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Article: The Lithographed General Issues of the Confederate States of America, Stone 2, Fill-ups

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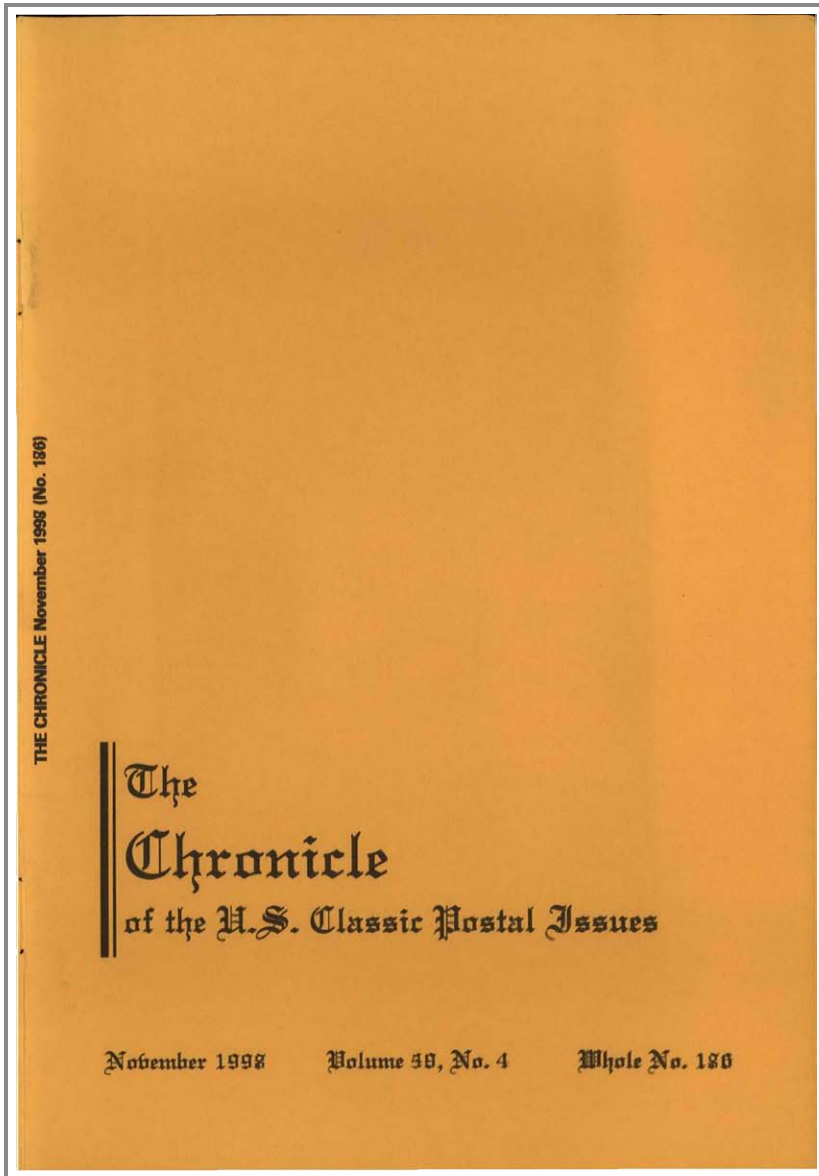


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THE LITHOGRAPHED GENERAL ISSUES OF THE
CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, STONE 2, FILL-UPS
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Prologue

It is intended that this be the first of a series of articles on the Lithographed General Issue Stamps of the Confederate States of America, Scott Numbers 1-5, with emphasis on the plating. The plan is to have an article in every 2nd or 3rd issue of the *Chronicle*, as opposed to every issue, to permit your responses to be integrated into the next article. The series depends on you the reader: no comments, no response, no new information, no more articles! Ultimately I plan to publish a comprehensive book on these stamps with complete platings, but first there are many things to be resolved.

