

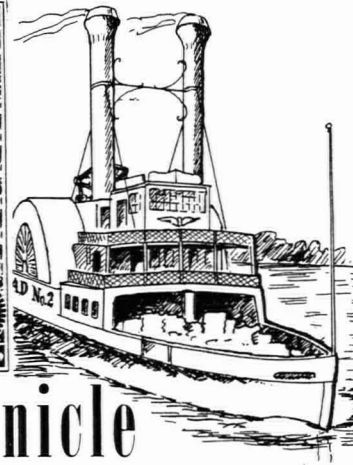
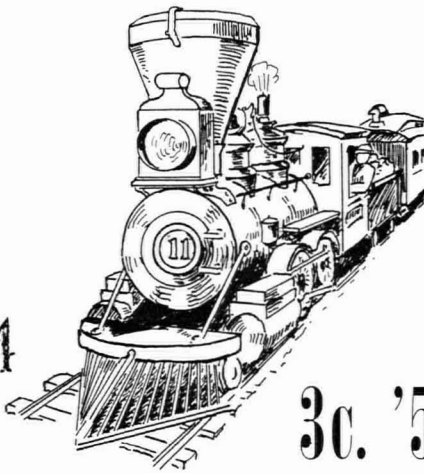
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A STUDY OF THE MAJOR VARIETIES OF THE U. S. 3¢ 1851

by Richard McP. Cabeen, RA #19, and Contributing Editor

Editor's Note: Because few members of our Unit have the good fortune to possess a copy of THE STAMP SPECIALIST No. 2, issued in 1940, containing Mr. Cabeen's outstanding monograph on one of the stamps of our choice, the article and its splendid plates are reprinted in full herein. The monograph is of such signal importance that this entire issue is devoted to it. It is our hope that at an early date the similar article by Mr. Cabeen on the U. S. 3¢ 1857 from THE STAMP SPECIALIST NO. 4 likewise may be reprinted. This reprint is by courtesy of the author, and by permission of the publisher of THE STAMP SPECIALIST, Mr. H. L. Lindquist, who kindly loaned the original plates for this purpose.

Original Preface of the Publisher of THE STAMP SPECIALIST: Richard McPherren Cabeen, Stamp Editor of the Chicago Tribune since September, 1932, needs very little introduction in the field of philately for he has long been a student of stamps, particularly the 1851-57 issues of the United States. He was born in Seaton, Illinois, May 11, 1887. His collecting activities began in 1898 and the once small collection has grown to over 45,000 varieties. Besides specializing in United States stamps, he has formed the habit of collecting everything pertaining to Illinois Town postmarks from stampless to current, advertisements around stamps of all periods, fractional currency, and American gold coins of obsolete values and commemorative issues. Mrs. Cabeen collects everything that does not appear on Mr. Cabeen's list. His club membership includes the A.P.S., C.P.S., C.C.N.Y., W.P.S., B.I.A., I.P.S. (London), A.N.A., and Chicago Coin Club.

All collectors of 3 cent 1851 stamps are divided into three groups. Some are contented with one stamp of this issue, some try to complete the reconstruction of all 13 plates, and others, a much greater number, show several pages of the more prominent varieties.

These pages often contain examples of the major cracks and the more prominent shifted transfers, as well as the interesting combinations of recut triangles and so

forth. Almost every collector who has several 3 cent 1851 stamps in his album is interested in knowing just what he has, but there is no source of information except the handbook written some years ago by Dr. Carroll Chase, and now out of print. Unfortunately that famous book was published at a time when serious collectors were hibernating and it was not possible to show as many illustrations as seems desirable in a similar book today. However it does show pictures of the major cracks, plate flaws, and some of the prominent shifted transfers as well as odd combinations of recut lines.

With a desire to supplement Dr. Chase's book as well as to provide a condensed guide to the subject, six plates of illustrations have been prepared which include cracked plates, flaws, accidental errors of recutting and a large number of shifted transfers. The first five of these show shifted transfers except in a very few cases and the sixth shows other varieties including a typical set of recut triangles, extended inner or tangent lines, and connected labels and diamond blocks.

Since shifts are not necessarily original to the state of the plate upon which they are found, but may be hangovers from an earlier state of the plate, it was thought advisable to group all stamps coming from a given plate. Space will not permit a complete analysis of each shift but generally speaking, later states show traces of shifts which occurred in earlier states.

