



Dummy News and Views

the Newsletter of the United States Stamp Society - Dummy Stamps Study Group

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Welcome to the Dummy Stamps Study Group's Thirty-fourth Newsletter

This newsletter is produced quarterly by the United States Stamp Society's - Dummy Stamps Study Group for your information and pleasure. We hope that the information included in this newsletter will be informative, useful and encourage your enjoyment of collecting dummy/test stamps. Our goal is to keep you up-to-date with the latest information available to our group. Questions, comments and articles proposed for publication should be directed to Terry R. Scott, Chairman of the Dummy Stamps Study Group at trs@napanet.net

Identifying Scott Listed "FOR TESTING PURPOSES ONLY" (FTPO) Design Self-adhesive Test Coils

by Terry R. Scott & Michael O. Perry

There are currently eight different known black printed "FOR TESTING PURPOSES ONLY" (FTPO) design self-adhesive test coils that are listed in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps & Covers*. There continues to be some confusion with the identification of these different types. The following illustrations and descriptions will hopefully help with their identification.

All of the FTPO self-adhesive test coils shown here are on an easy release backing paper. The backing paper can range from 28.0 to 28.75 mm tall, with the exception of TD133A and TD140. TD133A has backing paper the same height as the stamps (24.5 mm tall) and TD140 has backing paper that ranges from 31.0 to 32.0 mm tall.

All of the FTPO self-adhesive test coils shown here are printed in black ink on white paper. While four of them (TD126, the two varieties of TD133, and TD136) appear to be printed on light blue paper, the paper is not actually blue. The BEP applied three layers of blue-tinted white ink to the tagged white paper in order to mask the white phosphorescence of the paper the stamps were printed on. The offset plates that applied the blue-tinted white ink had a 3 mm gap where the two ends met. That gap was located in the gutter between every 21st stamp and was part of the matrix paper that was removed when the coils were diecut. However, part of the white gap usually shows on the perf tips on one or both sides of the gap on TD133 and TD136, and glows bright white when exposed to shortwave UV light. Examples of the white gap on TD126 are unknown and may not exist.

The printed dates shown are approximations since there is very little information available on the actual

printing dates and, therefore, the dates shown are usually the dates they were discovered.

There are 4 slightly different designs for the black printed FTPO design self-adhesive test coils. The first design is identified by Scott as TE55 and it is for the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) products TD126, TD133, and TD133A.

The second design type identified as Scott TE55a is for an Avery product listed as TD127 and for the Sennett product identified as TD137. Presently TD137 is identified incorrectly as TE55 and we will suggest that it be changed to TE55a.

The third design type identified as Scott TE55b is for another BEP product listed as TD136. TD136 is most easily recognized by the vertical line printed between the letters "N" and "L" in the word "ONLY".

A fourth design type presently identified as Scott TD55, is for an Avery product listed as TD140. While TD140 looks similar to the other BEP coils, the design is taller and has slight differences in the shading lines.

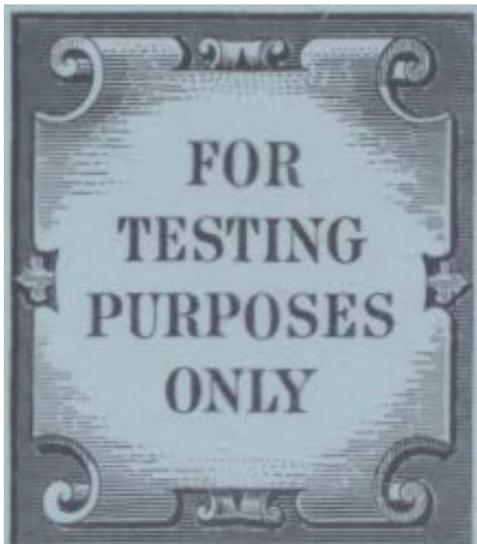
In this issue:

Identifying Scott Listed "FOR TESTING PURPOSES ONLY" Self-adhesive Test Coils	1
Recent Auctions of Interest	7
Proposed Future DSSG Project	8

