The History of the St. Louis Postage Stamps 1845-1847.

By C. H. Mekeel.
THE HISTORY

OF THE

POSTAGE STAMPS

OF THE

ST. LOUIS POSTMASTER

1845-1847

By CHAS. HAVILAND MEKEEL

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1895
Saint Louis, Mo.
The St. Louis Stamps.

By Charles Haviland Mekeel.

The forerunner of the postage stamp in the United States was the hand-stamp marks of various descriptions placed upon the letters to show the amount of the postage together with the word "Paid," "Due" or "Collect" to indicate whether the postage had been prepaid or was to be collected upon delivery. The hand-stamp dated postmark was of much earlier origin than that of the adhesive stamp, and prior to all hand-stamps we find the endorsements in ink upon letters, of the place, date of mailing, amount of postage and a word to indicate whether the postage had been prepaid or was to be collected. 1 The introduction of the use of the adhesive postage stamp in Great Britain in 1840 was followed by agitation in the United States Congress looking toward the introduction of cheap postage and the issuing of postage stamps in this country.

The proposed reform met with opposition, as all reforms do, and it was some years before much was accomplished.

The local express and messenger companies first introduced the use of adhesive postage stamps in the prepayment of mail matter in the United States. In 1842 Mr. A. M. Greig who had conducted a local carrier system in New York City, in competition with the Government service, was appointed by John


They are penmarked with the name of the mailing office, the date occasionally, the amount of the postage paid or due, generally in small figures, sometimes with the word "cents," in full or abbreviated, added. Gradually, hand-stamps were introduced. At first the name of the mailing office in a single frame, generally circular, the month and day being in full or abbreviated, added. A further improvement appears later on in the introduction of the month and day as part of the hand-stamp. The word "paid" or "due," the amount of postage in figures or with "cents," either written or hand-stamped, always added. And finally all the marks are included in one hand-stamp. There was evidently no uniformity of practice, except the general requirement that the name of the mailing office, the month and day, and the amount of postage should in some form be marked on the letter. Improvements seem generally to have originated in the larger offices, but smaller offices sometimes took the lead in enterprise. An improvement once adopted does not seem always to have been adhered to; letters mailed at the same office on the same day and differently marked may be frequently found in old files. The hand-stamps seem to have been obtained by the several offices for themselves, as there is no uniformity of style. *** Louisville, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Boston and New York letters of the same year have the same hand-stamp with a numeral or numerals, indicative of the amount of postage added at the bottom within the frame. When prepaid the word "PAID" was hand-stamped below the other.
My dear Madam,

What? I do not understand.

St. Louis Stamps.
Lotrimon Graham, the Postmaster of New York, to establish a carrier servant to be known as the "United States City Dispatch Post." The authority for this appointment was conferred by a letter from the First Assistant Postmaster General.

The stamps issued and used by this post were the earliest having any semblance of official character.

The failure of Congress in recognizing the value of the English postal system and enacting laws to provide for the issuance of postage stamps, was not shared by the public, the press or the Postmaster-General who were all in favor of the stamp arrangement. It finally resulted that various postmasters issued stamps upon their own authority for the convenience of their patrons.

These stamps were only recognized between the purchaser and the postmaster and had no value or significance outside of the post-office in which they were issued.

It will be observed that all the illustrations of the stamps of the St. Louis postmaster upon the original covers in this article bear the numerals to signify the rate of postage, and the word "Paid," the same as letters did that bore no stamps, and it was these marks the receiving postmaster noticed and not the stamps in governing him in the delivery of the mail.

The stamp was simply a receipt between the party paying the postage and the postmaster, and was recognized no further.

This was the character of the early postmasters' stamps of New York, Brattleboro, St. Louis and others.

The first of the postmasters' stamps was issued by the New York postmaster on July 14th, 1845; the stamp of the Brattleboro, Vt. postmaster was probably issued later the same year, and the stamps of the St. Louis, Mo., postmaster were issued in November, 1845, and first announced in the daily press of that city upon the fifth of that month.3

The city of St. Louis at that time contained a population of about 50,000. Mr. John M. Wimer was the postmaster appointed in 1845 and succeeded Mr. S. B. Churchill, with headquarters at 87 Chestnut Street.

He had engaged Mr. J. M. Kershaw, proprietor of the Western Card and Seal Engraving Establishment, of 31 North Second Street, the leading engravers in the city to engrave two stamps—a 5c. and a 10c. denomination.

These were engraved on an ordinary copper visiting card plate, the design of each denomination being repeated three times upon the plate. Modern duplicating methods were unknown to St. Louis engravers at that time, so that each of the six stamps were engraved separately and each has its individual characteristics.

The first installment of stamps printed from this plate consisted of 500 sheets and was on a greenish wove paper.

Very soon after the issue of these stamps the postmaster realized the need of a stamp of higher denomination.

The double rate at that time for any letter destined to a point over 300 miles from St. Louis was 20 cents.

From the evidence of the stamps before us to-day the plate was altered, the
two 5c. stamps in the upper left hand corner of the plate were altered to 20 cents stamps.