Plate I shows the major shifts of plate 1 in all three states. There are few shifts in plate 1, early state, and each which does occur represents an error of position on the part of the transfer roll operator which was later corrected without completely removing the traces of the first operation. Shifted transfers in the intermediate state of plate 1 are quite numerous and represent the failure of the operator in his attempt to lower the transfer roll relief exactly into the stamp space which he was re-entering.

Such shifts are usually scattered throughout the plate except perhaps in the lower left corner of plate 1, where there is a notable collection of double and triple shifts embracing 10 positions. Some of these shifts were quite far from the normal positions and show the tessalated background of the stamp outside the frame lines. See Plate I m, o, q, etc.

In Plate I, illustrations m and n, and o and p, and r and s, represent stamps in the intermediate and late states of plate 1. These show that in some cases traces of the shifts hang over into the succeeding state of the plate, while in other cases they do not. Usually the margins are cleaned up, but it is a different matter for the engraver to spot a shift when it falls in the rosette or even in the oval frame surrounding the medallion.

Plate II continues with the right pane of plate 1 in all states, and is completed by the addition of a few examples from the unnumbered plate known as plate "O." As an example of the persistence of some shifts, especially small shifts, refer to unit "a." Here are given illustrations of the shift in all three states of the plate, and the dangling portion under the upper left diamond block was caused by a little shift in the early state. Almost identical shifts will be found in positions 12 R and 22 R of plate 1, early, intermediate and late. These may be distinguished from position 2 R by the reliefs and position dots.

Position 92 L 1, late, occupies a venerated throne among shift hunters on account of the amount of visible evidence of careless workmanship, but it is only a minor shift when compared with position 80 R 1, late, or positions 1 and 11 L O. The former is

a wider shift and leaves traces of tessalated work in places found in no other example. The plate 0 examples have the shift misplaced so far out on the margin that there is some reason to suspect an occurrence similar to that which caused the inverts of the 1 cent 1851.

Plate III shows shifted varieties from plate 2 in both states. A few identical positions are shown in the two states and from an examination it appears that the small shift of position 19 L 2 early is carried over into the late state and that a new shift is added in the re-entering process. Positions 3 R and 26 R appear to have identical shifts in early and late states indicating that those in the late state are merely hangovers from the previous state. Plate 2 contains many prominent shifts among which are the triple transfer 92 L 2 late, and "Three Gents," 66 R 2 late.

Plate IV shows shifts from plate 5 in early and late states. The operator who re-entered this plate evidently was not one who had worked on any other plate in the series for he had a personal equation which caused him to shiver at the moment the roller relief came into contact with the plate, or how else can one explain the many doubled and tripled bottom lines and lower label blocks on this plate. Some of these are so slight as to defy any but photographic illustration, but yet are readily noted by the thinner letters and faintly doubled frames.

Stamp 87 R 5 late is a shift which is worthy of some attention. The shift in this case was downward, which in itself is somewhat unusual. In correcting the trouble it appears that the entire bottom of the label and the outer frame were removed, and that the former was redrawn as a single line far enough above its normal position to cut off the bases of the letters of the inscription. The outer line was then drawn in the proper relation to the lower label.

Plate V shows shifted transfers from the plates which did not exist in the orange brown period. The shifts are generally of small extent and of minor interest to collectors. The collector who desires a shifted transfer from each plate will find it possible to obtain all of them, but he must be contented with some not so striking as others.

Plate V also shows an illustration of the "Recut bust" stamp which is notable in that it is the only position among the 2600 which has been intentionally altered within the frame line of the portrait medallion. The lower row of illustrations on Plate V show typical examples of the stamps with extra or missing lines which are found in the three right hand rows of the left pane of plate 3.

Plate VI illustrates the major cracks found in plate 5 and several of the minor cracks. The hairline crack which crosses the interstice between positions 32 and 33 R 5 late, will also be found between 31 and 32 R 5 late, and possibly continues across the wider space between panes to join up with 40 L 5 late, just as a similar crack is shown joining position 80 L 5 late with 71 R 5 late. These are shown in unit j on the illustration. Many of these fine cracks occur, but it is difficult to find impressions which are fine enough to show the cracks and which are not cancelled so as to obliterate them.

