

PO 'OLEKA O HAWAII



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"PO'OLEKA O HAWAII"

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DID YOU KNOW?

PERFORATIONS

Most philatelists are aware that Henry Archer was the inventor of the first stamp perforating machine. However, it seems that part of the credit should go elsewhere if we are to believe the following story from the British "Post Office Magazine".

Many names are recorded in official files of men who brought about important reforms in the postal service, but we have searched in vain for an entry referring to a freelance journalist named Fowler. Yet he deserves to be remembered.

One night in the autumn of 1850, he was seated at his usual table in the Red Lion Tavern, near Fleet Street, preparing his copy for the post. In those days postage stamps were printed in large sheets unperforated and had to be cut off before fixing on the envelopes. Having no scissors or knife, Fowler took a pin from his coat, pricked along the edges of the stamps he needed and tore them off.

His companion at the table, a man named Henry Archer saw what had happened, and a few weeks later he came to the General Post Office with a perforating machine he had made which automatically did just what Fowler had done with his pin. He got £4,000 for his invention.

GUTTER

Most collectors are familiar with the philatelic term "gutter" which refers to the space, usually blank, between the panes of stamps on a sheet, also defined as the space between two adjacent stamps. However, how many collectors know that this philatelic term is derived from a bookbinding term meaning the white spaces between the pages of a book?

* * * * *

HAWAII'S "PROVISIONAL GOVT. 1893" SURCHARGE

By Charles Foster Richards
1916

Saturday, May 20, 1893, was a day of great excitement amongst the collectors of Honolulu, for on that day the stamps of the Kingdom of Hawaii, with the new surcharge "Provisional Govt. 1893" in three lines, were first sold to the public though a few may have leaked out before that date, for in "The American Journal of Philately" of April 29, 1893, page 248, mention is made of a letter having been received that was prepaid with a surcharged five cent ultramarine.

Queen Liliuokalani had been deposed by the peaceable revolution of January 17, 1893, and Mr. Joseph M. Oat had been appointed Postmaster General in the Provisional Government, April 4, 1893, succeeding Mr. Walter Hill, who was deposed from office April 1st.

The first surcharging of the stamps, stamped envelopes and postal cards was done between April 4, on which date the Finance Committee of the Advisory Council passed a resolution that the Postmaster General be ordered to have all stamps surcharged "Provisional Govt. 1893", and May 20th.

The work on the stamps was done by the Hawaiian Gazette Co. of Honolulu under the direction of Mr. P. T. Rhodes, and on the stamped envelopes and postal cards by the Press Publishing Co. of Honolulu, of which company Mr. Thomas G. Thrum, an old time collector and writer, was chief owner.

There was such immediate need for this surcharging that the two companies which did it did not have time to order supplies from the main land which in those days had to be done by mail, and it would take at least two weeks to obtain them. They therefore used what inks they had in stock or could get in Honolulu.

Possibly supplies were received from the United States before the second, or later printings.

All the normal stamps except the twelve cent red lilac with red surcharge were on sale on the opening day, these constituting what is known as the first printing.

In the Honolulu Commercial Advertiser of May 15th, 1893, appeared the following:

"The work of surcharging the postage stamps has been completed, and next Saturday they will be placed on sale.

"The issue aggregates 2,311,500 stamps and includes all of the twelve kinds now in use.

"The domestic 2 cent heads the list with 1,056,250 stickers to its credit, followed by the 1 cent of which there are 475,000.

"Of the foreign issue the 5 cent numbers 387,500, followed by the 10 cent of which there are 150,000. The 12 cent and 18 cent are next with 94,250 and 50,000 respectively.

"Of the \$1.00 kind there is just \$36,500 worth.

"The 50 cent and 25 cent varieties number 22,500 and 15,000 respectively, and the 6 cent foots the list with 25,000. The total value of the issue is \$133,300."

It will be noticed that the totals of both the quantities and values are incorrect, due no doubt to an error on the part of the reporter.

In spite of these defects and the fact that the reporter failed to segregate the different stamps of the one, two, five, ten and twelve cent values, this list is probably the best we shall ever have showing of what quantities this first printing consisted.

All but those surcharged in black bore the dark pink shade overprint, and on this first day the two cent

light vermilion were all sold out, none being sold singly, but only in sets of the whole issue except to those who had ordered beforehand.

Notice was given out that all could have one in a full set, but not alone.

Sheets of fifty of this stamp were sold that day, by those having been fortunate enough to obtain them, as high as fifty dollars a sheet.