Many marvelous items are mentioned in the old literature which are unknown to the current generation or were not understood and appreciated. Others marvelous items are still being discovered. Of the large multiples which we need to consult, I fear many no longer exist; some are known to have been cut up but others may still survive. To cut up a large multiple of any rare to unique item must surely be a crime to philately!

Unfortunately erroneous identification of the Confederate Stones is a more common problem than one would like. Some descriptions have no basis in reality. For the 5¢ Blue, Stones 2 and 3 are often confused; the only way to distinguish them is to plate the stamp. The proper identification of Stone A or B is much more of a problem, since it is by elimination; *i.e.*, if a 5¢ Green doesn't plate as Stone 1 or 2 it must be A or B. Distinguishing a 10¢ Blue Paterson from Stone Y is also complex. Paterson is plated, however many characteristics are quite minor and Stone Y is not plated. Excluding Stone 2, the published platings are all inadequate, to say the least.

I have an excellent photograph dating from the 1950s, given to me by Van Dyk MacBride, of a block of 50 of the 5¢ Blue Lithograph, Stone 3. The largest currently surviving multiple that I know of is a block of 40, and it is definitely not from the block of 50. Many of the multiples have been broken up over the years but I suspect this block of 50 may still be intact, since I have not seen any pieces that I would attribute to having come from this multiple.

August Dietz mentioned copies of the Lithographs printed on both sides (image would be normal) in addition to copies having a strong reverse offset (image would be reversed) on the back. I have really not seen a truly strong offset and have never seen a Lithograph that was printed on both sides. We know of a waste printing of the 10¢ Paterson printed on the back of a CSA bill, which is the only example of printer's waste that I have seen. A 10¢ Hoyer & Ludwig printed on both sides and a double print are illustrated on pages 120 and 121 of Dietz's *The Postal Service of the Confederate States of America*; does anyone know where they are today?

This series of articles starts with Stone 2, which when printed in green is Scott No. 1 and in blue is Scott No. 4. This Stone is perhaps the more interesting because of the number of major plate varieties and the use of at least three printing stones. The basic Stone 2 in blue is the most common Confederate Lithographed stamp; a few large multiples still exist but there are also many rare and even some unique plating items.

Introduction to Confederate Stamp Lithography

The starting point of any plating or reconstruction study must be a basic understanding of the printing methods involved. For the Confederate Lithographs we can do no better

than to use Dietz's classic *Postal Service of the Confederate States of America* for our text, pages 91-94. August Dietz was a printer of the old school. He knew the old processes and studied them as they applied to the 1860s and especially the CSA stamps.

To create a Printing Stone with multiple images, the Confederate printers started with the master image, most likely a lithograph but perhaps an etching, engraving, etc. I stated master image: die proofs for the 5¢ and 10¢ Lithographs are cataloged in the 1986 edition of *The New Dietz Confederate States Catalog and Handbook*—wonderful, show me one! The basic lithograph process is surface printing. It involves the absorption and repulsion of a fat-based ink with water, on the surface of an extremely fine-pore type of limestone from Bavaria. Using a special greasy ink, a number of impressions are printed on the coated surface of small pieces of transfer paper. These impressions are then trimmed of excess marginal paper and most likely attached to a large sheet of paper to simplify the alignment and the transfer to an intermediate stone, *i.e.*, the Transfer Stone. They could also be applied directly to the final Printing Stone without a previous paper mounting. It is at this stage that the basic characteristics that permit plating originate.

We are dealing with small pieces of paper. There are often numerous deviations from the master image: small clips in the design, tears, edges of the small units getting a bit of ink, in addition to the various abnormalities in the original impressions. A lithograph plate will produce small deviations on every impression, but when these impressions are used to create a Transfer Stone they become a permanent portion of the design. These clips are usually around the outside margins of each stamp; the original individual impressions were hand trimmed quite close to the design. The Confederate 2¢ and 5¢ Lithographed stamps have irregular outer borders and the clips are quite common, versus the 10¢ that was enclosed in a rectangular border and thus much easier to trim. This Transfer Stone now gives impressions consisting of multiple images.

