



NJPH

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New Jersey's Most Valuable Cover



Illustrated above is a cover on which is affixed Scott 314A, a 4¢ brown imperforate stamp with Schermack Type III perforations. It sold for \$130,000 in Siegel's Oct. 3 US Stamp Treasures Auction. Read more on page [184](#).

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DUES TIME AGAIN!

If your dues have not yet been paid, you will find an enclosed reminder for dues payment for 2019. Dues are still \$15 a year, and again this year you have the option of paying your dues online by Paypal (no extra fee), by going to our web site [www.NJPostalHistory.org] where you will find a link for membership renewal on the home page. You can also donate to the Society at the same time, if you would like. We are happy to accept your dues and donations in whatever form you like!

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

With this month’s commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI, Captain Larry Brennan contributes an article concerning the torpedoing of the USS Covington, a transport that carried over 21,000 troops on six voyages from Hoboken, New Jersey to Brest, France. John Lupia returns with an article concerning famed 19th century New Jersey stamp dealer, E.B. Sterling. Don Chafetz continues with his series on foreign mail to Morris County, and Ed and Jean Siskin and Henry Scheuer detail the Project Mercury First Day in Haddonfield. Gene Fricks brings us another in the Home Town post office series, this one detailing the postal history of Belvidere, while Jean Walton contributes another on the Beaver Lake post office. A number of New Jersey covers were featured in auctions sales this past fall as detailed in my *On the Auction Scene* article as well as a separate piece on New Jersey’s most valuable postal history cover that was sold in the Gross sale in October.

We need some first-time contributors to our journal. Each one of you must have a favorite cover. All you need do is send Jean a scan of the cover and a few sentences describing its significance and it can be turned into a short article. Sharing your interests with other collectors is a most pleasurable part of our hobby.

The continued success of our Society is due in large part to our members who do the heavy lifting. First and foremost, my many thanks to our editor, Jean Walton who spends countless hours in producing our award-winning journal. In addition, I am grateful to our webmaster, Warren Plank who continues to maintain our website. Take a look.

Your renewed membership for 2019 is crucial to our Society’s future. Once again, dues will be held at \$15 per year, a sum that does not cover the rising cost of printing and postage increases. To close that gap, I again urge you to include a tax-deductible donation with your dues payment on the enclosed dues notice.

ROBERT G. ROSE


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NEW JERSEY'S MOST VALUABLE COVER

By Robert G. Rose

The recent auction of a portion of the famed William H. Gross collection included the most valuable cover in all of New Jersey postal history.¹ Illustrated below is the cover on which is affixed a 4¢ brown imperforate stamp with Schermack Type III perforations, Scott 314A. Against a pre-sale estimate of \$100-150,000 it sold for a hammer price of \$130,000 plus an 18% buyer's fee of \$23,400 for a record total of \$153,400.



(Courtesy Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.)

Fig. 1. Scott 314A on cover tied by Sicklerville, N.J. handstamp postmark dated April 8, 1909.

The issuance of this imperforate stamp in 1908, its modification for use on an affixing machine for commercial mailings, the purchase of a number of unused examples by a collector, and its use by the collector on a few covers, makes for an interesting story. That story, as provided in the Gross catalog's description includes details concerning the stamp's production and purpose.

With the rising popularity of vending and affixing machines, numerous requests were made by manufacturers for supplies of imperforate stamps, which could then be privately perforated to conform to each firm's machine. In May 1908, a supply of 25 sheets (400 stamps per sheet) of the 4¢ 1902 Issue, without perforations, was delivered to the Schermack Mailing Machine Co. in Detroit. The entire supply was cut into coils with Schermack Type III perforations, designed for the firm's patented affixing machine and delivered to the Winfield Printing Co. for use on mass mailings of advertising material. Approximately 6,000 were used on a mailing for Hamilton Carhartt Manufacturer, and almost all of the 4,000 balance were used on a mailing for Burroughs Adding Machine Co.²

A Detroit stamp collector, Karl Koslowski, was the only person who purchased some of the unused 4¢ stamps from the Winfield Printing Company, which he first noticed at the plant while visiting a friend there prior to a trip to his native Latvia.³ In a 1910 article, Koslowski stated that he purchased 50 stamps and expected to be able to buy more, but the supply was destroyed when he returned the next day.⁴

