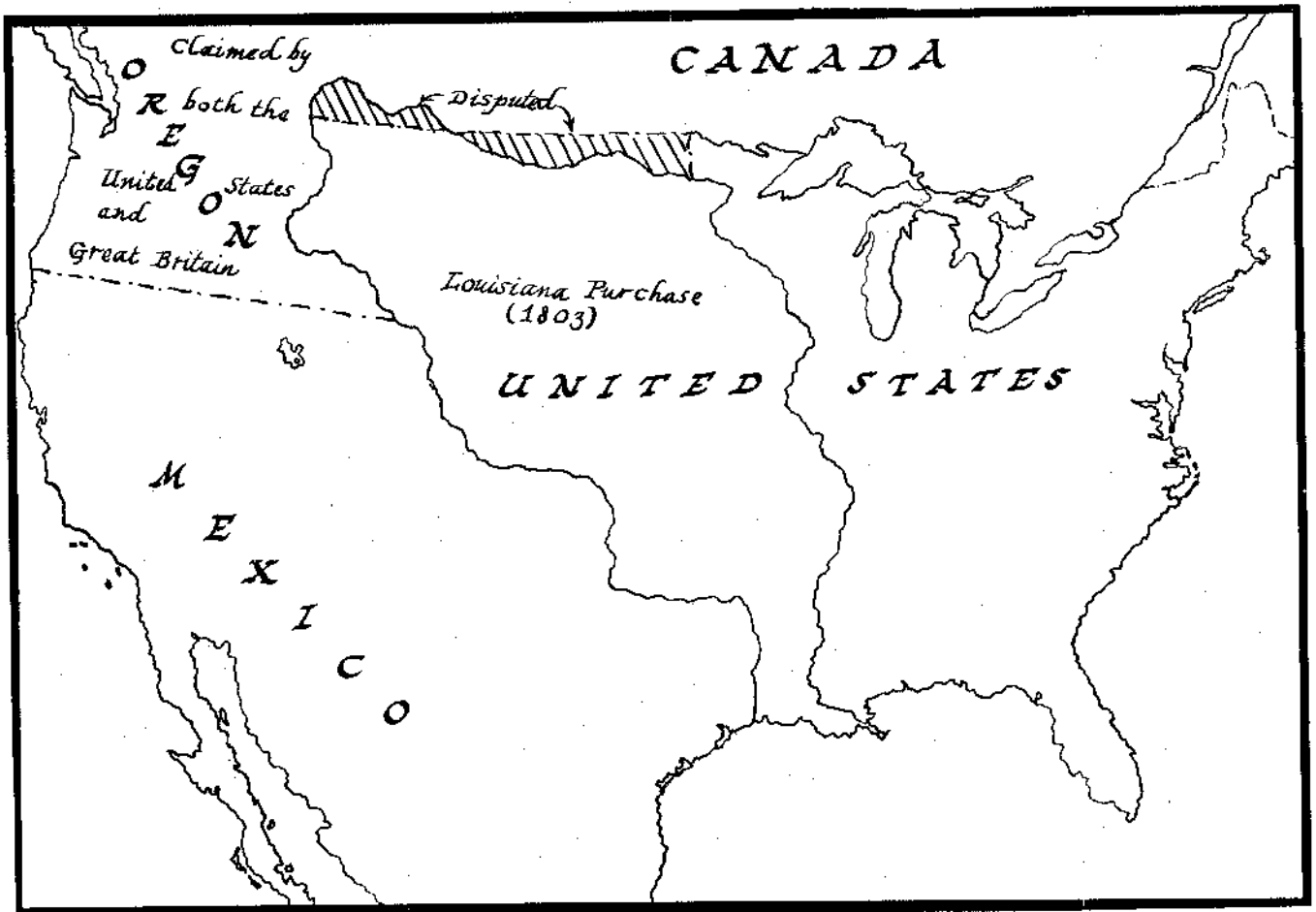


FIRST ISSUE OF U.S. STAMPS

CREIGHTON C. HART

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

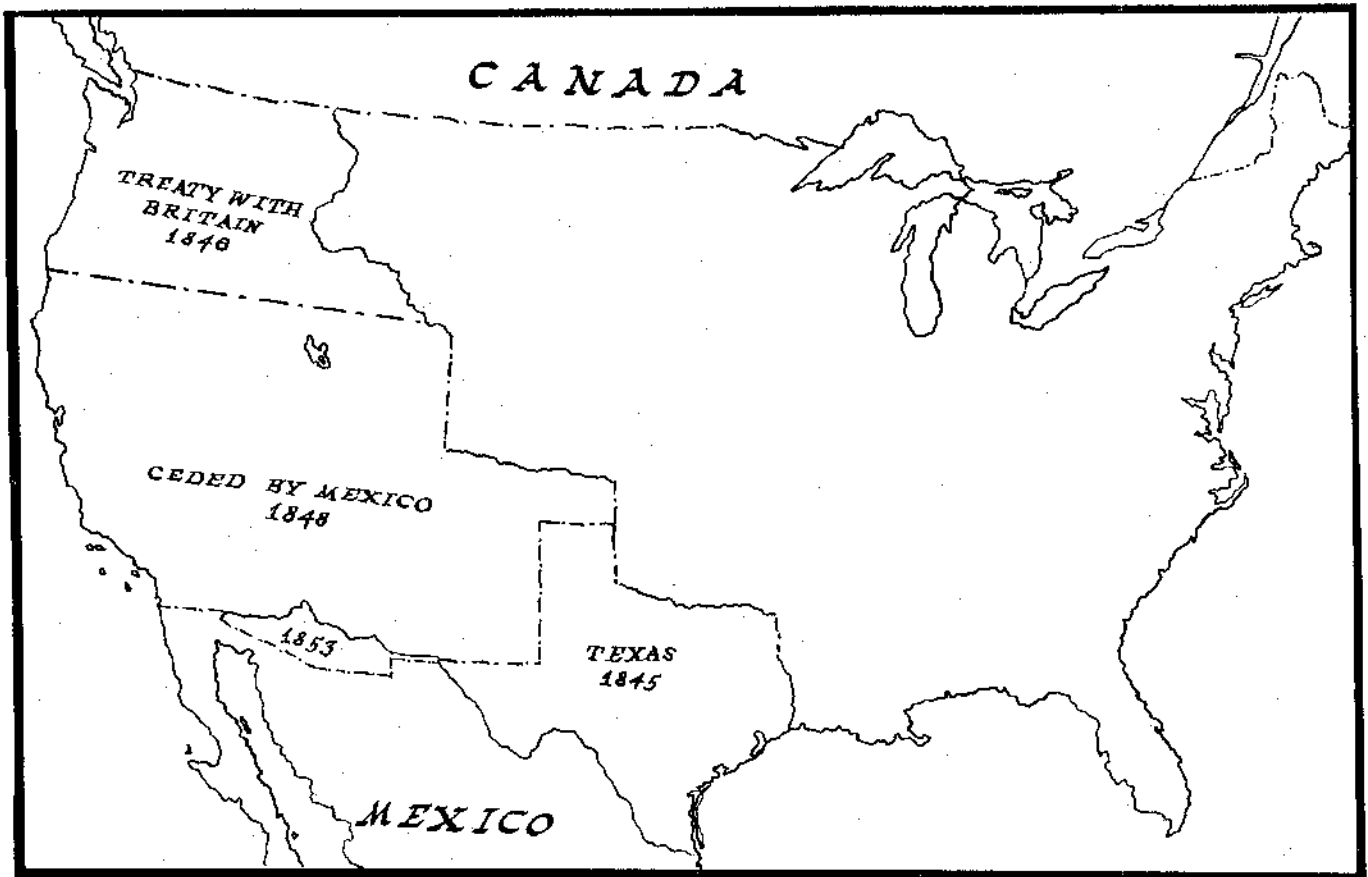
4 NOVEMBER 1988



There were two large territorial additions to the United States after the Revolutionary War. The first was the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The second occurred during the 1840-1850 decade. This latter expansion added more territory to the nation than did the Louisiana Purchase.

