

UNITED STATES STAMPED PAPER.

By A. F. HENKELS.

NEW YORK SERIES.

A much neglected branch of U. S. Revenue collecting has been the stamped paper of the Civil War period, in fact much more is known of the colonial and state issues of impressed paper than is known of this comparative recent issue. New varieties are turning up even now from time to time, whereas if there had been more interest manifested in them at the time of their issue, a complete list could have been compiled for a guide in collecting. There has been some good lists issued. The most important by far is that issued by Mr. E. B. Sterling of Trenton, N. J., in 1888. He listed at that time 244 varieties, and the discoveries since then brings the total up to 276, making 32 new varieties that have been discovered in the past twenty years. A number of these discoveries are entirely new types, and it seems most curious how they should have remained undiscovered until quite recently. I have no doubt that there is much in this line that has not come to light as yet, and I do not know of a wider or more fruitful field for the revenue enthusiast than that of the stamped paper issues.

For the past fifteen years I have been gradually forming a collection of the stamped paper of the Civil War period, and have succeeded in getting together about 225 varieties. It is a collection that I feel proud of, as I do not think there are many collectors who can boast of a better one. I collect first one of each variety on as plain a check as I can get, preferably unused, so as to show off the stamp. I also collect the various colored checks of each variety. Then I have a separate and distinct collection of the various ornamental, lithographed and engraved plate checks. This makes a very handsome collection, as some of the designs are superb. I have a third collection of Tom Thumb, or vest pocket checks, so named by our friend J. N. T. Levick on account of their small size. These little checks are quite interesting. They comprise 19 different varieties of color of 9 distinct types. Taking my collection of stamped paper which comprises about 750 pieces, I think it has given me more pleasure than any other of my philatelic hobbies. Leaving out the philatelic interest there are so many other points that appeal to the collector, I have a number of checks for very large amounts, a quarter million dollars and over, and others carry the signatures of prominent men both in politics and finance. So you can see that the stamped check is the link between the stamp collector, and the autograph collector in this connection.

Now what is this all about anyway? What are stamped papers? They are papers for various purposes, such as bank checks, receipts, insurance policies, etc., with the U. S. Revenue stamp printed upon them instead of having an adhesive stamp attached. They stand in the same relationship to the adhesive documentary issues, as the stamped envelope does to the adhesive postage stamp.

The stamped paper of the Civil War period were issued under Act of Congress, July 1st, 1862, to take effect October 1st, 1862. There were also other acts and modifications as follows: July 14th, 1862; December 23rd, 1862; December 25th, 1862, etc. They continued to be used until July 1st, 1882. The first series of bank checks, etc., of 2c denomination, listed by Mr. Sterling, are known as the New York series. They

were printed by the American Phototype Co., 24 Vesey St., New York City. Their work embraces some of the handsomest designs produced, and were more extensively used than any other series printed elsewhere. Sterling's "A" variety is one of the most difficult stamps to get any number of varieties of. I mean the design with the large figure 2 in the centre. This is the design that was used in the formation of that most curious combination, known as the tape-worm stamp, or specie clerks' statement sheet. It consists of 54 or more impressions, so printed as to appear to overlap each other, like the scales of a fish. Then again there is Sterling "B" variety, the design with the Eagle in the centre. This variety with its many colors of printing form a very interesting set. In this variety the idea of a tablet at the base of the stamp to indicate its legal use was first employed. The tablets read "Good when issued for the payment of money," "Good only for checks and drafts payable at sight," and "Good when the amount does not exceed \$100." There is an error of "B" variety, 5, with the tablet inverted. This is a very scarce article, as but about fifteen copies are known. The tablets on this set are interesting to study. They were an afterthought and were impressed by a separate block at the time of printing. In some instances the lower part of the design of the stamp was cut away to make room for the tablet. A very interesting thing to have is a set of the sample checks of the American Phototype Co., which consist of the "B" variety design, printed in all the colors used by this company, each stamp impressed on a separate check, the stamps of the "B" variety as well as "A" variety, and some others are collectable in various positions on checks, in the centre at the left end, and at the right end.

