

Viewing Collections:

The Richard Drews Prevention Essays

by John F. Dunn

Last December 12 Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries sold the Richard Drews Collection. Within that auction was an exhibition level study of essays that were developed in an attempt to prevent the illegal re-use of stamps.

One of the early lots in this section was this creation from an unknown author, a 2¢ Dull Red Violet, "U.S. Postage" Re-Use Prevention Essay (Sc. 79-E1), unfolded, with a small internal tear.

Per the auctioneers, "...these designs...share characteristics with essays produced by George Bowsby.... The design of the stamp is such that it was intended to be affixed to a cover folded. The postmaster would then remove part of the stamp, exposing punched out or different colored numerals underneath. The background of the design is also scored so that any attempt to remove a cancel or the stamp from the cover would result in its breaking apart. This is a particularly choice example as it shows the complete unfolded design and retains the 'U.S. Postage' tablet at both top and bottom." With an SCV of \$5,000, it drew a top hammer price of \$2,600. [All prices reported here do not include the 18% Buyer's Premium that is added on to these hammer prices. Statements in quotes are those of the auctioneers, while mine are in brackets. JFD.]



Next we view a 2¢ Black Jack (Sc. 73), with two re-use prevention features added, including two rows of three "S" slits and a bold "U S 2" overprint in metallic gold. "This is the only example in private hands...The slits and the fugitive ink overprint were designed to make the stamp impossible to lift or soak from a cover for re-use. Scott lists these as 'author unknown' but they share similarities with essay material associated with George Bowsby."



Sc. 79-E3, with an SCV of \$7,500, it realized \$6,250.

Here we see two matching essays, author unknown (Sc. 79-E5), 3¢ Blue & Black on Green, demonstrating and stating the "before and after" of their re-use prevention design, both with blue "POSTAGE" and overprinted "Void if Detached 3 US 3 Three Cents, Void if detached". The first is full-size and affixed to piece with violet manuscript "Stamp Before Cancellation" at top, the essay has a slit across the upper middle for removal of the



top section. The second has the upper portion above the slit removed and is affixed to piece with violet manuscript "Stamp After Cancellation" at top, the pair believed to be unique.

"The Bowsby patent for stamp reuse prevention (no. 51,782) called for only a portion of a stamp to be gummed. After being affixed to an envelope the ungummed portion was to be removed, thus preventing reuse of either piece once separated...Both with pencil notations on reverse from larger piece, likely patent submission papers explaining how the design was to be used.... Scott Retail for these is well out of date (and based on the second example's realization in our 1999 Finkelburg sale). Despite this admonition, with that SCV of \$6,000, the lot went for \$2,800.

Next we view one of eight examples in a lot of 1¢ Bowsby Patent Coupons Plate Essays (Sc. 63-E13c/63-E13h), "covering several of the listed varieties, mix of original gum and no gum, including imperforate in Red on pelure and white papers (63-E13c, d, white paper shown) perforated all around and between in Red and Blue (63-E13f), perforated all around and imperforate between in Red and Blue (63-E13g), perforated all around and rouletted between in Red and Blue (63-E13h), Fine-Very Fine. With a total SCV of \$1,850, the lot fetched \$1,700.



This next pair is from a lot with 14 stamps presenting 1¢ 1861 Issue, MacDonough, Lowenberg and Wyckoff Patents, in Trial Color Plate Proofs on Wove (Sc. 63TC5), showing all three of the patents,



MacDonough using glycerin based ink (shown), Lowenberg and Wyckoff using different types of coated paper, a few show a narrow wipe with water to demonstrate the fugitive nature of the printing. Estimated at \$500-750, the lot went for \$950.

Another example from a larger lot is this 3¢ Lowenberg Decalcomania from a lot of Plate Essays (Sc. 79-E8 to 79-E9), "33 essays including multiples, a range of colors and papers, corner margin examples, others showing chemically treated paper turning to blue when moistened, one pair on the scarce linen cloth (shown), few typical faults for these, overall Very Fine."