The census of this rare stamp as researched and compiled by the Siegel organization accounts for 34 of the 50 stamps Koslowski is stated to have purchased. This includes 21 unused stamps currently in the Siegel census, all of which must have been purchased by him. As further detailed in the Gross catalog's description:

[Koslowski] used at least 13 stamps on mail to friends, including a strip of three on a Koslowski cover, two used strips of three off cover (the mass mailings were all singles), a used pair, and two singles on separate Koslowski covers. The earliest known cover is dated at Detroit on May 27, 1908, from Koslowski to a friend in Austria, and the latest is dated April 8, 1909⁵

In addition to the stamps Koslowski used, there is one recorded commercial cover (June 2, 1908) and 32 used single stamps, most of which were presumably removed from the mass mailing of the commercial covers.

How was it that his rarity found its way to Sicklerville, New Jersey where it was destined to be used on a cover which has become the most valuable piece of New Jersey postal history? According to its Gross catalog description, the single 4¢ stamp "was affixed by Koslowski to a self-addressed envelope and sent inside a parcel to his brother in Sicklerville, N.J. The parcel bore a strip of three of the 4¢ stamp, with instructions to return the cancelled strip of three in the envelope bearing the single."⁶ Koslowski's brother dutifully followed the instructions, and mailed the enclosed cover back to Detroit, at which time the cover was hand stamped at the Sicklerville post office with its April 8, 1909 postmark.⁷

ENDNOTES:

¹ Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc., "United States Stamp Treasures: The William H. Gross Sale," Sale No. 1188, October 3, 2018, Lot 103 (Hard copy version available on-line). See https://siegelauctions.com/lot_lkp.php, search Sale 1188, Lot # 103.

² *Ibid.*, p. 227.

³ Johl, Max G. *United States Stamps 1902-1935* (Quarterman Publications, Inc., Lawrence, Mass. 1976) p. 43.

⁴ Gross Sale Catalog description at p. 227

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.* Further details concerning this stamp and its postal history, see Ken Lawrence's article, *The Scarce Imperforate 4¢ Ulysses S. Grant Stamp of 1908*, Linn's Stamp News, August 21, 2017, pp. 18, 65-66 (on-line).

⁷ Sicklerville is located in Winslow Township, Camden County. It was, in 1910, a small rural community with a population of 600. Its post office was established in 1873.

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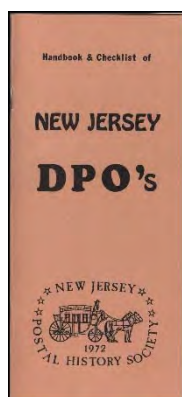
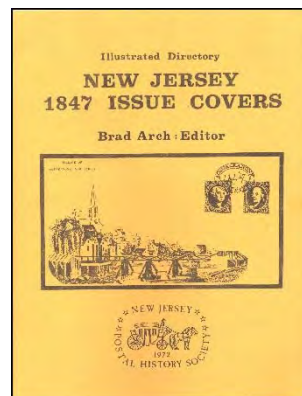
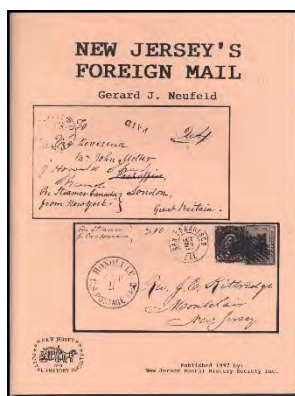
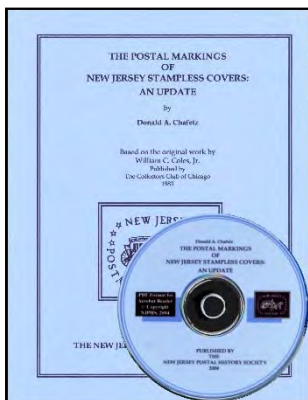
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* see our web site at www.NJPostalHistory.org for other files available free to the public in our Free Online Library ~ Includes information of early postal legislation, Revolutionary and Civil War covers, and postmaster lists from the stampless era (1789-57), and for various NJ counties which have been researched, of interest to postal historians and genealogists as well.

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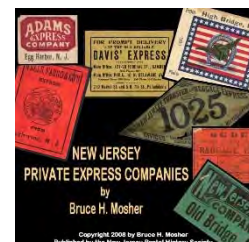


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