

Promotional Sample Envelopes of the 20th Century

This listing contains two types of promotional envelopes: 1) those used by USPS Philatelic Sales division to promote philatelic sales (page 1) and 2) those used by the U.S. Postal Service to promote envelope sales to the general public (page 9).

USPS Philatelic Sales Division to promote philatelic sales

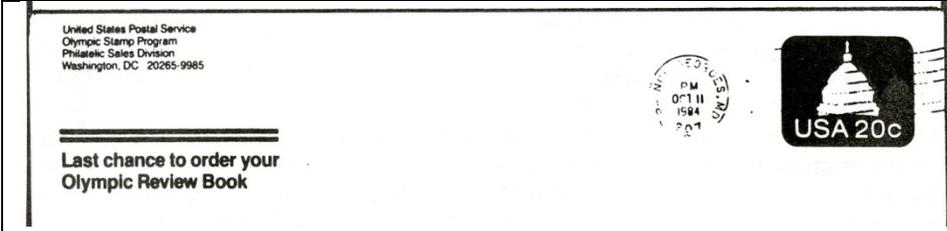
Between October 1984 and May 1988, the USPS had outside printing firms print promotional advertising on already-manufactured 20¢ Capitol, 22¢ Bison, 25¢ Circle of Stars, and 22¢ Official Mail size 23 window envelopes to promote philatelic sales. One usage of size 23 plain front envelopes is known. Each face-different envelope in the series is known with only one watermark. None of the additional printing on the face of the envelope or the enclosed literature was printed at the Stamped Envelope Agency.

USPS return addresses include: 20¢ Olympic Stamp Program; 22¢ Commemorative Stamp Club; 22¢ Souvenir Pages Subscription Program; 22¢ Precancel Souvenir Page Program; 22¢ Precancel Commemorative Stamp Club; 22¢ Official Mail Bar Tab Marketing Department.

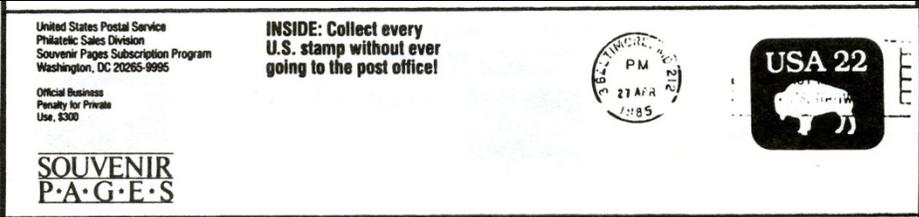
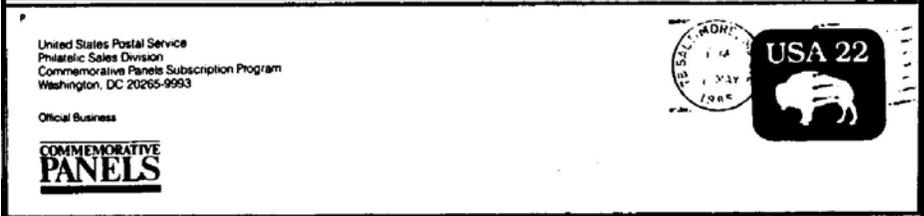
Some of the early 22¢ varieties have "Official Business, Penalty For Private Use, \$300" or "Official Business" printed below the return address.

For more information, including a checklist of reported varieties, see article by D. John Shultz. 1993. The USPS promotional envelopes series. *Postal Stationery* 35(4): 115-122. These envelopes do carry significant postal history value and are worth approximately \$25 each. Used copies are commoner than mint. Envelopes with full original contents are worth a \$5 premium.