Although cracks are desirable and somewhat expensive after they have been noticed, collectors should bear in mind that it is now an established fact that plate 5 late, was not cracked when it was first put to press, and that all of these positions.

should be available without any cracks showing. When found they are infinitely scarcer than the same positions with cracks, and should be just as desirable to the specialist.

The illustration g-3 shows what is apparently a crack in plate 4, position 91 L. This stamp has not been duplicated and it cannot be listed as a definite crack. Illustrations g-4 and h-1 and h-2 show three plate flaws caused by some damage to the plate, and the mark on k-4 is probably due to carelessness on the part of a workman.

The scratch connecting 38 L 1 late with 48 L 1 late, see k-1 and k-3, is probably due to a slip when engraving the outer line. A similar occurrence caused the loop on 95 R 4, 1-2. No definite reason is assigned for the mischief which caused the peculiar toga button on position 10 R 2, late, but it seems to be a stellate crack rather than a recutting. This stamp carries the title "Recut Button" in all lists and handbooks.

The final row of illustrations on this plate show typical recuts from the four corners of the stamp. A few of these recuts occur only once in 2600 positions, others occur in a great variety of combinations some of which are limited to one stamp position. Such a combination will be found on stamp position 85 L 1 late, shown at unit s on Plate I. Here are combined the recuts shown in illustrations q-1, q-3, s-2 and s-3, Plate VI. When comparing stamps having shifts with the illustrations make some allowance for the inaccuracies of the drawings, and some for the fact that it is not possible to indicate certain shifts on a standard mat due to the fact that reentering causes the metal to flow in various ways sometimes deforming the lettering so much that a photograph is the only solution to the illustration of the variety.

In addition it must be borne in mind that the shifts will not remain identical throughout the life of the plate. If the first position of the stamp was incorrect and was hammered out from behind, it is more than likely that the shift will be faint in the first printings, but will increase in strength and extent as the plate is worn away and the original entry exposed. On the other hand if the original entry of the stamp was faint and was disregarded when the new entry was made, the shift will show at its best on early impressions and will gradually disappear on later printings. Both types of shifts are found in the three cent stamps of 1851.

Of necessity many shifted transfers were omitted from this article, some on account of the minuteness of the shift and others due to a lack of suitable material for the illustrations. The writer only wishes that it were possible to show the entire 2600 stamp positions instead of the 124 which constitute the bulk of the illustrations.

SUMMARY OF SHIFTED TRANSFERS, CRACKS AND IMPORTANT VARIETIES

Shifted Transfers

Plate 1, Early state, orange brown only, dates starting with July 1, 1851.
Positions 3, 5, and 13 L, and 2, 7, 12, 14 and 22 R.

Plate 1, Intermediate state, orange brown only, dates starting about July 15, 1851.
Same positions as in early state and 45, 62, 72, 73, 74, 75, 82, 83, 84, 85 and 92 L, and 34, 44, 64, 92, 95 and 98 R.
Positions 74 and 84 L are triple shifts and 83 L may also belong in this category.

Plate 1, Late state, orange brown and 1852-55 shades, dates starting early in October, 1851.

Positions 3, 5, 10, 11, 21, 31, 33, 37, 51, 55, 56, 62, 66, 74, 75, 83, 85 and 92 L, and 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, 22, 34, 64, 70, 71, 80, 90, 92, 95 and 98 R.

Plate 2, Early state, orange brown only, dates starting about August 1, 1851.

Positions 2, 9, 15, 19 and 25 L, and 3, 5, 6, 9, 16, 26 and 66 R.

Plate 2, Late state, 1852-1857 shades, dates starting about Jan. 15, 1852.

Positions 2, 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 82 and 92 L, and 3, 6, 7, 16, 26, 66, 87 and 97 R.

Position 92 L is a triple transfer.

Plate 3, One state, 1852-1857 shades, dates after about March 9, 1852.

Positions 1 L, and 6 and 16 R.

Plate 4, One state, 1855-1857 shades, dates after March 31, 1855.

Position 9 R only.

Plate 5, Early state, orange brown only, dates after July 22, 1851.

Positions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 11 and 21 L, and 4, 7, 14, 24, 68 and 96 R.

Plate 5, Late state, 1855-1857 shades, dates after Sept. 1, 1855.

Positions 2, 3, 7, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 81, 82, 83, 91, 92 and 93 L, and 4, 14, 24, 77, 84, 86, 87, 91, 95 and 96 R.

