

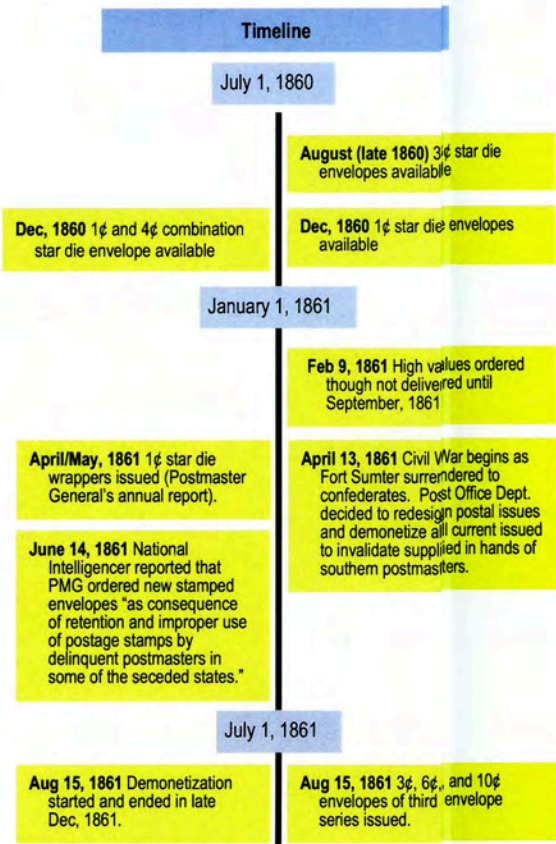
Development of Star Die Envelopes

This exhibit presents the development of the United States second envelope series. The Congressional Act of June 15, 1860, created need for one cent envelopes by reducing the rate for drop letters to one cent. The necessity for a new envelope denomination resulted in development of the 'Star Die' issue, named after the small stars on either side of the design. These were issued in the third and fourth quarter of 1860. Some dies were in use only a short time due to demonetization of stamps and some envelope denominations at the beginning of the Civil War while other dies continued in use for several years.

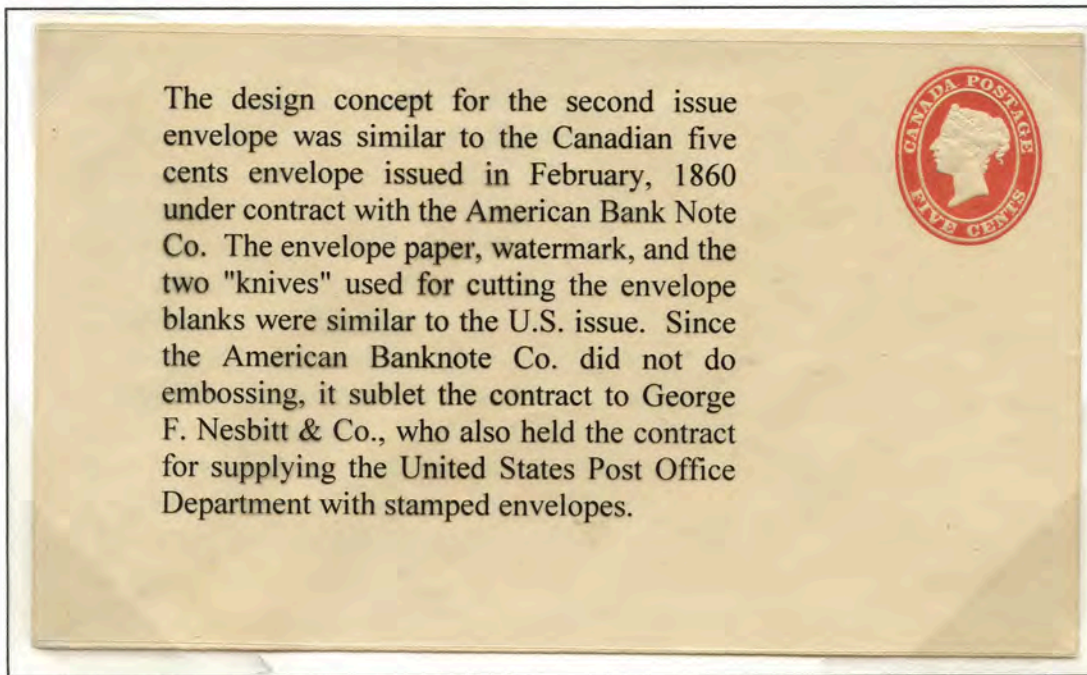
This exhibit will show development of the 1¢, 3¢ and 1¢ + 3¢ compound die envelopes. It will also show that bicolored, high value envelopes were developed with similar design concepts during the same time period and should be considered a part of this second issue, rather than the succeeding issue.

All essays and proofs are unique unless stated otherwise. Items in red boxes are those first reported by the author.

