

High Value Official Stamps on Cover

Alan C. Campbell

To make a quick judgment of how seriously an exhibit of classic United States stamps and postal history should be taken, simply station yourself in front of the last frame and count how many covers of the highest value are on display. With a very few exceptions - 30¢ 1867 A grill, 90¢ 1867 F grill (one cover known), 90¢ 1869 (only cover stolen), 90¢ 1870 grill - all of the 24¢, 30¢, and 90¢ values do exist on cover and generally in sufficient quantities that judges can fairly expect them to be shown. Now in the past decade, there has been a renaissance in competitive exhibits of the official stamps of 1873-1884, with at least six collectors (Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., Matthew Kewriga, Lester C. Lanphear III, Theodore Lockyear, Robert L. Markovits, and myself) showing at the national level. In jury critiques, should one of us inquire as to how our exhibit might be improved, the standard brusque refrain has been, "show more high values on cover." So we trudge out of the room muttering to ourselves, "Well, thank you very much, but that's easier said than done." In self-defense, then, this article will carefully document how scarce high value official stamps are on cover, by listing all those recorded with a 24¢ value or higher. Of course, within the small fraternity of official specialists, it is well known that virtually any 7¢, 10¢, 12¢ or 15¢ departmental stamp is also difficult to locate on cover. This article, though, will focus only the highest values, so as to catch some of the reflected glamour and prestige which has traditionally emanated from the same values of the regular issues. A preeminent cover will be illustrated from each department with the exception of Post Office, where neither of the 30¢ covers in the Ackerman sale of 1933 has resurfaced since.

The 24¢, 30¢, and 90¢ regular issue stamps were prepared to pay specific high pre-GPU international rates, and for the most part, this is how they were used and how they survive on cover. Domestic usages, typically on parcel wrappers and extra-size legal courthouse covers, are rarer, but their awkward size and dog-eared battered appearance generally make them unpresentable. Regrettably, this is precisely the format in which most high value official stamps are to be found on cover. They were put into service on July 1, 1873, only two years to the day before the 5¢ GPU rate went into effect. Moreover, none of the departments posted any significant amount of foreign mail. The only important surviving correspondences of official covers going overseas are the Conant to London (from Secretary of the Treasury John Sherman) and the Bingham to Japan. In as much as neither includes a single official stamp above the 15¢ on cover, they pale in comparison to such legendary correspondences as the Payan to France, the Heard to China, the Davis to Peru, or the Reverend Bissell to India. Pre-GPU or non-UPU treaty rate covers, besides the beauty of their colorful foreign transit markings, are preferred by collectors for the mundane reason that they can be mounted properly on a standard 8 1/2" x 11" page.

Legal size covers are an exhibitor's nightmare, but their prevalence among official covers has forced most of us to go to oversize pages, (although there is one stubborn holdout whose exhibit can be identified instantly from across the room by the predominant slashing diagonals). Of the forty-two covers in my inventory, only three are of small size and of these three, only one is to a foreign destination.

In Figure 1, courtesy of auctioneer Matthew Bennett, Inc., we illustrate a remarkable stamped envelope (3¢ green on amber entire - U161) from a New York manufacturer of surgical instruments, with an advertising corner card illustrating medals awarded by the U. S. Centennial Commission in 1876. This cover, originally postmarked on April 2 (1878), is addressed to George C. Cooper, an apothecary on the U. S. S. Essex at Norfolk, Virginia. Because this vessel had already left port, the cover was forwarded from Norfolk to the Navy Department in Washington, D. C. There it was determined that the ship had sailed for Montevideo, Uruguay, so a 24¢ Navy stamp was added to make up the 27¢ British mail rate via England. The Navy stamp, placed over the Norfolk postmark, was canceled at the main Washington, D. C. post office with the distinctive violet ink (faded here to a dull red) used throughout 1878. The cover then made its way via New York (April 13) and London (April 28) and per the backstamp, arrived in Montevideo on May 22. But George Cooper was no longer attached to the ship. Per a note on the reverse, probably entered by an officer on board, he had been discharged from the U. S. S. Essex on July 17, 1877, and was thought to be living in Wakefield, Massachusetts. The cover was then forwarded back to the United States, although there are no transit marks for the reverse routing. The Wakefield, Mass. address proved to be a dead end, and the letter was sent on to the Dead Letter Office in Washington, D. C. (July 19), which returned it to the original sender on July 23. This is the most spectacular of a small group of fascinating usages, where the Navy Department supplied supplemental forwarding postage for mail addressed to their personnel at sea. In a previous article we illustrated a similar usage, also forwarded from Norfolk in 1878, which caught up with a Navy captain in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.¹ But like the cover illustrated here, several other examples exist which went on frantic and ultimately fruitless quests to catch up with the addressee.

