

The Cover Story

The TASC0 Educational Booklets by Francis Ferguson

It is kind of strange how things come around in one's life to be revisited many decades later. As a very young and inexperienced collector, I recall seeing a TASC0 Booklet on the CSA. The booklet at the time was of mild interest, but soon forgotten in favor of more interesting material. If memory is correct that CSA booklet [Figure A1 on front cover and Figures A2 & A3 on front cover of two of the inside pages] was in the material that I was given as an 8 year old – that had been in my father's "collection" when he was a kid. What happened to that booklet – I have not a clue.

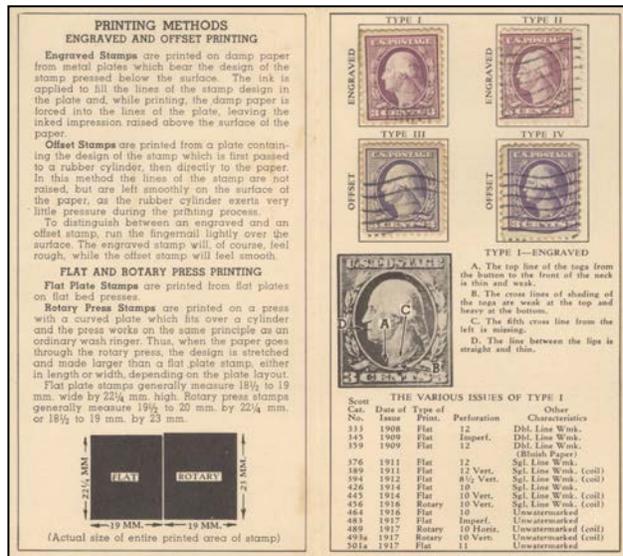
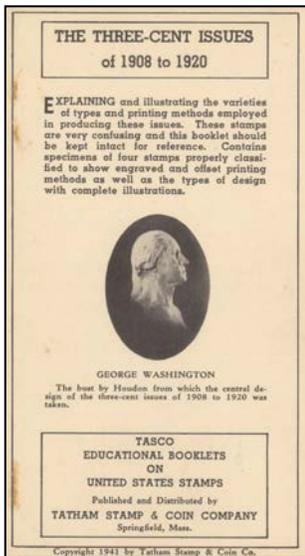


Figures A4

Over the years I have read articles on the TASC0 Booklets – again with only passing interest. It was at a recent club meeting night, that an offer of seven of the booklets, sparked a more concerted interest in obtaining more. (Thank you Peter!) Now for the story about the TASC0 Booklets.

Published and distributed by the Tatham Stamp & Coin Company of Springfield, MA, these educational booklets served to educate those in the philatelic world, but also provided a marketing tool for Tatham to keep the name in the public eye. The name TASC0 comes from the business name: **T**atham **S**tamp **C**ompany. From 1938 until 1956, a series of booklets covered topics ranging from "The One Cent Issues of 1870 to 1888 [Figures A4]", to "The Three-Cent Issues of 1908 to 1920 [Figures A5]" to "The Three cent issues of 1870 to 1887 [Figures A6]" appeared. There are up to 17 different types of the booklets – denoted by T1, T2, T3 T15. But it does not end there, as numerous varieties can be found within the types as the information and presentation was changed over the years. While many of the TASC0 Booklets can be considered to be reasonable in cost to obtain (under \$75) -- there are a couple, that are on the expensive side between \$150 and \$225. I would estimate all types and varieties with envelopes should be obtainable for around \$1,200 – if they can be found!

Most all of the booklets are folded with four printing surfaces, however there are a couple of tri-folds with the resulting 6 display surfaces. The CSA booklets have 8 display surfaces and glassine interleaving to protect the facsimile examples mounted on the pages. The booklets are all produced with the same type of off-white card like stock. Most all the booklets contain example stamps and descriptive text. The booklets came in a tight fitting envelope that could be of any number of colors ranging from buff to orange to blue.

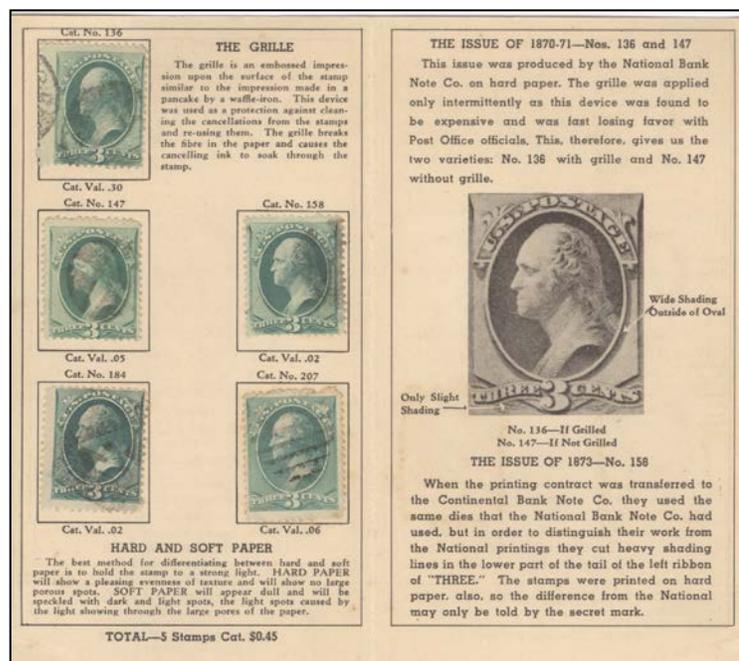
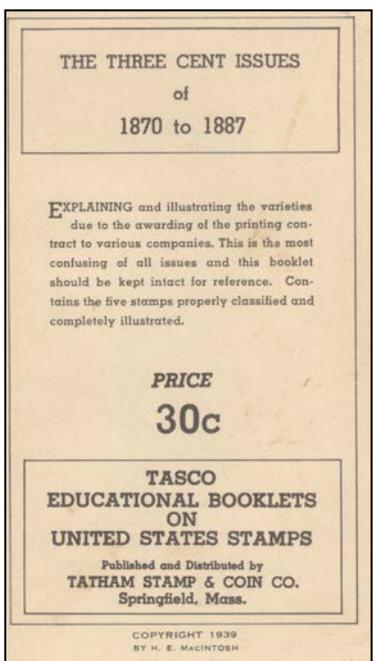


Figures A5

I currently own 8 of the booklets (one being a duplicate) and I am actively seeking more. While I am still learning the idiosyncratic nature of these booklets my guess is there are around 30 different types and varieties. Since each booklet also included an envelope – that adds another dimension to the hunt. So far I have yet to obtain an envelope with any of my purchases.

A brief look see on the world wide web shows a number of types available for sale on eBay and other sites. Prices depend on condition and the perceived value of the seller; some are in the reasonable range while others can only be described as outrageous!

We are by nature collectors; I believe that adding sub-collections like this to my main collecting interests just adds a further dimension of interest to being a philatelic collector – or as some view it – I am a hoarder!



Figures A6

If anyone has any of these booklets, please let me know.