Exhibit Plan	
Title page	Pages 1-2
Three Cents Issue	Pages 3-7
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The High Value Bicolor Issues	Pages 12-16



Issued envelopes of this series for which archival items exist showing development history.



The design concept for the second issue envelope was similar to the Canadian five cents envelope issued in February, 1860 under contract with the American Bank Note Co. The envelope paper, watermark, and the two "knives" used for cutting the envelope blanks were similar to the U.S. issue. Since the American Banknote Co. did not do embossing, it sublet the contract to George F. Nesbitt & Co., who also held the contract for supplying the United States Post Office Department with stamped envelopes.

The Three Cents die was likely **the first die developed** since it was for use on first class letter envelopes and most essays and trials colors exist for this die. The Post Office and/or Nesbitt considered bicolor designs for this new envelope issue as evidenced by the bicolor model essays below.



Red lettering on white collar bust on blue background



Blue lettering on buff collar bust on red background

Bicolor models without stars on the side of design



Blue collar with red background on white paper



Blue collar with red background on buff paper



Red collar with blue background on buff paper

Bicolor models with stars on the side of design

A **model** is an essay that is a combination of drawings, embossing and engraved prints pasted together, used to mock up a proposed design of a stamp. The above models have built up design; the collar with hand lettering and embossed bust are pasted onto the rest of design.

The Three Cents Issue

Trial Color Proofs



Rose on white



Black on white card



Yellow on white



Yellow on buff

Trial colors printed on small cut squares



Black on white



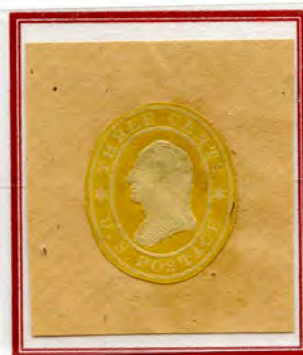
Yellow on white



Rose on white



Black on buff

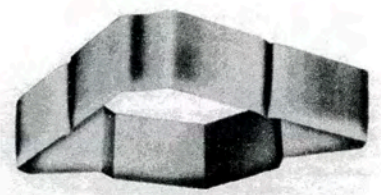


Yellow on buff

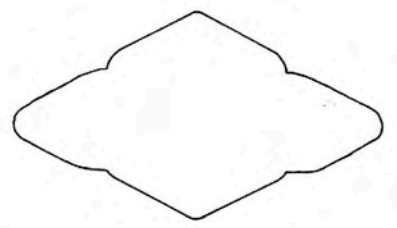
Trial colors printed on envelope paper, cut to shape and then mounted envelope paper.

Trial colors of the 3¢ die were printed on white and buff paper. Above are all of the reported trial color proofs.

The Three Cents Issue



Metal envelope blank cutting knife

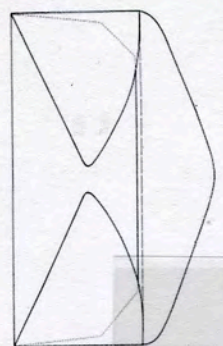


Envelope blank cut with specific knife

A **knife** is either the metal tool used to cut envelope blanks or the specific size and shape of an envelope cut by a particular metal knife.



Stamps on envelopes to right were printed in the issued color from the die used to manufacture envelopes but on envelopes cut with knives not used for envelope production. Therefore, these are envelope knife essays. Only three sets are reported to exist.



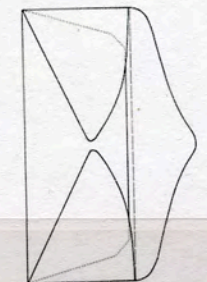
Knife 125, 271x118
Only on these proofs



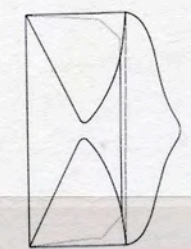
Knife 121, 260x110 mm
Only on these proofs



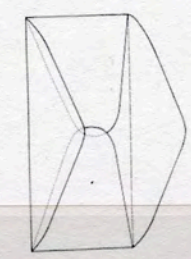
Knife 119, 249x109 mm
Only on these proofs



Knife 105, 241x100 mm
Used on these proofs and on 20¢ red & blue



Knife 95, 224x96 mm
Only on these proofs



Knife 94, 221x98 mm
Used on these proofs and 6¢ envelopes of first three issues.

Wax impressions of dies were taken to aid the die-sinker in perfecting the details of the design. Below are the discovery copies of Three Cents Die wax impressions.