The survival rate for official stamps on cover is far lower than regular issues, because the bulk of this mail went between government offices: either the clerks skinned the stamps off to save for collectors, or the envelopes were lost when the files were later purged. Moreover, high value official stamps were mostly used on heavy mailings, where the survival rate is low, as opposed to being used on foreign mail like the regular issues, where the survival rate is relatively high. So for high value official stamps on cover, these two factors together will reduce the survival rate exponentially and compound the acquisition degree of difficulty. From the

¹ Alan C. Campbell, "Usages of the 7¢ Stanton Official Stamps", *Chronicle*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Whole No. 185) (February 2000), Figure 13, page 57.

tables in Luff, we calculate that for the thirty-one different official high values, a total of 2,351,360 stamps were issued. With forty-two covers found, this yields a survival rate of 0.0000179. To put it another way, of every 55,985 high value official stamps issued, one cover has survived. How does this compare with the survival rate for high value regular issues on cover? The rate for 24¢ 1869 covers is .000321; for 30¢ 1869 covers, .000190. For the 24¢ large Banknote stamp, the rate is .000176; for the 30¢, .000500.² Therefore, high value official stamps have survived on cover at less than 10% of the rate of their regular issue counterparts. Taking into account the fact that all the high value official stamps were issued in far lower quantities than the regular issues, and that a much higher percentage of these official stamps went unused, the degree of acquisition difficulty for high value official stamps on cover is phenomenally high.

Of the forty-two covers found in this census, twelve were not intact covers per se but were cover fronts or parcel labels on package wrappers. In the specialized market for official postal history, such items are priced and sold as if they were intact covers. In Figure 2, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits, we illustrate the famous piece that was described in the 1933 auction catalog of Congressman Ackerman's collection as "the Kohinoor of the Department covers." I have discussed this cover previously, and would like to mention here only that this is a large mailing label on part of the front of the wrapping for a bundle of books.³ This of course is the unique piece on which the specialized catalogue listing for the \$2 State on cover is based. The catalogue listing for the 90¢ State on cover is also based on two nearly identical cover fronts to Matamoros, Mexico. Surely everyone would agree that this is a sensible approach, to stand in awe that such pieces could have survived and acknowledge them as fully legitimate "covers", instead of quibbling over whether the back of the wrapping survives intact. After years of disputation, the issue was finally resolved (or gracefully finessed) in the 2001 edition of the catalogue, with the creation of a new listing category: "on parcel label". In Figure 3, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III, we illustrate a 24¢ Agriculture stamp tied to a parcel label posted in Washington, D. C. addressed to Wyoming, Pennsylvania (PFC #0189853, issued 6/7/88). A 3¢

² These statistics are derived from *Linn's U. S. Stamp Facts, 19th Century*, 1999. The figures for the 1869 issues, derived from an actual census, should be fairly accurate, while the numbers for the large Banknote issues are mostly estimates. I did not calculate the survival rate for the extremely rare 90¢ large Banknote covers, because the estimates for the 90¢ Continental (fewer than 20) and the 90¢ American (fewer than 100) seemed wildly overstated. I would have expected values used exclusively on foreign mail to have survived at a higher rate than those used chiefly on domestic letters. While this seemed to be true for the 7¢ large Banknote (.00317), it did not hold up for the 10¢ 1869 (.000454).

³ Alan C. Campbell, "Color Cancellations on U. S. Official Stamps, 1873-1884", *Chronicle* 181, February 1999, Vol. 51, No. 1, p. 46, Footnote 22.

