

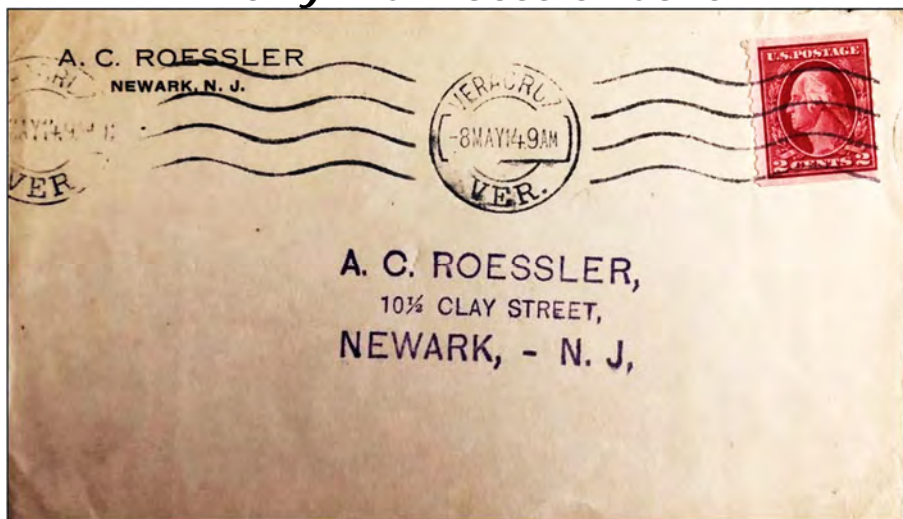


NJPH

The Journal of the
NEW JERSEY POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY
 ISSN: 1078-1625

Vol. 46 No. 3 Whole Number 211 August 2018

Early A.C. Roessler Cover



This early Roessler cover is postmarked VERACRUZ, Mexico, May 8, 1914, 17 days after USA occupied Veracruz. It is franked with a Scott #444 issued April 25th making this an early use. See John Lupia's article on page [123](#).

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THANKS TO MEMBERS FOR DUES PAYMENTS AND DONATIONS!

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

One of the pleasures in publishing a state postal history journal is the learning experience occasioned by the editing of so many articles over the years with my co-editor Jean Walton. In addition, there is the recognition our journal *NJPH* has received in the world of philatelic literature competition. Last year’s four editions of Volume 45 were entered in the literature competition in StampShow 2018 held in Columbus, Ohio in early August. Because so many of our members now take the option of receiving the journal via the Society’s internet link, the entry was submitted in DVD format in the electronic competition, which permitted the display of so much of the journal’s contents in color and with hyperlinks to the articles’ sources in the end notes. I am very pleased to report that our Journal was awarded a Large Gold Medal in the name of Jean Walton, our distinguished editor. Congratulations, Jean!

This issue of *NJPH* contains a broad array of articles that touch upon New Jersey’s rich postal history. John Lupia has written an in-depth article on the philatelic life of A.C. Roessler, the well-known New Jersey producer of air mail related and cacheted first day covers for almost 40 years, who is also remembered for his frequent run-ins with the Post Office Department. Articles concerning a number of towns make for interesting reading, including John Sharkey’s coverage of the history of the Westfield and Mountainside Post Offices, Ed and Jean Siskin’s on Haddonfield’s postmarks, and mine on Ocean City’s postmarks. Don Chafetz contributes another article on his continuing series concerning Morris County foreign mail. I include a short piece on the reporting of contagious diseases by postal cards over a hundred years ago. Jean Walton has contributed a short article concerning a Newark Post Office draft, and finally, a correction to my article on New Jersey pioneer airmail flights that erroneously included a picture of the U.S.S. Pennsylvania instead of the S.S. Pennsylvania.

Be sure to attend the NOJEX/ASDA Show which will be held at the Hilton Meadowlands Hotel in East Rutherford, NJ on October 19-21. The Society will hold its annual meeting at noon on Sunday, October 21. With over 40 dealers, two auctions, and a number of public programs, this year’s show will be sure to please.

ROBERT G. ROSE

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- Weisz Stamps & Covers • Bardo Stamps • Mr. Z/Vogt's Stamps & Coins • Richard Friedberg Stamps
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Discount room rate \$129 a night (cutoff Sept 18). Use code **NJO18A** at Hotel Website

A.C. ROESSLER, A JERSEY LEGEND

By John Lupia¹



Fig. 1: Albert Charles Roessler, Jr. (1883-1952), in a photograph at age 46 published by himself in *Air Plane Stamp News*, Volume 114, March (1929) with the gag line that the photo is of the manager of the import department.

| Wholesale. | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| 10 5c Pan American | .25c |
| 100 Australia 10 var | .6c |
| 1000 Australia | .48c |
| 50 31 U.S. Rev. | .10c |
| 100 1c appl. sheet mix. | .10c |
| 25 diff unused Chinese | .25c |
| 12 copper coins | .25c |
| 100 Australia Rev. | .75c |
| 50 " " | .45c |
| 100 2c Pan American | .12c |
| 100 2c Columbian | .3c |
| 200 diff stamps | .14c |
| 100 unused foreign | .40c |
| 100 Brit Colonials | .12c |
| 100 diff unused | .55c |
| 10 sets Egypt S T 3 var. | .22c |
| 100 Canada, 10-12 var | .10c |
| 1000 U.S. (no 2c red) | .13c |
| 1 half pound Australia, well mixed | |
| 20-30 var, postfree | 1.00 |

A. C. ROESSLER
21 Club Bldg., Denver.

Advertisement in *The Philatelic West*, Volume 28, No. 1, September (1904) leaf 13 recto.

Fig. 2: Roessler's 1904-7 ads give his address as 21 Club Building, Denver, Colorado. Later he removed to East Orange, New Jersey.



