

THE MAKING OF THE BLACK JACK

JOSEPH F. RORKE

AS RECEIVED BY
THE EXHIBITION PHOTOCOPY COMMITTEE
OF THE
U.S. PHILATELIC CLASSICS SOCIETY, INC.
30 JULY 1992

THE MAKING OF THE 'BLACK JACK'

IN 1842, AT THE AGE OF 75, THE RETIRED PRESIDENT JACKSON SAT FOR JOHN WOOD DODGE WHO PAINTED A MINIATURE PORTRAIT. THIS WAS THE BASIS FOR A BUST ENGRAVED BY M. I. DANFORTH WHICH SERVED AS THE MODEL FOR JOSEPH P. OURDAN'S ENGRAVING OF A HEAD VIGNETTE USED BY THE NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY IN PRODUCING THE \$1,000 BANK NOTE FOR THE CONFEDERACY. THIS SAME DIE WAS RE-DESIGNED BY J. MACDONOUGH AND THE ADDED LETTERING AND DECORATIVE SCROLLS WERE ENGRAVED BY WILLIAM D. NICHOLS TO PRODUCE THE DIE USED IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE 2c "BLACK JACK." REGULAR PLATES CONSISTED OF TWO PANES OF 100 SUBJECTS EACH WHILE THE RE-ISSUE PLATE CONSISTED OF BUT ONE PANE OF 100 SUBJECTS. OVER 333,000,000 "BLACK JACKS" WERE PRODUCED.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES WILL HIGHLIGHT THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES 2c STAMP OF 1863-67, INCLUDING ITS PROOFS, TRIAL COLORS, SPECIMENS, VARIETIES, EXPERIMENTALS AND RE-ISSUES.

SOURCE OF THE BLACK JACK

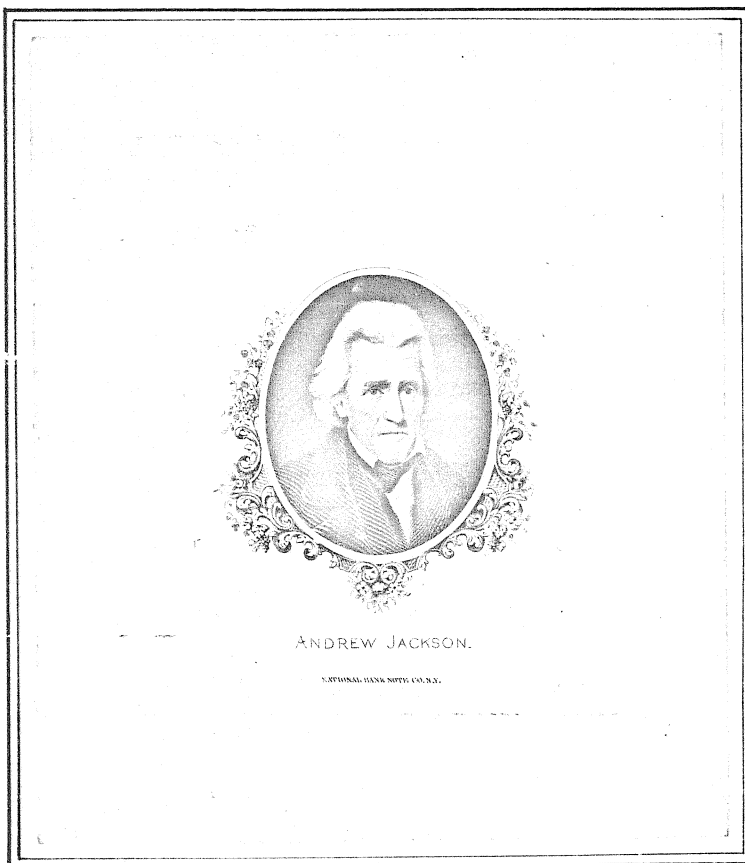


JOHN WOOD DODGE'S MINIATURE ON PORCELAIN

OF ANDREW JACKSON AT AGE 75. JACKSON

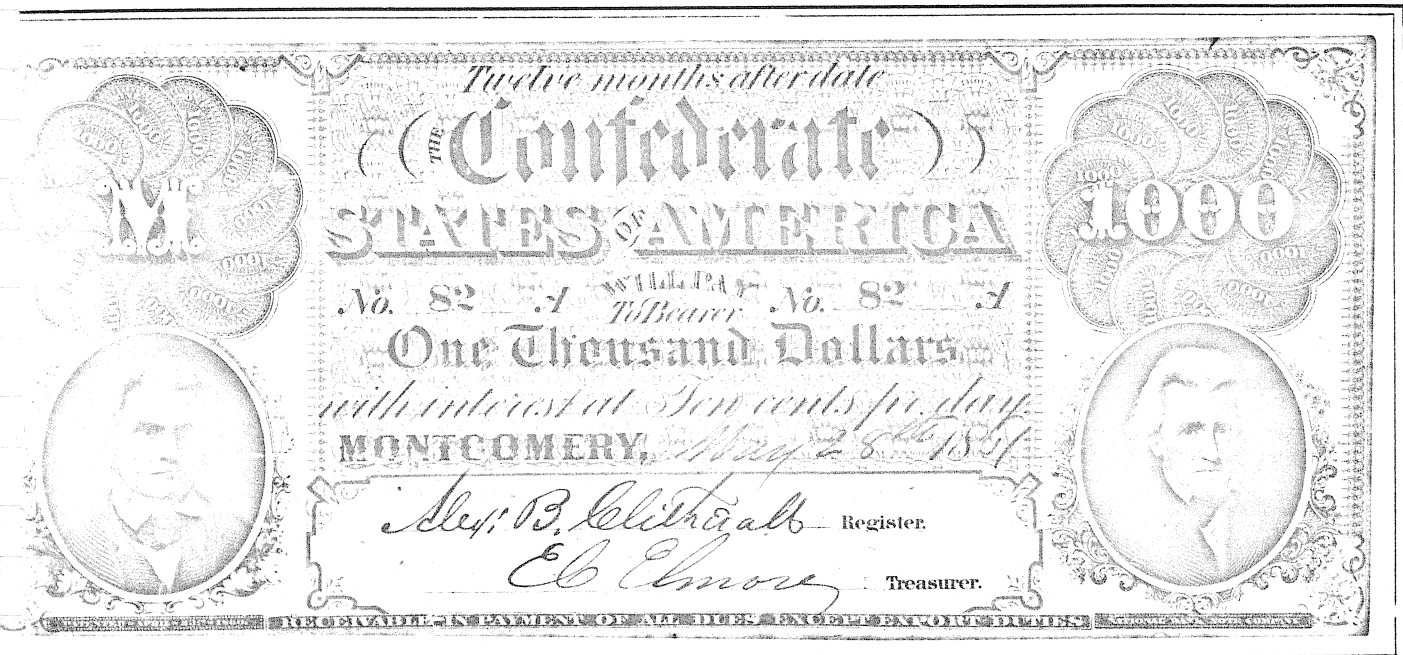
SET FOR THIS PAINTING IN 1842
WHILE HE WAS LIVING IN RETIREMENT
AT THE HERMITAGE.

