The story of the Schermack Mailing Machine Company actually starts back in 1904 when Joseph Schermack co-invented an envelope sealing machine for the Thexton Electric Sealer Company of Chicago. Later in 1906 he applied for a patent for his own new machine to be used by a company he was involved in, the Detroit Mailing Machine Company. His own version of the affixing machine was one that applied a stamp and sealed an envelope at a rate of 150 to 160 per minute. In it he used regular issued 12 perforation stamps because imperforated stamps had not been produced yet. Imperforate sheets of stamp production started in October 1906.

Schermack's second version came out later in 1906 still using regular issued stamps.

For his third model machine he started using the imperforated Post Office stamps, perforating them with six, seven and eight holes, centered on the gap between the stamps, known as the Type I variety. This was tried because the 12 perforation regular issue stamps were too weak for the high-speed mechanism of the machine. High speed was necessary for the machine to be an economical success, but the Type I perforations also had problems with the feeding mechanism.

So a second perforation was tried for a short period of time. This was the Type II perforation which was similar to the first type.
Finally, a Type III or hyphen-slot hole perforation was developed by an employee, Grover Cleveland in January 1908, with great success. Not only did it work but the device speed also increased to 250 per minute. In fact it was in use from 1908 till 1927. In 1908 the company changed its name to Schermack Mailing Machine Company.

Type III

1¢ Issue of 1906-1908 with Schermack Type III perforation experimental over Type I 8 Holes perforation

2¢ Issue of 1906 Carmine Die I with Schermack Type III perforation experimental over Type I 6 or 7 Hole perforation
Sealed, Stamped and Counted

BY THE

Schermack Envelope Sealer and Stamper

At the rate of 250 per minute.

CIRCULAR ENCLOSED.

RETURN IN 5 DAYS, TO

Schermack Mailing Machine Co.

TOVAR COURT

DETROIT, MICH.

CHICAGO OFFICE: N.Y. LIFE BLDG.

Mr. H. B. Sisson

314 Pine St.
St. Louis, Mo.

THIS ENVELOPE WAS SEALED, STAMPED AND COUNTED BY A SCHERMACK MAILING MACHINE AT THE RATE OF 250 PER MINUTE

Schermack Type III Dummy Stamp with a Alaska-Yukon regular issue of 1909
Chicago, IL to St Louis, MO
June 5, 1909

Front only
In 1909 Schermack was looking to expand the stamp vending machine business and he sent members of the American Philatelic Society looking for investors. The four page letter and his personal envelope are shown here. He was successful in his pursuit and the company had further successes.

Later on the machines were modified to use government coils.

Two Singles of 1¢ Issue of 1906-1908 with Schermack Type III perforations
Detroit, MI to Des Moines, IA
May 31, 1909

This letter was to Mrs. T.S. Farquharson, who was member # 2661 of the American Philatelic Society since 1909. Laura Farquharson also received mail from F.H. Brinkerhoff from 1909 to 1911. both Laura and her husband Thomas did business with several companies who used Schermack Type III perforated stamps in their mailings.
Jos. J. Schermack  
Detroit

201 S. Kirby Ave.,  
May 29, '09.

Mr. T. B. Tupper,  
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

I dare say the origin of the stamp attached is now familiar to all fellow members of the A. P. S., the hyphen-hole perforation being the design of the writers. These stamps are now used at the rate of 20 million per year in Chicago alone by the many large commercial houses using my mailing machines.

The success attending the introduction of this mailing machine (which applies the stamp, seals the flaps and counts the envelopes at the rate of 250 per minute) had prompted the investigation of the STAMP WADING OR SEALING PROPOSITION, with the result of having at last arrived at a solution of that problem also, as related in the enclosed confidential statement.

Believing you will welcome the opportunity, after careful consideration of the subject, I remain

Very truly yours,

Jos. J. Schermack
CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT
TO
MEMBERS OF AMERICAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY.

STAMP VENDING MACHINES have long been desired by the public. Why haven't they come into general use? First, stamps were not being handled in the proper form, second, the government is entirely too slow to act on the matter.

With this in mind, I found it only necessary to use my specially prepared stamp to insure accuracy and certainty in feeding them to overcome the mechanical difficulty. The next problem was, how to place them in general use without depending upon "Uncle Sam" to adopt them, yet derive a revenue from them. The idea of using an advertising display in connection therewith was finally hit upon, after quite a little experimenting, the combination was worked out as shown on the enclosed illustration.

This handsome little device is only 9 inches in diameter and 12 inches high to the top of the postal scale; yet it holds 1000 stamps or an average week's supply. A circular glass case encloses the advertising drum and all mechanism. Upon inserting a coin above and giving the crank a turn one stamp at a time is discharged, while doing so the advertising drum, which carries ten display cards makes a partial turn thus bringing a new card to the front.

