

A TRADITIONAL STUDY OF THE FIRST DAY COVERS OF A 1940'S CLASSIC

THE 1947 U.S. POSTAGE STAMP CENTENARY COMMEMORATIVE SYNOPSIS OF EXHIBIT

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first U.S. postage stamps, the Post Office Department decided to release a 3¢ commemorative in May of 1947. The stamps' release coincided with the first day of the CIPEX exhibition in New York City (see sidebar on the next page).

Production & Issuance

The stamp was designed by Leon Helguera, who had previously designed the 1943 2¢ United Nations commemorative stamp for the U.S. and later stamps for the United Nations. The exhibit begins with some of the preliminary sketches and artwork prepared by Helguera and the stamp's modeler, Victor McCloskey, Jr., Plate markings and production anomalies are shown as well as P.O.D. announcements, presentation folders and publicity photographs.



Plate block of the 1947 U.S. Postage Stamp Centenary Commemorative signed by the designer, Leon Helguera, on the day of issue; May 17, 1947.

The only large die proof (or proof of any kind) known in private hands is a part of the *Production and Issuance* chapter. Although Scott lists a large die proof on India paper this proof was produced on wove paper and it is believed that this proof is the source of the listing. There is a Bureau handstamp on the reverse reading "Engraver's Stock Proof/Authorized by" and initialed — most likely being pulled for the vignette engraver, Matthew Fenton,

First Cachets & First Day Use

It is documented that fourteen cachetmakers produced their first cachet for this issue, incorporating twenty-four different designs. This exhibit contains cachets from twelve of these cachetmakers showing twenty-two different cachet designs as well as the discovery copy of a first cachet by Ralph Duncan which has gone undocumented until this exhibit.



Discovery Copy of Ralph Duncan First Cachet

Over 45 cachetmakers produced cachets specific for the 3¢ commemorative encompassing well over 100 different cachet variations. The exhibit doesn't yet contain all of the documented cachets, it does provide more than a representative sample of all production methods used. The largest sub-chapter of the First Day Use chapter is dedicated to the non-

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EXHIBIT PLAN

1. Production & Issuance
2. First Cachets
3. First Day Use
4. First Day Use to Foreign Destinations
5. Unofficial Cities
6. Usage

ITEMS OF INTEREST

- * Design sketch and photographic models of preliminary artwork and progressive designs
- * Only large die proof in private hands
- * Unique Dorothy Knapp, Herman Maul & Walter Stawuszewski hand-painted cachets
- * Printing plates for all 4 Artcraft cachet varieties
- * Largest-documented multiple First Day Use
- * First day uses to French Indo-China, the Canal Zone, Australia and New Zealand
- * Discovery Copy of Ralph Duncan First Cachet





Only large die proof known in private hands. No small die proofs have been recorded.
(*ex-Livingston*)

produced unique cachets for Garrett include Knapp, Maul, Abel, Henriques and Stawuszewski — all are included in the exhibit. Weigand also produced covers for Garrett but the designs did not vary significantly from those produced for other collectors.

Leo August, one of the founders of Artcraft cachets, persuaded the CIPEX show committee to name Artcraft cachets the “Official” cachet of the show and because of this, first day examples of the Centenary Commemorative on one of the four Artcraft cachet designs are quite common. However the unique steel engraving plates used to produce all four designs are shown in the exhibit. All four plates are shown as Artcraft later made slight modifications to re-use the plates for various anniversary cachets.

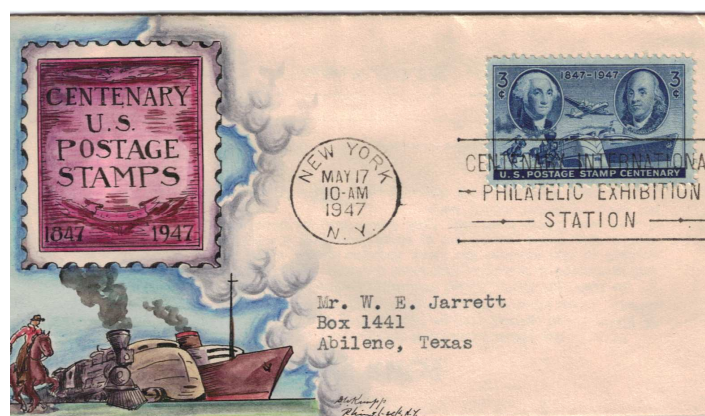
An interesting item shown is a Cachet Craft cachet designed by Ludwig Staehle that was part of his personal collection. Staehle used 14k gold-leaf to create a unique variation of this common cachet. In addition to his work with Cachet Craft, Staehle produced a cachets for all three

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first cachets that were issued specifically for the Centenary Commemorative — *and are arranged by production method.*

In addition, general purpose and cachets that were designed for other stamps are shown used for the issue. Of note are variations on the same hand painted cachet design work of Mae Weigand. A registered first day cover with a scarce and CIPEX registry dated-oval cancel is a part of the exhibit — and is the one of the very few examples of this cancellation the Exhibitor has ever encountered. Recycled designs by cachetmakers are shown where appropriate.