ORIGIN OF THE BLACK JACK ENGRAVING



IN 1861, JOSEPH P. OURDAN ENGRAVED THE HEAD OF ANDREW JACKSON FOR THE NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY. THIS ENGRAVING IS BASED UPON ONE BY M. I. DANFORTH OF THE BUST PORTION OF DODGE'S MINIATURE.

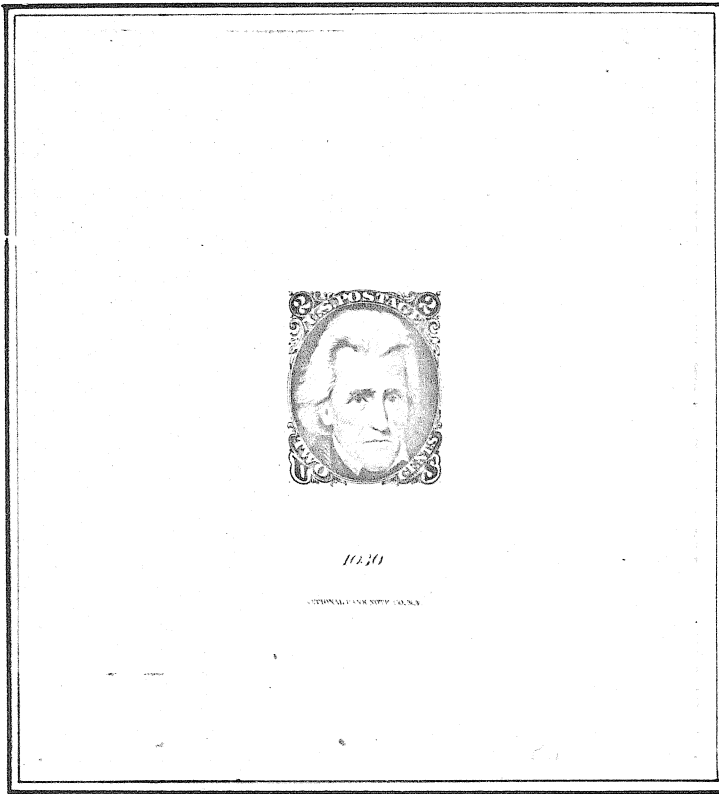
FIRST USE OF THE BLACK JACK DIE



THE CONFEDERATE CONGRESS OF MARCH 8, 1861, AUTHORIZED THE FIRST ISSUE OF CONFEDERATE CURRENCY. THE \$1,000 MONTGOMERY NOTE HAS AS ONE OF ITS VIGNETTES THE ANDREW JACKSON DIE ENGRAVED BY OURDAN. THE NOTE WAS PRODUCED BY THE NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY BEFORE PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S EMBARGO ON TRADE BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH. ONLY 607 NOTES WERE ISSUED.

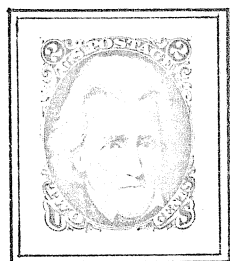
A5

LARGE DIE PROOF



LARGE DIE PROOFS ARE PRINTED ON INDIA PAPER ABOUT THE SIZE OF THE DIE BLOCK AND SUNK INTO CARD. THEY EXIST FROM BOTH DIE I AND DIE III, NONE BEING KNOWN FROM DIE II, AND ONLY TWO KNOWN FROM DIE I. THE DIE III PROOF SHOWN ABOVE IS READILY IDENTIFIED BY THE STAR ON THE CHEEK. THIS PROOF WAS PREPARED BY THE NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY, ASSIGNED THE NUMBER 1030 AND SUBMITTED FOR FINAL POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT APPROVAL.

PLATE PROOFS ON INDIA PAPER



DIE I

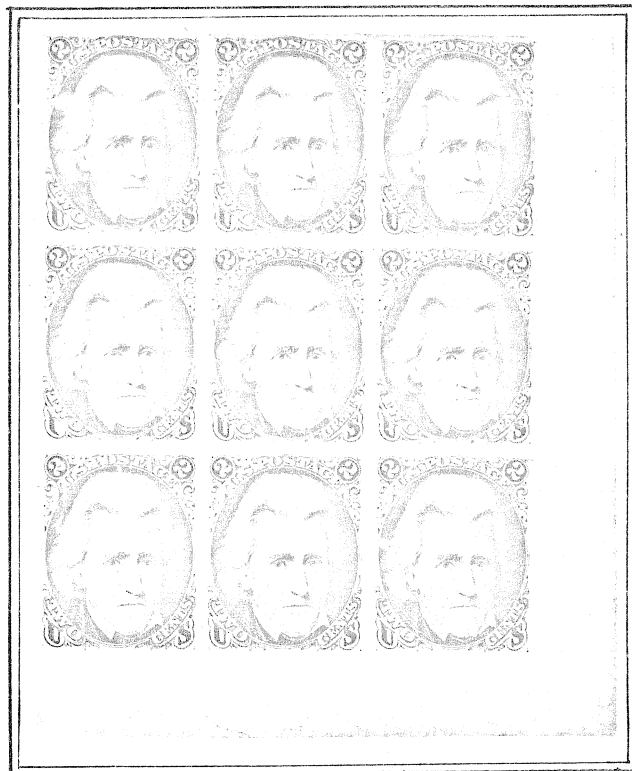
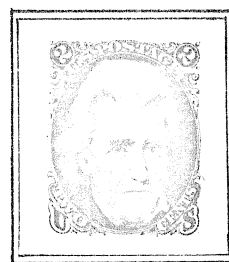