Agriculture cover from the same correspondence was illustrated here previously.⁴ Mr. Lanphear's label, although roughly trimmed, still adheres to the parcel wrapping (as if that should make any difference), and represents the only known usage of the 15¢, 24¢, or 30¢ Agriculture stamps.

Of the forty-two legitimate covers found, I know the whereabouts of twenty-six. Nine high value official covers were lost when the Charles J. Starnes collection was stolen in 1983. Even though I have severe reservations as to whether they still exist, I have included them in this census because most have a famous provenance. Collectors who scour the auction catalogues of the great official cover collections of earlier generations are entitled to know what measure of hope to hold out that long-missing covers will resurface. Seven other high value official covers could not be accounted for. Of these seven, five were last seen in the Ackerman Sale of 1933, , one at a John Fox Auction in 1955, and one in the "Crystal" Sale of the Ehrenberg collection in 1981. The Ackerman catalogue was not illustrated, and the cover unaccounted for from the Ehrenberg sale was not pictured. Since our research into official covers has improved greatly in the intervening years, it is possible that a few of these missing covers might not now be deemed legitimate. This was the case for a 24¢ State refolded cover, ex-Ackerman, sold in the Ehrenberg Sale as Lot 359, which did not subsequently stand up to expertization. Reservations have been expressed about other high value covers, especially when the stamp is not tied.

Official covers in general are not easy to fake, simply because the starting point is usually a period official business envelope with an imprinted corner card. It would simply be too expensive to reproduce one from whole cloth. Mr. Markovits' fascinating one frame exhibit of "Unofficials" does contain a couple of fake covers that were made up by utilizing some unused proof specimens of official envelopes. The style of these envelopes was a giveaway, since it did not match that of any known to have been used by the departments, although the faker also committed the unpardonable blunder of affixing perforated proofs instead of real stamps!⁵ In a few cases, forgers have replaced the original stamps on regular issue covers and added fake handstamped corner cards and fake postmarks, but these are usually easily detectable. Unused prestamped reply envelopes from a number of departments also exist, and fake postmarks and killers have been added to a few of them, most notably on Agriculture covers (the John Hagen collection, sold by Dennis J. Swinehart in the early 1980's, contained two of these). The best raw material for faking official covers are the official imprinted envelopes that were sometimes posted with regular issue stamps. Then the faker's challenge will be to remove the Banknote regular issue stamps, substitute unused official stamps, and

⁴ Warren S. Howard, "What Have We Done? Congress Probes the Departmentals, 1873-1874", *Chronicle* 183, August 1999, Vol. 51, No. 3, p.212, Figure 4A.

⁵ Lewis Kaufman, "Unofficial Officials: Fake Departmental Covers", *Philatelic Opinions III*, 1985, page 85-88.

somehow get the tying postmark or killer to match up. High value official covers, though, pose a unique danger, in that if a lower value official stamp can be found on a legal cover not tied but with a socked-on-the-nose killer, it can be lifted and replaced with a higher value official stamp. For this reason, collectors are cautioned to be circumspect about high value official covers when none of stamps are tied.

Of the forty-two covers found, nine were to foreign destinations: Brazil, Canada, Germany, Japan (2), Mexico (2) and Uruguay (2). But three of these were in the stolen Starnes collection, leaving only six for collectors today. In Figure 4, courtesy of Dr. David H. Lobdell, we illustrate a War cover to Japan franked with a pair of 24¢ War stamps, opened up to show the markings on the back. Also owned by Dr. Lobdell is a 6¢, 30¢ War cover from the same correspondence. The stamps on this second cover were mistakenly identified in both the Hughes and Duckworth catalogs as being the soft paper issue, but the 1876 docketing renders this impossible. I will excerpt here some comments prepared by Dr. Lobdell about this spectacular pair of covers, which rival the Commander Caldwell covers - a 24¢ Navy to Uruguay and a 12¢, 30¢ Navy to Brazil - owned by Charles Starnes (since 1983, in philatelic limbo and sinking fast).⁶

"Both covers were sent by the War Department's Chief Signal Officer to 'Benjamin Smith Lyman, Chief Geologist and Mining Engineer to the Kaitakushi'. Lyman was a Harvard graduate who later studied at the Ecole de Mines in Paris and set himself up as a consulting geologist. Between 1873 and 1879 he was chief geologist to the Japanese government, principally working for the Kaitakushi, which was an agency with the responsibility for the colonization and development of the natural resources of the northern island of Hokkaido. (Hokkaido was Japan's version of our frontier in '70s, so that while we were sending homesteaders into our West and killing off the Indians, they were populating Hokkaido with ethnic Japanese and doing a number on the native hairy Ainu.)"