Fig. 3: Roessler's imprint ad for his three publications: A. C. Roessler's *Stamp News*; *Dealers' Stamp News* (actual title: A. C. Roessler's *Stamp News, Dealers' Edition*), and *Air Plane Stamp News*. Eugene Klein of Philadelphia first published *Air Mail* in 1922, five years before Roessler's *Air Plane Stamp News*. *Dealers' Stamp News* is listed in Smith as No. 20, A. C. Roessler's *Stamp News, Dealers' Edition*.²

Albert Charles Roessler, Jr. (1883-1952), 140 South Parkway, East Orange, New Jersey, coin and stamp dealer, began trading as a stamp dealer in Denver. Roessler was both a stamp and coin collector and dealer. His coin business lasted over thirty years. His stamp business was extraordinary and novel, introducing a myriad of artistic illustrations for stamps (some of which were used by the government or at least based on his drawings but without credit or acknowledgement), and also for his many cacheted covers illustrating contemporary themes that took the collecting world by force. Because he was slighted by the government for his artwork inspiring several postage stamps, Roessler became a spokesman for criticism of the U. S. Post Office, Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the U. S. Postmaster, all of which eventually backfired on him in the 1930s.

Due to his innovative activity in philatelics, his numismatic business and dealings have become obscured by time, and little or scarcely any of his numismatic literature is known to be extant and rarely if ever is seen on the market. His weekly bargain list for coins was titled *The Coin News* which grew out of his original *Coin List*, offering coins at highly competitive bargain prices. One aspect of Roessler's coin business that will prove to be noteworthy to numismatists was his advertising and promoting medals and commemorative coins, and his illustrated cacheted covers of them that popularized them to a new generation of collectors. Commemorative coins were not exclusive to centennial, bicentennial and tricentennial celebrations since stamps were also issued, and Roessler pioneered and innovated the cacheted first day cover concept to stimulate collectors to collect both the stamps and covers, as well as coins and medals that accompanied them in their issues. For the medal and commemorative collector, scholar and dealer, Roessler played an important role in helping to establish a stronger market for this specialized niche. He evidently did business with Henry Chapman as several pieces of mail are found in the Lupia Numismatic Library, Special Collection, The Chapman Family Correspondence Archive.

A.C. ROESSLER, A JERSEY LEGEND ~ John Lupia

For many years, Roessler owned a stamp and coin shop in the Ampere section of East Orange, New Jersey, making the address of 140 South Parkway a familiar one to cover collectors. When he retired in 1940, the shop was taken over by Frank Gerardo Spadone or his brother John Gerardo Spadone, who may have worked for Roessler at the end of his career. John Spadone (1922-2010) is famous as the creator and originator of *The Coin Press* in 1955, while Frank Spadone is the numismatist famed for his specialization in coin oddities of mis-strikes and both author and publisher of *Major Variety-Oddity Guide of United States Coins*. Under Spadone's ownership the shop was known as Ampere Coins. Stamp sales were discontinued by him, though he had what was left of Roessler's hoard, hoping someone would come and buy the lot. Some of Roessler's coin and medal inventory was still there in the late 1950s and early 1960s (a fond memory of this writer), and included ancient and U. S. Colonial coins, among them Fugio, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Connecticut, and New York Cents, as well as Washington pieces, and a variety of American and foreign medals. I remember Spadone talking about Roessler and his arrests and the Federal agents that came into the shop and seized everything.

Roessler was born in Newark New Jersey on April 7, 1883, son of Austrian-German ancestry of both parents, Albert Roessler, Sr. (1859-1890), a native of New Jersey, and Emma Katherine Erb (1858-1930+³), a native of Connecticut. The family name in German is spelled Rössler. His paternal grandfather was Johann Rössler a native of Vienna, Austria, and his wife Mathilda a native of Baden-Württemberg, Germany. According to the U.S. Census 1900 his mother remarried in 1893, after the death of his father, to John Mulcahey. They lived on Mt. Prospect Street, Newark, New Jersey.

Roessler became hooked on stamps and coins at the age of ten, and later on, specialized as a First Day Cover (FDC) cachet maker and servicer for most of his entire career. He was a talented artist, illustrator and cartoonist and published in *Cartoons Magazine*. He used his artistic skills to create many illustrations for his three main publications: *A. C. Roessler's Stamp News*, *Stamp Dealers News*, and *Air Plane Stamp News*, as well as a myriad of illustrated cacheted first and second day covers. Originally living with his parents at 140 South (now called the Oraton) Parkway, East Orange N. J., he moved to Colorado as a young man, first working in the mines and on a ranch.⁴

He was trained as an artist at the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts. After graduation we find him first listed in the 1903 *Denver City Directory* as a printer's apprentice to the *Rocky Mountain News* and the *Denver Times*. While in Denver he ran a mail order stamp business, and wrote columns and advertised his bargain stamp products in *The Stamp Journal* of Denver and *Philatelic West*. He was a founding member of the Denver Stamp Club, organized on December 13, 1905. The minutes of the January 1908 Club meeting state that a photographer for the *Denver Republican* took a Club photo that was published in the February issue of the *Illustrated Sunday Magazine* of the *Denver Republican*.⁵ The photo certainly includes Roessler, who was present at the January 1908 Club meeting, but he had a passion for anonymity. In 1913, Roessler drew a cartoon of himself showing only the back of his head, and published it in the December 1913 *A. C. Roessler's The Stamp News*, with a humorous note saying it was in response to readers asking him to publish a picture of himself. Newton noted in 1977 that no one knew what Roessler looked like, sufficiently to identify him in the 1908 Denver Stamp Club photo.⁶ The 5'-11" Roessler, weighing 210 pounds, would never permit his photograph to be published and no confirmed pictures of him are known. Dan Barber in his "Via Air Mail" column in *Stamp Collector* (September 13, 1980), reproduced two photographs which might be those of Roessler. Originally Barry Newton reproduced the two photographs on page 108 purporting to contain Roessler in group shots. The first one he cites was published in red ink on the cover of *Philatelic West*, Vol. 20, September (1902). However, Brodstone also published Charles H. Nast's list of names of those in the Denver Stamp Club and Roessler is not in the photo since everyone is named except him.

