

THE
MIKE FARRELL
COLLECTION
OF INDEPENDENT MAILS

INCLUDING THE HISTORY, FORGERIES, & FANTASIES OF
UNITED STATES, LOCAL POSTS, CARRIERS,
INDEPENDENT MAIL ROUTES, & EXPRESS CO.S

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

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Colors listed for stamps and forgeries are the opinions of the Farrell Collection based on viewing physical copies of the pieces under consistent lighting. Colors in the .pdfs may be slightly inaccurate due to manipulations from the scanning process, computer monitor settings, or (in event that the files are printed for offline viewing) the printing process.

Unless otherwise noted, stamps are identified by their Scott Catalogue numbers and forgeries are identified by their Lyons Identifier type. Scott numbers in parenthesis under listed forgeries represent approximately what stamp the forgery is attempting to imitate.

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WEST TOWN SCHOOL

Established in 1799 by the Religious Society of Friends, West Town School in Chester County, Pennsylvania, is one of the oldest operating coeducational boarding schools in the country. A daily stage would deliver mail between the school and the post office, a roughly eight mile round trip. Originally letters were mailed in West Chester. After March 4th, 1859, the letters were sent from Street Road Post Office, located at the railroad station. This would later become the Westtown Post Office.



1840 PAINTING OF WESTTOWN SCHOOLHOUSE
AND GARDENS BY JOHN R. SMITH

In 1853, the school authorities ruled that all outgoing letters carried by stage would require a 2¢ fee. Stamps were made available at the school to prepay and were usually attached to the reverse of letter sheets or envelopes. Stamps were not cancelled by the school - any postmarks on existing stamps were applied by accident. These small stamps were used until around 1878, when the 2¢ fee was revoked.

The West Town stamps have been classified into two designs and seven different Types. There are also further differences in plate positions and printing variations.

Chronologically, the first stamps used at West Town were the Type IV stamps, which were first delivered to the school in April of 1853. These stamps were lithographed and printed by P. S. Duval in Philadelphia. The Type IV stamps were printed from the first stone, which contained 160 subjects in a 10x16 layout.

These stamps are identified by their smaller font, leaving more white space around "West Town". They are significantly less "pinched" in the middle, making the design look more like a single oval with ornaments in the middle, rather than like two circles attached in the middle.

The type in the subtype IV-A is slightly different from the original Type IV. The middle bar in the "E" is lower, and the loops of the "S" are more symmetrical.



TYPE IV
ENLARGED BY 250%



145L1
TYPE IV
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD
ON WHITE



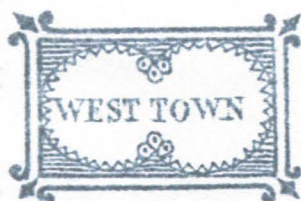
145L1
TYPE IV-A
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD
ON WHITE

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

The Scott *Specialized* Catalogue lists the red brown variety as a forgery. Philatelist G.B. Sloane listed this variation as an first printing. The example here does not fit any of the known forgery types. It is possible that the red brown was an underprinting for the gold ink.



145L1
TYPE IV-A
GENUINE (?)
2¢ RED BROWN
ON WHITE



TYPE I
ENLARGED BY 250%

School records show that in April, 1857, P.S. Duval Lithographers were paid to produce a new stone for additional stamps. It is believed that the Type I, Type II, and Type III designs were all printed from this second stone, which held 106 subjects in a 9x12 layout.

On the Type I stamps, the name "West Town" is shifted to the left. The upper left serif on the "W" touches (or nearly touches) the points on the rounded border. A subtype is identified by worn down serifs on the text.



145L1
TYPE I
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L1
TYPE I
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L1
TYPE I
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
BLUE "CANCEL"



145L1
TYPE I-B
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE

The text on the Type II stamps is well centered, leaving white space on both sides. The middle circle bottom ornament is larger than the other two circles. There is no subtype listed for Type II.



TYPE II
ENLARGED BY 250%



145L1
TYPE II
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L1
TYPE II
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L1
TYPE II
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE

WEST TOWN SCHOOL



TYPE III
ENLARGED BY 250%

The text on the Type III stamps is shifted to the right. The "N" nearly touches the rounded border, and the space between "West" and "Town" is centered with the ornaments. There are no listed subtypes for Type III.



145L1
TYPE III
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L1
TYPE III
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L1
TYPE III
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE

In July 1862, P.S. Duval Lithographers produced their third and final stone of West Town stamps. This new stone printed stamps in a smaller design with sans-serif text. The stone probably printed 200 subjects. 25,000 of these Type V stamps were delivered to the school.

The Type V stamps include text that is neatly and evenly typed. Although the round ornaments are reduced, they are still distinguishable for from the points. Subtypes can be identified by different numbers of points in the rounded borders.