Impression of Washington Bust for Master Die



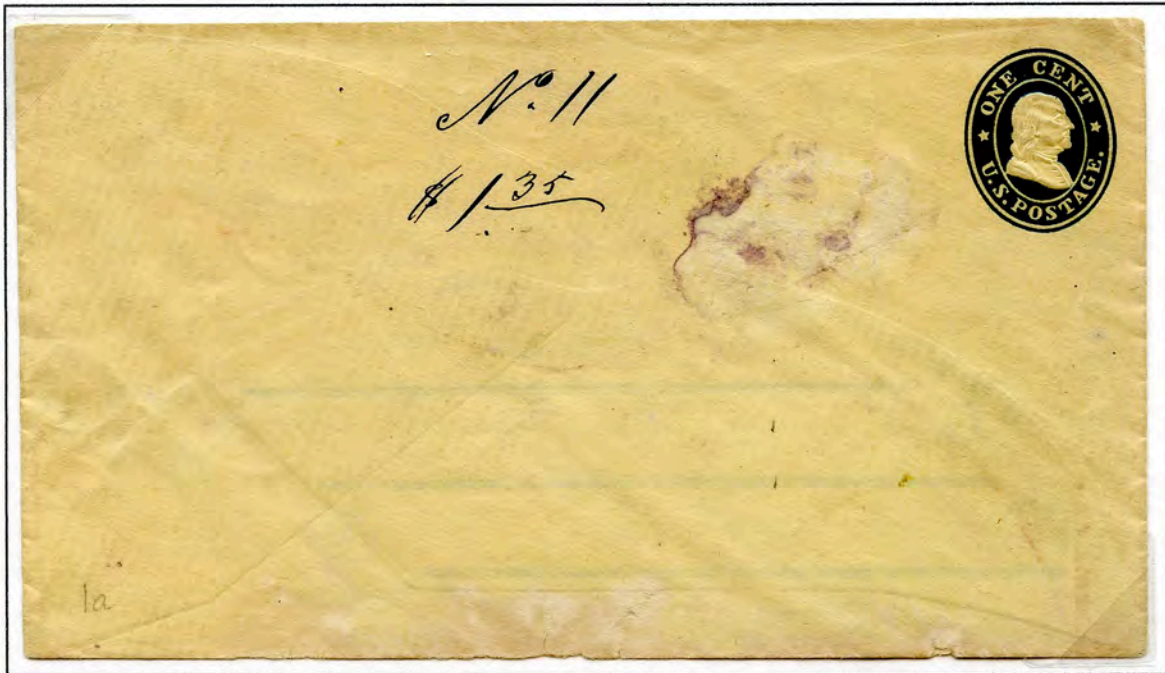
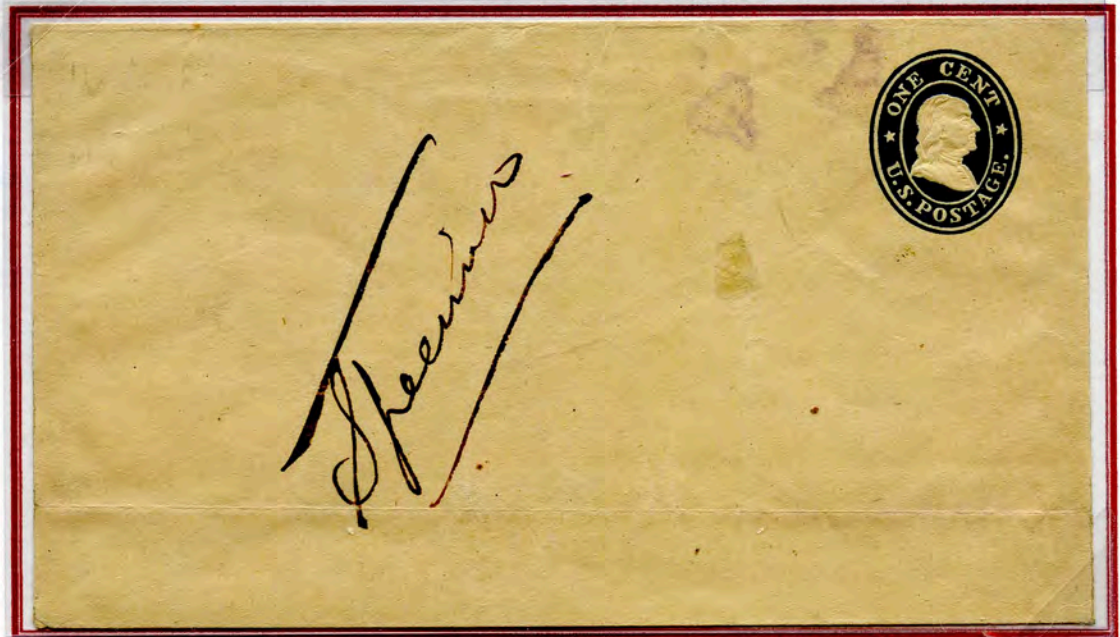
Two Different Impressions of Entire Master Die

There are **no development records of 6¢ and 10¢ star die envelopes**. It is likely that, after the 3¢ master die was made, the 6¢, and 10¢ dies were made by transferring the frame and bust separately from the same master dies used for the 3¢ and then hand engraving the lettering. The 6¢ envelope was printed in the same red ink and manufactured with the same legal size and knife as the preceding 6¢ issue. The 10¢ star die envelope was also printed with the same green ink and manufactured with the same size and knife as the preceding 10¢ issue.

