

Prexy – Matched Coil Plate Numbers

by Francis Ferguson

I have been collecting Prexy EFO material for about 15 years and I am continually amazed at the variety of stuff that is available in the marketplace. Some types of EFO material are relatively common, while other types of production goofs are simply rare beyond comprehension. One would think that the massive printing totals would have resulted in a large amount of EFO material available to collectors. Wrong. Even though the printing total for the 1-cent Prexy sideways & endwise coils was 5.653 billion over the lifetime of the series there is a dearth of EFOs. **Figure B1** shows a wonderful 1 cent prexy matched plate number at 100%. Now to put that in perspective – the production goof caused a miscut of the coil during the creation process, thus leaving a portion of the plate number that should have been removed – thus leaving about 40% of the plate number on the bottom of the coil. Next, try to match that 40% with the corresponding 60% on the top edge. Magic has occurred. You will note that the bottom coil actually is a ‘star’ plate while the top coil is not.



The 2-cent coil had a slightly lower production of 4.387 billion produced in both formats.

A perfect 100% rendition of the plate number 22893 is seen.

I have seven of these matched sets in my collection – all of which have been purchased that way. While I have attempted a number of times to find two coils that match 100% top

to bottom – I have failed thus far.

Plate Production Information

1 cent in use from 12.06.1940 to 10.02.1943
Impressions: 1,049,073

2 cent in use from 09.19.1949 to 10.24.1952
Impressions: 921,314

make the math easier. Since there is no way to assign definitive numbers to this problem, we will conjecture that in every ten thousand cuts there was some form of an misregistration problem. That would result in roughly 100 bad cuts. If we assume the number is every twenty thousand cuts that reduces the number of 50. Taking the math one step further, if the misregistration occurs once every fifty thousand cuts that results in a total of only 20 available plate number segments.

After nearly 15 years of chasing this material I must think that the realistic number of misregistered cuts is greater than one in fifty thousand but less than one hundred thousand. The number of full plate numbers that can be found in the marketplace is tiny. When you factor in use and the years since production the available number of examples to collectors must be very small.

What are the odds of finding the two halves to make a whole plate number? I can not even begin to calculate that number.

Less Than an Inch & History

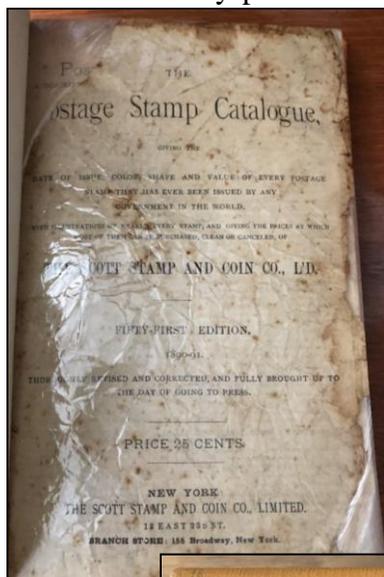
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The COVID-19 pandemic has opened a whole window in time that should be productive. Unfortunately, I have suffered from a lack of motivation for the most part. I finally decided to tackle a small part of my reference library – the auction catalogs. I had a shelf and a half of catalogs in no particular order – so it was difficult if



not impossible to find anything quickly when I was looking for it. In the back of my mind I had the thought that maybe I would free up some shelf space during this process. So much for that thought. When it was done and over with after three one-hour sessions of moving things around, I found a grand total of two duplicate catalogs that amounted to not even an inch of space. At least now I can find an auction catalog!

Related to this activity, I shelved a volume of Scott's catalog that was new to me. The 1890-1891, 51st edition was a recent eBay purchase. Any volumes before 1895 in decent shape are rare and infrequently seen in the marketplace. This is the second time, in ten years, I have seen this one offered for sale. It had been rebound to preserve it and the binder had taken extra care to enclose the first two pages in protective clear film as the condition is worn. The volume was purchased from a seller in New Hampshire. Much to my surprise a quick Google turned up a lot of information. Frank Berger served as teacher, principal and coach at Seabreeze High School, during the 1920s and later returned to the school after World War II. He retired in 1959.



He and his wife Grace left an endowment of \$500,000 to benefit the school. This donation was anonymous at the time and was only divulged after the passing of Grace in 1997. Apparently, Frank was a stamp collector of some stripe. I feel extraordinary honor to have a reference volume that he obviously cherished --- in my library.

