

# 100J

## The Summit of Stamp Collecting

**The** Monthly Grading Newsletter

Issue 20 / November-December 2018

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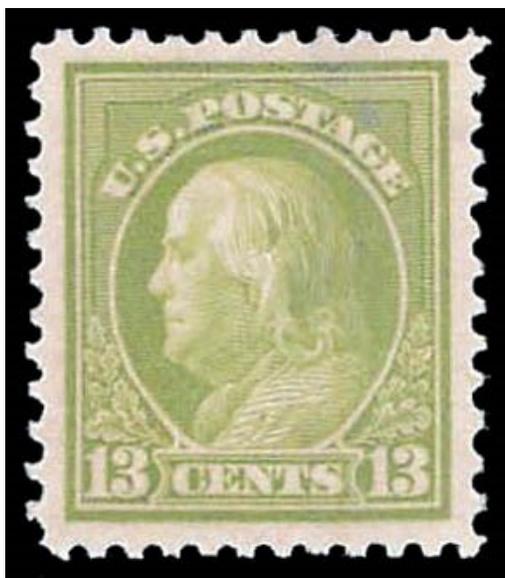
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### 100J of the Month

**100J is the highest grade that a stamp can be awarded.  
It is the summit of graded stamps. We start each issue with an example.  
Each example presented has some special significance associated with it.**

**Scott 513 / 13¢ Apple Green / Franklin Head / UPT \***



“You can’t judge a book by its cover.” This old adage translated into the philatelic world would read as, “You can’t understand the significance of a stamp by its appearance.”

This Franklin head definitive postage stamp has several stories attached to it.

First, it is a PSE graded-100J stamp. That alone qualifies this beauty as a special stamp.

Second, it is a unique population top (UPT), which makes this stamp a **VERY SPECIAL** stamp. This stamp is the best-centered known Scott 513 in the **entire world!**

Third, although unused, it is one of a very small number of UPT’s that is neither a never hinged (NH\*) nor a previously hinged (OG\*) unused stamp. It is a disturbed original gum (DOG\*) example.

Lastly, it is the only United States stamp printed in the apple green shade. While this fact is common to all Scott 513 stamps, it is just another interesting aspect of this stamp.

#### \* A New Column \*

Last month, we announced this new reader-support tool. Since not every **100J** reader is an expert in grading, we thought that inserting a glossary of grading terms used in our newsletter might help those collectors new to the grading world. Therefore, when we use a grading term for the first time in an issue, we will insert a red asterisk after the term. When you see \* you can turn to the last section in the issue and find the definition for that word. If you come across a grading term that you are not familiar with and it is not followed by \*, it may be in the glossary but not selected in the text because we have used it before (in the current or prior issues).

This unique stamp will be part of several articles to be published in the coming months.

Early in 2017, while browsing through a Kelleher Flagship auction, I was drawn to the picture of this stamp. When I read the description, I was hooked.

The description of this stamp stated that it had a 2016 PSE certificate grading it 100J. It also noted that the stamp had “*slightly disturbed OG*” (DOG).

An examination of the PSE population database\* revealed that this stamp was the only one graded 100J, thus making it a UPT (unique population top). See the population chart below.

<b>Scott 513</b>	PSE Population (as of October 14 <sup>th</sup> )									
Condition	Totals	≤85J	90	90J	95	95J	98	98J	100	100J
Used	27	11	4	3	4	3	2			
NG/RG/DG	4	2		1						1
OG	35	10	6	3	10	5		1		
NH	213	54	63	20	41	15	8	11	1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

*We have grouped all grades up to 85J for ease in viewing the population metrics.*

The Philatelic Foundation (PF\*) has graded 26 Scott 513s with the highest-graded stamp being one 98 NH. The PF graded stamps are not included above.

We have often written in **100J** that whenever a UPT is available, collectors need to pay attention, because such an opportunity may never occur again. After 16 years of grading, there is only one 100J of this stamp. While another could be discovered, the probability is low. My decision to acquire this stamp (despite being a DOG) was an easy one.

PSE does not value 100J stamps because of their very limited population. The next-highest-graded Scott 513 is a never hinged (NH) graded-100 single valued at \$1,350. What would you value this UPT graded 100J DOG? I purchased the stamp for \$240 (including the buyer's premium) and thought I obtained a bargain. Remember, today, it is the highest graded Scott 513 in the *entire world!!*

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**NOTE:** We have included in this issue an article about valuing 100J stamps. We will not provide readers with a definitive answer to this challenging question. What the article hopes to accomplish is to present the first detailed discussion on this subject. We need our readers to help continue the dialogue. Readers should submit their thoughts on this subject. In the issues to come, with your help, we will continue on the journey towards an answer (see pages 11-15)

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## In This Issue

### 100J of the Month *Pages 1 - 2*

We start each issue of **100J** with a PSE graded-100J stamp. The stamp selected possesses some significance, some story. This month we feature a Scott 513 that is also a **UPT**.

### Editor's Thoughts *Pages 5 - 6*

**Item 1:** Back issues of **100J**. We now have all our back issues waiting for you on our website. **Item 2:** With this being one of our two combined issues for the year, and because it is the holiday season, we want to make it a special issue. Therefore, we have **TWO** grading contests for you to win fame and fortune! **Item 3:** The New Year will be here before you can say 100J a thousand times. We share our grading resolutions with our readers. **Happy New Year!!**

### Topic of the Month *Pages 7 - 10*

**"Grading Creates Money - Out of Thin Air!"** This month's major discussion topic reveals the **"miracle of grading."** PSE used this concept in one of their earlier ads. While the concept is simple, it requires some thought. New grading collectors should pay close attention. This is at the heart of the **"window of opportunity"** we often discuss.

### Additional Feature *Pages 11 - 15*

**"Valuing 100J Stamps."** PSE does not value **ANY** 100J stamp. Their reasons are sound. There will come situations, however, when we need to value these "best of the best." While we won't provide a silver bullet answer, we will give you some solid underlying factors that will help in developing a 100J valuation. This is just the first discussion on this very fascinating topic.

### Tip of the Month *Pages 16 - 19*

This month, we are "tipping" one of the most beautiful bi-color stamps - the 6¢ airmail stamp, **Scott C23**. The metrics of this stamp will surprise you. While the lower-graded stamps are inexpensive and easy to acquire, higher-graded examples are very difficult to find.

**Philatelic World**  
*Pages 20 - 23*

**“Where Are All the WWI Armistice Covers?”** This is our **first non-grading article** in an issue of **100J**! The 100th anniversary of the end of World War I just passed. We have searched for a long time for a cover commemorating this earth-shaking event.

**The Pros Speak**  
*Pages 24 - 25*

Rich Spector presents another column on the technical aspects of grading. He answers questions on several topics including inclusions and the grading of coil line pairs.

**October Contest**  
*Page 26 - 27*

The October contest was won by a first-time winner - Gene Pica. Gene barely missed a clean sweep by correctly grading three stamps and missing the fourth by one grade.

**November Contest\$**  
*Pages 28 - 32*

**BIG NEWS!!** Since this is one of our two combined issues for the year, and since we are in the midst of the holiday season, we thought that we should provide our readers with **TWO grading contests in this issue**. The formats of the two contests are unique. ***The potential payout is \$300.***

**In Future Issues**  
*Page 33*

A partial listing of articles that will appear in the January 2019 issue of **100J**.

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**Glossary of Terms**  
*Pages A - C*

The start of a new reader-support tool, which is introduced on page 1. While it will start out with only a few terms, it will grow with each issue. It should provide help for all collectors, but especially those collectors new to grading.