Covers that have come to light since 2009 include unique hand-painted covers that were commissioned by Walter Garrett, a collector from Texas. Cachetmakers that



Unique Dorothy Knapp hand-painted cachet commissioned by Walter Garrett, a Texas Collector.

CIPEX : THE 1947 CENTENARY INTERNATIONAL PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

The Centenary International Philatelic Exhibition (CIPEX) was held at the Grand Central Palace on Lexington Avenue in New York City starting on May 17th and ending on May 25th, 1947.

A major facet of the decennial exhibition was the 100th anniversary of the issuance of the first United

States postage stamps — the Post Office released the commemorative stamp on the first day of the show.

Two days later on the 19th a 15c Souvenir Sheet depicting the first two U.S. stamps (in different colors) was issued. A 5c airmail stamped envelope followed two days later on the 21st.

CIPEX issues, but his cachet for the Centenary Commemorative is relatively scarce.

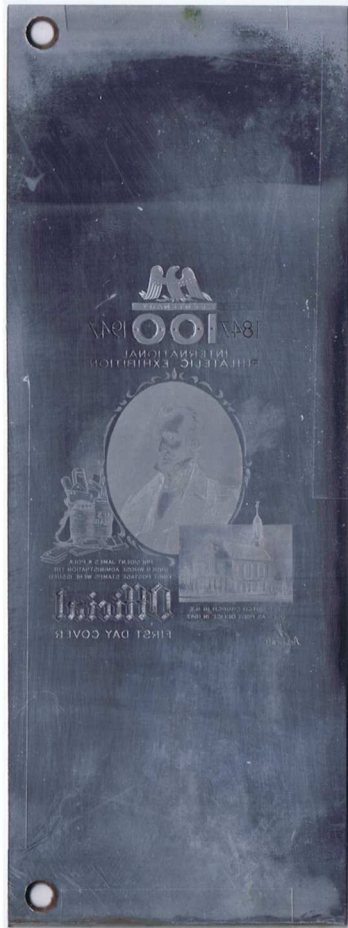
Kirk Kover produced a cachet with the same central design but with four slightly different background shadings. This exhibit is the first to document this detail.

Items signed by the designer, Helguera, are relatively common as he spent most of the CIPEX exhibition signing items for a donation to the *Stamps for the Wounded* charity but items signed by the engravers and

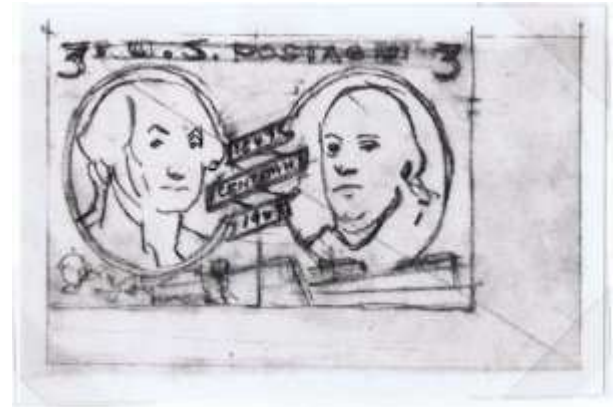
modeler are more difficult to find. Included in the exhibit is correspondence to one of the engravers from a collector looking to have covers signed by all of the engravers — the signed covers are included.

First Day Use to Foreign Destinations

First day uses to foreign destinations are given a chapter in the exhibit. Even though the stamp was released during the largest international stamp show up until that time, first day foreign destinations uses are difficult to find. Uses to Cuba, French Indo-China, the Canal Zone, Malta, Brazil, Venezuela and New Zealand are shown and the rates explained. Treaty rates to Canada and Mexico are also included.



Engraving plate used to produce one of the four Artcraft cachets by the Washington Press. All four plates used to produce the "Official" CIPEX cachet are shown in the exhibit.



P.O.D. photograph of preliminary designer sketch (ex-Glass)

Unofficial Cities

The stamp wasn't available at the Philatelic Agency in Washington, D.C. until Sunday the 18th — and covers posted in Washington on that day are shown. Additional first day uses from unofficial cities are included — including an "almost" pre-date from Waseca, Minnesota. While the cover was postmarked on the first day, an enclosed letter explains that the stamp was purchased a day early and the sender didn't want to get the Post Office clerk into trouble by posting the letter early.