Before altering, the plate was probably laid flat upon a hard surface, face downwards, the back hammered at the point the alteration was desired until the surface was flush, after which the new numerals were engraved, and the surrounding points affected by the hammering were retouched.

Mr. Kershaw some twenty five years after denying having altered this plate to the 20 cents values, but it may have been done by some other engraver or by an assistant in his shop.

The work of the numerals 20 do not resemble the work on the other numerals. From this altered plate 500 sheets were also printed, some of them on the same greenish paper as the first lot, but mostly on a grey-blush paper similar in character but of a harder and thinner character, and one on which the ink did not set as well.

After this second installment of stamps that were probably issued early in 1846, the use of stamps probably became more popular and the postmaster found that he was short of the 5 cents value—the first printing had given him 1,500 5 cents stamps and the second only 500. As a result the plate was again manipulated and the 20 cents values re-altered to 5 cents stamps.

The supply of 20 cents stamps had probably proved poor stock and remained largely unsold.

The work on the plate in the third condition was clearly the work of the same engraver who originally made the stamps, although there is a marked difference in the formation in minor points.

This last printing probably consisted of 500 sheets and was on a very thin, transparent, almost wether'd, paper, that was otherwise very much of the same character and appearance to the paper common to the second printing.

As each printing of St. Louis stamps was practically on a different paper, very few of the second impressions, it is believed, having been on the first paper, the scarcity of all specimens may now be understood by those who are endeavoring to plate the stamps, and there is reason enough if there were no more than 500 printed of any variety, varieties of paper considered.

It is very probable that but very few of the 20 cents stamps were ever used, and that most of the 5 cents and 10 cents stamps of the last printing on the thin paper were on hand when their use was discontinued.

What became of these remainders and the plate is problematical.

If they were most likely destroyed at the time, if not they were possibly lost with the effects of the Winer family that were sunk in a Mississippi steamboat disaster during the war. If not lost at this time and if among the private papers of Mr. Winer, they would have been seized by the Government, as he was a "suspected Confederate" in 1863 and arrested, his private papers confiscated and himself imprisoned at Alton, Ill., from which place he escaped two weeks later.

The use of these stamps of the St. Louis postmaster was entirely optional, and they never became very popular with the exception of a few large firms.

The writer has examined a number of files of letters written from St. Louis in 1845, 1846 and 1847 without finding a single stamp thereon.

It is a remarkable fact that most of the stamps that have been discovered were attached to letters from two firms, or were letters from individuals employed, or members of the families of people that were connected in some way with these two business houses, Wm. Nisbet


2. Compared with the other values the numerals of the twenty cents are very different from the others, not only in being of a very different type but also in their execution. To repeat Mr. Kershaw's statement that he never engraved them is to express not my own opinion, and while he is positive that the plates never left his possession until the use of these stamps had long ceased, it is quite possible that his recollection is faulty in this particular also. The directory of the period shows that there was another plate engraver in St. Louis at the time. It would seem possible, shall I say probable, that Mr. Winer being responsible for the value of all stamps printed from this plate would naturally have taken it onto his own custody, and that the second printing was made by another. But even if the work was done in Mr. Kershaw's establishment it is not impossible that an assistant made the alteration of the plate.


4. The engraver thinks he printed about 500 sheets, at three different times, upon such paper as he happened to have at hand, and that as the plate deteriorated easily, he probably retouched it slightly each time in parts, before printing.

The stamps that were discovered in the famous Louisville find of last summer were on the correspondence of the banking firm above mentioned.

Mr. Deats has in his collection a 10c. stamp on the original cover from the Sanford collection, that is used in the illustration of this article. This is a personal letter from Mr. Wm. Nisbet, of the above banking firm, addressed to his mother, and is particularly interesting on account of the early date, that of mailed from St. Louis during the years that these stamps were in use.

These facts go to show that the stamps were used by some people quite extensively, while others ignored them altogether, preferring to adhere to the old custom of prepaying the letters in the old way at the Post-office. Of course, the use of these stamps being optional, and simply as a matter of convenience for those who had adopted the new idea, their actual use was very much more limited than would be supposed from the size of St. Louis at that time and the volume of its mail business.

November 20th, 1845 while the first announcement of the issue of the stamps was made November 5th. This stamp is, of course, on the first green paper, characteristic in every way of the first printing and of the early condition of the plate.

The writer has personally examined many letter files containing correspondence from St. Louis during the years of 1845-6-7, and has always been disappointed with regard to stamps. In fact I have never found a single specimen of the St. Louis stamps by individual research, while I have probably examined no less than a thousand letters

In another part of this article I will mention more particularly, the "find" of St. Louis stamps that was made in Louisville, Kentucky, during the past summer. This correspondence was most all addressed to Messrs. Tyler & Rutherford, from the the firm of Wm. Nisbet & Co. of St. Louis, an Exchange and Banking House. A number of these letters bore extraordinary rates of postage, some as high as 50 cents. Many of the letters were exceedingly brief, considering the large size of the covers. One of them may be given as follows:

Postmarked November 20th, 1845 From the collection of Mr. H. E. Deats, of Flemington, N.J.
"St. Louis, Jan. 29, 1847.

