

THE SMOKY MOUNTAIN PHILATELIST

JOURNAL OF THE ASHEVILLE STAMP CLUB



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WHOM TO CALL

If you cannot make a meeting, club event, presentation, or have a question or a suggestion, please contact:

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GENERAL INFORMATION

COVID-19 NOTICE: WE ARE NOW BACK TO MEETING AT DEERFIELD. IF YOU ARE UNVACCINATED, YOU MUST WERE A MASK. MASKS ARE OPTIONAL FOR THOSE WHO ARE VACCINATED. The Asheville Stamp Club meets at Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community, 1617 Hendersonville Rd, Asheville, NC in the Blue Ridge Room of the Community Center at 1:30 pm on the third Sunday of each month. Bring stamps and covers to sell, trade, or show. There are Nickel Boxes and Envelopes of stamps with new material being added all of the time. The Club's 2023 Scott catalogs will be at the meeting; 2023 World Classic, US Specialized. As always, there will be the 50-50 Drawing and Door

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Prizes.



SMOKE SIGNALS

In kicking off 2023, I'd like to thank all our contributors to this issue of the SMP. Jim Haxby has shared part I of his mini-biography of Charles Lindbergh: Flying Fool Filately. It is quite an entertaining read. Guest author and revenue collector Charles DiComo documents his amazing find of probably the finest RP1a T. Kensett & Co. canned fruit stamp extant, and explains the history behind this proprietary revenue issue. Finally, even though Scott Martz has relocated to the warmer climes of Florida, he's authored another one of his Variety Hunter Columns. Scott has been a devoted member of the club for many years, and we hope he continues to bless this publication with his philatelic expertise.

Which brings me to a concern for this publication. When I originally became editor of the Journal, we were able to publish six issues per year. During the Covid pandemic the frequency was dropped to quarterly. And unfortunately this issue has been a year in the making. Putting together each issue takes me 10-15 hours of work, and that is not including any articles I author! In the past, I could rely on a number of ASC members to keep the articles flowing. More and more, I've asked guest writers to contribute content. However, most of my expertise and contacts are with the revenue community, and this should not be the focus of the Journal. That said, I encourage our members to contribute articles to keep the Journal more relevant and allow more frequent publication. Thank you for your understanding, Randall

Email your articles, letters, classified ads, auction items, and comments for the Smoky Mountain Philatelist to Randall Chet: randallchet@gmail.com

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Please print, fill out and bring to a club meeting with \$10 payable to ASC, or send to Kathy Bromead, Secretary ASC, 2854 North Face Dr., Valdese, NC 28690, or visit our website at ashevillestampclub.org, click membership, download the interactive application form and submit by email.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

appy New Year to all our members and their families! It is wonderful to see this Journal Lemerge to start off the New Year 2023. And what a year it will be! May is the celebration of our 100th anniversary (plus a few) of the existence of the Asheville Stamp Club. An article in Mekeels Stamp Magazine in January 1920 notes that several stamp collectors in Asheville have been meeting and starting a new club. Since 'have been meeting' stated in January 1920 would seem to imply that this was happening in at least late 1919, we are tentatively concluding that we have existed for 104 years! We are pleased to announce that we will host a celebratory banquet on May 20 at a location still to be finalized and announced. And to compliment Lewis Blodget on his impeccable timing, we will help him celebrate his 100th birthday! With all this in mind, welcome to our second century of philatelic excellence and dedication to our great hobby! Thank you so much for your participation in this wonderful adventure. Stay tuned and...

Happy Stamping Everyone! Frank





Keep an eye on your email box for new issues of the Occasional Asheville Stamp Club Gazette!

