

# Kansas-Nebraska Overprints

## Counterfeit Kansas-Nebraska Overprints on 1922–34 Issue

by Robert H. Schoen and James T. DeVoss

## First Day Covers of the Kansas-Nebraska Overprints

By Jack V. Harvey

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APS Handbook Series

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# Counterfeit Kansas-Nebraska

## Overprints on Issue

1922-23

1923-26

1926-34

Compiled by Robert H. Schoen, A. P. S.

**PRELUDE:** Before commencing to unfold the story of the various counterfeit findings, the writer feels it is in order to provide both an introduction and some factual data pertaining to the Kansas-Nebraska overprints existing on the United States 1926-27 issue of postage stamps, ranging from the 1-cent to 10-cent denominations.

A SERIES of post office robberies in the Mid-West in the late 1920's was the foundation for a special issue of United States postage stamps. To the powers in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing it appeared logical that if all the postage stamps shipped to one state were overprinted with the name of that state, it would be impossible to sell the stolen stamps in another state, especially if large amounts of postage stamps were involved. The Bureau actually planned to extend the scheme to all 48 states after a test period. The two mid-western states of Kansas and Nebraska were adopted for the experiment and only the lower values of the then current postage stamps, the 1¢ through 10¢ stamps of the 1926-27 issue were used. For some unknown reason the ½¢ stamp of that issue was not included.

Fortunately, after a trial, this plan proved to be a failure and only the original two states were issued the overprinted stamps—Kansas and Nebraska. However, these overprinted stamps were valid for postage wherever United States stamps were accepted in payment of postage fees, in all states and all United States Possessions.

Shipments were made to the smaller post offices in Kansas and Nebraska on April 13, 1929, who requested the stamps and not all denominations were included. The earliest recorded use of the stamps is April 15, 1929, in a number of Kansas and Nebraska towns. May 1, 1929, might be considered as "official" first day as that is the day the Philatelic Agency placed the stamps on sale for collectors.

By June of 1929 collectors showed an interest in the issue and one student pointed out that if any overprinted stamps were found that had a spacing of more or less than 22mm. between overprints, they were out and out counterfeits.

So it went, and it appeared that each student had a different idea on the overprinted stamps as to whether or not they were genuine or counterfeit.

DESLEY F. TAYLOR reported in *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News*, April 28, 1930, in his column "The State Control Overprints"—The two, three, eight, and nine-cent "Nebr." overprints have been discovered with the wide-spacing and sheets of the three and nine cent stamps have been found with the overprint missing on one row. Of the Kansas overprints only the one cent denomination has been chronicled with the wide-spacing. A two cent "Nebr." stamp has been found with the sheet margins on which the stamp itself bears an overprint, and a further overprint appears in the margin. The "tall" overprints measure about 4mm. in height in comparison to the 2.5mm of the normal overprints, and appear somewhat smudged at the bottom of the letters. They have been found on the one cent and two cent "Nebr." controls.

In *Mekeel's Weekly Stamps News* of July 21, 1930, the column *Washington News* states: Noble G. Larson submits for inspection an irregular block of 19 of the 2¢ rotary with "Kans." overprint showing an unusual spacing. The vertical spacing between the words counting from the bottom of the letters immediately under, run 21mm, 27.5mm, 24.7mm, 24.7mm. It will be noted that the last two are normal, that the first is narrower and the second is wider. The wide spacing, however, is not as wide as found on the various previously chronicled and which may be readily noted with the naked eye. In fact, in the case of the previous finds, the surcharges generally appear on the bottom of the stamp on a portion of the sheet, and the top of the stamp on the balance. In Larson's block, the surcharges are all at the bottom, hence the differences are not readily noticed. It is difficult to explain the block for the spacing which differs from the normal is certainly not caused by the plates for printing the stamps, and the surcharge not synchronizing, as is the case with the wide-spacing variety.

IN MEKEEL'S of August 20, 1931, in the column *Washington News* is a report of a "New State Variety" and comments that "H. M. Southgate has



located the 1¢ Nebr. overprint in block showing vertical pairs, one with and one without surcharge. Only four blocks were located as the fifth block had been used for postage before being discovered. To date only four other similar varieties have been found, namely the 3¢ and 9¢ Nebr. on which one sheet of each was located and the 1¢ and 3¢ Kans. of which two sheets of the former variety and one sheet of the latter were found. It is regretted that the supply in all cases is so small that they are not sufficient to go around. In the case of sheets, only one horizontal row shows the surcharge missing so that 10 vertical pairs may be obtained from the complete sheet. Southgate also writes that he located the 7¢ Nebr. with the surcharge in the margin."

It is best to point out here that H. M. Southgate was the Precancel Editor of *Mekel's* and that he considered the Kansas and Nebraska overprints as a form of precancels.

To properly understand the cause of some of the scarce varieties of this otherwise uninteresting group it is necessary to know how these stamps were overprinted. The following description by H. M. Southgate, a past president of the Bureau Issues Association, clearly explains how these varieties occur and why they are so scarce. This article appeared in the B.I.A. number of *Weekly Philately Gossip*, Dec. 12, 1931:

### Method of Manufacture

**F**OR ORDINARY stamps a roll of paper about 18.5 inches wide and 24 inches in diameter, long enough to print about 6,000 sheets, is drawn through the press by the plate rolls and a tension from the receiving roll at the opposite end of the press.

The paper first is drawn over the rolls, which dip in a trough holding water and give the necessary moisture to the paper. It then passes over the curved stamp plates and through the ink drying section to the overprinting electro-type plates and gumming roll and out through the gum drying box, which also dries the overprint, to be coiled at the end of the press into working rolls of about 12 inches in diameter. These rolls are equivalent to about 1,500 sheets of 400 subjects. The size of these rolls is limited for handling purposes.

The printing of the stamp and overprint thus is done during one series of operations. All varieties that are covered by these notes are occasioned by these two printings.

### Causes of Varieties

**W**ITH WEATHER of uniform temperature and humidity, paper of uniform thickness, material and condition, and with uniform tension on the paper, it would be practicable to rigidly together drive the stamp printing roll and the overprinting roll and find the overprint placed in the same position on the stamps as long as the press operated. These conditions are not constant. Variations in humidity change the

**Figure 1. Improper adjustment of the overprinting roll by hand method. Spacing between overprints, bottom to top as printed, is 24.5mm, 23mm, 22.5mm, 25mm, 22.5mm, 23.5mm, 22.5mm and 22mm. The correct spacing is 22mm. An example of 18 overprints on 20 stamps is shown here.**



Figure 2. Wide spacing pair, 32mm between overprints. The area reserved for the gutter has worked into the body of the sheet of stamps.



Figure 3. The wide spacing has worked into the body of the stamps but left one row of stamps without overprint.

amount of moisture required in dampening the paper for printing, as well as the stretch of the paper. The paper itself varies not only in thickness but also in strength. The paper is manufactured in rolls 72 inches wide and split into narrower rolls for the Government contract.

The characteristics of paper in rolls cut from the center of the original roll may vary from that in rolls cut from the sides. The press motor drives onto the coiling roll on which the printed and gummed paper is wound. As a roll of paper increases in diameter the pull on the paper will increase. To compensate for this, a slipping clutch is placed in the drive line. This cannot maintain an absolutely constant tension so variations in stretch of paper results.

### Method of Adjustment

ASIDE FROM the slipping clutch of the coiling roll, which tends to keep a constant tension on the paper, there are adjustments on the overprinting roll which permit that roll to be advanced or retarded in relation to its position with the stamp plate roll, independent of the main drive.

The ordinary stamps are printed on the paper in an upright position, the design coming through as it were, feet first.

An adjustment, to maintain registration of the stamp and overprinting and to aid in original setting up of the machine, consists of a hand operated gearing. By a turn of a hand wheel about the size of a door-knob the relative position of the overprinting roll and stamp roll may be modified. One complete turn of the hand wheel in either direction in which the paper is moving changes the position of the overprint downward on the ordinary stamp about  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (6mm). A complete turn of the hand wheel in the opposite direction would raise the position of the overprint on the "ordinary" by about twice this amount when the overprint roll is being shifted against the movement of the paper.

### Standard Wide and Narrow Spacings

THE PRESSMAN apparently turns the adjusting wheel through an angle of about 45 degrees at one motion of the hand, so we may expect to find changes between successive rows of overprints as each movement of the hand wheel is made, depending somewhat upon the speed with which the printer operates the hand wheel and whether he is rotating it with or against the motion of the paper.

The paper passes through the press at the rate of, roughly, 60 feet per minute. This means that a 100 subject sheet would pass a given point in about a second. If the individual motions with the hand wheel are made at about one move in a second, then the spacing of the overprint would probably be narrowed when working with the run of the paper about 1 to 1.5mm, or widened when turned against the run of the paper perhaps 2 to 3mm between the adjacent rows. The printer probably does not turn the wheel at a uniform speed but starts slowly and ends quickly, so the rate of change of position of the overprint may vary, giving an increasingly narrow or wider spacing between adjacent rows. Between each movement of the hand wheel normal spacing will occur (Figure 1).



Figure 4. Gutter area has worked into the body of the stamps leaving the top two stamps without overprint. One of two recorded examples of a plate block without overprint.

### Gutter Spacing

IN ADDITION to the variations of spacing of the overprint, due to automatic or hand adjustment, there are the varieties resulting from the incorrect registration of the stamp plates and the electrotype, i.e., the varieties showing the gutter spacing between rows of overprints. These varieties only occur on the 400-subject sheets of the regular stamps.

The overprinting roll had an outside diameter of  $3\frac{1}{2}$



Figure 5. Overprinting roll working toward the top of the sheet of stamps. If movement continued, the result would be two overprints on one stamp, or three overprints on two stamps.

(Note  
"stretched"  
overprint  
on top stamp.)



Figure 6. Bottom stamp of pair showing Wiped Letters. Usually referred to as "stretched" print.

inches with the overprinting plates mounted. Four plates of 50 subjects each were mounted on the cylinder, with two clamped longitudinally across the cylinder on one side and two plates in the same manner of the opposite side. One revolution of the cylinder overprinted 200 subjects. The overprinting plates measured 8.642 inches in length with .28 inch provided between the two plates for an over-all measurement of 17.564 inches. The .28 inch spacing provided for the vertical gutter.<sup>1</sup>

To obtain registration between the panes of the regular stamps, the overprinting roll must have an increased space between the rows of type to accommodate the  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch gutter or margin between panes. If registration between the roll carrying the stamp printing plates and that carrying the overprinting electrotypes is not affected, then this wide-spacing will fall on the body of the pane, instead of across the gutter, and produce the normal wide-spaced varieties (Figure 2).

WHEN THE wide-spacing falls so as to completely clear one horizontal row of stamps there is a row of stamps without overprint (Figure 3).

As hand adjustment is used to bring the wide space into registration with the gutter, sheets showing the wide spacing will show the effect of the hand adjustments with varieties of spacings.

When the machine is set up and the registration between the stamp roll and the overprinting roll is corrected after operating for some time the overprint roll may work up or down on the sheet to such an extent that the wide space, intending to cover the gutter, works out onto the body of the pane (Figure 4). The fact that packages of such spaced stamps have not been located is a clear indication that the pressmen are "on their job" or that the inspectors have withdrawn such prints. It is questionable if inspection would condemn sheets showing the wide spacings.

<sup>1</sup> Information supplied by James A. Conlon, Director, U. S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Washington, D. C.



Figure 7



Figure 8

Figures 7 and 8 are simply crude fake overprints.

### Double Overprints

THE CREEPING of the overprint from the normal position must bring at times the normal overprint into the margin between the stamps, and near double overprints will result. Varieties will be found where a true double overprint will occur on one stamp or three overprints on a vertical pair of stamps. These varieties result from hand adjustment working with the direction of the movement of the paper giving a slightly narrower spacing than the standard 22mm. Another group of varieties to be found consists of tall and short letters.

If the adjusting hand wheel is turned at the instant the type of the overprint is in contact with the paper, it will wipe or elongate the letters of the overprints, if the motion of the adjusting wheel on the electrotype roll is against the direction of the motion of the paper, it will shorten the letters. The lengthening of the letters is very pronounced in some cases and gives another check of the approximate movement attained by the operation of the adjusting mechanism, the letter heights in some cases being increased by at least 1mm (Figure 5).

Shortening of the letters, as it is produced by adjustment with the movement of the paper, makes a smaller difference; although instances have been noted where the height of the letters has been appreciably reduced (Figure 6).

### Offsets

AFTER THE overprint has been placed on the stamp the paper passes up and partially around a smooth

brass roll about 5 inches in diameter to direct the paper to the gum roll. This roll strikes the ink side of the sheet and picks up the impression from the undried overprint. A felt wiper is located on the under side of the roll, which is supposed to remove all ink from the roll. These wipers have to be changed periodically and during this change it is possible for the roll to pick up a light impression from the fresh ink of the overprint and re-impress it on the sheets as it completes the turn. This will account for the occasional so-called double prints.

The impressions are exceedingly faint and not often detected.

(Reference: H. M. Southgate as published in the B.I.A. issue of *Weekly Philatelic Gossip* Dec. 12, 1931. Same article appeared in Max G. Johl's Vol. 3, *The United States Postage Stamps of the 20th Century*, published by H. L. Lindquist, 1935.)

### Precanceled Kansas-Nebraska Overprints

UNDER DATE of April 30, 1929, there appeared in the Postal Bulletin an order of Third Assistant Postmaster General R. S. Regar, in which the postmasters in Kansas and Nebraska were told NOT to precancel these overprinted stamps. The same order advised these postmasters that sufficient stocks of other regular issues, in the required denominations should be kept on hand for precancel requirements.

Precancels of the Kansas-Nebraska issue are really hard to locate. Some of the larger towns precanceled only one value. Some of the regularly-used precancels came from towns having a nursery, hatchery, a radio store, circularizing firms, etc.



Figure 9. "Unlisted plate rarity." Plate No. 19350 was never used in the production of the Kansas-Nebraska overprints. Clever manufacture, and a fooler, but the Bureau has no records to confirm its use.

During Christmas rush, towns which had no users of precancel permits were authorized to precancel through the busy season as a time saver. The smaller offices used the 25-subject handstamp instead of the 100-subject electro and many times as few as 25 of a kind were precanceled, since they were only used



Figure 10. Overprints are not in line as are the genuine overprints. The "N's" do not line up, the spacing between the vertical "N's" varies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mm. The ink of the overprints fluoresce BLUE.

at Christmas time. This was true of any issue, but in the case of the overprints, they are doubly scarce because of the small issue of Kansas-Nebraskas, and since they were in use for less than one year.

Due to the fact these Kansas-Nebraska overprinted stamps were valid anywhere in the United States, they were sent to many towns outside of Kansas and Nebraska. They are known with precancels from Des Moines and Hampton, Iowa; Independence, Mo.; Galesburg, Mich., Chicago, Philadelphia, San Antonio, and Pittsburgh. Many cities that had mail order houses, nurseries, seed houses, etc., promptly precanceled the stamps as they are permitted to do.

There are about 175 varieties of the Kansas-Nebraska overprints with precancels. (Note: Many were precanceled as favors.)

Inverted Precancels: There are reported to be 25 Clay Center, Kans., precancels (25-subject handstamp).

References: "Precanceling of Kansas-Nebraska Overprints" Asolph Gunesch, *Stamps Magazine* (H. L. Lindquist); Victor B. Smith's Collection of Nebraska Overprints with precancels.

## Counterfeit Overprints

IF ALL the Kansas-Nebraska stamps in our albums, in stock books of dealers, or on the market today had come from the Philatelic Agency or had been available from the post offices in the two states concerned, there would be no purpose of this section. However, counterfeits do exist, and the supply available appears to be on the increase. No issue of United States stamps is so extensively imitated and over 60 per cent of the used copies are not genuine.

Perhaps 90 per cent or more are so crudely manufactured they would fool no knowledgeable philatelist, but the collector who does not take the time to check his purchases or examine the overprinted stamps is frequently the loser (Figure 7).

Fortunately, the faker of the overprinted stamps usually is not a philatelic student and often slips somewhere as the Kansas-Nebraskas do not lend themselves to skillful faking. Yet the fact that so many fakes rest in collections posing as genuine, is as much the fault of the buyers as it is the sellers (Figure 8).

What may surprise most people is the fact that it is almost impossible to counterfeit the mint stamps in a manner that will fool anyone who is informed. The most important thing to remember is that when these stamps were overprinted, they were not yet gummed. The manufacture of the stamps occurred in this order: The stamps were printed, then overprinted, then gummed, and then perforated. Had the stamps been overprinted after gumming, they would have had an indentation in the gum leaving an "embossed" affect, but the genuine stamps do not have that condition.

The author's collection contains straight-edged examples, stamps perforated 11, *Scott's Nos. 552-562*; stamps perforated 10, *Scott's Nos. 581-591*; and these examples are purely ignorance on the part of the faker, as the genuine stamps only exist perforated  $11 \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ . Then, too, the faker put the overprint on stamps perforated  $11 \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ , but failed to consider the colors of the stamps ink.