TYPE V
ENLARGED BY 250%



145L2
TYPE V
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L2
TYPE V-A
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE

In the fall of 1864, West Town ordered their supply of stamps from a different lithographer.

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

In November, 1864, West Town ordered their supply of stamps from lithographer Thomas Sinclair (later T. Sinclair & Son.) Sinclair's stamps, Type VI and VII, used the same small design of Duval's Type V stamps.

It is uncertain if the Type VI or Type VII stamps were produced at the same time, or in different printings. They were both probably printed from stones of 240 stamps, arranged in a layout of 10x24, and delivered in orders of 30,000 stamps (125 sheets) at a time.

The rounded border in the Type VI stamps is slightly flatter than the Type V design, but not as flat as the Type VII stamps. The text is slightly messier than the Type V stamps, and the center ornaments are less distinct.



TYPE VI
ENLARGED BY 250%



145L2
TYPE VI
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



TYPE VI
ENLARGED BY 250%

The key identifier of the Type VII stamps is the hyphen between "West" and "Town". The rounded border is the flattest in this type, and the center ornaments are almost indistinguishable from the points.



145L2
TYPE VII
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L2
TYPE VII
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L2
TYPE VII
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L2
TYPE VII
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE



145L2
TYPE VII
GENUINE
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

Forgery A is one of the most deceiving forgeries of the large West Town School stamp, and was once illustrated as genuine in the Scott *Specialized Catalogue* (newer editions now show a genuine photo). This forgery is based on the Type I stamp, with the text shifted to the left.

This forgery was printed in sheets of 12, arranged in a wide spaced 4x3 grid. Half the stamps on each sheet were printed upside down, resulting in the potential for tête-bêche pairs.

On this forgery, the left rounded border is slightly misshapen - it is not as circular as the original. There are also more points on the border (25/26 vs 22/24).



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
VERTICAL PAIR - TÊTE-BÊCHE



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ BROWN
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ BLACK
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ RED BROWN
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ RED
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY A
"TYPE I"
2¢ GRAY
ON WHITE
(145L1)

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

The cover below is a West Town forgery - the fake stamp was applied to a genuine cover to appear more legitimate. West Town stamps were only genuinely used from the West Town school in Pennsylvania, and were usually affixed to the back of envelopes.



FORGERY A - "TYPE I"
2¢ GOLD (SHADE) ON WHITE
ON COVER (DID NOT ORIGINATE) WITH
11A : 3¢ DULL RED (TYPE II)
CLIFTON SPRINGS, N.Y. CDS - AUGUST 6

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

Forgeries B, C, and D are from illustrations published by J.B. Moens. Moens published his own catalogue of stamps, and also published the French-language printing of Charles Coster's work. Coster and Moens shared illustrations of locals, so it is uncertain which creator is responsible for the forgeries; designs. All of these forgeries are known on in black on pink paper, which has French catalogue text on the reverse.

Forgery B is based on the Type I stamp. It can be identified by the number of points around the curved border. This forgery has 21 point on the left border, and 22 on the right; and the top left diamond is attached to the design rectangle.



FORGERY B
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE I"
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY B
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE I"
2¢ GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(145L1)



1724



PHOTOCOPY FROM
LES TIMBRES POSTE
ILLUSTRES 1883

FORGERY B (UPPER)
FORGERY C (LOWER)
ENLARGED 200%



FORGERY B
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE I"
2¢ BLACK
ON WHITE
(145L1)



FORGERY B
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE I"
2¢ BLACK
ON PINK (ALBUM)
(145L1)



FORGERY B
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE I"
2¢ BLACK
ON ORANGE
(145L1)

Forgery C is loosely based on Type IV. It takes several artistic liberties, including a curvier round border and the addition of tiny fleur-de-lis in the rectangle corners.



FORGERY C
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE IV"
2¢ BLACK
ON CREAM
(145L1)



FORGERY C
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE IV"
2¢ BLACK
ON PINK (ALBUM)
(145L1)

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

Forgery D is based on the small, Type V stamp. This forgery is identified by the long and slightly curved bottom of the "E" in "West". The curved binocular-shaped borders are slightly rounder/taller than the genuine stamp.



PHOTOCOPY FROM
LES TIMBRES POSTE
ILLUSTRES 1883

ENLARGED 200%

1703



FORGERY D
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE V"
2c BLACK
ON PINK (ALBUM)
(145L2)



FORGERY D
AFTER MOENS
"TYPE V"
2c BLACK
ON CREAM
(145L2)

Forgery E is based on the illustration published in J.W. Scott's albums and catalogues. It is a copy of the Type VII design, with the hyphen between "West" and "Town".

A key identifying point on the Forgery E stamps is the lack of dots within the center ornament bulbs.