## Editor's Thoughts

### **PREFACE**

I really had a problem when composing this part of **100J** for this issue. Normally, sharing my thoughts with you is an enjoyable task for me. For this combined issue, I started jotting down topics in early October. So much has occurred since that time, that I now have a page-long list of potential thoughts to include in this issue. I have also deleted a significant number because they became outdated or superseded by events.

By not making this section the longest part of issue 20, I have shaved down the list to only three items. I am sure that this will make the majority of readers very happy!

**Item 1.** If you haven't visited our website in the last 30 days, please take a few minutes to do this. While you will see the current issue, you will also see three blocks labeled "Past Issues 2016," "Past Issues 2017," and "Past Issues 2018." By placing your cursor on a block, you will see all the issues of the year you have selected. Click on any issue and it will appear. You can now read that issue on the screen or print it out.

There is also a Table of Contents for each year. Same procedure as for the past issues. There is also a small subscription form for those who wish a formal monthly subscription.

Now, people interested in past issues can obtain them on demand. While we did not issue a warning, we should have. If you would like a good laugh, select the February 2016 issue - issue number 1. The format is very different from today. The good news is that the content was not as simplistic as the format. We believe the content from issue 1 forward has maintained a decent level of expertise.

There are some very worthwhile articles. In fact, in the first few issues of 2019, we will revisit the topic of encapsulation ("Paper or Plastic" - issue number 2) and the NH premium ("Are Graded OG Priced Too Low?" - issue number 1 and "Part 3 - The NH Premium 'Best of the Best'" - issue number 5). That is just for starters.

On several occasions, I have been asked which article is the "best" one we have published. While answering that is virtually impossible, I will state that the article I recommend that everyone should read or reread is the article titled "**Window of Opportunity**" in issue number 14. This is the article that PSE reprinted in their 2018 SMQ. It discusses the current window of opportunity - the most significant collector opportunity in the history of our hobby (our opinion). We place a "**must read**" label on this article.

**Item 2.** The November-December issue (the one you are now reading) is one of our two annual combined issues (the other is the July-August issue). Since this issue is really two issues in one, we decided to provide our readers with **TWO, yes TWO**, grading contests.

While we have been successful in many aspects of this newsletter, we have yet to crack the code on increasing the participation in our grading contests. We receive entries from a small group of dedicated graders. We would like to see more entries arrive each month.

In trying to accomplish this goal, we have been experimenting with different formats trying to gauge which one generates the most interest. Therefore, the two contests in this issue are both different and have never been used before. At this point, many readers will have departed this column heading directly for the contest pages (pages 28 - 32). For those of you remaining here, let me describe the unique features of each contest.

**Contest 1** is made for those readers who like playing with numbers to obtain an answer. We present four stamps and ask you to grade them. We also supply the total PSE valuation for all four stamps, which will let you know whether your grading guesses are correct. If the total value of all four stamps you graded does not equal the PSE total value, you need to regrade one or more of the stamps. We think this will be a lot of fun.

**Contest 2** allows readers to drop one of the stamps in the contest. Usually there is one stamp that presents itself as your nemesis. Well now in the contest 2 format, you can drop that stamp from your entry. We will present you with five stamps for you to grade. You need only submit your four best guesses. The choice of which stamp to eliminate is yours to make.

We will treat each contest separately. The winners and awards will be made on Saturday December 29<sup>th</sup> in time to spend your contest money on having a great New Year's celebration.

We sincerely hope you enjoy the new formats and wish you the best of luck!! **The potential payout is \$300 (\$150 x 2)**. Winning would be a great way to end 2018 and start 2019!!

**Item 3.** The New Year is almost upon us. Before you know it, you will be watching the ball dropping in Times Square. I really enjoy the beginning of a New Year and still go through the exercise of making resolutions for the coming year. It is true that almost all the resolutions never survive the first week of the year, but this does not prevent me from going through this exercise. I think there is some value to assessing deficiencies and thinking about how to improve them. So, I am going to go through this exercise, not for me - but for **100J**. Below are the top five **100J** resolutions for 2019. More to come next year (January issue).

**"In 2019, we will ..."**

1. **Issue all ten issues on time.**
2. **Increase our subscriber base by 50%.**
3. **Increase the percentage of space devoted to newer grading collectors.**
4. **Establish one additional method of providing grading education to our readers.**
5. **Increase our grading knowledge, including listening to every PSE podcast.**

**I wish all of you a very happy, healthy, and prosperous 2019!  
Stay healthy and enjoy life! RDL**

## Grading Creates Money - Out of Thin Air!!

It is the “*miracle of grading*.”  
It is *the* concept that *all* collectors need to understand.

### PREFACE

The title may deceive you into thinking that we found a never-before-known discovery - a thrilling discovery of untapped potential. While the end result may be as impressive as the title indicates, the concept is simple and has been discussed many times before. The idea is so important that we must ensure that as many readers as possible understand the “*miracle of grading*.” So, please devote a few minutes of your time to read this article thoroughly. If you have any questions, please contact us. We will respond to your questions very quickly. This topic deserves to be discussed so that every reader understands its importance.

### PSE SAID IT ALL!!

When we first discussed this subject, the consensus was that we would start out with a discussion about how the government creates money. This would be a good way to transition into this “Topic of the Month.”

Well, the best laid plans... After performing what we consider adequate research, we realized that such an undertaking was beyond our ability and the scope of **100J**.

How money is created is a subject that has many aspects associated with it. None of the explanations are clear or consistent in their attempt to answer the question. For today, while not the actual truth, let's use the fiction of the government having the ability to print money. This seems to be the explanation that most people understand even though it is a very simplistic, and not fully accurate answer.

We consider this PSE ad to be *very effective in explaining why stamps should be graded.*

If you think about your portfolio of better-centered stamps, how much money could you create, out of thin air, by having them graded by PSE?

**GRADING MATTERS**

Graded **\$2,450**      Ungraded **\$110**

*Enough Said!*

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We will start our discussion of how grading creates money out of thin air with the PSE ad on the previous page. The ad was a very effective one that clearly displayed the “*miracle of grading*” - the creation of money by having a stamp graded.

While the stamps and valuations are intriguing, focus on what the ad clearly shows. Two very similar stamps, one ungraded and its “twin” graded. *This example created \$2,340 in money - out of thin air - JUST by being graded.*

Whenever an example is presented, we always need to ask ourselves, is this an example at the extreme edge of probability that could not be duplicated again? The answer is easy. NO.

This example is typical of what some of our readers duplicate on a frequent basis. We have shared with our readers some of the finds that Larry Hull has discovered. Remember his two C11s that he found in a plate block at a garage sale? In issue 14, our article titled “*Window of Opportunity*” discussed this at length. *That article is a must read!*

### **LARRY'S RECENT FINDS**

#### **Scott 654. PSE graded-100J. Certificate 01349976. UPT!**

Another Larry Hull find. Very similar story. This was one stamp in a small accumulation of stamps. The photo did not show the entire stamp but Larry had a hunch that proved accurate. He purchased the group of used stamps for less than \$10.

*This is a very special stamp being a UPT* - it is the highest-graded 654 and the only one to obtain the 100J grade.

The next highest used 654 is a 98J valued at \$350. While PSE does not value 100J stamps, we estimate a value of at least \$1,000.

*Larry created \$1,000+ of money out of thin air.* While there are other “big game hunters” out there, Larry seems to consistently bag the big ones.

This stamp is featured in another article in this issue - “Valuing 100J Stamps.” See page 11 - 15.