Messrs. Tyler & Rutherford,

"Gentlemen—Please to forward as soon as possible, the enclosed letter to A. Hamilton, N. O.

"Yours truly,

"Wm. Nisbet & Co.""

Other letters contained drafts and checks for collection, and some as many as three and four letters to be forwarded to parties in New Orleans and other important points in the South. Considering the geographical location of St. Louis, Louisville, and New Orleans, this now appears strange to us, and indeed without advancing any theory on the subject, I took an opportunity of interviewing a gentleman who was one of the active business men of St. Louis in the years 1845-67, Mr. Francis Lepere. Mr. Lepere belongs to one of the oldest families of this city, and was at that time engaged in the wholesale grocery business. In later years he became interested in philately, and today his son, Mr. Wm. H. Lepere, is one of the most enthusiastic and active philatelists in this city.

Mr. Francis Lepere states that the time the stamps were in use, was of course long before he had taken any interest in philately, in fact, his firm was not one of those who adopted their use, they preferring to adhere to the old way of paying postage at the post-office at the time the letters were deposited, and having same marked "Paid," and forwarded in the old way; so that with regard to the stamps themselves he could give me no new information regarding their early history. His account, however, of the commercial relations of St. Louis with other American cities at that time was most valuable and interesting to me.

St. Louis at that time was secondary commercially to Cincinnati, and Louisville was a very important commercial city, being on the highway between New York and New Orleans, practically the gateway to the Southwest. Much of the trade went through that city to and from New Orleans by way of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. A very fast line of steamers was then being run between Louisville and St. Louis: the more important lines of steamers between New Orleans and the North came up the Mississippi to the junction of the Ohio and then on to Louisville, so that it would be a very natural course for a merchant in St. Louis having business relations with New Orleans to send his remittances, collections and important matters of business through his Louisville correspondent, who would be in much closer and quicker relations with New Orleans than the St. Louis merchant by direct river communication.

This was in the days before the railroads had come into this Western country, and most all of the trade and business was conducted by the steamers on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, so that the character of this correspondence between St. Louis and Louisville becomes plain to us when explained by a citizen of those early days. It was particularly gratifying to me to find a gentleman who was so eminently fitted to inform me with regard to the early commercial relations of these cities, and one who is a philatelist.

Mr. Francis Lepere was a correspondent of Mr. Wm. P. Brown, the New York dealer, at the time of the first discovery of the stamps by philatelists in 1863, and Mr. Brown wrote to him at about that time for information, and he remembers of interviewing Mr. Kershaw, the engraver, and others, with regard to the stamps on behalf of Mr. Brown.

Although statements conflicting with the following facts have recently been published, the earliest philatelic mention of the St. Louis stamps was made in November, and again in December, 1863, in the Stamp Collectors' Magazine; the 10 cents stamp being briefly described in a list of U. S. local stamps by C. W. Viner, A. M., in his "Philatelic and Postal History of the United States," published in 1864, the only work on the subject which has been published to date.

The St. Louis Post-office has been recently described by Mr. A. S. Terry, in the Stamp Collectors' Magazine, Vol. IV., p. 127. The St. Louis post-office was opened as a local office on the 1st of December, 1863, and was continued until the 1st of February, 1864, when it was discontinued.

Philaletes, greeting the Philatelic Society of St. Louis, and all those interested in philately, the undersigned cordially begs to announce the publication of a new and improved issue of the "Philatelic Journal," which will be published every month at the price of $1.00 per annum, and will contain the most interesting and valuable information on all branches of philately.

The Society is now in a flourishing condition, and is growing rapidly in membership and influence. Its officers, members, and friends are most cordially invited to take part in the proceedings at the annual meeting of the society, to be held on the 1st of January, 1865, at the hotel of Mr. A. S. Terry, the president of the society.

St. Louis, Jan. 29, 1847.

Messrs. Tyler & Rutherford,

"Gentlemen—Please to forward as soon as possible, the enclosed letter to A. Hamilton, N. O.

"Yours truly,

"Wm. Nisbet & Co.""
St. Louis Stamps.

5c. Dies 4 and 5 (Re-engraved B and C) on thin paper, dated 1847. Above is an exceedingly rare envelope and would sell readily at over $5,000.

5c. Dies 5 and 6 (Re-engraved B, and Retouched A), an un-severed pair, on thin paper. Dated February 4th, 1847. Equally as rare and valuable as the above.
S. local stamps. The 5 cents stamp was not known in Europe, however, until June, 1864, when Mr. Fred. A. Philbrick secured the 5 cents from Mount Brown for 6 shillings. Mr. Philbrick had previously secured the 10 cents from the collection of Rev. F. J. Stainforth, who had acquired it from an American collection rich in early U. S. the stamp being priced to him at 5 shillings 6 pence. A second die of the 10 cents came to Mr. Philbrick's collection from Mr. de Sanley. As late as April, 1867, the 10 cents was the only value mentioned in a list of the postage stamps of the United States in the Stamp Collectors' Magazine. In March the following year the two values were illustrated in that periodical.

