

Collections Display: **Early Hawaii Stamps & Covers**

by John F. Dunn

On October 1, 1851, the first stamps of Hawaii were issued: "The Hawaii Missionaries," the name stemming from the fact that they were primarily issued to pay the postage for mail sent by the Missionaries who had settled in Hawaii. And so, for our October Philatelic Events we will display a selection of the early stamps and covers of this extremely popular area.

To do so, we will begin with a March 6-7, 2007 auction conducted by Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries. On that date the Hawaii Collection of Thurston Twigg-Smith was offered. (This auction is not to be confused with the 1995 Siegel Auction of the *Honolulu Advertiser* collection that was owned by Persis Corporation, a holding company for members of the Twigg-Smith family.)

Thurston Twigg-Smith is a direct descendant of those early missionaries Reverend Asa Thurston and Lucy Thurston, who were among the first missionaries to Hawaii, having arrived there in 1820.

This 2007 auction was the personal property of Thurston Twigg-Smith and even included material that he had purchased in the Honolulu Advertiser auction. Also included were covers and letters that had come from family members' correspondence.



The auction opened with the most valuable lots in the sale, the Hawaii Missionaries stamps. The first lot was this 1851 2¢ blue, Scott 1, SCV for a repaired example, \$250,000, also shown in color on our front cover. Only 15 examples exist, ten of which are in museums, and this is one of the finest appearing examples. Described by the late Herbert Bloch as having "A piece at top...replaced in its original position without any repair in the philatelic

sense...” this stamp sold for \$210,000. (All prices quoted here do not include the 15% Buyers’ Premiums that are added on to these hammer prices.)

One cover with a Missionary that was offered in this sale was this 1852 cover with the 1852 13¢ blue “H.I. & U.S. Postage” issue, Scott 4. The stamp was repaired at



lower right, where a corner had been missing, and part of the frameline was painted in. Of the nine known covers with this stamp, two are in museums. This one sold for \$85,000 against a \$40,000-50,000 estimate.

Another “Missionary stamp” cover is shown here, but you have to look closely to see the stamp—or at least the tiny part of the 13¢ “Hawaiian Postage” (Sc. 3) stamp that was described as being peeled off in transit—the reason being that the “Paid” and “8” in circle markings appear where the stamp would have been.



The next two lots show examples of the 1853 Kamehameha III 5¢ blue (Sc. 5). At left we see a fine example, lightly cancelled so that the design is fully visible. It sold for \$1,500.



The example at the right on page 2 has wide margins and shows red Honolulu and black San Francisco circular date stamps (c.d.s.). It sold for \$2,200. I leave it to you to decide which stamp is the better buy.

This next cover shows the 13¢ dark red Kamehameha III issue (Sc. 6), sent in September 1854 to Connecticut, fully paying the rate to the East Coast (6¢ plus 2¢ ship captain's fee, plus 5¢ cross-country). As the rate to the east coast was increased in April 1855, this is one of only six covers with the 13¢ Kamehameha III used by itself to pay this short-lived rate. Estimated at \$20,000-30,000, it realized \$35,000.



This next cover shows the Hawaii 5¢ on 13¢ Provisional surcharge (Sc. 7) used in 1857 in combination with a U.S. 1851 12¢ (Sc. 17), to pay the 17¢ rate



from Hawaii to the East Coast. One of 11 such combination covers reported by Fred Gregory (see page 8), it sold for \$52,500 against a \$30,000-40,000 estimate.

In the Numeral issues section, this 1859 1¢ light blue on bluish white paper, Sc. 12, SCV \$9,000, with red cancel (rare thus) sold for \$16,500 despite a faint thin spot.



And in the Kamehameha IV issues section, this rare cover bears the 2¢ carmine rose on vertically laid paper (Sc. 28a) shows a rare usage of



the 2¢ single, paying the inter-island rate, on a collect cover sent from Hawaii November 23, 1864 to San Francisco, received there on December 7. According to Hawaii expert Gregory (more to come later), this cover was one of three that left Honolulu on November 23 on the A. A. Eldridge. Estimated at \$1,500 to \$2,000, it sold for \$1,600.

The 1864-91 Royal Portrait issues section opened with this piece, bearing the 2¢ rose vermilion bottom right diagonal bisect, Sc. 31b, used as a 1¢ stamp with the 1866 5¢ ultramarine, Sc. 32, both stamps tied by a “G.P.O. Honolulu, H.I. Paid All Jul. 23” c.d.s. Estimated at \$1,000-1,500, it realized \$1,300.



Next up for viewing is a cover with the 1882 5¢ Royal

Portrait issue tied by a purple straight line “Volcano House” handstamp with matching “Volcano House, Crater of Kilauea” oval with an illustration of the crater, also with Hilo Nov. 23, 1890 c.d.s.



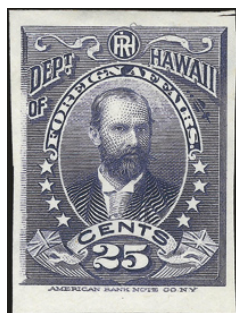
An extremely rare example of this pictorial oval used on cover as a corner card, it was estimated at \$3,000-4,000 and sold for \$8,000.

The 1893 Provisional Government issues, rich in overprint varieties, included a used 2¢ dull violet with inverted red overprint (right, Sc. 57g, SCV \$4,500). With minor faults, it sold for \$2,000.



And at left we see the 1893 2¢ rose vermilion—a good color for showing overprints and cancels—(Sc. 65, SCV \$75) showing a light Kahului double circle datestamp. It sold for \$120.