Table 1. list of promotional envelopes reported				
No.	UPSS No.	Envelope	Advertising Description	Date Cancel
1	'----	Permit No. G-10	Red and blue, "Commemorative Stamp Club/celebrates its opening with a/free gift to charter members." top center of envelope.	April, 1984
2	'----	Permit No. G-10	Blue, "Important Olympic/Information Inside"	July, 1984

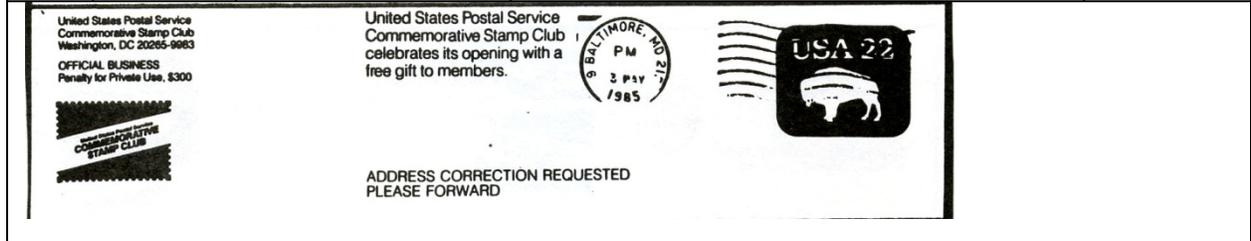
				
3	3674-47	20c Capitol Dome	Black, "Last chance to order your/Olympic Review Book" below two bars on middle left	Oct 11, 1984
				
4	3697-49	22c Bison	Red and blue, "United States Postal Service/ Commemorative Stamp Club/celebrates its opening with a/ free gift to charter members." top center of envelope.	Mar 26/27, 1985
				
5	3697-49	22c Bison	Red and blue, as 4, with "Address Correction Requested" middle left of envelope	Mar 27, 1985
				
6	3697-47	22c Bison	Red and blue, "Joint our Commemorative Stamp club. And we will give you a FREE gift" top center of envelope.	Apr, 1983 to 1985

7	3697-47	22¢ Bison	Red and blue, "Inside: let us put the future heirlooms of the future in your mailbox" top center of envelope.	Feb 25, 1986
8	3697-47	22¢ Bison	Red and blue, 'INSIDE: A special offer from the Commemorative Stamp Club.' top center of envelope.	May 5, 1985
9	3697-47	22¢ Bison	Red, blue, and brown, "We know that stamp collecting means more to you than Just collecting stamps." top center of envelope. And" brown "Souvenir Pages" between three horizontal bars on left.	May 16, 1986

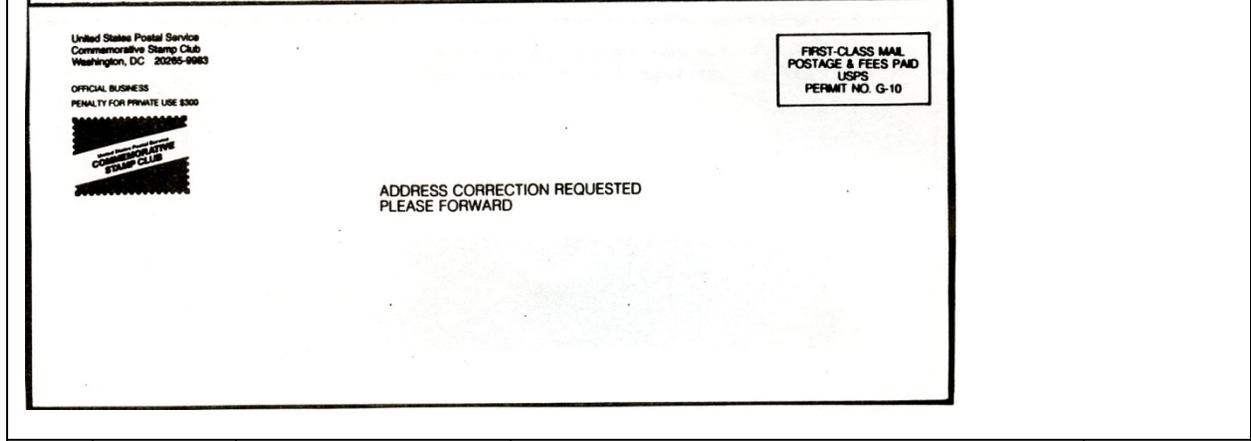
				
10	3697-47	22¢ Bison	Red and blue, "INSIDE: Collectibles you won't want to miss." top center of envelope. And blue "Souvenir Pages" between three red horizontal bars on left."	April 26, Oct, 1985
				