The second is the Senior Stamp Collectors Club of Denver published in *The Denver Republican, Illustrated Sunday Magazine*, page 5, February 23, 1908. Roessler is believed by this writer to be the next to last man far right back row deduced by his height and age being twenty-five at the time and seems consistent with the 1929 photo in *Air Plane Stamp News*.



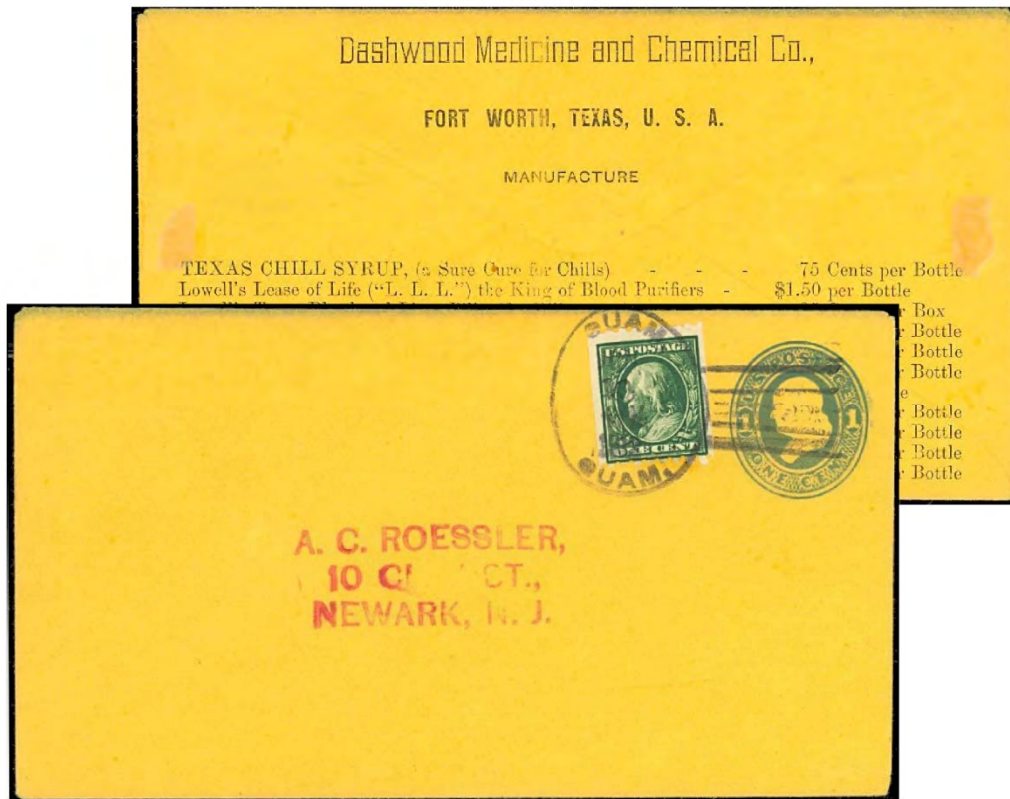
Reprinted in Newton⁷

Fig. 4: Picture published in the *Denver Republican, Illustrated Sunday Magazine*, page 5, February 23, 1908. Roessler is believed by this author to be the next to last man far right back row.

The May 1908 issue of *The Stamp Journal* in Denver announced that Roessler was leaving his job as President of The Stamp Journal Company, and transferring his stock in the company, to return East to full-time residence in New York City. The April and May 1909 issues of *The Stamp Journal* published humorous articles by Roessler on the stamp dealer scene on Nassau Street in New York City – about monopolistic auctions and the appearance of imperforate stamps from the First Bureau Regular Postage Series of 1902-03. On May 1, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 1 of [A.C. Roessler's] *Stamp News* appeared, the first of 209 issues published from 1909 to 1937. Originally titled simply *Stamp News*, Roessler changed the title in December 1909, prefixing his name to it as *A.C. Roessler's Stamp News*. In 1909 in New York, Roessler worked as Manager of the Federal Stamp Co. in the Tribune Building on Nassau St, and lived at 1958 Washington Ave., New York City.⁸

He applied to the American Numismatic Association in September and joined the ANA in November 1909 with an address at 1958 Washington Ave. This is the earliest known numismatic activity of Roessler within the mainstream of American numismatics. From here on we find Roessler involved with the coin business until he retired in 1940.

By 1910 Roessler moved across the river to his native city of Newark, New Jersey, to 10½ Clay Street, where he resided, dealt in stamps, coins and covers, and published *A.C. Roessler's Stamp News*. He became vice president of the Newark Stamp Club in 1911 and the President in 1914.



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, A.C. Roessler File
Fig. 5: Roessler postal stationery cover Scott #U116-U35 = Thorp-Bartels #362 with uprated franking with a very scarce Scott #392, postmarked Guam, June 10, 1912. This is a remarkably early Roessler cover that was originally printed with an all-over advertising backside for Dashwood Medicine and Chemical Company of Fort Worth, Texas, on Plimpton postal stationery issued 1874-1876. In 1912 this was already an antique unused cover, some 36 -38 years old when Roessler came upon it and self-addressed it with a rubber stamp in red ink.

Note the right handed Roessler favored the far left side when applying the rubber stamp, leaving the right side with a weaker impression, thereby causing the maladroit impression of the address 10 CLAY ST., to appear as if reading 10 CLAY CT. The C of what seems to be CT., is actually composed of the upper and lower lobes of the S of ST. Apparently, he sent this cover in a larger envelope either to a postmaster in Guam or someone he knew at a military base in Guam and requested they mail it back to him with the Guam postmark. Many dealers used to do this sort of thing to get postmarks they wished to have either for themselves or for a collector/client.

