

# The 3¢ Connecticut Tercentenary Issue of 1935

## And Its First Days

SYNOPSIS as of 2012-07-27

**PURPOSE & SCOPE:** This is a multi-frame “Traditional” First Day exhibit of the 3¢ Connecticut Tercentenary stamp of 1935 (Scott #772). First Day covers shown include those postmarked on its official date of issue, April 26, 1935, as well as covers from the first day of general release (a.k.a. 2nd-day covers), mainly from Washington, D.C. The imperforate version of the design, one of four designs included in the 1936 TIPEX souvenir sheet, is NOT included in this exhibit.

**TREATMENT:** Following the Traditional format, this exhibit starts with a study of the stamp. Photo essays (ex Sol Glass) are followed by large and small die proofs and a color trial, then a study of the plates and plate varieties. Six plates were used to print this stamp, but two plates, 21391 and 21396 were not sent to press in time for the first day. Plate blocks of the four plates available on April 26 are shown on cover in the exhibit. Alas, EFOs for this issue are virtually unknown.

The main section on the First Day covers begins with the circular sent by the Third Assistant Postmaster General to postmasters. (Note that the issue date for this stamp precedes the use of philatelic announcement cards that were sent to collectors.) The FDCs are arranged by the main design element, starting with those depicting the Charter Oak tree. First cachets are indicated by the symbol ❶. Sets of cacheted covers are kept together and shown at the end of this subsection. Unofficial FDCs follow in the next subsection arranged first by towns in Connecticut in alphabetical order, then by towns in other states, ships and RPOs.

Note that covers showing special services (e.g. airmail, registered, special delivery, etc.), auxiliary markings, foreign destinations, etc. are interspersed in the FDC section. These will be highlighted with judicious use of bold text.

The exhibit concludes with commercial and private uses. Examples shown are restricted to contemporaneous uses.

Key and important items are highlighted with a “rich lilac” border (as suggested for the stamp color by FDR).

**IMPORTANCE:** While not of the “classic” FDC era, the Connecticut Tercentenary issue enjoys the status of being issued prior to the use of the now common FDOI cancel. A number of important cachet makers created their first commercial covers for this issue, including William Grandy, O.W. Lindquist, Henry K. Manger, William Weiss and others.

**KNOWLEDGE, STUDY & RESEARCH:** The exhibit includes a number of cachets and cachet varieties not listed in *Planty/Mellone’s*. Likewise, over a dozen and a half unofficial covers for towns not listed by Colby are also shown, including Air Mail Field from Washington, D.C. These items will be identified by the symbol ❁ in the exhibit.

To identify all cancels used in Hartford on the First Day, I conducted a survey of covers from my collection and those of fellow collectors of the issue. This also established the relative rarity of each can-

cel. This study is presented in the exhibit prior to the section of cacheted covers.

I have discovered that the cachet attributed to “Dodd” as his first cachet (Planty #772-32) is inaccurate. While the engraving was indeed created by William H. Dodd, it was for the cover of a small booklet, a tribute to the fallen Charter Oak tree, published in 1856. (The original booklet is included in the exhibit.) Born in 1826, Dodd was long dead when the stamp was issued. The cachet most likely was printed by Case, Lockwood & Co., the succeeding company to Case, Tiffany & Co, which originally commissioned the engraving from Dodd. The image has been used in a variety of ways since its first use in 1856, up to the present where it is used as the logo for a tree and landscaping service.

The six-cachet set (Planty #772-42a through #772-42f) is listed without attribution. Due to the discovery of a business size envelope with enclosed newsletter, this set has now been identified as being created by Grant and Lyon Hobby Shop of Providence, RI. Owners Donald M. Grant and Stephen C. Lyon were granted permission to use the six images from the 1935 calendar distributed by Travelers Insurance Company of Hartford.

**RARITY & CONDITION:** Created over seventy-five years ago, many FDCs for this issue show signs of age: worn, tattered, stained and toned. The covers shown in this exhibit are of the best quality possible, most in pristine condition, even though the vast majority passed through the mails.

Pre-production material for early 20th century stamps is rare. This exhibit includes a large die proof, two varieties of small die proofs, as well as a color trial.

Many unofficial FDCs are shown in this exhibit, a number of which are not listed by Colby. For many of the small towns in Connecticut, only a handful of covers were created.

While a number of unlisted cachets and cachet varieties are shown, which presumably were created in very small quantities, if not one-offs, the highlight of the exhibit is a hand-painted add-on cachet by Dorothy Knapp, from the Jarrett estate sold in 2009, one of just 3-4 (as estimated by James McCusker).

#### **REFERENCES:**

*Mellone's Planty Photo Encyclopedia of Cacheted First Day Covers, Volume VIII 1935-1936*, 1997 edition by Michael A. Mellone; FDC Publishing. The Connecticut Tercentenary issue is covered on pages 5-24.

*Checklist of US FDC Predates and Unofficials 1922 to Mid-1936*, by Robert P. Colby; published 2002 by American First Day Cover Society. See pages 34-35. Note: issue date is incorrectly stated as May 26, 1935 and “Tollan” should be “Tolland” in the list of unofficial towns.

*Encyclopedia of Plate Varieties on U.S. Bureau-Printed Postage Stamps*, by Loran C. French; published 1977 by Bureau Issues Association, Inc. See page 249.

*The United States Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century*, Volume 4, by Max G. Johl; published 1938 by H.L. Lindquist. See Chapter IX, pages 153-161.