**Scott C4. PSE graded-100. Certificate 01351243.**

Larry obtained this gem by purchasing a cover franked with a block of four of C4 that included the plate number. The cover was heavily creased but Larry thought that this stamp was free of any of the creases. He paid \$6 for the cover.

The highest used C4 grade is 100. There are now two used graded-100 singles. PSE SMQ values this stamp at \$1,200.

Larry created \$1,194 out of thin air. Another great example of the *miracle of grading* and the *“window of opportunity.”*

**OUR MISSION**

Our mission - the reason why we went to the effort of creating this newsletter - is to help philately by educating collectors (and dealers) regarding the grading aspect of stamps. Formalized grading, begun by PSE in 2002, is the next natural step in the evolution of our hobby.

When we reflect on other hobbies, it was their adoption of grading (and encapsulation) that was responsible for moving their unsophisticated and unorganized activities into a vibrant growing hobby. Without grading, such hobbies as coins, currency, sports cards, comics, and others would never have enjoyed the phenomenal growth they have experienced over a period of a few decades.

While the philatelic hobby is well into its grading journey, our hobby has taken a longer time to fully accept grading. While this is a negative aspect, it has allowed the window of opportunity to remain open for a longer period.

One day when more collectors and dealers become grading experts, the window will start to close. No longer will you be able to purchase well-centered material for pennies on the dollar, thus ending the ability to create money out of thin air.

We are not there yet but each time we present stamps with such histories, we convince more collectors to search for gems among all the stamps being offered in public venues such as eBay, Hip Stamp, and auctions (especially in collections and lots). And who knows what ungraded gems may be hidden in your own collection?

***NOTHING NEW, BUT VITALLY IMPORTANT***

What we have described on these few pages is nothing new and certainly not rocket science. It is something PSE has tried to instill in everyone from the early days of stamp grading.

We are not certain how many collectors have reflected on their ability to create money - monetary returns - of significant amounts by finding well-centered ungraded material and having a few select stamps graded.

While we have focused in this discussion on the monetary aspect, there is another return involved. When Larry finds a stamp and submits it for grading and it comes back graded-100, graded-100J, or comes back as a PT or a UPT, he has a great feeling of accomplishment. While he has earned some monetary rewards, he has also earned some psychic income.

While making money is a worthwhile experience, everyone needs some psychic income in order to enjoy life. Whether it is the personal feeling of competing against fellow philatelists or a more universal feeling of helping the hobby, Larry has added a large quantity of highly-graded stamps to the PSE database. He has added to the wealth of our hobby by uncovering some of the best-centered stamps in the world!

We will be the first to admit that this article contains nothing new or earthshaking. It does, however, contain the most important and fundamental aspect of grading. With its simple message, you would think that everyone would understand the significance of this key grading characteristic.

We hope that we have finally reached ***YOU***. When this facet of grading is finally understood and accepted by the majority of collectors and dealers, our wonderful hobby will begin the journey to restore its glorious past. When the history of our hobby is written years from now, grading will be looked upon as the savior of stamp collecting ensuring not only its survival, but also its prosperity!

Grading has allowed us to state with an absolute feeling of honesty that ***philately's best days are yet to come!*** So let us end this article with our maxim -

***Grading is the most exciting new aspect  
of philately since stamps were first issued!***

Our holiday gift to our readers is this simple message.  
Grading is an activity that not only helps philately grow, but also brings significant pleasure to those that find stamps that ***create money out of thin air!***

## VALUING 100J STAMPS

This is our first attempt to address a very challenging subject. You can expect that future discussions will refine our initial thoughts. More than ever before, we will need your contributions if we hope to bring clarity to a method that will eventually provide realistic valuations for 100J stamps.

### PREFACE

PSE does not value **ANY** 100J stamp. They have a very sound reason for this action. 100J stamps are usually extremely rare and normally possess a very limited sales history. This profile makes establishing a realistic valuation an almost impossible task. Despite this major challenge, there are occasions when establishing a valuation is needed.

Our monthly newsletter, **100J**, is undertaking a series of discussions attempting to shed light on this subject. To produce an enlightened methodology, we will need your help. More on this later in this article.

### INTRODUCTION

PSE pricing is a fact-based system. Rather than obtain subjective thoughts from dealers or their price lists, PSE is looking at actual sales. What an item is worth can be objectively viewed only from what an item sold for in a fair and equitable marketplace. Such data is very time-consuming to acquire. It originates with auction house sales, other public sources such as eBay, and sites that freely publish their sales data.

This does not mean that you need to find a public price for every stamp. For example, suppose you have a set comprising five individual stamps. To correctly price each item, you might only need to obtain prices for three of the five stamps in the set. You can deduce the other two values with a fair degree of accuracy. The point to be made is that the prices are based on objective data from a public venue - not just opinions as is seen all too often today.



Larry Hull found this stamp on eBay in an accumulation of other used stamps.

The entire small group cost him a whopping \$10. See page 8 for a full discussion.

We will use Larry's new find in our initial 100J valuation attempt.

**FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED**

**There is NO magic formula for estimating the value of a 100J stamp.** There are, however, certain factors that can help to value these summit stamps. Here is a summary list of those factors that should be considered in establishing a valuation for a 100J stamp. We will discuss each relevant one in relation to Larry's used Scott 654 graded-100J stamp.

Population factors

- Total graded population
- Population at same grade and next lower grade
- PT vs. UPT
- Dilution over time

Valuation factors

- Comparison to other condition valuations
- NH premium
- Comparison of valuations of used and NH

Not all factors are applicable to every 100J stamp being evaluated.

Other factors

- Single vs. part of set
- Perforated vs. imperforated
- Printing issues

**POPULATION FACTORS**

Below is the total PSE graded population for Scott 654. We have compressed the grades (all grades up to 85J) to make it easier to analyze the population numbers. Used examples represent a very small number (3) with all being highly-graded (98+). NH examples tend to cluster around the 95 grade. The overall NH population distribution looks like a "normal" type of distribution - no significant anomalies noted.

Scott 654	PSE Population (as of November 28, 2018)									
Condition	Totals	≤85J	90	90J	95	95J	98	98J	100	100J
Used	3						1	1		1
OG	2		1				1			
NH	131	22	19	5	49	8	18	8	2	
<b>Totals #</b>	136	22	20	5	49	8	20	9	2	1
<b>Totals %</b>	100.0%	16.2%	14.7%	3.7%	36.0%	5.9%	14.7%	6.6%	1.5%	0.7%

*Note: PF has graded eight 654s. Used - 2 (highest 90). NH - 6 (highest 95J). PF population numbers not included above.*

**Population factors** (continued). Based on the population metrics, this 654 is not only rare but is also the highest-graded used stamp of the three Edison commemoratives (Scott 654-656). This stamp ranks very high on the list of the rarest graded used 20<sup>th</sup> century commemoratives.

### **VALUATION FACTORS**

Scott 654, in high grades, possesses an uncommon valuation trait. These stamps are valued significantly more in used grades than in NH grades.

<b>Scott 654</b>	<b>Valuation Comparisons</b>	
<b>Condition</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>98J</b>
<b>Used</b>	\$275	\$350
<b>NH</b>	\$165	\$240

<b>Differential \$</b>	\$110	\$110
<b>Differential %</b>	66.7%	45.8%

*Notes: There are only two grades that can be compared.  
 The valuation differential percentage is based on the  
 NH valuation.*

This differential is most likely due to the rare nature of highly-graded used examples. While such situations, where used is valued more than NH, are not common, they do occur with a certain frequency, recognizing the difficulty of obtaining fault-free copies after a trip through the mailstream.