Coin Department:
 A. C. ROESSLER, Supt., 10½ Clay St., Newark, New Jersey, U. S. A.
 Official Translator:
 H. F. KALSE, 219 McDermot Avenue, Winnipeg, Canada.
EVERYBODY'S PHILATELIST, Official Organ.

Everybody's Philatelist, Volume 4, No. 8, August 1913, page 190.
Fig. 6: Roessler was in charge of the "Coin Department" for Everybody's Philatelist.

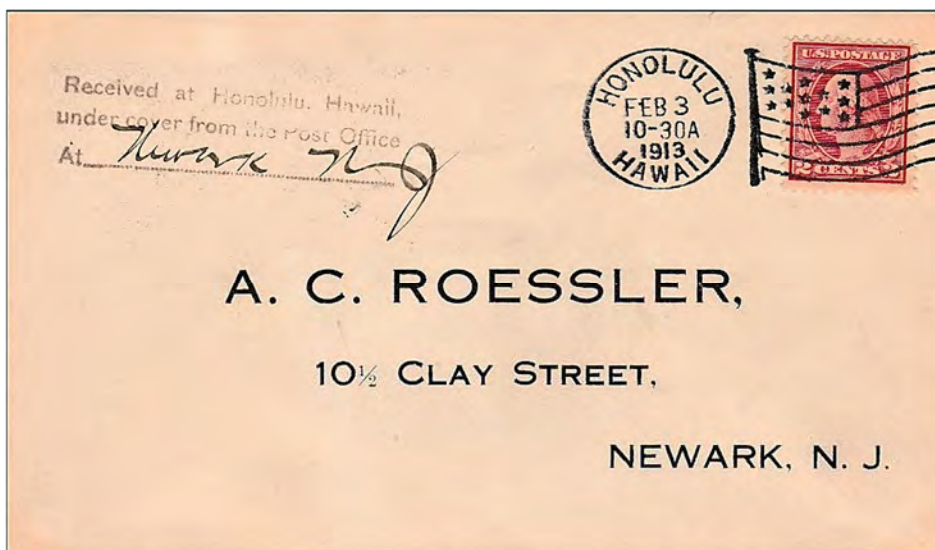


Fig. 7: A May 8 1914 self-addressed Roessler cover with Newark corner franked with a Scott #444 issued April 25th making this an early use. That was just 17 days after USA occupied Veracruz. On April 9th U. S. sailors entered Tampico Bay fueling station and were arrested. President Wilson ordered the U. S. Navy to occupy Veracruz and release the sailors.

Roessler probably franked this the first day of issue placing it in a larger mailing envelope to the postmaster at Veracruz. The postmark and cancellation were made by a roller with repetitive CDS and four wavy line killers.

Fig. 8: A variety of Roessler corner cards, from Denver, NYC, Newark, and East Orange

Clay Street in Newark is an industrial section of Newark with scattered apartment buildings and overhead apartments. Apparently Roessler owned his own shop there since he advertised print jobs in various periodicals. Owning a print shop allowed him to print his magazines and envelopes at cost.

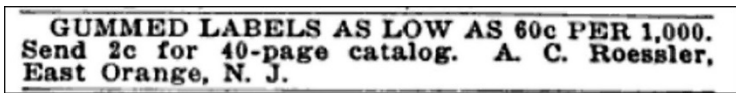


Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library.

Fig. 9: Self-addressed stamped business envelope of A. C. Roessler postmarked Honolulu, Hawaii, February 3, 1913, A.M., Flag Cancel - H-14. Special postal marking in violet stamped "Received at Honolulu, Hawaii under cover from the Post Office At Newark, N. J" at upper left.

A.C. ROESSLER, A JERSEY LEGEND ~ John Lupia

By December 1914 he had moved his residence and stamp and coin operations into his new home at 140 South Parkway, East Orange, New Jersey.



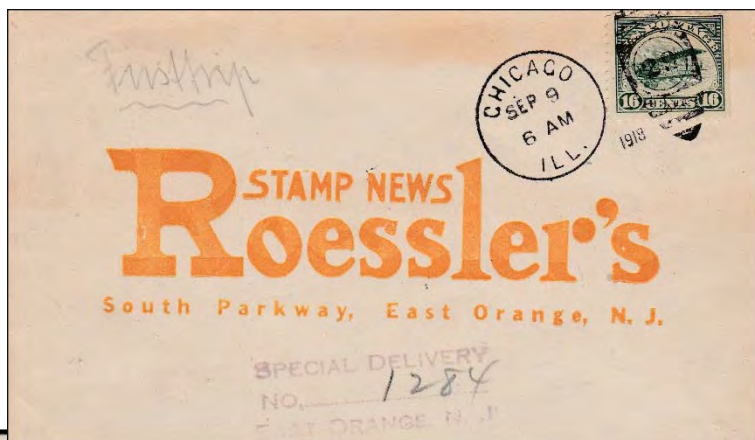
Cartoons Magazine, Vol. 7, No. 5, May 1915.

Fig. 10: Roessler's advertisement soliciting to print labels and for a mere 2 cents will send his 40- page catalogue of printing services and rates published in Cartoons Magazine in 1915.

He serviced First Flight Cachets (but not First Day Cachets) on the #C3 24¢ Airmail issued May 13, 1918 for the inauguration of the US airmail between New York and Washington. In *The Stamp News* he published an early report of the C3 Inverted Jenny. Shortly after C3 he founded *The Air Plane Stamp News*, publishing 167 issues between 1918 and 1938. He operated his postal printing business operations at 37 So. 8th Street, in the Roseville Section of Newark, and addressed his covers to this address from March 1921 until March 1924, after which he reverted to exclusive use of his home address at 140 South Parkway, East Orange.⁹

Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library,
A. C. Roessler file.

