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New study reveals only three known on cover

Perfins on the Kansas/Nebraska issue

By Steve Endicott (#2284)

Responding to a series of post office robberies in the middle west in the 1920s, U.S. postal authorities decided to overprint U.S. mint stamps with the name of the state to which they would be sent prior to sale at local post offices. The reasoning was that, although the stamps were valid for use anywhere in the United States, large quantities of stolen stamps could not be sold in other states.

Kansas and Nebraska were chosen as the test states, and plans were in place to actually overprint stamps for all 48 states. Imagine if that had occurred!

The 1927 rotary press definitive series was chosen for the overprint effort,



The only reported multiple of a perfin on the Kansas/Nebraska issue. The block is even more interesting because Wilson & Company is not otherwise known as a user in either Kansas or Nebraska.

although the ½-cent stamp was excluded for reasons unknown. The overprinted stamps (Scott 658 through 679) were shipped to Kansas and Nebraska in April 1929 and first used in May of that year. The program was disbanded after approximately one year.

As an additional security precaution, we know that a few of these overprinted stamps also were perfined. Such stamps are rarely seen. The most common user was the University of Kansas, but club members have reported a mere 15 copies of this perfin distributed over six Kansas issues on this otherwise common F rated perfin (U39).

In March 1982, former Club member Samuel S. Cobb, Jr., compiled a list of known perfins on these overprinted stamps. Early in 1999, Floyd Walker suggested that we revisit and update the list, a challenge that I readily accepted. The project quickly turned into a full census of perfins on the Kansas and Nebraska overprints, and also expanded to include the Hawaii and Molly Pitcher overprints on similar stamps of the same U.S. issue.

One of the concerns about the earlier Cobb survey was the number of perfin

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Kansas/Nebraska perfins remain elusive

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users located outside Kansas and Nebraska. This deserved checking, although legitimate usage is documented outside Kansas and Nebraska for a variety of reasons.

First of all, the overprinted stamps could be genuinely used anywhere in the United States; small quantities were certainly transported to nearby states for business usage (to Kansas City, Missouri, for instance) and some were probably sent to friends in other states as a favor.

Secondly, firms are known to move their perforators to various offices over time. Consider, for example, perfin W8.1, used by Wilson & Co. We know of general perfin usage in Chicago, Illinois, and Toledo, Ohio. Wilson & Co. had other perfin patterns that were used in Oklahoma and Missouri, but none are documented in Kansas or Nebraska. Now consider the Nebraska 2¢ overprint block of six with a W8.1 perfin, which is pictured on the front page. This is without question a legitimate perfin and a legitimate overprint that was used by a firm whose prior usage was not in Nebraska or Kansas, although we obviously do not know the postal origination of this block of six. Therefore, we can conclude with confidence that these overprinted stamps were perfined by firms whose prior usage patterns were not in Kansas or Nebraska.

One third of the reported perfins in the Cobb survey are from states other than Kansas and Nebraska, two as far away as Boston and Salem, Massachusetts. Perfin L130 from Salem, Massachusetts, has a documented usage period from 1938 to 1954, and wasn't re-reported in this current census. This is a good case of an item that was probably reported in error and is now properly deleted from this census.

I want thank the various members who responded to my request for information in this interesting area. In the 1982 survey, 37 perfin patterns were reported. This time, we found 38 perfins (although not all on the same patterns as before) and a total of 95 examples. But we also found some inconsistencies between the two surveys, which will be discussed later in this article.

There is a genuine concern about counterfeiting of both the overprints and the perfins. All the perfins found in this survey are common, except one, O66, for which there are two copies. It is doubtful that anyone would counterfeit a common D, E, or F perfin pattern onto a genuine Kansas/Nebraska overprint. But what about counterfeiting an overprint onto a genuine perfin? I doubt there is much of a market justifying such an effort, but let's discuss how one can identify such a counterfeit.

