

# The Colors of the US 5¢ 1856-61 Issue and the Problem with Scott's

The *Scott U.S. Specialized Catalog*, the catalog most frequently used by collectors of U.S. stamps, contains eight listings for the 5¢ stamp of 1856-61. Unbeknownst to most collectors, predominantly as a result of the low number of dated covers available for many of the color varieties, the order of the Scott listings for the 5¢ stamp are incorrect. This exhibit will show, through the use of dated covers, the colors, the true order of release, and uses of the 5¢ stamp of 1856-61.

## Background:

Between the demonetization of the 5¢ 1847 issue in 1851, and the release of the new 5¢ denomination in 1856, the United States was without a stamp in carrying this face value. A 5¢ red brown stamp with a portrait of Thomas Jefferson was issued in 1856 with the earliest documented usage on March 24<sup>th</sup> of that year. Approximately 14 months later, the government specified that stamps receive perforations to facilitate separation. Toppan, Carpenter, & Co., the printers of these stamps under contract to the US Government, commenced to provide such perforated stamps by adding rows of perforation holes to previously printed sheets. As supplies were depleted, additional sheets were printed from the original plates and perforated for release. These later printings introduced color variations.

The original plates were not designed with spacing for rows of perforations. Toppan, Carpenter would eventually produce a new plate with adjustments made to increase the inter-image spacing. This involved creating a new transfer roll with the upper and lower design projections of each stamp removed, creating a second “type” for this stamp. These stamps remained in use until demonetized in late 1861 in order to prevent the secessionist states from receiving value from U.S. stamps remaining in Southern post offices.

The improperly ordered *Scott* catalog numberings are highlighted in **Yellow**

Color	Earliest Documented Usage	Scott Cat. #	Type		Estimated Stamps Printed	Estimated Covers Remaining
Red Brown	March 24, 1856	12	Type I	Imperforate	600,000	≈ 350
Red Brown	August 22, 1857	28	"	Perforate	---	≈ 150
Indian Red	March 31, 1858	28A	"	"	50,000	≈ 35
Bright Red Brown	***	28b	"	"	---	---
Brick Red	October 6, 1858	27	"	"	135,000	≈ 85
Brown	March 21, 1859	29	"	"	510,000	≈ 250
Brown	May 4, 1860	30A	Type II	"	825,000	≈ 350
Orange Brown	May 8, 1861	30	"	"	570,000	≈ 40

\*\*\* The color of the Bright Red Brown is closer, spectrographically, to the Indian Red shade than any Red Brown shade. Though some believe it was the product of a separate, late 1858 printing, it appears more likely that it should be renamed “Dull Indian Red” and be considered part of the March 1858 printing.