Mr. L. W. Durbin was a resident of St. Louis in 1868 and wrote an interesting account of the early history of the stamps for the American Journal of Philately. This contained an error in the

8. Above date is given in error June, 1869, in a letter published in the Stamp Collectors' Magazine, Nov. 1, 1869, p. 175. It is correctly given in a letter published in the same paper February 1, 1869, p. 29.


To the Editor:

Since through the columns of your valuable "Journal," I beg leave to advance a few arguments in defense of the two stamps, which, next to my Reunions (and a few others of the same class), I prize most for their rarity. The St. Louis P. O. stamps, viz., 5 and 10 cents were engraved and used during the summer of 1861. The engraver, I believe, did not attempt the exact date of these emissaries cannot be determined, as Mr. Hymer and his successor in office are dead, and the books of the engraver were destroyed by fire some years ago.

The engraver, J. W. Kershaw, recognized the stamps the most, but had not the eyes on them, and remarked: "I have not seen one before twenty years." He told me he had engraved them by order of Mr. Hymer for the use of the St. Louis Post-office. This the engraver did at the stamp window during Hymer's administration and who still holds the same position, remembered distinctly of seeing the stamps, and seeing them on letters sent from this office. It is now difficult to get much information in regard to them, but the above evidence is sufficient to establish the one and important fact that the stamps were sold to the public, and used by them for the purpose of preparing letters, and as such are justly entitled to a place in our albums, as many others whose official origin is not less obscure than the St. Louis stamps, but nevertheless are counted among the choice specimens of a good collector. Would any collector dare to refuse a wood-block Musstrum, because its value to the nation's history or its eminence has not emanated from the British Home Office, but only from the Colonial Postmaster? The large proportion of public spirited India, converted from a revenue to a postal label by order of the Local Postmaster during a temporary scarcity of the regular emmissaries, is accepted by all, and yet, I think, if the full history of St. Louis stamps could be collected, it would show that they were issued under the same circumstances, i.e., that the supply of the U. S. and 5 cent stamps had become exhausted, or was insufficient to meet the demands of the St. Louis Historical Society desiring to place among the mementos of the past history of St. Louis the plate of St. Louis stamps, made an effort a short time since to procure it, but without success. They, however, know that the stamps had once been in use at this Post-office, and engraver thereof bound to return the plate, so far without success. All trace of it is lost after it left his hands, and it must either have been destroyed by the Postmaster, or, when the building was burned, was rendered name of the postmaster that was only partially corrected in a later number. The character of these stamps had been assailed by certain papers, especially the French.

Copied by the Post-office Department, was torn down. There is then no possible chance for repetition, and might it not be from this cause that some collector in St. Louis has seen fit to throw doubts upon these stamps, because he could not procure a set to adorn his own album? I only know of perhaps a dozen sets in existence. I have examined six of each denomination and could discover no difference between any of the 5 cents, but found two varieties of the 10 cents. They are printed from a copper plate on thin, brown paper, and cancelled with pen strokes. All of them were taken from letters that had passed through the St. Louis Post-office.

More, Mons. Moers, in the last edition of his beautiful album, has acknowledged them, and under the heading of United States inserted an engraving of each value. He is therefore unnecessary, as anyone can (if they have not the genuine) impress the locutions in the album work. I have become very much interested in these two "bits of paper," and if I can gain any more authentic information in regard to them, will give it to your readers, but I think enough evidence has been produced to show that they have without doubt performed the duty of a postage stamp. 10 And though they may not have been authorized by special act of Congress, we are in duty bound (as postage stamp collectors) to give them a place in our collections.

Yours very respectfully,

L. W. Durbin.

"We differ from our correspondent in regard to the occasion of their use, as they were certainly used one year before any general issue for the United States ever appeared, and consider it more likely that the postmasters of the large cities of New York and St. Louis finding it nearly impossible to transmit their messages by post office at the time, they therefore procured a set of these stamps, caused them to be prepared for use in their cities, and they were recognized by all other postmasters as a receipt for payment.

"The difference in the two stamps consists in the bluish surroundings of the design. It is more noticeable under the name St. Louis, there being six dashes in one and only three in the variety."


To the Editor:

DEAR SIR:—Please correct in your next the name of the P. M. mentioned in my article on the St. Louis stamps. His name was Hymer, not Hymer. Yours truly,

L. W. D.

Editor's Note.—The correct name was "Hymer."

The first mention of the St. Louis stamps in Le Timbre-philatélie was in January, 1868, and is given below in French and English. This paper published in April, 1868 an article by "Alinier," seeking to discredit the stamps principally upon the strength of a letter from Judge Holmes, called "Judge H.," which shows that half the stamps were really known even in St. Louis, as Judge Holmes is an influential citizen and a member of the Missouri Historical Society.


SAINT LOUIS. L'excédent abolished, que nous devons à M. Berger-Leverault a pris en lumière deux timbres trés rares et que, pour le moins, nous avons empruntés de mesures de servir, sans les yeux de nos lecteurs.

