

Washington & Franklin 1908 Imperforate Coil Issues

Purpose of This Exhibit is to show the development of the 1908 Third Bureau imperforate coil issues. It includes the imperforate coil stamps, production examples, and uses to domestic and foreign destinations.

Organization of Exhibit: The exhibit shows the imperforate coil issues produced by the Third Bureau and includes production material and postal uses to foreign and domestic destinations.

Importance: The 1908 imperforate Bureau coils were a part of an important experiment done by the Bureau to see if the use of coils were viable option to businesses as well as offering an option to the general public to purchase them from vending machines when the post offices were closed or not available. The United States was one of several countries that experimented with and developed coils. The United States was the only country that produced imperforate coils. Overall, the Bureau produced 15 different flat plate imperforate coils. There were seven issues in the 1908 series. The perforated coils were more popular with businesses and the Bureau eventually phased out the imperforate coils after 1914.

What is Shown: The exhibit is composed of 6 of 7 issues from the 1908 imperforate coil series. The only item missing is the 3c 345H imperforate coil, which there is one known certified pair off cover. The remaining issues are all present on and off cover.

Challenge Factor: One very important factor to realize is coils were not readily available at the post office like sheet stamps. This was the very first issue introduced by the Bureau and new to businesses and collectors. The business or individual had to fill out a form and place an order with the local postmaster. They were also charged a nominal fee to make the coil. With the exception of the 3c Scott 345H mint pair, the remaining issues are easy to acquire in mint format. The real challenge are the scarce production varieties and uses on cover. The 1c foreign entry on the 2c vertical imperforate coil is a difficult item with 9 documented examples. There are only 2 known documented examples in used condition. Solo uses of the one and two cent vertical imperforate coils are fairly common on cover. Large multiples or frankings are very scarce. The true challenge are the 4c and 5c vertical issues and the 1c and 2c horizontal issues on cover. There are 6 documented uses of the 4c Scott 346V on cover, 4 of those are solo uses from the same company. *The exhibit has one registered use, and one solo use which is the Earliest Documented Use.* There are 8 documented uses of the 5c Scott 347V on cover, with just two of them being solo uses. *The exhibit has one registered use with 3 machine affixed singles paying the registered UPU rate to Germany and one solo use to Russia.* The 2c Scott 344H is scarcer with only 5 documented uses on cover. *The exhibit has one solo use and a registered use with a strip of 5 that is the Earliest Documented Use for all imperforate coils.* The most difficult imperforate coil on cover is the 1c Scott 343H, there are two documented uses. *The exhibit has both examples, a solo use on post card and a pair on a letter. These four specific flat plate imperforate coils are the most difficult of all coils to acquire on cover.*

Original Research: There are numerous examples of personal study and research done on this exhibit by the exhibitor over the past 20 years. A recent article was published in the May 2024 issue of The United States Specialist on a new production variety named the, "Guide Pin Marking", that only occurs on hand assembled paste-ups of perforated and imperforate Bureau coils. Other research on production varieties such as plate numbers, plate cracks, reverse paste-ups, and earliest documented uses have been researched and compiled by the exhibitor for current up to date information in the exhibit.

Exhibit Summary: This exhibit contains some of the more difficult Washington and Franklin coil material on and off cover. In fact, a lot of the imperforate coils on cover are as hard or harder to acquire than it's perforated counterparts. Six of the seven issues are known on cover. Out of the six issues known on cover, the exhibit has 4 of the current Earliest Documented Uses. Scott 343V, 343H, 344H, and 346V. The solo use of the 4c Scott 346V is one of four documented solo uses. The solo use of the 5c Scott 347V is one of two documented solo uses. The exhibit also has 3 of the Largest Known Multiples or Frankings of imperforate coils on cover. The population of genuine certified imperforate coils on cover is very low with 4 of the 6 issues, which is why they are so difficult to acquire. The production material can be difficult as well. The 1c foreign entry on the 2c vertical coil is uncommon, with 9 documented examples. The used example is 1 of 2 documented examples. There is a mint 344H paste-up strip of 10, with a rosette crack. It is known in the French book on sheet stamps, but not reported on imperforate coils. The reverse paste-up of the 2c Scott 344H with plate number 5188 is the discovery copy noted in Durlands. As of now, there have not been any other reverse paste-ups found on imperforate coils.

Key Items are listed in the order as they appear in the exhibit.