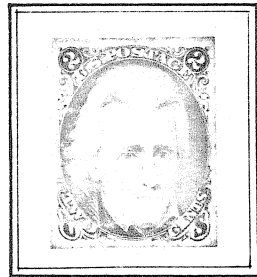
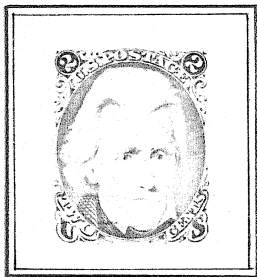
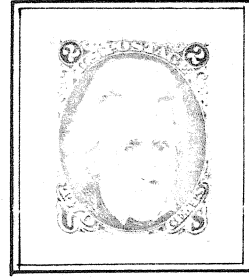
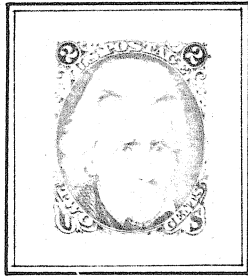
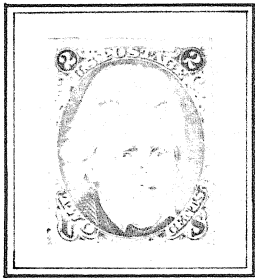
PLATE NO. 28



DIE III

PLATE PROOFS ON INDIA PAPER ARE KNOWN FROM PLATE NO. 28, DIE I AND FROM PLATE NOS. 30 AND 57, DIE III. THE LATTER PLATES MAY BE DISTINGUISHED BY THE WIDER SPACING ON THE RE-ISSUE PLATE NO. 57. DIE I COPIES ARE SCARCER THAN DIE III.

TRIAL COLOR PLATE PROOFS ON INDIA

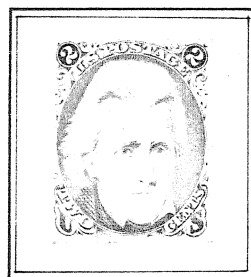
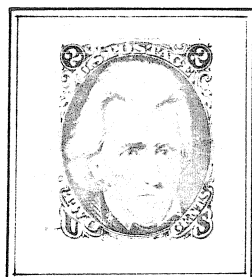
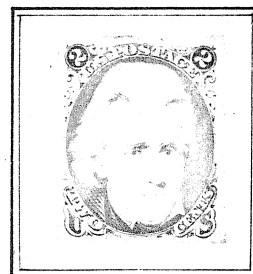
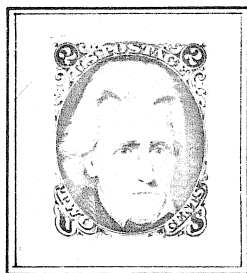
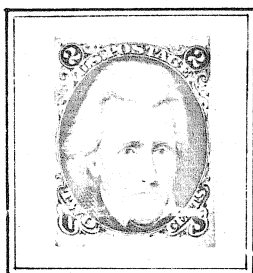


3

INDIA PLATE PROOFS WERE MADE FOR SELECTION OF THE STAMP COLOR BEFORE THE PLATE WAS USED IN THE REGULAR PRODUCTION OF STAMPS.

AS

TRIAL COLOR PLATE PROOFS ON INDIA



3a

TRIAL COLOR PROOFS WERE MADE ABOUT JULY 1,
1863 USING DIE I. IT IS BELIEVED THAT ONLY ONE
SHEET OF EACH COLOR WAS PRINTED.

7A

5010

A9

TRIAL COLOR PROOF
EXPERIMENTAL CANCELLATION



THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT APPARENTLY SELECTED
GRAY BLACK, CHALKY BLUE AND OLIVE GREEN TRIAL
COLORS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. A GEOMETRIC
PATTERN WAS APPLIED TO FIVE STAMPS IN EACH PANE
OF 100 TO TEST THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A BLACK
CANCELLATION.

4

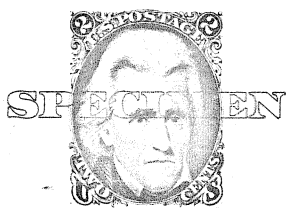
8

5012

A.10

SPECIMEN OVERPRINT
LARGE (UNOFFICIAL) DIE PROOF

THIS PROOF WAS
PRINTED ON THIN
LAID PAPER AND
WAS ATTACHED TO,
BUT NOT SUNK
INTO, A LEAF FOR
INCLUSION IN THE
SAMPLE BOOK OF
A NATIONAL BANK
NOTE SALESMAN.
ALTHOUGH UNOFFI-
CIAL, IT WAS MADE
FROM THE MASTER
DIE I OR A LAYDOWN
THEREFROM.



SPECIMEN
ROSEBARE STAMP
NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY
NEW YORK

