In George P. Howard's book The Stamp Machines and Coiled Stamps”, he talks about various stamp issues on pages 55 and 56 having double private perforations. These are stamps having Schermack Type III perforations, and also having additional perforations of varying gauges, from 12.5 to 13.

He mentions that no one can be certain as to why or how these combination perforations came about. I do not have any firm answers either, but I believe that the images and additional details about this relatively unexplored area might bring out other information on the subject. It might even answer the question of which one came first. That is, was the 12.5-13 gauge perforation applied to a Schermack Type III stamp, or was it the other way around?

Along this line Howard talks about the International Vending Company from Baltimore, Maryland having produced the slanted perforations that he found because that is how some of their stamps produced looked like. He concluded that because they went out of business in 1909 they could not have produced the perforations on later issues that have been found. Also, their perforations were closer to 12.5 than to a 13-gauge. He cites that he had a letter from the founder of the company stating that he did not have a device for perforating that size (13 gauge) after the company closed. There were also examples of stamps issued after 1909 with this type of perforation, so Howard felt that he would discount that reason.
Howard's second thought as to why these double perforations exist was that the 12.5-13 gauge perforations were added afterwards to Schermack Type III stamps. This is because their Schermack mailing machine could not handle envelopes having a width greater than 5 inches. The modified Schermack Type III stamps were used either by hand or in a hand-operated affixer to apply the stamps on these envelopes. I believe that his suggestion that the second perforation was added so that the stamps could be used by hand does not make sense. However, to use the stamps with a hand affixer possibly may have been a reason.

Howard later suggested in an article in the February 1946 issue of The Bureau Specialist, a third idea. That is, that in 1909 J. J. Schermack started a new company and he had Type III perforated stamps around and was testing and adapting his new vending machine for various other types of perforations. Howard believed that the company would not apply Type III perforations to a 12.5-13 gauge perforated strip or roll for use in a mailing machine because of the company's previous experiences with weak perforations having that gauge. So to some of the Type III perforated stamps he had the 12.5-13 gauge added for use in a vending machine prior to government coils being used. I believe that this doesn't make much sense because the two types of perforations would logically make a strip or roll even weaker when used in a vending machine. Yet one more theory to add to the other theories as to why it happened. But in light of the fact that not all of the double private perforations that have been found have the same size perforations, Schermack may have tried different gauges to see which was better.
George W. Brett also touched on the subject in an article in the July 1978 issue of The United States Specialist. He agreed and disagreed with some of Howard's remarks in his book but did not come to any conclusion because of too few examples to examine. He does indicate however that at the time frame concerned here, there were many privately owned perforators that were used for receipt stubs, checks and for initial perforating. That any company or person with a perforator could have applied almost any perforation gauge to any stamps or strips, even the Type III. In fact he mentions that Howard stated on page 37 of his book that Schermack used an early type sewing machine single-row perforating machines for the Type III perforations. Anyone could have applied the 12.5-13 perforation using the same type of device.

One of three examples of the slant on an International Vending Company Pair
Not all of the examples shown here have slant perforations similar to the International Vending Company. I have included images of both the slanted and unslanted stamps and on envelopes. Of the 16 examples off cover I have found 5 with some degree of slanting, 11 with no slanting. Of the 10 cards and covers, only 4 did not have slanting.

The degree or slant angle varies between the stamps both on and off cover. This can clearly indicate that when the double perforation was produced it most likely was not made by one company and not in any standard manufacturing process. More likely it seems that a single item perforator mentioned before might be the type of unit producing the 12.5-13 gauge perforation. Since these devices were hand operated whether a single stamp or strip of stamps was placed in the device, the angle that it was fed into it could account for the varying degree of slanting we see.

The last two pages are very unusual and might be called compounded stamps.

I feel that these are really experiments by some parties.
Schermack Type III Combined:

2¢ Imperforated Lincoln Issue of 1909

With 12.75 Gauge and Slant

Pair

Both Edges of Pair have Slant Top to Bottom
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:

1¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 12.75 Gauge

With 12.3 Gauge
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:

2¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 12.5 Gauge

With 13 Gauge
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:

2¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 12.75 Gauge and Slant

Pair
e
ex-Howard

Right and Center Top to Bottom

With 12.5 Gauge and Slant

Strip
Top to Bottom on Right
rejoined on right

With 12.75 Gauge

Strip
Dear Mr. Eldred:

Thank you for your check of $25.00 on account, leaving balance due on the previous list of stamps $39.50.

I am enclosing the set of 4 perf 12 1/3 at $2.80 also used single, fold coil, similar perf 12 1/3 at 100.

Per Schurr III plus 12 1/3 perf on 409 unused 7.50

483 used 2.50

483a 2.50

line per Brink II on 383 4.00

pads IIc on 396 3.50

strip 3 II6 on 381 6.20

These are items I was holding for you, and with balance due, makes a total of $99.50.

