

# Martha Washington

## A study in stamp production



This exhibit will use the three stamps depicting Martha Washington as a means of portraying the evolution of stamp production over the span of forty years. This was a period of tremendous expansion in the usage of the postal system by both private citizens and commercial mailers. Changes in printing and perforating were made to better serve the increasing demand.

The exhibit will portray the evolution of production in:

- printing methods—introduction of the rotary press
- perforations
- overprinting for special usages
- final output configurations—introduction of coils

Also displayed are some results of the imperfections of production:

- color variations
- plate wear
- inking flaws
- moisture problems
- misperforations







## Second Bureau Issue



The inscription included in the design at the top of the stamp was true for the 8 cent, but not for most of the series. The 8 cent was officially issued on December 12, 1902. However, the earliest known usage is December 27, 1902.

The stamp was printed from engraved plates of 400 subjects in four panes of 100. Paper used was watermarked and perforated 12, consistent with previous issues. A total of twelve plates were employed from # 1497 to # 3576 over a span of six years.



An unusual number of color variations exist ranging from lavender in the earlier issues to black. The change to the darker ink most likely was done by the Bureau because letter handlers were confusing the color with the 13 cent Harrison





Paid the Registry rate. Boston (Jamaica Plains Station)  
receiving stamp November 20, 1908.



Fremont Goodwine.  
WILLIAMSPORT, INDIANA.

174  
174  
REGISTERED  
NOV 16 1903  
WILLIAMSPORT, IND.



Miss M. E. Hunt,  
Florence,  
Colorado.



C. J. JORG

IN  
AN

521 JACKSON STREET

MILWAUKEE.

1903 VF DcDs Registered  
Milwaukee Wis. on cover to  
Appleton Corn Card

\$30. 23, 08



Mr. Arnold Krueger,  
c/o Dohr's Hotel,  
Appleton, Wis.





Second Bureau Issue



Creditanstalt in Luzern,  
Lucerne,  
Switzerland.

Paid the rate for first class to Europe. Luzern receiving stamp dated April 12, 1907.



Alvah G. Clark,  
285 Spring St.,  
Trenton, N.J.

Paid the rate for special delivery. Trenton receiving stamp dated 12:30 am, Feb. 12, 1909.



C184

309817

168-09000-101057

1902

Oklahoma ☒ Muskogee, Ind. T. 1908 Boxed cml w/ Purple double circle  
Reg pmk tie #306 to large Penalty env, stains, slightly reduced at L, imprint for  
Department of the Interior, Commissioner to the Five Civilized Tribes, territorial  
pmk used after statehood, addr Campbell OK, Indian Nation, ex Bleuler (PH)...\$125



Department of the Interior.  
Commissioner to the Five Civilized Tribes,  
MUSKOGEE, IND. TER.

60034

Mary N. Williams,

Campbell, Oklahoma.





③

2.50

erick  
Nation

Muskogee Okla  
Registered  
Jan 6 1908  
on the cover

A remarkable piece  
Indian Tax ceased Exempt Nov 16 1907

MUSKOGEE  
IND. T. L.

on the stamp  
- 8001

2.50



Ben. Dr. O. Becker,  
622 Oak Street,  
BUFFALO, - - N. Y.

REG. No. 1128  
APR 11 1903  
BUFFALO, N. Y.



164  
Evangelischer Oberkirchenrat

Germany  
Herrn Karlruhe

Harden

283, 306 Buffalo, NY registered to Germany 1903 at 2 X 5 cents UPU rate + 8 cents registry fee. New York transit & German backstamp. Vertical filing fold.

Scarce mixed issues.

EAX \$40





132





Acce

H. S. Coe

94 Corey Road

Brookline

Mass.

Stratford National Bank

DORR

New Hampshire



REGISTERED  
JAN  
STATION No. 100,  
BOSTON, MASS.  
1907

47556



The Philippines overprint, with its atypical diagonal format, was issued on November 1, 1904 with a much larger printing quantity of 49,033. This stamp, along with the rest of the series, became obsolete for usage on September 8, 1906 and all remaining stock was destroyed.



P. O. Box 1020,  
BALTIMORE, MD.  
Return if not called for in Five Days.



J. S. Peter, Esq.  
Acty Gen Mgr. Texas A. & P. Ry.  
San Antonio  
Texas



## 1922-25 Series



Flat plate printing once again was the method used when this series was begun. The first four cent stamps were issued January 15, 1923. Approximately 573,385,000 were printed.

The stamp was printed from plates of 400 subjects in panes of 100. A total of 36 plates were printed. Star plates were made but never used. The sheets were then perforated 11.



The letter F before a plate number indicated that the plate was ready for hardening.

