



The Expert's Corner



By J. Randall Shoemaker

GRILLS, Part 2

Determining the genuineness of a grill is often more experience than a technical measurement project, but does entail comparing the subject grill to known genuine grills for the more expensive varieties. However, you can turn your own collection of grills into a reference set easily. 'E' and 'F' grill examples are inexpensive, especially if you buy some slightly defective examples that show good grill impressions.

Remember, references don't need to be any particularly great quality, just good usable examples of what you are looking to use as an example, in this case, a clear crisp example of the grill you are questioning. Any denomination of a particular grill is an example that can be used for any other denomination, so pick the cheapest one as your example. You really only need one good example of each grill type to get you going. If you go to stamp shows, look for these in the HALF-PRICE boxes!

'A' Grills – GRILLED ALL OVER, Issued in August 1867:



Figure 1.

Refer to above showing the backs of three grilled all over examples. The left two stamps are FAKES and the right stamp is a genuine Scott No. 79, 3c Grilled All Over. The left stamp grill is actually diagonal rows of points and compared to the genuine ex-



Front sides of three stamps shown at lower left.

ample is a rank FAKE made from a Scott No. 65, 3c 1861 stamp. The center stamp is a bit more devious. However, the grill points are too strongly impressed and dimensionally a bit too small. Also note that on the genuine stamp the perforation tips are pretty ragged and several perf tips are short or missing. This is very important to notice. The grilling all over affected the perforations and made them significantly weaker. When the stamps were separated, these weak tips broke very inconsistently due the grilling. See the other two examples that were made from 1861 stamps. The perforations are mostly INTACT since they were grilled AFTER THE FACT of separation. This is one of the tell-tale signs of a fake Grilled All Over stamp. The fact that the second stamp is heavily impressed, the 'biscuits' of the female grill sit up too high as compared to the more relatively flat biscuits of the genuine grill at right.

'C' Grills – GRILLED 16-17 X 18-21 POINTS, Issued in November 1867:

The 'C' grill is a Female 'Biscuit' grill, points up and the grill count is 16-17 X 18-21 points. The photos below show the front and back of a nice example of the C grill, 17 by 19 points. Notice how well the grill points line up in rows and the notice even spacing of the whole grill. This is a common characteristic of these C



grills, a prominent clear grill. These photographs are particularly clear and show well the definition of the grills.

“D” Grills – GRILLED, 15 X 17-18 points, Male Grill Points DOWN, Issued February 1868



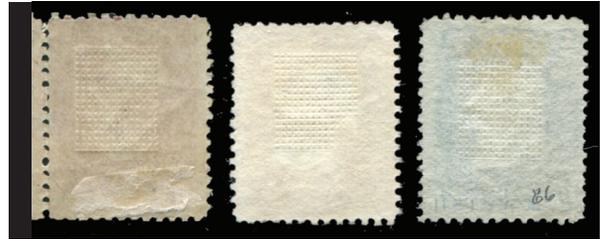
Again, D grills show a well-defined grill with the above point count. Grill points from time to time get pressed when a stamp is cleaned with subsequent pressing of the stamp. As noted in Part one of this series article, pencil graphite may be necessary to bring the grill points ‘out’ for better viewing to count.

“Z” Grills – GRILLED, 13-14 by 18 points, Male Grill, Points DOWN, Issued January 1868



On the grills D through F, the grill point pyramids have a vertical point, but the ‘Z’ Grill has a horizontal point to each pyramid. This differentiates the Z grills from all other grills. The size is similar to the E grills and once in a while the Z grills can be mistaken for E grills and you can pick up a prize with some astute observation. The image above shows the 2c Z grill, Scott No. 85B and the horizontal points can be seen best in the bottom two horizontal rows and at several other points. The nature of the point can be seen better when you dip the stamp in watermark fluid. Always dip the grilled stamps because the pyramid structure shows up better.

“E” Grills – GRILLED, 14 by 15-17 points, Male Grill, Points DOWN, Issued February 1868



E grills are quite easy to identify and their grill points show a distinct vertical cut at the center of each point. Dipping will make this easy to identify and the grill almost appears square.

“F” Grills – GRILLED, 12 by 17 points, Male Grill, points DOWN, Issued March – August 1868



F Grills are easy to identify since they are taller than wide and are narrower than the E grills. Getting a good reference is easy and inexpensive. The 3c F Grill is probably the most common grilled stamp in the 1867 to 1868 period.

All things considered, the 1867 -1868 grills are not counterfeited that often, but getting any of the scarcer items authenticated is a wise decision, especially if they are well-centered and sound without faults. Since reference examples of the scarcer items are expensive, it’s best to just get them expertized to take the worry out of the purchase. These items then become reference pieces in and of themselves.

Happy Hunting! Part three of the Grilled issues will show all the Grill varieties for this period. It is very interesting to see the myriad of varieties few have ever seen in the flesh!



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