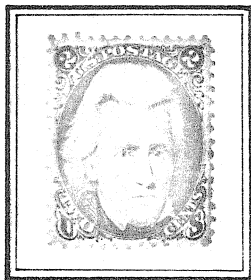
5

9

5-24

A11

FIRST ISSUE

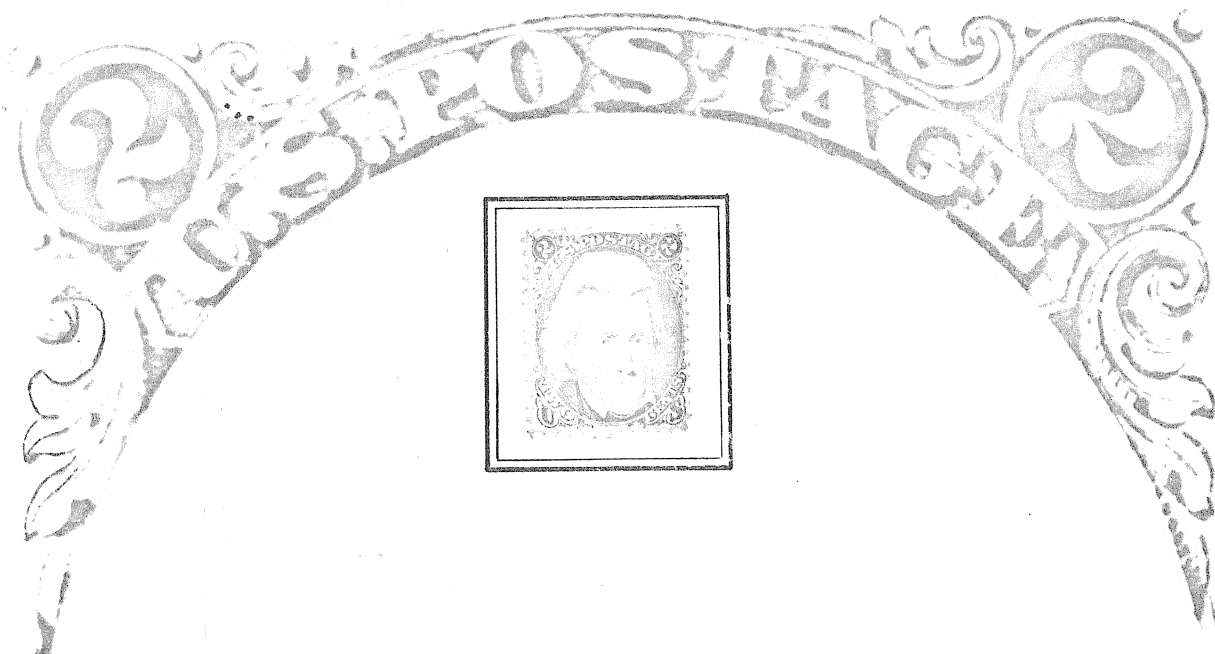


THE BLACK JACK WAS PRINTED FROM STEEL PLATES OF 200 SUBJECTS EACH, 20 STAMPS WIDE AND 10 STAMPS HIGH. THE SHEETS WERE CUT APART VERTICALLY BETWEEN THE 10TH AND 11TH ROWS BEFORE DELIVERY TO THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT. APPROXIMATELY 2 MM. SEPARATED THE VERTICAL ROWS AND, ON THE EARLIER PLATES, NO ADDITIONAL SPACE WAS ALLOWED BETWEEN PANES FOR CUTTING. THE DATE OF ISSUE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN JULY 1, 1863. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE ABOUT 256,566,000 OF THIS ISSUE, MADE FROM PLATE NOS. 28, 29, 30, 31, 50, AND 51. IT IS KNOWN AS DIE I.

518

A12

VARIATION IN DESIGN
DOTS IN SCROLL



8

THE FIRST VARIATION CONTAINS THREE DOTS (SOMETIMES ONLY TWO ARE SEEN) IN THE SCROLL TO THE RIGHT OF THE LEFT NUMERAL "2". THESE WERE ADDED TO THE ORIGINAL DIE OR TO A LAY-DOWN FROM IT, FOR SOME REASON NOT KNOWN. IT IS SEEN MORE FREQUENTLY ON THE GRILLED STAMPS THAN THE UNGRILLED, AND WAS PRINTED FROM PLATE NO. 53. IT IS KNOWN AS DIE II.

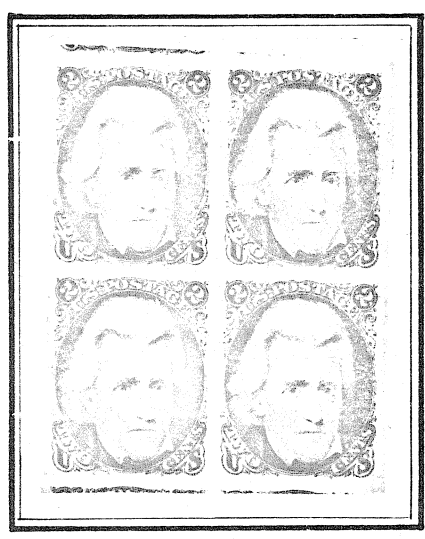
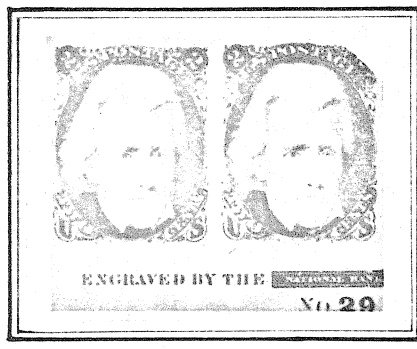
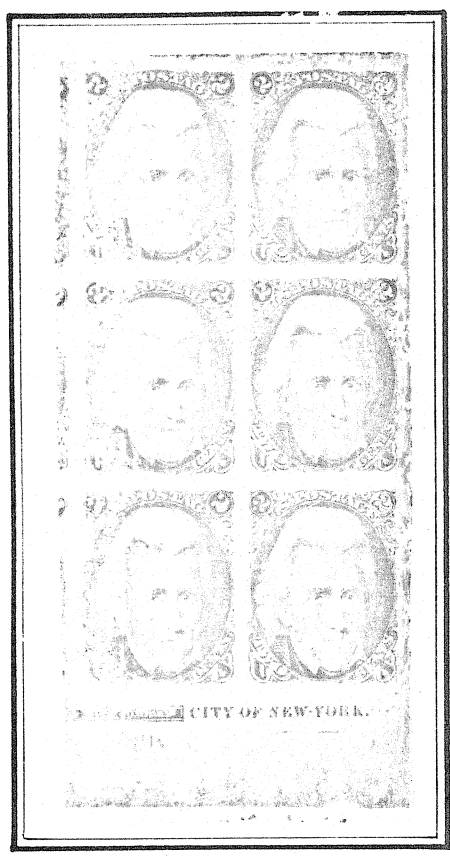
VARIATION IN DESIGN
STAR IN CHEEK



THE SECOND VARIATION CONTAINS THE THREE DOTS IN THE SCROLL AND, IN ADDITION, A STAR ON JACKSON'S LEFT CHEEK. THIS IS SEEN IN SOME COPIES WITH THE "F" GRILL AND IN ALL COPIES OF THE RE-ISSUE. PLATE 30 WAS RE-ENTERED USING THIS NEW TRANSFER ROLL; AND FROM IT THE NEW PLATE, NO. 57, WAS MADE FOR THE 1875 RE-ISSUE. IT IS KNOWN AS DIE III.