Initials of the sideographer of the plate





## 1922-25 Series

With the increased demand for stamps, the Bureau employed the Rotary Press for its speed and economy. This press was already being used on coil issues, but when full sheets of rotary printed stamps were delivered, their tendency to curl was unacceptable. When this problem was solved, a new issue was printed, this time **perforated 10**, a prerequisite for the Rotary press. The four cent was first issued in March, 1925. A total of twelve plates were made.



This perforation still presented post office clerks with the problem of tearing individual stamps without damage. The press was again modified to facilitate the production of stamps **perforated 11 x 10 1/2**. The four cent was first issued May 17, 1927.



Perforated 10

The Stickney Rotary Press produced sheets with a plate number in each of the four corners of the sheet. Eleven plates were used in production of the perf 10; eight were used for the 11x 10 1/2, some of which were the same.



Perforated 11 x 10 1/2



## 1922-25 Series

The four cent was overprinted often. The first precancels were printed for production of coils. The rotary press sheet stamps were initially printed for use in precanceling.



Cities in need of limited numbers of precancels used their own methods to make them available.







The four cent Kansas and Nebraska overprints were all printed from existing plate numbers 18038 and 18082. They were printed on the Rotary Press and perforated 11 x 10 1/2. A total of 2,290,000 of the Kansas overprint were issued, 1,600,000 of the Nebraska, the first day of issue being April 16, and 17, 1929.



Faulty production resulted in numerous errors of registration, doubling of overprints, and blurry or underinked overprints.



Both the Kansas and Nebraska overprints were sometimes precanceled.

Sometimes the result was not quite what had been expected.





## 1922-25 Series

Coils were by now very much in demand. The four cent's production was begun on August 5, 1923, when the stock of the previous issue was exhausted. A total of 228,288,000 were printed until the design shifted to the William Howard Taft stamp.



Numerous shades are present in all issues in the series.



The rotary press sheets used perforating guide lines consisting of quarter inch lines at the center of the sheet which formed a cross, and  $\frac{3}{16}$  inch lines at the outside margin center points.



Yet, in the rush to produce more and more stamps, many stamps were produced with poorly aligned perforations.

The speed of the Rotary Press would cause any overinking to get thrown and dragged over the plate leaving streaks or blobs.







585  
NH







662 NH

35.00

Price



Style No. GK 102BK





Paid 4 cents for over one ounce, 2 cents for business reply letter, and 10 cents for special delivery. Cancellation shows Pawhuska, OKLA, Aug. 23, 1926. Chicago receiving stamp on reverse is dated Aug. 24. Perf 10.



Paid four cents for first class between one and two ounces. Perf 10 coil showing the end strip still attached.



ELY & WALKER DRY C  
WASHINGTON AVENUE AT 16TH  
SAINT LOUIS, MO.

SAINT LOUIS  
JAN 19  
3:30 PM  
1928



William M. Stadler,  
441 Beach Ave.,  
Bronx, N. Y.

VIA AIR

JAMES E BRETTON  
FAIRPORT



DOWNINGTOWN PUBLISHING CO.  
Downingtown, Pa.

REGISTERED  
NO. 42.

Mr. Cedric W. Lemont  
49 Oak Hill Ave.



550

55  
566

636



REGISTERED  
NO. 106

Floyd Shockley  
P. O. Box 125  
Cumberland, Ind.



Mrs. E. G. Eager  
2225 Lawrence Ave  
Toledo O.

REGISTERED

1537

636

Mr Fred G. Eager  
Baltimore Md



Return in 5 days to  
WM. V. D. WETTERN  
Ellicott City, Maryland

Registered



Mr Arthur F. Simionescu  
Hackensack

After 5 days, return to  
PHILIP H. WARD, JR.,  
P. O. Box 4216,  
Germantown Station,  
PHILADELPHIA, PA.



Batavia Stamp Exchange  
2345 NO. MARMORA AVE  
CHICAGO, ILL.



Batavia Stamp Exchange  
2345 NO. MARMORA AVE  
CHICAGO, ILL.





Miss Elizabeth B. Lundy

International House

65 ✓ New York City

New York

Riverside Drive at 124th St.



VIA AIR MAIL

Mr Stanley Helfrich  
Pineville  
Pa.







#636, 638  
AAMC CAM 23N2a  
Net \$ 4.00

BRV89



CLAUDE C. BEALS  
2025 Tenth St., Boulder, Colorado

If not delivered in 5 days return to  
ECONOMIST STAMP CO.  
87 NASSAU STREET  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

REGISTERED  
RECEIPT  
REQUIRED

316355

Mr. Jerome H. Schloss,  
277 W. 23rd St.,  
New York City.





AIR MAIL.

636

Norway.