11	3697-50	22¢ Bison	"INSIDE: Collect Every U.S. stamp without ever going to the post office!" top center of envelope.	Apr 27, 1985
				
12	3697-47	22¢ Bison	Blue with "Commemorative Pages" between two horizontal bars on left."	May 1, 1985
				
12A	3697-507	22¢ Bison	Blue with "Commemorative Pages" between two horizontal bars on left."	Apr 23, 1986



3697-47	22¢ Bison	Blue with "IMPORTANT INFORMATION ENCLOSED"	Mar 24, 1986
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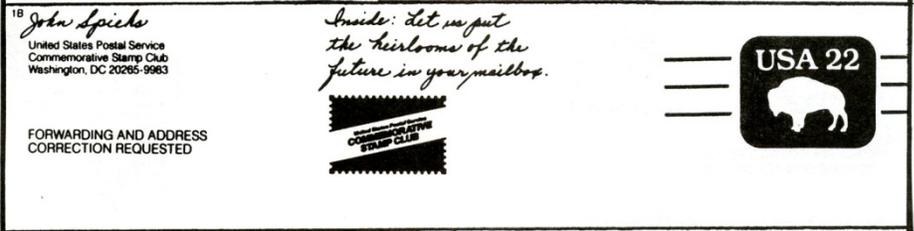
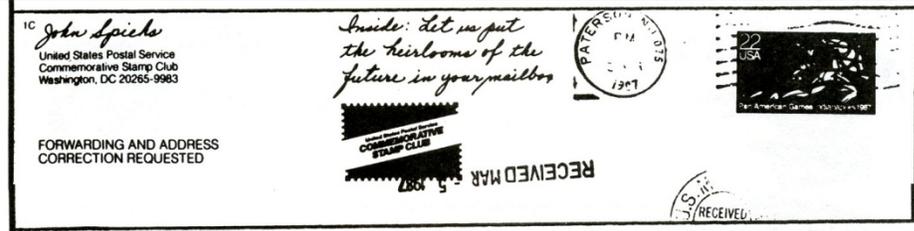


