

# “COMBO” FIRST DAY COVERS OF THE FOURTH BUREAU ERA

## SYNOPSIS

Colopex 2024, May 31-June 1, 2024

Revised 2/8/24

The term “Combination First Day Cover” can have several meanings—1. a cover which contains first day cancellations of stamps honoring the same person, event or theme but on different dates, 2. a first day cover containing a related stamp which does not have a first day cancellation or 3. a first day cover containing multiple different issues introduced on the same date, usually but not necessarily in the same city. The “Combos”, combination first day covers, of this exhibit have the latter definition and are all Fourth Bureau issues. The **purpose** of this **first day cover exhibit** of “Combos” is to demonstrate the criteria for date of issue and the frequency of common dates **from 1922 to 1938**. The early issues were printed on flat plate presses, the later issues on rotary presses.

In the Fourth Bureau there are 34 dates when more than one issue was introduced, and this exhibit demonstrates 26 of them. These “combos” are shown in the order that they were postmarked, except when the size of #10 envelopes necessitated placing them out of chronological order.

The policy of W. Irving Glover, the Third Assistant Postmaster General responsible for stamps during the Fourth Bureau, included releasing new stamps at a site of significance to the stamps’s subject, higher denomination stamp subjects which represented “America as it might be viewed by a newly arriving immigrant”, dates of introduction associated with the stamps’ subjects (e.g. Armistice Day for Arlington Amphitheatre and Statue of Liberty), and a tendency during the Republican administrations of the 1920’s to especially honor deceased Republican presidents (e.g. Grant, Hayes, T. Roosevelt, Garfield and McKinley).

“Combo” covers of the flat plate issues of the Fourth Bureau are much more scarce than the rotary issues and as a result I am missing two of them. Of the May 1, 1923 “Combo”, my cover is franked with Grant and the American Indian but does not have McKinley or Golden Gate. The Vermont and Burgoyne issues were both introduced on August 3, 1927, but in different cities. The Bennington, VT cancellation is 7 am, and the Albany, NY is 5 pm which allowed the servicer ten hours to travel the approximately 35 miles to create this “Combo” cover.

Several of the “Combo” covers contain at least ten issues. The May 1, 1929 Kansas and Nebraska Overprints have all eleven denomination issues on each cover. The January 1, 1932 Washington Bicentennial cover has all twelve new Washington definitives as well as all twelve of the old Series of 1922 definitives which were being replaced. Finally, the March 15, 1935 “Combo” includes the ten National Parks issues, Mothers of America, Wisconsin Tercentenary and the 16¢ Air Mail Special Delivery, all imperf. and all first day of issue.

First day cover collectors then (during the Fourth Bureau) and now are grateful to W. Irving Glover for initiating “press releases of upcoming first day of issue information for new postage stamps; not only for commemorative stamps, but for ordinary and special service stamps as well.”

This exhibit has been shown twice—at Garfield-Perry and Great American Stamp Show in 2023—both receiving Large Vermeil.

## REFERENCES:

The United States Fourth Bureau Issue 1922-1938, by Gary Griffith and Edited by Jay B. Stotts  
Linn’s United States Stamps 1922-1926, by Gary Griffith  
The United States Commemorative Stamps of the Twentieth Century, Vol. 1, by Max G. Johl