Ces deux timbres ont été donnés par l'Etat de Saint Louis officiellement et doivent être considérés comme des plus authentiques. Inutile de dire qu'ils sont de la plus grand rarité et que ces deux exemplaires ne sont plus aujourd'hui possédés. Les originaux qui nous ont servi appartenaient à M. Ph. Ils sont imprégnés de noir sur couleur 5 cents, vert gras.


ST. LOUIS STAMPS. 15

St. Louis. The excellent catalogue which we owe to M. Berger-Leverault has brought to light two stamps very little known, and which for that reason we illustrate for our readers.

These two stamps were issued by the State (sic) of St. Louis officially, and are regarded as quite authentic.

It is unnecessary to say that they are of the greatest rarity, and that very few amateurs will succeed in possessing them. The originals we have used for illustrations belong to Mr. Ph. They are painted in black on color. Five cents, greyish-green; 10 cents, white.
Mr. Durbin discovered a second type of the 10c stamp and Mr. E. L. Pemberton a second type of the 5c. 1

Up to 1869 these stamps were all very scarce; in that year a lot turned up in New York consisting of one hundred 10 cents, fifty 5 cents and three 20 cents stamps. This lot was purchased by Mr. J. W. Scott, and the result of his study of the rarities was published in the *American Journal of Philately.* 2 He there

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1 From *The Philatelist,* September 1, 1869.
2 *The Philatelist,* No. 1, p. 50.
described the three varieties of each, 5 cents and 10 cents, and correctly explained the existence of the two types of the 20 cents stamps as having been altered from two types of the 5 cents. The discovery of this lot of 6 cents and 10 cents as well as the 20 cents value was treated by Mons. Moens in his usual conservative style. 14

Later that able philatelist, Mr. E. L. Pemberton, having specimens of all known varieties before him, prepared an elaborate article upon the subject that was published in the Stamp Collectors’ Magazine. 15 His work was indeed a great credit to him as a philatelist.

Mr. Pemberton had every variety before him except the re-altered 5 cents die C, and in light of later study it is

14 Le Timbre Poste, February, 1870, Vol. XII, p. 17.

15 St. Louis Stamps. As an introduction to this paper, we, however, would not have pronounced it genuine necessarily, but the same party having two more specimens, we compared them carefully, and found that two of the specimens, which had apparently been taken from the other plate, had been altered from the original plate (DIE C). On the other the figure 6 is slightly different and is altered from (DIE B). From slight marks found on them, we are of opinion that the original dies of the 5-cent stamp was altered to 6, or at least two of them.


FIVE CENTS.

Eleven stamps over St. Louis, ten over LOUIS, one of which cuts them from the face. Page Pemberton, in his last, lettering thin and very uneven. Scroll at base has a double outline to the right ends, and, in addition, these ends touch the frame.

—Twelve stamps over ST. LOUIS, over ten over LOUIS, Eagle slightly shaded. Lettering in roll, P of SUPREMA very small, N very low down, E after it seems very unfurnished; second P of POPULI has a line down it and might be anything. scroll not as in m.

—Six stamps over ST. LOUIS, right over LOUIS, the top and bottom ones being long strokes. Eagle leans to the right. Lettering thin and queer, P of STAND, and first P of DIVIDE very rough, V of dito is a Y, LL of FALL double lines.

The above points do not touch upon the figures, because the numeral of value is the greatest differing point between the 5c. as first engraved, and the same stamp, after alteration, and then re-engraving as 5c. To avoid comparison, and identification of varieties from this paper, I have grouped the great points of difference, which seem to me to be the first 5c. and the intermediate 5c., as thus:

a. The numeral. There are always large open marks of shading in top and back of the 5 sometimes in the ball; these I call marks, the other shadings I call dots in distinction.

b. The strokes under ST. LOUIS.

c. The lines on frame above numeral.

d. The head of the bear to the right side of the stamp.

e. The lines of frame above numeral.

These will be found to bear the points which differ.

DIE I.

First state of die, 5c.

a. Mark thus: a triangle in top, a diamond in back, with four dots above, and one below it, bull blank.
b. Four strokes, one long, the other shorter, with one between them.
c. The bear’s ears pointed and shaded, the paw on garter is also shaded. Pressure paper turned and trimmed, leaving a depression above snout. Snout rounded at end, and it the whole head is heavily shaded.

d. Two short, two long, shorter, the two long points above, one beyond others.
e. Four strokes, but bolder and closer than above, the vertical stroke over 5c. or 10c. shaded.

f. The strokes deeper and more regular, the third stroke (downward) on a level with the bear’s ear. 1c. of Louis has been re-engraved.
a wonder that his theory did not have greater weight with philatelists.

The manner in which the stamps were handled and the way their sponsor was regarded may have had something to do with the reception of the 20 cents.

d. Ears above, slanting, and the left one unshaded. Small square, 8, and the whole head, less shaded. Bear’s paw on gather is erased.

Four lower lines of frame half erased between SAINT and LOUIS.

Third state of die, 50.

1. Mark thus: In top a diamond, in back a long diamond with four dots above and four below, in half a black mark. Nothing around figure much coarser than in first, and by the back is one vertical curved line, the outline of the right side of a gather, which was not clearly erased.

