

The Cover Story

What's Missing? by Randall Priest

To identify stamps from different countries we look for the thing that sets that country's stamps from all others. This can be in the form of a symbol, a few letters or other characters that are unique to that country.

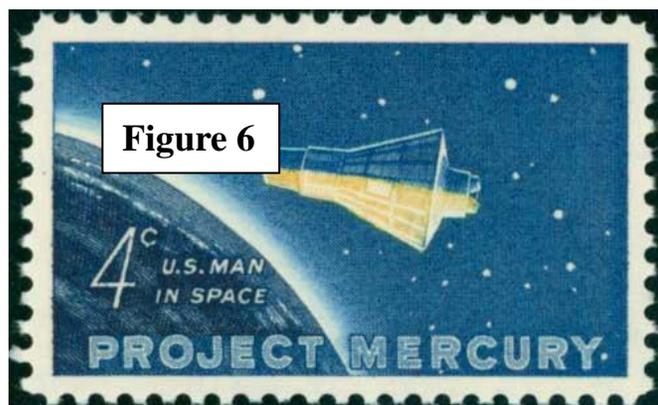
One of the things that make it easy to identify any United States stamp is that on the stamp somewhere you will find the words "U.S.", "Postage", "US Postage", "United States Postage", or in the case of the first two stamps issued by the United States you will find the words "Post Office".

For the first 73 years every stamp issued by the U.S. Post Office had a country designation. Then in 1920 three stamps were issued that did not have any of the usual markings to identify them as from the United States. The stamps were to mark the 300th anniversary [figure 1] of the pilgrims landing in Massachusetts. Now 43 years later we find missing information on another stamp. Issued in 1963, a 5 cent stamps [figure 2] showing the White House with a flag flying over it with no other information.



Over the years there have been four stamps issued that show the White House under a flag. The 5 cent issued in 1963. The 6 cent [figure 3] issued in 1968. The 8 cent [figure 4] issued in 1968, and the 29 cent [figure 6] issued in 1992.

The Postmaster at the time of the issue of the 5 cent stamp, had this to say: "You will notice that the new Flag stamp does not contain the words "United States or "Postage" or even the initials "U.S." while this is unusual it does not set a precedent for American stamps."



He went on to say "We feel that the Stars and Stripes and the White House, both universally recognized as symbols of the United States are sufficient designation."

In fact in 1962 we find the 'Project Mercury' [figure 6] stamp only has the words "U S Man in Space". These words are very small. This may be the first stamp to drop the word "Postage" from the stamp. Also in 1962 the "Apprenticeship" stamp has dropped the word "Postage". In the years going forward there have been a number of stamps that do not use the word "Postage" as was the case before 1962.

In the 166 years of issuing stamps the United States Post Office has only issued 4 stamps that have the distinction of no way to identify them as being from the United States.

Two Covers of Interest

by Phillip Fettig



Figure A

AKRON flown cover from a coast to coast flight carrying mail for the USPO. The label in the upper left corner is not normally seen. The cover was cancelled in Lakehurst, NJ on May 6th, 1932. The flight actually departed May 8th and arrived in San Diego on May 11, 1932. Figure B shows the USPO rubber stamp on the reverse.

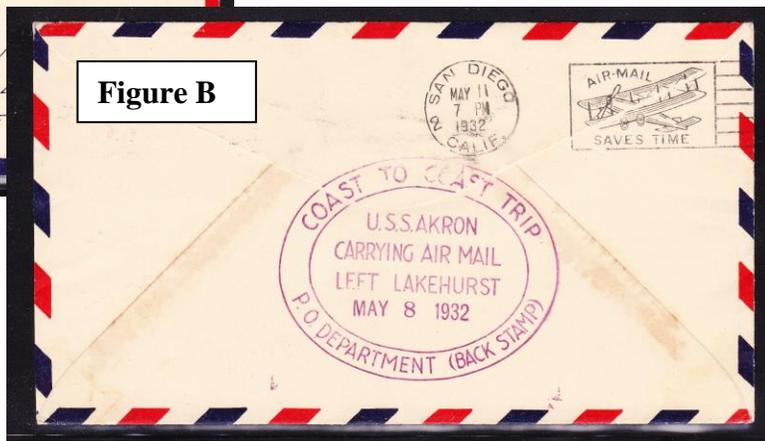


Figure B

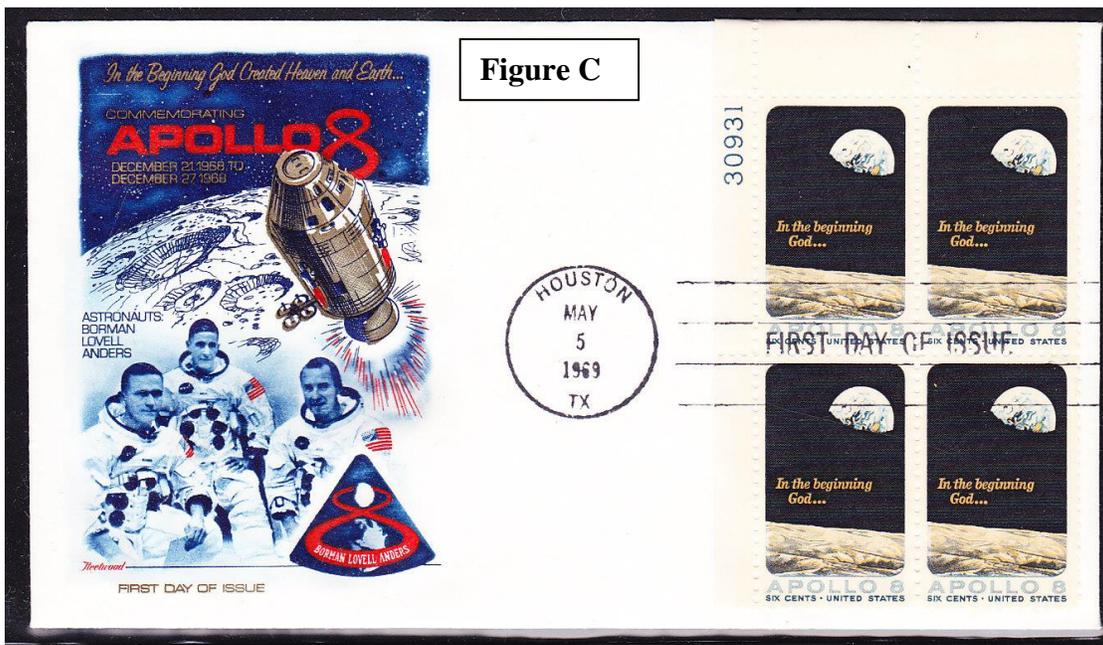


Figure C

This first day cover of Scott 1371, the Apollo 8 stamp is not an expensive or rate item. It is however a very attractive and popular stamp. This cover, Figure C, with a plate block of 4 is a common Fleetwood cachet. All of this proves you don't have to spend a fortune adding something nice to your collection!