

Guide to U.S. Vending and Affixing Machine Perforations 1907-1927
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Two years ago the USSS published *Guide to United States Vending and Affixing Machine Perforations, 1907-1927*. Since then new information has surfaced about these stamps and it is worthwhile to provide an update. For convenience, I'll list these updates below by page numbers from the book. References to illustrations in the book are identified by the Figure shown in the book.

Page 5. Snow's Postage Stamper and Labeling Machine.

I've now seen a wonderful cover postmarked Boston Mass. Aug. 19, 1858 with a Snow's advertising label. The label is tied by the postmark.

Page 37. Schermack Type III

There is a new EDU for the 1c Green Issue of 1923-26, Scott No. 575. A postcard dated Chicago, Ill Oct 23, 1923 has come to light. This card from S.W. Strauss & Co. beats the old date by more than six months.

Pages 39-49. Schermack Control Perforations

Table A on pages 44-47 lists only two patterns of the experimental Schermack 12 hole control perforation, shown in Figure 3-37. These patterns are identified by lettering each hole, as shown on page 41, and listing the pattern based on which holes are missing. Additional information has now been discovered about these experimental perforations. The basic 12 hole control perforation is now known on a cover to Germany from New York City, postmarked February 26, 1910. In addition, a Schermack Type III stamp with the 12 hole perforation on a piece from 1909 used in New York City has also been reported. It is now clear that these experimental perforations were used in New York City.

Furthermore, as noted in the book, other 12 hole patterns had been listed in the *Catalog of United States Perfins* (and elsewhere) but were delisted in 1998 because the only reported examples of these patterns had not been seen for many years. In the fall of 2009, four of these unique Schermack experimental patterns reappeared when the collection of Dan Howell was sold in The Perfins Club Private Auction #26. These four patterns should be listed at the end of Table A as follows:

B, E, F, J with four missing pins shown here as Figure A,
 C, F, G, J with four missing pins shown in Figure B,



Figure A. Front and back of only known coil with Schermack experimental control pattern B, E, F, J, which is missing these four holes.

Figure B. Front and back of only known coil with Schermack experimental control pattern C, F, G, J, which is missing these four holes.



Figure C. Front and back of only known coil with Schermack experimental control pattern C, F, G, H, J, which is missing these five holes.

Figure D. Front and back of only known coil with Schermack experimental control pattern B, C, E, F, G, H, which is missing these six holes.

C, F, G, H, J with five missing pins shown in Figure C, and
 B, C, E, F, G, H with six missing pins shown in Figure D.

The company using each pattern is not known. Since only one or two examples of each pattern are known, they rank as Extremely Rare on the book's rarity scale. Lastly, these missing pin patterns are not known used on cover. All these patterns with less than 12 holes are variations of the basic 12 hole perforation that were presumably created when the perforating pins broke as they were used to punch the pattern in the stamps as they were affixing to envelopes by the Schermack affixing machine. Although the city of use is not known, based on these four stamps having similar straight line cancellations, they must all have been used over a short period in one location. Now that the basic 12 hole experimental perforation has been identified as having been used in New York City, in all likelihood these missing hole varieties also were used in New York City rather than Chicago or Detroit.

Another pattern missing holes A, F, K has been reported although I do not have a scan of the stamp to post here.

Lastly, I understand that several of these patterns are likely to be re-listed in the next update (now scheduled for August, 2011) of the *Catalogue of United States Perfins*, published by The Perfins Club.

Table A also needs to be corrected to show that the control patterns used by Julian Hawthorn Co. (13579 and 245679) were used in New York City, not Chicago, Ill. Table B has it right but somehow it didn't carry over to Table A. An interesting historical note about Julian Hawthorne Co. is that Julian Hawthorne was the son of Nathaniel Hawthorne, the great American writer. In the period these experimental patterns were being used, Julian Hawthorne was engaged in promoting Canadian mining stocks. The mining company was bogus and in 1913 he was convicted of mail fraud and spent a year in the Atlanta Penitentiary.

Pages 80-81. Mailometer Test and Demonstration Coils

Two remarkable pieces of the rare Mailometer test coil with Type I perforations in red with no company name (Scott No. TD 14C) have turned up; a strip of eight and a strip of four. The strip of eight is now the largest known multiple of this stamp.

Page 96. 2c Carmine Issue of 1912, Scott No. 409.

The new EDU is June 7, 1912 on a Farwell window envelope with a Boston (receiving) cancellation June 8, 1912 on the reverse.

Page 147. 3c Deep Violet, Issue of 1980-09, Scott No. 345.

There appears to be a commercial use of this stamp on cover. It is a registered letter with a strip of four 3c Type I stamps paying the 8c registry fee plus 4c for double weight first class postage. It is postmarked New York, N. Y. July 3, 1909. The return address is Chancery Office, 23 East 51 Street, New York. Presumably, this was the Chancery Office for St. Patrick's Cathedral directly across the street.

Page 155. 2c Carmine Issue of 1908-09, Scott No. 344.

A limited attempt has been made to try to determine whether Scott No. 344 or No. 384 with U. S. Automatic Vending Type II perforations was used on the six or so known covers. Two of these 2c covers have now been examined by The Philatelic Foundation, including lifting the stamps to check the watermark. The two covers, postmarked July 31, 1911 (Figure 10-19, page 155) and August 21, 1911, were determined to be Scott No. 344 with a double line watermark. If some of the remaining covers from 1912 and 1913 were also examined by The Philatelic Foundation, we could quickly determine in any of these covers bear a single line watermark stamp, No. 384.

Page 157. 1c Green, Issue of 1910, Scott No. 383.

A limited attempt has begun to identify when the company began using Scott No. 383 on its Type II stamps. The Philatelic Foundation has examined one of the two known covers using two 1c Type II stamps to pay the first class rate and, by lifting the stamps, determined both have a single line watermark and are No. 383. The cover is postmarked Hudson Terminal Stat, N.Y. Feb. 20, 1912 and sits in the middle of the period of use, 1911-1912, of these stamps. This undermines to some extent Howard's theory (discussed on page 141) that the Company didn't run out of double line watermarked stamps until September 1912. It would now be more interesting than ever to have some more covers sent to The Philatelic Foundation to determine when this change-over took place for Type II stamps.

Pages 166-167. U.S. Automatic Vending Test and Demonstration Coils (pages 166-167)

The green imperforate Automatic Vending test stamp (Scott No. TD 24E) shown in Figure 10-34 in the book is now known in a block of four in red (TD 24), as well as a horizontal pair. The test coil (Scott No. TD 24C) shown in Figure 10-35 is also known in a block of four.

I wish to thank Pieter Bosen, Stephen Endicott, Dave Frederick, Melvin Getlan, Chuck Gherman, Terry Scott, and Bob Szymanski for providing information for this update. The study of Vending and Affixing Machine coils continues to be a dynamic field with new information regularly coming to light. I look forward to hearing about more discoveries and updated information, which will encourage me to continue these updates.