Fig. 11: A. C. Roessler's Stamp News, advertising cover, postmarked Chicago, Illinois, September 9, 1918, first flight, 60 days after issue of Scott # C2-API 16¢ green issued July 11, 1918. Very early Air Mail before the establishment of the Trans-continental route from Cleveland to Chicago. If this were a regular mail cover alone it would be worth from \$150 on up. Early Air Mail covers sell typically \$600-\$800.



Courtesy Lupia
Numismatic Library, A. C.
Roessler file.

Fig. 12 & 13: Roessler's Air Plane Stamp News and Winged Letters postmarked December 18, 1918.

The first Roessler cachets were for #620/621, the Norse-American Set issued May 28, 1925.¹⁰



Fig. 14: A. C. Roessler's *Stamp News*, May 1920. In 1919 his address was East Orange, New Jersey; in 1924 his address was 37 South 8th Street, Newark, New Jersey.

There are no known Roessler FDCs, either manufactured or serviced, for the #617/619 Set (3) Lexington-Concord, issued April 4, 1925.¹¹ The first pictorial Roessler cachet was the #623-1 17¢ Woodrow Wilson issued Dec. 28, 1925.¹² As a printer, Roessler also produced and sold to other FDC cachet makers and servicers as well as the general public, many varieties of distinctive air envelopes, beginning with the Roessler double-bar envelope on March 20, 1925, two types of “barber-pole” air envelopes in 1928, and three types of “checkered” air envelopes in 1929-1930.¹³ The #620-9 and #620 ROE-2 cited above have a printed advertisement for Roessler envelopes on the back.¹⁴

The #629 2¢ Battle of White Plains issue on Oct. 18, 1926 was Roessler's first “stamplike” cachet, featuring distinctive enlarged perforations framing a picture of a stamp.¹⁵ This cachet had original artwork by Roessler inside the perforation frame that Roessler had published in *The Stamp News* as a proposed design for the new White Plains issue. The cachet picture duplicates the “U.S. Postage” words, and the face of the cachet states that “Cut shows rejected design.”

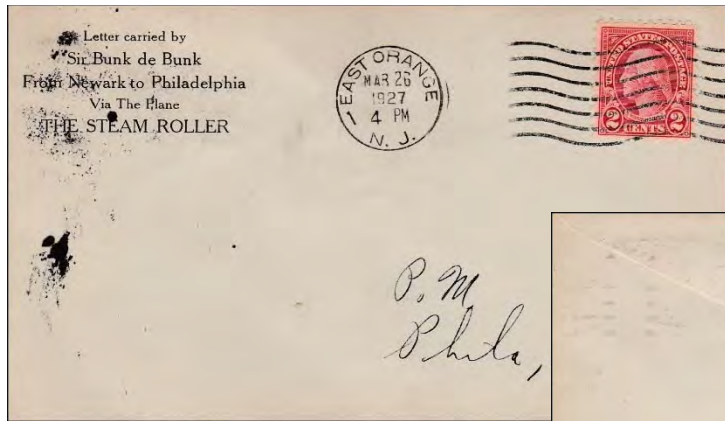
During the early 1930s, Roessler continued the practice of printing FDC Cachets with artwork resembling the announced design, eliminating, however, the prohibited “U.S. Postage” words. His cachet for the #704-715 Washington Bicentennial Series featured an enlarged engraving of young Washington's portrait lifted exactly from the #703 Yorktown stamp's engraving of Washington. Bad blood between the Post Office Department and Roessler fomented with Roessler's continuing to claim prior design of U.S. stamps, publishing uncomplimentary articles about the Post Office Department, and producing cartoon-like cachets that appeared insulting because they parodied official Post Office Department designs. The Post Office Department refused to mail most of Roessler's original cachets for the #724-8 3¢ William Penn and the #725-29 Daniel Webster, both issued Oct. 24, 1932. Roessler produced censored versions that eliminated the perforated border and the phrase “Use Air Mail.”¹⁶



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, A. C. Roessler file.

Fig. 15: Stamp dealer and philatelic writer and columnist Philip Ward mailer to A. C. Roessler franked with 19 cent air mail rate postmarked Philadelphia, registered mail, February 21, 1927.

A.C. ROESSLER, A JERSEY LEGEND ~ John Lupia



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, Roessler file

Fig. 16: Roessler's prankish double-sided cover. Front side a mimic air mail cover "Letter carried by Sir Bunk de Bunk / From Newark to Philadelphia / Via the Plane / The Steam Roller" franked with a nicely centered Scott #554-A157, postmarked East Orange, N.J., March 26, 1927.



Fig. 16a: Reverse, self stamped addressed to A. C. Roessler, franked with Scott #627-A188, Liberty Bell Sesquicentennial Exposition carmine rose 2¢.



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, A. C. Roessler file.

Fig. 17: Roessler's "First Experimental Airplane-Motorcycle Courier Service" postmarked Westfield, Massachusetts, March 15, 1928. Franked with a strip of two 1-1/2 cent Harding, 2 cent Washington Fourth Bureau, and 5 cent Ericsson.



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, A. C. Roessler file.

Fig. 18: Roessler First Day Cover - June 17, 1929 - (Barry Newton) 657 ROE-1a Binghamton - special rubber-stamped cachet. The light blue-green overprint reads First Day Cover, Binghamton (diagonally), with this additional text: Center of New York's Southern Tier / 230 Diversified Industries / Hub of Five Important Auto Trails. Very scarce.

Although dealing heavily in covers of various types, coin dealing remained a large part of Roessler's business:

LINDBERGH MEDAL.

This was made by the French mint in gold for presentation to the Colonel. We have secured what we believe to be the only supply in the U. S. Our medals are in bronze.

