

Errors, Freaks & Oddities

by Stan Cronwall

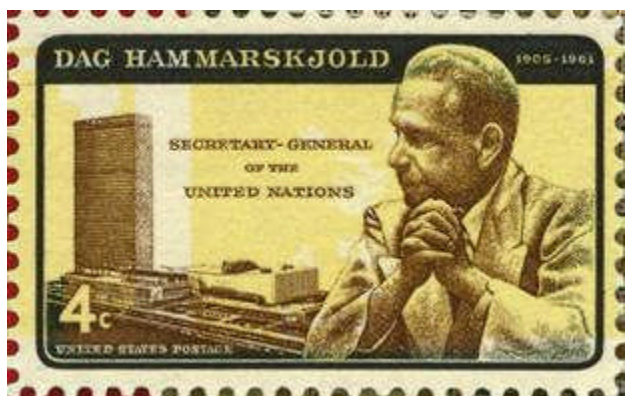
No, I'm not talking about the latest political circus in town or some carnival side-show, these are representative of the "Fly-specks" I wrote about a few issues ago.

Let's see if maybe a few definitions will help you as go through your collection(s) to see if you have something that is unique to your amassing of little colored pieces of paper.

Many articles have been authored on these subjects, but perhaps the best simplification in my memory come from a recent Linn's Collectors' Forum (October 24, 2016). The editor of this column offers up these as a way of defining E F & O's:

Error:

"An error is the complete omission of an important element of stamp production (color or perforations completely absent, for example, or an inverted central vignette on a bi-colored stamp or a surcharge printed upside down)"



A great example of this is the famous inverted Jenny stamp (Scott C 3a), or more recently, the Dag Hammarskjöld stamp of 1962 with the inverted yellow background (Scott 1203), and the CIA invert of 1979 (Scott 1610C).

Freak:

"A freak is a one-of-a-kind mistake in production such as improper perforation or poorly registered inking. Freaks are more common than errors, but because of the random way in which they are created, no two examples will be precisely the same, unlike errors."

As the Forum article suggests a good example of this might be a booklet pane that was miss-cut in the assembly process trimming off a portion of the stamps on the unstapled end.

This can also occur for full sheets. Worth checking if you are a sheet collector. Below are stamps with the perforations shifted to make some interesting examples.



Normal stamp



Pair with perforations shifted up about 4mm. No value on stamp.



Another perforation shift with the value on bottom of the stamp.

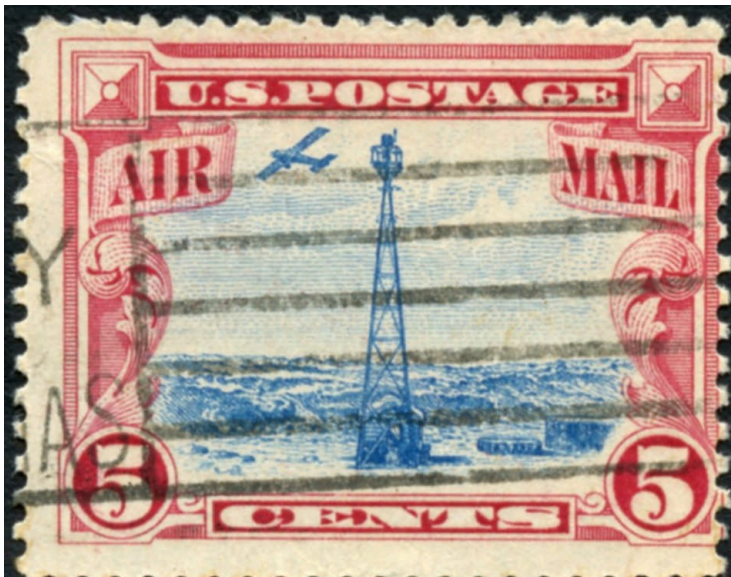
All of these stamps were found in a donation box mixed with many other denominations for use as postage.

These stamps will be offered in an upcoming club auction.

Oddity:

An oddity is anything else that gives a stamp a distinctive or unusual appearance that varies from the intended appearance of a stamp, including such things as extremely poor centering or even worn printing plates (as illustrated below with Scott airmail C11).

(See the full article, on the next page, about this stamp that was in a recent donation to our stamp club.)



"Open-door" variety caused by a worn printing plate.



The normal stamp. The hut door is "shut."

Okay, now that you are armed with these simplified definitions, maybe it is time to look at what you have rejected for your collection and set aside. Are they candidates for the waste-basket, or to be donated to **Eugene Smoots** for the club's Penny Boxes, or re-packaged in some clever way for the club auctions or consignment events.

Looking through the penny boxes might yield some interesting freaks and oddities. You will never know what lurks in those boxes until you start the hunt. Starting with your own stamp accumulations is a great way to hone your searching skills. If you find something, esp. in the Penny Boxes, please write a report for the Post Boy.

Again, I wish you happy hunting.

Stan Cronwall's collecting interests include Germany: Third Reich 1933-45 and the areas it occupied (stamps covers & cards). He also collects U.S. World War II Patriotic Covers and Cards; Civil War Patriotic Covers (both U.S. and CSA); U.S. Naval Covers; DDR stamps; and, Post WW II Soviet Zone Hitler Head Obliteration stamps, covers & cards.