- 1) A 1c Scott 343V pair on cover, Earliest Documented Use.
- 2) The 2c Scott 344V, strip of 11 with the 1c Foreign Entry, and a used strip of 3 with the 1c Foreign Entry
- 3) A 2c Scott 344H paste-up strip of 10 with a Rosette Plate Crack, discovery copy, noted in the French book of plate varieties as a sheet stamp, but not found on an imperforate coil.
- 4) A reverse paste-up strip of six, 2c Scott 344H, with plate number 5188, discovery copy, special note in Durlands plate number catalog as reverse paste-up.
- 5) A 1c Scott 343H solo use on post card, Earliest Documented Use, one of two documented uses.
- 6) A 2c Scott 344H strip of five on cover, Earliest Documented Use for all imperforate coils.
- 7) A 4c Scott 346V, one of four solo uses, Earliest Documented Use.
- 8) A 5c Scott 347V, one of two solo uses, to Russia.
- 9) Three machine affixed singles of the 5c Scott 347V on a registered cover to Germany.
- 10) Registered cover with a guide line strip of 4 and a paste-up pair of the 2c Scott 384H from the "A" plate printing. One of six documented uses, largest known franking.

Washington & Franklin Coils

1908 Imperforate Issues

The **Purpose of This Exhibit** is to show the development of the 1908 Third Bureau imperforate coil issues. It includes the imperforate coil stamps, production examples, and uses to domestic and foreign destinations.

Exhibit Plan

I. Production

- A. Paper
- B. Plates
- C. Plate Markings
- D. Coil Construction

II. Uses

A. Vertical & Horizontal Format

- 1. One Cent Vertical
- 2. One Cent Horizontal
- 3. Two Cent Vertical
- 4. Two Cent Horizontal

B. Vertical Format

- 1. Four Cent
- 2. Five Cent

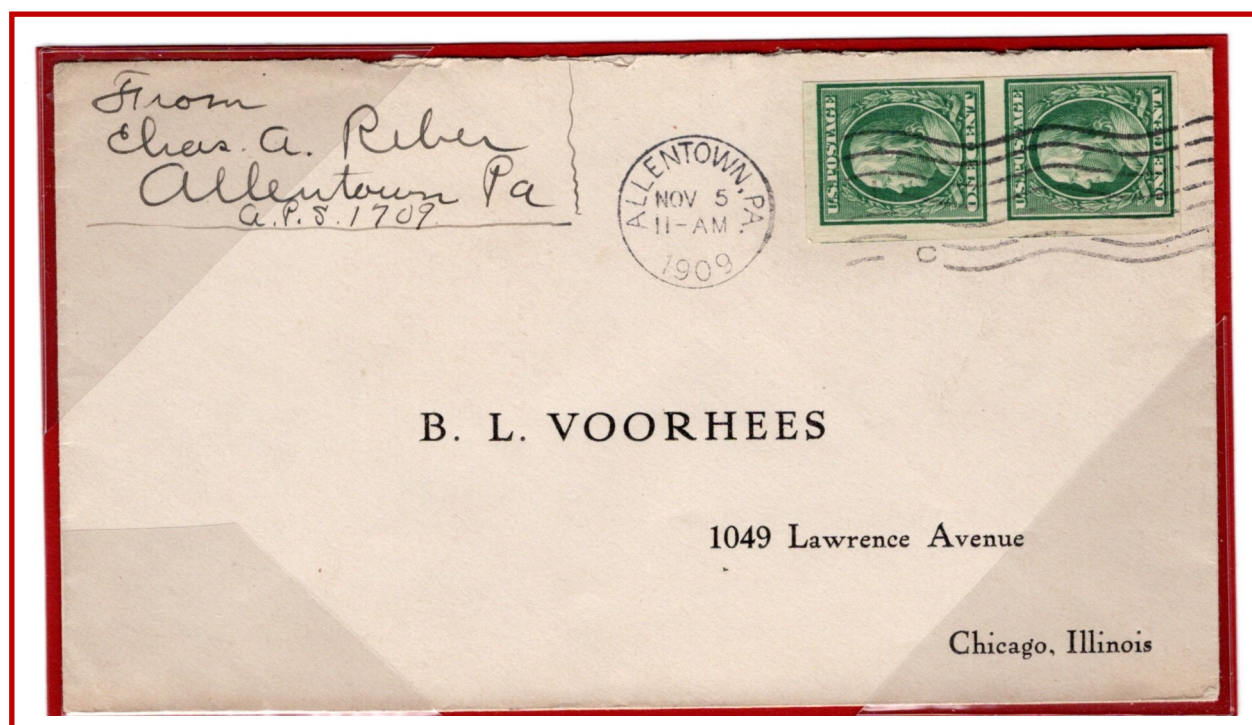
III. Epilogue: Transition to 1910 Issue

- A. Key Production Changes
- B. Transition From Star Plate to A Plate

Key Items: Major rarities are matted and outlined in **Red**.

Rarity statements are in *Red Italics*

Largest known frankings or multiples are in **Bold Red** block letters



Earliest Documented Use

First class, 2 cents per ounce.

PSE 1420584