The entire remaining stock of this stamp was surcharged at the first printing.

About a month later the twelve cent red lilac with red surcharge was issued, having been so printed in error, the first printing having been with black surcharge, of which only a few were printed as it was thought the demand would be small, and the expectation being that the second printing would be in the same color.

The selling of this error naturally caused further excitement amongst local collectors. The stamps of this second printing, which was much larger than, and several weeks after the first -- and possibly a still later printing -- were largely of the light red shade -- except, of course, those printed in black -- the supply of the dark pink ink having apparently become exhausted.

Those stamps having a more or less speculative character such as the double and inverted surcharges, the ten cent brown with red surcharge, and the six cent green with black surcharge belong to the second, or a later printing. Those with slipped or broken "G" and those without period were of the first printing, and are absolutely free from the accusation of having been made surreptitiously for collectors.

This accusation does not lie against the Government, nor against the Postmaster General, but against

subordinates, for we know that Mr. Oat gave strict orders against acceding to the great pressure brought by dealers, speculators and collectors for errors and oddities. He said to one collector that private parties had importuned him to issue different printings, but that he had warned the printers against surcharging any stamps except on his written order.

The Government refused many offers of large sums for special favors along this line, one of which is said to have been that of an eastern dealer, and to have been rejected with great indignation.

The offer was for one thousand dollars' worth, face value, of the one cent green to be overprinted in black instead of in red, and for which the dealer was willing to pay fifteen hundred dollars cash. The Government also, as early as September 1893 had returned thousands of dollars sent for the 1893 issue with a mimeographic letter saying the desired stamps were sold out.

The no period error was discovered shortly before the stamps were first put on sale. It occurred on the sixth stamp of the sheet -- the first stamp in the second row from the top -- and had been corrected before the second printing.

The slipped "G" on the first stamp of the sheet was corrected probably soon after. There was immediately quite a demand for the no period error, but not such as appeared later.

It is said some of the clerks in the post-office held out some of these stamps without period, and made good profits by selling them after the supply was exhausted, and when it was known that the error having been corrected in the frame, none would be found in the second printing.

Also that many of the errors after the first printing were never sold at the post-office window, but by clerks at advanced prices.

The type used for surcharging the adhesive stamps was set up in ordinary printers' frames, fifty impressions to the frame, there being no stereotype plant on the Islands at that time; and as two small presses, each surcharging fifty stamps at a time, were being used simultaneously, each stamp would be likely to differ in minor points from its fellows.

The wonder is that all are practically alike, though there are sufficient variations to enable us to designate three different frames. These can only be distinguished in entire sheets or by certain known differences in a few single stamps. Thus, in the sheets printed from the frame we designate as I, the sixth stamp is always without period and it was only used during the first printing. Usually, but not always, this frame printed a faulty "G" -- and sometimes other letters -- on the first stamp of the sheet, due to the type being loose and slipping. Sometimes part of the letters failed to come in contact with the paper at all on this first stamp. Frame II is the same as above with the period error corrected and with the first stamp nearly always normal.

Frame III was probably used for all printings without being changed.

In this frame we find "G" of "Govt." to the left of "O" in "Provisional" on the 47th stamp; directly under "O" on the 48th; and very slightly to the right of "O" on the 49th stamp. The two frames were, at the finish of the first printing, taken off the presses -- as they were at the end of each working day -- kept intact, and put on the presses again for the second and possibly later printings.

There is no written record concerning these frames, and all information in regard to them is from men who were connected with the surcharging, or saw it done, and from the sheets of stamps themselves.

The same colored ink was used on both presses for each day's printing.

Apparently there was a printing after Giffard made up his figures December 1, 1893, for Kenyon in his book gives larger ones on many of the stamps, and these he assures me were obtained from the official records.

I have included the ten cent brown with red surcharge, and the six cent green with black surcharge amongst the small type varieties for reasons appearing hereafter.

There is still at this late date a great difference of opinion amongst students of Hawaiian stamps, some regarding them as frauds made for collectors by grafting insiders, or trial colors made for, and stolen from, the Government, while a few lay stress on affidavits made July 1, 1901, by Louis T. Kenake, the clerk in charge of the Stamp Division of the Republic of Hawaii, that one sheet of the ten cent brown was duly issued to the Postmaster at Kahuku, Island of Oahu, and one sheet of the six cent green to the Postmaster at Honolulu.