James K. Polk, an avowed territorial expansionist, was President from 1844 to 1848. During his presidency the great postal reform of 1845 was instituted, by which rates were greatly simplified and reduced. It was also during his term office that the first United States postage stamps were issued.

Communications are vital to a large and growing nation. The postal reform coupled with the convenience of postage stamps, played an important part in binding the nation together.



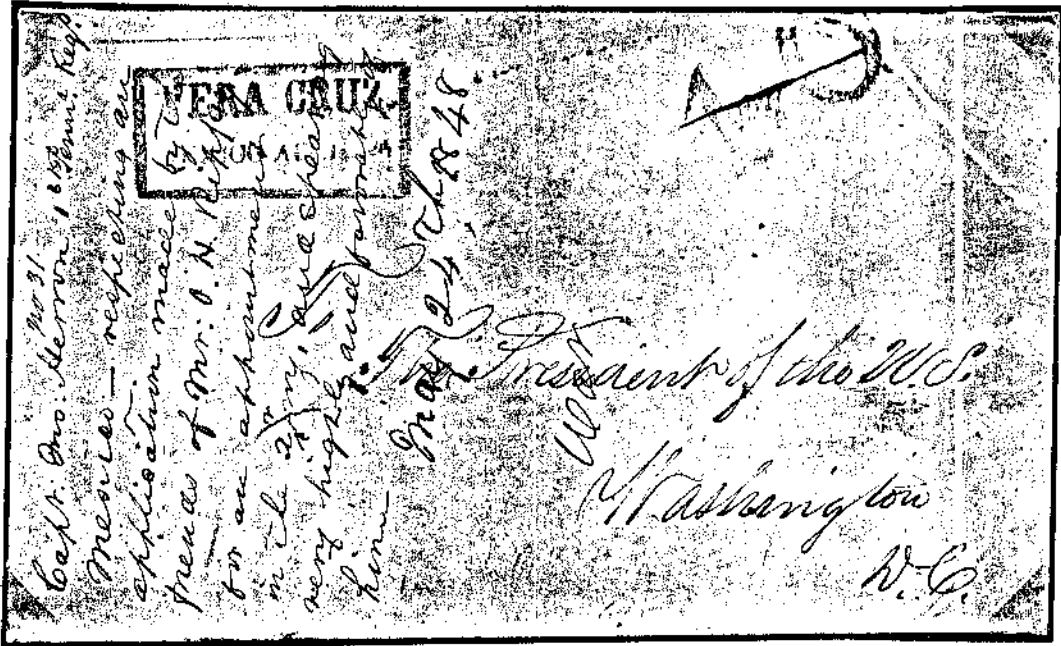
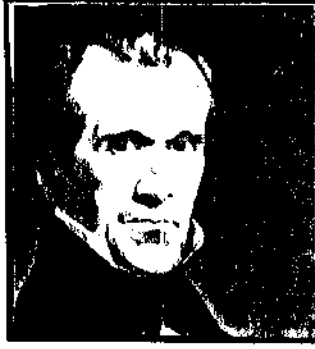
By 1850 the continental limits of the United States were as they are today, except for Alaska and the comparatively small Gadsden Purchase of 1853.

President Polk was responsible for bringing about a large territorial expansion, first by obtaining the admission of the Republic of Texas to the Union in 1845. This act precipitated the Mexican War, which ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo on February 2, 1848. By that treaty all of Mexico west and north of Texas to the Pacific Ocean became a vast unorganized territory of the United States.

By a second significant expansion in 1846 the northwest boundary of the country was fixed at the 49th parallel. Congress agreed to this compromise boundary with Great Britain even though Polk wanted the entire Pacific coast, all the way to Russian Alaska.