FLYING FOOL FILATELY

PART [: 1902-1926

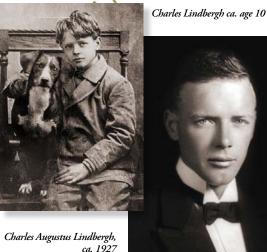
Jim Haxby

Whenever Charles Lindbergh's name is brought up, one naturally first thinks of his historic 1927 flight from New York to Paris. While this event did play a major role in shaping the rest of his life, it is much less prominent when one looks at his philatelic legacy. American Air Mail Society president, David Ball, has estimated that over his career Lindbergh piloted planes that carried about one million pieces of mail. Of that only a few covers were carried on his trip to Paris.

In this presentation we will discuss Charles Lindbergh's philatelic legacy, particularly the mail he actually flew, and set this against the backdrop of the major events of his life. Our presentation will be in three parts, the first of which covers Lindbergh's life up to the end of 1926.



harles' father, Charles August Lindbergh, was a prominent lawyer who had a large farm on the ✓Mississippi River, near Little Falls, MN, a town of about 5,000 people. His mother, Evangeline Land, was a college graduate who taught chemistry in the town school. When she became pregnant, Evangeline decided to go to her parents' home in Detroit and have the baby delivered by her physician brother. So, Charles Augustus Lindbergh was born in Detroit on Feb. 4, 1902 in Detroit. He spent his early years on the family's farm. In 1906 Charles' father was elected to Congress for the



first of four terms. From then until his mid-teens Charles and his family bounced between Little Falls, Detroit and Washington, D.C.

Charles' maternal grandfather, Charles Land, was a self-taught dentist and a gifted inventor. One of his inventions was the porcelain crown. In fact he was later called the Father of Porcelain Dentistry. By the time he was 9, Charles, too, manifested exceptional mechanical and inventive abilities. He could take apart his bicycle and similar devices and reassemble them with ease.

Lindbergh's fascination with flying dated from the time he was 10, when his mother took him to an air show outside Washington. From then on he hoped to fly himself. He avidly followed advances in aviation and the exploits of the WWI air aces.

Charles Lindbergh and his barnstorming companions, ca. 1925. Lindbergh is on the right.

Lindy entered college in 1920 in engineering, but found the classes unfulfilling and in April 1922 dropped out of school and headed for Lincoln, NE. He had seen a brochure advertising flying lessons given there. After Lindbergh's first brief flying experience, his teacher sold his only plane to a group of barnstormers and closed the school. Barnstormers were people who went around the country selling plane rides and putting on aerial shows that included wing walking, parachute jumping and stunt flying. Lindbergh went with them as an assistant and airplane mechanic. They called him "Slim", a name by which he was addressed by many of his

friends for the rest of his life. Soon he talked his way into becoming a wing walker and parachute jumper. As he gained experience, Lindbergh proved to be a fearless performer and came to be billed as "Daredevil Lindbergh". In April 1923 Lindbergh bought his first plane, a war

surplus Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny", and taught himself how to fly it. As his piloting skills improved Slim became the one flying the plane in his barnstorming group.

A few months later a friend, aviation pioneer Marvin Northrup, put a new idea in Lindy's head. Northrup urged him to



enter the Army Air Service Training School. Commercial aviation was still several years off, he said, and the smart flier would in the meantime take Army training, using their newer and more powerful planes. So, Lindbergh sold his Jenny and in March 1924 enlisted as a cadet in the Army Air Corps flying school. In March 1925 he received his wings and became a 2nd Lieutenant, one of only 18 members of his class of 140 to graduate.

After graduating from flying school, Lindbergh headed for St. Louis, a city that he was convinced would become a major hub of U.S. aviation because of its central location. Lindy made his headquarters at Lambert Field, where he subsisted as a flying instructor and aircraft mechanic. He stayed on, confident that something would happen to improve his fortunes. He didn't have to wait long.

Charles Lindbergh, Army Air Corps Cadet, 1925.

Domestic Air Mail Pilot 1926

Up to 1925 the carrying of the air mail had been handled by the government. The first government route was inaugurated in May of 1918 and ran between Washington, Philadelphia and New York. At first, war surplus Curtiss Jennys were used. Later, the Jennys were supplemented with De Havilland DH-4s, of British design, but many of which had been manufactured in the U.S.