It is said that Mr. Henry J. Crocker, through his agent, Mr. Joseph H. Makins, whom he sent to the Islands, bought both these sheets, or large parts of them, from the brother of Postmaster General Oat. The fact that these two stamps became known to collectors generally first in 1901, and that none are known to have been used before 1898, would seem to prove their standing.

Personally, I believe they are illegitimate, and I find the majority of Hawaiian specialists agree with me, but I have been told by one now living, who believes they are genuine errors, that he was offered the entire sheet of the ten cent by the man who bought it at the post office at Kahuku. He felt the entire sheet was more than he could afford, but he did buy the bottom row of five.

Some points in favor of these two stamps being genuine errors are:

The affidavits to that effect.

The conceded fact that they paid postage.

The fact that they were printed from one of these regular frames of Government type.

The difficulty of printing a single sheet of each with or without collusion in face of the strict orders against such practice, the frames being locked up when not in use.

And points against the stamps are:

The lack of faith in their truthfulness amongst those who knew the maker of the affidavits. He was an interested official. Failure to make the affidavits might jeopardize his position.

The ease with which it was possible through obliging or careless Postmasters to prepay postage with unauthorized stamps. A case in point being the five cent blue surcharged "Specimen" which is found on original covers.

The improbability that the printers would take one sheet out of the number before him -- the sheets being only obtained from the Treasury on requisition -- and print it alone with a different color ink, or that the printer would have only one sheet of each stamp before him. Bear in mind that each press used the same colored ink as the other on any particular day.

The several years that elapsed after the printing of the balance of the 1893 issue before these two stamps became known to the public, which was not until after the burning of what was supposed to be the entire stock of the Provisional Government surcharges, and previous issues, in the hands of the Government and of all Postmasters.

In spite of the fact that Postmaster General Oat early in 1893 issued an order that after May 20th "the present issue, and sale of same, will cease and none of the old issues will be thereafter sold for postal purposes", hundreds of dollars' worth of unsurcharged stamps were bought at the Honolulu Post Office stamp window by collectors and dealers. These stamps paid

postage as well as the surcharged issues at all times.

There are said to have been four auction sales in Honolulu early in 1894 at which the twelve cent red lilac with black surcharge brought \$150.00 for a sheet of fifty, and the red surcharge sold at two dollars each. The two cent light vermilion sold at ninety cents each.

Postmaster General Oat personally certified to the genuine character of the surcharge on a number of sheets by pasting to the left margin a piece of white paper, writing across it in black ink in three lines

"Genuine
Jos. M. Oat
P. M. Gen'l."

and applying the embossed circular colorless seal of the Postmaster General of the Republic of Hawaii.

The writer has seen full sheets of the 1¢ blue and 5¢ black blue, and a block each of the 12¢ red lilac with black and with red surcharge.

The date upon which the frames were broken up is unknown, but it was not until after all the printings of the 1893 issue were finished.

The one cent purple "189" instead of "1893" occurs on the 48th stamp.

In the two cent violet it is on the 32nd stamp. In some cases the "9" shows very faintly. The same is true of the five cent ultramarine.

The two cent violet "18 3" instead of "1893" is found on the 23rd stamp, and the same is true of the eighteen cent.

No stamps of the 1893 issue were on sale July 7, 1898, when the Islands were annexed by the United States, all having been destroyed, with some of previous

issues, in the furnaces of the Hawaiian Electric Co. before Postmaster General Oat, Minister of Finance Damon, and a committee composed of John H. Soper, W. M. Giffard and F. L. Stolz on the morning of January 28, 1897, in accordance with an act of the Legislature of the Republic dated May 27, 1896, which provided that the sale of postage stamps, stamped envelopes and postal cards issued previous to the present issue should cease on December 31, 1896.

The following is the report of the destruction of these stamps appearing in The Evening Bulletin of March 27, 1897:

T H E C O M M I T T E E R E P O R T S
ON THE NUMBER AND VALUE OF POSTAGE STAMPS BURNED

Report That Will be of Special Interest to Dealers and
Speculators in Hawaiian Stamps

Ever since the burning of the old issues of Hawaiian stamps on the morning of January 28 last, under authority of a joint resolution of the Legislature, local speculators have been particularly anxious to find out exactly how many stamps were destroyed and their particular denomination. In the issue of the Bulletin of the date mentioned a tabulated statement of the number and value of the stamps on hand and authorized to be destroyed by the Legislature, if not sold prior to January 1, 1897, was printed. (Note below)

It will be noticed that in the report given below, the total value of the stamps destroyed is not given. The Bulletin has made repeated efforts to obtain the exact value and denomination of the stamps sold between the date of the passage of the resolution by the Legislature and January 1, 1897, but for some reason best known to the authorities the figures were not available.