Postmaster General Joseph Holt on December 1, 1860 reported (after the three-cent envelope had been introduced):

"A new die for embossing the stamp on the postage-stamped envelope has been adopted, which is believed to be an improvement on the former one, especially because of its reduced size. It is contemplated to introduce immediately two new denominations of envelopes, one embossed with a one-cent stamp, the other with both the one-cent and the three-cent stamps. The one-cent envelope is designed mainly for circulars, of which many millions are annually distributed through the mails. The same envelope, however, will also be largely used for city correspondence."

The envelope to right was cut down and fabricated from a larger envelope. It is a unique early trial sample and a knife essay.

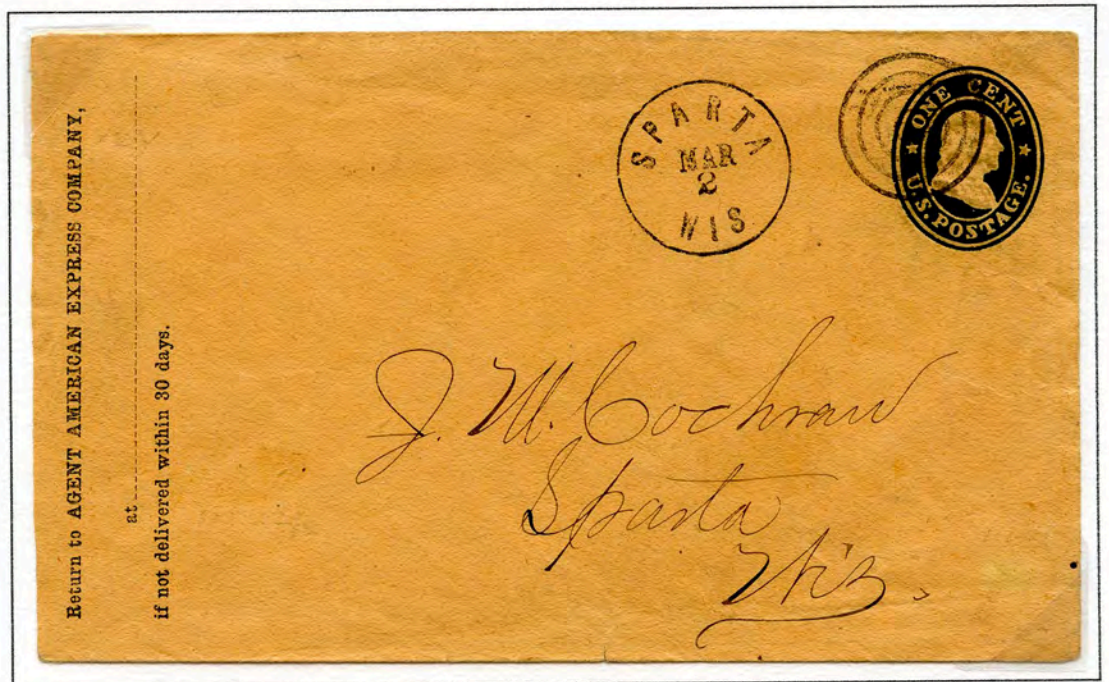
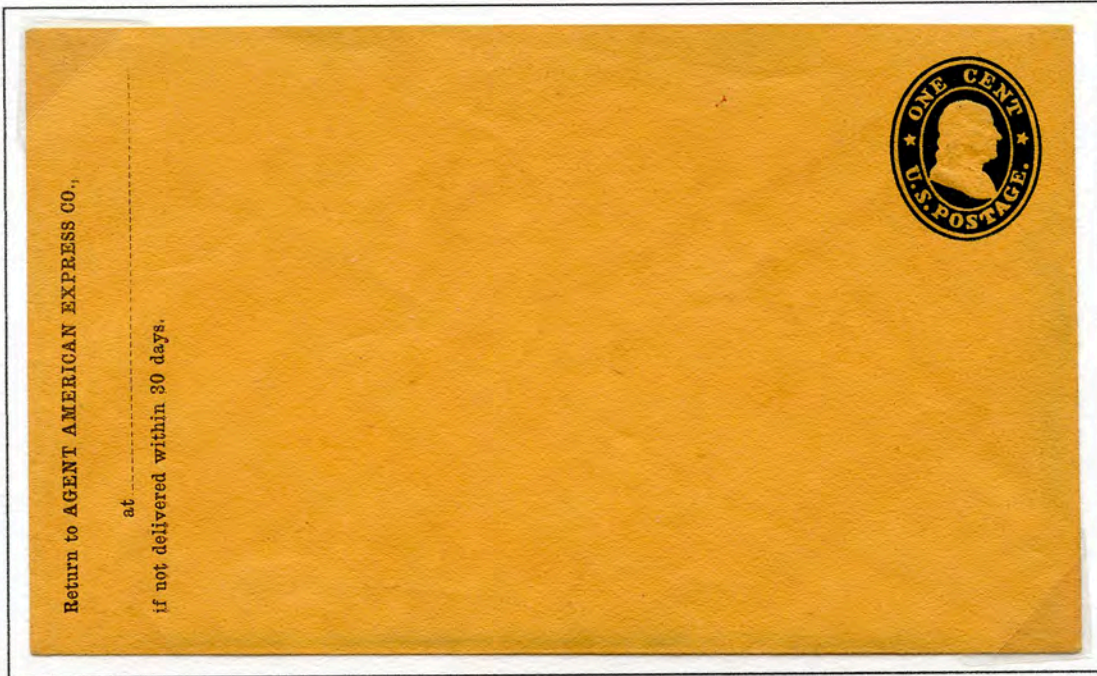


