IDENTIFYING AND COLLECTING
FAKES & FORGERIES

A HISTORY OF FAKE STAMPS & THE FORGERS WHO CREATED THEM
FOCUSING ON THE FORGERS OF U.S. STAMPS & LOCAL POSTS
PRESENTATION OUTLINE & INTRODUCTION

• Introduction
• Why Collect Fakes & Forgeries?
• Famous Forgers • Identification Tips
• Presentation of Forgeries & Research
• Question & Answer
• Where to Learn More
WHY COLLECT FAKE & FORGERIES?

FOR FUN ♦ FOR REFERENCE ♦ FOR POSTAL HISTORY
FORGERIES ADD INTEREST & DEPTH TO COLLECTIONS

• Forgeries are interesting to look at
  • Good forgeries show the impressive skill of forgers
  • Bad forgeries can take “creative” artistic liberties

• Build a forgery reference collection
  • Own examples to compare to originals
  • Practice identifying forgeries

• Fill album spaces
  • Use as illustrations for rare stamps

• Forgeries tell good stories
  • Many stamp forgers lead interesting lives
FORGERIES ARE IMPORTANT TO POSTAL HISTORY

• Some of the first stamp catalogs, albums & magazines were created by forgers
  • Spread the word about a growing hobby
  • Provided inspiration to collectors in the early days of philately
  • Created and published valuable philatelic research

• Bogus stamps were often based on real mail delivery services
  • Provides insight to postal history
  • Keep the memory of companies alive for future researchers
A BRIEF HISTORY OF FAMOUS FORGERS
& TIPS TO IDENTIFY THEIR WORKS

♦ DE SPERATI
♦ PETER WINTER
♦ SENF
♦ SPIRO
♦ MOENS*
♦ HUSSEY
♦ SCOTT
♦ TAYLOR
One of the most famous stamp forgers
- His works are popular and collectable
- Forgeries often sell for hundreds of dollars

High quality work & attention to detail
- He sometimes worked for days on a single stamp
- Before he was discovered, many of his forgeries were certified as genuine
- Difficult to identify – but many copies are signed or marked in some way
JEAN DE SPERATI

• Born in Italy as Giovanni De Sperati, 1884
  • Had an interest in stamp collecting as a child.
  • Brothers were a photographer and a stamp dealer – probably worked with Italian forger Erasmo Oneglia
  • First forgeries were the stamps of San Marino
• Moved to France and took the name Jean
• First considered creating his “philatelic works of art” as a hobby
  • Built a personal collection of expertised forgeries he called his Livre d’Or (Gold Book)
JEAN DE SPERATI

- Came into public spotlight in 1942
  - A shipment of his forgeries was confiscated by French customs
  - Was arrested for exporting valuables without a license
  - Claimed the forgeries were “artistic works” and the value of genuine stamps didn't apply
  - Experts were brought into court to examine the stamps – they believed the forgeries were genuine
  - De Sperati proved his innocence by creating new copies as evidence
  - In 1948 the case was settled - but he was arrested for fraud
JEAN DE SPERATI

• British Philatelic Association purchased all De Sperati’s forgery stock, dies, printing material and records in 1954
  • Paid a very large sum for the collection – including a “promise” to stop producing forgeries.
  • The collection was used to better understand & identify forgeries still in circulation

• Published two books:
  • La Philatolie sans Experls
  • La Technique Complete de la Phitatelie d’Art

• Many of De Sperati’s forgeries are marked by the BPA or collectors – books also available to identify forgeries
PETER WINTER

• Born and lived in Bremen, Germany
  • Trained as an Opera singer

• Created stamp reproductions in the 1980s
  • Marketed forgeries under the names ProPhil Forum & House of Stamps

• Used photolithography to create forgeries
  • Only made forgeries of the most expensive stamps
  • Created fake covers with his replicas
  • Did not appear to have especially great postal history knowledge
• British Library in London filed a copyright claim in 1988
  • Winter used high quality photos from the library’s collection to make dies
  • Settled out of court – had to give up all dies and replicas made with the library’s photographs

• Supposedly tried to secure a deal with the APS
  • Offered the American Philatelic Society all of his stock and a promise to stop printing for one million dollars
  • Was declined

• Forgeries look modern or “flat” in appearance
  • Often marked on the reverse with “REPLIK” or “FAUX” handstamps
SENFR BROTHERS

• Printers from Leipzig, Germany.
  • Emil Louis Richard Senf (younger brother)
  • Wilhelm August Louis Senf (elder brother)

• Richard began publishing stamp collecting material
  • First listing of stamp prices in 1872
  • *Illustriertes Briefmarken Journal* – stamp journal in 1874

• In 1880, the brothers co-owned the journal as Gebrüder Senf
  • Included color facsimiles of current stamps, often cut out by collectors
SENF BROTHERS

• Began selling “art supplements”
  • High quality, steel engraved facsimiles

• No intention to deceive collectors – took measures to identify their work
  • Engraved markings into stamp designs
  • Dealers sometimes covered or scratched away identifiers to use facsimiles as forgeries