Note: See tabulated report of January 28, 1897 on following page.

Description	Number shipped from New York	Total Number surcharged	Number on hand sur-charged and unsurcharged		Number sur-charged and unsurcharged destroyed Jan. 28th 1897
			May 27th 1896		
1¢ purple	162500	62500			
1¢ blue	275500	75000			
1¢ green	2250000	762500			
2¢ brown	3600000	37500			
2¢ violet	2500000	1325000			209135
2¢ light vermilion	125000	6250	470000		
2¢ carmine	6275000	250000			
5¢ black blue	62500	46350			
5¢ ultramarine	2137500	587500	318750		289536
6¢ green	725000	40000			
10¢ black	200000	50000			
10¢ vermilion	87500	27500			
10¢ brown	562500	112500	88250		81250
12¢ black	225000	90500	106100		98919
12¢ red lilac black surcharge		3750			
12¢ red lilac red surcharge	37500	7500			
15¢ red brown	75000	20000			
18¢ dull rose	175000	100000	67000 *		62879
			30990 **		
25¢ dark purple	50000	25000			
50¢ orange	50000	25000	23700		21151
\$1.00 rose	100000	41500	43600		41901

* surcharged; ** unsurcharged

However, to those who are interested enough to do a little figuring they can be easily got at by computing the values of the stamps mentioned in the following report and subtracting them from the figures given in the table printed January 28. The difference will show what stamps were sold at the Post Office, and as they mostly went to speculators, will give a pretty general idea of the number of stamps of each denomination now owned in this city and held for speculative purposes.

Following is the report made to President Dole:

Honolulu, February 1, 1897

Sir: We, your Committee, duly commissioned on the 5th day of January, A.D. 1897, under and by virtue of a Joint Resolution of the Legislature, approved May 27, A.D. 1896, to supervise with the Minister of Finance and Postmaster General, the Enumeration and Destruction of all Postal Cards and Postage Stamps and Envelopes issued prior to the present issue, beg leave to report that: On the 27th day of January, A.D. 1897, your Committee enumerated the Postage Stamps and Envelopes, as given in the Inventory annexed hereto and which was found to correspond with the list furnished by the Postmaster General, and Registrar of Accounts; that the said Postage Stamps and Envelopes were then placed in mail bags, sealed with the private seals of your Committee as well as that of the Government and then deposited in the time vault of the Finance Department until the morning of the 28th, when they were transported to the furnaces of the Hawaiian Electric Co., and there burned in the presence of the Minister of Finance, the Postmaster General, and of the several members of your Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Soper)

W. M. Giffard)

F. L. Stolz)

Committee.

To Sanford B. Dole,

President of the Republic of Hawaii.

Inventory of Hawaiian Postage Stamps and Envelopes issued previous to the present issues of the Republic of Hawaii, and which remained on hand at the Post

Office and Treasury, December 31, A.D. 1896.

SURCHARGED PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, 1893.

2 Cent Violet, 4192 35-50 Sheets, 209,135 Stamps.
5 Cent Light Blue, 5790 36-50 Sheets, 289,536 Stamps.
10 Cent Chocolate, 1625 Sheets, 81,250 Stamps.
12 Cent Black, 1978 19-50 Sheets, 98,919 Stamps.
18 Cent Red, 1257 29-50 Sheets, 62,879 Stamps.
50 Cent Red, 423 01-50 Sheets, 21,151 Stamps.
\$1.00 Red, 838 01-50 Sheets, 41,901 Stamps.
5 Cent Envelopes, 7932.
10 Cent Envelopes, 10,293.

OBSOLETE ISSUES.

2 Cent Red, Kamehameha IV, Imperf overprinted
"Reprint", 924 13-15 Sheets, 13,873 Stamps.
5 Cent Blue, Kamehameha III, facsimile of 1853 issue,
overprinted "Reprint", 318 05-20 Sheets, 6365 Stamps.
13 Cent Red, Kamehameha III, facsimile of 1853 issue,
overprinted "Reprint", 415 04-20 Sheets, 8304 Stamps.
5 Cent Blue, Kamehameha III, 1853 issue overprinted
"Specimen", 363 16-20 Sheets, 7276 Stamps.
13 Cent Red, Kamehameha III, 1853 issue overprinted
"Specimen", 812 17-20 Sheets, 16,257 Stamps.