When impressions are pulled from the Transfer Stone to make up the Printing Stones, there is again the possibility for additional constant varieties from inking and from abnormalities in the stone. At this state in building up the printing surface a variety will only occur on the impression involved rather than becoming a part of each unit of every impression from this stone. However, this transient variety from the Transfer Stone may well become a permanent variety on the Printing Stone.

In designating a set of minor varieties for any given position as being constant varieties for plating, one must examine a number of examples to be certain the varieties are permanent.

Varieties occur much more infrequently after the Transfer Stone is laid down and etched; the transferer is working with a unit of convenient size which requires a nominal amount of trimming and handling. The only constant varieties known to the author which are not traceable to the Transfer Stones, excluding printing and paste-up varieties arising from the relative positioning of the Transfer impressions when making up the Printing Stone, are a few scratches on the Printing Stones and a few dots around the edges of the sheets. The laying down of the four units from the Transfer Stone to create a Printing Stone creates position combinations that permit the Printing Stones to be distinguished on multiples that straddle these joints.

If the surface of a stone, Transfer or Printing, is damaged, it may be repaired by erasing the damaged area and entering another impression. There are only a few re-entries known for the Printing Stones of Confederate stamps. A re-entry could also be made on the Transfer Stone; no examples of this variety are definitely known, but there are several positions which readily lend themselves to this explanation. Those positions on Stone 2 in which a few of the outer lines of the design are duplicated in the margin on one side of the normal design, usually to the left, are most likely attributable to re-entries on the Transfer Stone before the impressions were pulled for the Printing Stone. However, it is also possible that two impressions from the master unit may have stuck together when the Transfer

Stone was built up, thereby causing this variety.

Most printing varieties associated with the actual printing process and occurring during the production of the Printing Stones, such as a line not printing, a blob of ink, etc., also occur after the Printing Stone is in use. The clipped and torn transfers are exceptions; these are make-up varieties and not printing ones. It is often quite difficult to tell from appearance alone if a variety is constant or transient. For a definitive evaluation it is necessary to have several examples from the same position, preferably printed in differing shades, to determine that a variety is truly from the stone and not a transient. Clips around the individual unit and inked corners can be readily identified with reasonable certainty by appearance.

The Transfer Stone was intended to be used only for the master impressions to create the Printing Stones. After all, it contained a relatively small number of units, versus multiple impressions on the Printing Stones. It was desired to keep the Transfer Stone in perfect condition so additional Printing Stones could be made as needed. While it is possible to print issued stamps from it, we have no reason to believe this was done with the Confederate issues.

In "A New Look at Paterson's Confederate Printings," in the *Confederate Philatelist* of November-December 1982, Gordon McHenry and Douglas B. Ball note that the Bartels half sheet (*i.e.*, half pane) of the 10¢ Paterson has a 6mm top margin, and as there is an imprint on the bottom this indicates a Printing Stone different from what we now know—or perhaps, though not suggested, a printing from the Transfer Stone being issued as stamps. Their observation was apparently taken from printed images of the item, perhaps from the 1929 Dietz book, page 135. In reality, the top margin is extremely close to the stamps, and has every indication of normal spacing between the (no longer present) 5th row of stamps and the start of the block at the 6th row.

The Historic Platings

Bertram W. H. Poole authored an excellent pioneering series, "The Confederate States of America, A History of the General Issues," that appeared in 23 issues of *The Philatelic Gazette*, starting with Vol. V, No. 7 (July 1915) and continuing through Vol. VII, No. 6 (June 1917). The sections listed below contain plating descriptions of the Lithographs. However, there are no illustrations and the descriptions are mostly one or two lines per position and are not adequate for plating anything except a large multiple (and even that is questionable); however, for a re-plating study they are useful.