Price to those who order in advance of receipt of medal, postpaid, \$1.75.

A. C. ROESSLER,
140 South Parkway, East Orange, N. J.

Fig. 19: Roessler's ad for the bronze Lindbergh Medal in The Numismatist, Vol. XL, No. 8, August (1927), No. 499. Roessler created about two dozen or so different Lindbergh cacheted covers.

Hawaiian Half Dollar.

THIS COIN WILL BE SENT OUT JULY 1.

We are taking advance orders now. All we need tell you is the sale is restricted and that there are only 10,000 at \$2.00 each. When you stop to think of the thousands of Sesqui and Stone Mountains we don't need to say anything further. We are taking orders, cash in advance, please, to be sent out insured, day of issue, postpaid.

\$1.00.

A. C. ROESSLER
140 South Parkway, East Orange, N. J.

Fig. 20: Roessler's ad for the Hawaiian half dollar in The Numismatist, Vol. XLI, No. 7, July (1928), No. 439.

Roessler began calling out the post office for what he felt were unfair practices: His criticism and humor were not appreciated by the USPO, which began to retaliate in kind.

CHARGES TWO AIRMEN VIOLATED POSTAL LAWS
Hassell and Cramer Accused of Carrying Mail to Greenland
ROCKFORD, Ill., Sept. 6 (AP).—The Rockford postmaster today received a copy of a complaint that has been filed with the Post Office Department by A. C. Roessler, a New York stamp collector, charging that Bert Hassell and Parker Cramer violated United States postal regulations in carrying mail from Rockford to Greenland on their projected flight to Stockholm, Sweden.
The postmaster, however, said so far as he knew no United States mail was carried by the Rockford fliers. He said they merely carried some personal messages from persons here to members of the University of Michigan expedition in Greenland.

Fig. 21: Roessler's complaint against the U. S. Post Office was published in the Morning News, Friday, September 7, 1928, page 1.

• • •
A. C. Roessler of New Jersey makes some comment which may astonish some readers. In this 'stamp news' he tells that the Molly Pitcher overprints on current U. S. postage, to commemorate that intrepid woman at the Revolutionary battle of Monmouth were printed at the instigation of a politician who spoke to officials at the Post Office Department in words in this effect: "You get out stamps for Republicans, but you never do anything for Democrats. You are bigots O, come on, not a regular stamp—just an overprint like the Hawaiians for Molly and Monmouth. What say?" Roessler concludes: 'And doggone, if the department didn't say yes.'

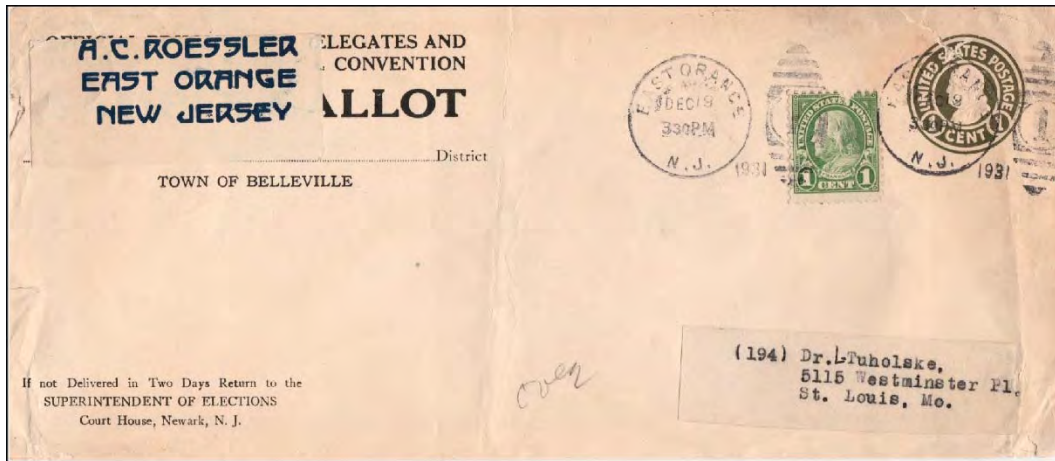
Fig. 22: Another Roessler complaint against the U.S. Post Office was published in the Democrat and Chronicle, Sunday, January 20, 1929, page 42.

PHILATELIST IS HELD
Albert C. Roessler Charged With Using Mails to Defraud.
NEWARK, Jan. 30. (AP)—Albert C. Roessler, internationally known authority on stamps, was arrested today on a federal bench warrant in connection with an indictment charging the use of the mails to defraud.
The federal grand jury returned the indictment Jan. 17. Roessler was released in \$100 bail after a hearing following his arrest.
The indictment against Roessler charges he had advertised that he had an exclusive agreement with Sir Hubert Wilkins, Polar explorer, whereby the later would autograph letters carried by his submarine, Nautilus, in its recent polar expedition from England.
The demand for such covers, the indictment charges, was so great that Roessler counterfeited a facsimile of a New York cancellation stamp to cancel the stamps on the Wilkins letters.

Fig. 23: Roessler's arrest and indictment published in the Asbury Park Press, Monday, January 30, 1933, page 3. The story ran in the Associated Press and was also published in the St. Louis Post Dispatch on the same day.

Wilkins' Name Figures In Stamp Fraud Charge
The name of Sir Hubert Wilkins cropped up today in Federal Court as Albert C. Roessler, well-known stamp dealer of East Orange, pleaded not guilty to charges of using the mails to defraud.
The Government charges that Roessler sold letters at a dollar each to stamp collectors, the envelopes to bear evidence of Sir Hubert's dash for the North Pole by submarine.
The letters were to be mailed in England, carried aboard the submarine to Nome, Alaska, and there to be shipped by airmail to the purchasers, it was alleged.
Such was not the case, the Government contends, because all the letters were mailed in the United States and never went out of the country.