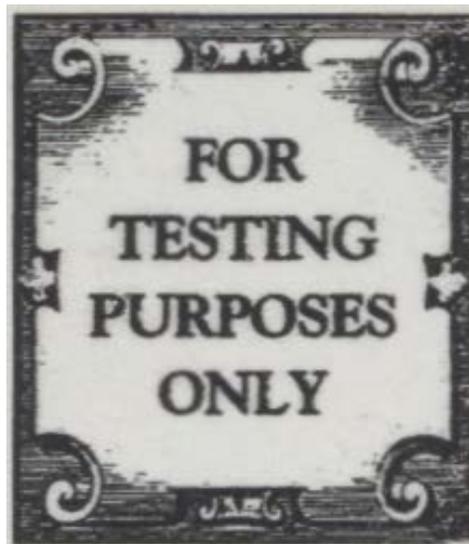
please turn to page 2 ➤

The TD140 design measures 19mm x 22.25 mm while the other three designs are 18mm x 21mm. It should be designated as Scott TE55c. This correction will be suggested to the Scott catalogue editors.

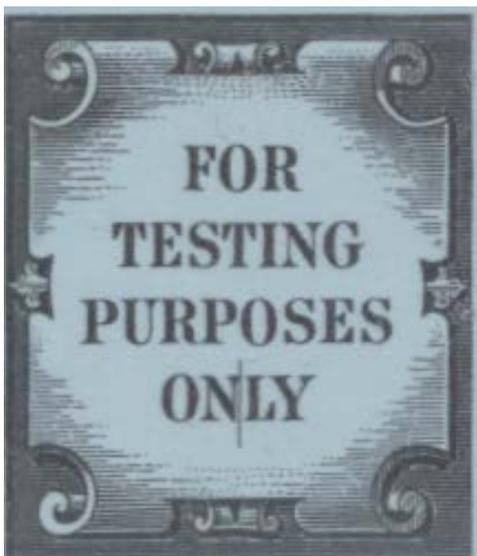
Following are enlarged scans of the 4 different TE55 type designs which will hopefully show the slight differences in these stamps.



Scott TE55 illustration TD126, TD133 and 133A



Scott illustration TE55a for TD127 and TD137



Scott illustration TE55b for TD136



Proposed Scott illustration TE55c for TD140

Following are illustrations of plate # strips of 5 (where there were plate numbers printed), gap strips of 5 (for the bluish BEP coils without plate numbers), and a plain strip of 5 for the other Avery coil. The white gaps found on TD133 and TD136 are between 3.0 and 3.5 mm wide. Since the width of the matrix that was removed on TD126 was 3.0 mm wide, you might expect a white gap to show somewhere on the coil - but none are known. It is possible that the gaps on three offset plates that applied the blue-tinted white ink was less than 3.0 mm on TD126. The plate number, if printed, would be on the stamp to the left of the vertical white gap seen on the tips of the perforations between stamps three and four.

please turn to page 3 ➤



The example shown above is Scott #TD126 (TE55). It was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and is from 1996. It has straight-line die-cut separations. A 4-digit Plate Number “1111” appears every 21 stamps and is beneath the center stamp in this strip of 5. TD126 stamps are 24.5mm tall and the backing paper is 28.75 mm tall.



The example shown above is Scott #TD127 (TE55a). It was printed by Avery-Dennison and is also from 1996. It has serpentine die-cut 11.2 gauge vertical perforations. There are printed perforation “holes” in addition to the serpentine die-cut separations. Plate Number “V1” appears every 15 stamps and is beneath the center stamp in this strip of 5. TD127 stamps are 25.0m tall and the backing paper is 28.0 mm tall.