ILLUSTRATION
SCOTT ALBUM CUT
"FORGERY E" - TYPE VII
2c BLACK ON CREAM
1886



FORGERY E
AFTER SCOTT
"TYPE V"
2c GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(145L2)



FORGERY E
AFTER SCOTT
"TYPE V"
2c GOLD (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(145L2)



FORGERY E
AFTER SCOTT
"TYPE V"
2c BLACK
ON PALE GREEN
(145L2)

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

S. A. Taylor created three different designs using the West Town name. His Bogus 1 is the most similar to the real design, and could possibly be considered a "forgery", although there is little mistaking it for genuine. The "binocular" shape rounded border is replaced with a more spade-shaped design, and the corner ornaments are greatly reduced.



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM 8
YELLOW
ON WHITE



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM 8
PURPLE
ON WHITE



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM 8
PURPLE
ON YELLOW



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM 9
BLACK
ON WHITE



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM 9
BLACK
ON PINK SC



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM 9
BLACK
ON SCARLET SC



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM AA3
GOLD
ON GREEN SC



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM AA3
GOLD
ON MAGENTA SC



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM AA3
GOLD
ON PALE VIOLET SC



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM AA3
GOLD
ON BRIGHT PURPLE SC



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM AA3
GOLD
ON BRIGHT BLUE SC



BOGUS 1
TAYLOR - FORM AA3
GOLD
ON BROWN SC

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

Bogus 2 is another Taylor creation. It is very different from the genuine stamps - much larger with the curved shape in the center pinched in two places, creating three "bulbs". The background rectangle is crosshatched, and includes two stars above and below the center shape. "West-Town" is written with a hyphen.



BOGUS 2
TAYLOR - FORM B4
CARMINE
ON WHITE



BOGUS 2
TAYLOR - FORM B4
PALE RED
ON WHITE (THIN PAPER)



BOGUS 2
TAYLOR - FORM B4
PALE RED
ON OFF-WHITE

The final Taylor design, Bogus 3, is also in the small format. "West-Town" (with hyphen) is written in a spiky, curved "binocular" shape, over a rectangular background of dots. Colorless dots are placed in all four corners of the background, and also in the middle, above and below the points in the center shape.



BOGUS 3
TAYLOR - FORM B5
VIOLET
ON WHITE



BOGUS 3
TAYLOR - FORM B5
VIOLET
ON CREAM



BOGUS 3
TAYLOR
BRIGHT RED
ON WHITE



BOGUS 3
TAYLOR
PINK
ON WHITE

This strange bogus stamp, listed as Bogus 4, is unattributed to any known forger. It is built from messy black type reading "West Town / Despatch" in a hand-drawn rectangular border.



BOGUS 4
BLACK
ON GRAY

WEST TOWN SCHOOL

The Southeastern Pennsylvania and Delaware stamp society used the West Town stamp in the seal for their 15th exhibition show in 1953. This was appropriate, as it was the 100th anniversary of the first West Town stamp issue. The seals were sold at 10¢ each.



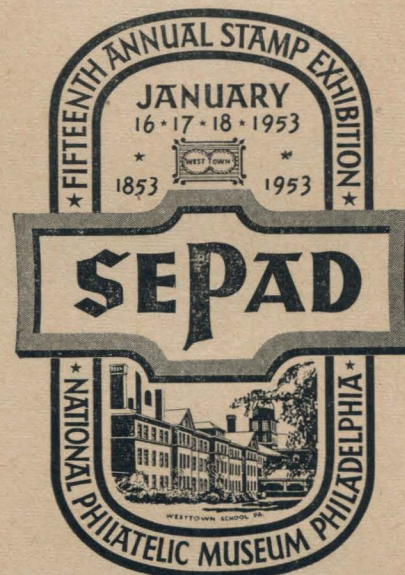
STAMP SHOW SEAL
SEPAD - 1953

ARTICLE FROM
STAMPS - JANUARY 17, 1953

Stamps. Jan. 17, 1953

SEPAD 1953

THE National Philatelic Museum in Philadelphia will be the scene for the 15th annual exhibition of the Southeastern Pennsylvania and Delaware group known as SEPAD. The dates are January 16, 17, and 18, and admission will be free. We are advised that some of the best known collections will be shown, and there will also be a stamp dealers' bourse.



Design of 1953 SEPAD Seal

This year SEPAD is featuring the West Town Locals in its seal. These can be purchased at 10c each, plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope from George T. May, 4804 Chester Ave., Philadelphia 43, Pa. There will also be special postal cancellations with long and short bars, which may be obtained from Mr. May at 10c each on cacheted envelopes; airmail covers, 15c. The colors of the seal and cachet are blue and gold.

The National Philatelic Museum is located at Broad and Diamond Streets, Philadelphia, and all collectors are invited to attend the event.

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Price List of France