In order to demonstrate the advertising value of space in the machines, a thorough canvass of the 250 Detroit Drug Stores was made to ascertain the average number of stamps sold, we found it to be about 800-1½ and 400-2½ per week for each store, knowing so great a number were sold by the drug stores it was an easy matter for an advertiser to figure out the amount of publicity he would receive especially from a device so novel as a stamp vendor will be for a long time to come.

Location leases were then secured from Detroit druggists, we found they were very glad to allow the machines to be displayed in a conspicuous place in their stores for it would relieve them of all the trouble, annoyance, and expense they have always had in handling stamps.

Meanwhile 25 machines were made and quietly yet thoroughly tested. Now that I am satisfied the proposition is commercially practical and profitable, I am organizing "THE SCHEMACH STAMP VENDING MACHINE CO," to make and sell the machines on some one of several plans not yet definitely determined.

However the plan being carried out locally may be adopted in all cities of any size, it is this; 200 machines are now being made for use in Detroit only, a local company will be organized for operating these, to be known as.
THE DETROIT S. V. M. Co. It will have a capital stock of $10,000, 60% of this stock is retained by the original parent company, the balance of $4,000 or 40% will be sold at $3,000 for treasury purposes. This will enable them to buy the 200 machines from the parent company at $10 apiece and leave enough for three months operating expense by which time returns will have come in from the advertising.

The expense of operation, receipts and profits of the local company will be as follows:

Receipts:
Cash in treasury............................... $3000.00
Cash from advertising on basis of 35¢ per space per month or 3.50 per machine would realize for 200 machines $700 per month or for the year.............................. $8400.00
$11400.00

Disbursements.
200 machines at $10.................................. $2000.00
Expense of operation for one year................ $3600.00
$5600.00
Leaving a balance of .................................. $5800.00
Keeping on hand $800 for expenses, a cash dividend of 80% is possible at the end of the first year, making a net profit of 66 2/3% on the stock sold for cash.

Using the figures above as a basis we find 200 machines to earn at least $5000 a year profit or $25 per year for each machine, since the parent company receives 60% of this or $15 from each machine per year, 5000 machines only placed in operation would make the annual earnings of the company 75% on a capital of $100,000.

5000 machines in operation would be a very conservative estimate since we find Detroit can use at least 400 machines or one for every 1000 population, distributed among 200 drug stores, 200 more in confectionary, cigar stores, hotels, restaurants, and grocer stores. Having so small, simple and inexpensive a machine as this one, makes it possible to place them more universally for the public's convenience, than the government is ever likely to.

On the basis of one machine for every 1000 population taken in the largest cities only, would require about 12,000 machines, let alone all cities having from 30,000 population on up, all of these can afford to have some one man or company operate on the above method.

Considering all possibilities very conservatively, the prospects are unlimited, even the we were to sell the machines outright at any $25 or $30 each in quantities depending upon the size of territory.

Obviously, no matter what plan of operation the parent company follows, no large amount of capital is required for the machines will be paid for on delivery at a slight profit, therefore.
THE SCHEMACK STAMP VENDING MACHINE CO. (the parent company) will have a capital stock of only $100,000, to be organized under the laws of Michigan, 60% to be retained by myself and Mr. A. M. Fechheimer, a practical advertising man, of this city. The balance of 40% or 4000 shares at $10 a share fully paid and non-assessable, to be placed in the treasury, to be sold as needed to raise funds for carrying on the business.

Remember we already have a factory, patterns, special tools, etc., and 25 finished machines and are building 175 more for use in Detroit. Mr. Fechheimer and I having at our own expense carried the proposition through its experimental period and up to the practical stage, all of this property will of course be assigned to the company in exchange for our stock.

Believing that a great many members of the A. P. Society would appreciate the privilege of investing in one or more shares of the parent company's stock, I am setting aside 1000 shares of the treasury stock, until June 5th, for sale to them at 75% of its par value or $7.50 per share.

How many shares do you wish to subscribe for?

Very truly yours,

J. J. Schemack
Joseph Schermack having started with his mailing machines decided to build a stamp vending machine which was also a goal of the Post Office Department.

In 1905 the Post Office Department started discussion on having a quality stamp vending machines for Post Office that were unmanned at certain times as well in other everyday facilities. In 1908 they decided to perform test from several companies.

Schermack's machine was built to vend his Type III perforated stamps, 1¢ and 2¢ denominations. The device was about 9 inches by 12 inches with a postal scale at the top. A picture is shown here.

Schermack Stamp Vending Machine

In later years the company use this type of test stamp.