THE REGULAR issue, 1926-1934, was current for a number of years and produces various shades. An example is *Scott's No. 640* in an olive green shade, and an olive bistre, with perhaps eight shades between these extremes. It is important to note that the Kansas-

Nebraska stamps do not exist in the same colors as the unoverprinted issue. The 8¢ Kansas and 8¢ Nebraska exist only in the olive green color. An overprinted olive bistre can only be a counterfeit. This color condition is true with the balance of the set. A 5¢ overprint in light blue, rather than a dark blue, has to be a fake. A 3¢ in the rich color of the 1932 reissue, too, is a fake.

Plate numbers are important in identifying the genuine stamps as many philatelic books list the plate numbers and the dates they went to press. The Kansas-Nebraska appeared in 1929 and overprints on stamps that went to press in 1930 can only be counterfeits. Recently a plate block of the 9¢ Nebraska arrived with a note—"Unlisted plate number—rarity" and the asking price was \$250. Yes, it was a rarity—it just could not exist as a genuine 9¢ Nebraska (Figure 9).

To summarize: A collector should first establish that the stamp is the correct one. It cannot be perforated 11, or perforated 10. It cannot have a straight edge. The overprint cannot break the gum. By holding the stamp horizontally, flex it so that light falls across it to ascertain whether or not the gum is raised where the letters have been applied on the face. The gum on the genuine is absolutely smooth. On the fake, the overprinting has raised the gum. If your stamp passes these tests, check the shade with known genuine stamps. A set of stamps on covers postmarked the year of issue is the best reference for correct color. A set of Kansas-Nebraska stamps that were purchased from the Philatelic Agency or a set that belongs to someone of repute, also are excellent references.

**T**HERE IS one final check on authenticity and that is the gum ridges and the gum breakers. The ridges running horizontally on stamps of vertical format which occurs on the Kansas-Nebraskas, were applied to mint sheets in quantity by the U. S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing by subjecting the sheets to tremendous hydraulic pressure to prevent curling and buckling. One will note that the genuine stamps have vertical gum ridges, 14 per stamp. Comparison can be made with the Molly Pitcher (Scott's No. 646) and the Hawaii Overprints (Scott's Nos. 647 and 648).

Another check for the used stamps is a powerful magnifying glass to determine if the overprint is under or over the cancellation. Naturally, if the overprint is over the cancellation, the stamp is a fake. However, most fakers are aware of this, and used canceled stamps where the area to receive the overprinting is clear of previous cancellations.

Blocks of four or larger, mint or used, are assumed

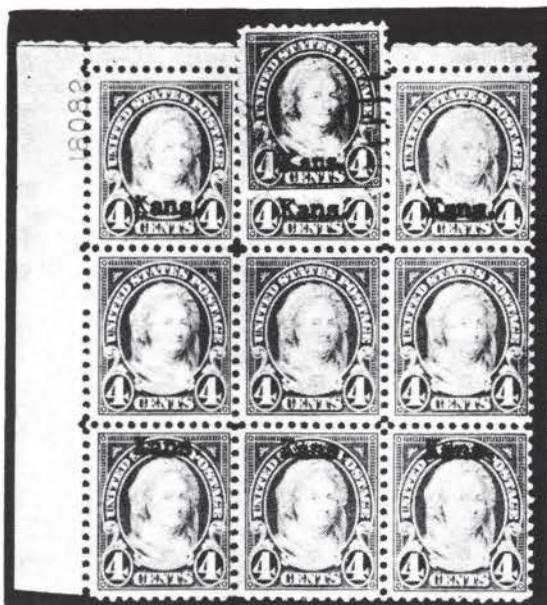


Figure 11. Plate No. 18082 was used for both the regular issue, Scott No. 636 and the overprints, Scott No. 662. The overlay, a genuine 4c Kansas used, shows the difference in size of the overprints.

to be genuine if they meet the above tests. Almost 99 percent of the counterfeiting is done with single stamps. Seldom does one encounter blocks that are not genuine. Counterfeit post office panes are unknown (Figure 10).

Counterfeits first made their appearance early in 1930 as we noted in an article by Desley L. Taylor entitled "Bad 'Nebr.' Overprints" in *Mekeel's* of June 9, 1930. Because of the striking similarity of the overprinted controls to a typewriter abbreviation, it is not unreasonable to expect some counterfeiter to try to imitate the stamps and produce one of the rare varieties (Figure 11).

By way of protecting collectors against possible fraudulent varieties which could be printed by typewriter, some of the outstanding characteristics of the Bureau overprint that cannot be accurately duplicated are herewith described: It is impossible for any person to successfully fake the overprints by typing the "Kans." or "Nebr." abbreviations on ordinary postage

Figures 12 and 13 are genuine stamps placed over mint fakes to show the difference in length of overprint, and the difference in type used.



Figure 12



Figure 13

stamps. Comparison of a fraud made on a typewriter with a genuine control discloses several peculiarities that are quite easily recognized. In the first place, there is a decided variation of the type fonts. An example, observe that in the "Nebr." overprint the "r" is larger when produced by a typewriter. Secondly, the spacing between letters is wider on a typewriter specimen than the government issue. A typewritten imprint measures about 1½mm across from the lower left-hand serif on the first letter of the abbreviation to the period, while the Bureau copy has a width of 8½ to 9mm. Finally, the letter on a typewriter will usually break the fabric of the paper and will show through the back of the stamp. This is especially true of the period which will invariably punch a small hole through the stamp.

It should be noted that an ultra-violet lamp, in many

## The 'California Varieties' Of Kans. and Nebr. Counterfeits

By Col. James T. DeVoss, A. P. S.

NO UNITED States postage issues have been counterfeited more often from such a large number of different sources than the Kans. and Nebr. issues of 1929. Fortunately for philatelists, the United States has overprinted very few of its postal issues. The scarcity of some of the values of the Kans. and Nebr. set has made them a target for the counterfeiter who is anxious to make a quick profit.

The first counterfeits cropped up on the philatelic scene early in 1930.

Recently, however, two new "printings" have been manufactured and distributed in fairly large quantities. The source is not known to the writer, but it is known that the one group flooded the market in the San Francisco area, whereas the other group was being distributed in the Los Angeles area. For the purpose of this report we will refer to them as the "Northern California" and "Southern California" fakes.

### Basic Stamps

The regular issue of 1926-34 *Scott's No. 632-642*, was used for the Kans. and Nebr. overprints. This issue was rotary press printed, perforated 11 by 10½, with the 2¢ value appearing first on Dec. 10, 1926. The other values were put on sale in 1927 with the 6¢ red-orange the last of the issue with its first-day on July 27, 1927.

Although the 1½ and 4¢ values were replaced in 1930 and the 3¢ value in 1932, the entire issue was not superseded until the Presidential issue of 1938. During the 12 years this series was currently in use there were many different printings. In some instances these differences can be determined by shade variations. If mint copies are available with full original gum, it is easy to distinguish some of the different printings by the gum breakers and the rotary press ridges.

The earliest printing of these basic stamps appear to have thicker gum than the later printings. The gum of the earlier printings seems to have a yellow cast, whereas the later gum was a whiter shade. The most distinctive feature about the gum of the early printings is the distinctive gum breakers or alternate lines of heavy gum and light gum. (See left stamp Figure 1.) The characteristic appearance of this type

cases, is a definite aid in detecting a counterfeit specimen since the ink of the genuine overprint is black and will not fluoresce in any other color.

In recent years there are more counterfeits available, but these easily can be detected if the above suggestions are observed. These latest faked overprinted stamps are well centered, unhinged, do not show the vertical 14 gum ridges, and the color of the stamp proper does not conform with the colors of the stamps as issued. It is quite easy with the use of a millimeter rule to note the overprint is 1 to 1½mm longer than the genuine overprint (Figures 12 and 13).

Reference: "How Are Your Kansas-Nebraskas?," by Oliver Huntington (Herman Herst Jr.) as published by *Western Stamp Collector*, 1948; republished May 7, 1968.

of gum resembles that of laid paper. The metal roller used to apply this gum was provided with a fine thread on a lathe for the purpose of controlling the proper amount of gum. This thread on a gum fountain roller resulted in fine streams of gum on the paper. When the paper was carried away to be dried, the streams sometimes coalesced completely. More often the streams did not coalesce completely before drying, resulting in the gum having a more or less ridged appearance, somewhat similar to uneven ribbing of paper.<sup>1</sup> The early stamps of this issue clearly show 14 separate gum ridges.

In some of the later printings these gum breakers are less distinct and in the last printings of this issue the breakers disappear entirely with the results appearing to be very smooth. (See right stamp Figure 1.)

ANOTHER distinctive feature which can be seen easily on the reverse side of stamps bearing original gum is the rotary press ridges. (See Figure 2.) These ridges were applied to help prevent the curling of sheets during warm, humid weather.

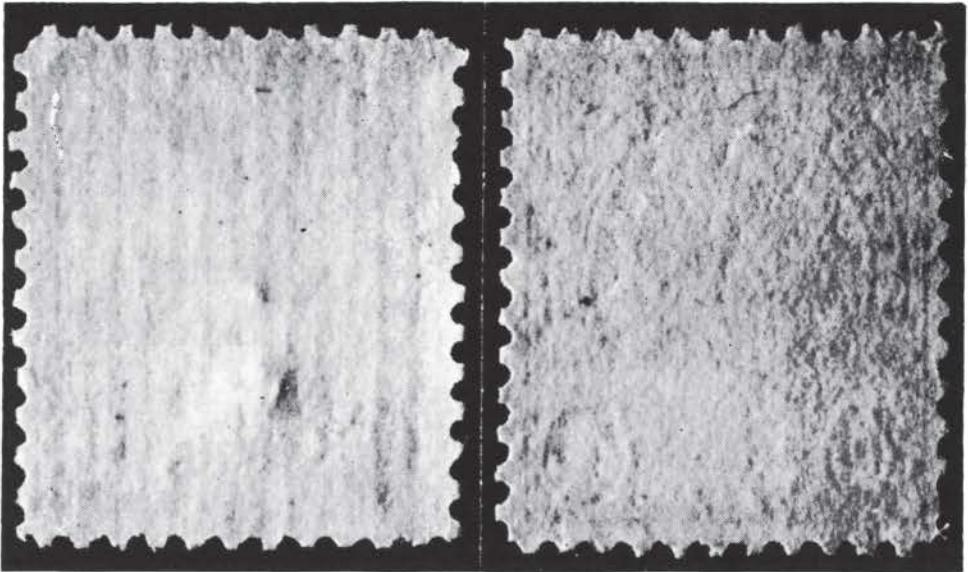
In the earliest printing of the 1926-34 issue, these rotary press ridges were applied approximately 21mm apart, thus, normally only one such ridge appears on the reverse of each mint stamp. It is possible to have two ridges, in which case they appear near the top and bottom perforations. These ridges were applied perpendicular to the line of gum breakers.

In the mid-period printings the rotary press ridges were applied approximately 10½mm apart, in which case two ridges must appear on the reverse of every mint stamp. The distinctive gum breakers of the earlier printings referred to above were changed during the middle period so that the printings with two rotary press ridges exist with both the gum breakers of the earliest printing and also with the smoother, less distinctive gum of the later printings.

The last printings of this issue reveal that the rotary press ridges were narrowed to approximately 5½mm apart, thus, the reverse of each stamp shows at least four ridges per stamp and sometimes five when the top

<sup>1</sup> *Fundamentals of Philately*, L. N. & M. Williams, p. 486. State College, Pa. American Philatelic Society, 1971.

Figure 1



and bottom ridges appear extremely close to the perforations. The differences in the spacing of the rotary press ridges are quite apparent as shown in *Figure 2*.

The experimental electric eye markings were first printed in 1933 on the 2¢ value, *Scott's No. 634*,<sup>2</sup> after the Kans. and Nebr. issues were discontinued.

The Kans. and Nebr. overprints with first day of sale on May 1, 1929, *Scott's Nos. 658-679*, were all overprinted on the early printings of the basic stamps referred to above. It is important to remember this, as you will see in the comments to follow reference the counterfeits.

### The Counterfeits

**S**INCE THE early printings of 1926, 1927, and 1928 were much more scarce than the later printings, many of the counterfeiters used the wrong printing for their products. The genuine Kans. and Nebr. overprints, if they have full original gum, must show only one rotary press ridge per stamp or two ridges approximately 21mm apart if the ridges should be extremely close to the top and bottom perforations. The Kans. and Nebr. stamps were overprinted on the basic stamps bearing the distinct gum breakers referred to earlier. There are 14 vertical gum ridges with each line of gum extending lengthwise with the stamp. (See left Stamp *Figure 1*.)

Some of the counterfeits were overprinted on the proper early issues, but many of them appear on the mid and later printings which did not exist when the Kans. and Nebr. overprints were applied in 1929, thus, many of the mint counterfeits can be eliminated quickly by merely looking at the gum on the reverse side. Keep in mind, however, that all of the Kans. and Nebr. overprints appearing on the proper printing of the basic stamp are not genuine.

Let's turn now to a discussion of the overprint itself. For the purpose of this report we will limit our comments strictly to the two groups of counterfeits which have suddenly appeared on the philatelic scene during the past two or three years. We will leave it to other authorities to discuss in detail the numerous counter-

feit overprints which have existed long before these two groups.

In *Figures 3 and 4* we have illustrated the overprints enlarged almost double the actual size. The top overprint in each illustration is the genuine. The second overprint in each illustration is that of the "Northern California" product, while the bottom overprint is the "Southern California" product.

**A**LL OF the measurements referred to in the following comments easily can vary as much as .1mm, depending upon whether it is heavily or lightly inked and upon the pressure exerted by the press. The measurements we are using should be considered as the average.

The genuine Kans. measures 9.2mm. The "Northern California" fake also measures 9.2mm, whereas the "Southern California" fake measures only 8.2mm.

The genuine Kans. overprint, although fairly heavily inked, reveals the letters to be in a fairly straight line, whereas the "Northern California" fake appears to be on a curve with the "K" and "s" below the level of the other letters and the period. You will also notice that the shape and slant of the serifs on the letters are slightly different than the genuine, particularly on the "s" and the "a".

The "Southern California" forged overprint appears much too clean and the serifs are too nicely formed. You will notice that the "K" is open at the top and bottom and that the serifs do not come together as they normally do in the genuine overprint.

The measurement of the genuine Nebr. overprint is 9.0mm. The same measurement is found in the "Northern California" counterfeits. The "Southern California" counterfeits are again shorter than the genuine, this time measuring 8.8mm.

One very distinctive and noticeable difference is the shape of the letter "N". Taking a measurement through the very middle of the letter, forgetting about the serifs entirely, the genuine "N" measures 1.8mm wide, the "Northern California" counterfeit measures 1.7mm wide, whereas the "Southern California" counterfeit measures 2.0mm wide. These differences easily can be seen in *Figure 4*.

The serifs in the letters of the "Northern California"

<sup>2</sup> United States Stamp Catalogue Specialized, p. 11. New York, N. Y. Scott Publications. 1971.



Figure 2

**Kans.**

**Nebr.**

**Kans.**

**Nebr.**

**Kans.**

**Nebr.**

Figure 3

Figure 4

counterfeit of the Nebr. overprints are not distinct or evenly formed. On the other hand, the "Southern California" counterfeits are much too clean and nicely formed.

Owners of Kans. and Nebr. material would be wise to have their stamps expertized by a recognized authority.

*Acknowledgements:*

We want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous assistance we have received from Edmond S. McConnell of Berkeley, Calif., and Robert H. Schoen of Saginaw, Mich., both of whom not only helped with this project but loaned considerable portions of their collections for this study. Thanks also go to Frank Sankey of San Francisco, whose advice and assistance have been most helpful. All of the illustrations were made from photographs taken by the writer.

Revised from an original presentation in

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# First Day Covers OF THE Kansas-Nebraska Overprints

By Jack V. Harvey, A.P.S.

## General Information

SEVERAL YEARS ago when we had completed the first draft of the handbook, *First Day Covers of the U.S. Regular Issue of 1922-35*, published by the American First Day Cover Society (A.P.S. unit No. 33), one of the officers who received the draft and made many valuable suggestions was AFDCS Past President Richard H. Thompson. He suggested, among other things, that we ought to include a section detailing the Kansas-Nebraska overprints, which are listed in Scott's Catalogue as Nos. 658-668 (Kansas, 1 cent through 10 cents) and Nos. 669-679 (Nebraska, also 1 cent through 10 cents).

Thompson was quite correct. Logic certainly dictated that these overprints should have been included, as the designs were exactly the same as those of the 1922-23 ordinary series. But we did not act on Dick's suggestion. Instead we contented ourselves with simply drawing attention to the omission and the statement that "the author believes that the First Day Covers of this unique group of stamps are worthy of a separate detailed study in themselves."