- 5¢ Stone 1: Vol. V, No. 10 (October 1915), pages 233-235
- 5¢ Stone 2: Vol. VI, No. 1 (January 1916), pages 14-15; Vol. VI, No. 2 (February 1916), page 37
- 10¢ Hoyer: Vol V, No. 11 (November 1915), pages 273-275; Vol. V, No. 12 (December 1915), page 289
- 2¢ Hoyer: Vol. V, No. 12 (December 1915), page 291
- 10¢ Paterson: Vol. VI, No. 4 (April 1916), pages 108-109; Vol. VI, No. 5 (May 1916), pages 154-6

For this Poole plating of Stone 2 there is an error in that everything is shifted. For positions 1-40, add ten, thus his No. 1 is actually No. 11; for his positions No. 41-50, subtract forty, thus position 41 is actually No. 1. This error is quite easy to understand and the problem can be a constant annoyance in working with Stone 2. In essence the first horizontal row, No. 1-10, is shifted up in the Transfer setting and overall is slightly narrower than the second row, No. 11-20, and subsequent ones. Thus in looking at a block, one can easily think this first row is a horizontal gutter between an upper and lower Transfer Unit. One can assume that they laid out the first row, thought the stamps a fraction too close together, and spaced the rest of them out a bit more.

A better plating of Stone 2 was published by Gerald S. Curtis in the *Philatelic*

Gazette, Vol. VIII, No. 2 (February 1918), pages 38-42. This plating is accurate, though a few characteristics that are listed as being constant are not completely constant. The double page illustration is lacking in detail and the description too incomplete to permit the plating of anything but large multiples and a few singles having major varieties.

Your author published a plating in the *Confederate Philatelist* with detailed text and large photographs, starting in November 1966, Whole Number 112, continuing with Whole Numbers 114, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121 and concluding with the March-April, 1968 issue, Whole Number 123. The illustrations are sufficient to permit any single stamp to be identified with respect to the basic 50 positions on the Transfer Stone; this applies to both the Blue and the Green Stone 2 stamps.

The conventional scheme used to designate Confederate Transfer Stone positions consists of numbering the stamp in the upper left corner as position number 1, the stamp to its right is number 2, the stamp under position 2 as position 12 (*i.e.*, 2 + 10), and thus to the lower right corner which is position number 50.

The numbering scheme needs to be expanded. I propose an identification system made up of the following elements: Basic, Color, Transfer Position, Quadrant [UL-LL-UR-LR], Printing Stone. For example: Stone 2, Blue, 30, LL, 1. The Basic is the Transfer Stone identification, such as 10¢ Hoyer or (as in our example) Stone 2; the color is Blue or Green for Stone 2; Transfer Position is the position in the unit of 50, with position 30 in our example at the right end of the third row of 10; LL designating the lower left quadrant of the printing stone; and the final designator (1) identifying the printing plate. If something is unknown it is simply omitted from the description.

The purpose of the Transfer Stone is to expedite the production of larger and multiple Printing Stones and to be a depository for the image should the larger Printing Stone become worn and or be needed for other work, in which case it would be ground off and another image applied. To the best of our knowledge, the Printing Stones for the CSA Lithographs were all arranged as sheets of 200, consisting of two panes of 100. Each pane was made up of two units from the Transfer Stone, resulting in four Transfer Stone subjects on each Printing Stone.

01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10
 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40
 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

General Arrangement of Transfer Stone, 50 Subject

01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10
 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40
 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50
 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10
 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40
 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50
 Left Pane.....|.....Right Pane

General Arrangement of Printing Stone, 200 Subject

We thus have both horizontal and vertical jumps in the plating. A pair straddling the left and right pane could be position 10 on the left and position 1 on the right. The spacing between these two stamps is often not great and may or may not be an evident gutter. The