The stamp listed by Mr. Sterling as "C" variety, the design of the 2c U. S. Inter. Rev. adhesive stamp impressed on check, was supposed until recent years to have been printed by the American Phototype Co., and as their work was listed in the New York series, but research has proved beyond a doubt that it was issued by Jos. R. Carpenter of Philadelphia and should be included in the Philadelphia series. The 2c Bank Check, stamp same design as the adhesive stamp, was discovered by me about seven years ago. They are both scarce checks and should be in every collection of revenue stamps whether the collector is interested in stamped paper or not. No collection of revenue stamps can be complete without these two checks.

The "D" variety, that very large, handsome design with the medallion head of Washington in centre, embraces many interesting varieties, such as those with inscriptions at bottom, left and right of stamp reading "Good only for sight draft," "Good only for receipt of money paid," "Good when issued for the payment of money," "Good only for Bank Check," "Good when the amount does not exceed \$100," etc.; also the altered dies in which a space across the lower portion of the stamp has been cut out and the words "Good only for Bank Check" inserted. But by far the scarcest check in this set is the altered type last referred to with the 2c Nevada State Revenue stamp printed over the face of the United States stamp. But very few of these checks were used as the firm using them was a branch of a California

house doing business in Nevada for a short time. I consider this check the scarcest of all stamped paper. But six copies are known.

"E" variety, the first design to bear the portrait of Franklin, whilst rather plain in design, still has a number of interesting varieties, it can also boast of an altered design, as a space is cut out of the circles at right and left in the design of the stamp and the words "Good only for — Bank Check" are inserted. There are also several other interesting forms with words below stamp, reading "Good only for sight draft," etc.

Sterling "F" variety is an odd design, being of a rectangular shape, and is also ornamented with a likeness of Franklin. There is also a variety with the words at base "Good only for sight draft," as also altered type in which the half disks above and below the portrait of Franklin have had spaces cut away, with the words "Good only for — Bank Check" inserted. This variety I discovered about six years ago. I had made an exchange with a collector of Macon, Ga., and this check was one of the lot I secured. I did not notice the variety for some months after it was in my possession. I then wrote to see if I could secure more of them, but no more were to be had. The collector I got it from could not remember ever having had it, and I have not seen another since, nor have I record of any other collector possessing one.

"G" variety is a neat design, with small portrait of Franklin in circle in centre. It is a check stamp easy to obtain, and is attractive in appearance.

"H" variety, printed by the American Graphic Co. of New York, is the commonest of all bank checks. It has the head of Liberty in centre, and the stamp is of diamond shape. This stamp is found impressed on both the obverse and reverse of checks. There is a variety of this type with the imprint of the American Graphic Co. of New York, which has become quite scarce. An interesting set to obtain are the sample checks issued by the engraving firm of Corlies Macy & Co., New York. To illustrate their workmanship, these checks are printed in five colors on safety paper. The die of the 2c stamp is the same as above without imprint, with the addition of the word "sample" under the head of Liberty, and below the stamp "Invalid for actual use." Sample checks with altered dies similar to this are found in several of the other types.

This closes the issues of the New York Series, one of the most interesting emissions of our government, as with the tablets and inscriptions employed they carried us through the experimental stages.

PHILADELPHIA SERIES.

The Philadelphia Series were printed by Jos. R. Carpenter of Philadelphia, Pa., who was the President of the American Bank Note Co. I remember when I was a small boy I lived next door to the American Bank Note Co. on Pine St., above 5th Philadelphia. It was during their latter contract with the U. S. government, and I recollect the engravers handing me proofs of stamps and stamped paper over the dividing fence. I wish I had preserved them, as they would no doubt be a valuable addition to my collection; but I was not interested in stamps at that time and they went the way of all small boys' treasures.