### **OTHER FACTORS**

Scott 654 is a stand-alone commemorative. While there are two other Edison commemoratives using the same design, this stamp is not part of a set. This stamp is a flat-press stamp. The other two are a rotary press sheet stamp and a rotary press coil issue.

Being part of a set can impact the valuation of a 100J stamp dramatically, especially on the up side. Imagine a collector who has been collecting the best centered stamps of a set. Further imagine that the collector is only missing one stamp to complete his future award-winning set. That collector would probably pay 2, 3, or more times the “normal” value for a missing 100J.

Being a stand-alone stamp, such as the Scott 654, should have little, if any, impact on that stamp’s 100J value.

### **VALUING THE 100J USED SCOTT 654**

So here we are at the point of trying to estimate the value of Larry's used Scott 654 PSE graded-100J stamp.

On page 8, in the article titled "Grading Creates Money - Out of Thin Air!!," we stated the following about this stamp (before we wrote this article) - "While PSE does not value 100J stamps, we estimate a value of at least \$1,000."

While this was a quick estimate, let's see if we can place a few more facts behind that estimate. You just need to remember that while this is an art vs. science project, it probably relies on art more than on science. This fact alone is a sound reason why PSE does not value these highest-altitude stamps.

- **Base calculation.** The highest-graded used 654 with an SMQ\* value is a 98J. It is valued at \$350. That stamp has a population of 1.
- **NH comparison.** The used 98J is valued \$110 higher than the NH 98J. This translates to a 45.8% premium over the NH value (see prior page). The NH 98J population is 8. The NH 98J is not the highest-graded NH 654. There are 2 graded-100s. *Side note: In the January 2019 issue, we will revisit the topic of the NH premium. It will be illuminating.*
- **First "Assumption" - calculating the value of a used 100.** While there is no graded-100 used stamp, we should start our calculation at this stage. If we use the 45.8% premium at the 98J grade level (the premium of used over NH), we would initially arrive at a valuation of \$510 (\$350 value of NH graded-100 multiplied by the NH premium of 45.8%).
- **Second "Assumption" - calculating the value of a used 100J.** This assumption sounds like it should produce the answer but one more assumption is required. If a used graded-100 has been estimated at \$510 (prior step and first assumption), then we are suggesting that a used graded-100J should be worth a 50% increase over the used graded-100. The 50% assumption is **OUR** best guess. You might have a very different percentage. Using the 50% assumption, we arrive at a valuation of \$765.
- **Third and FINAL "Assumption" - calculating the value of a used 100J UPT!** All graded-100Js are not equal. It is not difficult to understand that the value of a 100J UPT should be worth more than a 100J stamp that is only a PT. Therefore, a premium exists for UPTs but not for PTs. In some cases, it can be a huge differential. For stamps with high participation rates (see page 17), the UPT premium should be significant. Scott 654 has a medium participation rate ( $31,679,200 / 136 = 232,935$ ). Once again, we believe that a 50% UPT premium is realistic - you may believe that another percentage is more realistic. If we use a 50% premium we arrive at an estimated valuation for a graded-100J used Scott 654 at \$1,148!!

Below are the words turned into a simple “formula.” Small changes in assumptions result in large differences in valuations. The assumptions, the percentages used, are dependent on each collector’s thoughts about how to value a 100J stamp. The first set of assumptions below takes the words from the prior page and creates a simple formula. The second set demonstrates the impact of making changes in the assumptions (higher percentages).

**Step 1. Pricing a graded-100 used**

When there is no graded-100 used value:
Graded-100 NH value
Used premium at nearest grade - 98J
Projected value of graded-100 used

Assumptions    Valuation

100 NH	\$350
45.8%	
	\$510

Assumptions    Valuation

100 NH	\$350
45.8%	
	\$510

**Step 2. Pricing a graded-100J used**

Assumption - percentage differential for 100J
Projected value of graded-100J used

50%	
	\$765

75%	
	\$893

**Step 3. Pricing a graded-100J used UPT**

Assumption - premium differential for <b>UPT</b>
Projected value of graded-100J used <b>UPT</b>

50%	
	\$1,148

75%	
	\$1,563

From prior page

Example - higher assumptions

Often we hear the word “comparable” being used in a discussion of establishing valuation. We realize that finding a comparable stamp is a very difficult task. Using auction results for establishing valuations for highly-graded material is extremely difficult also since auction realizations can be over-blown when two or more bidders are engaged in a “must have” bidding competition.

You must realize that there are no right or wrong answers in attempting to value 100Js. It is a true art vs. science effort. What we have attempted to present in this article is just one approach to accomplishing this difficult task.

This is just our first attempt at bringing some formality to a discussion that today has no specific answer. We intend to continue to refine this discussion over time. In order to accomplish this, we need **YOUR HELP** - your thoughts on this subject. **How would you value a 100J stamp?**

**PLEASE share your thoughts with us!**

<p>Graded-100Js are at the summit of stamp collecting. Valuing them is an extremely difficult task. If a 100J, like Larry’s 654 above, has no sales information, how is a realistic valuation to be calculated? That is precisely why we decided to author this piece. We hope this <b>STARTS</b> the discussion on this important topic!</p>
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## Tip of the Month

This month we are “tipping” a common stamp that is not common in high grades.  
**Scott C23** - the beautiful bicolor airmail stamp!

### INTRODUCTION

This stamp is one of the most beautiful U.S. bicolor issues. It was issued in 1938 to provide additional stocks of a 6¢ airmail stamp to meet the domestic airmail rate established in 1934.

We will start our analysis with some very recent news. In the Robert A. Siegel auction 1192 conducted on Thursday November 15<sup>th</sup>, a PSE encapsulated NH graded-98 copy sold for \$885 (including buyer’s premium). This is a 77% increase over the PSE SMQ.



This stamp was lot 699 in the recent Siegel auction mentioned above.

In March of this year, this **exact stamp** sold for \$443 (including buyer’s premium).

This 100% increase in realization is an enigma.

### THE FACTS

The current PSE graded population clearly indicates that this stamp is not a popular one from a grading perspective. Here are the population numbers as of November 21<sup>st</sup>.

<b>Scott C23</b>	<b>PSE Population</b> (as of November 21, 2018)									
Condition	Totals	≤85J	90	90J	95	95J	98	98J	100	100J
Used	16	8	1		2		2	2		1
NG/RG/DG	3	3								
OG	7	7								
NH	116	41	28	1	28	4	12	1		1

Totals #	142	59	29	1	30	4	14	3	0	2
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Totals %	100.0%	41.5%	20.4%	0.7%	21.1%	2.8%	9.9%	2.1%	0.0%	1.4%
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Note: PF has graded two C23s both in the ≤85J category. PF population numbers not included above.

The POD printed just shy of 350 million C23 stamps. In order to effectively measure the “participation rate” of a graded Scott numbered stamp, we compare the total number of stamps graded, in this case 142 (in all conditions), to the total number of stamps printed (and sold) by the POD. In the case of Scott C23, the numbers indicate a very low participation.

