

1870-71 NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY I GRILL

I Grills to Become Major Numbers in Scott Catalogue

Starting with the 2013 Scott U.S. Specialized Catalogue, the I Grills will be elevated to major catalogue numbers. This corrects a past inconsistency in the catalogue, and creates new spaces to be filled in collectors' albums.

At least two sizes of grills were used by National Bank Note Company for the 1870 Issue. They were previously identified in Scott Catalogue by a notation preceding Scott 134, which assigns them the letters H and I. Until now they have not been separately catalogued, as have the different grills used in 1867 and 1868 (A, B, C, D, Z, E and F). The G Grill was used on the 1869 Pictorial Issue.

The H Grill is larger than the I Grill, measuring approximately 11-13 points wide by 14-16 points tall, or 10 x 12mm, when the full dimensions are visible. It is found on all values from the 1c thru 90c. The H Grill is sometimes extremely faint, appearing only as a few pinpoints on the face of the stamp, and H Grill multiples are known with some stamps grilled and others in the same multiple having no impression of the grill whatsoever.

The I Grill measures from 9-11 points wide by 10-13 points tall, or 8.5 x 10mm. It is often a stronger grill impression (though sometimes incomplete) with well-defined points, the shape of which differ from the H Grill's points. The I Grill is currently recorded on all values except the 24c.

Students also distinguish between early and late states of the grilling device. The sizes of the grills remained the same in both states, but the characteristics of the grill points changed in different ways as the device wore away. The new Scott Specialized will have a comprehensive introduction written by Ronald A. Burns, the foremost student of the issue.

The 1c thru 7c values make up most of the population of I Grill stamps. Values from 10c and above are extremely rare, with population figures similar to the sought-after 1867-68 Grilled Issue rarities. A population report summary is listed below (I Grills census work by Ronald A. Burns):

| Scott No. | Description | Number Known |
|-----------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 80, 80a | 5c A Grill | 4 used |
| 81 | 30c A Grill | 8 used |
| 82 | 3c B Grill | 4 used |
| 85A | 1c Z Grill | 2 used |
| 85D | 10c Z Grill | 6 used |
| 85F | 15c Z Grill | 2 used |
| 139A | 10c I Grill | 10 used plus 2 on a cover |
| 140A | 12c I Grill | 2 unused, none used |
| 141A | 15c I Grill | 3 unused, 9 used, 2 on covers |
| 142A | 24c I Grill | Not known to exist |
| 143A | 30c I Grill | One unused |
| 144A | 90c I Grill | 3 used |

According to Luff, in 1884 American Bank Note Company, who had possession of the grill rollers, also held the contract for printing tickets for the New York and Brooklyn Bridge. They were asked to provide a machine to destroy used tickets. They used the grill rollers to make this machine, which were altered by the addition of grooves and raised edges to shred the tickets.