Estimated at \$500-750, the lot sold for \$850.

On page 29 we view a pair of stamps with the 5¢ 1861-66 issue on the 10¢ 1861-



66 Issue, demonstrating the Lowenberg Decalcomania Re-Use Prevention, a Plate Proof on Goldbeaters Skin (Sc. 79-E67P5 to 79-E68P5), "Vertical pair showing both 5¢ and 10¢ designs, difficult to say which was printed first, both designs are clear but the 5¢ is a bit stronger, usual creasing and flaking for this very fragile paper, Very Fine and extremely rare, only a few of these hybrid design essays are known, we have not offered another in one of our auctions."

Estimated at \$750-1,000, this unusual piece went for \$450.

Below we see two different Sturgeon Patent Essays with Crossed "Cancelled" Hand-



stamps, Crossed "Internal" and "Revenue" Handstamps (Sc. 79-E10b), the 10¢ Dark Carmine with Crossed "Cancelled" handstamps, the 10¢ Green with



Crossed "Internal" and "Revenue" handstamps, "first in Red affixed to piece, small tear, second in Green with overprints reading down, light crease, Very Fine appearance and scarce, the second is unlisted in Scott."

Estimated at \$300-400, the lot fetched \$475.

Next up is a 3¢ Rose Lake Imperforate on Stamp Paper



(Sc. 65P5 variety) bottom imprint and plate no. 52 block of 12, original gum, "barely hinged if at all, brilliant color, large margins, light diagonal crease at top left, small inclusion between horizontal rows at right slightly indents the paper... This is a sensitive ink printing of the 3¢ Washington design. It is extremely rare in plate block form."

Estimated at \$2,000-3,000, it realized \$3,750.

The next lot is a 3¢ Brown Rose Imperforate on Experimental Ribbed Paper (Sc. 65c var) with large margins all around and clear horizontal finely ribbed paper lines.

Estimated at \$400-500, it sold for \$250.

At the top of the next column we view one piece from a lot containing four 3¢ Black Trial Color Plate Proofs,



"including two examples of the scarce Charles F. Steel Essay from patent no. 86952 of Feb. 16, 1869, consisting of white tissue paper backed with white wove paper, first is perforated, original gum, circle of wedges cancel, other (shown) is pink tissue paper on white wove, large margins, both Very Fine and rare, the other two proofs are imperforate in Black, including on thick bluish chemical paper and white wove, both with the same or similar cancel to the first item... the bluish chemical paper with some moisture at bottom on back that transforms it to white...a fascinating group and among the rarest of the 65TC's.

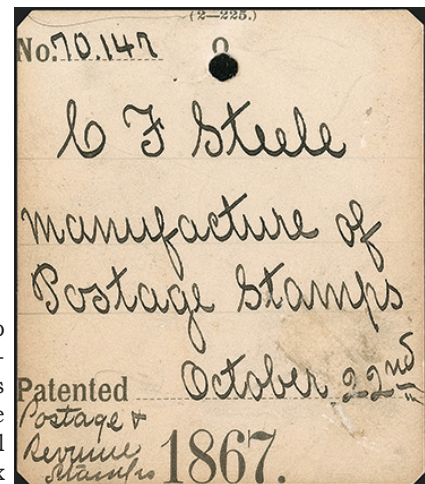


Estimated at \$750-1,000, the lot brought \$850.

Next we see one stamp from a larger lot containing 2¢ Black and 3¢ Rose, Francis Patent Essays (Sc. 65-E var, 73-E var)...2¢ Black Jack [includes] four singles showing the nearly complete range of chemically treated paper and patent cancels, four are perforated and one imperforate, one on piece with dark blue chemical cancel nicely showing the reaction with the paper...3¢ with perforated single



and imperforate pair, the single on an exceptionally dark blue paper, small faults on most, overall Fine appearing and scarce group, the Francis Patent essays, produced in Providence R.I., were few in number compared to other paper and ink essays of the period, they used chemically treated paper which would react with special inks to deface the stamp and prevent reuse." Estimated at \$400-500, the lot went for \$350.