2. Lines and marks four, graduating, the second sinuous, and touches the bear’s ear.

3. There, long, two short, the last level with bear’s ear. Lot of LOUIS stri is longer and more slanting than in others.

4. Head, ears, etc., as last, the paw on the gather is only outlined.

5. Edges a little, showing where re-engraved.

**Die I**

First state, 2.

Not having the third state, I can only describe the first as it stands with reference to the second state, i.e., the present.

1. Marks are these: A diamond in top, an upright diamond in back with eleven dots below, thus above are held by the postmark in this, the only specimen I have seen. It is a very fine early copy, with the curious feather-like strokes over SAINT and LOUIS very clear under a magnifier—sharp enough. I am convinced that the figure 8 on this was originally engraved, whether by accident or design I cannot say, but the straight or down-stroke of the 8 shows a thin line to its right, and at top in the 8, there are three minute dots in a curve, to the right of the diamond mark, whilst in the left are two, equally small, one over the other.

2. Four—none long, three short.

3. Four—one long, two short, and one speck on a level between the ear and the eye of the bear on that side.

Second state of die, 22.

1. One long and one short.

2. Two—one short. Ball gone, third quite gone, but the speck is there.

3. Inner line gone from I to L, and a smaller piece of the outer frame.

Second state of die, 2.

I have never found it double, or any other.

**Die II**

Of the five I have seen, or in number are alike, save that some have a clear mark in half of figure, whilst others have the ball blank. The last are the earliest, those with marks having the ball blank when the two above were engraved in their last states. I have never found any other differences, or anything pointing to the existence of a 20c. from this die.

First state of die, 2.

1. Marks are these: A long diamond in top, a meshappen one in back with four dots, and nine below it, half with a slight speck. Later this was engraved deeply, becoming a transverse pear-shaped mark.

2. Four—none long, two short and one speck.

3. Four—one long and three shorter, of which the middle one is smallest.

The finishes the and for specimen at my disposal.

The existence of the third state, die II on one of the well-known old copies, is an argument which clinches the correctness of the 20c., and consequently of the later found specimens of dies I, II and III, on thick paper, of the first state.

**Ten Cents**

Of this value I have identified three dies. As they have never been in my possession, the miserable difference, as given below, will suffice to distinguish one die from the other.

**Die I**—Three curved lines at foot, 15, 15 at 1, 15 one stroke.

**Die II**—Three curved lines with a smaller stroke over each, at foot 15, 15, 15 at 1, four strokes.

**Die III**—Three curved lines, with a smaller stroke over each, and with dots added between the two strokes at each end, and at foot 15, 15, 15 at 1, five (two last are specks) at 15, five (the last a speck).

An effort to realize upon some of these stamps at auction was referred to in one of the British magazines in 1872.

From this time to 1894 the 20 cents stamp was regarded as a "fake" by such philatelists as Moens, Evans and Tiffany. A solitary specimen had remained in the hands of Mr. Scott the original purchaser of the lot of 1869. In the last year this stamp was sold to a prominent American collector, who had adopted the Pemberton theory. The stamp was loaned by the new owner to Mr. Tiffany for examination and study. In the fall of 1894 the writer of this article picked up from a dealer in New York City a specimen of the re-altered 5 cents, Die C, the very specimen missing to complete the chain in the Pemberton theory.

This stamp had been sold by the dealer as a regular Die C, but was returned to him by the purchaser who had regarded the stamp with suspicion upon the discovery of the points of difference existing in and about the number.

This stamp was referred to Mr. Tiffany about the time of the receipt of the above mentioned 20 cents stamp, and several prominent collectors loaned their specimens of St. Louis stamps until twenty-six specimens were accumulated. This was the first time Mr. Tiffany had had an opportunity of examining enough specimens of 5 and 10c. to write the paper which forms the basis of this article.

In conclusion, the earliest specimen of 5 and 10c. were printed on an opposite page of a delicate greenish-grey tint, later of a dull grey-blue, getting thinner; and finally, on a very thin, dull grey paper, more or less transparent. Some copies are shown upon white, but these are copies from which the color has been discharged by chemicals. The three 20c. are in the second-mentioned paper.


11. The March 10th, 1872, No. 3, Sotheby & Co., at 13, Wellington St., Strand, held "an auction sale in London," which "could only have paid anyone, who, like Mr. Scott, possessed so much which was undesiredly required by a few people, or so many specimens of which no one knew anything but himself, and for the goodness of which he alone was unwealble." * * * Had the proprietor refrained from bidding for his own property (which it struck us was not a right procedure), many things would have realized more.

* * *

This led to a feeling of disgust very early in the sale, and few ventured to bid for any lot when it was seen that the owner was in opposition to them, for the inevitable consequence appeared, that possession could only be obtained by payment considerably in excess of value.

* * *

The paper comes to a point, it is true, it has several pieces in the same manner. The catalogue appeared to us rather too plentifully sprinkled with errors. We observed some pages absolutely bordering with "very scarce," "almost unique," and so on, and often imagined that the auctioneers reading of the observation frequently created downright laughter.