Schermack Stamp Vending Machine Company
10.5 gauge test dummy
After Joseph Schermack left the company he built his own vending machines, under the name of Schermack Stamp Vending Machine Company, in Detroit around 1909. The two post cards shown below show no signs that they were from an affixing device. They may have the vended stamps from these machines used on them.

[Image of two postcards]

Detroit, MI to Watertown, NY
May 25, 1910

Detroit, MI to Sandusky, OH
June 12, 1910
In 1909 Joseph Schermack left the company, and the name of the company was changed to Mail-om-eter Company. While still producing the Type III perforated stamps for its existing customers, the company was experimenting with a different series of perforations. They were trying to convince the Post Office to produce coils of stamps using their new perforation design. When the Post Office made their own type of perforation, the Mail-om-eter Company made their affixing machine to handle these Bureau coil rolls.

During this period of automatic machines and mass mailing, companies wanted some sort of a security method to control their stamp inventory. Besides having a counting device on some of the affixing machines, the government in 1908 approved the applying of punched initials into the stamps as a method of control. These were commonly known as perfs. An employee of the company in 1909 developed a mechanism to punch the initials into the stamp as it was being affixed to the envelope. In general, each customer who wanted this control had a specific punch pattern, but some companies used the same pattern. There were many pattern designs; most common was the variation of the 9-hole layout. But there also was a 12 hole and 8 hole designs.
DE LAVAL
STANDARD
THE WORLD OVER

MR. CHRIS. PETERSON,
EARLEION,
KANS.

THE DE LAVAL SEPARATOR CO.
165 BROADWAY
NEW YORK

Perfin Pattern # 4578
Hudson Term Sta, NY to Earleion, KS
1910

2¢ Issue of 1910-1911

Carpenter Street Station

G. FROSH,
WAYSIDE,
WIS.

Return in five days to Kabo Corset Co
Corner Milwaukee Avenue and Carpenter Street, Chicago

Perfin Pattern # 48
Chicago, IL to Wayside, WI
May 23, 1911
Sixteen different commercial companies placed their distinctive perfin design on Schermack Type III perforated stamps. Several were on strips. Three of these are the American Book Co of New York, New York and Southern Pacific Steamship Lines of Galveston, Texas, New York and L. H. Keller & Co of New York, New York.

The Perfin Catalog number are # A40 and # S234 and # L93.

### Issue of 1916-1917

**Type I**

A40
American Book Co of New York

**Type II**

S234
Southern Pacific Steamship Lines of Galveston
Pasteup Strip
Some perforations not completely punched

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**Sampson Electric Co:**

Springfield, Ill.

L 93
New York, NY to Springfield, IL
September 12, 1917
Examples of test dummies or demonstration stamps by the company are found and were used for many reasons. These were used for advertising purposes, as leaders on coiled rolls for starting in the machines and also for testing their own machines during production.

Test Dummy

Blank Test Dummy

Mail-o-meter Brown Test Dummy

Mis-perforated

Not fully perforated

2¢ Issue of 1912

Strip with pasteup test dummy leader
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type III
Test Dummy

Pasteup Strip

Guideline Strip with Mail-Om-Eter name
Another area unique to Schermack is that of what is commonly called "double private perforations" or "compound perforated stamps". These, in general, are stamps that have multiple perforations on them; Schermack Type III and some other gauge perforations. These other perforations range from 12.25 to 13 gauge. Some also are with Schermack Type I perforations. There are several theories as to their existence but no one knows for sure why they exist.

2¢ Issue of 1912

Pair
Schermack Type III perforation over 12.25 gauge perforation

2¢ Issue of 1912

SCHERMACK TYPE III PERFORATION OVER 13 GAUGE PERFORATION
New York, NY to Paterson, NJ
September 23, 1913
Finally, when Joseph Schermack left his original company he formed the Schermack Vending Machine Company in Detroit. There he developed several types of stamp vending machines, first using his Type III hyphen-slot perforation and later the government Bureau coiled stamps. As far as we know the Type III usage might have been confined to Detroit, but the Bureau usage was nationwide and continued for many years.

Adverting Envelope

THE SHERMACK COMPANY
DETOIIT
PIONEER MAKERS OF HIGH GRADE
POSTAGE STAMP MACHINERY
USING
Postage Stamps
IN ROLLS
YOUR POSTOFFICE WILL SUPPLY THEM

Bentley & Gerwig Furniture Co.,
Parkersburg,
W. Va.