Fig. 24: Roessler's case published in the Trenton Evening News, Monday, March 20, 1933, page 1.



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, A. C. Roessler file.

Fig. 25: Roessler altered use of this postal stationery mailer with return address pasted over previous use, and sent as printed matter, postmarked East Orange, New Jersey, December 19, 1931, 3:30 P.M.

On Jan 1, 1933, Roessler was indicted and arrested on two federal charges of crimes committed five-six years earlier:

- (1) using the U.S. mails for deceptive purposes in 1927; and
- (2) printing and using printed items “in similitude of obligations of the United States” in 1928.

The first charge was that, while processing event covers for a failed Arctic exploration flight on Sept. 24, 1927 by Sir Hubert Wilkins, Roessler forged a facsimile of a New York cancellation to create additional covers after the trip, when demand for the covers exceeded the supply actually taken aboard the airplane. The second charge was that Roessler overprinted “GRAF ZEPPELIN” on a 1¢ Franklin, and then advertised it for sale at 10¢ each,¹⁷ and used it Oct. 28, 1928 in combination with other stamps when servicing Graf Zeppelin LZ-127 Flight Covers.¹⁸ The overprinting was identical to the font style used by the Post Office Department on a 2¢ Washington stamp for the #646 2¢ Molly Pitcher and #647/648 2¢ and 5¢ Hawaii Issues, which Roessler had previously mocked publicly. On June 21, 1933 Roessler pled guilty to both charges in Federal Court in Newark. He was sentenced to two years in the Atlanta penitentiary, but the sentence was suspended and he was placed on probation for three years.¹⁹

The timing of these events is interesting. The 1927 and 1928 crimes were committed during the Coolidge Administration (1925-1929), yet resulted in no federal prosecution until the very end of the Hoover Administration, after Hoover had lost the election and become a Lame Duck President. Roessler continued to publicly blast Third Assistant Postmaster General Frank Tilton (under lame duck President Hoover’s Postmaster General Walter Brown) for censoring and withholding his #725 3¢ Daniel Webster FDCs.²⁰ The federal indictment for the 1927 and 1928 crimes was handed down Jan 31, 1933, only two months before Roosevelt was inaugurated March 4, 1935, and James A. Farley was appointed Postmaster-General. Following his conviction in June of 1933, Roessler became uncharacteristically cautious in his public criticism of the Post Office Department. By the summer and fall of 1934 the philatelic press was up in arms about Farley’s issuance of priceless imperforate sheets to Roosevelt and other favored cronies, one of which had been sold to a dealer in November 1934 for \$20,000. Yet it was not until the situation had been remedied by the public issuance of the Farley Reprints, #752/771, on March 15, 1935, that Roessler joined in the public criticism of Postmaster-General Farley’s abuse.²¹



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, A. C. Roessler file.

Fig. 26: Roessler First Day Cover April 21, 1937 (Barry Newton) C21 ROE-1 Very Scarce.

Barry Newton suggests that Roessler began going blind about the time of the #785/794 Army-Navy Set issued 1936-1937.²² Apparently he either developed severe cataracts or glaucoma.

For the 1938 Presidential Issue, he produced defaced photographic images, i.e., sections cut out to avoid printing the entire image which would violate Federal Law, of the #803 ½¢ Franklin, #804 1¢ Washington, #805 1½¢ Martha Washington, #806 2¢ Adams and #807 3¢ Jefferson.²³ For the #806 2¢ and denominations higher than 3¢, Roessler serviced his regular client list with rubber-stamp addressed envelopes on WSE/Clifford Cachets, some with “By Aerial Mail” added by rubber-stamp. The last and highest Prexy denomination serviced by Roessler was the WSE/Clifford #817-58 12¢ Zachary Taylor issued Sept. 14, 1938.²⁴

The last cachet that can be definitively attributed to Roessler as designer is a commemorative – a defaced photographic image for #835 3¢ Constitution Ratification issued June 21, 1938.²⁵ Roessler serviced his subscribers with two other commemoratives from nearby New Jersey cachet makers: the Clarence Reid #836-40 for the 3¢ Delaware issued June 27, 1938 (Reid had also sold this cachet to Leo August’s Washington Stamp Exchange and Egon Bernet of Newark Stamp Exchange, and Roessler had often collaborated with all of them),²⁶ and John Alden’s Pilgrim Cachet #837-22¢ issued July 15, 1938.²⁷

Roessler appears to have been completely out of business by 1940. However, he still kept his shop in East Orange that became revived in the mid 1950’s under his former employee Frank Spadone. Barry Newton suggests that Roessler was near-blind (citing an article by Stan Fryczynski in May/June 1961 First Days) and collected unemployment compensation and welfare benefits from then until his death on January 26, 1952 in Orange, New Jersey.²⁸ However, he may not have been blind but lacked vision adequate enough to draw and carry on his hobby business. According to a notice in the Asbury Park Evening Press on Friday, January 2, 1948 he was a guest at the home of Robert Coslick of Ocean Grove at a Christmas party in December 1947.

Some of these covers are available for sale. Contact John Lupia at jlupia2@yahoo.com or visit <http://www.numismaticmall.com/numismaticmall-com/roessler-albert-charles>.



Courtesy Lupia Numismatic Library, A. C. Roessler file

Fig. 27: Roessler postal stationery mailer with invoice postmarked East Orange, New Jersey, April 27, 1932.