This is true, as far as it goes, but the fact is that the whole subject of the First Day Covers of the overprints had us rather thoroughly confused. We decided that we had a lot more work to do in this area before we tried to write about the overprint FDCs.

That was more than three years ago, and as of today we must admit that this subject is still quite confusing—although perhaps a little less so than it was then. After a number of years of rather intensive study and the exchange of numerous letters with various specialized collectors, we are still a long way from having all the facts.

However, we think it might be worthwhile now to get into print with what we do know about these First Day Covers, at the same time admitting the many things we do not know. Perhaps this will help smoke out some or all of the additional information that we need, so that we can gradually add to our knowledge of these issues and possibly some day put the complete story together.

A BRIEF description of the background and origin of these state overprints will be included here, because some of this information is important to an understanding of the First Days of this issue. Max G. Johl covers this subject so concisely and well that we will quote directly from him (*The United States Postage Stamps of the 20th Century*, Vol. III, p. 16):

"In February 1929 the Department announced that they had authorized the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to overprint rotary press stamps for use in Kansas and Nebraska. This move had been under consideration for some time in an effort to prevent the sale of stamps stolen in one state and selling them in another. Kansas and Nebraska were selected as trial states because the inspector who suggested the overprinting was in charge of the inspectors for these two states and the trial was made under his supervision. It was the Department's plan that if this proved successful it would be extended to other states. The first shipments of these stamps was made about April 13, the first covers being dated April 15. These (overprinted stamps) were put on sale at the Agency (Philatelic Agency in Washington) May 1."

(Parenthetically, it should be noted here that the experiment was not successful. The use of the over-

This monograph is a revised and updated presentation adapted from a series that originally appeared in "First Days," the official journal of the American First Day Cover Society, edited by Sol Koved. (All photographs of covers were taken by Adrien Boutrelle, Brooklyn, N.Y.)

Jack V. Harvey is a nationally-recognized authority on the subject of Kansas-Nebraska overprints on cover. He is presently the chairman of the Expertizing Committee for the AFDCS, which is A.P.S. unit No. 33.

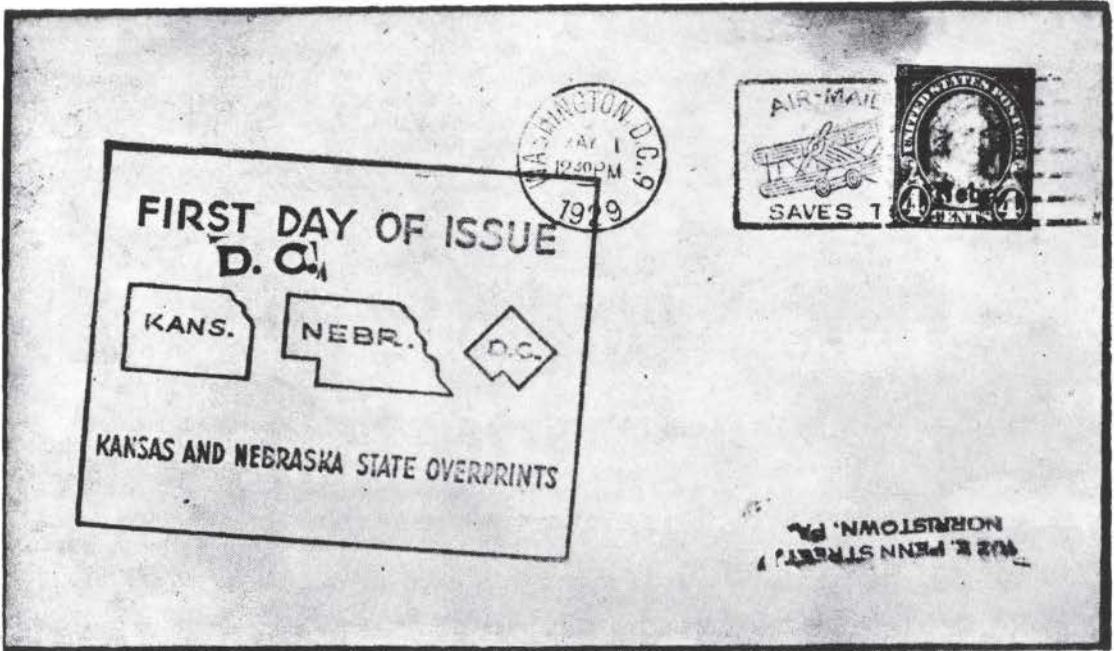


Figure 1

prints did not halt the post office burglaries; furthermore, even though the stamps were valid in all parts of the United States, there were many complaints that they were not being accepted for payment of postage.

Hence the experiment was not repeated, and no other states had similar overprints.)

The Department's official notice of the issuance of these overprints was dated April 8, 1929. The notice

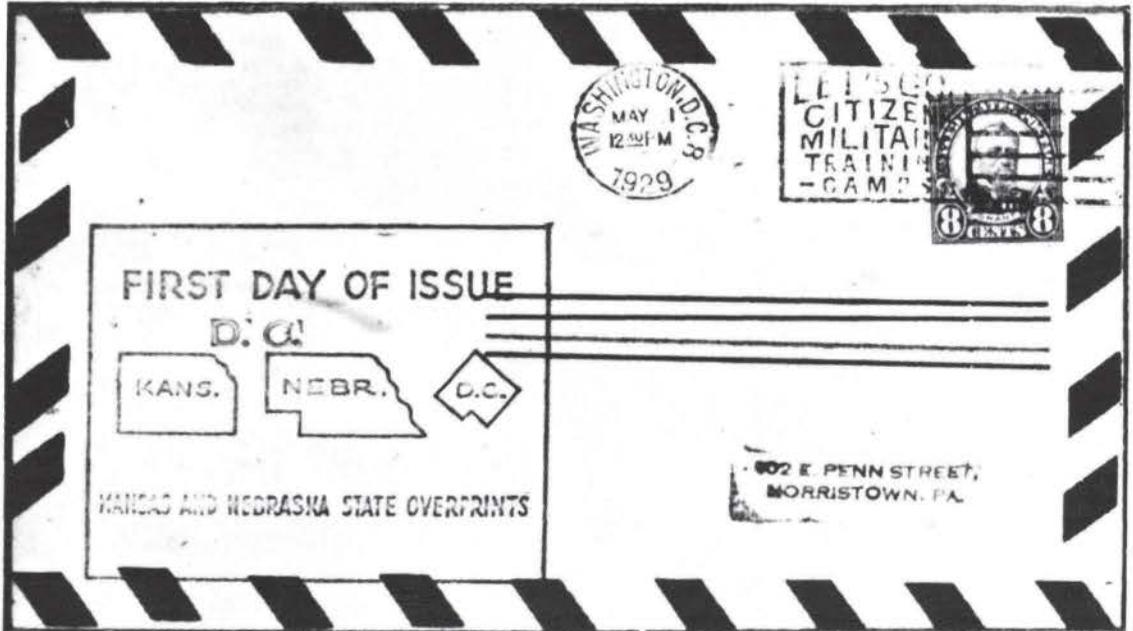


Figure 2

Figure 1 and 2 are typical machine-canceled May 1, 1929 "First Day Covers" from Washington, D.C. Both have rubber-stamped cachets, in purple, one of the few cachets used with this series. Note the variation in position of the printed "D. C." on the two cachets. This suggests that the cachet was originally prepared for use on FDCs from the Kansas and Nebraska towns as well as from Washington, and that the printed "D.C." was added later by separate rubber stamp when it turned out that no official First Day was designated for the Kansas and Nebraska towns.



Figure 3. An example of a complete set of Nebraska overprints on a single Washington, May 1, 1929 "FDC," except that the 9-cent stamp is the Kansas overprint. This cover was made by pioneer servicer Albert E. Gorham, who doubtless used the wrong 9-cent stamp inadvertently.

is somewhat lengthy, so we will not quote it in full. However, it stated that "arrangements have been completed to begin the issuance (of the overprints) . . . to post offices in Kansas and Nebraska, for placing on sale to the public. . . . The overprinted-style stamps will be issued to all post offices in the above-named states with the exception of Kansas City, Topeka and Wichita, Kans., and Omaha and Lincoln, Nebr., where ordinary postage stamps will be continued on sale for local use."

**F**OR OUR purposes in studying the First Day Covers of these stamps, two further quotations from the official notice are important:

"The supplies of ordinary unsurcharged stamps remaining on hand in post offices in the above named states will continue to be used until exhausted. *No official first day of sale will be designated for any post office supplied with the surcharged stamps.* (Emphasis supplied.)

"For the benefit of stamp collectors the State surcharged stamps will be placed on sale in the Philatelic Agency on May 1, 1929. Owing to the large number of denominations of surcharged stamps, the agency will be unable to accept first day covers from collectors for stamping and mailing on May 1."

In those two sentences from the department's official notice lies the dilemma facing the First Day Cover collector who is interested in these overprints.

In one breath the Department said it would designate *no official First Day dates* for Kansas and Nebraska cities, and in the next breath it seems to designate Washington, D. C., and May 1, 1929, as the official city and date of issue.

But, it is important to note, the Department *placed no embargo* on the use of the new overprints prior to May 1. Thus, earlier uses of these stamps from Kansas

and Nebraska towns were not unauthorized or illegal uses. Hence, covers franked with these overprints and canceled at Kansas and Nebraska towns prior to May 1 cannot be dismissed as simply being pre-First Days.

It would therefore appear that, for once, the First Day Cover collector might have a choice, or at least an opportunity to exercise his own opinion. He could decide to collect these overprints, in all denominations, canceled at Washington, D. C. on May 1, 1929. Or, alternatively, he could attempt to put together a collection of each denomination of these overprints canceled at Kansas or Nebraska towns on the earliest known date of use for each such denomination, provided that he had some idea of what date and what town to look for, for each denomination.

**O**UR PERSONAL opinion is that a complete First Day Cover collection of the Kansas-Nebraska overprints should include both the above-mentioned categories. The May 1, 1929 Washington covers are neither terribly scarce nor very common. (See Figures 1 and 2.) They appear rather frequently at auction, and can often be bought in sets at retail. Prices, in general, are higher for these covers than for First Day Covers of other stamps of the 1928-1930 period, especially for the higher denominations. The complete sets of the 11 Kansas overprints and the 11 Nebraska overprints, each set complete on one cover, are especially desirable and usually bring higher prices than a set of 11 covers with a single stamp on each cover. (See Figures 3, 4 and 5.) Nonetheless, these Washington covers are within the range of availability for most First Day Cover collectors, and the challenge of putting together a complete set of all denominations on First Day Cover from Washington can be, and has been, met by many collectors. Several complete sets of blocks of four on Washington FDCs are known (Figures 6 and 7) and there is at least one set of FDCs of plate blocks.



Figure 4

However, the challenge of completing a collection of all denominations canceled from Kansas or Nebraska towns on the earliest date of use for each denomina-

tion, is an entirely different matter. We have been working on this project for the past 13 years and we are still less than half-way finished. Indeed, we are

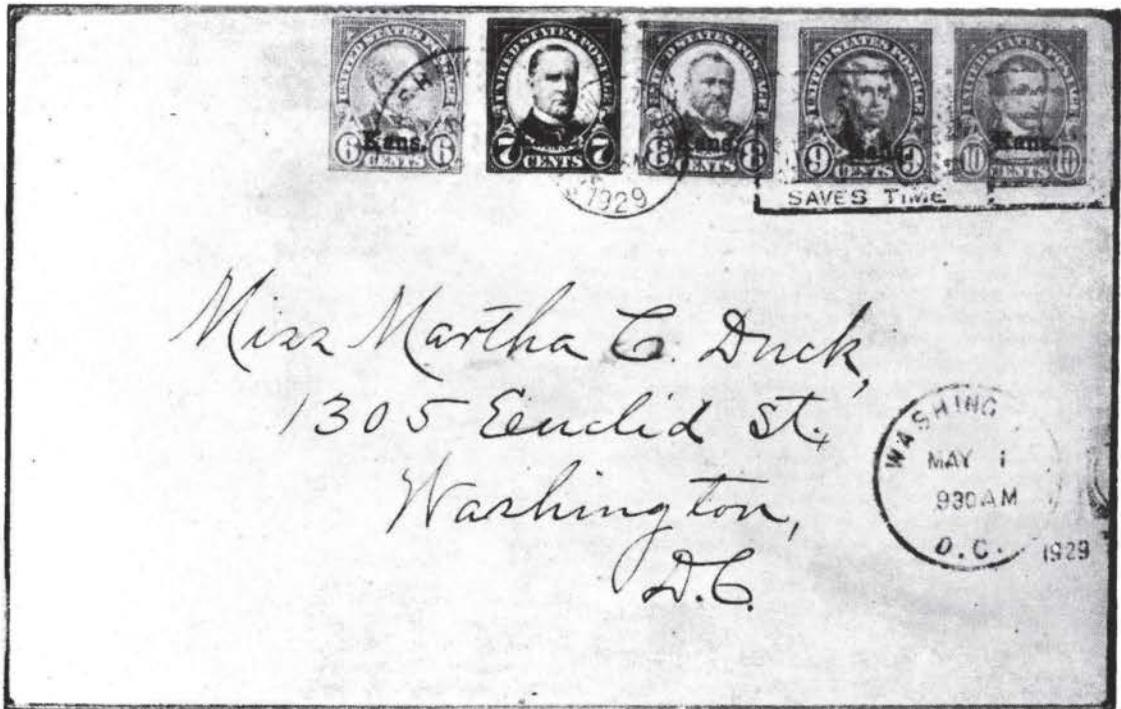


Figure 5

Figures 4 and 5 show complete set of Kansas overprints on two May 1, 1929, Washington covers, canceled both by machine and by hand.

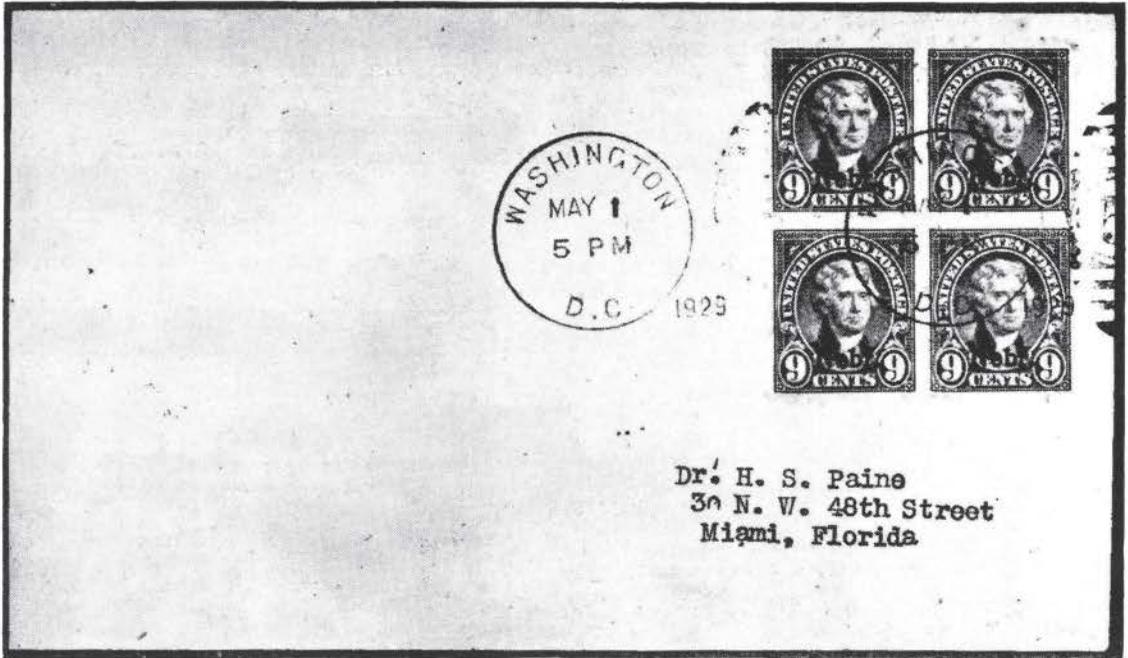


Figure 6

beginning to wonder if it will ever be possible to complete the task.

Not only are these early-dated Kansas and Nebraska covers extremely rare in many cases, but also it is

difficult to know exactly what one is looking for. Various published information on the earliest known dates and towns for each value does not always agree, and in several instances such published information has proven to be positively erroneous.



Figure 7

Figures 6 and 7 are typical hand-canceled May 1, 1929, "First Day Covers" from Washington, from a matched set of all values franked with blocks of four.

## KANSAS

**I**N THE General Information section we illustrated a number of "First Day" covers of the Kansas and Nebraska overprints canceled at Washington, D. C., May 1, 1929. It was noted, however, that the Post Office Department did not designate any official First Day for these overprints. May 1 was simply the date on which these stamps were first sold at the Philatelic Agency; all denominations were used quite legally on earlier dates from various Kansas and Nebraska towns.