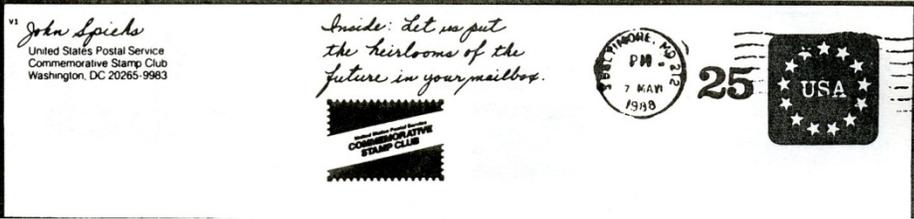
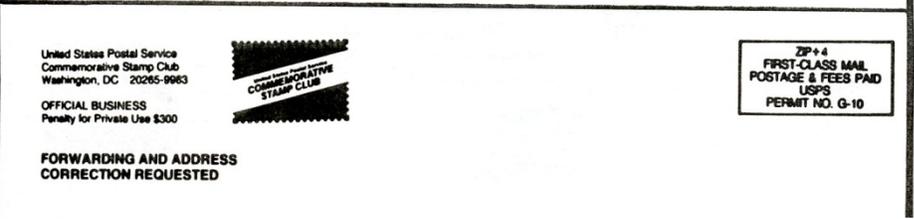
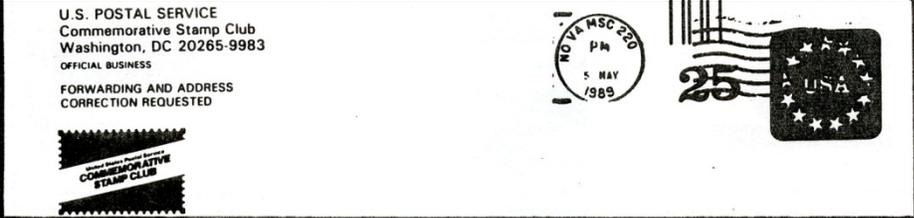
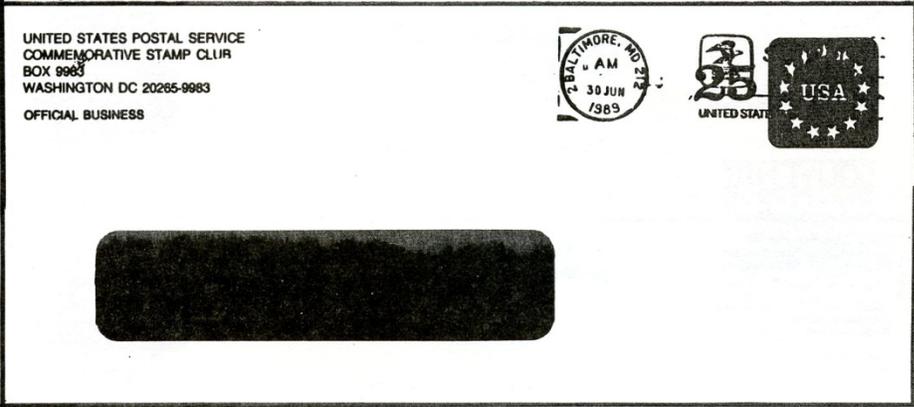
13	3697-47	22¢ Bison	Black, "United States Postal Service/Commemorative Stamp Club/celebrates its opening with a/free gift to members" top center of envelope	May 3, 1985
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14		FIRST CLASS MAIL/ POSTAGE & FEES PAID/PERMIT No. G-10	Multicolor, cc with flag only and "OFFICIAL BUSINESS"	May 16, 1986
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15	3703-0	Precancelled 22¢ Bison	Multicolor, "Inside: Let us put the heirlooms of the future In your mailbox." top center of envelope.	Feb, 1987
				
16	3703-0	Precancelled 22¢ Bison	Multicolor, Script "Inside: Let us put the heirlooms of the future In your mailbox." top center of envelope.	Feb, 1987
				
17		22c Stamp Pan American Games, Scott 2247	Red, blue, and brown, Script "INSIDE: Collectibles you won't want to miss." top center of envelope.	Feb, 1987
				
18	3697	22¢ Bison	Red, blue, and brown, "INSIDE: Collectibles you won't want to miss." top center of envelope. And blue "Souvenir Pages" between three horizontal bars on left."	Feb 26, 1985
				
19	3697-48A 3679-50	22¢ Bison	Brown "INSIDE: A limited-edition philatelic collectible" top center of envelope. And brown "Commemorative	May 20, 1986

			Pages" between horizontal bars on left."	
v1				
20	3721-50	Circle of Stars, small 25	Multicolor, Script "Inside: Let us put the heirlooms of the future In your mailbox." top center of envelope.	May 7, 1988
				
21		Zip+4/FIRST-CLASS MAIL/ POSTAGE & FEES PAID/USPS/ PERMIT NO. G-10	Flag alongside of cc	May, 1988
				
22	3722-48A	Circle of Stars, Large 25		May 5, 1989
				
23	3722-50	Circle of stars, large 25	Plain front	June 30, 1989
				

23		Eagle above U.S. Mail Penalty mail	Flag below cc with "FORWARDING AND ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED" No "Official Business"	Mar 2, 1987
24	3701-50	22¢ Bison	"INSIDE: A limited-edition philatelic collectible!" top center of envelope, with "COMMEMORATIVE PANELS" between two bars to left.	August 31, 1987
25	OM11-49	22¢ Eagle	Plain front	?
26	OM11-49	22¢ Eagle	"INSIDE: Collect every U.S. stamp without ever going to the post office!"	Feb 25, 1988
		Eagle above U.S. Mail Penalty mail	Plain front	3/88