The above envelope is also a unique knife essay since this knife (envelope shape) was never used to produce stamped envelopes:

- The knife is similar to UPSS knife 23 but slightly (10mm) larger,
- The self-ruling lines are printed on the left side flap instead of the bottom flap as the issued item,
- The left side flap is pointed rather than rounded and the right side flap is also shaped differently than the issued envelope.

The "N. 11" refers to item number 11 in a series of envelope size, paper type, self-ruling vs. not, and gummed vs. not options sent to the Post Office Department on November 14, 1860 by George Nesbitt and a duplicate set given to Mr. John A. Dix, the stamped envelope agent. The "\$1³⁵" refers to the price per thousand that George F. Nesbitt submitted to manufacture these envelopes.

The one cent Die 12A (with bust touching inner frame in front) was likely the first die produced of this issue since it was used for proofs like the unique items above. The die was then put aside and a new master die (Die 12, with bust not touching inner frame) was made for working dies to manufacture envelopes. One-cent envelopes were issued without gum for circulars (third class business mailings) and with gum for the drop letter or 'city correspondence.'



Mint and scarce used copies of this envelope with usage showing the drop rate (addressed to within city of mailing).

Die 12A was used only for essays and manufacture one special request order of envelopes with an 'AMERICAN EXPRESS CO' corner card in 1865 when drop rate was reduced to one cent for post offices without carrier delivery. The use of this die to produce these envelopes was likely a mistake.

The One Cent Issue

Essays/trials (1863)

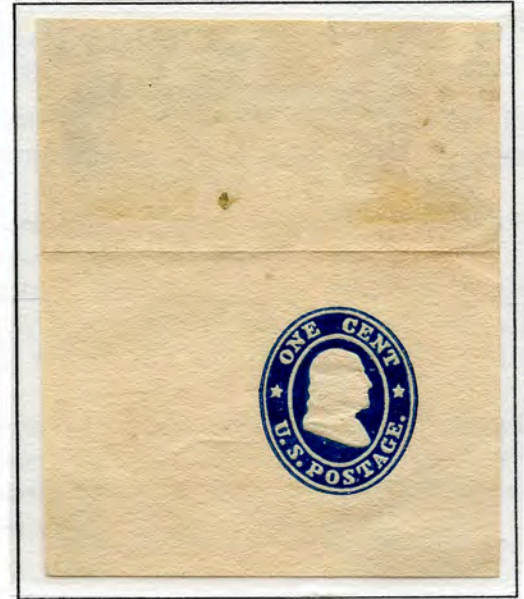
The Post Office considered Stamped to Order envelopes in 1862 as reported in The United States Mail and Post Office Assistant (Vol III no. 4. January, 1863, Whole No 28):

“We understand that (NY) postmaster (Abram) Wakeman is now ready to receive applications for embossing, in conformity with these instructions:

EMBOSSING POSTAGE STAMPS ON ENVELOPES AND PAPER FOR PRIVATE PARTIES.

The Post Office Department has adopted the following rules for embossing postage stamps upon envelopes or paper presented by private parties:

1. Application must be made to the postmaster of the city or town in which the applicant resides or does business.
2. Each applicant will state, in full, his name and place of business; if a member of a firm or company, the names of the several members thereof, with the style or title under which the business is transacted and a description of the same.
3. Before any envelopes can be embossed with a postage stamp, it is required that the owners of such envelopes shall cause their respective names to be printed or impressed thereon, and that specimens thereof shall be filed with the postmaster and at the Post Office Department...”