Thus, while these May 1 covers are desirable, it would appear that they are not true First Day Covers. The real First Day Covers for each denomination would have to be the earliest dates of use of each value from the various Kansas and Nebraska towns.

This is not just our own personal opinion. Several philatelic authorities have taken the same view. George W. Brett, for example, wrote in *The Bureau Specialist* for September 1961:

"For the Kansas-Nebraskans . . . first day covers were prepared by professional servicers (the Postmaster at Washington, D. C. didn't have the stamps, only the Philatelic Agency), and May 1, 1929, Washington, D. C. is commonly listed as the first day and place of issue for these stamps. The actual situation, however, was different because the true first days of use were when they were placed on sale in the post offices of Kansas and Nebraska, and in all cases for the first post offices this was prior to the Washington May 1 date—but of course the time differed with each post office. . . . So here we have a case where the first days have to be determined from actual usage. . . ."

Likewise, Max G. Johl stated in his handbook, *United States Postage Stamps of the 20th Century*, (Vol. III, p. 38) that "there was no official first day sale of these stamps except May 1, 1929, when they were placed on sale at the Agency 'for the benefit of stamp collectors.' These 'first day' covers are of doubtful interest or value as initial shipments of the state overprinted stamps was made about April 13, 1929, to various post offices in the two states."

**S**O WHAT do we look for? What were these earliest dates of actual use for each denomination, and what towns in Kansas and Nebraska had the stamps first? Is there any really authoritative source for this information?

Here the subject grows rather complex. The situations for the Kansas overprints and the Nebraska overprints appear to have been widely different, so we will confine the balance of this column to the Kansas overprints, leaving the Nebraskas for the next section.

The first place one would think to look would be in the standard First Day Cover catalogs. We immediately find some disagreement.

The *United States Catalog of First Day Covers*, published by the Washington Press, Maplewood, N. J., simply lists May 1, 1929, Washington, D. C., for all denominations, making no effort to show earlier uses from Kansas towns. This listing has continued to appear in The Washington Press catalog year after year.

The exact same type of listing appeared in the *First Day Cover Catalog*, published by Fleetwood Cover Service, Pleasantville, N. Y., through its 1958 edition. The publication was then suspended for about 10 years until 1969, when the firm changed hands and a new *Fleetwood's Standard First Day Cover Catalog* was introduced by Fleetwood Publications, Cheyenne, Wyo. In this new catalog, labeled the 18th edition of the *Fleetwood* series, the Kansas overprint listings are entirely changed. No mention whatsoever is made of

the May 1 Washington dates; instead, the 1c, 6c and 8c Kansas overprint First Days are shown as April 15, 1929, from Newton, Kans. And all other denominations (1½c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 7c, 9c and 10c) are shown as having first been used at Colby, Kans., April 16, 1929.

A third standard source, *Scott's U. S. Specialized Stamp Catalogue*, has it both ways. It lists May 1, 1929, from Washington for all denominations, and also lists Newton, Kans., April 15, for the 1c, 6c and 8c values and Colby, Kans., April 16, for all other denominations.

One additional published source is available. That is Johl's handbook in which he states that "with the assistance of H. M. Southgate (one of the founders and first president of the Bureau Issues Association) we have been able to ascertain the earliest known date of each value in the group with the name of the town first using these stamps." Johl then lists Newton, Kans., April 15, for the 1c, 6c and 8c denominations, and Colby, Kans., and April 16, for all other values.

So far, so good, Johl, Scott and Fleetwood, at least, are all in apparent agreement. But—how did this all come about? It is worth examining.

**J**OHL'S EXCELLENT work was published in 1935, and the author very clearly attributes his information on these early dates to Southgate. Scott first began listing First Day Covers in its 1932 edition, and in that year it simply showed May 1, 1929, at Washington, for all denominations except the 2c, which it also listed as having been used April 20, 1929, at El Dorado, Kans. In the 1937 edition, the April 15 dates for the 1c, 6c and 8c appeared for the first time, but Newton was not shown as the town for these dates indicating that Washington was still considered the First Day city. This identical set of listings continued to appear in all subsequent editions of Scott until 1943, when suddenly there appeared, full-blown, the Newton and Colby April 15 and 16 listings (with the April 20 El Dorado 2c listing deleted). These same listings have now appeared in every subsequent edition of Scott from 1943 right up through 1973, without change.

And then, in 1969, the new Fleetwood catalog appeared, for the first time showing the very same Newton and Colby dates.

Sincerely intending no disrespect to the publishers of these excellent catalogs, we nonetheless must point out that the whole accumulation of listings begins to resemble a house of cards, depending entirely on Southgate's work as its base. In other words, Johl got his information from Southgate, Scott apparently picked up Johl's listings in 1943, and Fleetwood appears to have picked up the Scott listings in 1969.

Now, this is not to suggest that these Newton and Colby listings are incorrect, although we will see later herein that they are at least incomplete. Certainly it would be hard to find a better source for this kind of information than the careful and observant Mr. Southgate, without whose work we would be at a loss to identify many First Day Covers of this period.

But it is now worthwhile, we believe, to examine what is actually known about these early-dated Kansas overprint covers and to ask some questions—with the hope that the answers will yet be forthcoming from some hitherto untapped source.

**F**IRST OF ALL, there is ample existing evidence to prove that the listing of Newton, Kans., and April 15, 1929, for the 1c, 6c and 8c denominations, is eminently correct. A substantial number of these covers exist and are known, and some of each are illustrated herewith. (See Figures 8, 9, 10 and 11.) Further the origin of these Newton covers was reported in the philatelic press at the time of their appearance.

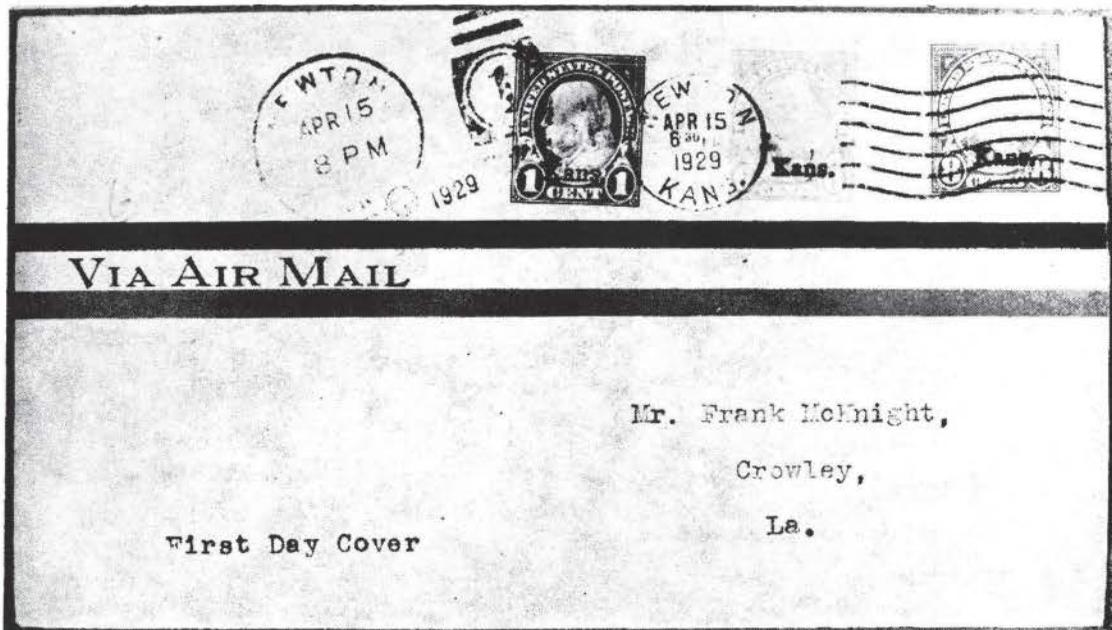


Figure 8. A combination cover franked with the 1-, 6- and 8-cent Kansas overprints, hand and machine canceled at Newton, Kans., April 15, 1929. This is the earliest date of use and the true First Day Cover for these three denominations.

An item in *Linn's Weekly Stamp News*, April 27, 1929, (Vol. 1, No. 26, p. 259) reports that "300 to 500 covers of the 1c, 6c and 8c Kansas surcharge (were) made at Newton, Kans., between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. April 15, 1929, according to H. S. Dickey of Newton. Shipment arrived on the fast #7 Santa Fe train. Prof. Heffelfinger spread the news. It is believed these are the first of the surcharges issued."

This belief turned out to be correct. No earlier dated covers of these denominations have since appeared, and consequently the April 15 date at Newton can logically be accepted as the First Day for these three values.

The Newton story was repeated, in more detail, several years later in *Stamps* (Vol. 1, No. 6, Oct. 22, 1932, p. 211) in a story by Howard Starr Dickey. We quote it in part:

"On the afternoon of April 15th, 1929, I went over to the post office to send a special delivery letter. When I asked for a stamp, the clerk at the window said: 'We've just received a package of the new Kansas stamps. Would you care to get some of them?' I held my breath. Here was a scoop for first day covers. I casually inquired which stamps they had and was informed that the 1c, 6c and 8c Kansas stamps had been placed on sale, and that a sheet of each was at the stamp window.

"I looked at the clock. It was almost closing time, and post offices are so prompt! I rushed out of the office and tore madly home. I tried to find some plain envelopes and a bottle of ink, but because I was in such need of haste, I could not find them. Finally, I pulled some envelopes out of the mass of papers I had tossed hither and yon, and discovered I had a fountain pen in my pocket, I addressed some envelopes and rushed back to the post office.

"In the meantime in my exceeding joy, I had telephoned to some other first day collectors so that they might share my find, and when I got back to the stamp

window, one of my friends whom I had thus assisted had nearly bought out the Kansas stamps, so that the clerk had difficulty in scraping enough together to supply my envelopes."

**EXISTING COVERS** of these stamps from Newton bear out Dickey's story. They are all timed later than 4 p.m., and there seem to be very few such covers actually produced by Dickey. Most of the Newton covers we have seen were made either by Dr. Harry P. Knowles or Dr. E. P. Cressler, both of Newton. There also exist a number of these Newton covers made on envelopes of the Newton City Schools, with the typed initials "J. B. S." above the school return address.

So much for the 1c, 6c and 8c values. What about the other denominations, unanimously listed from Colby, Kans., on April 16?

The first fact that strikes us is the almost complete lack of hard evidence to prove these Colby listings. With the Newton listings, both the covers and the published documentation exist to demonstrate their correctness. Almost the exact reverse is true of the Colby listings.

Consider the contrast. As to the Newton First Day Covers, we have nine in our own collection and have corresponded with at least four other collectors who also own similar covers. In addition, we have seen these Newton covers offered at auction at least five or six times over the past 15 years. Thus, at least 50 to 60 of these Newton covers are known to exist, and probably there are more.

**CONVERSELY**, we have never seen one of the Colby April 16 covers and have never heard of one. We have never seen one offered at auction over the past 15 years. Not one of the specialists with whom we have corresponded has ever seen or heard of an actual Colby April 16 cover. In addition, we have searched philatelic journals of the period, and we find no pub-

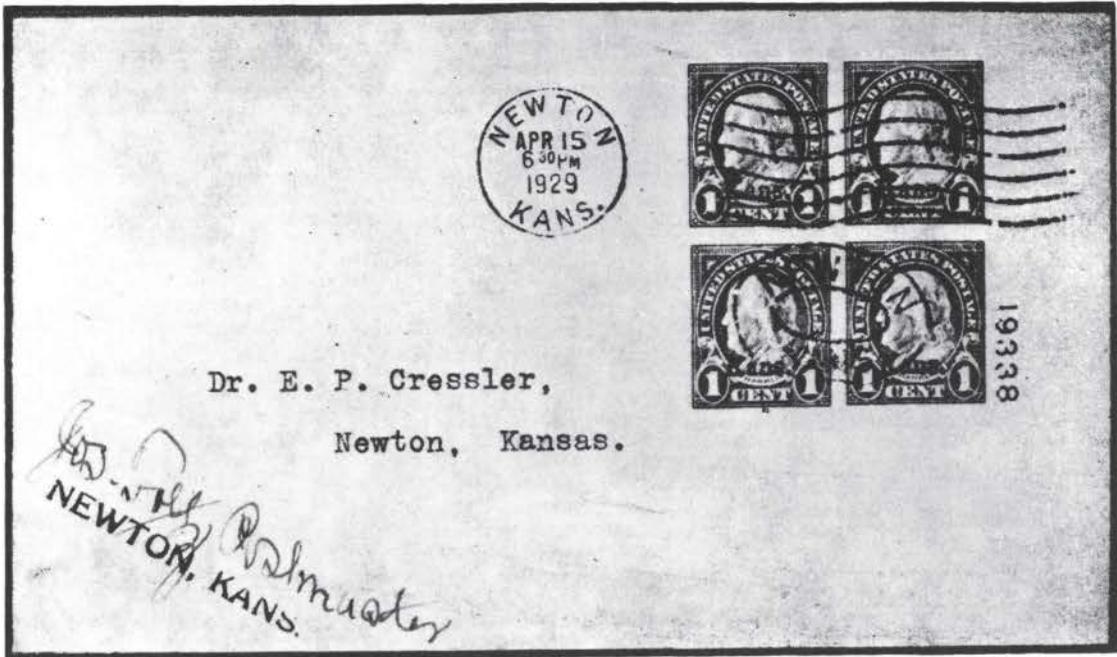


Figure 9. Another true First Day Cover for the 1-cent Kansas, franked with a plate number block of four, canceled April 15, 1929, Newton, Kans., and autographed by Newton Postmaster Josiah Foltz.

lished reports of such covers having been made at Colby on April 16, comparable to the Newton reports in *Linn's and Stamps*.

That is the negative evidence, but we are the first to admit that negative evidence does not constitute proof. So what is the positive evidence?

The only positive evidence we have been able to find is Johl's published statement (cited earlier) that Southgate had supplied him with the information that the remaining denominations of the Kansas overprints were used at Colby on April 16, 1929.

There is one other clue, this directly from Southgate's own writing, but it is less definite. In *Ward's Philatelic News* for March, 1931 (Vol. 1, No. 3), Southgate published an article on "The Kansas and Nebraska State Stamps" in which he states (on pages 52 and 53):

"The first day covers are indeed rare, shipped from Washington on April 12 or 13, 1929, to 33 Kansas and 26 Nebraska towns. . . . The stamps reached their destinations on April 15 or 16. But two Kansas and one Nebraska town received all denominations, the shipments being to fill orders in hand at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the average being perhaps only three or four denominations (per town). The earliest reported covers bear the date of April 15, 1929, with 1c, 6c and 8c Kansas denominations. All other Kansas denominations are dated April 16. . . . The shipments, while expected, were unheralded; hence the lack of early covers."

IT IS unfortunate that Southgate does not name the towns. His mention of the 1c, 6c and 8c covers must refer to the Newton covers already discussed. His statement also explains why Newton received only those three denominations; those were the only values on order for Newton at the Bureau when the stamps came out.

Now, it is obvious that Southgate knew what he

was talking about; he always did. Likewise, it appears certain that his reference to "all other Kansas denominations . . . dated April 16" was to Colby, as he later informed Johl. And we can be quite certain that Southgate would not have reported the April 16 covers from Colby unless he knew personally of their existence. He was much too accurate to have done otherwise.

So, we are quite prepared to believe that the 1½c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 7c, 9c and 10c Kansas overprints were indeed used at Colby on April 16; in fact, it is likely that the 1c, 6c and 8c were also used at Colby on the same date—but one day later than Newton. Colby is doubtless one of the two Kansas towns mentioned by Southgate that received all denominations.

But, these questions still remain: Where are the Colby covers? How many were made there on April 16? Was there just one set, or perhaps just two or three? (Certainly there was nothing like the 300 to 500 covers reported made at Newton, or some would have shown up by now.) Who made the Colby covers? Did Southgate have these covers himself at one time? If so, where are they now? Were they perhaps inadvertently lost or destroyed?

We hope that by raising these questions, we may ultimately learn some of the answers. If any reader has ever seen or heard of any of these Colby April 16 covers, or can provide any clue at all to their existence or whereabouts, we would be eager to hear about it. Certainly, if one or more of these Colby covers comes to light, the finder will have discovered a very great rarity.

MEANTIME, it can be said with certainty that April 16, 1929, is the true First Day for at least the 2c Kansas overprint. Two covers are known to exist bearing that denomination and canceled on that date, but neither is from Colby.