A 14

EXPERIMENTAL PRINTING LOEWENBERG PATENT



10

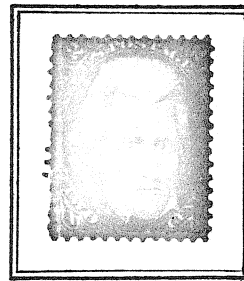
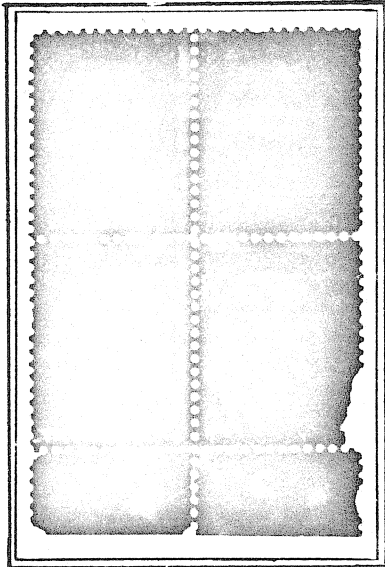
IN APRIL OF 1864, HENRY LOEWENBERG PATENTED A METHOD TO PREVENT THE CLEANING AND RE-USE OF STAMPS. THE DESIGN WAS PRINTED ON THE BACK OF A TRANSPARENT GOLDBEATER'S SKIN AND GUMMED ON TOP OF THE PRINTED IMPRESSION. THE DESIGN WOULD HAVE APPEARED IN REVERSE WHEN AFFIXED TO AN ENVELOPE. ANY ATTEMPT TO REMOVE THE STAMP WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN THE DESIGN REMAINING ON THE ENVELOPE AND ONLY THE TRANSPARENT "PAPER" COMING OFF.

13

50 15

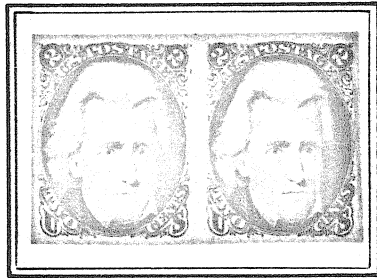
A15

EXPERIMENTAL PRINTING
FRANCIS PATENT



DR. S. W. FRANCIS, A NEW YORK CHEMIST, DEVELOPED THIS PROCESS TO PREVENT THE CLEANING AND RE-USE OF POSTAGE STAMPS. IT IS THE ONLY EXPERIMENTAL PROCESS PRINTING WHICH WAS GIVEN A TRIAL USE. SOME 10,000 TWO-CENT AND THREE-CENT STAMPS WERE PREPARED AND TESTED BY POSTMASTER T. COGGESHALL AT NEWPORT, R. I. THE STAMP PAPER HAD BEEN SOAKED IN AN ALKALINE SOLUTION, TURNING IT BROWN. STAMPS COULD THEN EASILY BE CANCELLED BY TOUCHING THEM WITH A SPONGE DIPPED IN ACID, TURNING THE PAPER A DEEP BLUE. FRANCIS PATENT BLACK JACKS ARE KNOWN FROM PLATE NO. 31 (DIE 1).

EXPERIMENTAL PRINTING ON
BLUISH-GREEN WOVE PAPER



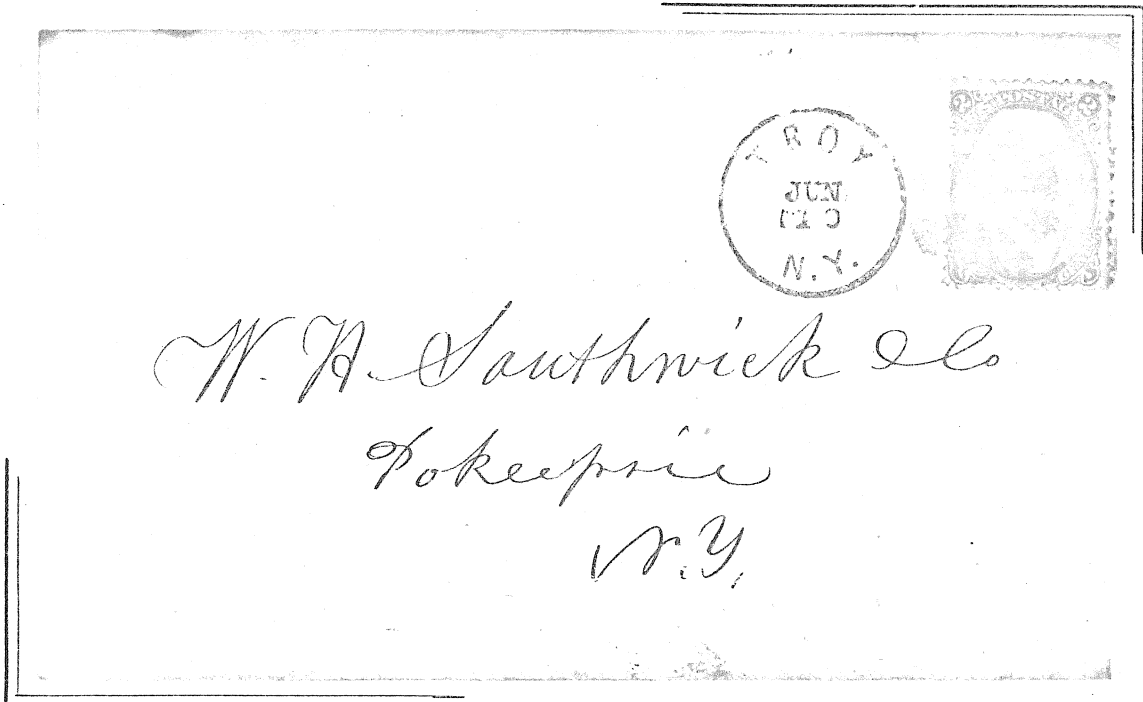
THIS EXPERIMENTAL PRINTING WAS MADE FROM PLATE
NO. 30 (DIE 1) AND IS GUMMED AND IMPERFORATE. IT IS
BELIEVED TO BE ANOTHER OF DR. FRANCIS' SUGGESTIONS,
ALTHOUGH ITS ADVANTAGES AND INTENT ARE NOT CLEAR.

15

to Capes

50.17

THE RE-USE OF STAMPS LED
TO THE GRILLED ISSUES

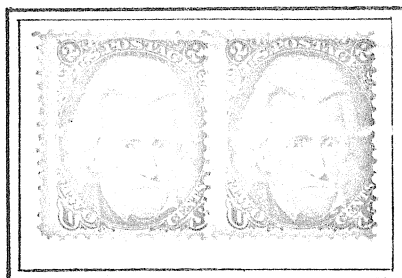


13

OF THE NUMEROUS SUGGESTIONS OFFERED TO PREVENT THE CLEANING AND RE-USE OF STAMPS, THE APPLICATION OF GRILLS WAS ADOPTED BY THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT IN 1867. A WAFFLE-LIKE ROLLER IMPRESSED THE PAPER, CAUSING THE FIBERS TO BREAK. WHEN THE CANCELLATION WAS APPLIED, THE INK COULD SOAK IN, PREVENTING SATISFACTORY CLEANING AND RE-USE OF THE STAMP.

