

Bureau Experimental Plate # Single Surfaces at Ottawa Meeting

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Back in 1916, in connection with attempts to develop a system of producing precancels, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing was awarded contracts to provide four million stamps to each of three post offices. Augusta, Maine received one denomination, New Orleans, Louisiana received four denominations of regular stamps and two of

the postage dues. Springfield, Massachusetts received precancels of fourteen different denominations.



Somewhere in print, one could probably find how many of each of the twenty-one Bureau Experimentals were printed for orders for the 12,000,000 stamps. Inasmuch as sixteen denominations were represented in the Experimentals, sixteen different plate numbers (with eight positions each) could be

expected as a minimum. Peter Heydt (IPSC #734) mentioned at Ottawa that John R. Boker, Jr. (IPSC #886) state that there have been only nine reports of Bureau Experimental Plate Numbers. Not only does the stamp illustrated above show plate number 7753, but it also has the "UFC" perfin of the United Fruit Company.

Additional Bureau Experimentals Info.

In the second paragraph of the preceding article it was inferred that the number of each of the twenty-one Bureau Experimentals were printed for the orders of the twelve million stamps could be found in print. The following partially reprinted from *Illinois Precancel news*, November/December 1994, pp. 281-5, with permission of the editor, Earl M. Ratzler provides additional information..

Shortly after the September/October 1994 issue had gone to press, I (Earl) had a call from Pete Heydt (IPSC #734). He reported that John Boker, Jr. (IPSC #886) had written a series of articles on the Bureau Experimentals which appeared in *The United States Specialist*. The twenty-one Experimentals were detailed in the issues of September 1982 through June 1983. The July 1983 issue went into details on the counterfeits of the Experimentals. I thanked Pete for the information and figured that all my questions (and then some) would be answered on the subject.

Wouldn't you know! My accumulation of *The United States Specialists* begins with the August 1983 issue.