The example shown above is one variety of Scott #TD133 (TE55). It was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and is from 2000. It has serpentine die-cut 9.8 gauge vertical perforations. On the example shown above, Plate Number “1111” appears every 21 stamps and is always located on the stamp to the left of the white gap (located between the 3rd and 4th stamps in this strip of 5). TD133 stamps are 24.5mm tall and the backing paper is 28.75 mm tall.



please turn to page 4 ➤

The example shown on the preceding page is a variety of Scott #TD133 (TE55) that does not have a plate number printed on it. It was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and is from 2000. It has serpentine die-cut 9.8 gauge vertical perforations. The plate number, if it had been printed, would have been located on the center stamp in this strip of 5. The 'white gap' repeats every 21 stamps with traces of it appearing on either the right perfs of a stamp, the left perfs of a stamp, or on the left and right side of adjoining stamps (as seen on the third and fourth stamps of the illustrated coil). TD133 stamps are 24.5mm tall and the backing paper is 28.75 mm tall.



The example shown above is Scott #TD133A (TE55). It was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and is from 2000. It has serpentine die-cut 9.8 gauge vertical perforations with no gaps between the stamps. Plate Number "1111" appears every 24 stamps and is beneath the center stamp in this strip of 5. TD133A is on backing paper that is the same height as the stamps, 24.5 mm tall. TD133A is known only in coil rolls of 100.



The example shown above is Scott #TD136 (TE55b). It was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and is from 1997. It has serpentine die-cut 9.8 gauge vertical perforations. There were no plate numbers printed on TD136, but if printed they would have been located on the center stamp of this strip of 5. The "white gap" can appear on just the right perfs of the center stamp, or on just the left tips of the 4th stamp, or on the perf tips of both stamps. The 'white gap' appears every 21 stamps, and on this strip it can be seen on the edges of both the 3rd and 4th stamps. TD136 is very distinctive as there is a vertical line printed between the "N" and the "L" of "ON | LY". TD136 stamps are 24.5mm tall and the backing paper is 28.75 mm tall.



The example shown above is Scott #TD137 (TE55a). It was printed by Sennett Security Products and is from 1997. It has serpentine die-cut 11.25 gauge vertical perforations. Plate Number "S1" appears every 19 stamps and is at the lower right corner of the center stamp as shown in this strip of 5. TD137 stamps are 25.0mm tall and the backing paper is 28.0 mm tall.

please turn to page 5 ➤



The example shown above is Scott #TD140 (*Proposed TE55c*). It was printed by Avery-Dennison and is from 2006. It has serpentine die-cut 8.7 gauge vertical perforations. There are no plate numbers printed on TD140, and the size of the printing plate is unknown. Scott #TD140 is on backing paper that is taller than the stamps. The TD140 stamps are 25.3 mm tall and the backing paper on most known TD140 coils is 31.0 mm tall. Correctly slit TD140 stamps have backing paper that is 32.0 mm tall. The TD140 stamp design is slightly taller and wider than for other For Testing Purposes Only self-adhesive coils, being 19 mm x 22.25 mm. TD140 is known in two shades of black ink. TD140a is also known in vertical pairs or blocks with the backing paper unslit horizontally (see following page for an example).