IMPERFORATE  
BRITISH OPEN MAIL

SCOTT 12 – RED BROWN  
AUGUST 1856  
SEPTEMBER 1856



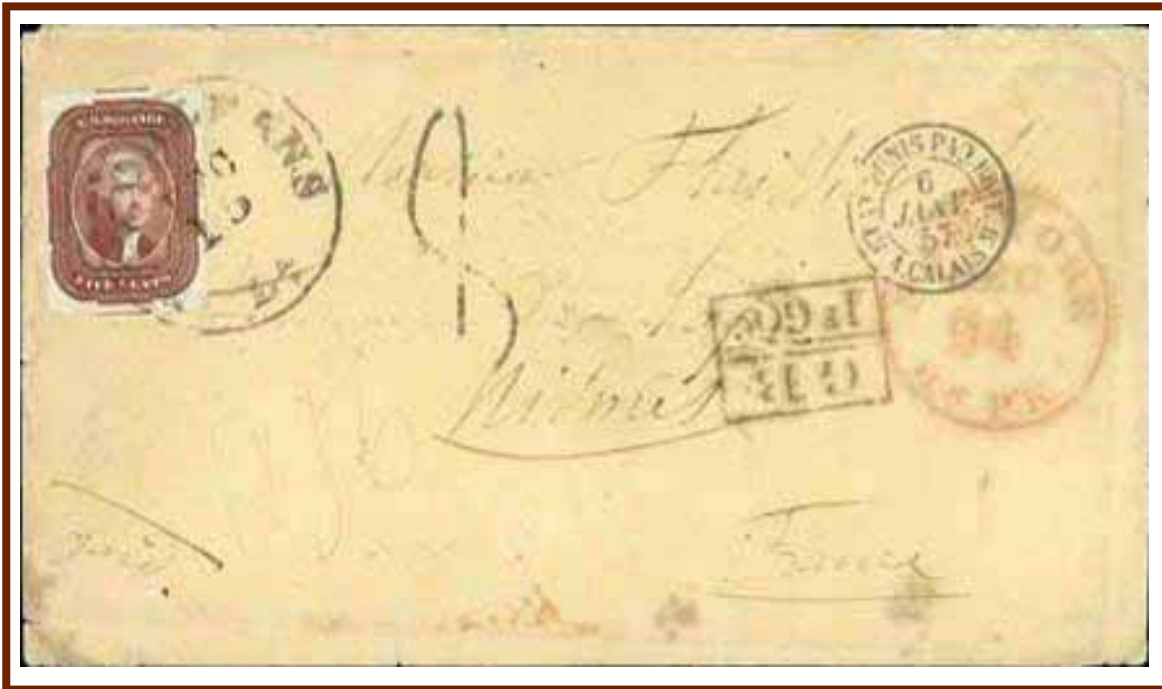
**August 25, 1856.** New Orleans, LA through New York, to France. Red brown, Type I. Adhesive paid the 5¢ British Open Mail rate. *PF Cert 264 301*



**September 8, 1856.** New Orleans, LA through New York, to France. Folded letter and prices current with merchant's handstamp. Black "New Orleans La / Sep 8" datestamp, red "New York Br. Pkt / Sep 17" exchange office datestamp. Carried on the Cunard Line *Persia*. Liverpool 29 Sep 56 and Calais 30 Sep 56 transit and "Nantes / 1 Oct 56" receiving datestamps. Black French "13" (decimes) due handstamp.

**IMPERFORATE  
THREE MONTHS PERIOD**

**SCOTT 12 – RED BROWN  
FEBRUARY 1857**



**December 15, 1856.** New Orleans, LA through New York, to France. Black “New Orleans La / Dec 15” datestamp; red “New York Br. Pkt / Dec 24” exchange office transit datestamp. Liverpool “5 JA 1857” transit and “Etats-Unis Paq. Brit. A. Calais / 6 Janv. 57” French entry datestamps. “Nimes 8 Janv. 57” receiving datestamp on verso. Black “GB / 1<sup>F</sup> 60<sup>C</sup>” British accountancy and black French “8” (decimes) due handstamps.

*Carried on the first sailing of British packet service during the Three Months Period.*

On January 1, 1857, a new postal treaty between Great Britain and France went into effect reducing the French due charges on mail transiting through Britain. On April 1, 1857, a new treaty between the United States and France went into effect standardizing rates between the two countries at 15¢ per ¼ ounce. The period between these two rate changes is referred to as the “Three Months Period.” Only sixteen British and seven American packets carrying mail for France and beyond departed during this period.

**IMPERFORATE  
DEFFECTIVE TRANSFER**

**SCOTT 12 – RED BROWN  
MAY 1857**



**May 10, 1857.** New Orleans, LA through New York to France. Vertical strip of three paying the simplified 15¢ treaty rate that took effect April 1, 1857. Positions 3/13/23R with the defective transfer of position 23R. Black “New Orleans / May 10 1857 / La” datestamp; red “Paid / New York / May 19 / 12” exchange office transit datestamp, French “Et. Unis Serv. Br. A. C. 1 Juin 57” entry “Reims 2 Juin 57” arrival datestamp on verso.