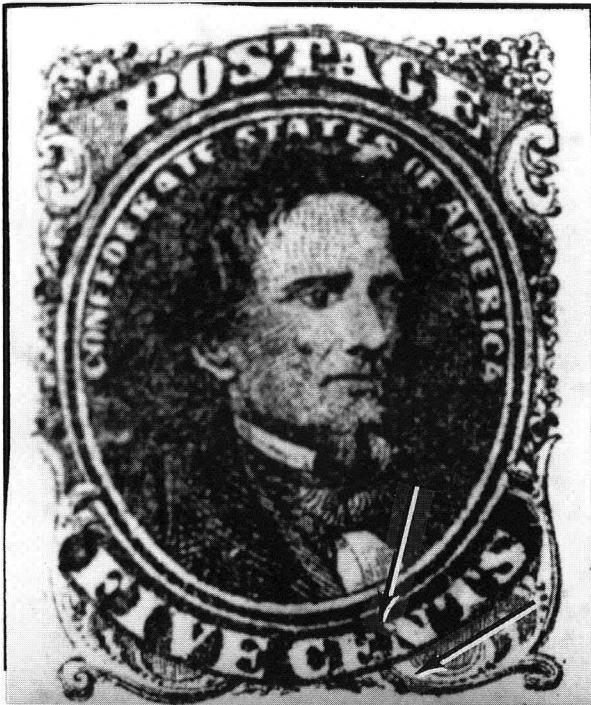
Stone 2, Position 46

Immediately above the T and between the TA of POSTAGE there are two small colorless areas. There is a small oval dot of color in the vertical stroke of the E of FIVE and a smaller one in the S of POSTAGE. The shading toward the back of Jefferson Davis' collar appears to be a continuation of the neck shading at one place; this shading variety is only apparent on finely printed specimens. The Green printings, one Lower Setting, show a Fill-Up in FIVE CENTS, 2nd most pronounced example of this type.



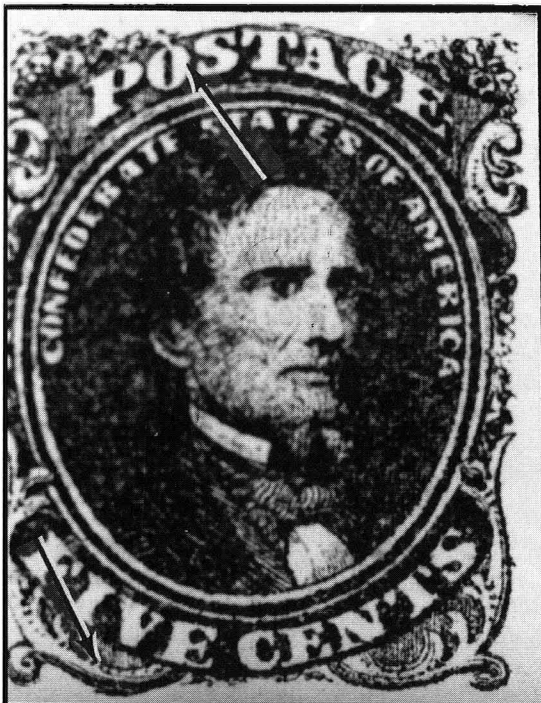
Stone 2, Position 47

There is a large triangular area of color in the lower right scroll. The I of FIVE contains a large colored rhombus and the C of CENTS has a small colored dash.



Stone 2, Position 48

The outermost portion of the design is repeated to the immediate left of the normal design. This is probably caused by two transfers sticking together, for no portion of the interior of the design is deformed. This doubling of the design is perhaps the most pronounced example of several similar varieties on this stone. The protruding portion of the upper right scroll is missing; however, this clip is not filled in with color as is usually the case. There is a dash of color in the upper and lower horizontal stroke of the E of CENTS and the flourish below this letter is slightly larger than normal. The Green printings, one Lower Setting, show a Fill-Up in FIVE CENTS, the most pronounced variety of this type.



Stone 2, Position 49

The O of POSTAGE resembles an inverted Q for there is a colored line and a colorless contrasting stroke running from the top of the letter on a 45° angle from the horizontal. There is a line under the lower left scroll which appears to be a partial clip or the clipped portion was replaced. The Green printings, one Lower Setting, show a Fill-Up in FIVE CENTS, 3rd most pronounced example of this type.

upper and lower transfer units in a given pane can yield pairs with the upper from position 41 and the lower from position 1. A cross gutter block of four would be positions 50-41-10-1.

