



INTRODUCTION

THERE WERE TWO MOTIVATING FACTORS BEHIND THE NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS Issues of 1865 and 1875 to 1897. One was the government's desire to compete with private companies that provided local distribution and bulk transportation of newspapers and other publications. The other was a concern that revenues were being lost due to the lack of accountability when post offices collected postage on bulk shipments of newspapers and publications.

The Act of Congress of March 3, 1863, gave the Postmaster General authority to use mail route agents on board trains and steamboats to handle packages of newspapers and periodicals at competitive rates. To increase this part of the Post Office's business, a set of three stamps was created for publishers to use on bundles of papers handed over to post offices or route agents. The 5¢, 10¢ and 25¢ stamps were made large, so that the colors and denominations would be easily visible to mail agents who received large packages with the stamps stuck on top. The 1865 Issue was printed by the National Bank Note Company from typographic plates which embossed the paper and left a solid colored border. The stamps were reprinted by Continental in 1875, using the original National plates. The 25¢ 1865 Newspaper stamp is the first stamp of any kind to depict Abraham Lincoln, predating the 1866 15¢ regular issue, Scott 77.

The use of stamps on newspapers and periodicals was discontinued in November 1869 with no reason given. From 1869 until December 31, 1874, postage on bulk mailings was collected in money. Beginning January 1, 1875, a new set of stamps was distributed to post offices for use in collecting postage on bulk mailings of second-class matter.

The new stamps were not intended to be sold to the public. The regulations specifically stated (in caps) "Under no circumstances whatever are they to be furnished to the public, or sold or loaned to other postmasters." The stamps were a means to hold postmasters accountable for second-class postage collected from publishers. By reconciling stamps received, sold and on hand, the POD Auditor's office could keep tabs on postmasters.

When a publisher paid for a bulk shipment of newspapers or periodicals, he was given a payment receipt. The postal clerk was then required to affix the corresponding denomination of Newspapers and Periodicals stamp to the stub in the post office receipt book and cancel it. When the postmaster filed his returns to the POD Auditor, the receipt book with the cancelled stamps was included.

The 1875 Issue was designed and printed by the Continental Bank Note Company. The designs were a significant departure for the Post Office Department, and are considered by many to be the most extraordinary U.S. postage engravings ever produced. Instead of Founding Fathers or modes of transportation, the Newspaper stamps depicted goddesses and female allegorical figures, including a Native American woman strolling on a forest trail. The irregular and high values, including a \$1.92 denomination, were necessary to show receipt of payments from publishers in increments conforming to bulk postage charges.

The Hope collection of Newspapers and Periodicals issues contains nearly all of the different Scott-listed issues, including the extremely rare 1875 Special Printings and 1894 Unwatermarked Bureau high values. Also included are rare or unique trial color proofs and die essays.

Apart from its completeness, the extraordinary feature of the Hope collection is the uniformly superb quality of the stamps. As anyone may observe by surveying the Siegel firm's auction listings online with Power Search™, these issues are extremely rare in sound, centered condition. The vast majority were perforated with little regard for alignment, and from there the circumstances of handling, even in the hands of collectors, were detrimental. The collector who painstakingly acquired each stamp in this collection, one by one, is to be congratulated on his achievement.

—SCOTT R. TREPEL