Detroit, MI to Parkersburg, WVA
1913

1¢ Coil issue of 1912

The Schermack Company
Detroit
PIONEER MAKERS OF HIGH GRADE
POSTAGE STAMP MACHINERY
USING
Postage Stamps
IN ROLLS
YOUR POSTOFFICE WILL SUPPLY THEM

Dayton Motor Car Co.,
Dayton,
Ohio

Detroit, MI to Dayton, OH
Front only
1914

1¢ Parcel Post issue of 1913
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<td>Issue of 1918-1920</td>
<td>1 cent</td>
<td>9817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cent</td>
<td>10918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type IV</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cent</td>
<td>11260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type V</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cent</td>
<td>11414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type Va</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cent</td>
<td>11641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type VI</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cent</td>
<td>8837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type IV</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 cent</td>
<td>14158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>15146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 1/2 cent</td>
<td>16862</td>
<td>16864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16939</td>
<td>16972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 cent</td>
<td>14197</td>
<td>15690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15836</td>
<td>16190</td>
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<td></td>
<td>16580</td>
<td>16651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16739</td>
<td>16743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17876</td>
<td>18197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue of 1923 Harding</td>
<td>2 cent</td>
<td>15025</td>
</tr>
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</table>
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 6 Holes
Issue of 1906-1908
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 7 Holes
Issue of 1906-1908

Pasteup Pair
e

ex-Agris
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1906-1908

ex-Howard
Margin Pair with Part Arrow
Guideline Pair
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 8 Holes
Issue of 1906-1908

Arrow Guideline
Vertical Pair

Shifted and missing perforations
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1906-1908

Horizontal Guideline Block
e

Vertical Guideline Block
e

Centerline Block
e
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1906-1908

Imprint Plate Number 3119 Block e
ex-Belasco

Imprint Plate Number 3120 Block e
ex-Belasco
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 1 6 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die I
U.S. Private Perforations

Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 1 7 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die I

Pasteup Pair
e

Guideline Pair
e

Pasteup Strip with Schermack Type I-7 hole Perforations at left and Schermack Type I 8 hole Perforations at right
e

ex-Belasco
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 7 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die I

MURPHY CHAIR CO
Manufacturers
DETROIT, MICH

Messrs Baxter D. Whitney & Son

Winchendon, Mass.

Detroit, MI to Winchendon, MA
December 14, 1907
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.

Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die I

Pair with Guideline at right

Guideline Pair
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 1 8 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die I

Margin Arrow Guideline Strip

Margin Block

Vertical Guideline Block

Imprint Plate Number 3454 Block

ex-Belasco
U.S. Private Perforations

Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 8 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die I

Centerline Block e
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die 1

Earliest Known Usage of Schermack Stamp
Earliest Known Usage of any United States Coiled Stamp

Return in Five Days to
P R M N U F A C T U R I N G COMPANY
1-659 Bellevue Ave.
DETROIT, MICH.

Travis Auto Co.,
311 Upper Second St.,
Evansville, Ind.

Detroit, MI to Evansville, IN
November 22, 1907

Front Only
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1906
Carmine Die I

Detroit, MI to Winchendon, MA
December 31, 1907

Baxter D. Whitney & Son,
Winchendon, Mass.

Detroit, Mich.
Manufacturers
Murphy Chair Co.
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 6 Holes
Issue of 1906
Lake Die II

ex-Agris
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 7 Holes
Issue of 1906
Lake Die II

Guideline Pair

c

c
U.S. Private Perforations

Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 8 Holes
Issue of 1906
Lake Die II

Strip e
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.

Type I 8 Holes
Issue of 1906
Lake Die II

Horizontal Guideline Block

Imprint Plate Number 4686 Block

ex-Belasco

Imprint Plate Number 4704 Block
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 6 Holes
Issue of 1906
Scarlet Die I

Guideline Pair
U.S. Private Perforations  

Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 8 Holes
Issue of 1908-1909

Guideline Pair
2.4 mm
e

3 mm
e

Pasteup Pair
Plate Number
4971
e

Guideline Pair
2.3 mm
e

Guideline Strip
2.3 mm
e
Guideline Pair
2.2 mm
e

Guideline Pair
2.4 mm
e

Guideline Pair
2.6 mm
e
ex-Agris
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1908-1909

2.3 mm
e

2.5 mm
e

Guideline Pair
2.3 mm
e

ex-Agris
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 6 Holes
Issue of 1909

2 mm
Shifted perforations

2.2 mm
e

3 mm
e

Guideline Pair
2.1 mm
e

Imprint Plate Number 4982 Block
Siderographer's initials
3 mm
e
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type I 8 Holes
Issue of 1909

2.7 mm

2.2 mm
ex-Howard

Vertical Margin Pair

3 mm
c

2.9 mm
Not punched thru

Guideline Pair
2.1 mm
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1909

Guideline Strip
2.2 mm
e
U.S. Private Perforations  Schermack Mailing Machine Co.
Type 18 Holes
Issue of 1909

Vertical Arrow Guideline Block
2.2 mm
e

Imprint Plate Number 4979 Block
2.1-2.8 mm
One perforation not completely punched