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Newsletter of the Lake County (IL)

Philatelic Society - Established 1933

Website: LCPSHOME.ORG

Perforations



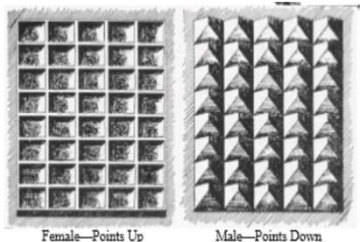
Last month, after gather more information on how members began collecting stamp, the meeting became a round table discussion on many facets of the hobby — from production, collecting niches, favorite aspects, etc.

This month, we'll continue along this course by asking that you bring in your favorite album/philatelic item and tell us why it is of interest.



GRILLS - In the late 1860's the United States Government became very concerned about the possible cleaning of cancels and subsequent reuse of postage stamps. During this same period the government failed to provide the smaller post offices with canceling devices, thus it was common practice for postmasters to pen-cancel the stamps on outgoing mail. With the application of a little bit of ink eradicator, the stamp was cleaned for reuse. Some enterprising souls went a step or two further and found ways to remove the grid cancels as well. Something had to be done, and quickly, to stop this chicanery.

Many clever devices sought U.S. patents and chief among them was what we know today as the "grill" (back then it was called "embossing").



Grilling in the late 1860's

Grills are basically nothing more than the name suggests; that is an embossing applied to a paper item by means of a roller that is pitted with the necessary depressions that will create this embossed image. The embossing (or female") roller receives its pitted impression from a knurl, or series of raised pyramids (which are referred to as "points") on the "male" roller. When the female roller makes its impression on a sheet of stamps, the result is that a grill, or embossing, is evident. The main concept of grilling stamps was such that the process would break the fibers of the stamp paper to such an extent that the canceling ink would soak itself into this broken area in such a manner as to render cleaning the stamp an impossible task. The paper itself is not broken, or "cut". It pertains only to the fibers.

Patent No. 70,147 (left drawings) was awarded to Charles F. Steele of Brooklyn, New York on October 22, 1867 for his grilling device and the rest, as they say, is history. The government conducted several experiments with grills. One of the first of these featured a small shield design intended to replace the central portrait of the stamp. This small shield contained a raised colorless numeral "3". The central area, excepting the numeral, was grilled. The frame design selected for this experiment was the 3c Washington of the 1861-1866 Series.

Treasures' Report: Total – \$3,501.03

Local
Stamp
Shows

MSDA Chicago Stamp Show
Holiday Inn Oakbrook Terrace
17 W 350 22nd St
Oakbrook Terrace IL
September 8 and 9



MILCOPEX 2018
Crowne Plaza Milwaukee Airport
6401 South 13th ST
Milwaukee WI
September 14, 15 and 16

MSDA Fall Show
Ramada Inn Wheeling
1090 S Milwaukee Ave
Wheeling, IL
October 13 and 14



Next meeting:

7-PM on Tuesday 24 July 2018

at the Grayslake Library

100 Library Lane - Grayslake IL 60030



Officers:

Dr Tom Willer – President
Bill Schultz – Vice President
Dave Sadler – Secretary
Ed Pieklo – Treasurer

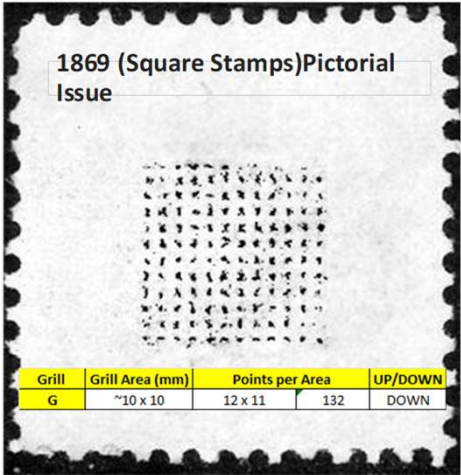
Examples of these test (essay) stamps are very rare today. Various experiments were carried out through much of 1867 until the Post Office Department finally settled on what we are familiar with today as the Grilled Issues and the printing and sale to the public were hastened.

Now we'll focus our attention on the relatively easy method of identification. We often hear the terminology **"Points Up"** or **"Points Down"** when the subject of grills is discussed.

"Points Up" refers to the embossing being from the bottom of the stamp paper so that the raised pyramidal shapes are on the face side of the stamp or pointing up. **"Points Down"** is exactly the opposite.

Grills are further identified by letters of the alphabet and it is believed by many that they were issued in this order; A, B, C, D, Z, E and F for the 1867-1868 printings, then G for the 1869 Pictorial Issue, followed then by H and I for the 1870-1871 National Issue.

The alphabet letters indicate a certain measurement, always in millimeters (mm) of the width and length of the raised (or "grilled") area of the stamp.



The table below provides a means of identification based on area and these grill (point) counts.

Grill	Grill Area (mm)	Points per Area		UP/DOWN
A	Entire Stamp	NA		UP
B	18 x 15	22 x 18	396	UP
C	13 x 16	16 17 x 18 21	288 to 357	UP
D	12 x 14	15 x 18 21	315 to 432	DOWN
Z	11 x 14	13 14 x 18	234 to 252	DOWN
E	11 x 13	14 x 15 17	238 to 255	DOWN
F	9x13	11 12 x 15 17	165 to 204	DOWN
G	~10 x 10	12 x 11	132	DOWN
H	10 x 12	11 13 x 14 16	154 to 208	DOWN
I	~9 x 10	10 11 x 10 13	100 to 143	DOWN

It has been found it best to measure from the bottom of the stamp so as not to be confused by the stamp's design or cancellation.

Noted collector Lester Brookman's tip to simplify the identification process for used stamps (**do not use on unused or stamps that have any gum remaining**). To make the tips of the pyramids show up, take an ordinary #2 "lead" pencil, turn the tip sideways and mark up a small area on a piece of scrap paper. Then rub the tip of your index finger over this area until the fingertip is covered with carbon. Then place the used stamp on a flat surface bottom side up.

Now rub your finger over the grilled area of the stamp. This technique is best suited for grills with **"Points Down"** rather than for grill types A, B or C. This technique is not necessary for those grills with **"Points Up"** as the grill points should show up clearly anyway.

The tips of the pyramids will pick up the carbon from your finger tip and will thus become more plainly visible. Once the task is completed, use a simple "bath" in luke-warm water with just a drop of dishwashing liquid to make the stamp presentable once again.

Note: Fake grills as they pertain to unused stamps with gum: As indicated in Steele's patent, the embossing was understood to be performed after the gumming of the stamps. If you have an unused grilled stamp with gum, check the points very carefully to detect if there is any residual gum. A gum spillover of this type is the simplest means of detecting a regumming job. Remember the process; gumming, embossing (or grilling) and then printing.