In 1920 transcontinental service was completed between San Francisco and New York, with feeder routes between Washington & New York, St. Louis & Chicago and Chicago & Minneapolis. Because of the primitive conditions, flying the air mail at that time was extremely dangerous. The planes were not very reliable, there was no ground to air radio communication, and there were

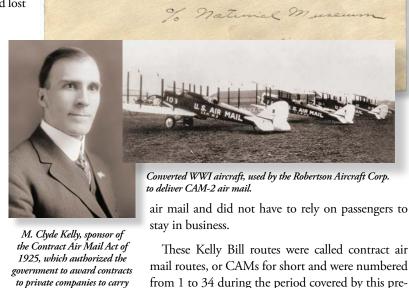
Cover from first Government air mail, New York to Washington, D.C., May 15, 1918.

few air beacons for night flying. Furthermore, weather forecasting was so bad that the pilots virtually ignored it. Thirty-one of the first 40 pilots hired lost their lives in air crashes.

In 1924 the Coolidge administration, after consultation with top business leaders, decided to take the necessary steps to privatize America's air mail. A bill, formally known at The Contract Air Mail Act of 1925, was introduced by Republican congressman from Pittsburgh, M. Clyde Kelly. This act, more commonly known as the Kelly Bill, became law in March, 1925, the month before Lindbergh got his wings. It would significantly alter the course of commercial aviation in America, which was then in the doldrums. The Kelly Bill divided the air mail

system into a series of segments (routes) and solicited private party bids to run them. Winners of the contracts were thus assured a regular income stream for carrying

the air mail.



known as CAM covers.

The contracts for CAM routes 1-12 were awarded on the same day. CAM-2, the most important one in our story, was a 285 mi. feeder line between St. Louis and Chicago. The successful bidders for the contract were William and Frank Robertson, wartime fliers who in 1921 had formed the Robertson Aircraft Corp. in St. Louis. The Robertson brothers, who already knew and respected Lindbergh, had offered him a job flying airmail if they won the contract. During the wait, Lindbergh did more barnstorming, now billed as "The Flying Fool" and by then considered to be one of the best all-around stunt fliers in America.

sentation. The inauguration of each route, as well

as later extensions or other changes generated a group of

first flight covers (many of which had official cachets),

When the Robertsons won the contract for CAM-2, they promptly hired Lindbergh as Chief Pilot. The route was set up with four stops: Chicago, Springfield & Peoria, IL and St. Louis. Part of the route involved night flying into Chicago, which could be quite dangerous in winter, as we'll soon see.

On April 10, five days prior to the inaugural flights for CAM-2, Lindberg personally flew the route to inspect the facilities to assure all was in order. This was termed a



CAM-2 Chief Pilot, Charles Lindbergh, in flight suit by his aircraft, 1926.

test flight. He carried a small number of souvenir covers on the leg from Springfield to Chicago with uncanceled stamps for his friend, Raymond Bahr. These are very scarce.

The inaugural flights took place on 4/15/26, beginning in Chicago. All departure points except Springfield have the standard design cachet used for most CAM flights of the period. Because of its association with Abraham Lincoln, Springfield was allowed to use a special cachet. The pilots were Lindbergh and Philip R. Love.

On two occasions, on Sept. 16 & Nov. 3, 1926, while on night flights Lindbergh encountered heavy fog and was unable to locate a suitable landing area around Chicago. He ran out of gas and had to bail out. Both times he found the plane wreckage and rescued the mail. Covers from these crash flights, especially the November crash, are very scarce and highly prized.

CAM-2 "Test Flight" cover, April 10, 1926, autographed by Lindbergh and Springfield, IL postmaster W.H. Conkling.



