



U.S. Philatelic Classics Society

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Article: Display Advertisement

Advertiser: United States Stamp Society

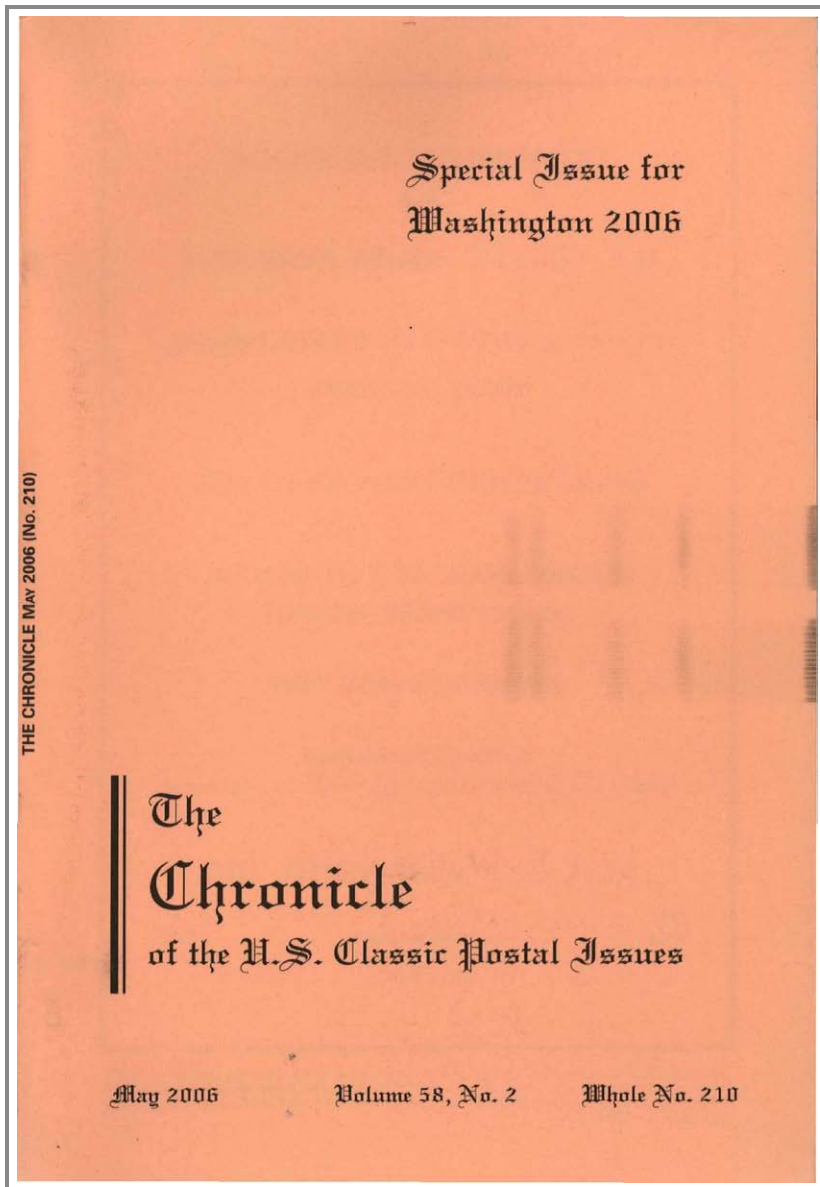


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five rows of the sheet. We also noted unusually close vertical spacing between the first and fourth stamps of rows four and five. This quickly identified our block as rows three through six, positions 21-24/51-54. Minute engraved details and blurs in the margins confirmed our identification.

Further study of the alignment of the 5¢ pane reveals that our observation that the rows were going up hill was not really accurate and more an optical illusion caused by the limited size of our block, which did not allow us to properly observe the whole layout of the sheet. When graphic tools are used to measure the straightness of the rows and overall plate layout, the rows are actually quite straight and the layout reasonably symmetrical. What caused the illusion of misalignment of the rows of the block of 16 was really the orientation of the individual impressions. We found that the first stamp of the first five rows, and many of the next four stamps to the right of each of these, were rotated slightly clockwise to the perpendicular and the overall layout of the plate. Thus when you extend a line using the bottom frame line of the first stamp it projects lower and lower with each row. On the other hand, if all the misaligned individual designs were rotated slightly counter clockwise to correspond with the direction of each column, everything would appear to be reasonably straight. Nevertheless, the use of alignment had been the major technique that we employed to identify the block on the plate, which would have been impossible if we had not had an entire intact pane to compare it with.

We now knew that this block was from the right pane and could be plated without question as coming from positions 21-24, 31-34, 41-44 and 51-54. The ease with which we were able to do it was largely due to the excellent photographs prepared by the National Postal Museum. Our plating process was done mainly by alignment and spacing, which is usually only possible when comparing full panes or very large multiples. A normal plate reconstruction made up of singles and maybe a few multiples would not have shown us the alignment clues that made this task so easy. Of course, since every impression on the plate differs in its details, we still could have used a plate reconstruction of singles to make the proper identification. Since we were plating such a large block from the left edge of the sheet, that would not have been a particularly difficult task for an experienced plater. However, our experience here illustrates that for anyone desiring to do plating of the 1847 issue, these photographs are a very useful tool. ■

United States Stamp Society

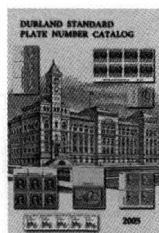
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