U.S. Postal Service use to promote envelope sales to the general public

In another effort promoting postal envelope use during the 25¢ and 29¢ postal rate periods, several envelopes were produced by the Stamped Envelope Agency for distribution to U.S. Post Offices and large volume customers as promotional samples. None other than the 29¢ Love Sample Reprint and the 25¢ Hologram overprint were intended to reach collector's hands.

The simplest of these samples were standard pre-existing envelopes which were run through the Verner press to receive the Stamped Envelope Agency's corner card, and were later demonetized by hand with a pen slash through the denomination. Others were merely demonetized by use of a rubber stamp stamped "Sample" or "Canceled" marking (with or without the Agency's corner card). A few had pricing information overprinted on the front.

Others were pre-existing envelopes overprinted with the Agency's corner card and a printed demonetizing slash through the denomination. Occasionally pricing matrixes were printed on the envelope's front as well.



The first such envelope known to the author is the 25¢ circle of stars in a blue square this is size 23 on watermark 50 paper (UPSS #3718; Scott #611) originally issued March 26, 1988. This envelope has a

magenta "SAMPLE" (72 x 8 mm) handstamped diagonally across the front. There is also a pen marking through the blue box of stars and red number '25'. This was obviously made for promotion since it has a fictitious corner card for ABC Manufacturing.



The second such envelope known to the author is the philatelic mail envelope (#3729; Scott 614). The paper has watermark 50 and the envelope is size 21 as were all the regularly issued

envelopes. The envelope has the magenta sample handstamped in the same size and at the same angle as previous. There is also a pen cancel through the blue box of stars and the numeral '25'. The fictitious corner card, John Q. Collector, is oriented to stamp collectors rather than a business, as before.



This circle of blue stars envelope was first issued in July 1989. The sample item is on unwater-marked paper and is size 21 as was the issued item #3730 (Scott 615). Sample hand-stamp and pen cancellation are

identical to the previous two items. The fictitious corner card, for ABC Manufacturing, is the same as the first item (UPSS # 3718).



This bulk rate 11.1¢ Birds on a wire was issued in 1989. The sample item is on the standard issue (#3749, U620) with watermark 49 and size 23. These envelopes were canceled with a single, printed, black line through the numerals and had the corner card of the Stamped Envelope Agency (right).

For several months in 1992, Linn's Stamp News magazine indicated incorrectly that a sample version of the "11.1¢ Birds on a Wire" was to become available to collectors; in fact it was merely one of these samples. All such envelopes have postal history value and are priced at \$25.00 and up. A currently proposed article in a future issue of Postal Stationery will provide additional details.

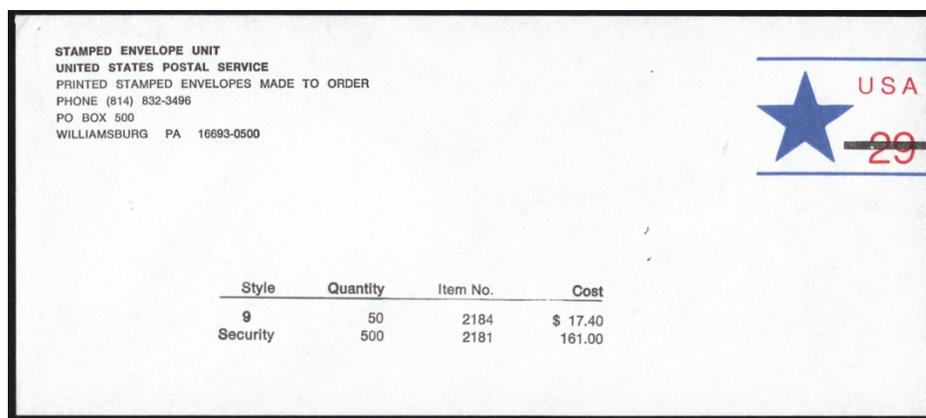


This envelope was issued Dec 3, 1989. The sample item was printed on a standard envelope (unwatermarked paper, size 21; UPSS #3735, Scott U617). It has the