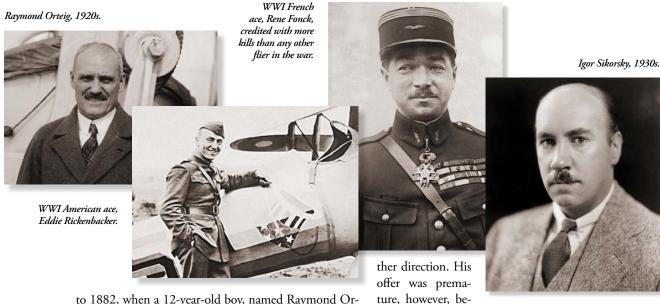


Inaugural CAM-2 cover, Springfield, IL to Chicago, autographed by Lindbergh and Springfield postmaster W.H. Conkling.



Orteig Prize Flight 1927

Five days after Lindy's first crash, another plane crash took place, this one at Roosevelt Field on Long Island. This crash was for a totally different reason than Lindy's crashes - it was because of a serious and sometimes fatal malady that was beginning to afflict fliers of the period. One writer has called it "Atlantic Fever". To understand the cause of Atlantic Fever one must go all the way back



to 1882, when a 12-year-old boy, named Raymond Orteig, immigrated from France to New York. Orteig was very industrious and by the late teens, when the U.S. entered WWI, he owned and managed the Hotel Lafayette and Hotel Brevoort. The Lafayette was a favorite hangout for airmen, both Americans and the Europeans who came over to help train them. Orteig went out of his

way to meet and talk to these men, whom he found very inspirational. They assured Orteig that very soon transatlantic flights could be possible, with the right encouragement. Orteig began seriously considering what he might do to provide such encouragement and do it in a way to more closely bind the U.S. and his home country, France.

Early in 1919, after the war had ended, Orteig attended a din-

ner organized by the Aero Club of America honoring America's top WWI ace, Eddie Rickenbacker. In his speech that night Rickenbacker brought up the theme of Franco-American friendship and linkage of the two countries by air. The great flier's speech finally spurred Orteig to action. On May 22, 1919 Orteig wrote to the Aero Club, offering a prize of \$25,000 to the pilot(s) of the first plane to fly non-stop between NY and Paris in ei-

cause at the time such a flight was an impossibility due to the distance (3600 mi). Within a month there would be a non-stop flight from Newfoundland to Ireland, but that was only about 2000 mi. So, five years passed without an attempt to fly the longer distance, and the prize offer expired.

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Aircraft designed and built by Igor Sikorsky for Rene Fonck's transatlantic flight attempt, 1926.

Orteig renewed the offer for another 5 years in 1926. By then airplane engines and aircraft design had advanced enough to make the crossing possible, but just barely so. It was still a very risky proposition. Suddenly, several contestants announced that they were preparing for the flight. The first attempt was made on Sept. 21, 1926 by France's top WWI ace and Orteig's friend, Rene Fonck. He had been a brilliant and deadly aerial opponent in the war, serving continuously for nearly

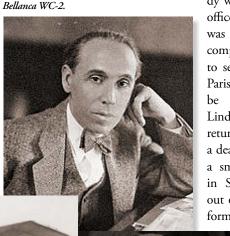
two years, when the life expectancy of the average combat flier was a mere three weeks. For his transatlantic attempt he used a specially-built biplane, designed and constructed by the famous aeronautical engineer Igor Sikorsky, and powered by three French-built engines. But, Fonck's normally clear mind was apparently clouded by his Atlantic Fever. With a crew of four and even a couch on board, his plane was seriously overloaded. It crashed on takeoff, killing two of the crew and destroying the plane in a ball of fire. Only Fonck and the navigator escaped. Atlantic Fever had claimed its first victims.