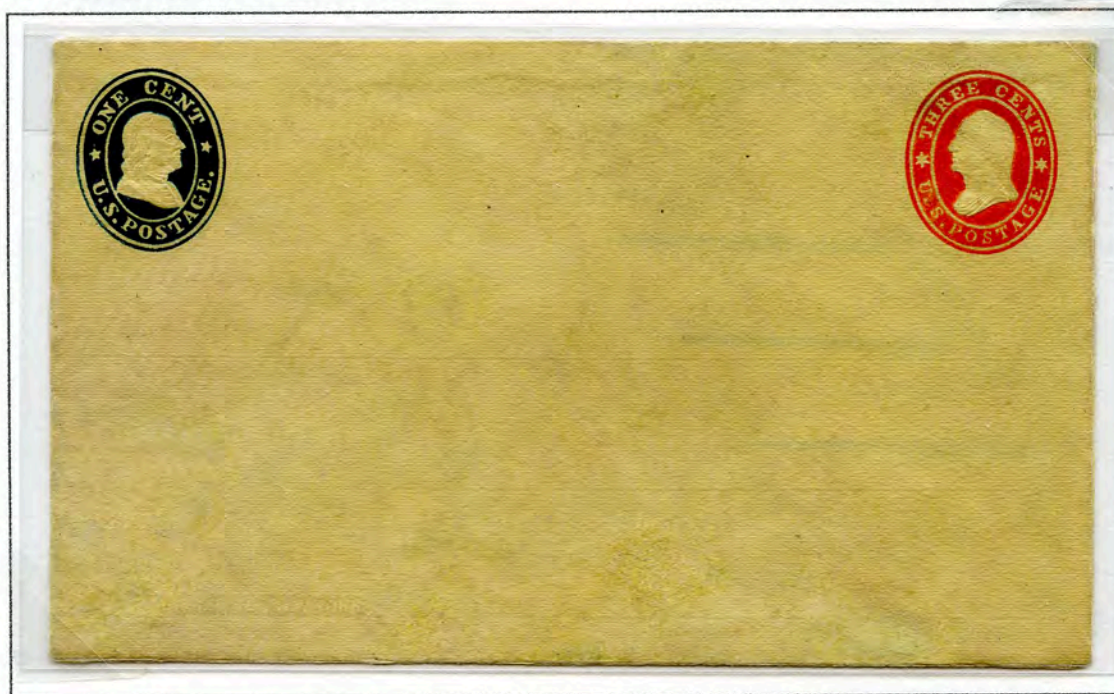


The item above is one of two known examples with the 1¢ Die 12 on white, laid paper. Though listed as a cut square in catalogs, the author believes this to be from these trials and not an issued wrapper.

The 1¢ Die 12 on wrapper made of orange paper is also listed in catalogs with less than 10 mint copies thought to exist. This wrapper also was likely a trial since no used copies are known and it is on unwatermarked paper when the Post Office contract for stationery required use of watermarked paper and.



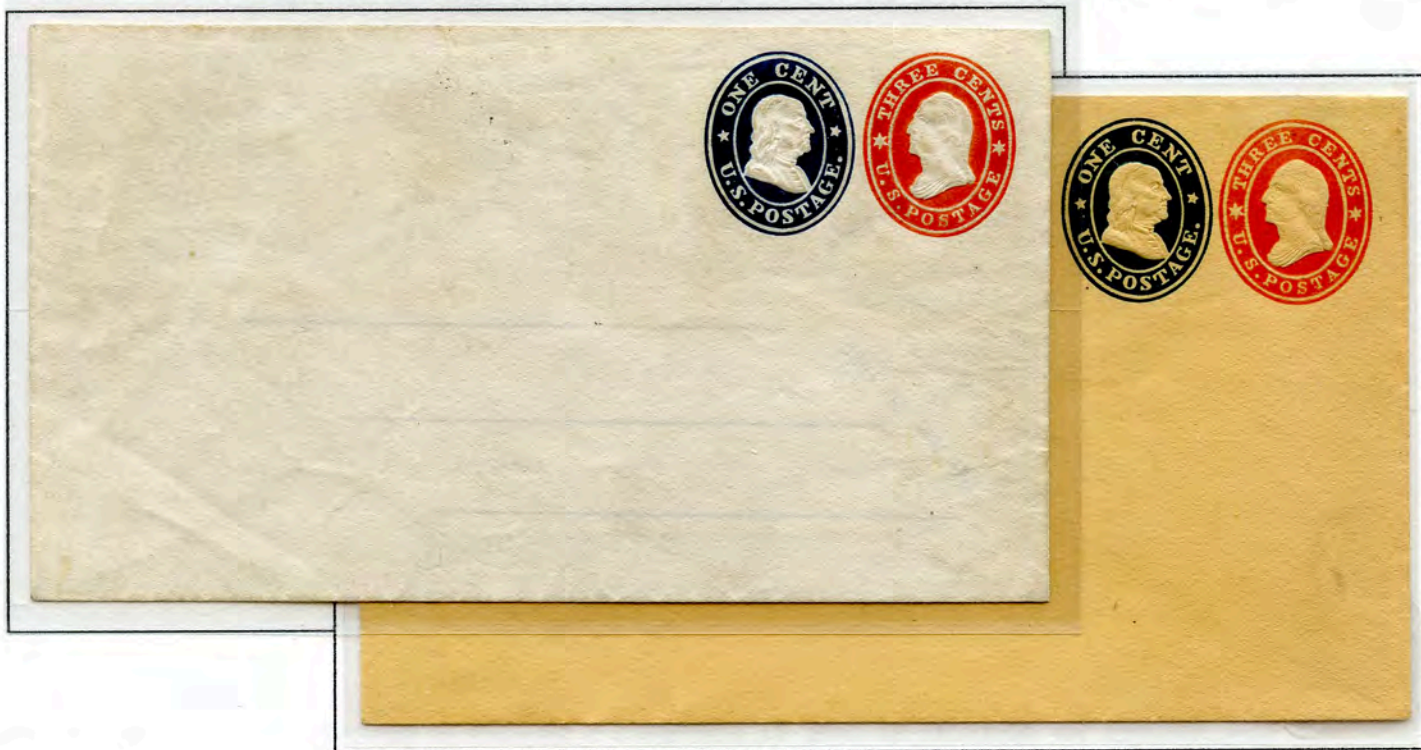
Nothing came of this experiment likely because printing stamps on privately produced envelopes would be **time consuming (and therefore expensive)** due to the need to reset presses for each paper size and modify inks to print properly on different papers. Further, the two colors (types) of paper and multiple envelope and wrapper sizes may have negated demand for stamped to order envelopes/wrappers. One-cent star die wrappers were issued in October, 1861 after demonetization.