• Richard operated Gebrüder Senf until 1910
  • Passed the company son-in-law, Heinrich Neubauer

• Wilhelm August Louis Senf sold stamps as W. A. Senf & Company
SPIRO BROTHERS

- Printing company in Hamburg, Germany
  - Philip Spiro head of company
- Produced facsimiles for collectors
  - Believed to have produced facsimiles for over 500 different stamps
  - Possibly millions of copies printed
  - Used to fill album spaces for many years
- A little less scrupulous regarding how well their stamps were identified as fakes
  - Inspired philatelic backlash over facsimiles
SPIRO BROTHERS

- Printed from lithography
  - Usually in sheets of twenty-five

- Often cancelled with large, distinct handstamps
  - Grids of dots or lines
  - Ovals of straight and curved lines
  - Rings

- Hawaiian Numeral Forgeries – “Broken E”
JEAN-BAPTISTE MOENS

- The “Belgian Prince of Philately”
  - Began selling stamps out of bookstore in Brussels in 1853
  - Key figure in the early days of stamp collecting
  - Sometimes wrongly classified as a forger

- Published his first stamp catalogue in 1862 - *Manuel des Collectionneurs de Timbres-Poste*
  - Published a monthly journal, *Le Timbre-Poste*, from 1863 until 1900
  - Published several other works regarding specific stamp studies

- Worked with other philatelists to share information
  - Published Charles Henry Coster’s book in 1882
Jean-Baptiste Moens

Moens's response to a review of his work published in the Stamp Collector's Magazine June, 1863

Some of the imperfections signalized proving to me, however, all the interest my reviewer attaches to my publication, I most sincerely than k him for the same. But those imperfections (which I must confess to) were caused by the confidence I had in my engraver, whose work was generally of irreproachable execution. I am willing to bear any justly-merited reproach.

Your correspondent also assigns me a talent I unfortunately do not possess, that of being able to copy stamps myself; if I had that ability, I should certainly not have committed the two mistakes in the inscriptions to which he alludes.

To conclude, I would take advantage of the opportunity to thank most gratefully those parties who have been good enough to entrust me with stamps I did not myself possess, for the continuation of my Postage Stamp Illustrations.

• Not a stamp forger – but many forgeries are based on his illustrations
  • One of the first to publish illustrations of stamps
  • Illustrations were made by different lithographers
    • F. Deraedemaeker and Pierre Schmitz
  • So-called “Moens Forgeries” might be album cuts
  • “After Moens” forgeries are copies by other forgers
  • Sometimes unknowingly published bogus designs as real
  • Got some of his stamps and information - especially on U.S. locals- from forgers
GEORGE HUSSEY

• Started selling stamps around 1856
• Had an office in New York City
• Offered a messenger express & local post service to patrons
• Created his own stamps to sell
  • Over seventy different listed types
• Offered reprints of hard to find stamps
• Bought dies from obsolete local posts
• Made new dies when he couldn’t acquire the originals
  • Still marketed these as “reprints”
• Robert Easson took over around 1874
GEORGE HUSSEY

- Worked with engravers to make stamps
  - Most well known is Thomas Wood
    - Some of Wood's printing records exist
- Printed stamps in multiples
  - Offered “favor cancels”
- Provided stamps to philatelic figures such as J. B. Moens
  - Supplied stamps to include in catalogs
  - Sometimes supplied forgeries as real
    - Supposedly tricked into producing the “SX” Essex boguses
JOHN WALTER SCOTT

• “Father of American Philately”
  • Born in London; collected stamps as a teen
  • Moved to New York & started dealing stamps

• Started three different stamp dealerships - all called J.W. Scott Company
  • Second company was sold and became Scott Stamp and Coin Company

• Issued his first stamp price lists in 1867
  • Became catalogues in 1868

• Published the *American Journal of Philately* starting in 1868
  • Published several other stamp & coin journals
JOHN WALTER SCOTT

• Focused on attracting people to the hobby with information, catalogues and albums

• Produced reprints of hard to find stamps to help collectors
  • Sought genuine original dies
  • Sometimes made imitation dies

• Later renounced this practice
  • Believed that to attract collectors, there needed to be trust in dealers
  • Actively shamed dealers who made “reprints”
    • Fired his friend, Joseph J. Casey, over the “Berford Abominations”
JOHN WALTER SCOTT

• Scott forgeries are *usually* similar to illustrations from Scott albums
  • Forgeries printed on different papers - usually keeping the same colors as the genuine examples
  • Some forgeries were printed on stiff white or cream paper
• Forgeries were sometimes printed in sheets or strips of multiple designs
SAMUEL ALLAN TAYLOR

• One of the most prolific and infamous forgers

• Born in Scotland, sent to New York at twelve years old
  • Ran away from home, briefly lived with a doctor
  • Worked as a messenger for New York telegraph companies
  • Became interested in stamp collecting and U.S. local posts

• Arrested for first stamp-related scam (that we know of) when he was eighteen
  • Sold envelopes with bogus “Hourly Express Stamps”
  • Called the scam “a tax on the gullible”
SAMUEL ALLAN TAYLOR