*Only recorded example of the position 23R defective transfer in an imperforate strip, on or off cover.*

**SCOTT 28 – RED BROWN  
OCTOBER 1857  
DECEMBER 1857**



**October 11, 1857** – New Orleans, LA through Boston to France – Paying twice the 15¢ per ¼ ounce rate to Bordeaux, France. Red “Boston / Paid / 21 October / 24” exchange office credit stamp and red November 2, 1857 French transit datestamp on face and Paris and Bordeaux transit and receiving datestamps on reverse.



**December 19, 1857** – New Orleans, LA through New York, to France – Red Brown, Type I. Red New York December 26 exchange office credit stamp and black January 9, 1858 French transit datestamp on face.

SCOTT 28A – INDIAN RED  
JUNE 1858



**June 21, 1858.** New Orleans, LA. Indian Red, Type I. New Orleans circular datestamp; Red “BOSTON / JUN / 30 / PAID / 12” exchange office datestamp; Black French “12 JUL 58” transit datestamp. *PSE Cert 128 783*

The Indian Red color of the 5¢ Type I stamp is the first color other than the Red Brown of the imperforate stamps to be released, implying that a new printing was made during the first quarter of 1858. The Indian Red color has an earliest known usage of March 31, 1858, about seven months after the first perforated stamps appeared.

**SCOTT 28 – RED BROWN  
OCTOBER 1858**



**October 18, 1858.** Philadelphia, PA to Sydney, Cape Breton. Red Brown, Type I. "10" cent rate handstamp and "8d" due marking, Boston and Halifax transit, and Sydney receiving backstamps.

Stamps used in late 1858 fall within a range of shades in the “red brown,” “Indian red,” and “bright red brown” family of colors. Determination of a specific named shade for any individual stamp is currently subjective. As can be seen, a stamp labeled “red brown” by experts may more closely resemble that of Indian red. Likewise, the “bright red brown” stamp shown here required a six-month stay at the Philatelic Foundation prior to a consensus on color being reached. However, all of the stamps of this period share the same spectrographic footprint indicating that they are most likely of the same printing using the same batch of printing ink. Later differences would then be due to fading and other environmental reactions..

TO GENOA, ITALY

SCOTT 28b – BRIGHT RED BROWN  
NOVEMBER 1858



**November 22, 1858.** New Orleans, LA, through New York and London. Bright Red Brown, Type I. Cover franked with single of the 5¢ with pair of 10¢, strip of three and single of 3¢ red brown, type IIa, and 1¢ blue paying 38¢ which would have paid the Prussian Closed Mail rate to Genoa. *PF Cert 431 396*

Datestamps and postal markings:

- *New Orleans, LA, Nov 22, 1858* datestamp in black on face
- *New York, Dec 4, Am. Pkt.* exchange office datestamp in red on verso
- *London, DE 16, 58* transit datestamp in red on verso
- *Calais, 16 Dec 58* transit datestamp in black on face
- *Paris, 17 Dec 58* transit datestamp in black on verso
- *Genova, 19 Dec 58 Arrivo* datestamp in red on verso
  
- GB/40c accountancy mark indicating 40 centimes per 30 grams due as per Anglo/French convention of 1856 covering unpaid letters from the US carried by American packets through the British system.
- Manuscript “2” for double weight letter under the French system (between 7½ and 15 grams)
- Manuscript “16” Italian postage due for 1.6 lira due from recipient

Apparently missed the December 1 sailing of the HAPAG *Bavaria* which would have required this franking. The New York exchange office dispatched it on the next ship, the Inman Lines *City of Baltimore* which departed on December 4 for Great Britain with stamps overpaying the 21¢ British open mail rate by American packet.



**SCOTT 27 – BRICK RED  
NOVEMBER 1858**



**November 2, 1858.** New Orleans, LA. Brick Red, Type I. New Orleans circular date-stamp; red “PAID / NEW YORK / NOV / 20 / 12” exchange office datestamp; black French “23 NOV 58” transit datestamp.