JAMES K. POLK

1844 - 1848



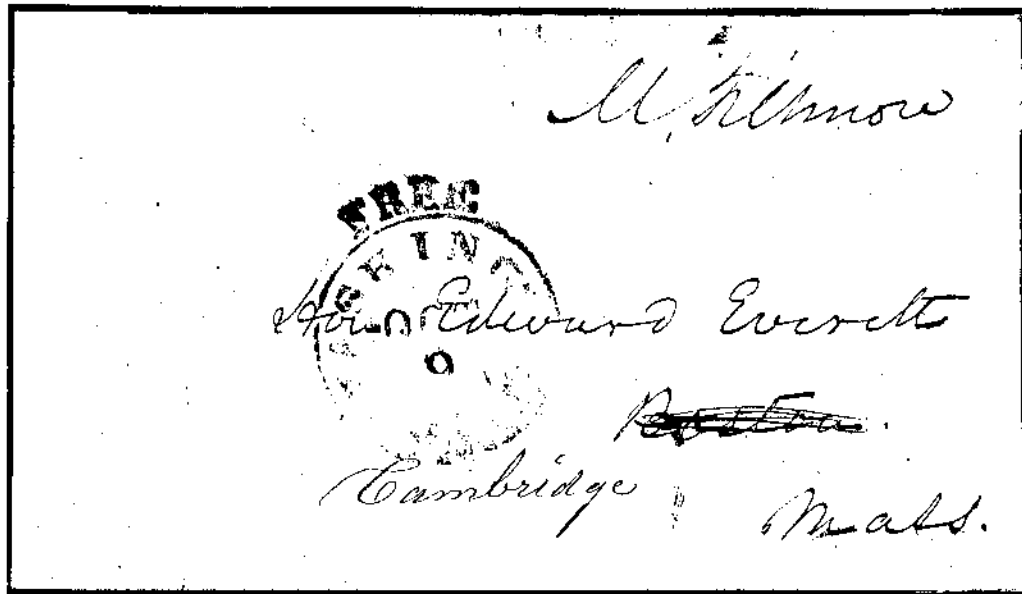
President Polk, a Democrat, never deviated from his policy of expanding the boundaries of the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts.

This 1848 letter to Polk is from an officer in occupied Vera Cruz, Mexico. It was rated "10" cents due; however, the "10" has been crossed out, since Presidents at this time received as well as sent mail free under their franking privilege.

The docketing at the left is entirely in President Polk's hand.