Usage

Ordinary commercial uses of the 3¢ commemorative are difficult to find, but the exhibit displays interesting examples of what has been found by the Exhibitor to date. Both domestic and foreign uses are shown — including a censored cover to the American Zone in Berlin as well as a package piece with 33 Centenary Commemoratives, 2 "Prexies" and a Special Delivery stamp. ■



Unique hand-painted cachet by Walter Stawuszewski.

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- Association for Stamp Exhibitions, Inc., The; *CIPEX Exhibition Catalogue*, 1947.
- Cusick, Alison; E.L. Bradley—Cachetmaker?; *First Days*, Jan. 1, 1985, pg. 61.
- Cusick, Alison; More on E.L. Bradley; *First Days*, June 15, 1986, pg. 529.

PORTRAIT SOURCE

Helguera based his portraits on those used on the first U.S. issue of 1847 produced by the banknote printing firm of *Rawdon, Wright, Hatch and Edson*. RWH&E had produced numerous banknotes prior to 1847 using stock dies of the Washington and Franklin portraits. The Franklin portrait was based on an engraving by Richard W. Dodson which in turn was based on James Barton Longacre's painting. The Washington portrait was based on an engraving by Asher Brown Durand which in turn was based on Gilbert Stuart's "Atheneaeum" painting.



1836 \$5 Bank of New Brunswick (NJ) banknote printed by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch and Edson using their stock dies of the Washington and Franklin portraits.



Plate Proofs of the 1875 5¢ and 10¢ (e)
B.E.P. Reproductions of the 1847 first
Federal U.S. issue.

WHAT'S NOT HERE...

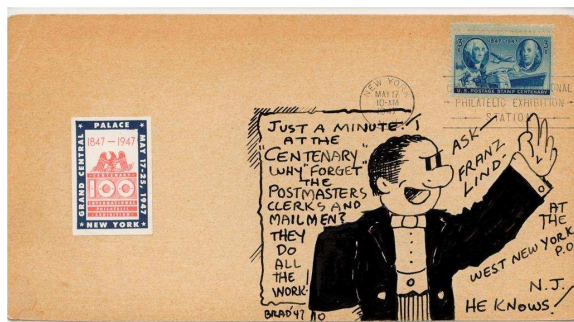
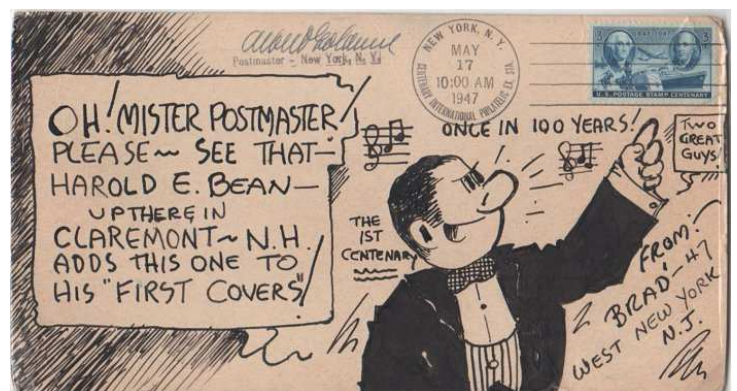
CIPEX Souvenir Sheets: As the souvenir sheet was issued two days *after* the release of the commemorative stamp, it does not play much of role in a FDC exhibit of the commemorative stamp. The same holds true for the airmail envelope which was released four days later.

Production Varieties: With exception of what is shown in the exhibit the Exhibitor is not aware of any other production varieties. As of this time no imperforate copies or plate varieties have been reported.

Cachet Color Varieties: Due to space limitations, variations of cachet colors are noted, but not shown.

"BRAD" : E.L. Bradley

Little is known about E.L. Bradley, other than the fact that he advertised his custom illustrated first day cards for \$1 each — in fact while researching Bradley for this exhibit, the Exhibitor was fortunate to obtain the original artwork for an advertisement that Bradley placed in *Linn's* for another stamp. A total of ten "Brad" cards have been documented for seven different U.S. stamps and one Postal Envelope — all using a similar design. Three "BRAD" covers have been



documented for the Centenary Commemorative; two are shown in the exhibit, the third was originally mailed to George Linn and pictured in his weekly magazine.

His cards proved unpopular for three reasons; first his price of \$1 was very high for 1947 and second, due to the fact that were prepared on oversized cards instead of the standard 6¾ envelopes. Lastly the similarity in design for each issue resulted in decreased interest.