ROESSLER WORKS

- A.C. Roessler's Stamp News* (1909-1937)
- A.C. Roessler's Stamp News, Dealers' Edition* (1916-1919)
- Air Plane Stamp News* (1927-1937)
- Flash List* (1927-19??) Smith reports 1977 as terminal date.
- Coin List* (1927-1930)
- The Coin News* (1930-1936/7)
- Bankers Coin Book* (1934/5-1937)

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ENDNOTES:

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- ¹ Copyright © 2011-2017 John N. Lupia III. John N. Lupia, III is a Fellow of Rutgers, and has taught art history and archaeology for over fifteen years at Seton Hall University and Kean University and is now retired. He has published numerous articles in journals and was a leading contributor to MacMillan Publishers for the new edition of Grove, *The Dictionary of Art* (New York: Groves Dictionaries, 1996) 34 volumes, with Jane Shoaf Turner, editor. He has worked and studied as an extern at various museums in New York including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Jewish Museum New York, Frick Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. He has traveled throughout the United States and Europe and lives part time in the Middle East studying the Holy Land archaeological sites in Lebanon and Egypt and Muslim and Christian relations. His last book was *The Ancient Jewish Shroud at Turin* (Regina Caeli Press, 2010).
- ² Ad shows "Airplane News" instead of "Air Plane Stamp News," seen on most issues of this publication we have seen.
- ³ Emma Roessler Mulcahy is listed in a 1930 census as living with her son in East Orange; she would have been 71 at that time.
- ⁴ Barry Newton's *A.C. Roessler Photo Cachet Catalogue*, 1977, p. 99.
- ⁵ The photo is reproduced in Barry Newton's *A.C. Roessler Photo Cachet Catalogue*, 1977, at p. 108.
- ⁶ Id., p. 108.
- ⁷ Newton, page 108.
- ⁸ Id., pp. 99-102.
- ⁹ Id., p. 101-106.
- ¹⁰ #620-621 ROE-1 and #620 ROE-2 in Newton, 1977, pp.6-7; #620/21-1 and -9, in Mellone, Planty Vol. I, 1994, pp. 37-38; Monty et al., *First Cachets Revealed*, 2006, p. 6.
- ¹¹ Newton, 1977, p. 7; Mellone, Planty Vol. I, 1994, pp. 33-36.
- ¹² Mellone, Planty Vol. I, 1994, p. 41; Newton, 1977, pp. 8-9.
- ¹³ Newton, 1977, pp. 3-4
- ¹⁴ Mellone, Planty Vol. I, 1994, p. 38; Newton, 1977, p. 7
- ¹⁵ #629-9 in Mellone, Planty Vol. I, 1994, p. 55; 629 ROE-1 and ROE-2 in Newton, 1977, p. 11
- ¹⁶ #724-9, Mellone, Planty Vol. I, 1994, p. 98, and ROE-2 in Newton, 1977, pp. 49-50; #725-30 in Mellone, Planty Vol II, 1995, and ROE in Newton, 1977, p. 51.
- ¹⁷ Newton, 1977, p. 95
- ¹⁸ See ROE-FZ15, Newton, 1977, p. 95.
- ¹⁹ Linn's Stamp Review, July 15, 1933, quoted in Newton, 1977, p. 106.
- ²⁰ See Roessler, A. C. Roessler's Stamp News #200 Jan-Feb 1933, Airplane Stamp News #145 Jan 1933, #146 Feb 1933 and #147 Feb-Mar 1933, quoted at length in Newton, 1977, p. 52.
- ²¹ Roessler, "Monkey Business," "A.C. Roessler's Stamp News #203 April-Jun 1935, quoted in Newton, p. 66; See Johl, U.S. Commem. Vol. I, 1947, pp. 237-241
- ²² Newton, 1977, p. 106.
- ²³ Newton, 1977 p. 79-80. Mellone, Planty Vol. XIV, 2001, p. 14
- ²⁴ Newton, 1977, p. 81; Mellone, Planty Vol. XIV, 2001, p. 30.
- ²⁵ #835 ROE-1 in Newton, 1977, p. 81; #835-68 in Mellone, Planty Vol. XIV, 2001, p. 88.
- ²⁶ See Mellone, Planty Vol. XV, 2004, p. 14; #836 ROE-1 in Newton, 1977, p. 81
- ²⁷ Mellone, Planty Vol. XV, 2004, p. 48; #837 ROE-1 in Newton, 1977, p. 81
- ²⁸ Newton, 1977, pp. 106-107.

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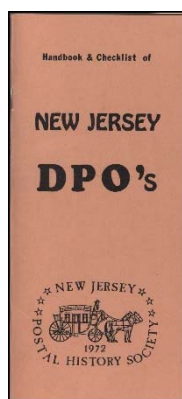
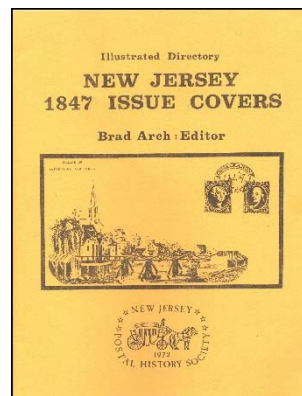
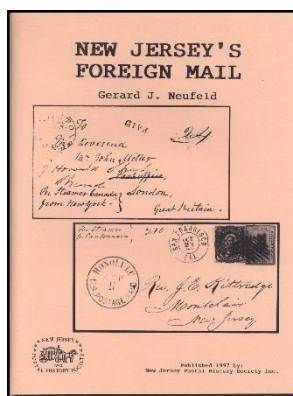
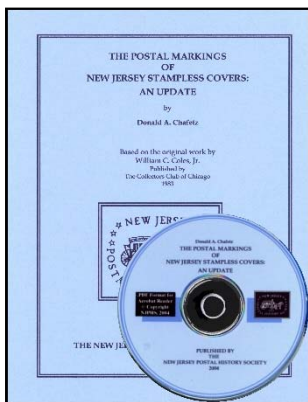
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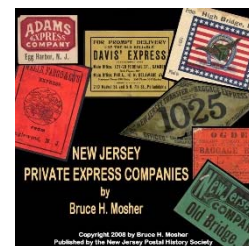


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