Lindbergh followed the Orteig contest intently. During his nightly mail run the day after Fonck's crash, it sud-

denly occurred to Lindy that he might be able to make the crossing himself in a much smaller and lighter plane. With the right equipment, he thought, a transatlantic attempt would be no more dangerous than flying airmail in the winter. Without doubt, Atlantic Fever had worked its way into Lindy's brain and he was powerless to resist. If he had any doubts about the relative dangers of the two enterprises, his need to use his parachute to save himself again only two weeks later must have settled the matter. From then on Lindy became obsessed with attempting the Paris flight.

company was headed by Charles Levine, a fast-talking New York salvage dealer with whom Bellanca had become associated on the promise that the company would make and sell his planes. Levine was willing to sell the WB-2 for \$15,000, so Lindbergh secured the money from his investors and headed to New York. However, at

Giuseppe Bellanca, designer of the Wright-



the last second (when Lindy was literally in Levine's office with the check) he was informed that the company reserved the right to select the pilot for the Paris flight, and it wouldn't be Lindy! Exasperated, Lindbergh immediately returned home and made a deal with Ryan Aviation, a small aircraft company in San Diego, operating out of a building that was formerly a fish cannery.

They agreed to build a custom plane, designed specifically for the crossing. The Ryan group modified the design for their M-2monoplane (being used by Pacific Transport to fly mail for CAM-8 on the west coast) to meet Lindv's needs, includ-

140

The Wright-Bellanca WC-2, early 1927.

To be successful Lindbergh needed the right plane with the right engine. He quickly focused on the WB-2 (WB for Wright-Bellanca), a high performance 6-seat monoplane, designed by Giuseppe Bellanca, and built by Wright Aeronautics to demonstrate its new Whirlwind J-5 air-cooled radial engine's capabilities. The WB-2 had won some important domestic air races during 1926, and it seemed the ideal solution for the Atlantic crossing.

Lindy got eight financial backers from St. Louis and began negotiations to purchase the WB-2 from its then owner, the Columbia Aircraft Corp. in New York. This

Charles Levine, owner of the Columbia Aircraft Corp.

ing the installation of a Wright J-5 engine and enlarged fuel tanks.

Lindbergh's last day with CAM-2 was 12/31/26. After that, he spent full time preparing for his Atlantic attempt.

To be continued...

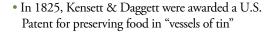
Thomas Kensett II

A Brief History of T. Kensett & Co., Food Packers & the U.S. Private Die Proprietary Canned Fruit Revenue Stamp they Briefly Issued in 1867

by Charles J. DiComo, PhD charlesdicomo@gmail.com December 2022

> Thomas Kensett (1786-1829), an Englishman born in Hampton Court, was an engraver who emigrated to America and settled in New Haven, CT before 1806. He began canning food in New York City in ~1810. His son and namesake was one of the first to process "Fresh Cove Oysters" in Baltimore beginning in 1849. "Cove" refers to Cove St., a lane in Baltimore where several oyster houses were located.

- In 1813, Thomas Kensett married Elizabeth A. Daggett, a sister of engraver Alfred Daggett (1799-
- In 1814, Thomas Kensett II (1814-1887), their first child was born in Cheshire, CT.
- In 1819, Thom. Kensett Sr. went into partnership with his father-in-law Ezra Daggett in New York City where they processed salmon, lobsters and oysters in glass containers (expensive & prone to breakage).



• In 1825, Ezra Daggett retired and Kensett Sr. continued the business until his death in 1829.

In 1849, Thomas Kensett II partnered with his brotherin-law Mr. Ira B. Wheeler and expanded the NYC company to Baltimore, MD which afforded far greater facilities for procuring oysters and fruits. He established a canning plant on York St., near Light St., on the waterfront and as the business prospered, built two factories, one for packing fruits and the other for manufacturing the tin canisters or "cans" for their expanding "hermetically sealed" oyster & fruit trade.

Before the Civil War, the company processed large quantities of oysters, fruit (peaches), and vegetables (corn, green peas, tomatoes). In 1857, Wheeler died and Thomas ran the business alone until 1864, then his son Thomas H. Kensett & nephew H.N. Vail took control.