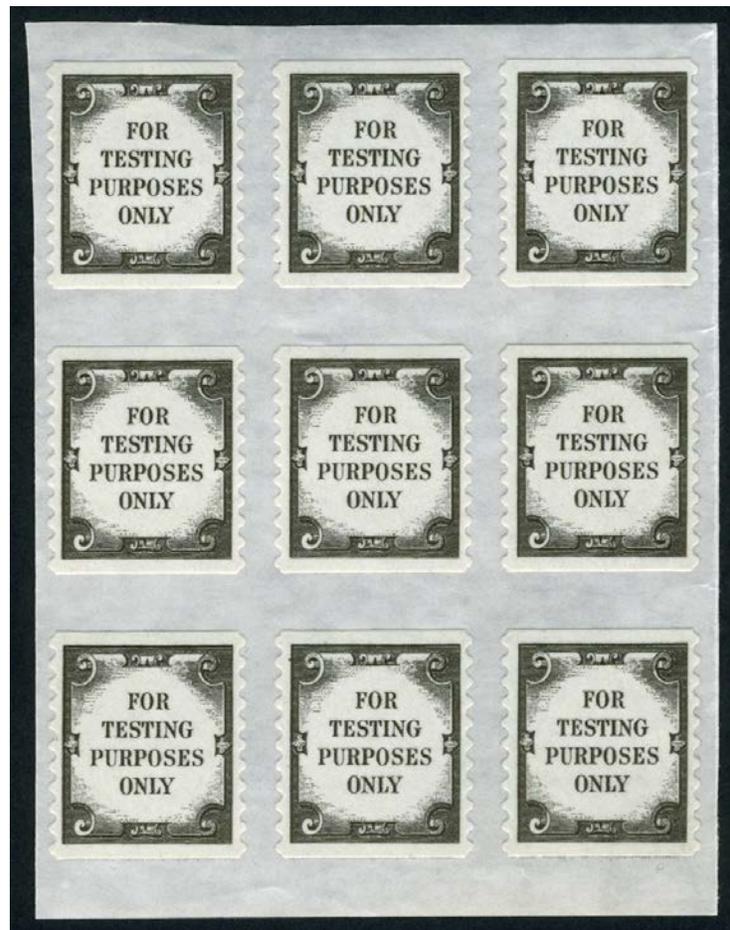
Shown above is a side-by-side comparison of the differences in the height of the stamp designs on the two different Avery products. Shown at the left is TD127 and at the right TD140. The TD127 image shows the typical stamp design height of 21.0 mm and stamp height of 25.0 mm. The backing paper height is 28.5 mm tall, which is the typical height of the backing paper on all For Testing Purposes Only self-adhesive stamps except the TD133A which is 24.5 mm tall and the TD140. The TD140 stamp design is 22.25 mm tall and the TD140 stamp is 25.25 mm tall with backing paper that is 31.0 or 32.0 mm tall.

please turn to page 6 ➤

To the right is a close-up of the white gaps that appear on TD133 and TD136.



Shown above is a pair of TD140 FTPO stamps that have a small portion of the matrix between the stamps that shows a portion of a vertical line. It is not known if this vertical line would appear between all stamps or at a set interval similar to joint lines on coils.



Shown above is a block of 9 (3 x 3) of TD140a FTPO stamps that are unslit horizontally and with the matrix removed between the stamps. TD140a is only known printed with the darker shade of black ink.

please turn to page 7 ➤

Recent Auctions of Interest to Dummy Stamp Collectors

by Terry R. Scott

On January 30, 2014 Vance Auctions, Ltd. held Sale #300 that contained the following test stamps. There is no Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 4450 * TD91, Strip of 4 of the 1944 Coil TEST STAMP, VF, NH Photo Cat. \$100.0 Realization unknown

On February 4, 2014 James T. McCusker, Inc. held Public Auction #350 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 518 * **3c Minerva (Scott TD29; Brazer 385-E2b)**, Harris Automatic Press Company, offset essay on hard white wove paper, pair, Superb very Rare & seldom offered, 2013 PF Cert. Photo Est. \$1,250.00 - \$1,750.00 Realized \$950.00



Lot 614 © **National Envelope Sealing & Stamp Mfg., 1915 (TD53)**, BRATTLEBORO, VT. testing coil, F-VF, light wrinkle from envelope & slightly short perfs at bottom, with original envelope piece, exceptionally scarce, if not Rare, seldom offered or seen. Photo Est. \$600.00 - \$800.00 Realized \$375.00

On February 4-6, 2014 Earl P. L. Apfelbaum, Inc. held Public Auction #1136 that contained the following test stamps. There is an 18% Buyer's Premium for this sale.