MILLARD FILLMORE

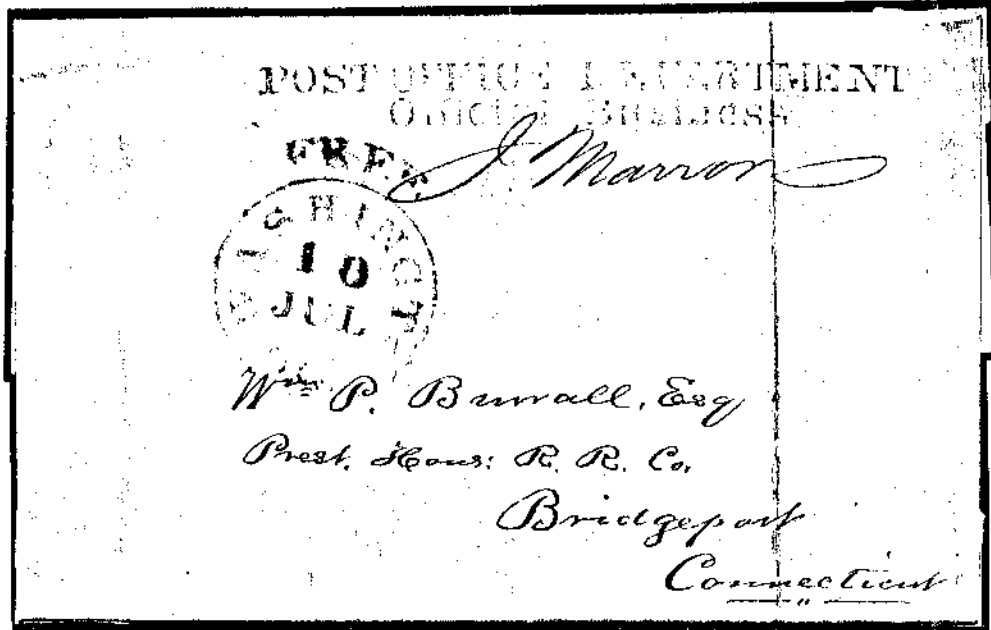
1849 - 1852



Millard Fillmore succeeded to the presidency upon the death of President Taylor on July 9, 1850. This envelope was franked while he was president. Fillmore was Vice-President for only a year and four months, and was President for nearly three years. Surprisingly, his frank as Vice-President is common, while that as President is rare.

JOHN MARRON

3^d ASST. POSTMASTER GENERAL



This letter was franked by John Marron on July 10, 1847, the day after he returned to Washington after delivering the first supplies of 1847 stamps to the postoffices at New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington, as follows:

<u>Postoffice</u>	<u>Date Delivered</u>	<u>5 cent</u>	<u>10 cent</u>	<u>Amount</u>
New York	July 1, 1847	60,000	20,000	\$ 5,000
Boston	July 2, 1847	40,000	10,000	3,000
Philadelphia	July 7, 1847	40,000	10,000	3,000
Washington	July 9, 1847	3,000	1,000	250

A week later 500 5¢ and 500 10¢ stamps were taken to Baltimore. After that supplies were mailed to the various postmasters who requested them.

PLATE AND DIE PROOFS

Plate and die proofs are noted for their sharp impressions to show all the fine lines of the engraving. Special care is used to make these impressions on very thin paper especially manufactured for this purpose.

The engravings of Washington and Franklin on the first United States stamps were in use long before the 1847 stamps were printed. Clarence Brazier and Julian Blanchard were two prime students of the plate and die proofs of this issue. They believed that A. B. Durand engraved both vignettes. The earliest use that Brazier and Blanchard record is in 1832 on a \$10 note of the Bank of West Florida.

At the time the stamps were printed the engravings had passed from Durand Perkins & Co. to Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson. Later, ownership passed to the National Bank Note Co., to the Continental Bank Note Co., and finally to the American Bank Note Co.

Plate and die proofs of the two stamps were struck many times by all of these bank note companies, both for the government and for company brochures. In this exhibit are examples of each printing, whether official or unofficial.

The year date of the plate and die proofs when struck is given if known; if not, the approximate date is shown.

Only a few die and plate proofs are contemporary with the stamps. On December 12, 1851 (after the 1847 issue was demonetized), the original dies and plates were destroyed. However, the engravers retained the transfer rolls and used them in 1858 (?) to make new dies. Apparently these were unharmed, as progressive changes on the 5¢ may be observed over the years. There cannot, of course, be any post-contemporary plate proofs of the original designs.

After the reproduction designs were manufactured in 1875, many die and plate proofs of these were struck at various times.



The banknote engraving firm of Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson obtained the contract to produce the 1847 stamps. They used two portraits for the stamp vignettes which they had previously used on banknotes, as shown here.