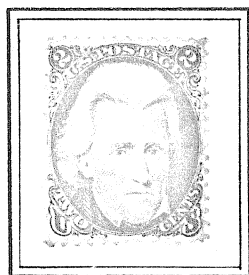
A. 5

THE "D" GRILL
15 BY 17-18 POINTS

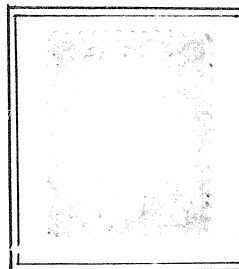


DIE II

14



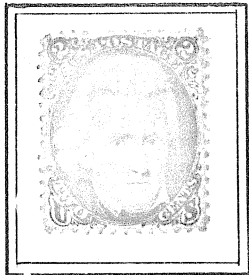
DIE I



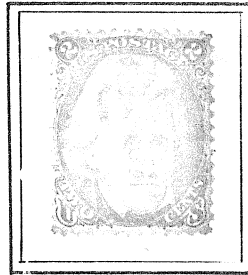
IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY
200,000 OF THIS ISSUE.

A.19

THE "Z" GRILL
13-14 BY 17-18 POINTS

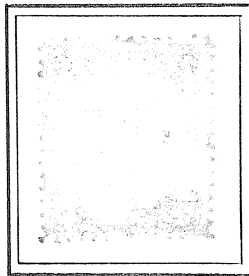


DIE I



DIE II

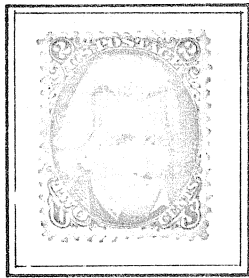
15



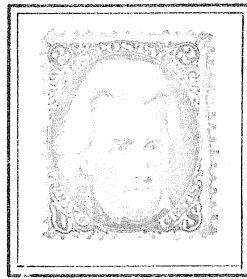
IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY
500,000 OF THIS ISSUE.

A 20

THE "E" GRILL
14 BY 15-17 POINTS

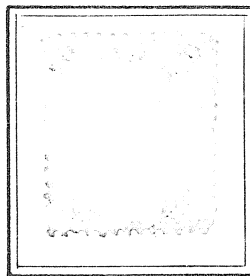


DIE I



DIE II

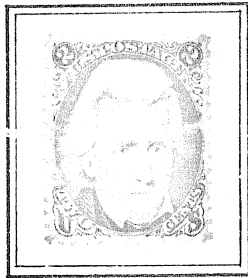
16



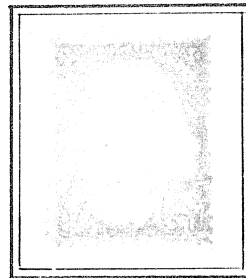
IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY
25,000,000 OF THIS ISSUE.

19

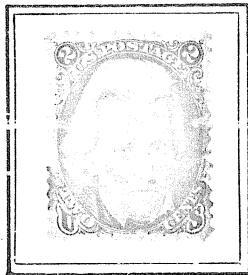
THE "F" GRILL
11-12 BY 15-17 POINTS



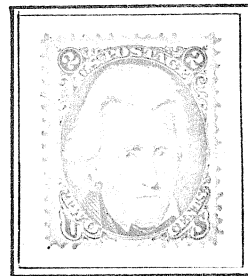
DIE I



17



DIE II

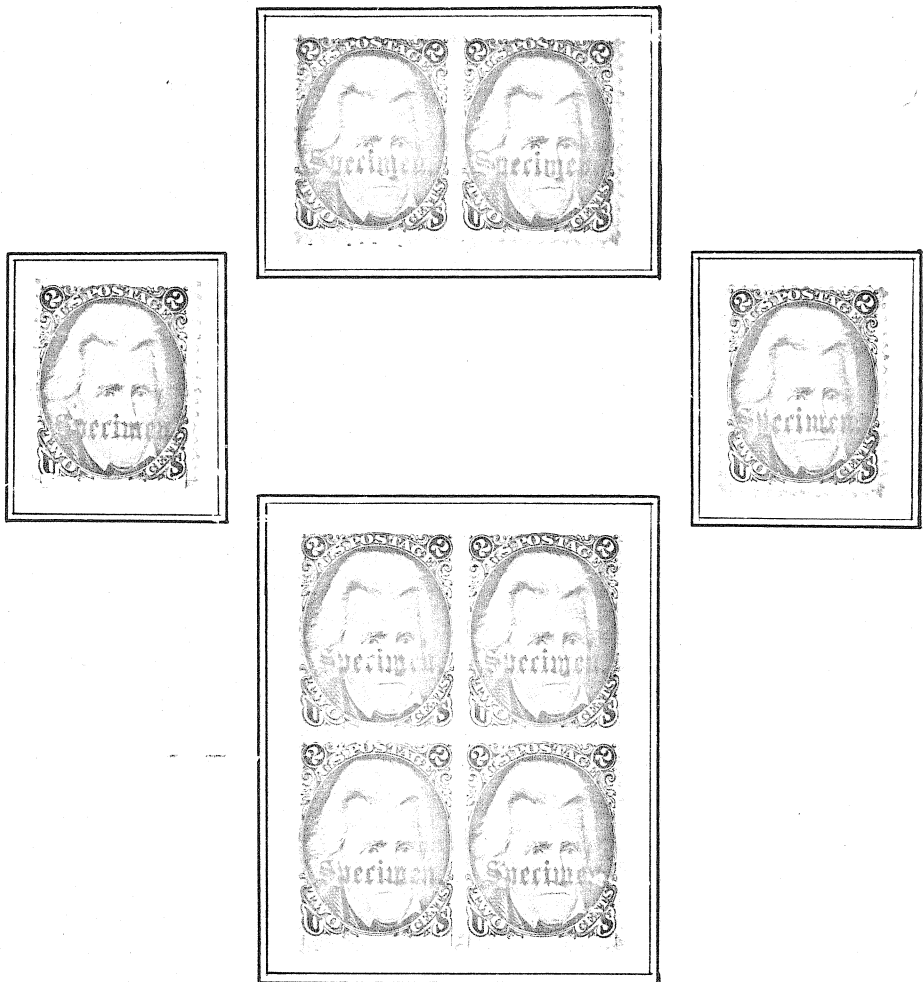


DIE III

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY
50,000,000 OF THIS ISSUE.