I am also enclosing an approval card items of 1/2 3 & offset as I hand, marked down according to condition, total $2.20. These may be the same shades you have. Please look them over and return what you don't want as I might have a chance to sell them this summer.

Meanwhile let me know some other items that might interest you later.

Sincerely,

George P. Howard
Schermack Type III Combined:

3¢ Imperforated Type I Issue of 1916-17

With 13 Gauge and Slant

Both Edges have Top to Bottom

3¢ Imperforated Type II Issue of 1916-17

With 13 Gauge
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:

2¢ Imperforated Issue of 1908-09

With 12.75 Gauge and Slant

Indianapolis, IN to Indianapolis, IN
July 14, 1909

Right Edge has slant Top to Bottom
Schermack Type III Combined:

1¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 13 Gauge

New York, NY to Philadelphia, PA
January 15, 1914
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:
1¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 12.75 Gauge and Slant

Watervilet, NY to Fort Edward, NY
June 3, 1914

Left Edge has Slant Top to Bottom
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:

2¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 13 Gauge and Slant

Mount Vernon, NY to Paterson, NJ
August 23, 1915

ex-Howard

Left Edge has Slant Top to Bottom
Schermack Type III Combined:

2¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 12.3 Gauge

Paterson, NJ to Paterson, NJ
November 13, 1916
Schermack Type III Combined:

2¢ Imperforated Issue of 1912-14

With 13 Gauge and Slant

Compounded Schermack Type III Single with 13 gauge along with a 2¢ Issue of 1912-14 Schermack Type III perforation and a 1¢ Regular Issue of 1914-15
United States Seaport to Paris, France
March 11, 1916

Left Edge has Slant Top to Bottom
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:

3¢ Imperforated Issue of 1916-17 Type I

With 13 Gauge

Mr. C.W. Milton, Atty.-at-law,
Dodge City,
Kansas.

Brooklyn, NY to Dodge City, KS
November 25, 1918
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Schermack Type III Combined:

3¢ Imperforated Issue of 1916-17 Type II

With 13 Gauge and Slant

New York, NY
June 6, 1918

Left Edge has Slant Top to Bottom
Enlargement of the compound stamp on the prior cover.

Schermack Type III with 13 gauge perforation

Left edge shows the slant width from top to bottom.
United States Private Perforations
Compound Perforations

Schermack Type III Combined:

3¢ Imperforated Issue of 1916-17 Type II

With 13 Gauge

After 5 days, return to
INNIS, SPEIDEN & CO., Inc.
46 Cliff St.
NEW YORK, N. Y.

New York, NY
November 7, 1918
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

2¢ Lincoln Issue of 1909

Experimental Compounding of Perforations

Springfield, MA to Denver, CO
May 12, 1909

The cover is from Springfield, MA by J.D. Bartlett, Jr. Delano Bartlett, who was a philatelist and published in 1910 a Handbook and Checklist of United States State Revenues. It was updated by him in 1916.

Most likely he or one of his friends might have been trying to produce some type of perforated stamp.
Experimental Compounding of Perforations

The prior cover consists of the following;

Top Edge shows 2 half Brinkerhoff style Type II Perforations, diameter of 2.5 mm and 7.5 mm centerline apart

Right Edge is a regular issued Lincoln 12 gauge perforation

Left Edge is a Schermack Type III perforation but slightly altered

Bottom Edge is unknown, it has 2 mm spacing between perforations
Brinkerhoff Type II Combined:

1¢ Imperforated Issue of 1908-09

With 10 Gauge

This unusual single stamp has a Brinkerhoff Type II perforation at the bottom compounded with a 10 gauge perforation.
The top of the stamp also shows the same but not as deeply punched.
It is used.
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS

Though Howard does not describe in more detail the 2c September 23, 1913 New York City cover, I have illustrated a cover with a Scott 409 having the same date and city cancellation with Schermack Type III perforations on the left side of the stamp along with what is 13 gauge on both sides. The Type III perforations are not clearly distinguishable because of the way they were made over a regular perforations, if produced that way. There is no slanting of the perforations. This is an illustrated return envelope to the Paterson, New Jersey company, Simon & Cohn, at the firm's address. Did they apply the double perforated stamp to the return envelope before sending it to a customer in New York City or to a New York City office of theirs? Or did the sender have access to such double perforation stamps from a different source, such as a vending machine or a single-line perforator? In addition, Howard mentions that there are two other commercial covers from 1916 canceled Paterson, New Jersey, one from June 10th and the other from November 15th. Were they also from Simon & Cohn or was there more than one company using double perforations from Paterson, New Jersey?

This answer is found in a hand written letter in Howard's own files 5 from November 5, 1938 from Leonard Garbaccio of Paterson, New Jersey. Mr Garbaccio was the owner of four double private perforation covers, that is, the 9/23/13, 8/23/15, 6/10/16 and the 11/15/16 canceled envelopes.