"The pair of 24¢ War stamps pays four times the treaty rate of 12¢ per half ounce for mail from the United States to Japan. (Although the General Postal Union rate of 5¢ per half ounce for international mail was already in force for many countries, Japan did not sign the GPU until the following year.) The letter was mailed in Washington, D. C. on May 9 and reached Yokohama on June 29, 1876, where a red "Yokohama Paid All" was applied by the US postal station there. It then took nine more days to travel less than twenty-five miles to Mr. Lyman at his lodgings in Yedo (the old name for Tokyo). How did it get from the US to Japan? There were two possible routes: (1) via New York to London, where it would have been put on a British ship round the Cape of Good Hope to the Orient, or (2) via the recently-completed transcontinental railroad to San Francisco, where it would have been put

⁶ Charles J. Starnes, "Universal Postal Union Mail to Non-Member Countries", *Chronicle*, February 1974, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 41-43.

on an American ship to Yokohama. Since the envelope lacks New York and London transit markings, I favor the Trans-Pacific route."

Both covers were at one time in the collection of Congressman Ackerman, the leading collector of United States official covers in the early part of this century. When Ackerman's collection was auctioned in 1933, at the very nadir of the Great Depression, the 24¢ cover fetched \$20 and the 30¢ cover \$12 - and at that, they brought more than any of the other fifty War Department covers in the auction. Let's hope that none of us have to sell our stamps during a Depression!"⁷

Of the domestic usages, perhaps the most spectacular cover surfaced in November, 1998 in a Matthew Bennett, Inc. auction. Nathan Goff served as the U. S. Attorney in Clarksburg, West Virginia from 1868 to 1881, and over half the surviving Justice covers derive from mailings sent from Washington, D. C. to him or to the clerk of the U. S. District court there, John Moore. In the Bennett sale, a large portion of the Goff/Moore correspondence never previously seen was consigned by an old-time Baltimore stamp dealer. "In the early 1970's, the consignor traveled to Philadelphia for the purpose of negotiating a sale of the Goff covers with legendary dealer Philip Ward. Upon seeing the high value Justice Department covers offered to him, his eyes popped and he was at a momentary loss of words."⁸ For Justice covers, we official collectors would be dead in the water without the Goff correspondence, and from the collector's point of view, it is a crying shame that groups of covers such as this weren't liberated from government archives more often. Which gives us pause to wonder, could a find comparable to the Goff correspondence still be moldering away in the basement of a courthouse somewhere? In Figure 5, courtesy of Theodore Lockyear, we illustrate a breathtaking legal cover franked with three 90¢ and four 30¢ Justice stamps. Since the envelope could hardly have contained four pounds of paperwork, we theorize that it was used as a mailing front on a tied bundle of courthouse documents, with the pressure from the string biting a notch into the top of the cover.

With the addition of this cover to his exhibit, Mr. Lockyear was finally able to show all values of the Department of Justice on both hard and soft paper on cover. It is not possible to accomplish this feat in any other department with the exception of the short Executive set, which Mr. Lanphear completed with the purchase of the

⁷ Editor's note: These two covers were bought by Dr. Lobdell at the Harmer, Rooke March, 1963 auction of the H. G. Duckworth Collection of Officials, with Robert L. Markovits acting as his agent. The 24¢ pair on cover (lot #327) realized \$42, while the 6¢, 30¢ cover (lot #334) sold for \$35. But during Dr. Lobdell's stewardship, these two covers have appreciated in value at a far better rate!