A 22

SPECIMEN OVERPRINT
"TYPE B"



18

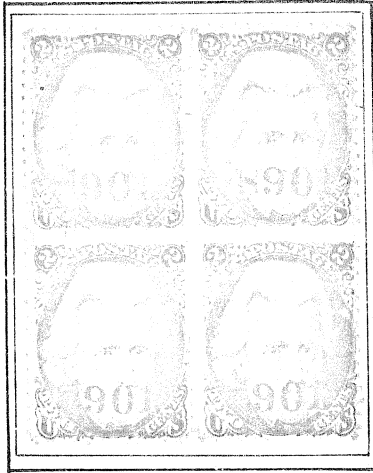
BY ORDER OF THE THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER
GENERAL, 20,000 SETS OF THE TEN DENOMINATIONS
OF STAMPS THEN IN USE WERE OVERPRINTED IN
THIS MANNER ON FEBRUARY 28, 1867. ONLY 1306
TWO CENT SPECIMENS WERE DISTRIBUTED.

21

58 13

A 23

SPECIMEN OVERPRINT
"CONTROL NUMBER"



19

VERY LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT THE INTENT OF THESE NUMERAL OVERPRINTS AND THEY WERE NOT USED FOR POSTAGE. THE NUMBERING SYSTEM WAS BASED ON THE DIGITS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 WITH FOUR CONSECUTIVE NUMBERS BEING ASSIGNED TO EACH DENOMINATION BEGINNING WITH THE HIGH VALUE OF THE ISSUE: 90 CENTS, 1234; 30 CENTS, 2345, AND SO ON.

22

A24

HYBRID PROOF

THIS PROOF WAS MADE FROM DIE III USED IN THE 1875 RE-ISSUE. IS ON INDIA, TRIMMED CLOSE TO THE DESIGN MOUNTED ON INDIA AFFIXED UNDER PRESSURE IN A SUNK AREA OF THE CARD TO RESEMBLE A LARGE DIE PROOF. SAID TO HAVE BEEN MADE WHEN DEMAND FOR DIE PROOFS EXCEEDED THE SUPPLY.



20

Copied

A 25

HYBRID PROOF

THIS EXAMPLE IS NOT AN INDIA PROOF, BUT ONE PRINTED ON VERY THIN, ALMOST PELURE PAPER. IT DEMONSTRATES THE INDIVIDUALITY OF THE HYBRID PROOFS, BEING MADE ONE AT A TIME AS ORDERED.

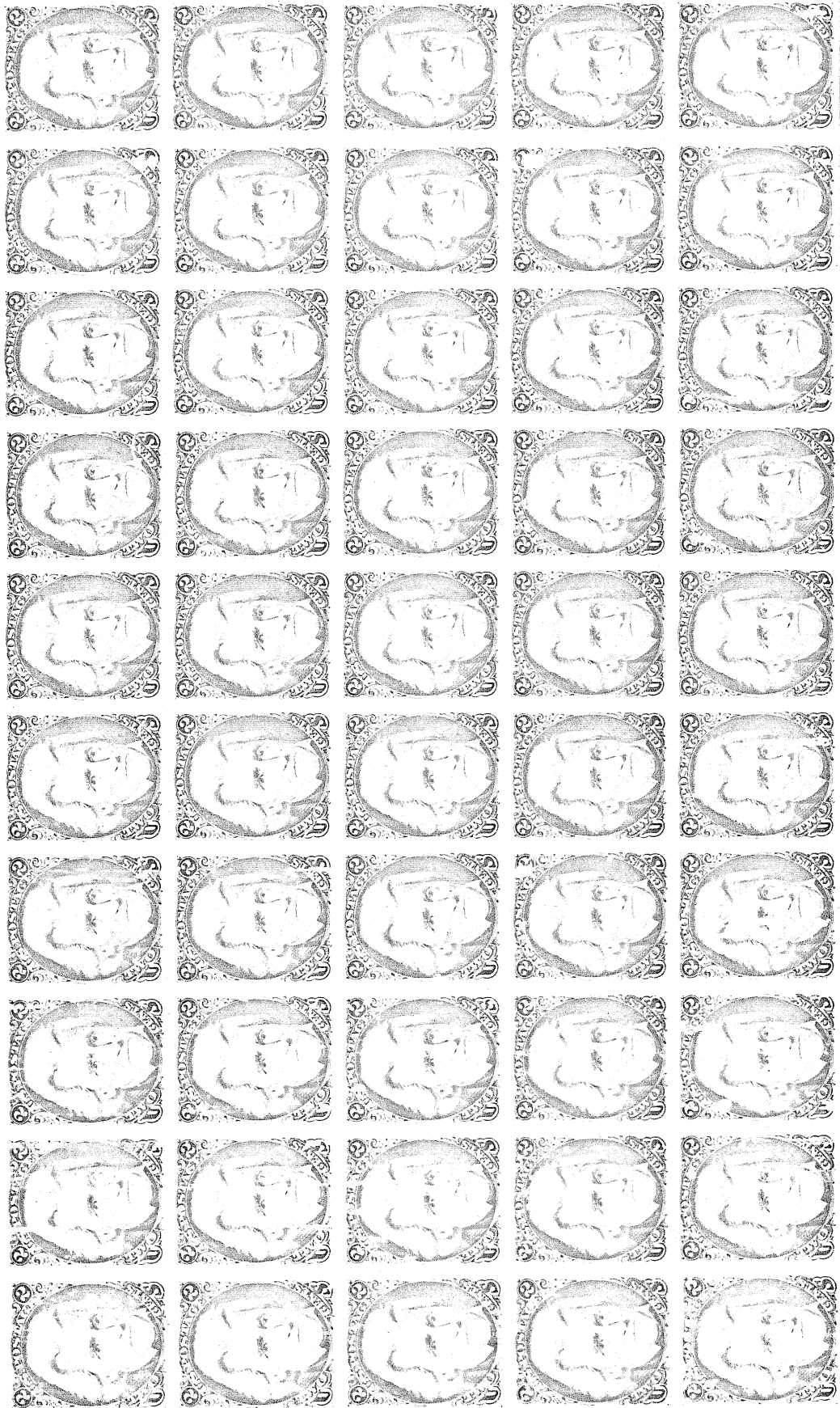
21.