It is possible that a Transfer and/or Printing Stone could have been laid down in another manner, as was implied for the unplated 5¢ Green Stone A/B in a most interesting article on "The Lithographs of the Confederate States of America," by G. S. Curtis, E. S. Knapp and T. H. Pratt, that appeared in the November 1929 issue of *Scott's Monthly Journal*. (The author has no other references to this study and would welcome any help, old notes, etc. I am also having problems in plating the Paterson and/or Stone Y.)

The early concept was that only one Printing Stone was produced from each Transfer Stone. However, by the 1960s it became evident from various gutter multiples that some Transfer Stones have more than one Printing Stone, as is implied in the 1929 *Scott's Monthly Journal* article cited above. For Transfer Stone 2, I am convinced that there are at least three Printing Stones, one unique stone for the Green printing and two for the Blue printings.

Most work on the lithographs has been devoted to plating the Transfer Stones, though in 1915 Bertram W. H. Poole recognized the importance of additional varieties on the Printing Stones. There is still much to be discovered and explained from the Printing Stones. In addition to the challenge of new discoveries, some of the most interesting major varieties originated with the Printing Stones and are independent of the Transfer Stone (that is, unless there are more transfer stones than we now recognize).

There is varying spacing between the 4 units of 50 of a Printing Stone, permitting identification; there are also some nice clipped transfers where there just wasn't quite enough room for complete entry.

Stone 2, Fill-Ups

For our first article, I would like to cover the "Fill-Ups," as Dietz called them. These are several Green Stone 2 positions with the FIVE CENTS significantly filled in with color, which one might assume is a transient printing freak.

Our major Fill-Up, Green 5¢ Stone 2 variety (position No. 48), was reported and well illustrated by August Dietz in the October 1925 issue of *The Southern Philatelist* (Vol. 1, No. 12, pages 223-224). The identical illustration and text was repeated in his 1929 book, *The Postal Service of The Confederate States of America*, pages 106-108:

Fill-Ups and Fill-Ins.—Under this heading we may class nearly every other oddity of lithographic prints—spots of color foreign to the original design, broken or jagged lines, quadrille-ruled backgrounds converted to a solid mass of color, ornaments blurred, or colorless lettering marred by splotches of color—countless in number, these freaks are attributed to carelessness, in letting the stone "go dry," and the consequent "filling-in" or "filling-up" of these dry spaces with ink, when the roller next passed over them. Thousands of these transient freaks may be found; many of them—too insignificant to illustrate, however—became permanent on every stone of every denomination, forming well-known road-signs for the student and plater.

The most pronounced example of this variety, Stone 2, Position 48, Green, Lower Setting is illustrated in both of the above references. However, there is one discrepancy. I have seen three examples of this variety, each in a slightly different shade of green, each show the filling in of the FIVE CENTS identical to each other and to the Dietz illustrations, with one exception. The three stamps at hand all show a distinct and identical blob of color on Jefferson Davis's shirt; this is not shown in the Dietz illustration. (Figures 1, 2, 3)

Examining the numerous minor plating markings on the three Fill-Up stamps from Position 48 confirm they are identical and are from the same basic Stone 2, Position 48 which exists in both Green and Blue stamps without the blob. The extremely clear Dietz illustration does not show these minor markings. This suggests that Dietz may have used



Figure 1. Stone 2, 5¢ Green Position 48, Fill-Up, Used on Cover from Gordonsville, Va, April 20, 1862



Figure 2. Stone 2, 5¢ Green, Position 47 - 48, Fill-Up, Used on Cover from Lexington, Va, November 7, 1862