In addition to the above Inventory of Stamps your Committee also destroyed 10,000 Reply Postal Cards of the denomination of 2 Cent Blue, issue of 1881. These Postal Cards, however, were not included in the official inventory of the Postal Bureau, but were a consignment sent a few years ago in error by the New York engravers and had never been accepted by the Hawaiian Government.

- 0 -

The difference between the numbers on hand and those destroyed are supposed to have gone largely into the hands of speculators.

In regard to the five cent black blue of which Giffard says 60,000 were surcharged and Kenyon's book states the number as only 46,350, Mr. Kenyon writes me he is sure the former figure is incorrect, because he has a copy of a letter he wrote from the Island July 15, 1893, saying that over 3,000 unsurcharged stamps had been

sold, which would leave less than 60,000 to surcharge.

Dark Pink Surcharge

- 1¢ purple (Frames I and II*) (Six or more shades)
 - No period after "Govt."
 - Slipped "G" of "Govt."
 - "189" instead of "1893"
- 1¢ blue (Frames I and II*) (Ten or more shades)
 - No period after "Govt."
 - Slipped "G" of "Govt."
- 1¢ green (Frames II* and III) (Nine or more shades)
- 2¢ brown (Frames I and II) (Two or more shades)
 - No period after "Govt."
 - Slipped "G" of "Govt."
- 2¢ violet (Frames II* and III*) (13 or more shades)
 - Slipped "G" of "Govt."
 - "189" instead of "1893"
 - "18 3" instead of "1893"
- 5¢ black blue (Frames I and II) (Four or more shades)
 - No period after "Govt."
 - Slipped "G" of "Govt."
- 5¢ ultramarine (Frames II and III*) (17 or more shades)
- 6¢ green (Frames II* and III*) (Two or more shades)
- 10¢ black (Frames II* and III*)
 - Diagonal surcharge
 - Parts of two diagonal surcharges - one on each side
- 12¢ black (Frames II* and III*)
- 25¢ dark purple (Frames I and III*)
 - No period after "Govt."
 - Slipped "G" of "Govt."

Light Red Surcharge

- 1¢ purple (Frame II) (Six or more shades)
 - "Govt. 1893" at top
 - "1893" at top

- 1¢ blue (Frame II) (Ten or more shades)
 Double surcharge - one faint
 "1893" at top
- 1¢ green (Frames II* and III) (Nine or more shades)
 Double surcharge - one faint
 Double surcharge in pair with single
 Double surcharge - one diagonal. Both heavy
 Pair - one without surcharge
 Parts of two surcharges - one on each side
 Entire surcharge at top
 "1893" at top
 Without "1893"
- 2¢ brown (Frame II) (Two or more shades)
- 2¢ violet (Frames II and III) (13 or more shades)
 Inverted surcharge (one sheet of fifty)
 Double surcharge - both heavy
 Double surcharge - one diagonal
 Double surcharge - one divided "Govt. 1893"
 at top, "Provisional" at bottom
 Double surcharge - one diagonal in pair with
 single. Both heavy
 Parts of two surcharges - one on each side
 "1893" at top
- 5¢ black blue (Frame III) (Four or more shades)
 Double surcharge - one faint
 Parts of two surcharges - one on each side
- 5¢ ultramarine (Frames II and III) (17 or more shades)
 Inverted surcharge (one sheet of fifty)
 Double surcharge in pair with single
 "1893" at top
 Without "1893"
- 6¢ green (Frames II and III*) (Two or more shades)
 Black surcharge
 Double surcharge - one faint
 "1893" at top
- 10¢ black (Frames II* and III)
 Double surcharge - one faint

12¢ black (Frames II* and III)
Double surcharge - one faint
Double surcharge - both heavy
Double surcharge - one divided "Govt. 1893" at
top, "Provisional" at bottom. Both heavy
"1893" at top

12¢ red lilac (Frame II) (Two or more shades)
Slipped "G" of "Govt."

25¢ dark purple (Frame III*)
"1893" at top and bottom
"1893" at top

Black Surcharge

2¢ light vermilion (Frame I)
No period after "Govt."
Slipped "G" of "Govt."
"1893" at top

2¢ carmine (Frames I and III) (Four or more shades)
No period after "Govt."
"1893" at top
Without "1893"

10¢ vermilion (Frame II)

10¢ brown (Frame II) (Two or more shades)
Light red surcharge (Frame II)

12¢ red lilac (Frame II) (Two or more shades)

15¢ red brown (Frame II) (Two or more shades)
Double surcharge - both heavy
Diagonal surcharge
"S" of "Provisional" missing
"V" of "Provisional" missing

18¢ dull rose (Frames I and III) (Two or more shades)
No period after "Govt."
Slipped "G" of "Govt."
Double surcharge - both heavy
Double surcharge - one faint
Double surcharge - one divided "Govt. 1893" at
top, "Provisional" at bottom. Both heavy
Pair - one without surcharge
Parts of two surcharges - one on each side

Diagonal surcharge

"18 3" instead of "1893"

"Govt. 1893" at top

"1893" at top

Without "1893"

50¢ orange (Frame I) (Three or more shades)

No period after "Govt."