This series should be headed by Sterling "C" variety, as that was the first type produced by Mr. Carpenter, and as I said in my remarks upon the New York Series, it was placed in that series through lack of information. The check stamp I refer to is the design of the 2c U. S. Inter. Rev. adhesive. There is also another variety of this series, the 2c Bank Check, same design as adhesive, impressed on check. I discovered it about eight years ago amongst a lot of papers from a brokerage firm of Philadelphia, and strange to say another lot turned up to a Philadelphia dealer, that were used by a totally different corporation, about six months later than those of my find.

We now come to Sterling "I" variety with flying eagle in centre of design. It is artistic in execution, and collectors will find that it is far more difficult to obtain in unused condition than is apparent from the low price at which Mr. Sterling has placed it in his list. There are some very interesting forms of this variety, that with the addition of "Good for check or sight draft only" at left or right of stamp, also the following two forms of receipt, one with a double line inscription "Good when used as a receipt for the payment of money," 17 mm. below the stamp, the other with a single line inscription "Good when used as a receipt for the payment of money" in black, reading upwards, on left side of receipt, 43 mm. from stamp. This is the only instance in which the instructions are printed in a color different from the stamp. Both of these receipts are on letter size sheets and were used by Henry Disston's Sons of Philadelphia, Pa. I discovered them in a small lot of stamped paper that I received from Macon, Ga. There was but three of the former and two of the latter. There are also two oddities of the check stamp of this set, one with the stamp inverted on check, and the other, a double impression, one overlapping the other about 5 mm.

Sterling "J" variety is one of the most striking designs of the series. The vignette of Washington in the centre, with the very ornate scroll work at either side, gives it the appearance of being very well balanced, and artistic. There is a variety with "Good for checks or sight drafts only" in curved letters below the stamp which is seldom run across. There are two varieties in the engraving of "J" variety, one with heavy, and the other with very light shading in the oval back of Washington's head.

Sterling "K" variety, is as plain in appearance as the previous design is artistic. It has also a likeness of Washington in centre with engine turned design at either side. It is an irregular oblong in shape and appears in many colors and shades, all but the orange colors being difficult to obtain, particularly in unused condition.

We now take under consideration the "L" variety, that particularly natty little stamp with the small portrait of Washington, surrounded by fancy design. They are all scarce excepting the orange color variety, and with the many colors and shades make a fine set. There is a set of sample checks of this and the previous design issued by Mr. Carpenter, on checks bearing his name at the left hand end, illustrating the different work done by him in this line, which make a very valuable addition to a collection.

BOSTON SERIES.

We now take up the Boston Series, consisting of two types. It is not known positively who were the contractors that

produced these two varieties of check stamps, but they seem to me like the work of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, but there is no record available to prove by whom they were issued. The first type, Sterling "M" variety, with small head of Washington in centre, are very interesting to study. You will note the similarity to the check stamp of the Spanish American War time, the only marked difference being in the head in the centre of the stamp. The Boston type has that of Washington, whilst the Spanish American War type has the head of Liberty. So it seems only natural to suppose that when the government had occasion to issue stamped paper for the Spanish American War tax, that the engravers of the department at Washington should turn to one of their own designs used for a similar purpose at a previous time, as being the best available design. The similarity of the two designs is more than a coincidence. It shows conclusively that the engraver of the Spanish American War stamp must have had a copy of the first Boston type before him for an example to engrave from. Of course this is only speculation, but is well worth giving serious consideration.

The second Boston type, Sterling "N" variety, with large figure 2 in centre, with spread eagle at left, and at right monitor at sea, have always been a scarce check. I was on the lookout for one for years, and was fortunate enough to run across a lot of forty in one package. The design is characteristic of the times. The picture of the monitor calls up recollections of the early stages in the evolution of our present men of war.