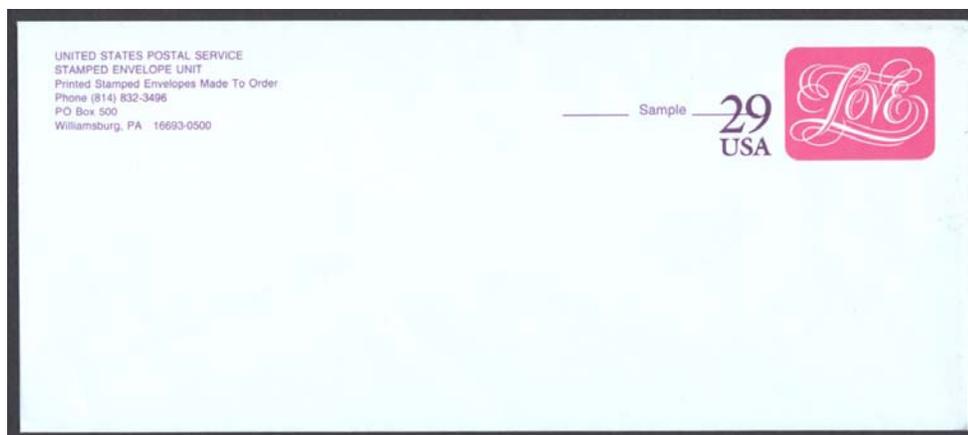
This envelope was produced by the Stamped Envelope Agency's overprinting approximately 2 million left over envelopes of 3735 with matching blue ink printed on the front and back promoting personalized envelopes made to order. The envelope was demonetized by the diagonal line through the numeral '25'.

First available for free in June 1992 in selected post offices and direct mail campaigns, They were later available for 30¢ each from the Philatelic Sales Agency.

Two varieties of inverted "L" shaped tagging are reported for the original envelope; the top bar on the earlier printings measure approximately 14 mm across and later printings measure approximately 21 mm across. All reported sample envelopes have the earlier 14 mm top bar.



This UPSS 3763 (U623) is previously a unreported item was apparently intended to promote envelope sales. The pricing and the cancel bar across the numeral were likely printed. The corner card shows relief on the back though neither pricing nor cancel bar do. This again was not intended to reach collector hands.



A special printing of 40,000 envelopes each of envelopes 3755 (size 12) and 3756 (size 23) was made for May 1991 distribution to all U.S. Post Offices, to be displayed to promote Personalized Stamped Envelopes

Made to Order. The envelopes were printed with modified dies entirely on-press in one continuous process, including the corner card, "sample" wording, "29 USA," and demonetizing horizontal slash. There was no printing on the back. A few copies passed into collector hands: copies with pin or staple holes, tape or glue marks are definitely collectible but discounted. The horizontal line to the right of "Sample" measures 17 mm from end to end, with no breaks in the line.

SAMPLE REPRINT

Collector pressure prompted the Stamped Envelope Agency to overprint 57,000 already-produced size 12 and 64,000 already produced size 23 Love envelopes which were offered through the Philatelic Sales Agency between September 15, 1991 and February 28, 1992. The overprinted nature of these envelopes is readily apparent: the horizontal line to the right of "Sample" measures 20 mm from end to end with a 1 mm gap which rarely registers with the left loop of the "9" in "29." Refer to the September-October, 1993 article in Postal Stationery for more details on the two sample printings.



First printing with 17 mm line right of SAMPLE



Two examples of second printing with 20 mm line right of sample having gap 1 mm from right

Please communicate any additional findings to the author.

Dan Undersander

djunders@wisc.edu