Plate 0, unnumbered, orange brown only, dates after Sept. 8, 1851.

Positions 1, 5, 11 and 45 L, and 2, 3, 4, 9, 12, 13, 14 and 19 R.

Plate 6, One state, 1856-1857 shades, dates after Feb. 18, 1856.

Positions 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14 and 18 R.

Plate 7, One state, 1856-57 shades, dates after Feb. 13, 1856.

Positions 9 L, and 8 and 9 R.

Plate 8, One state, 1856-57 shades, dates after April 25, 1856.

Positions 6, 7, 8, 10 L, and 2 and 10 R.

Cracked Plate Positions

Plate 5, Late state. Major cracks, positions 51, 74, 84, 94 and 96 L, and 9 R.

Minor cracks, positions 8, 27-37, 31, 44-45, 45-55, 65, 78-79 in left pane, and 7, 71-72 in right pane. Positions 80 L and 71 R are connected across the space between the panes.

Hyphenated positions are connected by cracks. Marginal cracks occur below positions 92, 93 and 95 L.

Plate 2, Late state. Major crack, position 10 R.

Plate 4, Late prints may show what appears to be a crack on position 91 L.

Flaws and Defects

Prominent defects are found on positions 5 and 20 L 4, 100 R 4, 97 R 6 and 98 R 7. Scratches connect positions 38-48 L 1, late state, 73-74 R 3, and a prominent scratch extends into the margin below 100 R 2, late state

Important Recut Varieties

Many recut varieties or combinations of recuts occur but once in the 2600 positions of the 3 cent 1851 plates. Some of these are listed, the references being to the illustrations of the varieties on the accompanying plates.

- 47 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-2, q-2, q-4, s-3.
- 95 L 1, late state, Plt. VI, r-2.
- 57 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-4.
- 47 R 6, Plt. V, o.
- 69 L 5, early state, orange brown, dot in center of lower right diamond block.
- 69 L 5, late state, ordinary shades, same variety.
- 45 R 2, early state, orange brown, Plt. VI, g-1.
- 45 R 2, late state, ordinary shades, same variety.
- 68 R 4, Plt. VI, g-2.
- 79 L 1, late state, Plt. VI, t-1.
- 68 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, q-1, q-2.
- 95 R 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, q-1, and t-2 to 96 R 0.
- 96 R 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, q-3, and t-1 to 95 R 0.
- 85 L 1, late state, Plt. VI, s-3, q-3.
- 100 R 2, early state, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-1, s-4, t-1, and scratch.
- 21 R 1, early state, orange brown, Plt. VI, q-1 and two lines recut at top of upper right diamond block.
- 49 L 1, late state, Plt. VI, q-1, q-3, q-4, and position dot.
- 95 R 3, same recuts, no position dot, but sheet margin.
- 84 L 1, early and intermediate, orange brown, Plt. VI, q-1, s-3.
- 82 L 2, early state, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-1, q-2.
- 93 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-1, s-1, s-3.

- 92 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-1, q-3.
45 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-1, s-3, s-4.
87 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-1, s-3.
68 R 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, t-2 extended to frame.
82 L 3, Plt. VI, r-3, q-3.
29 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-3, q-4.
66 R 2, early state, orange brown, Plt. VI, r-3, t-2.
37 L 0, orange brown, Plt. VI, q-3, q-4, t-2.
68 L 1, late state, Plt. VI, s-1, s-4.
14 R L, late state, Plt. VI, t-1, t-4.

Extra and Missing Line Varieties

- Plate V, t-1, 2-1 var., positions 9 and 19 L 3.
r. 3-1 var., positions 29, 39, 49, 59, 69, 79 L 3.
s. 4-1 var., positions 89, 99 L 3.
q. 2-3 var., positions 58, 68, 78, 88, 98 L 3.
t-2. 1-2 var., positions 70, 80, 90, 100 L 3.

Positions 69 and 99 R 4, and 8, 18, 28, 38, 48, 58, 68, 78, 88 and 98 R 6 have an extra line outside the right frame line but are not often confused with the stamps from plate 3 as the latter have inner lines on at least one side, while stamps from plates 4 and 6 have no inner lines.

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Plate Varieties
Delineated by
Richard McP. Cabeen

U. S. 3¢ 1851



PLATE I

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PLATE III

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PLATE VI