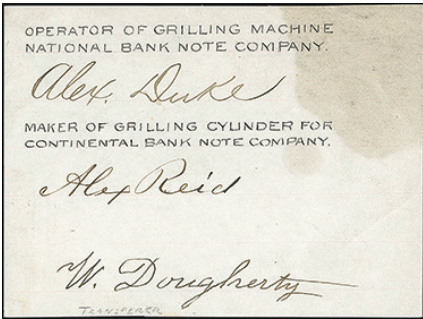
Now we come to something more familiar—the Charles F. Steel Grills. At the right is an "1867 Grill Patent Card, 66 x 76mm thick buff card,

with patent no. 70,147 and manuscript or printed 'C F Steele, Manufacture of Postage Stamps, Patented Postage & Revenue Stamps, October 22nd, 1867.', small scuff at bottom right and minor toning, a wonderful and historic item for the classic stamp or grill collector, accompanied by 3¢ shield-shaped perforated essay with grill as an example of the work (Sc. 79-E18d), original gum, small thin spot and gum crease, appears Fine, Scott Retail for the essay alone is \$1,000."

Estimated at \$1,000-1,500, it sold for \$2,000.

Continued on page 30

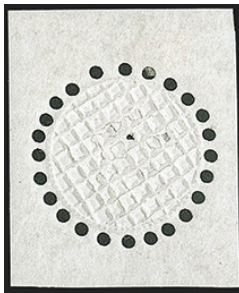
Another collateral item is this 107 x 79mm bond paper signed by Alexander Duke, "Operator of the Grilling Machine National Bank Note Company", Alex Reid, "Maker of Grilling Cylinder for Continental Bank Note Co.", and W. Dougherty, a transfer technician (written in pencil). The oil stain at the top right only adds to this "rare and fascinating signed item for grill production, likely unique."



Estimated at \$500-750, it went for \$400.



Next we see two pieces from a "Complete set of five stamp-size essays, including cross in square, star in square, horizontal lined oval in square, diagonal lined oval in square



and perforated circle (with 24 holes) with large waffle points down grill, all original gum, narrow h.r. at top which causes a few to have some faint toning at top, last shows a few breaks in the grill from a heavy impression." These are Charles F. Steel, (Unstated Value) Experimental Grill Essays on White Wove (Sc. 79-E13b, 79-E13c). "This complete set represents the only recorded examples of these early odd-shaped colorless grill essays...The first four odd-shaped grills offered in this set also show grilling in the larger square background. This might indicate the use of two different grilling devices in their production, but Brookman notes in his *United States Postage Stamps of the 19th Century* that the grill points on each stamp are in perfect alignment—indicating that the backgrounds were polished to allow the central design to stand out more clearly. Therefore, it is surmised that they were produced by the same grilling device. Ex Brazer and Finkelburg. Illustrated in Brookman on p. 77 and in Scott Catalogue on p. 846."

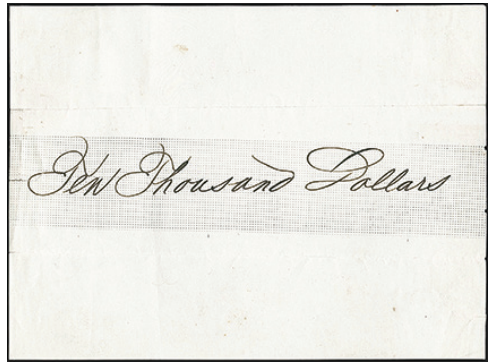
With an SCV of \$7,000, the lot fetched \$7,500.

Another Steel Patent Essay is this 3¢ Grill Essay, within a Red Network Frame, Perforated 12 (Sc. 79-E13 var) Charles F. Steel, "the colorless grill with '3' as seen in other 79-E13 listings, on stamp paper, original gum, h.r., red network frame is pasted onto essay, Fine and very rare, we have not encountered another, unlisted in Scott." Estimated at \$500-750, it realized \$700.