The 1894-99 Final issue opened with Plate Proofs on India, Sc. 74P3-79P3, 82P3, shown 79P3, a set that came from the Honolulu Advertiser Collection. With an SCV of \$1,090, it sold for \$850.



Another Plate Proof lot contained the 1896 Officials, Sc. O1P3-O6P3, shown O6P3. With a few small faults, the lot sold for \$800 against a \$1,800 SCV.

A showing of Spanish-American War covers included the colorful Patriotic envelope shown on our front cover, bearing the 1899 5¢, Sc. 82 tied by a purple “Lahaina, Maui Oct. 21, 1899 c.d.s., on a Hawaiian Flag patriotic sent to East Whitman, Mass. The cover, conveying a pro-annexation sentiment, was estimated at \$750-1,000 and sold for \$1,600.



The next lot for viewing is a cover bearing a full set of the 1896 Officials, Sc. O1-O6, tied by multiple strikes of “Honolulu H.I. Jun. 13



10AM 1900” duplex datestamp and oval. As explained in the lot description, while all covers with complete sets of these Officials are deemed to be philatelically inspired, those with the regular Honolulu postmark are rarer and more desirable than the covers with a “Foreign Office” favor cancel. This cover to San Francisco, with a San Francisco stevedore company corner card on the backflap, was estimated at \$2,000-3,000 and sold for \$4,750.



This next Official cover, with a single 5¢ and pair of the 10¢ (Sc. O2, O4) bears an American Flag and “Remember the Maine” Patriotic cachet.

The scarce quintuple rate franking and dramatic cachet design pushed this cover to a realization of \$2,800, well over its \$1,500-2,000 pre-sale estimate.

As explained in the auction catalog, “The Official set depicting Lorrin A. Thurston, grandfather of Thurston Twigg-Smith and proponent of annexation, was issued on January 28, 1897.”

On page 6 we view a rare and attractive cover, an 1884 Hawaii 5¢ entire, Sc. U4, also with the Wells, Fargo & Co.

Hawaii-U.S. Express company printed frank in brown and an oval Wells, Fargo Express Honolulu datestamp. This rare Wells Fargo Hawaiian Express usage

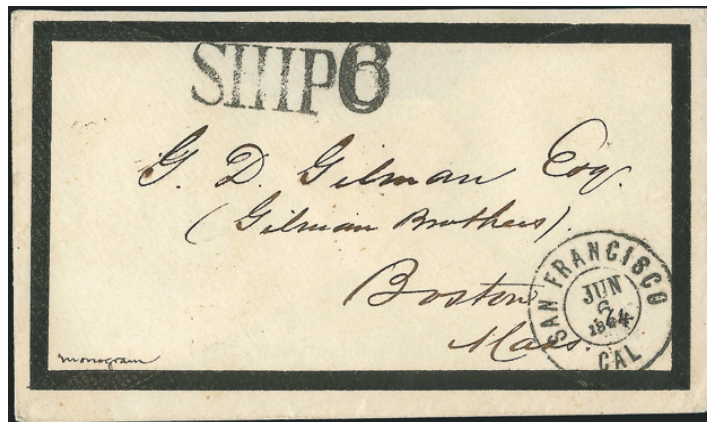


sold for \$2,800 against a \$3,000-4,000 estimate.

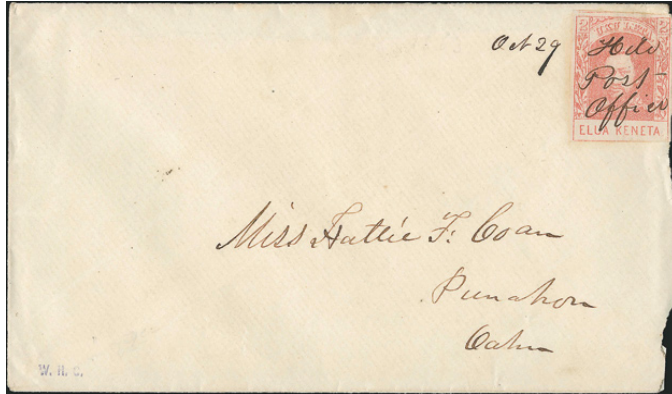
The only recorded example of the Kahului Railroad Company issue (lower left) “ostensibly used on cover”, according to the lot description, is seen here, tied by the “H.I.” cancel, also with a Hawaii 2¢ rose, Sc. 81, tied by a faint Wailuku, Maui double-line c.d.s. Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, the cover sold for \$3,750.



One of two lots in a Royal Mail section was this mourning envelope with a San Francisco June 6, 1864 double-circle c.d.s. and Ship 6 handstamp, also with an embossed and printed Hawaiian Royal Seal on reverse. The mourning envelope was for Kamehameha IV, who died in November 1863, and was probably sent free of Hawaiian postage due to its Royal origin. Estimated at \$1,000-1,500, it sold for \$1,700.



Finally, in an extensive section of Hawaiian Town Postmarks—a Twigg-Smith specialty—the highest realization was garnered by this extremely rare “Hilo Post Office” manuscript postmark on the 1861 2¢ pale rose on vertically laid paper, Sc. 28. Estimated at \$1,500-2,000, the cover realized \$2,100.



Addendum

Siegel Galleries President Scott Trepel gave credit to Fred Gregory and his “Post Office in Paradise” that is located on his website for much of the information in the auction catalog. Fred’s website and others that provide a wealth of additional information on the history and biographies of the early missionaries, as well as on the stamps and postal history of Hawaii may be accessed at

<http://www.stampnewsnowonline.net/StampNewsOnline-PW/Collections/Collections-2014/Col-HawaiiOct2014-PW.htm>

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