

PERKINS BACON LIBERIAN STAMPS OF 1897-1912

OBJECTIVE OF THIS EXHIBIT

This traditional exhibit documents the development and usage of stamps produced by Perkins Bacon for Liberia between 1897 and 1912, illustrating proofs, specimens, color and perforation variations, rates and sample stamps. This exhibit will not address the Liberian overprints made on these stamps after 1912.

There are three broad categories of stamps in this exhibit:

- The Definitive Pictorial Issues of 1906 and 1909
- Inland Postage and Registration stamps
- Post-Production Sample Stamps.

BACKGROUND

Henry L. Hayman was at one time the President of the Herts Philatelic Society, but he also held numerous positions in the Liberian Government, including Acting Minister Resident in Great Britain (1891) and Consul-General in London. In 1891 Hayman received a contract for the design, production and supply of Liberia's stamp issues, which lasted through 1918. It was Hayman's vision to produce high quality Liberian Pictorial Stamp Issues, printed by the line-engraved process. All previous Liberian stamps were lithographed (1860-1892). Hayman first contracted Waterlow & Sons for Liberia's Definitive stamps for the years 1892-1905, then he switched to Perkins Bacon for the 1906 and 1909 Definitive Issues. Perkins Bacon also produced the Inland Postage stamps between 1897 and 1912.

Perkins Bacon continued the pictorial themes of fauna, flora, national symbols and native scenes that began with the pictorial issues Hayman made with Waterlow and Sons in 1892. Designs for these local subjects were taken from a book by Sir Harry Johnson titled "Liberia", published by Hutchinson. The 1909 10c also continued the theme of "Commerce" on a triangle stamp, similar to Waterlow's 1894 5c triangle.

DISCUSSION

There are distinct and notable differences in the die proof and color trial archival material available for the issues shown, likely corresponding to process changes at Perkins Bacon during the 1903-1909 timeframe:

- The 1903 3c Inland Postage Issue contains large die proof color trials, as well as die proof perforated color trial sheetlets and plate proof color trials.
- The 1906 Definitive Issue large die proofs are very scarce. Color trials were conducted using perforated die proof sheetlets and plate proofs.
- The 1909 Definitive Issue contains many large die proof color trials, but perforated die proof sheetlets and color plate proofs are very scarce.

Rates during this timeframe were in multiples of 5c; postcard rates were 3c until 1909 when they dropped to 2c. Inland mail was 3c. Only one local usage of an 1897-1912 3c Inland Postage stamp has been reported, and it is in this exhibit. Unlike the 1890s where franking of mail with Official Service stamps was highly restricted to government mail only, beginning in 1903 Official Service stamps started to become available, and were accepted for non-official use at post offices. All overprints/surcharges shown in this exhibit were made by Perkins Bacon.

ORGANIZATION

This exhibit is organized in Chronological sections:

1. 1897 3c Inland Postage	Frame 1	6. 1906 Sample Stamps	Frame 6
2. 1903 3c Inland Postage	Frame 1-2	7. 1909 3c Inland Postage	Frame 6
3. 1903 Registration Stamps	Frame 2	8. 1909 Definitive Issue	Frame 6-8
4. 1906 Definitive Issue	Frame 2-5	9. 1909 Definitive Issue, Official	Frame 8-9
5. 1906 Definitive Issue, Official	Frame 5-6	10. 1910-1912 3c Inland Postage	Frame 9