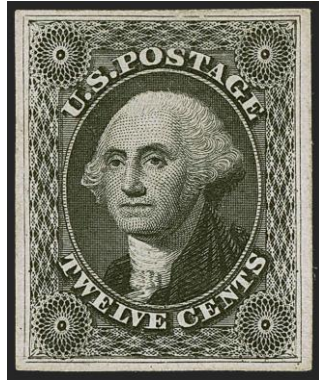


1851-1860 Twelve Cent Plating Initiative



Introduction

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A Stamp Smarter Project



https://stampsmarter.org/features/SQL_1857_12C_Plating_Plates.html

1851-1860 12-Cent Washington

INTRODUCTION

The first 12 cent stamp was issued July 1, 1851 (Scott 17) in an imperforated sheet format with two panes of 100 stamps, each arranged in ten rows of ten columns. All stamps were printed from Plate 1. Then early in 1857 the 12 cent stamp was issued in a perforated format (Perf 15), but it was also printed from the same Plate 1 (Scott 36). The earliest reported use of this stamp is July 31, 1857. It is believed that a Plate 2 was prepared in 1857, but no stamps printed from this plate were issued. Stamps from Plate 3 were printed in late 1859 or early 1860 (Scott 36B), and the earliest recorded use is June 1, 1860.

Plates 1 and 3 are in many respects very much alike. In general, the distinctions are as follows: The horizontal distance between the designs on Plate 1 are $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{8}$ millimeters (MM), while on Plate 3 it is from $1\frac{1}{3}$ to $2\frac{1}{8}$ MM. The outer frame line on Plate 1 copies is always complete, except possibly for very slight breaks at the corners, which are never over $\frac{1}{4}$ MM in length and generally less, whereas, Plate 3 copies always show the outer frame line broken at some corner and generally at the sides, top or bottom. Copies may also show an entire side frame line missing. The great majority of Plate 1 copies are sharp and clear, whereas, the majority of Plate 3 copies appear dull or blurred. A few Plate 3 positions show practically complete outside framelines, but no evidence of recutting exists, except possibly on the outer top frameline. These can be definitely assigned to Plate 3 because of the position of the guide dots on the stamps. On plate 1, the guide dots appear under the lower right rosette close to the bottom outer frameline of the design. On Plate 3, the dots are much smaller, generally round, and are located between the lowest part of the outer and inner right framelines or outside, to the right of the outer right frameline. The only Plate 3 positions without guide dots are the right margin copies in the right pane, and possibly some from the top row, but none have the complete outer right framelines.

So, the guide dots are a bit different from plate 1. On plate 1, the guide dots are not on the right column or the bottom row of both panes. On plate 1, the top row had guide dots around the top right corner, whereas, on plate 3, the top row guide dots are on the bottom and the bottom rows of plate 3 have lower right guide dots. Both plates used a single transfer row. Plate one was rocked in from the top down and plate 3 was rocked in from the bottom to the top. The right column of the left pane of plate 3 supposedly has guide dots.



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The current plating page is organized to collect and preserve multiple copies of these stamps for each position in Plate 1 right and left for both Scott 17 and 36, and Plate 3 right and left for plate 3 right and left for Scott 36B.

The primary historical resource for the study of these 12 cent stamp issues is **The 1851-1857 Twelve Cent Stamp**, by Mortimer L. Neinken, and copy of this publication may be downloaded in PDF format from the United States Philatelic Classics Society's electronic library page at:

<https://www.uspcs.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CL-TP-NEINKEN-U-S-The-1851-57-Twelve-Cent-Stamp-17-Neinken-Bookmarked2.pdf>

Updates and new discoveries are reported regularly in issues of **The Chronicle**, the quarterly publication of the Classic's Society.

The United States Philatelic Classics Society website also has information about this stamp and its plating, and hosts copies of Spacing Charts and Guide Dot Charts constructed from these plating efforts. These can be found here:

<https://www.uspcs.org/stamps-covers/uspod-issued-adhesives/the-1851-1860-issue/1851-12c2-a2-issue-2025-update/>

Another useful resource is the **1851-57 12c Washington** thread on the Stamp Community Family forum. It will often include discussions about new discoveries, and even the various plating charts and reconstructions, as they are prepared. This thread can be found here. https://www.stampcommunity.org/topic.asp?topic_id=86733

Please report any problems or errors with this plating feature to me.

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