There are three common measures for determining the graded participation rate metric:

1. **Percentage of total printed** =  $142 / 349,946,500 = .000041\%$ . While this is accurate, it simply doesn’t add any clarity to measuring the graded participation rate of a stamp.
2. **Number of graded stamps per one million printed** =  $142 / 349.946500 = 0.406$ . This metric states that for each million Scott C23s printed, there is only 0.4 (four tenths) of a graded C23. This metric still doesn’t add enough clarity to the subject.
3. **Number printed per graded stamp** =  $349,946,500 / 142 = 2,464,412$ . This calculation is the easiest way to determine relative participation. Simply stated, for each graded C23, there were 2,464,412 Scott C23 stamps printed. Just to make this metric fully understandable, let’s calculate it using Scott C15 (\$2.60 Zeppelin). C15 is one of the most popular graded stamps. That calculation is 61,296 (number of stamps printed) / 1,272 (number of C15s graded in all conditions). This translates to one graded Scott C15 for every **48.2** C15s printed. Hopefully, every reader will realize that Scott C15 is very popular while Scott C23 is not popular from a grading perspective.

To fully disclose all the relevant data, here are the PSE SMQ valuations as of November 21, 2018.

<b>Scott C23</b>	<b>PSE SMQ Valuation</b> (as of November 21, 2018)								
Condition	85	85J	90	90J	95	95J	98	98J	100
NH	\$25	\$40	\$60	\$95	\$130	\$300	\$500	\$800	Note

*Note: PSE values a NH graded-100 at \$1,200. There are no NH graded-100 C23 stamps.*

What is interesting about Scott C23 is the valuation comparison between PSE and Scott. We present this data without understanding how these differences occurred over time.

<b>Scott C23</b>	<b>PSE / Scott Valuation Comparisons</b>			
Condition	Grades			
<b>NH</b>	85	90	95	98
<b>PSE</b>	\$25.00	\$60.00	\$130	\$500
<b>Scott</b>	\$3.50	\$12.50	\$65	\$230

<b>Differential \$</b>	\$21.50	\$47.50	\$65	\$270
<b>Differential %</b>	614.3%	380.0%	100.0%	117.4%

*Notes: There are only four grades that can be compared. Scott does not value jumbos or the grade of 100. PSE starts valuing C23s at the grade of 85. Therefore, we can only compare four grades - 85 through 98. The valuation differential percentage is based on the Scott valuation. In all four comparisons, PSE values are higher than Scott.*

There is just one more set of data to present before we are ready to evaluate our tip. While PSE only values NH examples of C23, Scott values both NH *and used* graded singles

<b>Scott C23</b>	<b>Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps &amp; Covers - 2019</b>							
Condition	50	70	75	80	85	90	95	98
Used	\$0.25	\$0.25	\$0.25	\$0.25	\$2.00	\$5.00	\$27.50	\$80.00

*Note: Scott values in the general non-graded part of their catalog (white pages) equal their graded-80 valuation (yellow pages).*

Now that we have all the facts, we can assess, recommend, and provide acquisition strategies for Scott C23.

### **ASSESSMENT**

Scott C23 is an interesting stamp from a number of perspectives

- A. It is a stamp with a very low participation rate. This provides an opportunity for collectors. In 16 years of formalized grading, only 142 have been graded.
- B. The ungraded stamp is readily available at low cost in both used and NH conditions.
- C. There are significant NH valuation differences between PSE and Scott.
- D. Scott C23 is a major stamp that is widely collected, not some esoteric stamp or stamp-like paper that is often selected by other market tip authors.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**We recommend the acquisition of Scott C23 in both NH and used conditions.** We further believe that there will be large differentials between acquisition costs and graded valuations, providing collectors with not only pleasure, but also monetary rewards.

### **ACQUISITION STRATEGIES**

**USED Strategies. Ungraded (raw) material.** Purchasing ungraded (and unsearched) wholesale lots is a positive strategy. Collectors can submit a Scott C23 for grading under PSE's "Modern" service, which is the lowest-cost grading service offered by PSE. The cost for a Scott C23 would be \$10. Collectors can specify a minimum grade. If the grading process produces a grade lower than the collector established minimum grade, the collector can request that the stamp be rejected. This will result in no grading for the stamp and a reduction in cost to only \$6. This "raw" strategy works very well for Scott C23 because the cost is the lowest offered by PSE.

**USED** (continued). **Graded material.** Another used strategy would involve purchasing graded used examples. Since only Scott values graded used C23 examples, we believe that dealers not totally involved with grading may use the Scott catalog values to price their graded used C23s. We believe that Scott has significantly undervalued all used C23 grades. Purchasing any graded used C23 at or below the Scott values, would therefore be a very positive acquisition. Imagine purchasing a PSE graded-80 used stamp for 25¢!! Enough said.

**NH Strategies. Ungraded material.** The same used strategy can be applied to NH examples. The PSE NH grading cost is identical to the cost for used singles. You may be able to acquire wholesale lots at a cost slightly above face value. Examine auction collections and large lots for bargains. **Graded material.** Look for dealers who rely on Scott graded valuations to price their material (usually below Scott value). Since there is a very large differential between Scott and PSE for NH graded singles in the grades of 85 through 98, finding those dealers should allow collectors to purchase bargains. We believe that PSE valuations are more realistic than those of Scott.

### **CONCLUSION**

We believe that Scott C23 is an excellent choice for acquiring both graded and ungraded examples. There are strategies to acquire examples that will result in significant monetary gains. C23 is a stamp that has not been actively graded and therefore presents opportunities for collectors. Good hunting!

### **CONFLICT - of - INTEREST STATEMENT**

Never accept a “tip” about anything from anyone who does not provide you with a conflict-of-interest statement. You need to understand if that person is providing a tip to help themselves rather than you.

As of November 27, 2018, we own a few graded examples through the grade of 98. We do own several ungraded examples that will be submitted for grading in the future. **We believe that we have an unbiased perspective in our discussion of Scott C23.**

The “Tip of the Month” column contains the sole opinions of the editorial staff of **100J**. They are not based on comments by any dealer or organization. The opinions expressed in this section should not be relied upon for any purchase contemplated by the reader. The opinions expressed are strictly the unsubstantiated views of the editorial staff of **100J**.

## Where Are All the WWI Armistice Covers?

We are introducing a new feature focused on *non-grading topics*. Wow! Why? Our first article is timely.

### PREFACE

As indicated above, this is a very different feature. It introduces *non-grading topics* to our grading newsletter! While this may sound extremely odd, there is logic behind this new feature.

We have always viewed grading as *the salvation of the philatelic hobby*. There are several aspects of this phrase that need to be explored.

First, it indicates that philately is struggling. While some in leadership roles may deny this, I think it is apparent to the majority of collectors that stamp collecting is on the same track as the dinosaurs once were.

Second, being a salvation is analogous to providing a rescue. Often, rescuers help return a critically sick person back to a healthier condition - in our terms, bringing back our hobby to a healthier state.

We are not saying that grading is the sole answer to resurrecting philately, but it is a major force in revitalizing our hobby. We believe that grading is the "shot in the arm" that will finally stop the decline and help in growing the philatelic hobby.

If you believe that history can foretell the future, remember when coins, currency, comics, sports cards, and other hobbies were mere ghosts of what they are today. What allowed all of these hobbies to rise from obscurity to dynamic, growing hobbies today? The answer is *GRADING* and, to a lesser extent, *encapsulation*.

Would these hobbies have survived without grading? I think the answer is yes, BUT they would be far less vibrant today.

Hopefully, this long-winded explanation makes sense to you. While we will periodically include non-grading articles in future issues of **100J**, do not expect to see them in every issue. After all, Linn's, the ASD&C, Kelleher's quarterly magazine, and philatelic society journals do an exceptional job of covering general philately.

### TODAY'S TOPIC

It was 100 years ago, when fighting finally ended in World War I (WWI) on "the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month," - 11:00 AM on November 11, 1918.

I have always been interested in U.S. history, with a special interest in both World Wars. As a result, I have collected WWII patriotic covers for many years.