Lot 1—All three varieties St. Louis, 50c., bought in for 3s. 6d.

Lot 2—All three varieties St. Louis, 10c., bought in for 3s.

Lot 17—Lot 20—St. Louis, unique, bought in for 3s. 6d.

Lot 18—20c. St. Louis, not unique, bought in for 3s. 6d.
specimens to prove Mr. Pemberton's theory. The result was a thorough conversion\(^1\) and the able work, "A St. Louis Symposium," was the result.

So much for the published philatelic history of these interesting stamps.

After the great purchase made by Mr. Scott in 1869 referred to above, he mentions\(^2\) a second find of about twenty made in Washington, and a third lot of about twenty-five discovered in a rag-shop in New York in 1889. The letter addressed to Stuart & Co., illustration on page 14, being one of this lot.

The above with the few straggling stamps discovered from time to time included all the St. Louis stamps known until the last famous "find" in Louisville, Ky., consisting of one hundred and thirty-seven specimens—seventy-five 5 cents, forty-six 10 cents, and sixteen 20 cents stamps.

The story of this "find" is published in another part of this number.

These stamps have nearly all been in my possession for study, and about thirty additional specimens from other collections—a total of one hundred and sixty specimens, each of which has been carefully examined for the purposes of his article.

I have also had the privilege of study and consultation with such able and earnest philatelists as Mr. Fred W. Ayer, Mr. Hiram E. Deats and Mr. John K. Tiffany. The magnificent library of the latter gentleman has been at my disposition. By the aid of his

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\(^1\) A St. Louis Symposium. By John K. Tiffany, 1894.

"My own opinions and information about these stamps, of which I have examined many separately heretofore, as well as my dissection to induce in theoretical reasoning, as often substituted when facts cannot be ascertained, have so often appeared in print, that it is hardly necessary to say that I undertook the investigation with some pretty deeply-rooted ideas about the authenticity of some of these varieties, have reached my present conclusions and, so far as I can tell, have been generally supported by those who have adopted the same view, after the most thorough and extended examination, and the trial of every test that my long experience, both as a stamp collector and a student of all manner of counterfeits and forgeries, could suggest as applicable under the circumstances.

\(^2\) The Metropolitan Philatelist, Vol. VI., No. 9, September, 1895.

"The second considerable find of these stamps consisted of about twenty specimens which were discovered in the banking house of Messrs. Riggs, of Washington, in this lot was a pair of 5 cents which have escaped nearly twenty-five years, when another pair was discovered in New Orleans, we believe. A third lot, consisting we believe, of about twenty specimens, was purchased by Mr. Calhoun, about 1869.
From specimens in the last "find" of St. Louis stamps the position of the various dies upon the plate was definitely established by vertical unsevered strips of three 5 cents and three 10 cents. Also the fact that only two 5 cents dies were altered to 20 cents by a vertical unsevered strip containing the two 20 cents dies and a 5 cents unaltered at the bottom of the strip.

The positions were further established by a connecting link in the shape of an unsevered horizontal pair consisting of a 20 cents and 10 cents from the top of the sheet.

All three plates are illustrated on page 9.

Plate I. represents the original condition of the plate, three 5 cents and three 10 cents, each type different.

This was printed upon a greenish wove paper.

Plate II. represents the second condition of the plate with the two upper 5 cents stamps changed to 20 cents, the other 5 cents and the three 10 cents remaining unchanged.

This plate was printed on two kinds of paper. Evidently the first prints were upon the same paper as was used in printing Plate I, but as only a single copy of each die of the 20 cents stamps are known, we must conclude that there was very little of this first paper used in printing Plate II.

The paper characteristic of this second printing, and on which all of the 20 cents stamps exist, except the two specimens noted above, is a blue-grey wove of a thinner and tougher texture than that of the first printing. Owing to the wear of the soft copper, the 5 cents stamp that was not altered to a 20 cents became very much worn, and was finally retouched, making a distinct variety.

Plate III. represents the third and last condition of the plate with the two 20 cents stamps re-altered to 5 cents, and with the third 5 cents stamp that was not altered, again retouched. The 10 cents, except from slight retouching, remain practically the same.

The plate in this condition was printed on very thin, hard paper, almost pellure, the color is very much the same as the last paper described.

Stamps on this paper are much the rarest of the three, with the exception of 20 cents stamps printed on first paper noted above under Plate II.

Hereafter the varieties of St. Louis stamps will be known by new numbers, for the purpose of identification; enlarged illustrations of each type have been made, and the old letter of the die is given with the new number.

The two first papers upon which these stamps were printed are quite distinct in color when in their normal condition. They are both, however, more or less subject to change, according to the atmospheric or other conditions to which they may have been subjected.

Heat, light, dampness and gases all have an effect on this paper. Mucilage of different kinds have various effects, while paste produces an altogether different effect.

Thus we have a great variety of shades from a multitude of possible natural causes. The microscopic test that is the most reliable in distinguishing these two
St. Louis Stamps.