Slipped "G" of "Govt."

"G" of "Govt." missing

"Visio" of "Provisional" missing

"Pro" of "Provisional" missing

Double surcharge - one faint

"1893" at top

\$1.00 rose (Frames I and II)

No period after "Govt."

In regard to those frame numbers marked with asterisk above, it is not certain whether they come with pink or red surcharge, or both, so they have been included under both headings with the feeling that future investigations will prove they belong there; and in reference to the number of shades of stamps, the numbers shown include both red and pink surcharges - not that number of each.

It is certain that the frame numbers shown are correct for one or the other color of surcharge.

A curious thing is that there are a number of shades of stamps that are only found with surcharge, indeed it may safely be said that the shades of the surcharged stamps usually differ from the unsurcharged, which is doubtless due to the fact that certain shipments of stamps were sold only with surcharge.

The number of shades noted as is the case with the unsurcharged issues, is the number actually in the reference collection of the author.

It is, of course, fully realized this list of the 1893 surcharges is incomplete.

* * * * *

A MINIATURE ROESSLER ROCKET COVER?

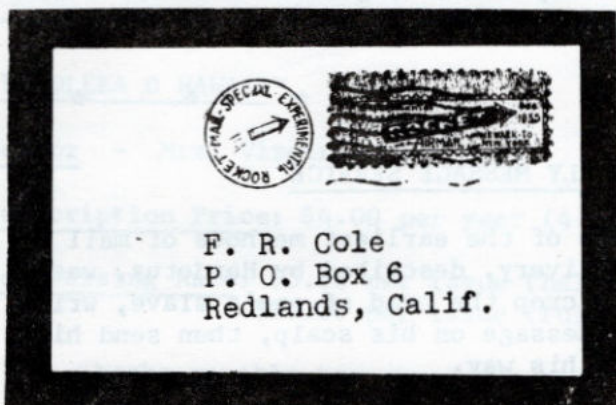
By Clyde Carriker

What I know about rockets can be summed up quickly: (1) don't stand close to one when it is going to be fired, and (2) try not to be a target for one after it is fired.

And what I know about rocket mail consists of some fragmentary information about rocket mail supposed to have been fired from ships to little Niuafo'ou, the famous Tin Can Mail island in the Tongas.

The success ratio at Niuafo'ou was rather pitiful at best, as most of the rockets landed either in the swampy lake or fell short into the ocean.

Therefore, when I received the illustrated little cover -- and I mean little -- from a friend in a swapping deal, I was not only perplexed but intrigued.



Measuring 2-7/8 inches (77-1/2 mm) by 1-13/16 inches (46 mm), the tiny cover bears a circular marking "cancelling" a red and green label. Pictured within the circle is a rocket and "Rocket-Mail-Special Experimental"; width of the circle is 15 mm.

A red rocket dominates the label and is 19 mm in length. The words in the upper left are "Experimental/Parachute". To the right of the rocket's nose is "Dec./1935"; just below the rocket in capital letters is "AIRMAIL"; and to the right and below the nose is "NEWARK-to-NEW YORK".

As closely as I can measure, the perforations are 13-1/2. On the reverse is an uncanceled U.S. C-19 stamp. No other cancels are on the cover.

My friend, the addressee, said he got the cover more than 40 years ago from "...a dealer by the name of Roessler". It's a neat, clean little cover and is unopened.

Did an actual parachute rocket carry the cover? If so, how many covers were carried, what dimensions was the rocket, was more than one rocket launched? Or did the experiment fail? Was the originator the famous A. C. Roessler?

Who says stamp collecting doesn't have its weird and fascinating facets?

* * * * *

EARLY MESSAGE SERVICE

One of the earliest methods of mail delivery, described by Herdotus, was to crop the head of one's slave, write a message on his scalp, then send him on his way.

If you wanted to keep the message confidential, you had to wait until some hair grew, in which case the messenger got a close haircut from the addressee.

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