Lot 1349 * (TD75), roll of 500, EXTREMELY FINE, og, NH. No Photo. Cat. #300.00 Realization unknown

Lot 1350 * (TDB11, TDB12) VERY FINE to EXTREMELY FINE, NH Photo Cat. \$175.00 Realization unknown

On March 1, 2014 Fusco Auctions held Sale #117 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 96 **United States TD137 Coil Roll of 1600+ stamps SCV. \$1000++** Fresh coil roll of well over 1600+ test coil stamps which includes 84 p#S1 strips of 5. Rarely seen in such a large multiple. Good one to sock away for a while. Photo. Est. \$200.00 - \$500.00 Realized \$180.00

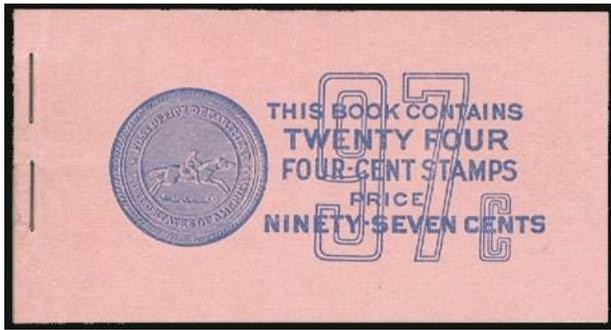
On March 19, 2014 Vance Auctions, Ltd. held Sale #301 that contained the following test stamps. There is no Buyer's Premium for this sale.

Lot 4791 * TD91, Test Coil Pair, VF, NH No Photo Cat. \$50.00 Realization unknown

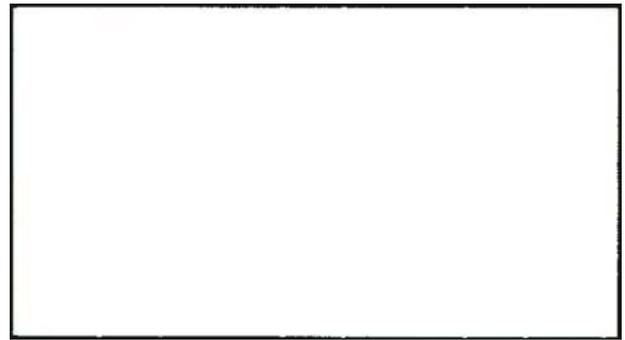
Lot 4792 * TD107, Test stamp coils, 2 Joint Line Strips of 4 incl. one with horiz INK SMEARS, F-VF, NH No Photo Est. \$35.00 CDN Realization unknown

Lot 4793 * TD107, Test stamp coils as singles, pairs, strips of 4 and Joint Line strips of 4. Incl. regular PLUS VARIETY showing horiz INK SMEARS, VF, NH (22 stamps) No Photo Est. \$45.00 CDN Realization unknown

please turn to page 8 ➤



Lot 4794 * TDB5, TEST BOOKLET, 1959 blue on pink 97¢. F-VF, NH Photo Cat. \$175.00 Realization Unknown



Lot 4795 * TDB61, Blank self-adhesive TEST PANE of 10 in complete booklet with blank cover. VF. Scarce. Photo Cat. \$150.00 Realization Unknown

Proposed Future DSSG Project

Updating Research Paper Number 3 - Dummy Stamp Booklets

Work is progressing on updating *Research Paper Number 3 - Dummy Stamp Booklets*. The last update by Dummy Booklets Study Group Chairman Earl McAfee, was in 1998. Since then there have been many new discoveries. Many of them have been written up in articles in *The United States Specialist*. Now the time has come to document and illustrate them in a new updated version of Research Paper Number 3. I am working closely with Mike Perry on this update project. We know that it will take quite a bit of time to complete, mid to late 2015 is hopefully

our estimated completion date. I will be asking all of you to join us in this project as we am not able to do it all, nor would you want us to do it all. It is a DSSG project and all members should have a chance to provide their input. Several illustrations are needed and a listing of these will be sent to you when it is compiled. Scans at 300 dpi, or better, are necessary for clarity. It is anticipated that this publication will be in color. It has not yet been determined if *Research Paper Number 3 - Dummy Stamp Booklets* will be available electronically. □

This issue and all past issues of the Dummy Stamps Study Group Newsletter - Dummy News and Views may be found at:

<http://www.usstamps.org/dssg.html>