⁸ Matthew Bennett, Inc. 206th Public Auction, November 15, 1998, page 113. The cover discussed here was Lot #229, illustrated in color on the back cover.

unique 10¢ cover.⁹ Dr. Lobdell has completed the War Department except for the 30¢ value on soft paper (not known to exist), and Robert Markovits has completed the Department of State through the \$2.

Another official envelope that appears to have been used as a mailing front is illustrated in Figure 6, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III. This is a legal size penalty envelope from the Land Office at Larned, Kansas addressed to a private citizen in Lyons, Kansas. Notes on the back and glue residue suggest that this envelope was pasted to a larger one containing homestead proofs. The 90¢ Interior stamp pays the 10¢ registry fee and postage at regular first class domestic rates, since at this time the penalty clause was not valid for field office correspondence with private citizens. This is the only legitimate 90¢ Interior cover recorded (PFC #0232519, issued 12/28/90), and is one of only two solo usages of 90¢ official stamps, the other being Dr. Lobdell's 90¢ War cover.

In Figure 7, courtesy of Matthew Bennett, Inc., we illustrate an unusual four value Treasury franking paying sixteen times the domestic first class rate. This large envelope, with the hand-written corner card of the Superintendent of Construction for the Post Office and Sub (sic) Treasury Building at Boston, was mailed to Farmington Falls, Maine. Even though it suffers from an advanced case of smallpox, this cover will attract spirited bidding in an upcoming auction, since no major collection of official covers since Ackerman has contained a 30¢ Treasury cover.¹⁰ 456,000 30¢ Treasury stamps were requisitioned in the fiscal years 1874-1879, the stamp used catalogues a humble \$9.00, and yet this may well be the only cover to have survived.

Counting the four stamps issued on soft paper, the catalogue lists 31 different high value official stamps, 24¢ denomination and above. Thirteen of these have never been reported on cover, not counting the 30¢ Navy stamp, of which the only reported cover (ex-Starnes) was stolen and is presumed lost to philately. Of the seventeen other high value official stamps which can be found on cover, only three have at least four examples reported: O22 24¢ Interior - 6, O66 30¢ State - 7, and O92 30¢ War - 4. The other fourteen high value official stamps survive on cover in quantities ranging from one to three. By comparison, the 1860 90¢ regular issue (#39) is very rare on cover and catalogues \$225,000 in the 2000 edition of the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of U. S. Stamps and Covers*. Six examples of this stamp on cover are known. Since I would prefer to continue collecting in this field, I would not begin to argue that high value official covers deserve to be valued in this same range. Still, when our exhibits are judged, heavy bonus points in the "difficulty of acquisition" category should be credited whenever we manage to show even a few

⁹ Lester C. Lanphear III, "10¢, 2¢, 3¢ Executive Combination Usage", *Chronicle* No. 173, February 1997, Volume 49, No. 1, p. 45-52.

¹⁰ The whereabouts and legitimacy of the ex-Ackerman cover are unknown.

of these extremely rare covers. Cost notwithstanding, there are simply not enough of them to go around.

In the 2001 edition of the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of U. S. Stamps and Covers*, the 24¢ Agriculture parcel label was finally listed, and the entry for the \$2 State was changed from "on cover" to "on parcel label". From the research presented here, I would recommend a few further changes. The price of \$500.00 for a 24¢ Interior cover seems absurdly low and should be stricken. A new price should be entered for the 24¢ Navy on cover, based on the realization in the upcoming Bennett sale. The listing for the 24¢ State on cover should be unpriced, since the basis for the current price is an auction realization for a cover that received a bad certificate. A new price should be entered for the 30¢ Treasury on cover, again based on the realization in the Bennett sale.

In conducting this census, I relied on photocopies of the current major collections, on auction catalogues of the Steinmetz, Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Duckworth, Ehrenberg and Stone sales, on marginally legible bootleg third generation photocopies of the Starnes collection, and notes made on a few other auction lots. I counted full covers, cover fronts, and parcel labels, but did not include stamps on piece. As a control to measure the completeness of this survey, I was able to compare it with the ongoing census of rare official covers started by Charles Starnes and maintained by my assistant section editor, Lester C. Lanphear III. I am indebted to Robert L. Markovits, who reviewed an early draft of this article; to Mr. Lanphear, who made many valuable suggestions; to Dr. David H. Lobdell, for supplying the eloquent analysis of his 24¢ War cover; to Mr. Theodore Lockyear, for the opportunity to reproduce here his spectacular Justice cover; and to Harvey Bennett and George Eveleth, for furnishing photocopies of the important covers from the upcoming Matthew Bennett, Inc. auction. I am eager to hear from any collector who either currently owns one of the high value covers listed here but unaccounted for, or who can report a new discovery.