The first of these was made by George M. Knox, of Hood River, Ore., and was canceled at Dodge City,

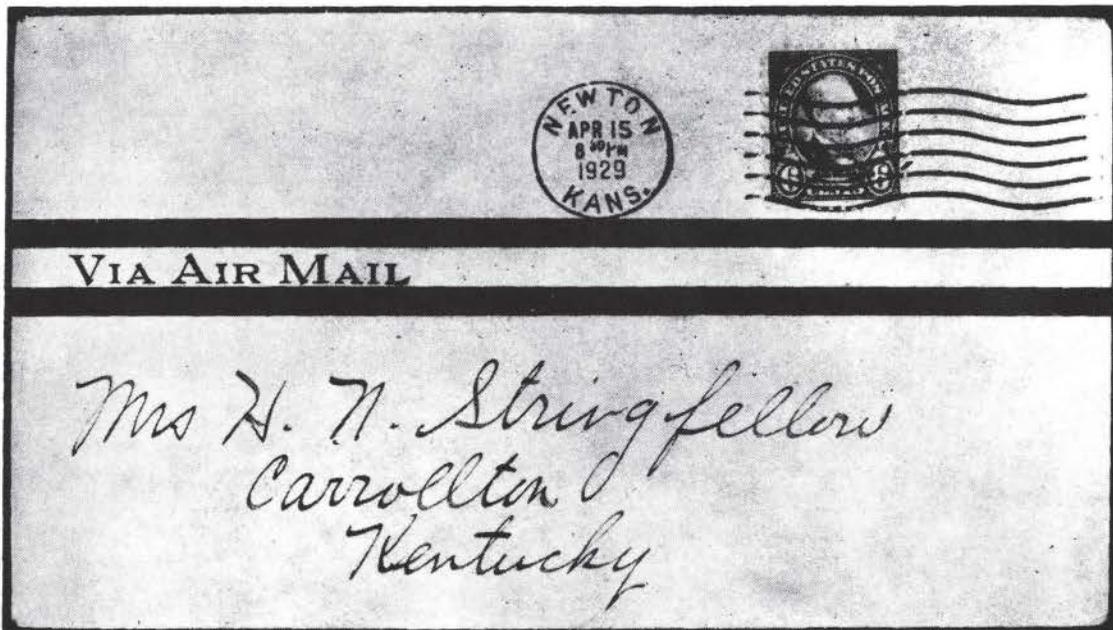


Figure 10

Kansas on April 16. It was one of a number of covers sent by Knox to various Kansas postmasters, just before the overprints appeared, to see what the earliest date of use and town would be. The Dodge City cover turned out to be the earliest, and the only one he got back canceled on the 16th. Knox's adventure with this experiment is described by George W. Brett in the September 1961 issue of the *Bureau Specialist*, and the rare First Day Cover is illustrated with the article.

The other known April 16 cancellation of the 2c Kansas is from Liberal, Kans., and this cover is illustrated herewith. (See Figure 12.) It is from the collection of Dr. Henry James Vogel, of Stowe, Vt., who was kind enough to lend it to us for examination and illustration. It appears to be of nonphilatelic origin, apparently used at Liberal on April 16 in the ordinary course of business. It bears a strip of four of the 2c Kansas overprints, on a legal-size self-addressed en-

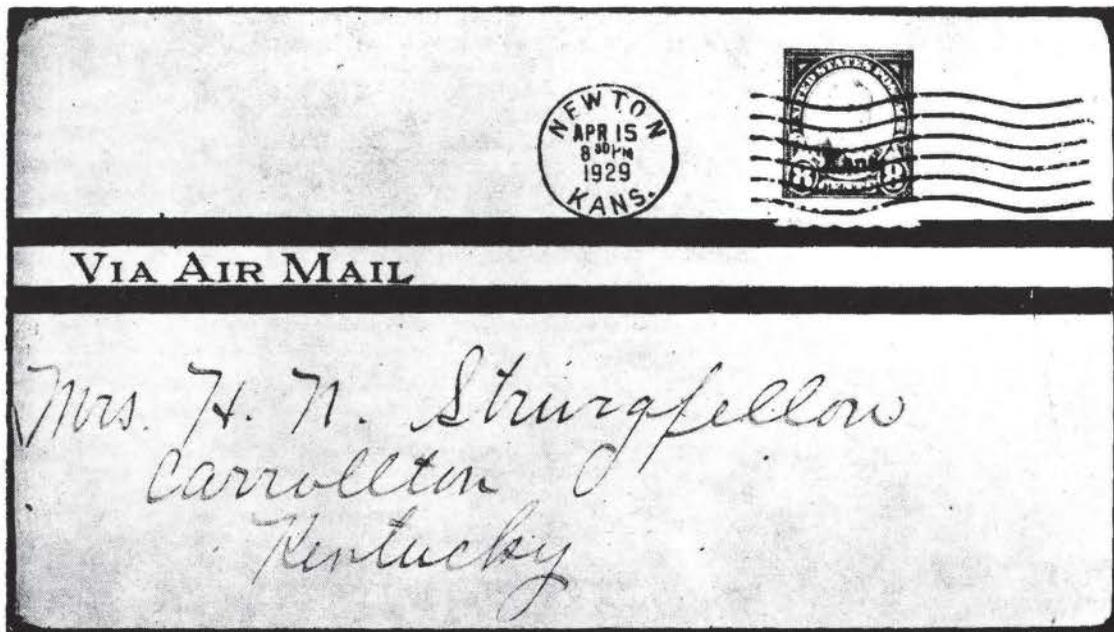


Figure 11

Figures 10 and 11 are Machine-canceled true First Day covers for the 6- and 8-cent Kansas from Newton, Kans., April 15, 1929.

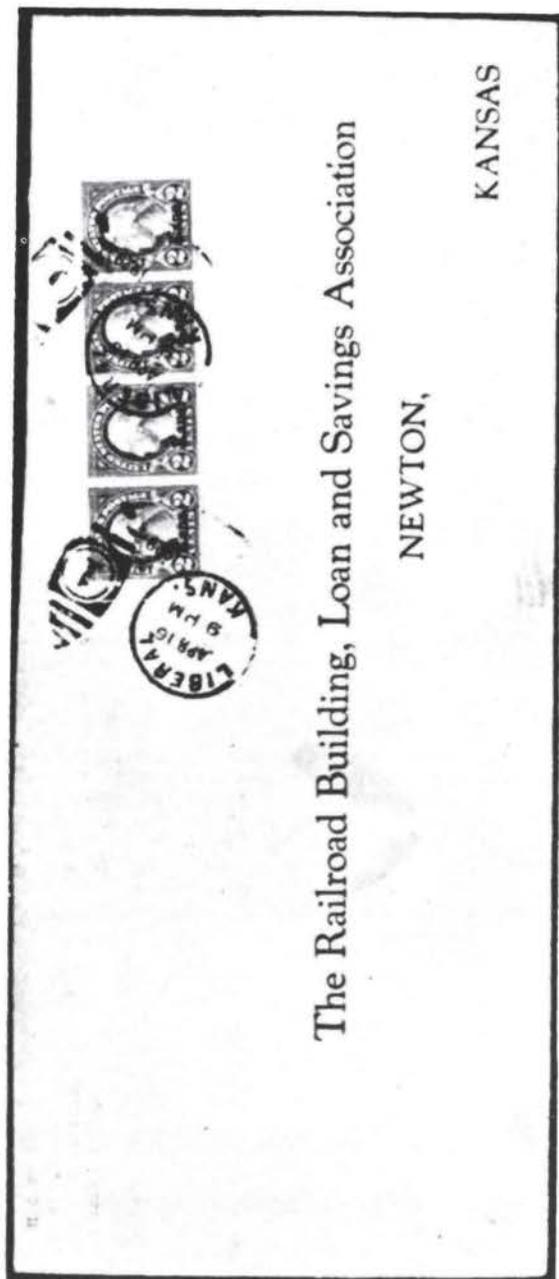


Figure 12. A true First Day Cover for the 2-cent Kansas, hand-canceled at Liberal, Kans., April 16, 1929, the earliest date of use for this denomination. (Courtesy of Dr. Henry James Vogel.)

velope, indicating that the contents were over the minimum first class weight. It is possible to speculate that the enclosure might have been a passbook and checks for deposit, inasmuch as the cover is addressed to a savings and loan association. By great coincidence, the addressee is in Newton, Kans.

Neither Dodge City nor Liberal is listed in any catalog as a First Day city for the 2c Kansas overprint. Both should be.

The Railroad Building, Loan and Savings Association

NEWTON,

KANSAS

THERE EXIST a scattering of other covers franked with the 2c Kansas and canceled at various Kansas towns between April 16 and May 1, but of course only the April 16 covers are real First Days. A list of these known early-dated but "interim" (not First Day) 2c covers follows:

El Dorado .....	April 18, 22, 24, 29
Liberal .....	April 22, 23, 25, 26, 27
Leavenworth .....	April 22
Emporia .....	April 25
Independence .....	April 27
Paola, Lakin and Towanda .....	April 29
Gardner, Ottawa, Oswatomie and Sabetha .....	April 30

The April 25 Liberal cover is illustrated herewith (see Figure 13); note that someone has stamped it a "First Day Cover." Of course it is not, as we now know that the 2c Kansas was used at both Liberal and Dodge City on April 16. However, it is likely that the maker of this April 25 Liberal cover really believed it to be the earliest known use at the time he discovered it.

Any Kansas overprint cover canceled prior to May 1, 1929, is quite rare, even though it is not a true First Day; consider how few are known. And almost all that are known bear the 2c denomination, since this was the regular first class rate at that time.

Even more rare are other denominations used prior to May 1; we know of only three such covers. One bears a pair of the 1c Kansas overprints, canceled at Olathe, Kans., April 30. The other two bear the 6c value, to meet the air mail rate—one, a first flight cover, canceled at Wichita, Kans. on April 16 and the other, an airport dedication cover, canceled April 27, at Waynesboro, Pa.

When we get up to the May 1 date, a few more covers of various denominations are known from a number of Kansas towns and even from a few towns in other states. We can list the following known May 1 covers of the Kansas overprints:

- 1c—Wichita, Topeka, Morganville, Silver Lake, Clifton and Belleville, Kans.; Kansas City and St. Louis, Mo.; Omaha, Nebr.
- 1½c—Salina and Silver Lake, Kans.
- 1c-2c combination—Kansas City, Kans.; Kansas City, Mo.
- 2c—Salina, Wichita, Topeka, Olathe, Silver Lake and Concordia, Kans.; Kansas City, Mo.
- 3c—Holton, Kans.
- 1c-3c combination—Holton, Kans.
- 2c-3c combination—Kansas City, Kans.; St. Louis, Mo.
- 4c—Manhattan, Kans.
- 5c—Silver Lake and Leavenworth, Kans.
- 6c—Holton, Kans.; Springfield, Ohio; Omaha, Nebr.
- 7c-3c combination—Holton, Kans.
- 8c—Holton, Kans.; Kansas City, Mo.

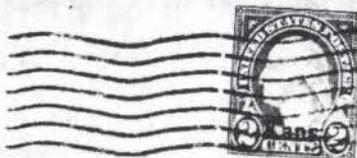
In addition, covers from other Kansas towns with slightly later dates are known, including: the 1c dated May 2 from Agenda, Wabaunsee, Vining, Zeander and Bala (the last two towns are no longer listed in standard atlases); the 2c dated May 9 from Arkansas City, May 20 from Coffeyville and June 7 from Pittsburg.

SOUTHGATE said the Kansas overprints went out to 33 Kansas towns, and a count of the above lists will show that we have listed 34, not counting Colby. These 34, however, include Wichita, Topeka and Kansas City, Kans., and the Department's official notice specified that the stamps would not be sold at these cities. Covers from those three cities must have been made by collectors who obtained the stamps elsewhere and carried the covers there for mailing; indeed, most of the covers from these towns are First Flight covers. So, if we deduct Wichita, Topeka and Kansas City from the list, and add Colby, it would appear that we have identified all but one of the 33 Kansas towns, which received the overprints.

Earlier we speculated that Colby was one of the two

AFTER FIVE DAYS RETURN TO

**Woodmen Accident Company**  
CLAIM DEPARTMENT  
*Lincoln Nebraska*



"FIRST DAY COVER"

*M. E. Snow*  
*1612 So 10th*  
*Lincoln*  
*Nebr*

Figure 13. An early-dated cover with the 2-cent Kansas, machine-cancelled April 25, 1929, at Liberal, Kans. Although it is rubber-stamped "First Day Cover," it really is not as this denomination was used at Liberal (and Dodge City) nine days earlier.

towns mentioned by Southgate to have received all denominations. From the above lists, we will speculate further that the second such town might well have been Holton, as covers with five different denominations are known from there.

Is it not fascinating to note that in all the foregoing lists of known early-dated covers, *there is not a single one from Colby*, of any date or any denomination?

In conclusion, let us summarize, as to the Kansas overprint First Days.

The following First Day dates and towns have been definitely established, by known, existing covers:

- No. 658—1c—*Newton, Kans.*, April 15, 1929
- No. 660—2c—*Dodge City and Liberal, Kans.*, April 16, 1929
- No. 664—6c—*Newton, Kans.*, April 15, 1929
- No. 666—8c—*Newton, Kans.*, April 15, 1929

That is all we really know, for sure. For all other values, it is likely that Southgate's report of April 16, 1929 from Colby, Kans., is correct, but it is not known that these Colby covers still exist. Until they are found, anyone coming up with a cover dated earlier than May 1, for any of these other denominations will have made a discovery of real significance.

(We are grateful and deeply indebted to the following collectors and specialists who took the time to reply to our letters and who supplied much of the information included herein: Mr. Robert H. Schoen of Saginaw, Mich.; Dr. Henry James Vogel of Stowe, Vt.; Dr. Byron J. Park of Richmond, Ind.; and the late Lawrence S. Fisher of New Castle, Pa. Our special thanks are extended to Dr. Vogel for allowing us to illustrate his Liberal, Kans. First Day Cover of the 2c value.)

## NEBRASKA

IN THE TWO preceding sections we have seen that:

(1) The May 1, 1929, covers of the Kansas-Nebraska overprints, while desirable, are not necessarily true First Day Covers for the various denominations of these stamps, and

(2) The true First Day Covers are the earliest dates of use, for each denomination, from various Kansas and Nebraska towns, which received the stamps prior to May 1, that simply being the date on which the overprints went on sale at the Philatelic Agency in Washington.

The last section explored the difficulties in knowing what dates and towns to look for on the Kansas overprints. Now, we will deal with the even greater difficulties in determining the earliest dates and towns for the various denominations of the Nebraskas.

As we did with the Kansas issues, let us first look at the published First Day information on the Nebraskas, from various standard sources. Again, as with the Kansas overprints, we immediately find disagreement; but with the Nebraskas the disagreement is greater, and we also find several demonstrable published errors and omissions.

The *United States Specialized Catalog of First Day Covers* (1970-71 edition) simply lists May 1, 1929, Washington, D. C., as First Days for all denomination of the Nebraskas. No effort is made to show earlier dates from Nebraska towns. This listing has been repeated unchanged in the Washington Press catalog in all editions for at least the past 15 years.

The other three standard sources again consulted in this series are *Scott's United States Stamp Catalogue Specialized*, (1971 and earlier), *Fleetwood's Standard First Day Cover Catalog*, (1969), and Max G. Johl's *U.S. Postage Stamps of the 20th Century*, (1935). Of

these, *Scott's Specialized* is the only one which lists both May 1, 1929, Washington, D. C., for all denominations of the Nebraska overprints, as well as earlier dates from various Nebraska towns for various denominations. Fleetwood and Johl ignore the May 1 Washington listings and give only earlier dates from Nebraska towns.

**I**N MANY cases these three sources do not agree, and the best way to observe the discrepancies is to look at the various denominational listings in columnar form, as follows:

Johl (1935)	Scott (1971)	Fleetwood (1969)
	1c (#669)	
April 17, Cambridge	April 15, Beatrice 1½c (#670)	April 15, Beatrice
April 18, North Platte	April 19, Lehigh 2c (#671)	April 19, Nehigh
April 15, Harlington	April 15, Auburn Hartington Beatrice 3c (#672)	April 15, Hardridge Beatrice
April 17, Auburn Exeter	April 15, Beatrice Hartington 4c (#673)	April 15, Beatrice Hardridge
April 17, Pawnee City Ravenna Wahoo	April 15, Beatrice Hartington 5c (#674)	April 15, Beatrice Hardridge
April 19, Crawford	April 15, Beatrice Hartington 6c (#675)	April 15, Beatrice Hardridge
April 17, Wahoo	April 17, Wahoo Ravenna 7c (#676)	April 17, Wahoo Ravenna
April 17, Auburn	April 17, Auburn 8c (#677)	April 17, Auburn
April 17, Humboldt	April 17, Humboldt Pawnee City 9c (#678)	April 17, Humboldt Pawnee City
April 17, Cambridge	April 17, Cambridge 10c (#679)	April 17, Cambridge
April 18, Tecumseh	April 18, Tecumseh	April 18, Tecumseh

Thus, comparing Johl, Scott and Fleetwood, we find complete agreement only on the 7c, 9c and 10c values. There is partial disagreement on the 1c, 6c and 8c denominations. And on the 1½c, 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c values there is complete, or near-complete, disagreement.

As in the case of the Kansas overprints, in order to bring these discrepancies into some sort of focus, it is necessary to examine and trace the development of these listings.

