

Private Perfin Usage Provides Proper Perfin Image for Pattern P53.3

Bob Schwerdt (#505-L)

Accidentally, a 1902 one-cent Franklin definitive in my collection fell off a picture postcard. The card illustrated below in Figure 1 is postmarked “Seattle Wash.” and is dated “Oct 27 1908”. A slogan cancel advertises the 1909 World’s Fair at Seattle.

On the picture side of the card is a scene from “Lake Washington Dennie Blaine Park Seattle” showing canoes at a concrete launching site. Obviously, the design has nothing to do with the intended fair and the picture side is not illustrated in this article.

The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition was a world’s fair held in Seattle in 1909, publicizing the development of the Pacific Northwest. It was originally planned for 1907, to mark the 10th anniversary of the Klondike Gold Rush, but the organizers found out about the Jamestown Exposition being held that year and rescheduled.

The fair was set up on what is now the campus of the University of Washington, an area which was mostly undeveloped at the time. The layout of the Exposition and its buildings were partially funded by the state legislature, so that they could be used later by the University. Two of the buildings were still in use as of 2004, although most were poorly built and have long since been replaced. 80,000 people attended the June 1 opening, and when it closed October 16, over 3,700,000 had visited.

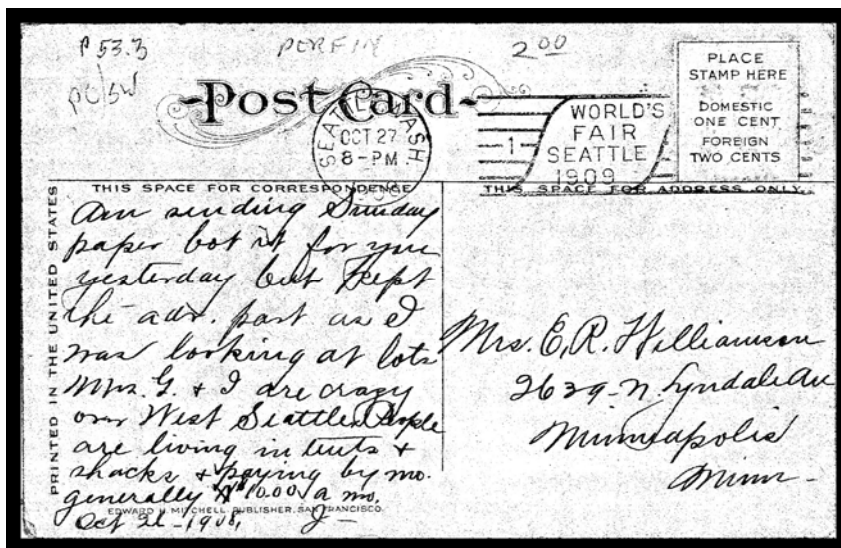


Figure 1
Message Side of Postcard (77% of actual size)
Note “World’s Fair Seattle 1909” Slogan Cancel



Figure 2
Back of Stamp
Pattern P53.3

The good fortune of this unfortunate detachment is that the perfin “PC/SW” provides a the proper illustration for the tracing currently shown for **P53.3** in the *Catalog of United States Perfins*. (See Figure 2.) Now a true picture can be provided in the next supplement. Additional good fortune is that the perfin is an “A” rate, but the user is still a mystery. I wonder if the “SW” initials represent Seattle, Washington?

Since I am unfamiliar with the 1909 Seattle World’s Fair, I sought information at my local library. With the assistance from a librarian, the computer yielded the following information supplied by Wikipedia and Old Company Research.com. I learned that the Seattle World’s Fair was an alternate name for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition.

The United States Post Office Department issued a 2-cent postage stamp for the Exposition (Scott #370), depicting a profile of William Seward and inscribed “ALASKA-YUKON-PACIFIC/EXPOSITION-1909”. At the request of several private vending machine companies, the stamp was also issued imperforate (Scott #371); these were sold at the show by the companies as a promotion.

In addition, two machine cancellations were devised: one a flag cancellation including the words “ALASKA-YUKON-PACIFIC/EXPOSITION”, and the other, a straight-line design reading “WORLD’S FAIR/SEATTLE/1909”. Scott’s *Specialized Catalogue of U.S. Stamps and Covers* lists 13 different examples of Scott #371 used by private vending machine companies.