He states in his letter to Howard that “Two of the covers are canceled Paterson, NJ one June 10, 1916 the other Nov. 13, 1916 both beautiful examples and I believe they are genuine because I have other covers with the same return address and they have a 2c stamp on with the regular #3 Schermack. It seems to me that every time this party mailed a letter he must have bought his stamps from a vending machine.” He does not mention the name of the company in that letter. I think that we can assume that these two 1916 covers were not Simon & Cohn because Mr. Garbaccio having all four covers would have most likely mentioned it. In a reply letter to Mr. Garbaccio, Howard asks for the name of the company, and was answered with a letter, “Elliots Jewelry Store 268 Main St”. In a later letter Mr. Garbaccio thanks Howard for buying two covers, one of the two covers with the Paterson cancel and another one not described, for $4.00. Howard never gives any details in his book or articles about this Paterson cover or the other cover, which could have been either that he acquired.
The following is a summary of the issues shown.

The Scott 344, is earliest known dated compound item, used on a cover, dated July 14, 1909, canceled in Chicago on an envelope from the Central States Bridge Co. of Indianapolis, Indiana to a Chicago business address. The stamp has two Schermack Type III perforation slots on the left and one on the right along with additional perforations measuring 12.75 gauge on both sides. The perforations are slightly slanted. What might be interesting to note is not only is this much earlier than what Howard reports but also it happens to be from a company in Indianapolis. This is the same city where the Parkhurst Company's stamp vending machine was made and tested for the Postmaster in 1908. Now while this example or any of the others do not exhibit the pinholes, which characterize Parkhurst, it does bring up the question again of which came first and by whom. Did Central States Bridge Company have an office in Chicago so it was postmarked there or was it taken to Chicago and mailed? Did the stamp originate in Chicago or Indianapolis?

Did Layton M. Parkhurst experiment with various types of perforations while designing and building his machine, which is why we see this perforation size, this early? His patent forms were in 1908. So even though there is very little information about him or his machine, it seems he kept up with his patents paperwork. If he did experiment with various perforations did he sell these test rolls to Schermack and that is why the Type III appears on this and other stamps and covers? He was still in the industry after the International Vending Company closed, so that could be a possibility also. Or did the International Vending Company sell their slanting type perforation device and someone else was using it? We may never know.
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

Howard also replied to Mr. Garbaccio's "vending machine" note. He stated at that time, in 1916, that the vending machines were using government coils already. Therefore the stamps must have come from an affixing machine or a "philatelist". Not the same position as stated in his 1946 article. Was he suggesting that a philatelist applied the 12.5-13 gauge and used the stamps, or that the philatelist had acquired them from someone else and had used them?

In all of the other writings by Howard, a philatelist is not mentioned as a user or the reason for the double private perforations.

Another cover described by Howard is a Scott 409 from Mount Vernon, NY, August 23, 1915 sent to the same company, Simon & Cohn (spelled Cohen by hand) in Paterson, New Jersey. This has Schermack Type III perforations only on the right side with a 13-gauge on both sides of the stamp, and this one shows slanting. Was the Mt. Vernon, New York company also using these double perforation stamps or did they get it from Simon & Cohn or from the same source? Based on the types of business they were in it is clear why there is correspondence between both companies.

SIMON & COHN,
MANUFACTURERS OF THE
"PATERSON" UNION MADE OVERALLS
AND WORKING PANTS.
PATERSON, N. J.

FACTORY: 15, 17, 19, 21 PATerson STREET.

New York, NY to Paterson, NJ
January 22, 1917
UNITED STATES PRIVATE PERFORATIONS
COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

The cover shown is a return envelope from the prior company's compounded covers, but this one has a torn Scott 408 strip from a Schermack Type III vending machine or a roll of such issue.

So there was a good chance either of the discussed ways compounded stamps and envelopes from Paterson, NJ might have been obtained.

A picture post card with a Scott 408 from Watervliet, NY dated June 3, 1914 with both sides having full Schermack Type III perforations with a 12.75 gauge on both sides of the stamp. This stamp has slanting. Where did this come from? This town is north of Albany, New York and about 45 miles from it destination. Where did the double perforation stamp come from?

A ship envelope postmarked United States Sea Post, March 11, 1916 having double perforation on a Scott 409. Schermack Type III perforations are clearly on the left side with a 13-gauge on both sides of the stamp along with a normal Scott 409 Schermack Type III stamp and a regular Scott 405 bound for Paris, France. Slanting can be seen on one side. Where could the sender get both a regular Schermack Type III and a double perforation variety Schermack? People did carry stamps in small boxes back during that period, but with private perforated stamps?

The two covers, are both from the same company, Innis, Speiden & Co of New York City, both canceled in 1918, one in June and the other in November. Both have Scott 484 with Schermack Type III perforations on both sides with a 13-gauge on both sides of the stamps. Both exhibit slanting perforations.

What is more interesting and may be the answer to our question can be seen in the enlargement of the stamp on the June 6, 1918 envelope.
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