Was a stamp dealer in Montreal, Albany and Boston

Sold his own forgeries and other forgers’ works

Started The Stamp Collector’s Record in 1864

First North American stamp journal

Was very knowledgeable about stamps

Could be quite mean to other dealers and collectors – especially those who challenged his forgeries
SAMUEL ALLAN TAYLOR

- Sold the bogus “Baldwin’s Railroad” stamps in 1865
- George Stewart, Jr. exposed the stamps as fakes in his journal, the *Monthly Gazette*
- Taylor accused Stewart of being the *real* forger
  - Called Stewart’s journal “The Blowhard”
  - Was particularly nasty to Stewart, calling him one of “Barnum’s ... Freaks of Nature”
- Created a new forgery
  - Claimed the new bogus was genuine
  - Continued offering the previous forgeries as the “New Brunswick Manufacture”

**First Baldwin’s Forgery Sold by Taylor**

**Second Baldwin’s Forgery by Taylor**

**Article Published in the Stamp Collector’s Record**
Samuel Allan Taylor

- Made forgeries of *any* stamps, but especially of U.S. local posts
  - Was responsible for many of the bogus or fantasy stamps
  - Was quick to produce stamps from descriptions in other journals
  - “Frankenstein” bogus stamps built from parts of other stamps
- Worked with other forgers
  - Printed stamps with Westervelt to "legitimatize" the philatelic local stamps
  - Some other forgers are believed to be Taylor operating under different names
  - Trifet confessed to creating a Hawaiian forgery which Taylor sold – he later worked to get Taylor arrested
SAMUEL ALLAN TAYLOR

- Arrested in 1890 for selling foreign stamps – probably stopped dealing stamps around this time
- Participated in other scams, inventions and investments outside of stamps
  - Occasionally worked as a chemist
  - Skilled at advertising – supposedly invented streetcar advertisements
- Stamp forgeries come in a wide variety of different colors
  - Used whatever inks and papers he could acquire
- Forgeries usually typographed
  - Printed in forms
    - Arrangements of different stamp dies
    - NO known multiples
THE TAYLOR FORMS
NEW RESEARCH INTO TAYLOR’S WORK
THE TAYLOR FORMS

Taylor printed his forgeries as they were needed. It isn’t likely that he had a grand scheme or plan of how his forms would be set from printing to printing. However, philatelists have long thought that some of Taylor’s forms could be reconstructed.

A serious attempt to reconstruct Taylor forms was set into motion by Sherwood Springer and has been continued by several collectors. Springer’s forms are classified into three groups based on common forgeries types and theorized time periods: A forms; B forms; and C forms.

SPRINGER CATALOGUE
FOURTH EDITION (1966)
PAGE 45

SPRINGER TENTH EDITION
(1985) PAGE 56
Working with the Farrell Collection, we are able to study a large group of Taylor forgeries together in one place and can see patterns start to form. We have put together over sixty new forms based on common colors. These forms also sometimes match with Taylor’s packet advertisements.

These new, so-called “Boussery forms” are classified into four groups that expand on Springer’s lettered groups: AA forms; AB forms; BB forms; CC forms. These forms are built when groups of at least five different forgeries in at least two different common color sets are discovered. Additional short forms, or “S forms”, represent forms with only three or four different stamps, but in multiple different common colors.
THE TAYLOR FORMS

These forms were built from personal study of the Farrell Collection, and have not yet been reviewed by the greater philatelic public. They represent work still in progress and are subject to change.

Now, in conjunction with this presentation, we have published these forms on the Farrell Reference Collection section of the Carriers and Locals Society website – we welcome collectors to share their feedback and insights on our research.

https://www.pennypost.org/farrell.asp
WHY THE TAYLOR FORMS MATTER

• Helps more accurately attribute forgeries to Taylor
  • The “Montreal Form” – probably Taylor’s first forgery form

• Gives a probable timeline of when some forgeries were made

• Helps predict what forgeries might exist in different colors

• Encourage collectors with new goals
  • Collectors can focus on specific forms
QUESTION & ANSWER
INVITATION FOR AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
REFERENCES & CONTACT

• **Websites:**
  - [http://www.numismaticmall.com/](http://www.numismaticmall.com/)
  - [https://www.wikipedia.org/](https://www.wikipedia.org/)
  - [https://www.philamercury.com/](https://www.philamercury.com/)

• **Google books:**
  - The Stamp Collector’s Record
  - The Stamp-Collectors Magazine
  - Les Timbres Poste Ilustrés 1864

• **Newspaper Articles:**
  - Geneologybank.com
  - Public libraries

• **Philatelic Journals:**
  - The Penny Post
  - The Chronicle

• **Stamp Auctions:**
  - The Winter Sale (Schuyler Rumsen Sale 36)
  - Siegel Auctions – Power Search

• **Books**
  - Byways of Philately
  - The Identifier for Carriers, Locals, Fakes Forgeries & Bogus Posts of the US
  - The Work of Jean De Sperati
  - United States Newspaper Stamps, 1865-1869: The Forgeries
  - Focus on the Forgeries
  - Album Weeds
  - The Spud Papers

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