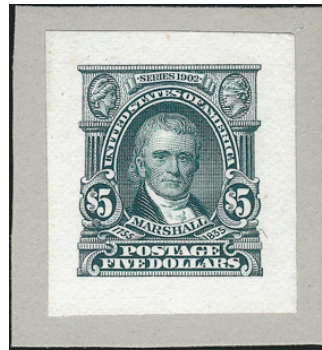


Viewing Collections: **The William Fekete Proofs & Essays**

Part 2 *(Continued from the May, 2015 SNO)*

by John F. Dunn

Continuing our review of the Proofs & Essays section of the Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries sale of the William Fekete Collection, we now come to 20th Century issues, starting with a scarce set of 1¢-\$5.00 1902-03 Issue Small Die Proofs on Wove paper (Sc. 300P2-313P2), complete on original small gray card backing from a Roosevelt Presentation Album, only 85 of which were prepared. With a Scott Catalog Value (SCV) of \$4,275, it was hammered down for \$2,400. (All prices quoted here do not include the 15% Buyer's Premiums that are added on to these hammer prices.)



Next we view a 3¢ Minerva, Harris Automatic Press Company Offset Essay on Hard White Wove Paper (Sc. TD28-TD29), two singles showing both orientations. As explained in the lot description, "Harris installed one of their presses in the BEP to demonstrate production of stamps by the offset method, the design was taken from the 2¢ 1903 Issue, the presses were not adopted at that time but were used for printing some Revenue stamps, particularly Tax Paid. With a \$1,300 SCV, this lot went for \$275.



This 2¢ Jamestown Small Die Proof on Wove (Sc. 329P2) shows how many of these later proofs are a lot more expensive than the issued stamps. Per the auctioneers, the proof is "scarce, a review of our



sales using Power Search failed to locate another example. With an SCV OF \$900, it garnered a \$950 top bid.

Another example of how these Proofs and Essays trace the history of an issue is this 2¢ Panama-Pacific “Gatun Locks” Error Composite Photographic Essay (Sc. 398-E2). In this essay, the two photos, for the outer frame and the vi-



gnette were overlaid into a composite design, the “2” denominations were drawn in with wash, other ink and wash touch-ups were made to the design. It was mounted on a 99 x 71mm thick gray card which bears the manuscript notation, “Approved Aug. 27-1912 Frank H. Hitchcock Postmaster General”. As explained, “the 2¢ Panama-Pacific stamp design was based on a model on display at the War Department, the image was incorrectly identified as the Gatun Locks, in fact, the scene was of the Pedro Miguel Locks, the Bureau destroyed all finished stamps of the Gatun Locks error and re-engraved the die to read “Panama Canal”, the only tangible evidence of the Bureau’s error to reach the public are this and one other slightly different photographic essay, as well as two die proofs, one of which is offered in lot 173 (the whereabouts of the second is unknown to us or to leading proof and essay dealers).” With an SCV of \$1,500, this lot soared to \$5,750.

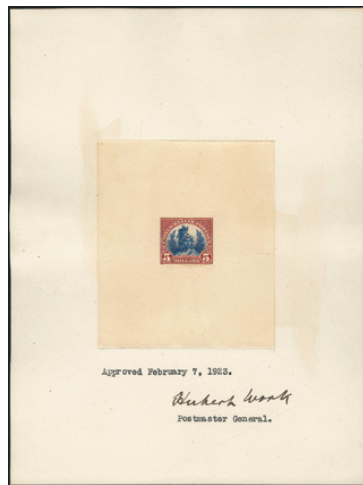
And here we have “lot 173” referred to above, the 2¢ Lake Panama-Pacific “Gatun Locks” Error Small Die Proof on India (Sc. 398-E3b). As further explained, “The 2¢ Panama-Pacific stamp design was based on a model chosen by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing’s director. He first rejected a photograph sent from the Panama Canal. Instead, a scaled model on dis-



play at the War Department was photographed and used as the basis for the engraving. What the Bureau did not realize until after the stamps had been printed was that the image was incorrectly identified as the Gatun Locks. In fact, the scene was of the Pedro Miguel Locks. Realizing its mistake prior to releasing the finished stamps, the Bureau destroyed all copies of the Gatun Locks error and re-engraved the die to read 'Panama Canal.' The stamps were printed from new plates."

As previewed in the previous lot, this Die Proof is the only one in public hands, the whereabouts of the Scott-listed large die proof being unknown. And so, this lot left its \$6,000 SCV in the dust, soaring to \$12,500.

Another sharp-looking lot is this 1¢ Pilgrim Tercentenary Small Die Proof on Wove (Sc. 548P2), but with a faint corner crease, SCV \$1,200, realization \$500.