Johl was the first to publish any specific early Nebraska dates and towns, in 1935. He states on page 38, Vol. III of his definitive work (cited earlier) that he obtained his information from Hugh M. Southgate, one of the founders and first president of Bureau Issues Association.

From 1932 through 1942, Scott listed only May 1, 1929, Washington, D. C., for all denominations of the Nebraskas. Suddenly, in the 1943 edition, Scott came out with a full set of earlier dates from various Nebraska towns for the various denominations. Unlike the Kansas early dates, which also appeared in Scott for the first time in the 1943 edition, the Nebraska listings agreed with Johl only in part. The 6c, 7c, 8c, 9c and 10c listings duplicated those from Johl, but Scott listed one additional town for each of the 6c and 8c values. The 1c through 5c values were

completely different in Scott from the towns and dates listed by Johl. Scott showed April 15, 1929, for the 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c, listing Beatrice, Nebr., as the First Day City for the 1c and showing Beatrice and Hartridge (sic) for the 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c. Please note that all of Johl's dates for these denominations were either April 17, 18 or 19, with the exception of the 2c, which Johl also listed on April 15, but from Harlington. For the 1½c value, Scott listed April 19 from Nehigh while Johl showed April 18 from North Platte. All these Scott listings, including Hartridge for the 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c, were continued unchanged in all editions from 1943 through 1969. The Johl listings, of course, remain unchanged from 1935 to this day, there having been no subsequent editions of his book.

**T**HEN IN 1969, Fleetwood brought out its new and revised catalogue after a lapse in publication of about 10 years. Earlier Fleetwood catalogues had merely shown May 1, 1929, Washington, D. C., for all denominations of the Nebraskas. But, in the new 1969 edition, Fleetwood dropped the May 1 Washington listings completely and showed only a full set of early dates from Nebraska towns. All these 1969 Fleetwood listings agreed 100% as to date and town with the 1969 (and previous) Scott listings, except in one particular. For the 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c values, Fleetwood listed Hardridge instead of Scott's Hartridge.

Are you by now thoroughly confused? We were when we first started collecting Kansas-Nebraska First Days some 15 years ago. Since then we have gradually, with the help of several cooperative K-N specialists, sorted out and solved several of the discrepancies, but we still have a long way to go.

First, let us look at the 2c Nebraska (*No. 670*), which is the most common on early-dated covers because 2c was the regular first class postage rate at that time. Here Johl listed Harlington, Scott (until 1970) listed Hartridge, and Fleetwood (1969) listed Hardridge—all on April 15.

The fact is that all three were wrong. There is not now and was not in 1929 a town in Nebraska named Harlington, Hartridge or Hardridge. There was and is, however, a town named Hartington, Nebr., and that is where some of the true Nebraska overprint First Day Covers were made. Some covers exist, franked with the 1½c and 2c Nebraskas, canceled at Hartington, Nebr., on April 15, 1929. (See *Figures 14 and 15*.) One of each is illustrated herewith. These are the true FDCs for these two denominations. At this time, we personally know of the existence of about 10 such covers of each denomination and, of course, there may be more. Every one that we have seen is addressed by hand to either Dr. C. N. Olsen or Ruth Olsen, City.

**J**OHL WAS closest to having this right as his listing of Harlington rather than Hartington was possibly a simple typographical error in just one letter of the name. Scott's transition to Hartridge is harder to explain; Fleetwood's Hardridge could again be a typographical error of one letter from Scott's listing, which was itself erroneous.

The 1½c (*670*) listings are also interesting, but wrong in every case. Johl has April 18 from North Platte, Scott (through 1969) had Nehigh, April 19; Fleetwood (1969) also listed Nehigh, April 19.

Now, there is no such town as Nehigh, Nebr. As it happens, there is a Lehigh and a Neligh, but no Nehigh. In any case, the argument is academic as far as First Day Covers are concerned, because we now know that covers exist bearing the 1½c Nebraska and canceled April 15, 1929, at Hartington (see above and



Figures 14 and 15

Portions of true First Day Covers for 1½-cent Nebraska (top) and 2-cent Nebraska (bottom), both machine canceled April 15, 1929, at Hartington, Nebr., the earliest date of use for these two denominations.

illustration). Thus the April 18 and 19 listings for the 1½c value from whatever town are not real First Days. The correct listing for the 1½c Nebraska should be April 15, 1929, from Hartington, Nebr.

In its 1970 edition, Scott corrected the Hartridge error and began listing Hartington instead for the 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c values. This came about after considerable correspondence between several K-N specialists and the editors of Scott, during which the actual existing Hartington covers of the 1½c and 2c Nebraskas were exhibited to the catalog editors as evidence of the error.

Inexplicably, however, the correction was not made in the 1½c listing. In spite of the existence of the 1½c April 15 covers from Hartington, the Scott listing for the 1½c in 1970 was simply changed from Nehigh to Lehigh (when in fact the town could even have been Neligh), and the April 19 date was retained. Hopefully, future editions of Scott and other catalogs will show the correct April 15 Hartington listing and will eliminate entirely the April 19 listing, which has been shown to be four days too late.

**A**NOTHER correction—actually an addition—was made in the 1970 edition of Scott when Auburn,

Nebr., April 15, 1929, was added for the 2c Nebraska. This was done as a result of the appearance of such a cover, which is illustrated herewithin. (See Figure 16.) It is one of two such covers now known to exist, and is from our own collection.

And that is the sum and substance of what we have been able to actually confirm, as to listed Nebraska First Days, from covers which we have actually seen and know to exist. Out of all this, all we really factually know about are just two of the 11 denominations of the Nebraskas:

1½c (670)—April 15, 1929, Hartington, Nebr.

2c (671)—April 15, 1929, Hartington, and Auburn, Nebr.

There is one lone piece of additional evidence that the listing of Beatrice, Nebr., April 15, for the 2c value is correct. Such a cover was offered for sale in Allan M. Thatcher's auction of April 1964. It was Lot No. 456, described as "2c (671) tied Beatrice, Nebr., Apr. 15." Unfortunately this rare cover was not illustrated in the catalog, and our own bid on it was unsuccessful. We do not know who the successful bidder was, but it was not one of the several K-N specialists with whom

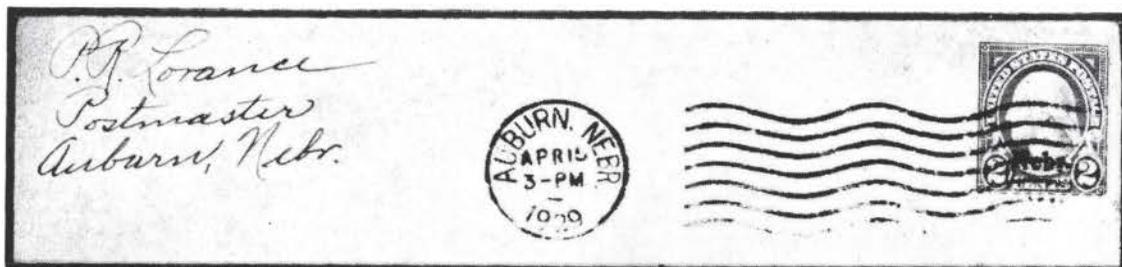


Figure 16. Top portion of another true First Day Cover for the 2-cent Nebraska, machine-canceled April 15, 1929, at Auburn, Nebr. It is signed by P. O. Lorance, Postmaster at Auburn.

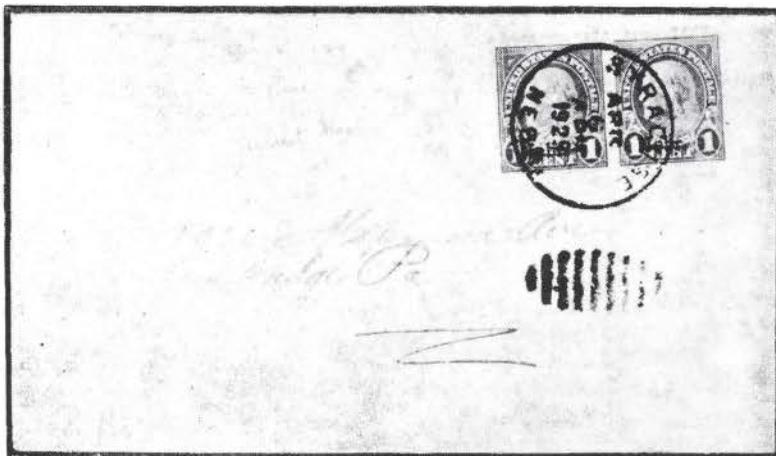


Figure 17. A "mystery" cover. It is one of three existing covers franked with either the 1-cent or 2-cent Nebraska overprints and hand canceled April 6, 1929, at Syracuse, Nebr. Something is wrong here, because the new stamps were not even shipped from the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing until April 12 or 13.

we have corresponded, so we have never actually seen this cover nor even a picture of it.

So, except for the few covers described heretofore, all of the early-dated Nebraska covers which led to the various catalog listings for the other nine denominations either are no longer in existence, or else they are in deep hiding. Although we now know about the 1½c and 2c covers from Hartington, neither we nor anyone else we know has ever seen or heard of April 15 Hartington covers of the 3c, 4c or 5c. Likewise, except for the 2c cover listed in the Thatcher sale, no April 15 covers of any denomination from Beatrice have come to light.

**WHILE WE** now know about the previously unlisted 2c Auburn cover, the 3c and 7c covers listed from Auburn have yet to make their appearance. And as yet completely unknown are the covers of various denominations from Exeter, Pawnee, City, Ravenna, Wahoo, Crawford, Humboldt, Cambridge and Tecumseh. Do they still exist? Indeed, did they ever exist? It is likely, of course, that they did, because we are certain that the originators of these listings did not simply dream them up. We must admit, however, that the Harlington-Hartridge-Hardridge-Hartington mixup, as well as the Nehigh-Lehigh-Neligh confusion leads us to wonder a bit about the accuracy of some of the other listings.

Several other "mysteries" with respect to the early-dated Nebraskas present themselves. Not the least of these are existing covers franked with the 1c and 2c Nebraskas and very clearly hand-canceled at Syracuse, Nebr. on April 6, 1929. One of these covers, franked with a pair of 1c Nebraskas, is shown herewith. (See Figure 17.) Another similar cover, franked with the 2c Nebraska, is owned by Dr. Vogel.

Both covers have an authentic look and the postmarks are very clear. Moreover, Dr. Vogel has obtained a certificate from the Philatelic Foundation certifying his cover to be genuine.

However, it is necessary to question the authenticity of these covers, because all available published information on the Kansas-Nebraskas indicates that these stamps were simply not available as early as April 6. The Post Office Department's official announcement of the Kansas-Nebraskas was dated April 8, and at least three separate sources state categorically that the ac-

tual stamps were not even shipped from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing until April 12 or 13. These sources are Johl (cited earlier) on page 16, Vol. III; H. M. Southgate, in *Ward's Philatelic News* (March, 1931, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 52); and Arthur J. Trumbull, in his article "Overprinted U. S. Postage Stamps" in *The Bureau Specialist* for November, 1950 (Vol. XXI, No. 11, p. 246). If these three sources are correct, and there is every reason to believe that they are correct in view of the April 8 date of the Department's announcement, then the stamps could not have been in the Syracuse, Nebr. post office on April 6, and there must be some other explanation for the Syracuse covers.

**DR. VOGEL** advances the theory that the correct date should have been April 16, and that the "1" was inadvertently left off the canceler when the postal clerk set it. This is possible, although the "6" in the date circle is perfectly centered below the "P" in "APR". It is still possible, of course, that the postal clerk who adjusted the canceling device simply put in a "6" instead of the correct date—whatever that date might have been. In any case, it is extremely unlikely, in our view, that these covers were canceled at Syracuse on April 6.

However, when Dr. Vogel checked back with the Foundation on this point, the Foundation replied that its committee had access to the "Southgate" records regarding this issue, which records "contained many examples of usage prior to the official day of issue."

We presume that here the Foundation was referring to the May 1, 1929, "official" day of issue, although this presumption may be erroneous. Perhaps—and this is pure speculation—the Foundation committee concluded that since genuine covers existed canceled prior to May 1, then an April 6 cover could be genuine.

In any case, the mystery deepens when we refer to the only published Southgate writing with regard to the Nebraskas—his article on "The Kansas and Nebraska State Stamps" in *Ward's Philatelic News* (cited earlier). Here Southgate states that: "The earliest reported covers bear the date of April 15, 1929 . . . and the 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 cent Nebraska stamps."

**NOW BEAR** in mind that the above was written in 1931. Yet, in 1935, when Johl's book was published, Johl attributed his Nebraska First Day information to Southgate and went on to list April 17 as the

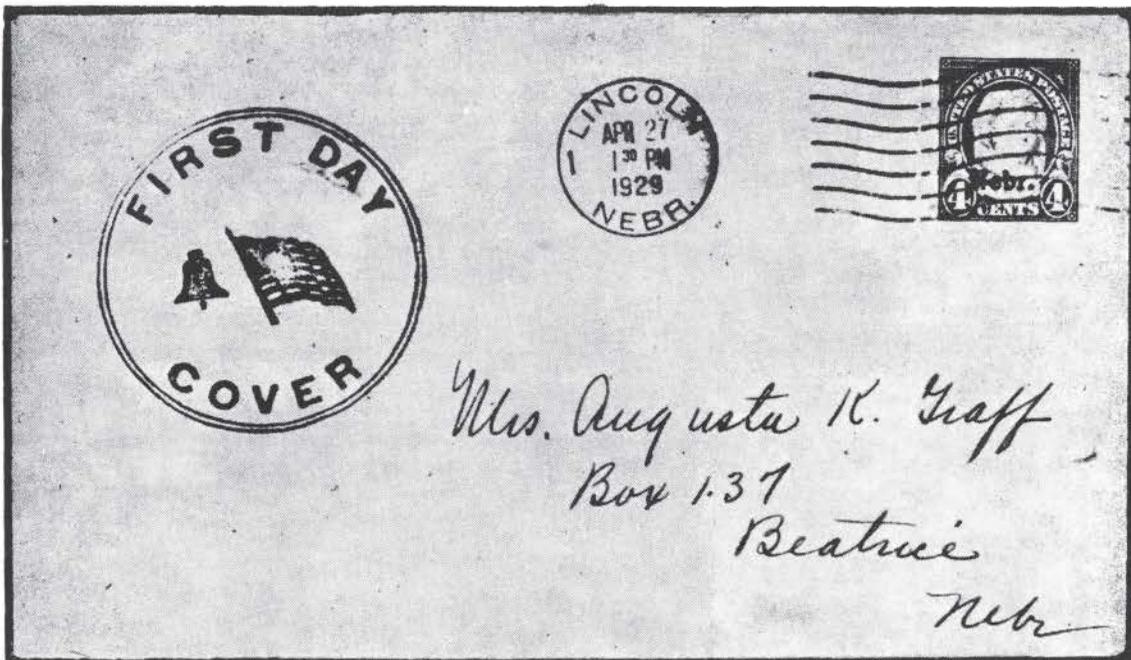


Figure 18. This 4-cent Nebraska machine-cancelled April 27, 1929, at Lincoln, Nebr., was for a time believed to be the earliest known use of the 4-cent value. Subsequently, however, the Westphal-Tweedy covers showed up, dated April 24 from Grand Island, Fremont, Waterloo, Elkhorn and Omaha.

First Day for the 1c, 3c and 4c Nebraskas and April 19 for the 5c. And the Philatelic Foundation opinion on Dr. Vogel's April 6 Syracuse cover (this opinion issued in 1961) also refers to Southgate's records as one reason for confirmation of the cover.

It is true that Southgate goes on in the above cited article to state that the earliest known uses of the 6c, 7c, 8c and 9c Nebraskas was April 17, and for the 10c he gives April 19—and while he unfortunately does not name the towns for any of the denominations, the dates at least do square with those given by Johl. However, there is definitely something amiss with the lower denominations.

To complete his comments on the early uses of the Nebraskas in the *Ward's Philatelic News* article, Southgate also stated that the Nebraska overprints were shipped to 26 Nebraska towns, reaching their destinations on April 15 or 16, and that only one Nebraska town received all denominations. The other towns received only some of the values, depending on orders in hand at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the average being three or four different denominations.

It is all very confusing. If Southgate was able to say that exactly 26 Nebraska towns received the overprints, he doubtless knew exactly which towns these were; and we already know from Johl that he also had reported from which towns each denomination was used first. At that time, such information probably seemed too unimportant to Southgate to warrant his including it in his article, but today we would certainly like to know. It is said that the Southgate notes of this era are still in existence, and if they are ever made available to philatelists for general study, perhaps we shall then learn more about these overprint First Days.

Meantime, there is so much confusion and divergent published information on these dates that they must

all be called into question except for those which are provable by existing authentic covers.