Afterword by Assistant Section Editor Lester C. Lanphear III:

On one of my visits to Charles Starnes he told me, "The one regret I have is never owning a 90¢ departmental cover". Since his entire collection was stolen in 1983 and not a single piece has been recovered, I suppose those of us collecting today should considerate it fortunate that he was never able to buy a 90¢ cover.

In reviewing the sales catalogues of great official cover collections of the past as well as the current collections, an interesting fact stands out: the maximum number of different 90¢ values on cover any collector has owned is two. The short list of collectors who have been able to accomplish this feat: Ackerman, Lanphear, Markovits, and Waud.

Inventory of High Value Official Stamps on Cover

No.	Stamps	Description	Owner
1.	24¢ Agriculture	Third class from Washington, D. C. to Wyoming, Pa. on parcel label (no post mark)	LCL
2.	24¢ Interior	Patent Office, 8x domestic rate, Washington, D. C. to New York, N. Y., on oversized cover.	ACC (ex-Ackerman)
3.	24¢ Interior	Land Office, Watertown to Warburg, Dakota Terr., 1879, registered first class legal cover	RLM (ex-Waud)
4.	24¢ Interior + 12¢ Interior	Land Office, Larned to Lyons, Kansas, registered first class legal cover	RLM (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Waud)
5.	24¢ Interior	Reduced legal cover to Portland, Ore.	LCL
6.	24¢ Interior + 2¢ Interior	Land Office, Larned, Kansas (cover badly frayed)	(ex-Ackerman)
7.	24¢ Interior	Washington, D. C., Maltese cross cancellation	(ex-Ackerman)
8.	24¢ Interior	Washington, D. C., legal cover with corners frayed	CJS (ex-Hughes)
9.	24¢ Interior	Land Office, Carson City to Virginia City, Nevada, small cover	CJS
10.*	30¢ Interior	Patent Office, Washington, D. C. legal cover	(ex-Needham, Ackerman, Hughes, Duckworth)
11.	30¢ Interior	book rate label, Washington, D. C.	RLM
12.	30¢ Interior	Washington, D. C. to Springfield, Ill., book rate label	CJS

No.	Stamps	Description	Owner
13.	90¢ Interior	Land Office, Larned to Lyons, Kansas, registered legal penalty envelope	LCL (ex-Ackerman, Stone)
14.*	90¢ Interior	Washington, D. C., badly frayed cover front	(ex-Needham, Ackerman)
15.	24¢ Justice	Washington, D. C. to Clarksburg, W. V. first class legal cover	LCL
16.	24¢ Justice (2)	Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury Washington, D. C. to Clarksburg, W. V., 1878, first class extralegal cover	TL (ex-Ehrenberg)
17.	30¢ Justice	Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, Washington, D. C., 1876, legal cover	CJS (ex-Ackerman, Hughes)
18.	30¢ Justice + 3¢ +6¢ Justice	Washington, D. C. to Clarksburg, West Virginia legal cover	TL
19.	90¢ Justice (3) + 30¢ Justice (4)	Washington, D. C. to Clarksburg, West Virginia legal cover	TL
20.	24¢ Navy	Washington, D. C. to Montevideo, Uruguay, 1876, legal cover paying 23 1/2¢ treaty rate	CJS
21.	24¢ Navy	3¢ small stamped envelope, forwarded from Washington, D. C. to Uruguay, 1878	upcoming Bennett auction
22.	24¢ Navy + 2¢ + 6¢ Navy	Nautical Almanac Office printed matter parcel front to Benton, Maine	RLM (ex-Waud)
23.	30¢ Navy + 12¢ Navy	Washington, D. C. to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil via New York and London, 1877, double treaty rate legal cover	CJS
24.	30¢ Post Office	Washington, D. C. legal cover, 1883	(ex-Steinmetz, Ackerman)