Mrs. Petra Johansen



Oakland, California to Oslo, Norway 1928. Scott 636 (horizontal strip of 4) tied to the upper right corner of an airmail cover by a black OAKLAND, CAL SIXTEENTH ST. 1928 duplex cancels, with blue underlined "Airmail" routing instructions in the upper left corner. Black WARWICK ST. STA N OCT 9 1928 ADDRESS YOUR MAIL TO STREET AND NUMBER transit machine cancel and black OSLO 1 TUR 20 X 28 receiving repeat machine cancel on the reverse. Franking pays the combined UPU airmail rate within the U.S., plus 6c airmail to Norway, plus 1c overpayment. This was routed via London. Great usage in spite of the overpayment, which was the rule with combined UPU and airmail instead of exception during this period. \$50.00

Norway.

RETURN IN 3 DAYS TO  
HARRY IOOR  
302 STATE LIFE BLDG.  
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.



J E Britton  
Commercial Hotel  
Fairport N.Y.



## 1938 Presidential Series



The Presidential series used Martha's image on the 1 1/2 cent. Because this denomination had many usages, a total of 97 plates were made from #21873 to # 23871. Once again, a range of shades is evident. The electric eye plates began to be employed on this issue at plate number 22412, and are recognizable by the horizontal frame bars in the gutter.



One plate number exists with one inverted numeral.

The electric eye device was a new innovation employed to guide in the perforating operation.

Still, some misperforated stamps seemed inevitable.





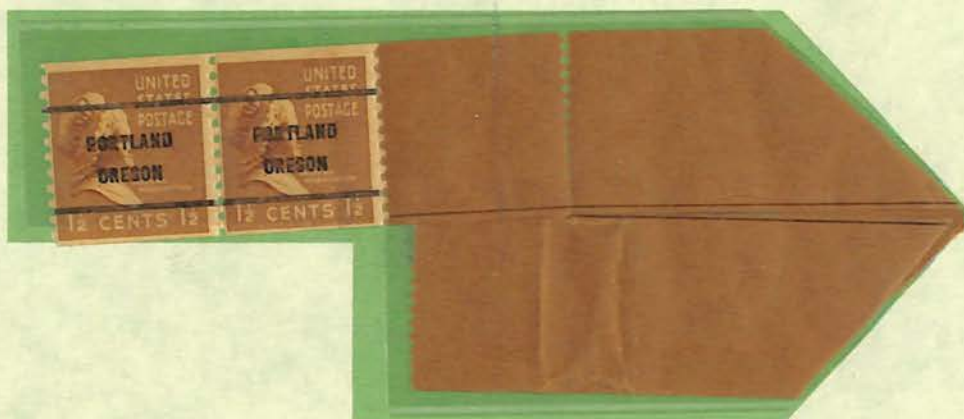
## 1938 Presidential Series



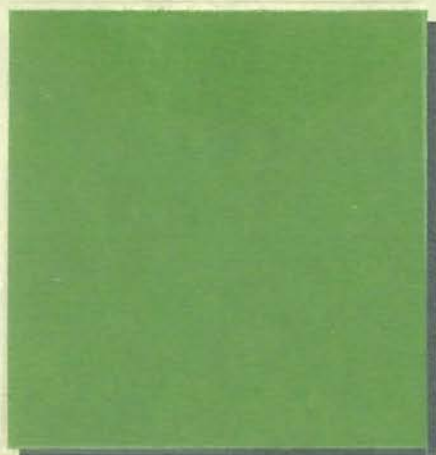
Vertically perforated coils were first issued on January 20, 1939, with horizontally perforated coils following seven days later.



Precanceling was in large demand, although there were no Bureau precancels of the horizontally perforated coil.



Precanceling of sheet stamps also became more available and smaller cities now had large enough requirements to allow for Bureau precancels.





## 1938 Presidential Series



The 1 1/2 cent is one of only two Bureau pre-cancel perforation errors.

The issue was overprinted for use in the Canal Zone. First issued on Sept. 1, 1939, a total of 935,00 were printed. Twenty-one existing plates were used, both pre-eye and electric eye.



The wet method of printing created problems of over- or under-inking. Moisture softened the paper for better impression, but if the moisture content was too low, the result was under-inked or a "dry" print.

Even though so many plates were made for this issue, plate wear shows up on many of the stamps. Battered Marthas are very common.