First of all, the stamp must be of the 10.5 x 11 perforated 1927 series; an overprint on any other perforation is a counterfeit. It is easy to check mint copies for rotary gum characteristics. It is also easy to check multiples for spacing of the overprints. Unfortunately, these checks don't apply to the single, used examples we find with perfins. One should closely check the overprint under a magnifier; there are excellent references in the philatelic press documenting various counterfeit patterns. There are specific color variations applicable to this issue. Finally, the cancellation on the stamp must be on top of the overprint, otherwise it is clear that the overprint was applied afterwards and is counterfeit.

* Steve Endicott's updated *
* Kansas/Nebraska checklist is *
* shown on page 31 in a special *
* format. If you have patterns *
* not listed on the checklist, *
* contact Endicott at the ad- *
* dress given at the end of his *
* article. Please also share in- *
* formation about perfins on *
* the Molly Pitcher and Hawaii *
* overprints. *

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Perfins on the Kansas and Nebraska Overprints—Census Compiled by Steve Endicott (#2474)

	Kansas Overprints										Nebraska Overprints										Total	User	City	Period		
	1	1.5	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	1.5	2	3	4	5	6	7	8					9	10
	658	659	660	661	662	663	664	665	666	667	668	669	670	671	672	673	674	675	676	677	678	679				
A87.2														1									1	Armour & Co	Chicago, Ill	1902-32
B22										1													1	First National Bank	Hutchinson, KS	1926-38
B219	1		2																				3	Barteldes Seed Co	Lawrence, KS	1902-33
C9				1																			1	Crane & Co	Topeka, KS	1908-38
C83														2									2	Cook County	Chicago, Ill	1908-63
C356.1																1							1	Cudahy Packing Co	Chicago, Ill	1908-54
D82													1										1	Jacob Dold	Omaha, NE	1917-42
D154														1									1	Dennison Manufacturing Co	Boston, MA	1908-40
F28	2					1				1													4	Fraternal Aid Foundation	Lawrence, KS	1926-38
G72-3													1										1	General Electric	Omaha, NE	1926-80
I43.7A1					1																		1	International Harvester Co	Richmond, IN	1938-40
I43.7A-15													1		1								2	International Harvester Co	Omaha, NE	1902-52
I43.7A-19			1			1		1															3	International Harvester Co	Parsons, KS	1908-54
I43.7H-1			1							1													2	International Harvester Co	Grand Island, NE	1926-53
I43.7H-11										2													2	International Harvester Co	Memphis, TN	1926-38
I54			1																				1	I & M Ottenheimer	Baltimore, MD	1912-38
J167			2							1													3	JW Jenkins Sons Music Co	Kansas City, MO	1902-42
K26																1							1	Katolicky Delnick (Catholic Workman)	New Prague, MN	1922-33
K60			5		1		1																7	Kansas State Normal	Emporia, KS	1926-64
M148			1																				1	Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway Co	Parsons, KS	1908-33
M150			2																				2	Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway Co	Parsons, KS	1914-18
M289															1								1	Mills & Gibbs	New York, NY	1912-23
M295			1							1													2	Missouri & Kansas Telephone Co	Wichita, KS	1912-33
NI13D1													2								1		3	New York Life Insurance	Omaha, NE	1908-52
O66			2																				2	Order of Railroad Telegraphers, Div #61		1912-23
P174	1																						1	Parker Pen Co	Janesville, WI	1922-73
P189				1		1	1																3		Bowie, TX	1917-26
R110													1										1	Royal Neighbors of America	Rock Island, Ill	1926-71
S121			1			2				1													4	Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Co	Galveston, TX	1922-68
S158															2								2	State Journal Co	Lincoln, NE	1926-53
S195-15A										1													1	Standard Oil Co	Wichita, KS	1914-38
S338.8A			1											1									2	Swift & Co	Salina, KS	1926-40
T101														1									1	Spirella Co	Niagara Falls, NY	1908-38
U39	2	1	6		2			2		2													15	University of Kansas	Lawrence, KS	1908-63
U59													1			1							2	Union Pacific Railroad Co	Omaha, NE	1922-54
W8.1														10				1			1		12	Wilson & Co	Chicago, Ill	1917-33
W147																1							1	Woodmen of the World	Omaha, NE	1917-22
W199.16																					1		1	Western Union Telegraph Co	Chicago, Ill	1908-26
	6	2	25	2	4	1	6	0	3	1	10	0	7	18	2	4	0	0	1	0	2	1	95			