**T**O COMPLETE our study of the Nebraskas, we feel it might be useful at this point to list all of the early-dated covers which we personally know to exist, or which have been recorded in one way or another. As in the case of the Kansas overprints, early-dated covers franked with the 2c denomination are the most numerous, inasmuch as 2c was the regular first class postage rate at that time. Following is a listing of all known early-dated 2c Nebraska covers, including up to May 1, 1929:

- April 15—Auburn, Hartington, Beatrice (listed in 1964 Thatcher sale but whereabouts unknown)
- April 19—Beatrice
- April 20—Nebraska City
- April 22—Hastings
- April 23—Alliance
- April 24—Fremont, Grand Island, Valley, Lincoln
- April 25—Lincoln
- April 27—Kearney
- May 1—North Platte, Beatrice, Hastings, Omaha, Crab Orchard, Falls City (all Nebraska), and Rome, N. Y.; Springfield, Ohio and Harrisburg, Pa.

For all the other denominations, covers dated prior to May 1 are scarce in the extreme. We have already discussed the April 15 covers of the 1½c value from Hartington, of which several are known and which are undoubtedly the true First Days for this denomination. Except for these, there are only two other known Nebraska covers dated before May 1. One of these has the 4c denomination, canceled at Lincoln on April 27. This cover is illustrated herewith (*See Figure 18*), and at this moment it is the earliest known existing use of the 4c value. The other is a single registered cover bearing a complete set of all values of the Nebraskas except the 7c, mailed by the postmaster at North Platte and backstamped at North Platte on April



Figure 19

Figures 19 and 20 show two May 1, 1929, covers from Beatrice, Nebr., were prepared for veteran serviceman Frank Herget, but they are not First Day Covers, earlier uses of both values being known. Other similar Herget covers from Beatrice exist, with blocks of four the 1-, 2-, 3- and 5-cent stamps. It is believed that these covers may have led to some of the possibly erroneous Beatrice First Day listings in standard catalogues.

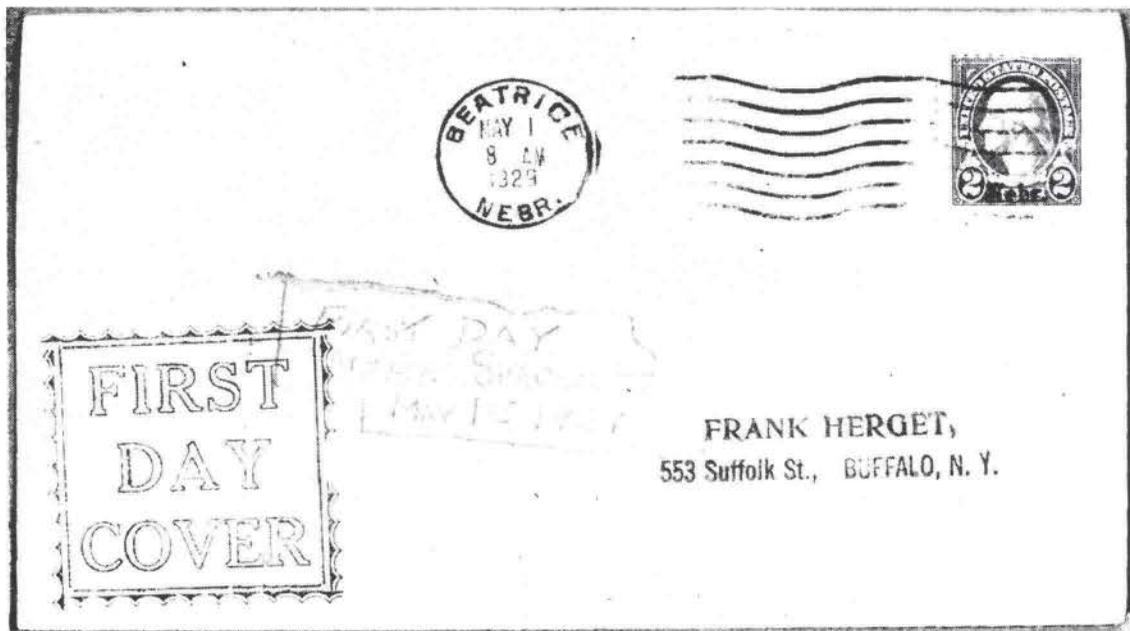


Figure 20

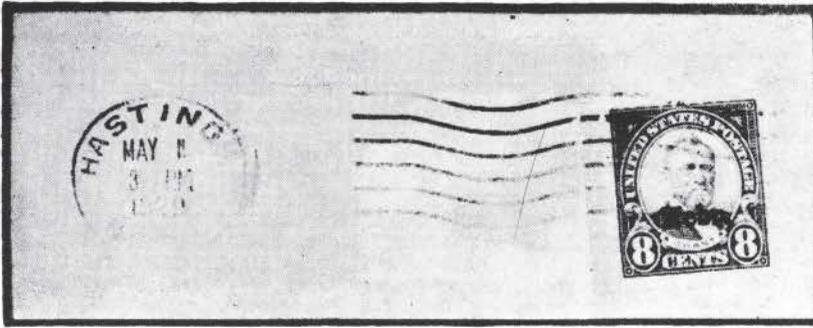


Figure 21. Portion of another May 1, 1929, cover from a Nebraska town (Hastings) but not a First Day Cover. These Hastings covers exist in complete sets of all values except the 1½-, 6- and 9-cent denominations and they were surely intended to be First Day Covers, even though May 1, 1929, was only the first-day-of-sale at the Philatelic Agency, Washington, D.C.

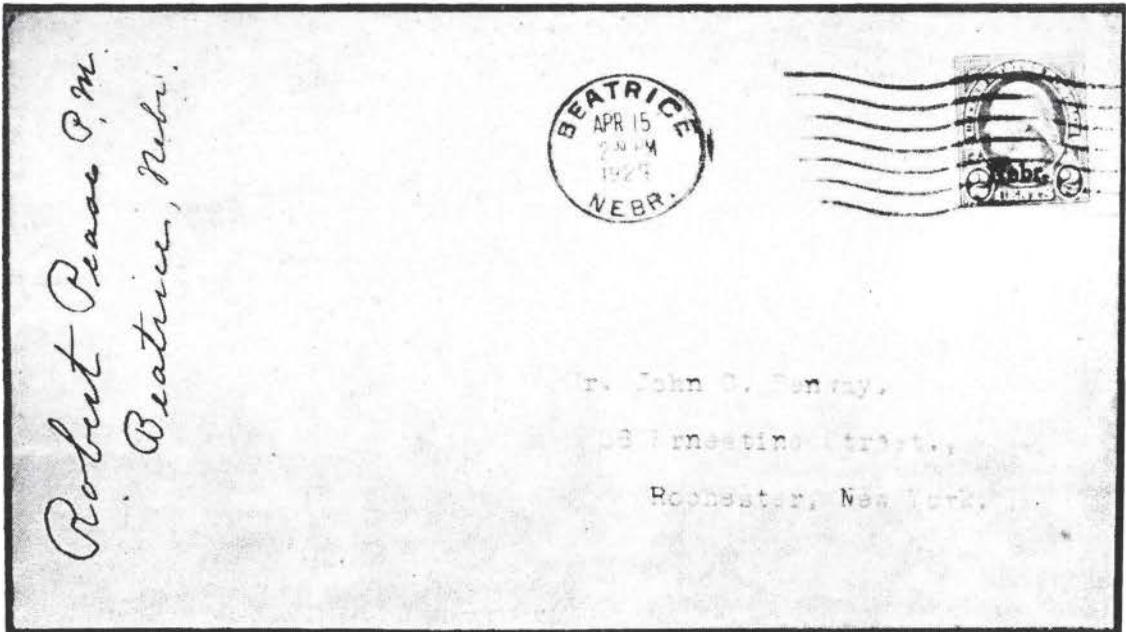


Figure 22. A true First Day Cover for the 2-cent Nebraska, machine-canceled April 15, 1929, at Beatrice, Nebr., and signed by Beatrice Postmaster Robert Pease. Only two such Beatrice FDCs are known to exist. (Courtesy of John S. Haupt.)



Figure 23. Portion of another early-dated cover for the 2-cent Nebraska which is stamped "First Day" but which is really not a FDC. It is machine-canceled April 24, 1929, at Grand Island, Nebr., but the 2-cent is known to have been used as early as April 15. This is one of a group of covers of the 2- and 4-cent Nebraskas made by railroad men A. H. Westphal and W. A. Tweedy at various towns.



Figure 24. A complete set of Kansas overprints, in plate number singles, hand-canceled at Lawrence, Kans., on April 24, 1929. It was made by the late Kansas specialist, Robert W. Baughman, and represents the presently earliest-known use of seven of the 11 denominations—the 1½-, 3-, 4-, 5-, 7-, 9- and 10-cent stamps. (Courtesy of Al Zimmerman.)

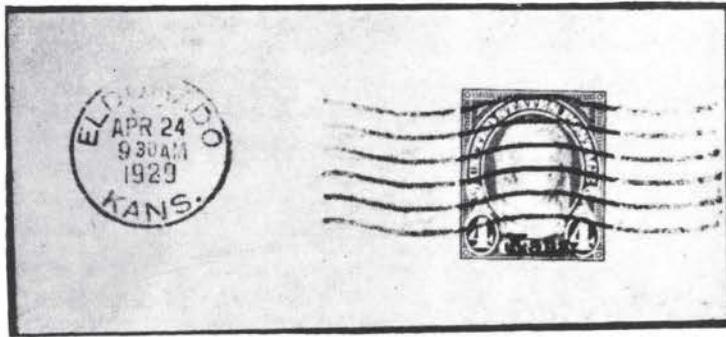


Figure 25. Portion of another earliest known use of the 4-cent Kansas, April 24, 1929, from Eldorado, Kans. Similar April 24 usages are known from Augusta, Winfield, Lawrence, Abilene and Arkansas City. Cover bears name, John B. Heffelfinger as addressee. He is the same Newton collector who "spread the news" of the arrival of the 1-, 6- and 8-cent Kansas overprints at Newton April 15.

29, 1929. This great cover is also owned by Dr. Vogel and actually illustrates the earliest presently provable use of the 1c, 3c, 5c, 6c, 8c, 9c and 10c Nebraskas—at least until some of the covers giving rise to the earlier published dates come to light.

**E**XCEPT FOR the 2c denomination, even May 1 Nebraska covers are rare canceled at Nebraska towns. The 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c are known canceled May 1 at Hastings and Beatrice, most of these covers having been made by veteran servicer Frank Herget, of Buffalo, N. Y., sometimes in blocks of four. The 1c is also known from Fairbury, Nebr., canceled May 1, 1929—also a Herget cover. The 7c, 8c and 10c values are known only from Hastings. All the Hastings covers we have seen are addressed to F. Hambrook Jr. of Lakewood, N. J. Examples of these May 1 Beatrice and Hastings covers are shown herewith. (See Figures 19, 20 and 21.) In addition, there is at least one set of covers bearing all values of the Nebraskas except the 1½c and mailed via a first flight from Kansas City, Kans., on May 1, 1929.

Checking through all the above listings, we find that there are May 1 or earlier covers known from a total of 16 towns, including Omaha and Lincoln, which were not to have received the Nebraska overprints, according to the official Department notice. Subtracting these two cities, we have thus accounted for only 14 of the 26 towns which Southgate reported receiving the overprints.

Johl, Scott and Fleetwood list "First Day" covers from nine additional towns, including Wahoo, Lehigh (or Neligh?), Exeter, Pawnee City, Ravenna, Crawford, Humboldt, Cambridge and Tecumseh—which would bring our total to 23 of Southgate's 26 towns. However, it is interesting to note that *not a single cover of any description nor of any denomination* has turned up at auction from any one of these nine towns in the past 15 years. We have to wonder if any of these covers still exist—and if so, where could they be? If any one of them does turn up, it will have to rank as a rarity of the first degree—at least so far as First Day Cover collectors are concerned. It is



Figure 26. The date on this cover is unclear but appears to be April 16 from Newton, making it a "Second Day Cover," but it is interesting for other reasons. It was made by the same Howard Starr Dickey who provided the definitive report of the First Day in Newton, and it is addressed to Kansas specialist, the late Robert W. Baughman. Further, its reverse side contains Baughman's handwritten notes which are a possible clue to the elusive Colby FDCs.

indeed curious that *not even a May 1 cover from any of these nine towns* has yet made its appearance.

We feel sure that the final chapter on the Kansas and Nebraska overprint First Days has not yet been written. Surely, some day, some of the covers which gave rise to the various published listings will show up—perhaps in some long unpublicized collection or

perhaps in a 10c cover box on some dealer's table. If you find one—or any previously unlisted K-N cover dated May 1 or earlier, for that matter—would you let us know? We are anxious to add to the relatively little positive knowledge we have gathered on the First Days of these overprinted stamps, and we need your help.

## NEW INFORMATION

**A** YEAR has passed since the author first introduced this series in *First Days*, the official publication of the American First Day Cover Society (A. P. S. Unit No. 33) and response from readers was excellent, far exceeding initial hopes. The author is pleased to be able to extend this series by utilizing new and additional information furnished as a result of readers' response.

Unfortunately, there are still many wide gaps between the catalogued first day cover information on these Kansas-Nebraska covers and what the author can actually prove from the study of covers that are known to exist.

In summary, the year's response has brought forth the following additional information:

1. Definite confirmation of Beatrice as a third First Day town for the 2c Nebraska on April 15, 1929, in the form of an actually existing cover.

2. A new "earliest known date of use" for the 4c Nebraska, April 24, together with some details of the episode.

3. The addition of several new towns to the lists of known early-dated covers from both Kansas and Nebraska.

4. A tiny shred of collateral evidence indicating that the April 16 catalog listings from Colby, Kans., for most of the Kansas denominations might possibly be correct.

5. And, from a negative standpoint, not a single report of any specific known cover from Colby, of any denomination nor of any date.

There seems to be no way to present all this new information in any coordinated fashion, so we will simply take the new items, one by one, and deal with each separately.

### The 2c Nebraska from Beatrice, April 15

**P**ROBABLY the most significant new report is that of an actual existing cover franked with the 2c Nebraska (#671) and machine canceled at Beatrice, Neb., on April 15, 1929. This cover, both reported and owned by John Hauptert of Williamsville, N. Y., is illustrated herewith. (*Figure 22*).

The existence of this cover confirms the catalog listings of Beatrice as a First Day city for the 2c denomination, along with Hartington and Auburn.

We reported in the section on the Nebraskas that a Beatrice April 15 cover of the 2c Nebraska had been sold in a Thatcher auction in 1964, but that we did not know the whereabouts of this cover. Hauptert advises that he did not buy the illustrated cover from the Thatcher sale; he obtained it as part of a Kansas-Nebraska collection which he purchased in Sacramento, Calif., in 1961. Therefore, it is apparent that at least two of these 2c Beatrice April 15 covers exist; the whereabouts of the one from the Thatcher sale is still not known.

It is fascinating to note that Hauptert's Beatrice FDC is similar in many respects to the Auburn 2c FDC which was illustrated as *Figure 16* in the Nebraska section.

The Beatrice cover is autographed by the Beatrice postmaster, Robert Pease; the Auburn FDC was autographed by the Auburn postmaster. But even more intriguing is the fact that both covers are addressed to John C. Benway, 26 Ernestine St., Rochester, N. Y.

Hopefully, this might provide us with an important clue to obtaining some of the now-unknown history of these two covers. There being two rare first day covers from two separate towns, both addressed to Benway, it is obvious that these covers were not just accidents, but that they were philatelically created. But who is Mr. Benway? Nothing is known about him. He must have been a collector of first day covers, and a painstaking one, at that, as he not only produced these rare covers but also got the two postmasters to autograph them.

It is also interesting to note there are exactly two known Auburn FDCs, and also exactly two known Beatrice FDCs of the 2c Nebraska. Both of the Auburn FDCs are addressed to Benway, and we are now willing to wager the second Beatrice cover (from the aforementioned Thatcher sale) also will turn out to be addressed to Benway—if and when it again turns up. Could it be that Mr. Benway made exactly two covers from each of these towns?

### A Possible Explanation

**N**OW THAT we factually know that at least two April 15 2c Nebraska covers from Beatrice exist, it is possible to construct a likely explanation for the Scott April 15 listings from both Beatrice and Hartington for the 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c denominations (and Beatrice only for the 1c)—even though only the 2c covers are actually known.

First of all, over the last year we have received reports of the existence of at least five additional sets of the 1½c and 2c Nebraskas on April 15 covers from Hartington. This means there are at least 25 sets of these Hartington covers in existence, and they are widely scattered and have been rather actively sold and resold over the last 15 years. In every case, these Hartington covers are addressed to either Dr. Charles N. Olsen or Ruth Olsen, at Hartington.

We have learned that Dr. Olsen was a chiropractor at Hartington, then a town of about 1,600, and his family consisted of his wife and one daughter. Although Dr. Olsen moved to California some 20 years ago and subsequently died there, several elderly citizens of Hartington remembered him plus the fact that he was a stamp collector.