**December 1860.** New Orleans, LA, through Boston to France. Red “Boston / 24 DEC / PAID / 6” exchange office datestamp and black January 5, 1860 French transit stamp. Black boxed “P.D.” indicates that the cover was paid to destination.

*Only known cover with an imprint multiple of the 5¢ type I stamp*

Toppan, Carpenter, Casilear & Co. **BANK NOTE ENGRAVERS**, Phila., New York, Boston & Cincinnati.

A survey of auction records of dated covers from New Orleans reveals that type I stamp usage exceeds that of type II for six months after the introduction of the type II stamps in other cities. As New Orleans was one of the greatest consumers of 5¢ stamps, this indicates there was likely a large stock of the type I stamps within the city at the time of the type II introduction.

**TO SPAIN  
TRANSITION FROM TYPE I TO TYPE II - 2<sup>nd</sup> HALF 1860**

**SCOTT 29 – BROWN  
SCOTT 30A – BROWN**

**Type I – June 5, 1860.** New Orleans, LA, through NY to Barcelona. Red London transit; black “España / La Junquera” and black “Barcelona 28 JUN 60” datestamps on verso. 5¢ open mail rate to Spanish border. 8 Reales due for local carriage (1/4-1/2 ounce)



**Type I Die**



**Type II – Dec. 22, 1860.** New Orleans, LA, through NY to Barcelona. Red London transit; black “España / La Junquera” and black “Barcelona 28 JUN 60” datestamps on verso. 5¢ open mail rate to Spanish border. 4 Reales due for local carriage (<1/4 ounce).



**Type II Die**

In 1860, a new die was created with the upper and lower projections removed and a second plate made to created with room between stamps for perforations. The Die II stamp was printed in the same brown color as the 1859 Die I stamps

TO SINGAPORE  
TYPE II ENGRAVER'S IMPRINT

SCOTT 30A – BROWN  
JANUARY 1861



**January 20, 1861.** Boston to Singapore. Four singles of 5¢ Brown, including two with imprint at right (originally a vertical pair – 40-50R2), used with 24¢ Gray Lilac and 1¢ Blue, Type II. Double rate letter by British mails, overland via Marseilles.

Toppan, Carpenter, & Co. **BANK NOTE ENGRAVERS.** Phila. New York. Boston & Cincinnati.  
No. 2

The type II stamp was printed from a new plate with the upper and lower projections on the design removed to create greater spacing for perforations. Toppan Carpenter & Co. used the opportunity to remove “Casilear” from the imprint, as he had left the firm in 1857. Toppan Carpenter transferred the first part of the imprint from the old transfer roll, rotated the roll and transferred the rest of the imprint. The new plate was designated “No. 2” on the second line of the imprint.



**April 29, 1861.** Washington, DC, through New York, Aachen, and Zurich, to Chur, Switzerland. Single of 5¢ Brown, Type II used with 30¢ orange paying 35¢ rate by Prussian Closed Mail. This rate was in effect from October 1852 through April 1863.

Datestamps and postal markings:

- *Washington, DC, April 29, 1861* datestamp in black on face;
- *New York April 1861 30 Paid* exchange datestamp in red on verso
- *Aachen May 14 Franco* boxed transit stamp in red on face
- *Bahnpost 16 V 61 St. Gallen* transit stamp in black on verso
- *Zurich 16 Mai 61 Vormittag* transit stamp in black on verso
- *Bahnpost 16 V 61 Zurich* transit stamp in black on verso
- *Chur 16 Mai 61 Vormittag* receiving stamp in black on verso

Likely traveled on the HAPAG Bavaria, which departed New York on May 4, 1861. This was the first sailing following the change from scheduled sailings on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month to a schedule of every Saturday sailings.

**FIRST DAY OF DAILY OVERLAND MAIL SERVICE  
CENTRAL ROUTE VIA SALT LAKE CITY**

**SCOTT 30A – BROWN  
JULY 1861**



**July 1, 1861** – San Francisco, CA – 5¢ Brown Type II, Position 68-70R2. Endorsed “By Overland Mail” above the stamps and routed by the Post Office by the central route via Salt Lake City on the first day of the daily overland mail service. The central route replaced the southerly Butterfield route which faced disruptions due to the escalating Civil War.