The first compound die essay had the one cent Die 12A added to the left side of a 3¢ envelope. This is **one of three known copies** of this essay

This is an essay both of the **compound die envelope and of the envelope knife** since this envelope shape (knife) was never used to produce envelopes for the public as issued envelopes had patent lines on the bottom flap rather than the side flap.

The design with stamps in opposite corners of the envelope **was quickly decided against** because postmasters would have had to **strike the envelope twice** (once in each corner) to cancel the envelope.



Above are **two of three known essays** with the two stamps together on the right side of the envelope. They were produced by **opening a 3¢ envelope and adding the 1¢ stamp**. Note that the envelope on top, with white paper, has the horizontal patent lines printed on the left flap.

The Post Office decided to produce a compound **1¢ plus 3¢ envelope for postage plus the added one cent carrier fee** for use in cities with carrier delivery service. Demonetization of stamps and envelopes was carried out beginning about the middle of August 1861 and not completed until late December, 1861 or early January, 1862. **The one-cent and 1¢ + 3¢ combination star die envelopes were not demonetized as the 3, 6, and 10¢.**

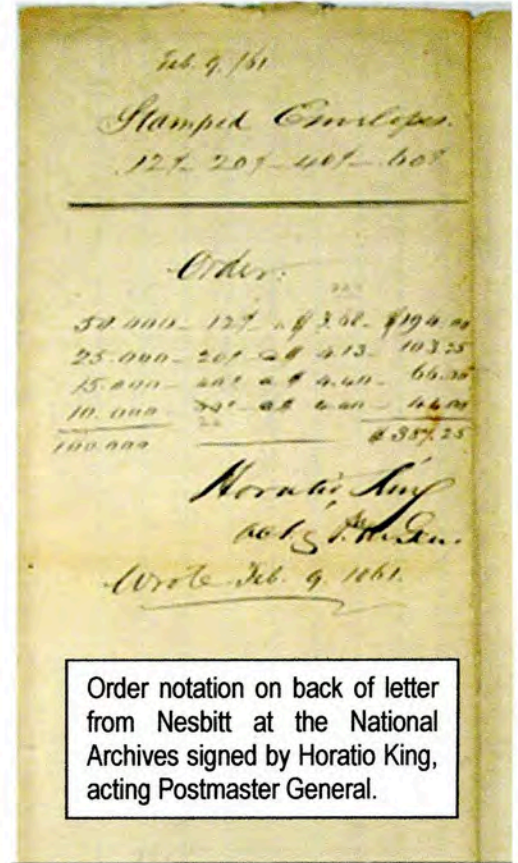
The High Value Bicolor Issues

High Value Essays

The high value bicolor envelopes have been considered to be a part of the next envelope issue, after the demonetization of stamps and envelopes in August, 1861 and following. However, as the handwritten note of the Post Office Department on the back of a letter from George Nesbitt indicates, the order for the 12, 20, 24, and 40 cents bicolor envelopes was placed on **February 9, 1861**, while the star die envelopes were still being manufactured and **6 months before demonetization** of the 3, 6, and 10 cents star dies. The essays below were obviously produced in the star die era before the order date of February 9, 1861.



Model with center oval, including white ring, pasted on remainder of design printed on corner of envelope. Note that the bust is of Franklin and facing right.