All the evidence points to the fact that all Hartington FDCs must have been produced by the Olsens. If Dr. Olsen made sets of FDCs of the 1½c through 5c Nebraska FDCs at Hartington on April 15, why have some 25 sets of the 1½c and 2c covers shown up, while not a single FDC of the 3c, 4c or 5c has been discovered?

**L**EAVING the Olsens for a moment, let us turn to the Scott listings of the 1c through 5c Nebraskas from Beatrice on April 15—of which only the 2c is known to exist, and then only two such covers. Where are the 1c, 3c, 4c and 5c April 15 covers from Beatrice?

Now, we do factually know that the late veteran servicer, Frank Herget, made a large number of covers of the 1c through 5c at Beatrice (See Figures 19 and 20), but he made his on May 1, not April 15. Hauptert, owner of the above-described 2c Beatrice April 15 FDC, writes that he knew the late Mr. Herget, who often told him that he did not know of the April 15 date in time to make covers that early.

Additionally, Norm and Don Walker of Alliance, Ohio, have uncovered a memo from Herget which was enclosed in one of his Nebraska covers, which reads as follows:

"The Neb. stamp went on sale May 1. I had about 3 or 4 thousand run off. Mr. Lang serviced my covers at Beatrice, they are genuine. I still have a few odds and ends of the issue. Scott has carried 4/15 for years, why bother to war with Scott, he is wrong in many instances . . . we can't all be perfect by any means."

We ask: Is it not possible that the Scott FDC editor back in the 1940s might have known of the Olsen 1½c and 2c April 15 covers from Hartington and the Benway 2c April 15 cover from Beatrice, and from this might have assumed that 1c, 3c, 4c, and 5c covers also originated from those towns? If he made this assumption, he might have considered it warranted in view of the existing May 1 Beatrice covers of the 1c, 3c, 4c and 5c, made by Herget. In fact, it is even possible that the very existence of these later Herget covers led to the April 15 Beatrice listings for all the lower denominations, either through confusion or extrapolation.

This is only a theory, of course, but it makes a certain amount of sense to us. And if, as the years go by, no Beatrice or Hartington April 15 covers of the 3c, 4c and 5c are discovered, it will make even more sense.

#### **New 'Earliest Known Date' for the 4c Nebraska**

In the Nebraska section we illustrated a cover franked with the 4c Nebraska (No. 673) and canceled April 27, 1929, at Lincoln, Nebr. (See Figure 18). Although the various catalogues list the 4c as having been used as early as April 15 and 17, these covers are not actually known, and therefore we commented that the Lincoln April 27 cover represented the earliest actually known use of the 4c.

This is now no longer true. A long-time K-N collector from Nebraska has reported five separate covers, all franked with the 4c Nebraska and canceled on April 24, 1929, at Fremont, Grand Island, Waterloo, Elkhorn and Omaha (Burlington Station). These covers now represent the earliest known uses of the 4c Nebraska, and they may well turn out to be the true first day covers of the 4c, unless the April 15 and 17 covers listed in the catalogue turn up, which begins to appear doubtful.

The owner sent us photostatic pictures of the covers, but they are not of sufficiently clear quality to allow reproduction. However, we can illustrate a similar cover (Figure 23), franked with the 2c Nebraska and canceled April 24 at Grand Island. The five April 24 4c covers are almost identical with this one; each bears the same rubber stamp Nebraska state outline map cachet, and all of the covers are addressed to the same A. H. Westphal or to W. A. Tweedy, both at Fremont. The Grand Island, Fremont, Waterloo and Omaha covers are machine canceled; the Elkhorn cover is hand canceled.

The AFDCS member who reported these covers was also able to tell us how they came to be made. This correspondent reports that he has had in his collection for some 25 years six 2c Nebraska covers, all bearing the same map cachet and all canceled April 24, from Cedar Bluffs, Valley, Waterloo, Elkhorn, Kearney and Omaha (all Nebraska). While these 2c covers are highly interesting and represent several previously unreported "early date" towns, they are not, of course, FDCs, inasmuch as the 2c is known as early as April 15 from Auburn, Beatrice and Hartington.

**H**OWEVER, in the same group are the five 4c covers mentioned above, plus a sixth which bears both the 2c and 4c sent via air mail on April 24 from Fremont to Flint, Mich.

"These (map cachet) covers were all originated by the same two ambitious collectors, namely Messrs. Westphal and Tweedy of Fremont, Nebr.," writes our correspondent. "I visited with Mr. Westphal often, but never met Mr. Tweedy. I think he had passed away before I became interested in stamps and covers (1943). Mr. Tweedy's sister worked in the Fremont post office and evidently she informed them that the Nebraska 2c and 4c would be placed on sale at Fremont April 24."

Our correspondent quotes Westphal (now deceased) as saying: "We got a bunch of envelopes and stamps and got in our car and made first day covers all the way from Fremont to Grand Island."

Our correspondent continues: "They (Westphal and Tweedy) were railroad trainmen, and their run evidently was from Omaha to Grand Island. I think they really only made FDCs in all of the little towns along the road to Omaha, including the Burlington Station, which was at the Omaha depot. They made these interesting covers on their way to Omaha, where their run began, and had time to make some at Kearney, and of course at Grand Island, the end of the run.

"I am sorry that I did not inquire as to the number of these 4c covers. I purchased all of these covers from Mr. Westphal, and although at the time I thought they were interesting and very fascinating, I did not know that they would be such a collectors' item."

We repeat that these April 24 covers from Grand Island, Fremont, Waterloo, Elkhorn and Omaha now represent the earliest known uses of the 4c Nebraska. Whether they will stand up indefinitely as the true First Day Covers for the 4c remains to be seen; Scott still lists the 4c from Beatrice and Hartington on April 15 and Johl (cited earlier) lists the 4c from Pawnee City, Ravenna and Wahoo on April 17. None of these listed covers is now known to exist, however, and it does begin to appear that Johl and the catalogs could be in error. Until the listed covers do make their appearance, the Westphal-Tweedy covers must be considered first days.

#### **Additional Early Date Towns**

**E**ARLIER we were able to list a total of 16 Nebraska towns and 34 towns from Kansas from which overprint covers are known dated May 1, 1929, or earlier. As a result of correspondence received during the past year, these lists can now be considerably expanded.

Four new towns can be added to the Nebraska list. They are Humboldt, Cedar Bluffs, Waterloo and Elkhorn. In addition, covers franked with the 2c Nebraska were reported from Red Cloud, dated May 9, and from McCook, dated May 13.

All of these new towns were reported by our unnamed correspondent with the exception of Humboldt, which was reported by Al Zimmerman of Bronx, N. Y.,

and Robert H. Schoen of Saginaw, Mich. Each turned up a cover franked with a pair of the 2c Nebraskas canceled at Humboldt on April 23.

While the Humboldt covers are not FDCs (the 2c is known as early as April 15), they are nonetheless interesting from another standpoint. They are the first early-dated covers to turn up from Humboldt, which *Scott, Johl* and *Fleetwood* all list as the First Day City for the 8c Nebraska on April 17. At least we now know that Humboldt did have the overprints before May 1; whether the 8c was really used from Humboldt as early as the 17th is still not known.

The Kansas list can now be expanded even further. Covers from 10 new towns, all canceled prior to May 1, have been reported, including the following: Valley Center, Abilene, Geuda Springs, Lawrence, Lyons, Goessel, Wellington, Winfield, Augusta and Humboldt. (Yes, there is a Humboldt in Kansas as well as in Nebraska.)

In addition, two covers franked with the 3c and 4c Kansas, canceled April 24 at Arkansas City, Kans., have been reported. Previously, the earliest known use from Arkansas City was the 2c on May 9.

Adding these 10 new towns to the 34 previously reported, we now have early-dated covers from 44 Kansas towns, including Wichita, Kansas City (Kans.) and Topeka, which were not to have received the stamps. Thus, even deducting those three, we still have eight more than the total of 33 Kansas towns which Hugh M. Southgate said received early shipments of the overprints. If Southgate was correct, we must then conclude that the covers from at least eight of these towns were made by collectors who obtained the stamps from one of the original 33 towns and carried them elsewhere to make covers, such as Messrs. Westphal and Tweedy in Nebraska. Which eight, of course, we do not know, as Southgate unfortunately did not list the names of the original 33 towns.

**P**RACTICALLY all these new Kansas towns were also reported by Zimmerman, as a result of his purchase of the residue of the collection of the late Robert Baughman, well-known for years as an outstanding collector and student of Kansas postal history.

The Baughman collection, put together over a period of many years, included several covers of special interest. Probably the most interesting is the one illustrated herewith (*Figure 24*), which is franked with a complete set of eleven Kansas overprints, each a plate number single, and canceled at Lawrence, Kans., on April 24, 1929. Lawrence, of course, is the home of the University of Kansas, and the envelope used for this cover bears the corner card of The Acacia Fraternity at Lawrence. The cover is autographed by the assistant postmaster at Lawrence and is addressed to Baughman himself.

In addition to being a real showpiece, this magnificent cover actually now represents the earliest known use of seven of the 11 denominations of the Kansas overprints; specifically, the 1½c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 7c, 9c and 10c. The 1c, 6c and 8c are known, of course, from Newton on April 15, and the 2c is known on April 16 from Liberal and Dodge City. All the other denominations are listed in the catalogs from Colby on April 16, but to date not one of these covers has made its appearance; therefore, the Lawrence cover is significant.

Also found in the Baughman collection were several other covers which equal but do not beat the Lawrence cover for "earliest use" honors for several denominations. These include.

Augusta, Kans., April 24: Nine covers franked with singles of each denomination except the 9c and 10c.

Winfield, Kans., April 24: Eight covers franked with singles of each denomination except the 2c, 9c and 10c.

Eldorado, Kans., April 24: One cover franked with a 4c single. (*See Figure 25*).

Abilene, Kans., April 24: One cover franked with singles of the 1c, 1½c, 2c, 4c and 5c.

Arkansas City, Kans., April 24: Two covers franked with the 3c and 4c.

Thus, with the emergence of the Baughman collection, we have a new set of earliest known uses and towns for seven of the 11 Kansas overprint denominations, which can be summarized as follows:

#659, 1½c Kans.: Lawrence, Augusta, Winfield and Abilene, Kans., April 24, 1929.

#661, 3c Kans.: Lawrence, Augusta, Winfield and Arkansas City, Kans., April 24, 1929.

#662, 4c Kans.: Lawrence, Augusta, Winfield Eldorado, Abilene and Arkansas City, Kans., April 24, 1929.

#663, 5c Kans.: Lawrence, Augusta, Winfield, and Abilene, Kans., April 24, 1929.

#665, 7c Kans.: Lawrence, Augusta and Winfield Kans., April 24, 1929.

#667, 9c Kans.: Lawrence, Kans., April 24, 1929.

#668, 10c Kans.: Lawrence, Kans., April 24, 1929.

### So What About Colby?

**S**O WHERE does this leave us with respect to Colby, Kans., which is listed by *Johl* and the catalogs as the First Day town on April 16 for all the Kansas denominations except the 1c, 2c, 6c and 8c?

Well, these Colby covers are still among the missing. Not a single report did we receive of any Colby cover of any denomination—not even later than the listed April 16.

Is it now time, therefore, to assume that these Colby covers are either irretrievably lost or that they never did in fact exist, and therefore that it is time to assign these April 16 Colby listings to our mental ash heap?

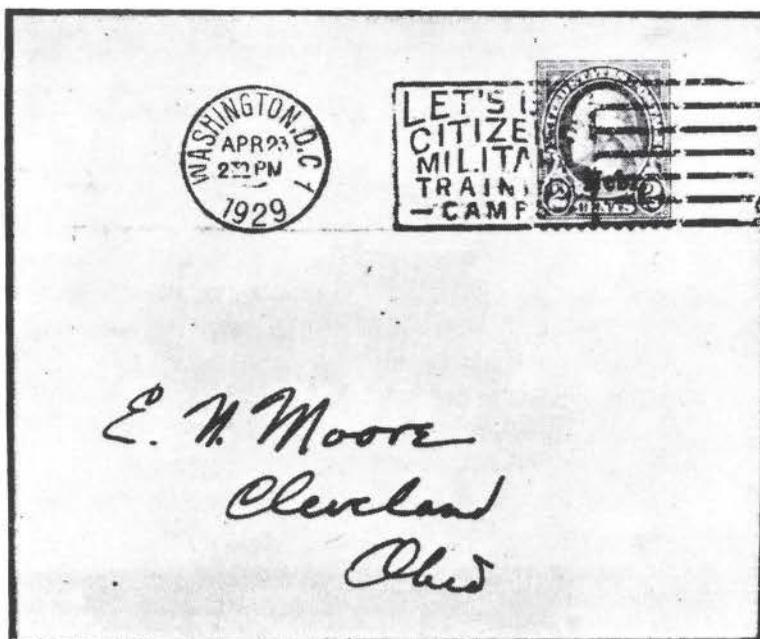
We believe that time has not yet come. First of all, *Johl* and *Scott* must have had some reason for listing these covers; they were assuredly not just "dreamed up." Secondly, we have been searching for these Colby covers for only about 16 or 17 years, and that is really not a very long time, philatelically speaking.

And thirdly, one tiny piece of evidence has appeared to give us additional hope that these Colby covers did indeed once exist and might yet be found.

This evidence appeared in a most off-hand way. Among the Baughman collection was a cover with a pair of the 1c Kansas addressed to Baughman and mailed from Newton, Kans. When we first saw this cover it struck our fancy because it bears the rubber stamped return address: "H. S. Dickey's Piano Store—Next Door to Post Office—Newton, Kansas." Even though the date in the cancellation is none too clear, we hastened to acquire the cover because it was the first one we had ever seen that was prepared by H. S. Dickey, the gentleman who contributed the fascinating report on the first day in Newton for the 1c, 6c and 8c Kansas overprints, which we quoted in our earlier series. (*Figure 26*).

But it is the reverse of the cover, which we cannot illustrate because it is too light to reproduce, which proved to be more interesting. There we found some

Figure 27. This is not a First Day Cover, but a curiosity. Franked with the 2-cent Nebraska, it is canceled April 23, 1929, at Washington, eight days before the overprints were placed on sale at the Philatelic Agency, Washington, D.C. The maker must have obtained the stamp in Nebraska and brought it back to Washington to construct this cover.



brief notes, written in pencil, probably by Baughman himself. They read:

"C. O. Conkey sent Ks covers Apr. 15 to Dwvorak. Colby & Dodge City had all values by Apr. 16. (Emphasis supplied). Eldorado had 2c Apr. 19."

That is all there is, but we are impressed. Here for the first time we see a scrap of evidence, independent of Johl or the catalogues, that not only Colby but also Dodge City had all values on April 16.

**B**AUGHMAN was an authority on Kansas and this is the kind of thing he would certainly have investigated. Further, we already know that Dodge City had the 2c, at least, on April 16.

It might be argued that Baughman made these brief notes after reading the April 16 listings in *Johl* or *Scott*, but that will not stand scrutiny. *Johl's* book did not appear until 1935 and *Scott* did not list Colby until 1943, whereas this cover was made in 1929. If Baughman's notes sprang from either *Johl* or *Scott's* information, why would he make the notes on a 1929 cover—just one of many in his collection? And why would he then include Dodge City, which was not listed at that time by either *Johl* or *Scott*? No, this has to be information obtained independently by Baughman in 1929, the very year the Kansas overprints were issued.

Further, Baughman's notes square with Southgate's report that only two Kansas towns received all denominations. Were these two towns Colby and Dodge City?

We must admit that further speculation on Baughman's brief notes has its discouraging aspects. If a Kansas specialist such as Baughman was aware in 1929 that Colby (and Dodge City) had all values on April 16, how could he have failed to get his hands on a set of these covers—if, indeed, such covers were actually made? There were no such covers in the Baughman collection.

Despite this, we feel it is not yet time to give up on Colby. In fact, it now appears that the search for April 16 Kansas overprint covers should be broadened

to include Dodge City. If sets of Colby and/or Dodge City covers were actually made on that date, surely they must have been preserved and will ultimately turn up.

#### A Final Curiosity

**I**N CLOSING, we illustrate as *Figure 27* a final curious but interesting cover discovered by Norm and Don Walker of Alliance, Ohio. This cover is franked with the 2c Nebraska and canceled at Washington, D. C., April 23, 1929.

We know, of course, that while the overprints were shipped to Kansas and Nebraska towns April 12 or 13, they were not placed on sale at the Philatelic Sales Agency in Washington, D. C., until May 1. Obviously, whoever made this cover had to obtain the stamp somewhere in Nebraska on or after April 15 and send it back to Washington to be used on this cover on April 23.

This was not a complicated, nor even necessarily a desirable thing to do, but nonetheless, this is the only pre-May 1 usage from Washington yet to be brought to our attention and therefore it is worthy, in our opinion, of inclusion in the record of these fascinating stamps.

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