No.	Stamps	Description	Owner
25.	30¢ Post Office strip of 5	Washington, D. C. extra legal cover	(ex-Ackerman)
26.	24¢ State	Washington, D. C. to Sherbrooke, Canada, 1878.	CJS (ex-Hughes)
27.	24¢ State	Diplomatic pouch mail from the Consulate at Beirut, Syria, Washington, D. C. to Crawfordsville, Georgia legal cover	RLM (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Waud)
28.**	24¢ State	Washington, D. C. to New Orleans reduced, refolded and readdressed cover	(ex-Ackerman, Ehrenberg)
29.	30¢ State	Diplomatic pouch mail from the Consulate at Mexico City to Baltimore, July 20, 1877, with large green seal on back flap	CJS (ex-Hughes)
30.	30¢ State	Washington, D. C. to Philadelphia, Pa., July 10, 1873 legal cover	(ex-Ehrenberg, Ackerman)
31.	30¢ State + 10¢ State	Washington, D. C. to Charleston, S. C., book rate parcel label	LCL (ex-Ehrenberg)
32.	30¢ State + 12¢ State	Washington, D. C. to New York, parcel label dated April 6, 1874	(upcoming Bennett auction, ex-Ackerman)
33.	90¢ State + 30¢ State + 6¢ State	Washington, D. C. to Matamoros, Mexico, June 17, 1874, on parcel front	RLM (ex-Waud)
34.	90¢ State + 30¢ State + 10¢ State(2)	Washington, D. C. to Matamoros, Mexico on parcel front	John Fox, 4/15/55
35.	\$2 State + 30¢ State (17) + 10¢ State	New York, N. Y. to Stuttgart, Germany, 1882, international printed matter rate on a package front	RLM (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Waud)

No.	Stamps	Description	Owner
36.	30¢ Treasury	Washington, D. C. legal cover	(ex-Ackerman)
37.	30¢ Treasury + 2¢, 6¢, 10¢ Treasury	Boston to Farmington Falls Maine extra-legal cover (foxed)	upcoming Bennett auction
38.	24¢ War pair	Washington, D. C. to Yedo (Tokyo), Japan legal cover	DHL (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Duckworth)
39.	30¢ War + 6¢ War	Washington, D. C. to Yedo (Tokyo), Japan, 1876, legal cover	DHL (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Duckworth)
40.	30¢ War + 6¢ War	Fort Apache, Arizona Territory to Washington, D. C., 1883, on over- sized cover	LCL (ex- Steinmetz)
41.	30¢ War + 6¢ War (4)	Office of the Chief Signal Officer, Washington, D. C. to Webster, Maine, 1875 printed matter parcel front	ACC
42.	30¢ War (two pairs)	Quartermaster's Dept. - Jeffersonville Depot to Philadelphia, Pa., legal cover front	CJS (ex- Hughes)
43.	90¢ War	Medical Dept. of the Army, Nebraska, legal cover	DHL (ex- Steinmetz, Hughes, Duckworth)
44.	90¢ War + 24¢ War (4)	Mobile, Alabama to Washington, D. C., parcel label on package front	RLM (ex- Waud)
45.	90¢ War pair + 24¢ War (4)	Mobile, Alabama to Washington, D. C., parcel label on package front	LCL (ex- Ehrenberg, Hughes)

*The Henry Needham collection is notorious for containing covers with high value stamps fraudulently added. The authenticity of these two covers is so questionable that neither has been included in the final tally. The 30¢ cover surfaced in 1985 and was certified as fraudulent by the Philatelic Foundation (PFC #148565).

**After the "Crystal Sale", this cover was reportedly certified as fraudulent, although neither the PF nor APS records indicate such a cover was reviewed. A few years later, it resurfaced in a Kaufman auction with no mention of a bad certificate and was resold. Extensively reworked, this cover's small size makes it dubious-looking, but the distinctive violet canceling ink of 1878, although faded, does tie the stamp, and the Department of State handstamps looks authentic. This cover probably deserves reconsideration. Although I have seen other dubious high value official covers over the years (including a 30¢ Interior cover which I had killed in 1990 - PFC #219273, and a 30¢ Treasury which bit the dust earlier this year - PFC #0348782), I included only these three from well-known collections in the inventory.