Here we view a \$5.00 Head

of Freedom Large Die Proof on India (Sc. 573P1). It is a hybrid die proof ("as are all known contemporary examples," we are told), with the India paper cut to shape and mounted on a larger piece of yellowish bond, and die sunk on a 150 x 200mm card with full die sinkage, with a typed "Approved: February 7, 1923.

/ Postmaster General." and signed by Postmaster General Hubert Work, also with a pencil "1198125" on the back.

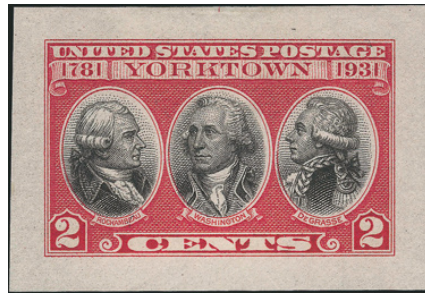
As explained, "This is only the second example we have offered since 2001. The Livingston [Collection] example was not signed by the postmaster general. Accompanied by a letter dated March 1, signed by Harry S. New, stating that the set of die proofs prepared by his direction was presented to President Calvin Coolidge. Scott Retail without signature \$5,000." This lot fetched \$4,000.

And now for a few examples of other 20th Century commemorative proofs, in order:

A 1¢ Huguenot-Walloon Small Die Proof on Wove paper (Sc. 614P2), SCV \$700, realization \$425.

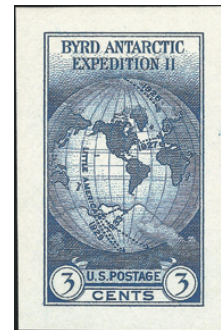


A 2¢ White Plains Small Die Proof on Wove (Sc. 629P2). It has a hinge remnant, but the auctioneers state, "Power Search does not reveal another example." SCV \$850, realization \$1,400.



A 2¢ Yorktown Small Die Proof on Wove (Sc. 703P2), "a rare proof of this popular commemorative, Power Search reveals three examples of large die proofs but no other small die proofs," SCV \$750, realization almost double that, \$1,400.

Another rare beauty: a 5¢ Byrd Small Die Proof on Wove (Sc. 733P2), "no other small die proofs of this issue appear in Power Search," SCV \$650, realization almost three times that, at \$1,900.



Moving into the Back-of-the-Book issues in this Back-of-the-Book Proofs & Essays field, we view one of the 10¢ Special Delivery Woodcut Essays in this lot (two slightly different shades of E7-E4, one of E7-E5; shown the E7-E5). With an SCV of \$1,650, the lot was hammered down for \$700.



Here we see the high value in a set of 1¢-50¢ 1879 Postage Due Atlanta Trial Color Proofs on Card (Sc. J1TC4-J7TC4), the complete set of 35 Trial Color Proofs, all seven denominations in all five colors, some minor faults, SCV \$1,785, realization \$600.



Still another complete set lot, this is the 1¢-50¢ Claret 1894 Postage Due issue Panama-Pacific Small Die Proofs (Sc. J31P2a-J37P2a), complete set of the rare 1894 Postage Dues Panama-Pacific Proofs. With “approximately five or fewer sets...believed to have been produced,”

despite a large repaired tear in the 10¢, with a total SCV of \$3,500, it realized \$4,250.

In the Officials section, we view a 90¢ Dull Scarlet Post Office Die Essay on Proof Paper (Sc. O56-E1b), 29 x 35mm, but with a central thin spot that brought a hammer price of \$325 for this \$1,500 SCV Essay.



And now for the 1¢-90¢ Officials in



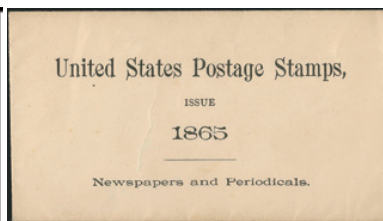
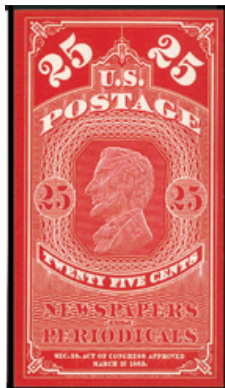
a set of Atlanta Trial Color Proofs on Card (Sc. O1TC5-O67TC5, O72TC5-93TC5, shown the 90¢ value for each

Department)—435 pieces in all, complete for all colors and denominations except for the rare dollar-value State Department Officials.