We are now at the last variety of the 2c or bank check series of the Civil War period, the St. Louis Series, printed by the St. Louis Lithograph Co., Sterling "O" variety, one of the most difficult stamped checks to obtain. The design has a Liberty head with flowing hair, with cap and pole, in centre, and at the left the obverse, and at the right the reverse of the two cent coin of the period. All these checks that I have seen were used by Chicago firms, but there seems to be few of them in existence. So I infer that they were used but for a short time.

HIGHER VALUES.

The higher values, the 5c, 10c, 25c, 50c and \$1.00 values of stamped paper, are difficult to obtain on the entire documents, so collectors have to be satisfied in most instances with copies cut from documents. Of course they should have large margins, but we need not be ashamed to have cut copies in our collections; in fact we should be glad to have many of them represented at all, as they are scarce. They are found on Insurance Policies, Certificates of Stock, Coupon Bonds, Warehouse Schedules, etc. The 5c value with the portrait of Lincoln in centre exists in two types, one with an additional figure five printed at the four corners of the stamp. A very interesting instance of the use of the first variety of this type is to be found on a little document about 1½ by 3 inches in size, used in Chicago in the latter '60's, by the management of the Crosby Opera House. They held a raffle or lottery for steel engraved pictures. Each subscriber had to pay \$5.00 and he received an engraving, but also held a chance upon a picture of much greater worth. Each of these little tickets have the U. S. 5c Revenue stamp impressed upon it. It seems strange to see the United States stamp on a document so closely approaching a lottery ticket.

The second design of the 5c value has the likeness of Madison in the centre. It is known as "B" variety. It is an oblong rectangle in shape, the impressions are rather heavy as a rule, and the ink used is of a dull shade.

"C" variety, the first 10c value, has the portrait of Lincoln in the centre. The stamp is lozenge shaped. There is a variety with a tablet below the stamp containing "Good when the premium does not exceed \$10."

The likeness of Washington is in the centre of the "D" variety, the third variety of the 10c value. It also has a tablet at the base of the stamp inscribed "Good when the premium does not exceed \$10."

The first design of the 25c value, having a shield in the centre, containing an eagle at bay, Sterling "E" variety, has an interesting variety in the way of a tablet below the stamp as follows, "Good when the premium does not exceed \$50," and another variety with the same wording in letters below stamp without tablet and a third variety with tablet below stamp inscribed "Good when the amount insured shall not exceed \$1,000." This variety is also found with the following "Stamp returned to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue for redemption, October 1, 1872," surcharged in black over face of stamp. This shows that the stamp has been redeemed, and the document afterwards applied to its intentional use. This surcharge is known as the redemption clause.

The second type of the 25c value has a very large portrait of Franklin in the centre in a circle with a smaller circle at either side containing figures of value. The stamp is very large, measuring 126x60 mm. This type has many varieties of tablets inscribed "Good when the premium does not exceed \$50," known as the premium clause, the first with premium clause at left, the second with clause at right, and the third variety with clause at base of stamp. The variety without premium clause, and the variety with clause at base, are both known surcharged with the redemption clause.

"G" variety is the first 50c stamp, and is shield shaped with portrait of Lincoln in centre, with fancy scroll work surrounding stamp. There is also a variety with a tablet inscribed "Good when the amount insured shall not exceed \$5,000;" also a variety with the same wording in type without tablet. The variety without tablet or inscription is known surcharged with the redemption clause.

The \$1.00 value "H" variety is a very handsome stamp, measuring 34x74 mm. It is large rectangular in shape, having a medallion portrait of Washington in the centre. This variety is also found with "Stamp redeemed" surcharged on it, and also with the usual redemption clause.

This finishes the Civil War Series of stamped paper. I have tried to give a rough idea of the different types, without going into a description of the colors in which they are found printed. That I must leave to the collector to learn from Mr. Sterling's very excellent list. I propose to issue a full tabulated list in serial form through one of the philatelic papers, which will treat of the subject in its entirety, as well as giving a list of the stamped paper issued during the period of the Spanish American War, which I trust will be an aid to collectors in this branch of our hobby, and also be the means of attracting the attention of collectors who have not as yet taken up their study.