Copy

PLATE PROOF ON INDIA
PLATE NO. 57 DIE III

NATIONAL BANK OF INDIA



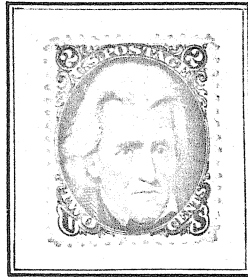
D26

22

UPPER HALF OF A 100-SUBJECT PRINTERS' PLATE PROOF FOR THE
1875 RE-ISSUE. THE WIDER SPACING IS READILY APPARENT.

25

1875 RE-ISSUE

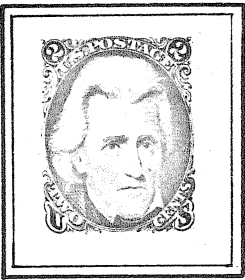


23

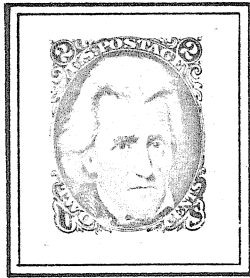
IN 1875 THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PREPARED RE-ISSUES OF ALL ITS EARLIER POSTAGE STAMPS FOR DISPLAY IN ITS EXHIBIT AT THE CENTENNIAL EXPOSITION TO BE HELD IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1876. THE ORIGINAL PLATES BEING MISSING, A NEW 100-SUBJECT BLACK JACK PLATE, NO. 57, WAS PREPARED. THE RE-ISSUE CAN BE IDENTIFIED BY THE "STAR" ON THE LEFT CHEEK, PROVIDED THAT THE STAMP IS NOT GRILLED. ALTHOUGH 10,000 SETS WERE OFFERED FOR SALE AT FACE VALUE FROM THE DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON, ONLY 979 COPIES OF THE BLACK JACK WERE SOLD.

A28

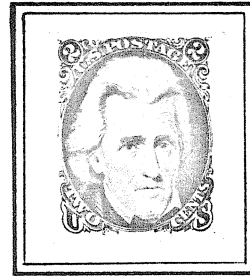
PLATE PROOFS ON CARDBOARD



1879 .013"

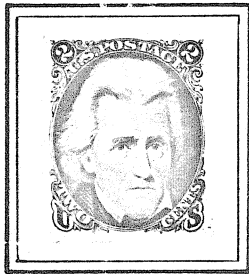


1885 .0095"

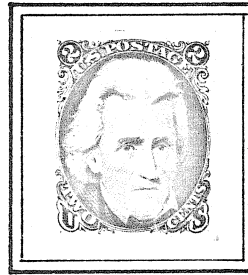


1890 .012"

24



1893 .012"



1894 .013"

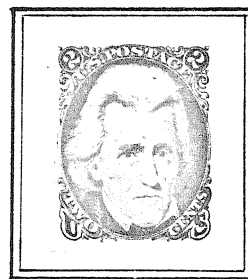
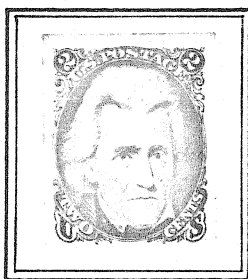
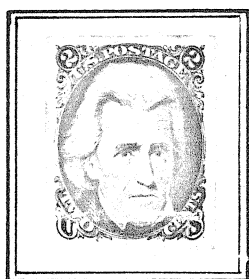
BETWEEN 1879 AND 1894, FIVE SPECIAL PRINTINGS OF CARDBOARD PROOFS OF ALL STAMPS ISSUED PRIOR TO THAT DATE WERE PREPARED BY THE AMERICAN BANK NOTE COMPANY. ALL BLACK JACK PRINTINGS WERE FROM THE RE-ISSUE PLATE OF 100, AND THEREFORE ARE DIE III. THEY CAN BE DISTINGUISHED BY THE THICKNESS OF THE CARD AND BY VARIATION IN THE SHADE OR INTENSITY OF THE INK. THE SETS WERE ASSEMBLED AND DISTRIBUTED IN SMALL ENVELOPES TITLED "UNITED STATES POSTAGE STAMPS" (YEAR OF SET), AND "PROOF SPECIMENS".

27

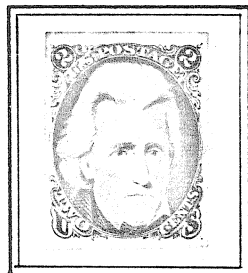
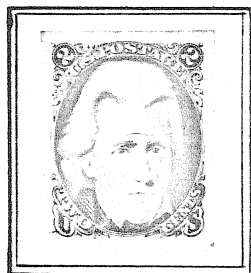
5021

A29

ATLANTA TRIAL COLOR PLATE PROOFS



25



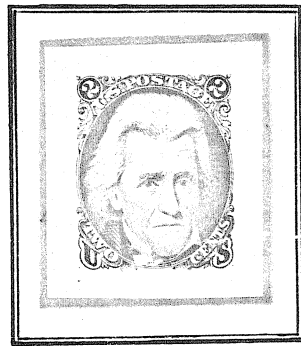
IN 1881, THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT ORDERED SETS OF ALL UNITED STATES POSTAGE STAMPS ISSUED PRIOR TO THAT TIME. THEY WERE PRINTED IN FIVE COLORS ON THIN CARD (.0075"—.0085") BY THE AMERICAN BANK NOTE COMPANY FOR DISPLAY AT THE INTERNATIONAL COTTON EXHIBITION IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA. THEREFORE, THEY ARE KNOWN AS THE "ATLANTA" PROOFS. PROBABLY 100 BLACK JACKS WERE PRINTED IN BLACK AND 200 IN EACH OF THE OTHER FOUR COLORS. THEY ARE FROM DIE III.

28

822

A 30

ROOSEVELT SMALL DIE PROOF
DIE III



26

Roosevelt
27 (Sheet)

THIS DIE PROOF RECEIVES ITS NAME FROM THE SMALL SIZE OF THE WHITE WOVE PAPER ON WHICH IT WAS PRINTED. THE PROOF WAS CUT FROM PAGE FOUR OF THE BOOK OF STAMPS DISTRIBUTED BY THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT IN 1904 DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT. EIGHTY FIVE BOOKS WERE SAID TO HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

29

56 23