At the top of the next column is a Charles Steel All-Over Grill Essay on White Paper (Sc. 79-E14b var) (Unstated Value), "a 144 x 117mm paper with 144 x 28mm grill across middle, from a male roller with Z Grill-like horizontal ridges, applied from reverse so points up (points slightly pierce the paper), with manuscript 'Ten Thousand Dollars' written across grilled

area, no doubt to test ink penetration, light creases from folding mostly outside the grilled area, insignificant tear at left, Very Fine appearance, undoubtedly unique."



Estimated at \$1,000-1,500, it went for \$850.

Next we view a National Bank Note 3¢ Rose All-Over Grill Essay, Points Down (Sc. 79-E15a var) in a horizontal pair, "similar to the so-called 'Biscuit Grill' but the points are different and

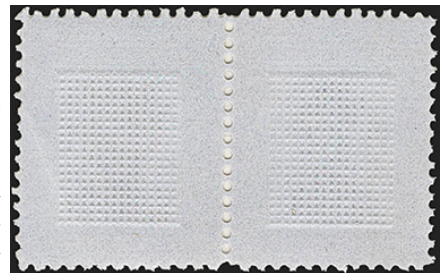


give the ridges more of a 'boxy' shape...this is the only example noted essay-proof specialist James Lee has encountered of this variety." SCV as two singles is \$500. This pair sold for \$350.

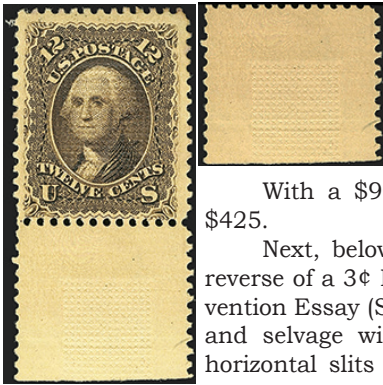
This next single displays the National Bank Note 3¢ Rose All-Over Pinpoint Grill Essay, Points Up (Sc. 79-E15d). "The so-called 'Music Box Grill', tied on small piece by segmented cork and 'National Bank Note Co. N.Y. Sep. 24, 1867' trial cancels, the [circular] datestamp is partly struck but clear enough to identify its nature [most visible along the right edge of the stamp], the only recorded example of an 1861 Issue essay with this cancel." Estimated at \$750-1,000, it realized \$750.



In the two lots above you can see there is a difference in the Points Down and Points Up Grills, but this next lot gives us a great look at a Points Down Grill. It is a National Bank Note Co. C. Grill Essays, Points Down, from a lot with Perforated and Imperforate examples (Sc. 79-E15g) "three singles and a pair, three are perforated and one imperforate), with paper color varieties including white, yellowish, pinkish and blue (the latter unlisted)." Estimated at \$300-400, it went for \$425.



On page 31 we view a 12¢ Z Grill, Thorp Patent Experimental Trial Color Essay from a lot that also contained an Unstated Value example Z. Grill, both Essays on Tinted Paper (Sc. 85E-E1, 85C-E2). Each also has a selvage with the grilled, computer enhanced here. "The 12¢ stamps are No. 85E-E1, the bottom selvage are No. 85C-E2, original gum, a few perfs with some slight gum soaks...these are conclusive



proof for the footnote in Scott which states that No. 85C-E2 comes from fully perforated selvage of the 3¢ and 12¢ Z Grill essay panes.”

With a \$900 SCV, the lot sold for \$425.

Next, below, we view the front and reverse of a 3¢ Rose E. Grill, Re-Use Prevention Essay (Sc. 79-E var), “each stamp and selvage with sewing-machine style horizontal slits and gummed only above



the slits...the only recorded example of this re-use prevention essay and one of a very few E Grill essays in existence, the Bowsby patent for stamp reuse prevention (no. 51,782) called for only a portion of a stamp to be gummed, after being affixed to an envelope the ungummed portion was to be removed, thus preventing reuse of either piece once separated, the essay offered here is not directly linked to Bowsby but very possibly represents an interpretation of his patent tried by NBNCo.” Unlisted in Scott, it was estimated at \$750-1,000 and realized \$850.