1847 PLATE PROOFS
"SPECIMEN" OVERPRINTS

India Paper



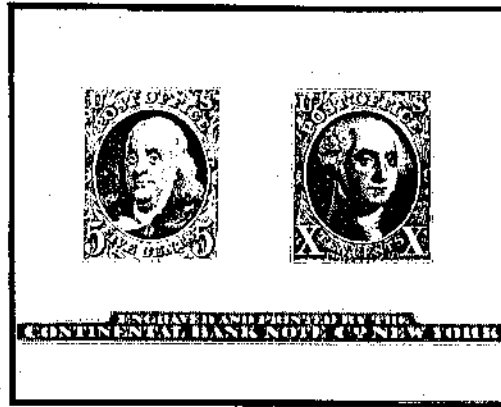
India Paper Mounted on Cardboard



1875 PLATE PROOFS

(1847 DESIGN)

CONTINENTAL BANKNOTE COMPANY

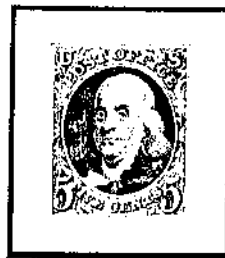


Hybrid plate proofs on India paper mounted on thin cardboard.

1902 DIE PROOFS

(1875 DESIGN)

AMERICAN BANKNOTE COMPANY



Printed by the American Banknote Company for albums prepared for each director.

DIE REPRODUCTION

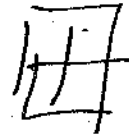
1847 DESIGN



On white bond.

PLATE REPRODUCTION

1875 DESIGN



On cardboard.

These are believed to have been produced in 1879. The 5¢ value is distinguished from earlier examples by the "dot on the forehead." On the 10¢ value, many of the fine lines on the leaves are cut away.

1875



These blocks on India paper are not backed with cardboard. They are valued by specialists because of the sharp impressions, which show clearly the fine lines of the engraving on the official reproductions made in 1875.

CENTENNIAL REPRODUCTION



The block on the left shows the issued stamps as they were printed in 1847-1851 by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson. The stamps on the right are official imitations manufactured in 1875 by the Bureau of Engraving & Printing for display at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.

Despite the identical design, these two products are strikingly dissimilar in appearance, primarily because of the different paper and color used for each. As to the design, the major difference is that Franklin's ruffle strikes the oval higher on the reproduction than it does on the original.

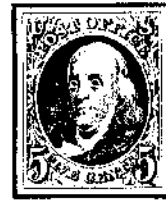
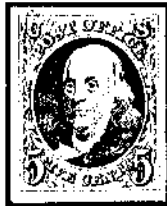
The stamps were demonetized as of July 1, 1851, and was no longer valid for postage. The official imitations of 1875 were never valid for postage.

ATLANTA TRIAL COLOR

PLATE PROOFS

These were printed for display at the International Cotton Exposition in 1881 at Atlanta, Georgia. A plate of 50 impressions for each denomination was prepared for the Post Office Department from the 1875 reproduction design.

According to Clarence Bruzer, only one sheet of 50 of the 5¢ and one sheet of 50 of the 10¢ in each of five colors became available in 1881. About 1918, each of these sheets was cut into one block of eight, two blocks of four, two horizontal pairs, and 30 singles, some of which were badly cut into.



DIE PROOFS

1895

Various Colors and Papers

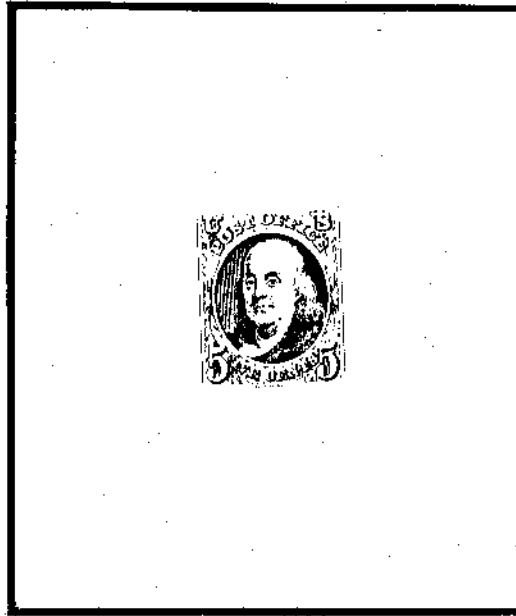


PLATE PROOFS OF 1875