Two crude models for 12¢ were made by mounting cutouts of oval and bust of Washington from the previous three cents envelope issue on diagonally laid envelope paper and then drawing the outer portion of the design in pencil and over-writing in ink to provide color.

Left is model mounted on right end of an envelope.

The High Value Bicolor Issues

Essays

Models from wood cuts with varying combinations of printed and embossed portions were made to test different designs and color combinations.



Blue and red



Green and red

Model with bust of Washington pasted on inner oval which itself is pasted on rest of the design. Printed design produced from woodcut.



Red and black



Gray and red



Red and gray

Model with bust of Washington pasted on and rest of design printed. Printed design produced from woodcut.



Red and green



Red and black

Model with bust of Washington printed on inner oval which is pasted on rest of the design. Printed design produced from woodcut.

The High Value Bicolor Issues

High Value Essays



Gold outlines and numerals



Brown outlines and numerals



Black outlines and numerals



Blue outlines and numerals



Black outlines and numerals

The entire design of the above essay was printed from woodcut. **Woodcuts** were used for essays until a design was approved because they were **less expensive to produce** than engraved dies. This set above does **not have clipped corners** as did the items listed by Thorp and Maisel. Therefore the above are from a second, previously unreported set.



Black outlines and numerals with red background

Model with head of Washington pasted on to rest of design. Design similar to previous but with shaded balls in outer oval.



Red and brown, cut corners



Red and brown



Red and green

These essays are from a previously unknown set since previous listings stated that all known copies had cut corners as at left.

Essays of previous model with entire design printed from woodcut. Original woodcut is in the Smithsonian Museum of Postal History.

The High Value Bicolor Issues

Proofs

Trial Colors

To right are trial color proofs of the 20¢ and 24¢ dies that were printed on light buff, laid paper, then cut out as circles and pasted onto buff wove paper. The 20¢ is a lighter blue and red than issued envelopes and the 24¢ is a lighter green and red than the issued envelopes.

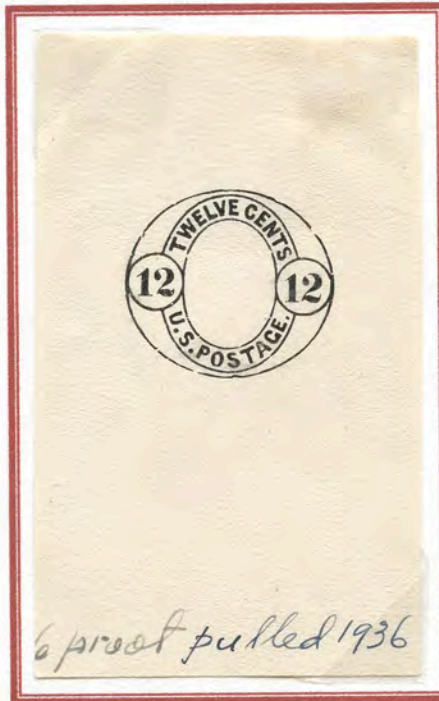
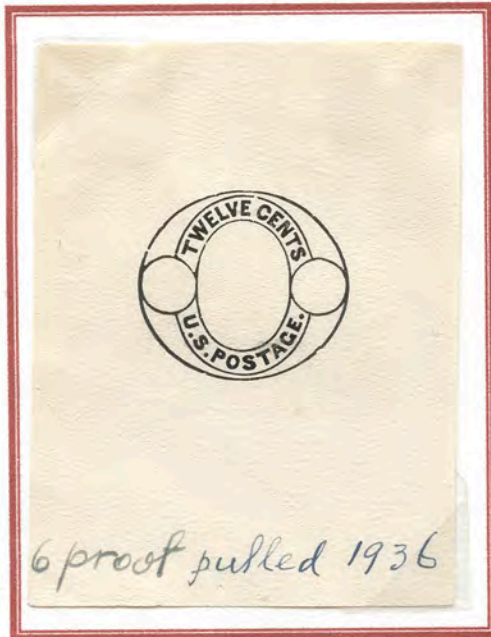


Without numerals



with numerals

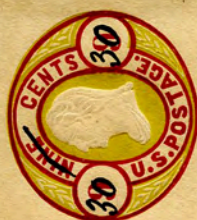
Wax impressions without the bust



Posthumous proofs of twelve and twenty cents frames printed in 1936 on glossy paper during Franklin Roosevelt administration when James A. Farley was Postmaster General. Were these the "Farley's Follies" of postal stationery?



SPECIMEN.



*Specimen
30 substituted for 9.*

According to Postmaster General Reports only about 29,600 of all the bicolor high denomination envelopes were issued, mostly during the second half of 1861.

A new series of high value envelope issues was released in the second half of 1865 with denominations of 9¢, 12¢, 18¢, 24¢, 30¢, and 40¢. The envelopes on this page were essays for the second issue of high value envelopes showing that bicolor dies were again considered; though decided against, likely because of higher production costs.