Next up is a National Bank Note 3¢ Deep Pink, Shield-Shaped Die Essay on Thick White Paper, Grilled (Sc. 79-E18a). “30 x 38mm, original gum, grill points down, bright color, Very Fine and scarce, others we have encountered in this color or the other listed Black color have faults, this example is particularly fresh.” With an SCV of \$1,000, it brought a top bid of \$475.

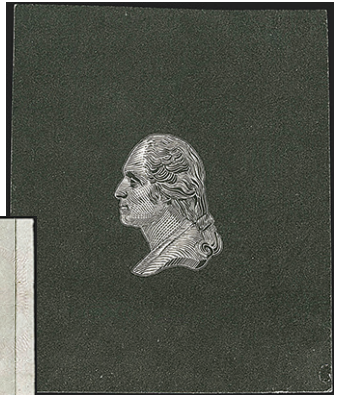


Here we see a National Bank Note 2¢-3¢ Un-trimmed Shield Die Essay on India (Sc. 79-E28b) with embossed design, signed in pencil “Edmund

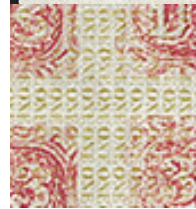


Oldham”, “the only recorded example of this 2-cent-3-cent dual essay. Edward Oldham was a prominent bank note engraver from Ireland. After emigrating to New York he worked at National Bank Note Co. from 1863 until his death in 1894... Scott Retail has long remained at \$1,000 for this, despite its \$2,900 hammer realization in our 2007 ‘Lake Shore.’ Despite that previous realization, it was estimated at \$1,500-2,000 and went for \$1,200.

To the right we see a National Bank Note (3¢) Washington, Portrait Only, Face Lined, Lithographed Die Essay (Sc. 79-E24c), struck in black, fresh and Very Fine, SCV \$750, hammer price \$250.



And to the left is a National Bank Note Gibson Patent, 3¢ Rose Pink on India, “ONE” Overprint in Deep Orange Yellow (Sc. 79-E26a) along with a magnified view of a gutter showing the “One” (side-ways). The piece shows a vertical pair with underinked portions of four other stamps, “overprint die measures 53 x 67mm with small ‘ONE’ repeated in 41 vertical lines per 40mm, vivid stamp color, the overprint a lovely Deep Orange Yellow... an exceedingly rare...essay...”



“The safety network overprint essays listed in Scott as 79-E26 are discussed in two important articles by James Lee, Richard Drews and Jan Hofmeyr in the 2016 and 2017 Chronicle....Both Abram Gibson and Emanuel Harmon received patents for re-use prevention ideas based on overprinting intaglio engraved stamps with surface printed networks of light wavy lines in various colors. Either the intaglio ink or network ink would be fugitive and wiped away if an attempt was made to re-use the stamp. The essay offered here conforms to the Gibson patent and is so attributed in the second Chronicle article. This is the bottom half of the unique sheet....It is clear that the plate used to test this safety overprint was only four stamps high. Using what we can observe from this sheet and the unique ‘VEINTE’ sheet of 12 offered in lot 281 [not shown here], it is evident that all the safety network essays were printed from miniature sheets of 12.”

With an SCV of \$2,000, this rarity fetched \$1,600.

On page 32 we view a National Bank Note Gibson Patent, 3¢ Washington, from a lot of Plate Essays “from Sheets of 12 with Safety Network Overprints Types 1-3 (Sc. 79-E26d-g), group of 12 singles, four each with the Lee/Drews/Hofmeyr Types 1-3 safety network overprints, including large wave (Type 1), medium wave (Type 2) and mesh wave (Type 3), mix of imperforate and perforated.