Imperial Brand, Fresh Cove Oysters Can Label, T. Kensett & Co.



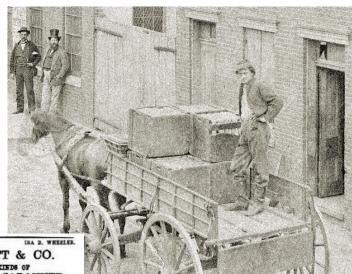


Kensett Packers Token ca. 1865





Crate of Fresh Cove Oysters and Tin Cans, illustrated in Treasure in a Cornfield, by Greg Hawley on the discovery and excavation of the steamboat Arabia, sunk in the Missouri River in 1856. Kansas City: Paddle Wheel Publishing, 2005.



Oyster Houses with Shells, Crisfield MD 1890s

Kensett Man with multiple crates of unlabeled oysters

Thomas Kensett & Co advertisement, circa 1850's

TROMAS KENSETT. THOMAS KENSETT & CO. MANUFACTURERS OF ALL RISDS OF

HERMETICALLY SEALED OYSTERS, FRUITS, &c. WEST PALLS AVENUE, BALTIMORE.

Prior to the Canned Fruit Stamp being Issued, Kensett & Co. used First Issue R3c 1¢ Red Proprietary Revenue Stamps



1866

Horizontal pair of 1¢ Red Proprietary stamp R3c, used improperly as documentary revenue stamps, cancelled by black d-c "THOS KENSETT & CO Baltimore DEC 30 1867" handstamp. (#5148)

Care of Dan Harding

www.revenue-collector.com



Provisional Canned Fruit Stamp, R3c surcharged in black, Type II: two vertical lines reading up, Roman type, undated.

Provisional Canned Fruit Stamp, R3c surcharged in black, Type I: three horizontal lines reading across, Roman type, dated.

Care of Mike Morrissey

References:

- 1. W.H. Waggoner, "Mr. Kensett's Revenue Stamp," The American Revenuer, Volume 40, Number 5, pp. 98-100.
- 2. "An Historical Reference List of the Revenue Stamps of the United States," G.L. Toppan, H.F. Deats, A. Holland, Boston Philatelic Society, Boston, Mass., 1899.
- 3. Aldrich, Michael E., A Census of United States Match and Medicine Stamps, Aldrich Publishing, Saint Paul, MN, 1997.

Revisiting the Census of Known Copies of #RP1a

The Kensett Canned Fruit stamp has been one of the more popular U.S. Private Die Proprietary Revenue stamps due to its design, the limited quantity issued (528,000) and its narrow use over a two month period in early 1867 before the tax on meats, shellfish, fruits and vegetables was repealed on March 1, 1867. In 1997, Michael E. Aldrich published his seminal work entitled "A Census of United States Match and Medicine Stamps" which built upon earlier censuses from 1934 and 1987; referred to as the "1994 Aldrich Match and Medicine Census." This 1994 Census consists of 227 items with a full population of 4,630 stamps. At that time, only 27 known copies of #RP1a were available to collectors, of which 20 were faulty. Quality of extant R1a's is usually quite poor in that they were used on steel cans of canned fruit, often torn off; exhibiting tears, thins and rust stains.

For the 2022 Census, I have thus far identified 42 copies. What follows are the best representative digital images I could obtain from the internet and colleagues.



It is worth mentioning that this montage puts a "face" on the phrase "most are faulty", so often attached to many Private Die Proprietary stamps. In effect, most of the 42 copies illustrated are faulty to some extent.

If you own (or have access to) one of the RP1a's depicted in this census and would like to submit a high-resolution digital image, please contact me. If you own an RP1a that is not represented here and would like submit to the Census, please contact me. All inquires shall remain confidential.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO UN STAMP (OLLECTING?