Data is current as of December 20, 1999

Molly Pitcher & Hawaii overprint perfins equally scarce

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Returning to the discussion of perfins on these stamps, the table on page 31 summarizes our findings. We documented 38 users on a total of 95 stamps. No perfins were found on the 7¢ Kansas overprint, nor were any found on the Nebraska overprints of denominations 1, 5, 6, or 8¢. Sixteen perfin patterns reported from the earlier survey did not show up this time (A87.3, A87.6, C415, I43.7A-16, I43.7B-1, L130, M10, M148, O68, R122, S156, U86, W13, W39, W122, and W199-2). And there are perfins on 20 issues of the Kansas/Nebraska overprints that were reported last time, but not in 1999. This represents a significant discrepancy between the two surveys. I ask all members to continue to check their collections for this interesting combination of perfins and overprints.

Since we know that these overprints began in 1929, we can use this information to expand the known usage period for certain perfin patterns in the U.S. perfin catalog, such as for perfins I43.7A1, M150, M289, O66, P189, W147, and W199.16.

Could there be more perfin patterns on these overprint issues?

Using the current U.S. perfin catalog, I searched for perfin users located in Kansas and Nebraska where known years of perfin usage include the possibility of perfins being found on Kansas and Nebraska overprints. This is admittedly a narrow view, as the documented usage period may be incorrect and as explained earlier, legitimate usage is found outside these two states. Nevertheless, this provides us a rough estimate of the capacity for finding additional perfins on these overprints. Only 28 additional perfin patterns are applicable: B116-16, C356.5, C356.9, C356.14, D52, H20, I43.7B-19, I43.7C-7, I43.7C-9, K45, K53, L106, N27, N113Cc-3, O56, S38, S50, S122, S338.8A, S195-2, S195-15A, U43, U60, U61, W72.37, W72.41, and W72.42 and W147.5. Check those collections; you might find a jewel hidden there!

Only three perfins on these issues were reported on cover, all of them on Scott #660, the 2 cent Kansas overprint. Two of the covers include perfin pattern K60 used by Kansas State Normal; the other involves perfin pattern M295 used by the Missouri and Kansas Telephone Company.

During this research, I found only one multiple, a photo of which is shown on the front page of the *Bulletin*. This dramatic block of six on the Nebraska 2¢ overprint (Scott #671) includes the perfin pattern W8.1 used by Wilson & Co. Although this is a common perfin, it certainly is a unique philatelic item. Thank you to John Randall for permitting me to photograph this item for this article.

About 175 unique precancels have been reported on these Kansas and Nebraska overprinted stamps.

I also asked members if they had seen any perfins on the Molly Pitcher 2¢ overprint (Scott #646) and the Hawaii overprint on the Roosevelt 2¢ and 5¢ issues (Scott #647 and #648). Here, the findings are even more rare than perfins on the Kansas/Nebraska overprints. Two copies of a single perfin A277 (American Wholesale Corp.) were the only reported examples on the Molly Pitcher overprint. Single copies of perfins A192 (Atlantic National Bank of Jacksonville) and N113AB-3 (New York Life—Honolulu office) were reported on the 2¢ Hawaii overprint. No perfins have been discovered on the 5¢ Hawaii overprint.

If you have further information on perfin usage on any of these issues, please send your input to Steve Endicott at SEndicott@FairIsaac.com, or write to me at 20 Greensburgh Lane, San Anselmo, CA 94960, or fax information to me at 415-444-5033. If you send material by fax, please clearly direct it to my name on the first page.