Cacheted patriotic covers commemorating events in WWII are available for more than a hundred events starting with the attack on Pearl Harbor and ending with post-war atomic testing in the Pacific. While the majority can be easily acquired, there are a few that bring premium prices.

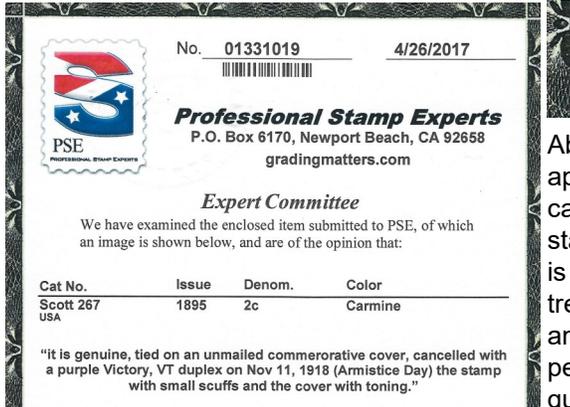
About the year 2000, I decided that I wanted to accumulate a collection of covers commemorating the end of WWI - Armistice covers. They would be postmarked in an American city on November 11, 1918.

I started searching eBay and then postal-history auctions. I searched for years hoping to find my first Armistice cover. While I found many scarcer items over the years, I could not find an Armistice cover.

Finally, late one night while searching through eBay, I came across the cover pictured below. It looked like a very odd piece and my initial reaction was that it must be a fake. There were so many issues with this cover that I thought it could not be a real Armistice cover. The only positive aspect about the cover was that it had what appeared to be an actual November 11, 1918 postmark from Victory, VT.



Victory, VT was a popular city for postmarking WWII patriotic covers. There were other cities such as Tokio, TX. Covers postmarked from these cities bring premium prices. Since I had been looking for years for such a cover, I bought it immediately for a very reasonable price. I finally submitted the cover to PSE fully expecting that it would be returned with an unfavorable opinion.



"it is genuine, tied on an unmailed commemorative cover, cancelled with a purple Victory, VT duplex on Nov 11, 1918 (Armistice Day) the stamp with small scuffs and the cover with toning."

Above is the opinion issued by PSE on the cover I submitted. It appears that PSE believes that despite several anomalies (add-on cachet, non-contemporaneous stamp, "aeroplane mail" rubber stamp, under-rated stamp franking, unaddressed cover) the cover is genuine as it regards the postmark. So while this cover is extremely odd-looking, I treat it as an Armistice cover - my only example. Having spent literally hundreds of hours over a 20-year period and not finding one other Armistice cover raises many questions.

My search of auction catalogs over the 20-year period did not uncover any additional examples for sale. There was only one reference to an Armistice cover that I found in all those years, which was in a 2011 Siegel sale of 1918 airmail covers. There was one reference to a Philip Ward, Jr. prepared "Armistice Day flight cover" franked with a C3 stamp. There was no illustration of that cover. The lot in which this cover resided was composed of 57 airmail covers all dated 1918. The lot sold for slightly more than \$24,000 (including buyer's premium). From the lot write-up, the Armistice cover was not among the significant pieces. This was the only Armistice cover reference I found in my auction search.

In discussing Armistice covers, my focus is covers cancelled in America on November 11, 1918. The number and availability of letters and envelopes postmarked on that date originating in Europe (almost exclusively from members of the military) is not rare in any definition of the word. They appear with regularity on eBay and in auctions.

The logistics of that November day need to be understood in order to make any assumptions about Armistice postal history items. The armistice was rumored a few days before it was officially announced on November 10th. The news made its way to America on the 10th. The official time when the guns stopped firing was 11:00 AM on November 11th. That would translate to 6:00 AM Eastern Time and 3:00 AM Pacific Time. Before the workday began in America, the armistice was in effect in Europe.

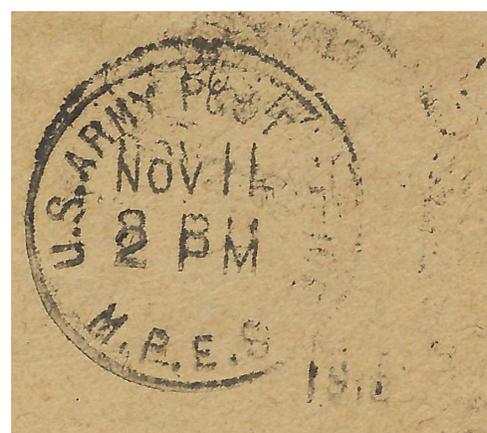
So why wasn't this monumental event memorialized with a multitude of covers postmarked on that date? That is the question that I hope will be addressed by one of our readers who is also a postal-history collector. How can only two covers be known after extensive searching covering two decades? **PLEASE HELP US UNDERSTAND THIS SITUATION!**

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If you want to author an article, perhaps this new feature is just what you have been waiting for. Tell the world about your favorite philatelic subject. Let us know what subject you would like to discuss and we will help you become a published author. Seeing your name in print is a very special event!

From the European perspective, there are many covers and letters dated November 11th. For soldiers in combat in the field, this event was probably the most memorable event in their lives. The guns falling silent at 11:00 AM was the signal that their lives had been spared. The first thing they did was write home letting loved ones know they survived WWI!!

Below are two examples of correspondence from Europe to America dated November 11th. Most mail from soldiers was sent on very lightweight paper due to the constraints of shipping thousands of letters back to the U.S. on a daily basis. The durability of this flimsy paper was poor. It is amazing that so many actually survived.



# The Pros Speak

Your Technical Questions Answered by Rich Spector, **100J** Copy Editor

## PREFACE

In order not to confuse new readers by the title of this column, we need to repeat an important fact. We are **NOT** the “Pros” referred to in the column title. We gather questions from our readers and ask the pros at PSE to ensure that our answers are accurate. They make sure that we provide you with answers that help you expand your understanding of grading. Please help us by keeping the questions coming.

## Q & A

**Q1:** When grading modern stamps, is the date printed in the margin included in the centering calculation? This question was supplied by Joe Wetmore. Thanks, Joe!

**A1:** No, the imprinted date in the stamp’s margin is not considered when determining the stamp’s centering. When stamps are manufactured, the perforations or die cuts are aligned with reference to the framelines of the stamps, and the date in the margin is disregarded. Similarly, when such a stamp is submitted for grading, the date imprint is ignored when evaluating centering.



**Q2:** Can a coil pair receive a high grade (>95) if the central perforations are not well-centered between the stamps?

**A2:** When coil pairs and line pairs are graded, the first step is measuring the horizontal and vertical margins around the perimeter of the pair. (This procedure is similar to the one used for sheet stamps.) Prior to 2007, these measurements were the only ones taken to determine the centering grade of coil pairs and line pairs. In late 2007, PSE began including the perforations between the stamps (internal perforations) when determining the centering grade. To receive a high grade, therefore, a coil pair must have well-balanced perimeter margins and a well-centered line of perforations between the two stamps. For line pairs, the internal perforations must be well-centered on the guide line (flat-plate coils) or the joint line (rotary-press coils) to obtain a high grade.

**Q3:** How does a paper inclusion affect the grade of a stamp?

**A3:** “Paper inclusions” refer to certain defects that are introduced into the stamp paper during the paper manufacturing process. Typically, these defects are random, and are caused by dirt, unprocessed wood fibers, or other foreign materials, and appear as dark spots on the stamp paper. A paper inclusion is an integral part of the finished paper.