Postally speaking, the United Nations is an inventionan organization not a nation or political entity. The fact that it issues its own postage stamps and maintains its own postal service is a concession to the trappings of sovereignty (real political entities control their own post) and a revenue grab (UN stamps can be sold to collectors and the United States has the expense of processing and delivering the United Nations Postal Administration's (UNPA) mail). Interest in UN stamps has always been a factor of interest in and respect for the United Nations as an organization and it is safe to say that interest in UN stamps are at an all time low.

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The first UN issues were issued in 1948 and were avidly collected, largely by Americans. For the first twenty years of UN issues many US collectors maintained a collection of UN. It was cheap and they could complete it. After the UN began taking an anti US and anti Israel line,

beginning about 1970, UN philately increasingly fell out of favor. Three things have contributed to UN's continued decline in collector interest. First, collectors have been put off by the fact that now three UN postal agencies-New York, Geneva and Vienna-all issue stamps, making far too many issues for the legitimate postal needs of the UN. Second, the UNPA has continued to increase restrictions on the use of their stamps on mail (thus lowering the value of older postage type material). Originally, postal patrons could mail what they wanted from the UN. Now the post office only accepts smaller quantities of mail with difficult restrictions as to use. This has led to a steep decline in the value of older UN stamps to where it is hard to sell UN at 20% of the postage value. Collectors don't want to put their money into a collection that depreciates like this. And third, the investment scandal company Afinsa was gearing up to begin promoting UN before it was closed down by the Spanish government leaving a market overhang of millions of dollars of UN stamps further depressing prices. It seems unlikely that the stamps of the United Nations will ever regain the popularity they once had.

Our dealer-members have a unique perspective to our hobby and we invite you to share your unique insights and experience with our club. If you would like to contribute, please send your correspondence to the editor: randallchet@gmail.com







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(ASE OF BRAZIL #109A - "INVERTED CENTER"

s most of you know I love varieties, and here is a real interesting piece. Brazil #109a with an "inverted head". I have two copies in my collection. One is mint, and one is used (and faulty).

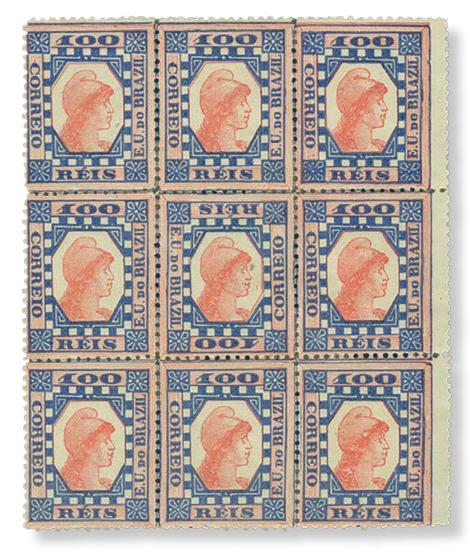
These are quite scarce, and prices reflect that. But this is a very interesting error, as it is a single cliché in a plate, and not a plate printed in the wrong position. The photo below is an example of how this stamp is found on the plate. As one position on the blue plate having the frame placed inverted. The moniker of this being an inverted head is incorrect, it is really an inverted frame, but if viewing a single it appears as an inverted head (center). So, this is truly a plate variety and not a freak.

This is a similar repeating plate error like the 5-cent carmine error from the US, where three clichés were impressed with a 5-cent denomination instead of the 2-cent.

These are out there and could be easily be overlooked.

Happy Hunting Scott

Image found on ebay where this block is listed with an asking price of \$10,000!



Member Dealers: Are you interested in reaching more collectors? Time to take advantage of your free 2.5" x 2" display ad! You editor/designer can even style it for you. It's just one of the benefits available for Asheville Stamp Club members. And if you are reading this but are not yet a member, our membership application can be found on page 2 of this journal. Contact randallchet@gmail.com for your ad.





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