The provenances cited are derived from the following major sales of official covers:

Steinmetz	Eugene Klein	1929
Ernest R. Ackerman	J. C. Morgenthau	1933
Edward S. Knapp	Parke Bernet	1940
James E. Hughes	Bruce G. Daniels	1953
H. G. Duckworth	Harmer, Rooke	1963
Rae D. Ehrenberg	"Crystal" Collection, R. S. Siegel #577	1981
Morrison Waud	private treaty	1982
Charles J. Starnes	stolen	1983
Marshall Stone	R. S. Siegel #728	1990

Census Results: High Value Official Stamps on Cover

Scott No.	Stamp	Stamps Issued	Covers Found	Cover Numbers *	Scott Cat. Val. (2001)
O8	24¢ Agriculture	60,265	1	1	unpriced
O9	30¢ Agriculture	82,265	0		unlisted
O22	24¢ Interior	134,125	6 (8)	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, (8), (9)	\$500.00
O23	30¢ Interior	138,300	1 (2)	11, (12)	unpriced
O24	90¢ Interior	64,377	1	13	\$4500.00
O32	24¢ Justice	6,400	2	15, 16	\$2750.00
O33	30¢ Justice	8,600	2 (3)	(17), 18, 19	\$7500.00
O34	90¢ Justice	3,200	1	19	\$16,500.00
O43	24¢ Navy	26,000	2 (3)	(20), 21, 22	unpriced
O44	30¢ Navy	29,600	0 (1)	(23)	unlisted
O45	90¢ Navy	12,270	0		unlisted
O54	24¢ Post Office	87,625	0		unlisted
O55	30¢ Post Office	133,255	2	24, 25	unpriced
O56	90¢ Post Office	65,200	0		unlisted
O65	24¢ State	13,800	1 (2)	(26), 27	\$1750.00
O66	30¢ State	20,100	7	29-35	unpriced
O67	90¢ State	6,643	2	33, 34	unpriced
O68	\$2 State	3,508	1	35	unpriced
O69	\$5 State	363	0		unlisted
O70	\$10 State	363	0		unlisted
O71	\$20 State	363	0		unlisted
O80	24¢ Treasury	100,000	0		unlisted
O81	30¢ Treasury	456,500	2	36, 37	unpriced
O82	90¢ Treasury	312,500	0		unlisted
O91	24¢ War	200,925	3	38, 44, 45	unpriced
O92	30¢ War	336,641	4	39, 40, 41, 42	unpriced
O93	90¢ War	48,172	3	43, 44, 45	\$2000.00
O103	24¢ Interior soft	?	0		unlisted
O112	30¢ Treasury soft	?	0		unlisted
O113	90¢ Treasury soft	?	0		unlisted
O120	30¢ War soft	?	0		unlisted

*Numbers in parentheses indicate total covers reported if the Starnes covers are included.

Cover Captions

- Figure 1. 24¢ Navy added as supplemental postage to forward a 3¢ stamped envelope to Montevideo, Uruguay, courtesy of Matthew Bennett, Inc.
- Figure 2. \$2 State and 30¢ State (17) and 10¢ State on a parcel front to Stuttgart, Germany, *the* legendary departmental cover, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits.
- Figure 3. 24¢ Agriculture on a parcel label, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III.
- Figure 4. 24¢ War pair paying four times the treaty rate to Japan, courtesy of Dr. David H. Lobdell.
- Figure 5. 90¢ Justice (3) and 30¢ Justice (4) on a cover used as the mailing front of a tied bundle of courthouse documents, courtesy of Theodore Lockyear.
- Figure 6. 90¢ Interior on a registered penalty envelope pasted to a package of homestead proofs, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III.
- Figure 7. 30¢ Treasury and 2¢, 6¢, 10¢ Treasury on an oversized cover from Boston, courtesy of Matthew Bennett, Inc.