A paper inclusion will not result in a grading deduction, unless it is “annoyingly visible,” and detracts from the stamp’s appearance. If the inclusion affects the eye appeal of the stamp, however, a deduction of at least one grade will result. A paper inclusion on the back of a stamp, which does not show through to the front, will result in a lesser deduction than if the same inclusion were visible from the front of the stamp.



### **OUR APPEAL FOR QUESTIONS**

We know that almost all our readers have questions about the technical side of grading. This column authored by Rich Spector is an ideal way to get your questions answered by the **PROS**.

Please send us as many questions as you want. This column needs your questions! Rich will work diligently to get them all answered. To be very frank with you, I have already learned new facts (new to me) about grading by reading this column. **RDL**

## October Grading Contest

It is always a pleasure to see a new name as the grading contest winner. Our goal is to have more of our readers entering the grading contest each month.

### THE OCTOBER WINNER

We announced the winner in an October **FLASH!!**. Gene Pica won the October grading contest by correctly guessing three of the four contest stamps. Gene not only was the sole contest participant to correctly guess three stamps but he was only one grade off on the fourth stamp. Watch out for Gene in the **TWO** contests in this combined issue of **100J**.

As part of winning a monthly grading contest, we offer the winner the ability to share his/her philatelic biography with all our readers. Gene was gracious enough to allow us to share some of his background. I would love to print Gene's entire letter. Unfortunately, space limitations prevent this. I must, however, share some of his comments. Gene really "gets it" (at least as viewed by us). His feelings about grading almost perfectly mirror our thoughts.

Gene, as did the majority of collectors, started collecting at age eight when his parents gave him his stamp collecting starter kit.

When PSE started grading in 2002, Gene was somewhat skeptical. Once Gene received his first batch of graded stamps back from PSE, he was completely hooked on grading. He only uses PSE for grading since he recognizes their grading consistency and experience. He fully understands the value of third-party grading. "I believe that grading has opened up collecting to groups of people that lack the enormous amount of expertise necessary to navigate the hobby." This may well be the salvation for our hobby by attracting new and more sophisticated collectors.

Gene has an identical feeling about the acceptance of grading as we have expressed many times before. "I am a huge fan of grading but am frustrated, as you are, by the lack of dealer and philatelic leadership acceptance of the concept."



To demonstrate Gene's grading ability, I present one of Gene's favorite purchases. In 2002, in the Siegel sale 842, lot 4, Gene purchased this beauty - Scott 288. He paid \$990 (including buyer's premium) for this stamp which PSE graded in 2007 as a 98 NH. Today, this is one of three at the 98 grade with only three NH examples graded higher. The value of Gene's stamp has increased dramatically from the \$990 auction realization to a current PSE SMQ of \$10,500!!

This is another perfect example supporting our Topic of the Month - "Grading Creates Money - Out of Thin Air!" See pages 7 - 10.

We sincerely congratulate Gene and wish him good luck with **BOTH** of the grading contests in this combined issue.

### OCTOBER ANSWERS

One of the 2019 resolutions that did not make the top five list (see page 6) is our intent to provide more information about the previous month's contest. In this pursuit, let's start with some summary data. Here is the distribution of entries submitted using low, medium, and high designations for the number of entries received at each grade.



Scott Number	382	397	500	J50
PSE Grade	90J	95J	80J	85J
Certificate No.	01326875	01326882	01326885	01326879
100J	Low	Low	Low	Low
100		Low		Low
98J	Med	Low		
98	Low			
95J	High	High	Low	Med
95	Low			Low
90J	Low	Low	Low	Med
90	Low	Med		Low
85J			Low	Med
85	Low			Low
80J			High	
80		Low	High	

Based on this table, the most difficult stamp to correctly guess was the first stamp - Scott 382. This stamp received the lowest number of correct answers. The easiest stamps to correctly guess were the Scott 397 and 500 stamps. The other stamp, Scott J50, received a medium number of correct entries.

Gene correctly estimated the grades for the first three stamps and only missed the postage due stamp - Scott J50. That stamp was graded an 85J. Gene estimated it as a 90J.

All four stamps were jumbos. Most of the participants understood the clue that was included in October newsletter. Of the entries received, 64% of the entries listed four jumbos.

**We believe that the grading contests we offer are not just an opportunity to win some money. We hope that you also view them as an educational activity. Study the results and learn. Becoming a better grader will pay dividends forever.**

## Holiday Gift - Two Grading Contest\$! Yes, Two!!

Since this is a combined issue covering two months, we have therefore decided to give you **two chances to win!**

The time from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day is often called the "holiday" season. In the spirit of the holidays, we want to thank all our readers for their continued support of our activities.

We publish two combined issues during the year - July-August and November-December. We have decided for this combined issue to provide our readers with **TWO CHANCES** to become a grading contest winner. We have created two very different contests for this issue.

Each grading contest will have a different format. We are exploring different formats to find the one that our readers like best. If you want to share your thoughts with us on the two formats, please do so. We really want to hear from you. Just email your thoughts to [ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com](mailto:ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com).

### CONTE\$T ONE

We present you with four PSE-graded stamps. You need to tell us the grade of each stamp. In order to help you, we will provide you with a **clue** - the PSE valuation (SMQ) total of all four stamps. PSE valuations can be found on their website - [gradingmatters.com](http://gradingmatters.com). If you have any questions, just ask us at [ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com](mailto:ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com).

***Stamps listed in Scott catalog number sequence.***



Stamp 1: **Scott 14 used**

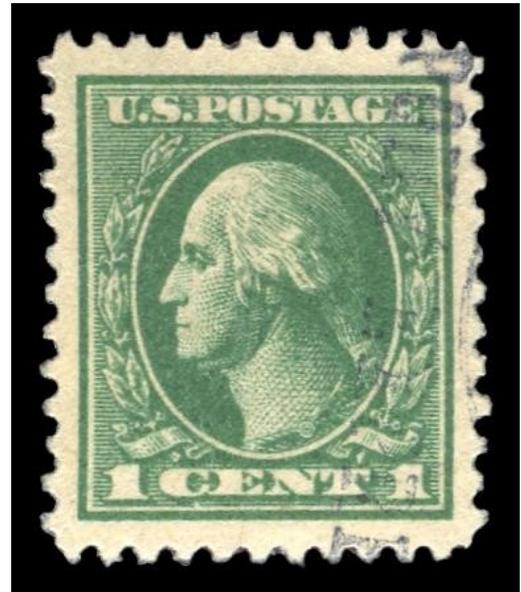


Stamp 2: **Scott 113 used**

*Stamps listed in Scott catalog number sequence.*



Stamp 3: **Scott 299 used**



Stamp 4: **Scott 525 used**

The **clue** for this contest is a great one for those readers who want to increase their odds of winning this contest by researching valuations. The **clue** is that the total value (PSE SMQ) of these four stamps is exactly **\$1,170**.

This is the first time we have given such a **clue** as the total PSE valuation of the contest stamps. **PLEASE** share your evaluation of this **clue** with us. It will help us design future contests.

Now that you have a good handle on Contest One, here is the second holiday contest.

## **CONTE\$T TWO**

There are five stamps in our second holiday contest.

Since we are in the midst of the holiday season, instead of a **clue**, for Contest Two, we will give you a "**gift**." We will allow you to eliminate one of the contest stamps. The choice of the stamp is yours. So, instead of submitting all five stamps with your grade estimates, you can eliminate one stamp and only submit your four best guesses. Nice gift!

The five stamps in Contest Two appear on the following two pages. We have included several unusual selections. Being able to eliminate one stamp will provide you with a huge advantage. Enjoy!