Figure 3. Stone 2, 5¢ Green, Positions 48 - 49, Fill Up, L, probably LR

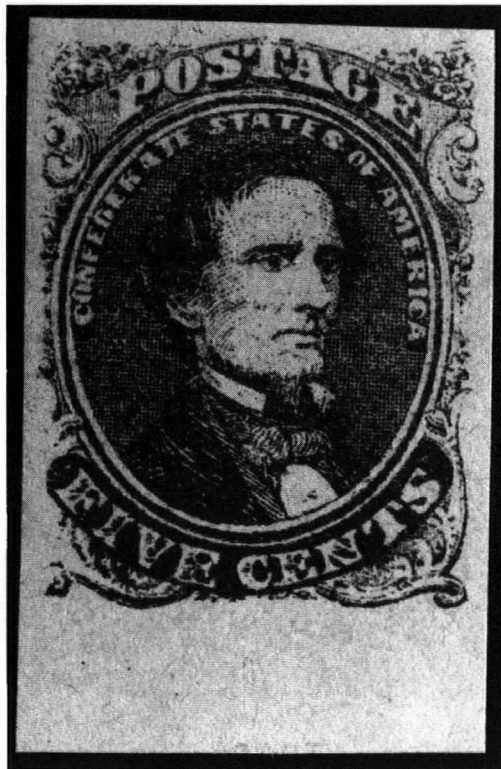


Figure 4. Stone 2, 5¢ Green, Position 46, Fill-Up, L, probably LR

drawings made from a master photograph of the stamp and in this case did not illustrate actual stamps, no doubt to obtain clearer illustrations. The “softer” images created by lithography are much more difficult to reproduce by photography and other printing means than the clear sharp lines of engraved or typographed stamps.

The multiple examples of these Fill-Ups, especially in different shades, prove they are constant varieties on the Printing Plate and thus they should be classified as constant varieties and not as transients or “freaks.” Stone 2 in Green is typical of the known general issue lithographs, thus there are four units on the printing stone. I have not kept records of all copies of these positions that I have seen, but it is most likely that only one of the four Transfer Units showed the filled in impressions. Thus taking at random four copies of any of these positions, we should have one with the fill-in, which is in agreement with my recollection.

While Fill-Up varieties no doubt originated from printings freak, such as temperature, moisture, pressure or ink aberrations, they occurred on single prints from the Transfer Stone. When laid down upon a Printing Stone, a Fill-Up became a permanent variety, distinct from the normal Transfer Stone varieties. As it is extremely noticeable, it becomes significant. In fact it is so evident that the Printing Stone should have been repaired—and perhaps it was, so that the Fill-Ups actually form less than 25% of all the prints from these positions.

If anyone has a Position 48 with the Fill-Ups that does not show the glob of ink on the shirt it would be most interesting and should be reported. An example printed in Blue would be even more interesting, as I am convinced the Stone 2 printing plate that was used for the Green stamps was not used to print the stamps in Blue. I doubt they exist in either Green or Blue, but there is no reason that they could not.

Positions Stone 2, Green, 46, 47 and 49, L also show this Fill-Up variety to varying degrees but it is most pronounced in Position 48. The attribution to the Lower settings of the printing stone is firm. The irregular block of 7 suggests that it is from the Right side; however, this is not 100% proven although it is most likely.

I have never seen Positions 46, 47, 48 or 49 Fill-Ups on a Blue Printing of Stone 2. In fact, I have never seen this type of Fill-Up on any other stamps. This is added proof that the Printing Stones used to print Stone 2 in Green and Blue are not the same.

It is most unfortunate that the multiples of classic stamps continue to be cut up to supply the demand for singles and blocks of four. They often still have secrets and should have a special rarity and desirability over the smaller units even though they often have some defects and can create mounting problems. The pair of stamps illustrated in this article showing the Fill-Ups from Positions 48 and 49 (Figure 3) was cut from an irregular block of 7 no earlier than April 15, 1980, when it was sold intact in an Edgar Mohrmann & Co. sale in Hamburg, lot 212. The block then contained positions Stone 2, Green, 36, 37, 46, 47, 48, 49 and 50, L. The single showing the Fill-Up from Position No. 46 (Figure 4) was also cut from this block.

The Stone 2 plating illustrations with arrows provided with this article are all taken from Blue printings. However, the indicated characteristics are generic for this Transfer Stone. □