On March 12, 1861, service on the southern overland mail route (the Butterfield route) was ordered discontinued. The contractor moved horses and stock northward and the first through daily stages on the central route left St. Joseph and Placerville simultaneously on July 1, 1861. Both coaches reached their destination on the 18th, the time occupied in making the trip being a few hours over seventeen days, whereas, the schedule was twenty-five days by the southern route.

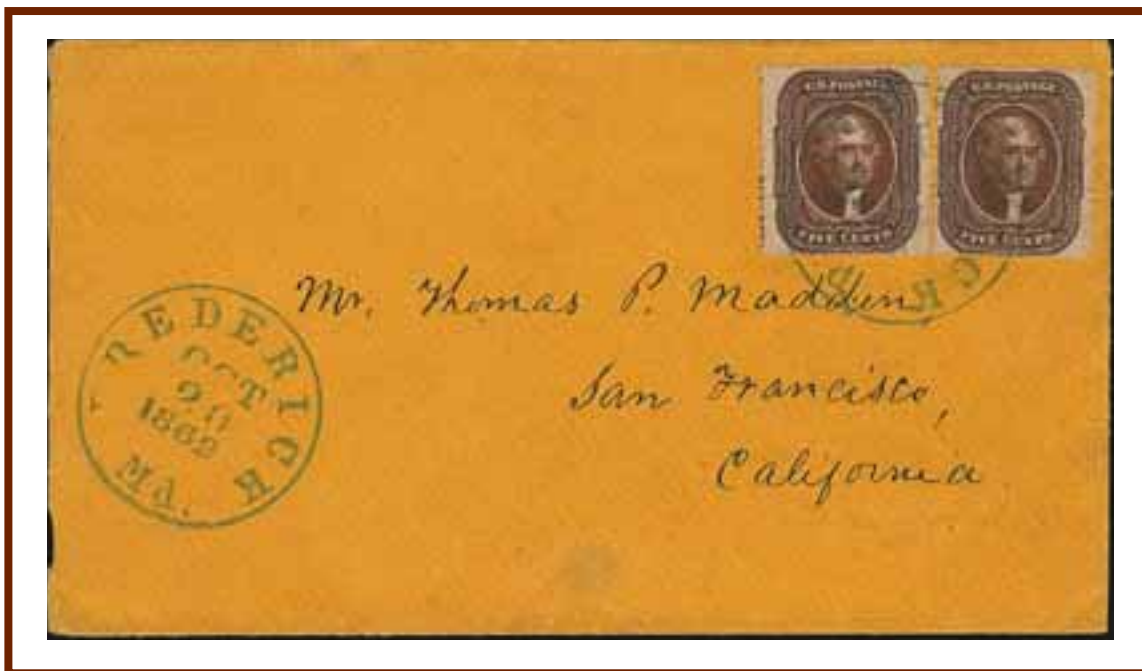
TO COLOGNE, PRUSSIA

SCOTT 30 – ORANGE BROWN  
SEPTEMBER 1861



**September 1861** – New York, NY to Cologne, Germany – Orange Brown, Type II. Smudged red “N YORK PAID HAMB PKT / SEP / ?? / 10” exchange office datestamp. Black oval “HAMBURG / 23/9.61” transit datestamp, black circular “Coeln / 24 / 9” receiving datestamps on verso. *PF Cert 41 386*

*Four covers are recorded with strips of three of the orange brown shade - two vertical strips and two horizontal strips. A strip of three is the largest known multiple on cover of the 5¢ orange brown.*



**October 20, 1862** – Fredrick, MD – Post demonetization usage accepted paying 10¢ rate for transcontinental mail. The issue of 1851-61 was demonetized in the latter half of 1861 to remove the value from any existing stamp stocks in Confederate hands.