

THE 30¢ ROOSEVELT and 50¢ TAFT PREXIES USED TOGETHER

Introduction: The 1938 Presidential Issue, commonly known as the Prexies, began to be released on April 25, 1938. A total of thirty-two denominations were eventually issued, including profiles of the twenty-nine deceased presidents at the time.

The final two Prexie denominations released, the 30¢ Roosevelt and 50¢ Taft, were issued at the same place and time - Washington, DC on December 8, 1938.

This exhibit shows the uncommon first day covers franked with both the 30¢ and 50¢ Prexies, followed by showing commercial use items with only these stamps in the franking.

PLAN:



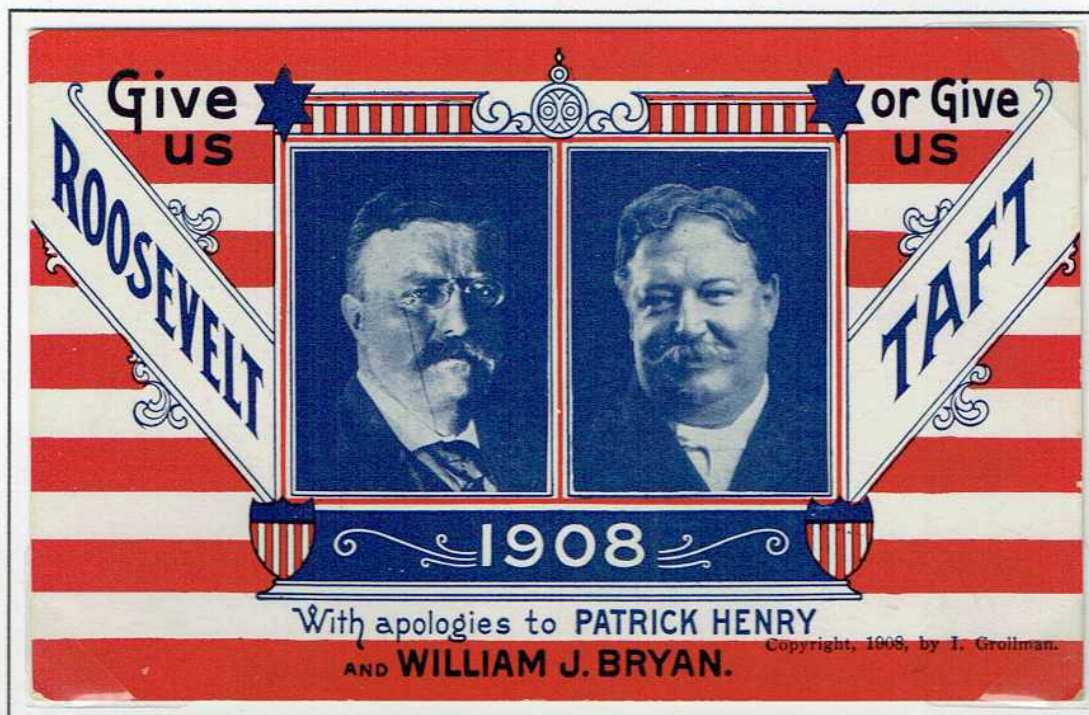
First Day Covers
Announcements
No cachets
Generic cachets
Roosevelt cachets
Taft cachets
Combo cachets

Commercial Use
An 80¢ rate
80¢ multiple weight rates
80¢ combination of rates
More than 80¢ required
Epilogue



Nearly all items shown are difficult to find.
The most significant are double framed in a **dark red** border.

ROOSEVELT AND TAFT ON 1908 CAMPAIGN POSTCARD



Theodore Roosevelt, the nation's 26th president, pledged not to run again in 1908. His chosen successor was William Howard Taft. Some Republicans wanted Roosevelt to run again but were also willing to vote for Taft to keep William Jennings Bryan from winning. Taft was elected and became our 27th president.

Synopsis:

The 30¢ Roosevelt and 50¢ Prexies Used Together

Exhibit Background: I have a successful one frame exhibit of the 50¢ Prexie Solo uses that has received large gold medals, and even a single frame grand at RMSS 2016. For years I have done a daily fruitless eBay search looking for additional items. I began to notice an occasional FDC franked with both the 30¢ and 50¢ Prexies. That made sense because the two stamps were issued at the same place and time, Washington D.C. on December 8, 1938, and I started collecting them.

This Exhibit: This is a one frame class exhibit that shows first day covers and postal history uses only. It does not deal with stamp design, production, layout, varieties etc. There are no first cachets. It does not show the later Electric Eye first day covers.

Importance: December 8, 1938 was an important date because these were the final two Prexie denominations released. True there were later FDCs for Electric Eye perforated stamps, coils, and booklet panes, but no new denominations. I know of no other attempt at an exhibit such as this.

Treatment: There are two chapters and an epilogue as stated on the title page. The First Day Cover section is organized by showing the announcements, FDCs with no cachet, generic Prexie cachets, Roosevelt cachets, and Taft cachets. It appears that no cachet maker made a cachet to deal with the two stamps together. One enterprising collector did make his own by combing parts from two Fidelity cachets.



The postal history section begins with items using a single of each stamp on a cover that required 80¢. This was the only way to pay 80¢ in postage using just two stamps. There were no 40¢ stamps at the time. Larger rate covers are also shown if they use one or more of each stamp, but nothing else in the franking.



Difficulty of Acquisition: Rustad¹ tells us how many FDCs of each were prepared, including blocks, but cannot say how many were prepared using both stamps. I have no census numbers to give, just my difficult experiences to relay. I have everything that Doug Weisz and Henry Gitner could provide. I have only once passed on an FDC because I already had it.

I am writing this in February 2024, and have not added any new cacheted FDC since July 2022 when I found one on eBay. At GASS 2022 I was able to acquire a Third Assistant Postmaster first day announcement to postmasters. At GASS 2023 I found a more interesting uncacheted FDC to replace one in the exhibit. D.A. Lux has my criteria on his list, but that has unearthed nothing. I placed an ad in *First Days*, but so far that has not been money well spent.

Why are the FDCs so hard to find? Page 2 of the exhibit shows that the post office sent separate cards to collectors telling them how to order first day covers with a single stamp or block affixed, one card for the 30¢ Roosevelt and a different card for the 50¢ Taft. There were no instructions on how to order a cover with one of each stamp affixed.

I have looked at all issues of Linn's Stamp News for 1938 and found that cachet maker ads of the day offered cacheted envelopes but did not offer to prepare covers nor did they offer to sell any first day covers. It is likely the few covers that exist with each stamp affixed were prepared by collectors in attendance who chose to do so.

Condition: It is easy to claim that every FDC is the finest one known since all but one are the only ones I have ever seen. Fortunately, there are no condition problems.

Exhibit History: This was last shown at GASS/Americover 2023 in Cleveland where it won the single frame grand.

¹ Roland E. Rustad, *The Prexies*, The Bureau Issues Association, 1994, pp 298 and 305