Per the lot description, “The Atlanta trial color plate proofs on card were prepared for display at the 1881 International Cotton Exposition in Atlanta. Only one sheet in each color was printed. This set is complete except for the 28 dollar-value State Department stamps, which catalogue \$1,000.00 apiece. Most previous offerings by our firm are either nearly complete (such as the Sheriff set) or substantially incomplete to the point where they are offered by Department. (Image Magnifier)

With a total SCV of \$17,599, this wonderful lot went for \$4,500.

And here is one of those State Department high values, the \$20.00 Green & Brown State Department Atlanta Trial Color Proof (Sc. O71TC4e), but with a small thin and a hammer price of \$300 against its \$1,000 SCV.



Next we view the envelope and the 25¢ value from the

Newspaper 5¢-25¢ 1875 Reprints Plate Proofs on Card (Sc. PR5P4-PR7P4), comprising a complete set of the three values, accompanied by the envelope reading

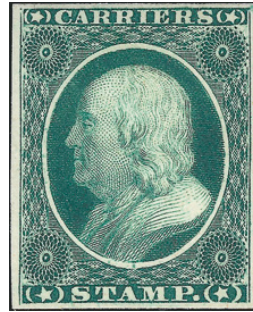
“United States Postage Stamps, Issue 1865, Newspapers and Periodicals”. We are told “the envelope is particularly scarce,” and with a pre-sale estimate of \$150-200, this lot sold for \$325.

To the right is the high value in the Newspaper 2¢-\$60.00 1875 Issue Atlanta Trial Color Plate Proofs (Sc. PR9TC4-PR32TC4), a complete set of 120 proofs,



24 values in all five issued colors “perhaps a half dozen with small flaws,” still a rare complete set which, with a total SCV of \$5,160 still only realized \$1,700.

Also part of a complete Atlanta Trial Color Proofs set, we see here examples of the (1¢) Franklin and 1¢ Eagle Carriers (Sc. LO1TC4-LO2TC4), all five colors for both issues, SCV \$1,120, hammer price \$650.



Among Specimen lots, we see here a 2¢ value from the 1¢-90¢ 1861-66 Issue with Red Control Number Overprints (Sc. 63S-78S-J). The complete set of ten different, plus an extra 2¢, have original gum, a few with hinge remnants, these are numbered from the highest denomination to the lowest starting with the 90¢ “1234”, 30¢ “2345”, 24¢ “3456” and so on except for the 15¢ which has only three numbers (“235”). Further from the lot description, “recent research by Michael Plett and Ken Gilbert (Chronicle Aug. 2012, pp. 214-226) solved the long-standing mystery of these specimens and determined that the overprints were applied by a bond-numbering mechanical device.” With an SCV of \$2,750, the lot realized \$1,600.



This 1¢ Trans-Mississippi with the Specimen Type F Overprint (Sc. 285S-F) has original gum, but with a hinge remnant and small thin spots—and



despite that it brought a top bid of \$1,200, well above its \$850 SCV.

Concluding the Specimens section, we view the 30¢ value from a 1¢-50¢ Deep Claret “Universal Postal Congress” Type O Overprint set (Sc. J38S-J44S-O), with

original gum, ranging from heavy hinged lower denominations to lightly hinged higher denominations. With only 125 produced, the SCV for the set is \$875 and the hammer price was \$400.

We are now so far back in the Back-of-the-Book that we are viewing material that isn't even in the "book"—the Scott catalogue that is. But they are covered in reference works that are available to specialists. For example, we view here a 3¢ Eagle and Coin Perforated Essay on Wove Paper (Brazer catalog 56E-Gc), part of a lot



of two, in Red and Violet Brown, with original gum. Per the lot description, "listed in Brazer only in Red Brown, these are undoubtedly rare as we have offered more than 10 examples of the Eagle & Coin large die essays over the last 15 years but none of these perforated and gummed essays, attributed to Butler & Carpenter, this may be a Revenue essay." With a pre-sale estimate of \$500-750, this lot fetched \$700.



Finally, we conclude our viewing of the Fekete Proofs & Essays with this 2¢ Red Brown pair from a lot with Hugh McCullough Portrait, Percussion Cap Plate Essays, Imperforate (Turner Essay #41, 41-A). The Red Brown

is in the pair you see here, the Blue is in a strip of three and a single, and the Black is in a pair. All have the caps "fired" resulting in central hole in each essay. The lot also contained a 1¢ Scott 156 "unfired" with the intact cap. The auctioneers state, "we don't recommend hitting it with a hammer," and explain, "the 'exploding' stamps are among the more inventive concepts to prevent fraudulent reuse..." In the pair illustrated here, you can see the damage done to the right stamp.

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