250 H

30

27.58 Price 18-























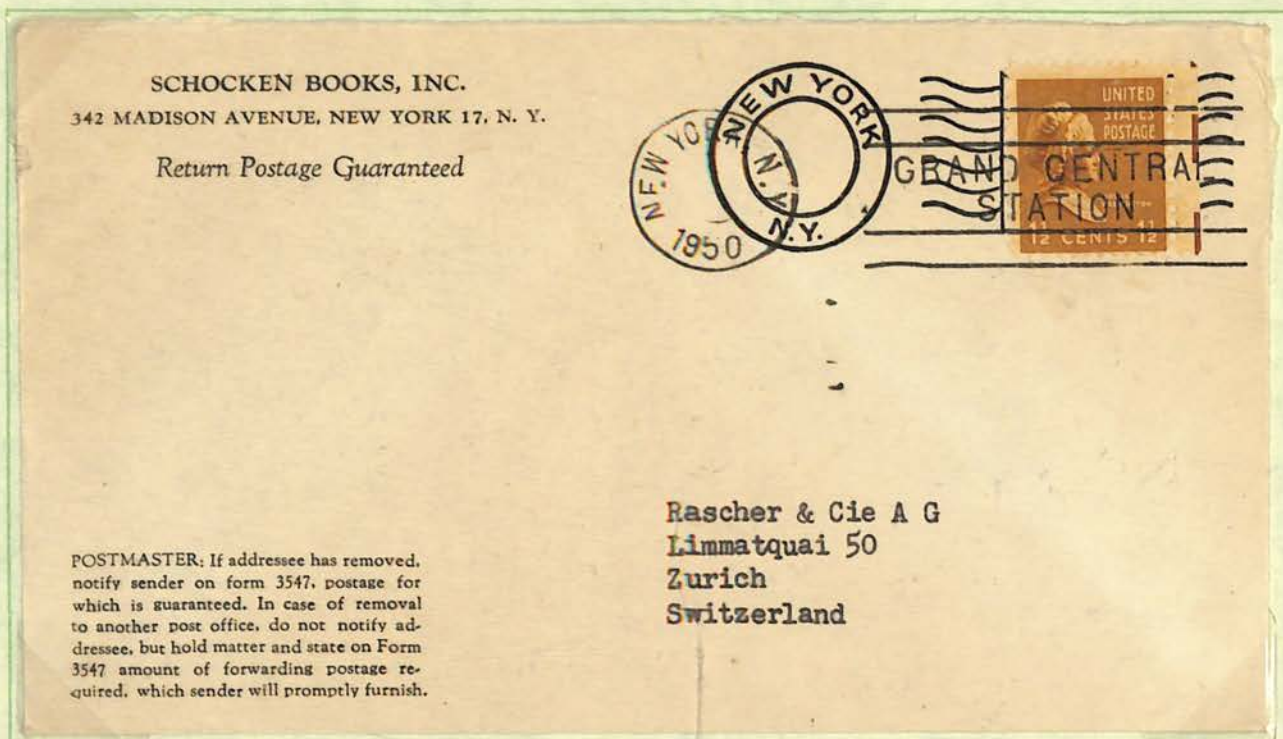
The power of Martha. A one and a half cent stamp covered a lot of ground between Oil City, PA, and APO 4769 to find a soldier, probably with Christmas greetings. Earliest readable date stamp is on the reverse reading Dec. 8, 1943. On the front is the Directory Company's stamp reading January 23, 1944.

#### Bibliography:

- Cleland, Wallace. Printing History of Second Bureau Issue. BIA Research Paper.
- Griffith, Gary. The 2-cent Washington. Philatelic Exhibit.
- Johl, Max. United States Postage Stamps 1902-1935.
- Johnson, Kim. Durland Standard Plate Number Catalog.
- POD. United States Domestic Postage Rates 1789-1956.
- Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps & Covers.
- Williams, L.N. Fundamentals of Philately.



1938 Presidential Series



Paid rate for printed matter to foreign countries. Stamp's margin shows vertical dashes used in perforating by means of electric eye.



Paid first class rate plus penalty due to addition of handwritten part of address which negated the permit. Guideline coil pair.



C715

700611

83-02033

3498 *20th Century Issues*, 805, wrapper use to occupied country, prexie pre-  
 nt New York NY, on wrapper, addr Yambole Bulgaria, usual "RETURNED TO SENDER SERVICE SUS-  
 PENDED" vs, label stating "This Communication Returned to Sender Because..." glued to reverse, a very  
 scarce destination, especially as an occupied country, circa 1942 (Jan 1943 designation in addr probably expi-  
 ration date for the publication being sent), VF (PH)... \$110

EXAMINED BY

MAZADETH BALKARDJON  
 MAITRE  
 YAMBOLE BULGARIA  
 JAN 1943

RETURNED TO SENDER  
 SERVICE SUSPENDED  
 1943





Sec. 34.66 P. L. & R.

POST CARD



A. N. Picerno  
17<sup>th</sup> Utter Ave.  
S. I. N.

BURTON KLEIN  
Route No. 1  
VINCENNES, INDIANA



New Coil.

Mrs. J. W. Lundy,  
23 South Chancellor St.,  
Newtown, Bucks Co., Pa.