“The wavy-line examples of the safety network overprints (Sc. 79-E26d thru 79-E26g) are misdescribed in Scott. The second Chronicle article [mentioned previously] clears up the listing confusion and confirms that there are only three wave varieties, not four as listed in Scott, which also pictures two of the same types under different numbers. We will use the Lee/Drews/Hofmeyr types until the Scott listings are fixed.”



With an SCV of \$6,100, the lot went for \$1,600.



This next lot clearly shows the overprint technique. It is a National Bank Note Harmon Patent 1¢ Blue with a Red “Bedspring” Safety Network Overprint (Sc. 79-E26 variety, unlisted in Scott)...“Brownish original gum, deep rich color, clear rows of red overlapping rings, the so-called ‘Bedspring’ safety network overprint...extremely rare on the One-Cent 1861 Issue. Attributable

to Harmon.

“...Abram Gibson and Emanuel Harmon received patents for re-use prevention ideas based on overprinting intaglio engraved stamps with surface printed networks of light wavy lines in various colors. Either the intaglio ink or network ink would be fugitive and wiped away if an attempt was made to re-use the stamp. The essay offered here conforms to the Harmon patent...”

Unlisted in Scott, it was estimated at \$1,500-2,000 and hammered for \$1,500.

Now we see another approach, a National Bank Note 1¢ Black Die Essay of Frame on Thin Crisp Paper, Dull Olive Green Safety Underprint (Sc. 79-E29a), “40 x 58mm, fresh color, manuscript ‘+1’ and ‘Carbon-’ in left margin, outside the safety underprint...extremely rare...It has been reported that only two examples exist. We have not encountered the other. With an SCV of \$2,750, it sold for \$3,000.



The wide variety of essays for Re-Use Prevention continues with this National Bank Note 1¢ Red Brown, “Die Essay of Frame on Stamp Paper, Monogram in Vignette, Grilled, Perforated 12 (Sc. 79-E29i). Full perforations with sheet margin on three sides, natural s.e. at right, original gum, h.r., clearly-defined 14 x 16 points E Grill, few minor perf separations, tiny corner crease in selvage at top left... very fine. To the best of our knowledge, only one other example...exists...it is likely that [they were] printed from a plate of two designs, which were then scissors-separated. With an SCV of \$11,000, it did not sell.



Here we see the National Bank Note 3¢ Liberty, Spencer Patent, Rainbow Plate Essay on Transparent Wove paper, Imperforate (Sc. 79-E30p). “Complete sheet of eight, showing all Scott-listed color combinations, large margins, light creases at top left, still Very Fine, a beautiful multiple and one of only two recorded full sheets of the Spencer Patent multi-color rainbow essay, ex Finkelburg, who also owned a full sheet in single-color rows, illustrated in Scott Catalogue on p. 850.” Estimated at \$1,500-2,000, it realized \$900.

Concluding the viewing of the Richard Drews Re-Use Prevention Essays Collection, we come to a National Bank Note 3¢ Liberty, Black Green on White Wove, Safety Paper Underprint Essay, from a lot with seven different safety paper essays, representing the complete set of all designs (Sc/ 79-E31a, b, c, d, e, f, g). “A rare opportunity to acquire a spectacular set of National



Bank Note Company 3-Cent Liberty Safety Paper designs. The Scott Catalogue recently corrected the listings for these essays. There had long been one design combination listed which does not exist. This set, which was always complete, now nicely matches the listings in Scott.

“These beautiful essays are similar to the subsequent 1869 safety paper essays. Scott 79-E31a (red horizontal diamonds safety network) is the only one that shares the same safety paper underprint with the 1869 Pictorials (see Siegel Sale 1158, lot 4137). This 1861-68 Issue set and the 1869 Pictorial sets are among the most beautiful and unique of all United States essays and proofs. With an SCV of \$9,800, this lot went for \$3,750.

To view the complete Drews Collection auction, go to https://siegelauctions.com/sales.php?sale_no=1195

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