▲ Stamp 1: **Scott 1 used**



Stamp 2: **Scott 25 used** ▲



▲ Stamp 3: **Scott 822 NH Plate Block**

*All stamps listed in Scott catalog number sequence.*

*All stamps listed in Scott catalog number sequence.*



Stamp 4: **Scott 4814 used** ▲



▲ Stamp 5: **Scott RW14 used**

### Contest Rules and Payout\$

**Contest One:** Submit the grades of all four stamps. Use the clue of the total valuation (PSE SMQ) to help you win. The winner is the earliest entry submitted with the highest number of stamps with the correct grade. Each correct answer is worth \$37.50 to the winner. Correctly guess all four stamps and receive \$150.

**Contest Two:** Submit four stamps with their grades. The stamp not submitted will be assumed to be your "gift stamp." Each correct answer is worth \$37.50 to the winner. Correctly guess all four stamps and receive \$150. Like the first contest, the winner is the earliest entry submitted with the highest number of stamps with the correct grade.

The two contests are being treated independently. The potential payout is \$300. **One person can win both contests.** We hope that these contests are exciting for our readers.

**Entries must be submitted by midnight (EST) on Friday December 28<sup>th</sup>.** Please email your entries to [ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com](mailto:ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com). We will announce the winners and deposit the awards into their PayPal accounts by noon on Saturday December 29<sup>th</sup>. For the winners, what a wonderful way to end 2018 and start 2019.

Please, **only one entry per contest per reader.** Like all our contests, ties are awarded to the earliest submitted entry. Entries for both contests need not be submitted at the same time.

**Good luck!**

**Remember, you've got to be in it,  
to win it!!**

## Articles In Future Issue

### January 2019 Issue

*(to be distributed first week of January)*

#### **Revisit - the Never Hinged Premium**

We are going to revisit one of the most confounding topics, the never-hinged (NH) premium. While it is hard for us to understand, the NH premium currently reflects an historic high. Are we collecting the best grades available or the best gum available? Some examples defy logic!

#### **Revisit - Paper or Plastic? Guest author**

Another revisit to start the new year - paper or plastic? While encapsulation has become the industry standard for coins, currency, sports cards, comic books, and several other hobbies, stamp collectors have not yet seen the benefit of opting for plastic instead of paper certificates. This article will be authored by a very special guest.

#### **UPT's - the VERY Best of the Best!**

We will provide a complete study of the topic of UPTs (unique population tops). They are the "VERY best of the best."

#### **100J - New Year's Resolutions Follow-Up**

We will provide more detail on our New Year's resolutions. Hopefully they will still be in effect by the time you read this article.

***And at least one surprise!***



## Become a **100J** Guest Author!

We are actively looking for your story about grading or philately in general. It is a rush seeing your name as the author of a published story.

You can select the topic. We will gladly accept almost any topic focused on grading or stamp collecting in general.

We will help you at every step in the process. We will “polish” the article so that it sounds like a Hemingway novel (if that is what you want). Regardless of our support, you will be listed as the sole author of the article.

Expand your horizons - become a published author!

We welcome any thoughts, suggestions, requests, and *criticisms* that you may have regarding **100J**. Our mission is to create a grading newsletter that both educates and entertains our readers on the exciting subject of grading. We can only accomplish this with your help. Please share anything with us. We want **100J** to be the philatelic publication you look for each month. Thank you!!

Prior issues of **100J** as well as yearly tables of contents are available free of charge. To view and/or print them, please visit our website - [www.100j-grading-newsletter.com](http://www.100j-grading-newsletter.com).

***Grading is the most exciting new aspect of philately  
since stamps were first issued!***

**100J** is a monthly newsletter focused on the grading aspect of philately. It is delivered by email to any and all interested parties. There are ten (10) **100J** issues published per year, including two combined issues - July/August and November/December. Subscriptions are **free** and may be requested by using the form on [www.100j-grading-newsletter.com](http://www.100j-grading-newsletter.com) or by requesting a subscription by email to [ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com](mailto:ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com). You may unsubscribe by emailing [ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com](mailto:ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com). The marks **SCOTT** and **SCOTT's** are registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and are trademarks of Amos Media Co.

**GLOSSARY of TERMS Used in 100J**

*As of Issue 20*

One of our staff members, Bruce R. Peters, thought it would be a good idea for us to start a glossary of terms that we use in the issues of our newsletter. Bruce recognizes that not all of our subscribers are familiar with grading. In order to support our readers, we have started this glossary of terms with issue 20 (this issue) and will expand it each time we release another issue. Please let us know if there are any terms that you would like included below.

Word	Group	Definition
DOG	Gum	<b><i>Disturbed Original Gum</i></b> . A stamp with gum designated DOG has its original gum that has been affected by climate conditions or some other event. The gum is no longer pristine but shows the signs of having been impacted by some event. Often a DOG stamp may appear NH to the eye but under magnification will show signs of having been impacted and thus will be designated as DOG. PSE lists DOG stamps along with regummed stamps (RG) and stamps with no remaining gum (NG) in one condition of their valuation and population databases.
NH	Gum	<b><i>Never Hinged</i></b> . A stamp that is never hinged has pristine gum. There is no evidence of it ever having been hinged or disturbed. The gum shows no sign of deterioration from climate effects. NH means that the stamp has its original gum.
OG	Gum	<b><i>Original Gum</i></b> . A stamp designated OG has been hinged but retains its original gum. PSE uses two designations for an OG stamp. OGph indicates that the stamp was "previously hinged" but the hinge no longer remains on the stamp. OGH indicates that the stamp was "hinged" and the hinge or part of the hinge remains on the gum side. <b>100J</b> uses the term OG to represent both.

PF	Organizations	<p><b><i>Philatelic Foundation</i></b> . PF is a not-for-profit organization located in New York City. They have been authenticating stamps since 1945. At an early point in their history, they were considered the leading authority for determining the soundness of a stamp. They have a long history of certifying stamps especially classic-period stamps. They started to offer grading several years after PSE introduced grading in 2002. They do not have as vast an experience in grading as PSE does. They offer education and have a great depository of philatelic literature. They have incorporated an extensive glossary into their website. Readers should access the PF glossary for full definitions of terms.</p>
Population Database	PSE	<p>PSE maintains a database of the stamps that it has graded. The database is one of the most useful tools for a grading collector. It lists PSE graded stamps in all grades (from 50, 70-100J). It lists graded stamps in all four conditions (where appropriate).</p>
PT	Population	<p><b><i>Population Top</i></b> . A stamp designated a PT possesses the highest grade for a stamp. There are other stamps with the same grade. The PT designation is irrespective of condition. All stamps are either a PT or a UPT but cannot be both. There are more stamps that are PT than UPT.</p>
SMQ	PSE	<p><b><i>Stamp Market Quarterly</i></b> . SMQ stands for two valuation methods. PSE maintains a valuation database on their website. This is a unique customer-support tool. Scott is the only other facility that provides valuation for graded stamps. Scott does not, however, value jumbo stamps, or graded-100 stamps. PSE maintains valuations as a customer-support tool and does not make a market for graded stamps. SMQ also refers to a hardcopy publication released by PSE on a periodic basis that lists some of the prices from their SMQ database as well as articles on current subjects.</p>

UPT	Population	<b><i>Unique Population Top</i></b> . A stamp designated a UPT possesses the highest grade for a stamp and is the only stamp graded that high. UPT designation crosses all conditions - it is irrespective of condition. It is the highest graded known to date. It is often described as the "best centered stamp in the entire world."
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