Plate 1

5 CENTS, DIE 2 GOLD IN BK.
(Pemberton's I.)

10 CENTS, DIE 2 GOLD IN BK.
(Pemberton's II.)

5 CENTS, DIE 2 OLD IN BK.
(Pemberton's I.)

10 CENTS, DIE 2 OLD IN BK.
(Pemberton's II.)
PLATE II.
This plate only differs from Plate I. in the introduction of the two 20 cents and the retouching of the 5 cents stamp.

PLATE III.
This is a poor illustration, having been enlarged from a photograph. This is the rarest of St. Louis stamps, only two copies known.

- The down stroke of the 5 is very much thinner, the ball is smaller, the inner line of the circle touches the diamond ornament.
- The ball of 5 cents contains a more pronounced dot than the common one.
papers, when there is any reason for doubt, exists in the blue coloring matter in the second paper. There was an indigo used that was wholly absent in the first paper.

Tiny indigo spots may be found deposited upon the surface of the paper that become quite plain under the microscope, and are always to be found, no matter what change of shade has taken place in the general appearance of the stamps.

The following comparative illustrations may be interesting:

Dies 1, showing the same die in its three conditions. The upper left hand corner always serves for my cue to this die.

The ornament consists of a greater number of lines than the other two.

Dies 2, showing the same die in its three conditions.

Dies 3, showing the retouching that took place during the three printings.

This is the commonest die and is easily recognized by the long dash at top.

THE TEN CENTS DIES.

The 10 cents dies are very easily identified by the strokes below the words "Post-Office."

Die 1. A series of single strokes.

Die 2. A series of double strokes.
POST OFFICE

Die 3. A series of double strokes with dots between.

There are many other ways of distinguishing the dies as they differ in almost every respect. I have simply given the cues that I always use, and think that they are the easiest to remember.

Commercial. The comparative value of the various St. Louis stamps will be at once suggested in a commercial consideration of them.

No stamps in the world have commanded the price that certain of the stamps of St. Louis have realized, and the demand is far in excess of the supply.

Even the commonest varieties are much rarer than I had been led to believe, until an actual investigation and endeavor to purchase proved same to be true.

I shall quote a few figures in this article, but will indulge in some logical reasoning and state a few facts:

1. Five cents, Die 3, and 10 cents, Dies 1, 2 and 3 must be of equal scarcity, whether on first or second paper, as exactly the same number of each were printed, and they were probably all used.

II. Five cents Dies 1 and 2 which come only on the first paper are much scarcer than the last mentioned varieties, because the dies of these two stamps were altered to 20 cents before the first paper was exhausted. At the time Mr. Tiffany wrote "A St. Louis Symposium" he could not find a single Die B for comparison, and only knew of one copy in the country at that time.

III. Many more of the 20 cents stamps must have been printed than were ever used, and the accumulation of these stamps remaining in the hands of the Postmaster evidently caused the plate to be re-altered again to 5 cents. As the second paper was only used in the printing of plate II, there must have been the same number of 20 cents printed on that paper as there were of the other dies. There are only two 20 cents, one of each type known, on first paper.

IV. The stamps on third paper, plate 111., are all of about equal rarity, most of these were likely on hand when the use of St. Louis stamps were discontinued, and comparatively few were ever used.

The plating and study of these stamps has greatly reduced the number of varieties, and even the commonest are extremely rare.

The 5 cents Die 3 in point of numbers is the commonest known, it is commoner than either of the 10 cents dies.

It is priced at $250.00 used, the 10 cents are each worth as much, if not more.

These values apply to the first paper only, which is much commoner than the second, owing to the second printing having been on both first and second papers.

The following is a list of the known varieties of St. Louis stamps, showing the five degrees of rarity.

1845-46—On green paper—
5c., Die 1, RRR.
5c., " 2, RRR.
5c., " 3, R.
10c., " 1, R.
10c., " 2, R.
10c., " 3, K.
20c., " 1, RRRR.
20c., " 2, RRR.

1846—On grey-blue paper—
5c., Die 3, RR.
5c., " 3, worn plate variety, RRRR.
10c., " 1, RR.
10c., " 2, RR.
10c., " 3, KK.
20c., " 1, RRRR.
20c., " 2, RRR.

1847—On bluish pelure paper—
5c., Die 1, re-altered, RRRR.
5c., " 2, RRRR.
5c., " 3, RRRR.
10c., " 1, RRRR.
10c., " 2, RRRR.
10c., " 3, RRRR.

The values of pairs and strips are, of course, greatly in advance of the single specimens of which they are composed.

Condition also enters into the value of these stamps. They may be classified

St. Louis Stamps.

as follows, commencing at the commonest:
I. Penmarked.
II. Penmarked and postmarked.
III. Postmarked.
IV. Uncanceled.
All unused copies that I have seen have been taken from letters having missed the cancellation.
Plate I. reconstructed, has sold from $2,500 up to $4,000, according to condition.
Plate II. reconstructed, has sold from $7,500 up to $10,000.
Plate III. reconstructed, is complete in only one collection, and is valued very highly.
The fact that they cannot have St. Louis complete will not likely deter collectors who can afford the luxuries of philately from possessing such specimens as they can obtain of these most interesting stamps.