

Collecting Poster Stamps

An occasional periodical dedicated to the study of United States poster stamps

Number 2

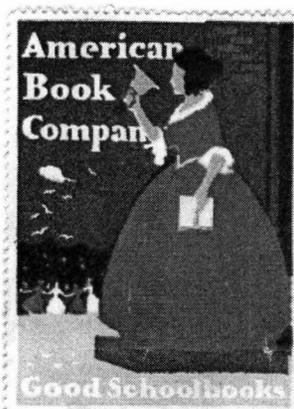
June 2008

American Book Company Set

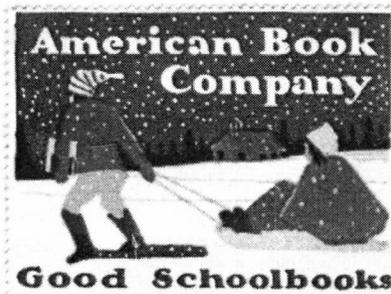
The American Book Company published a set of six poster stamps advertising “good schoolbooks.” Rogers & Company, Chicago and New York, printed these stamps. Although undated, they were available in 1914 since the set was tipped into the May 1914 issue of *The Printing Arts* (Cambridge, MA: University Press). (The numbers below each poster stamp are from *United States Advertising Poster Stamps 1912 – 1915* by Robert C. Bradbury. Worcester, Massachusetts. 2008).



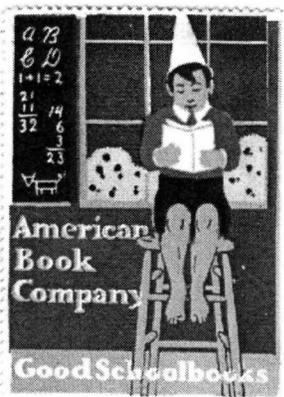
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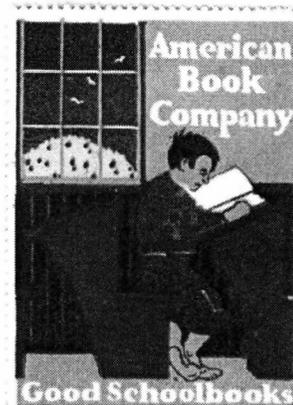
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Rogers & Co. was a major printing company with a fine reputation as indicated by the following comment appearing on p. 215 of the magazine cited above: “That good taste, appropriateness, artistic excellence, and technical perfection, which always characterizes the booklets and catalogues produced by Rogers & Company, of Chicago and New York, is also true

of the poster stamps this firm produces, ..." The writer reports that Rogers & Co. is "producing a large number of advertising stamps with strong, poster-like treatments." J. M. Bowles, writing in issue no. 5 of *M.A.C.* [Modern Art Collector], refers to the German origin of the artwork in these stamps stating: "Made in Germany for an American House. A model school-book advertisement."

Toby Rubovits, Inc., Chicago

Toby Rubovits, Inc. was a printing firm in Chicago, Illinois from 1894 to at least 1952. Toby Rubovits, the founder, died in 1935 and his company was then managed by his sons. In the October 1914 issue of *The Printing Art* (p. 128), Rubovits is touted as "one of the best known printing offices in Chicago noted for the uniform excellence of the work produced."



2830

Poster stamp advertising by printing companies is usually general in nature. The company's name followed by such words as "printing," "lithography," "binding" is the usual format. Some stamps advertise the printing of generic products like "books" or "poster stamps."

The poster stamps issued by Toby Rubovits vary from this practice by touting a specific printing product. Your editor knows of four Rubovits poster stamps. Only the first uses general terms, "printer, binder, designer" along with company name & city.

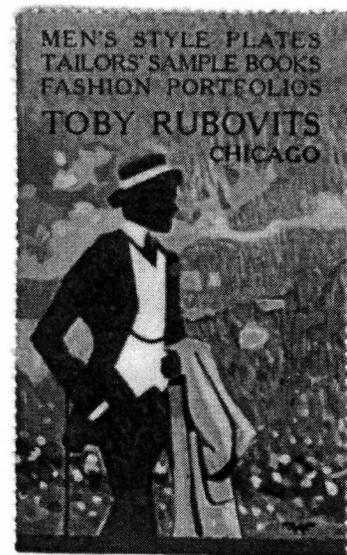
The other three stamps focus on Rubovits' publication of "men's style plates." A clue to the date of these stamps comes from the *Catalogue of Copyright Entries* (Library of Congress Copyright Office), vol. 13: 2 (1916) that lists a Rubovits copyright for "Styles for men and young men."



2831



2832



2831

Early Football Poster Stamp

On October 30, 1915 Indiana University played a football game against Washington and Lee. The game was played in Indianapolis. The poster stamp shown here advertises this game. Although no year appears on this stamp, these two teams played only once. The final score was a 7 to 7 tie game.



Doubleday, Page, & Co.'s Poster Stamp Advertising "Gold"



810

The November 29, 1913 issue of *Publishers' Weekly* contains on page 269 a short article entitled "The 'Book Stamp' Which Doubleday, Page, & Co. Are Using to Advertise 'Gold.'" This is the first U. S. product advertising poster stamp mentioned in a contemporary publication found by this editor. A summary of this article appears below.

Doubleday, Page, & Co., Garden City, New Jersey, published the book *Gold* by Stewart Edward White in 1913. The poster stamp shown here promoted this book. Although there is no date on this poster stamp, it was likely issued in 1913 as this is the year of the book's publication. Also an illustration of this stamp appears in this 1913 issue of *Publishers' Weekly*. This publication reports that Thomas Fogarty is the artist for this poster stamp and that Doubleday is "much pleased with the success of the experiment on *Gold* and will try it on some of their forthcoming books." I do not know if any other poster stamps were issued by Doubleday.

Publishers' Weekly. November 29, 1913. "The 'Book Stamp' Which Doubleday, Page & Co. Are Using to Advertise "Gold.""

"Doubleday, Page and Company has adopted from Germany an ingenious and attractive advertising device. On the back of thousands of envelopes of first-class mail which leave their plant in Garden City is affixed a miniature poster, artistically printed in gold, red and black, reproducing Thomas Fogarty's cover design for 'Gold,' Stewart Edward White's new book. 2 x 1 1/4 inches in size, it gives a charming little picture of two red-shirted miners testing their 'pay dirt.' ... This German idea of a tiny poster, artistically designed and printed, is an excellent one. ... In Germany, owing to the remarkable attractiveness of these 'stickers,' they have become almost a craze—children collect albums of them and tourists buy them as souvenirs. Doubleday ... is much pleased with the success of the experiment on 'Gold,' and will try it on some of their forthcoming books."

New Reference Book Available

United States Advertising Poster Stamps 1912 - 1915

by Robert C. Bradbury

134-page catalog describes more than 3,600 United States advertising poster stamps documented as published from 1912 through 1915.

More than 650 illustrations at 70% of original size. Extensive reference list.

All poster stamps advertise a product, service or place.

Appendix has copies of all 5 issues of *Poster Art Stamp Supplement* (1915 – 1916), New York, illustrating 125 poster stamps. Spiral-bound, soft cover.

Excerpts from *Introduction*

“Publication dates for many poster stamps included in this catalog were found through this author’s search of the journals, magazines and newspapers published from 1910 to 1920. Several trade journals, such as *The Printing Arts* and *American Printer*, included tipped-in poster stamps and other publications illustrated poster stamps. Popular magazines like *St. Nicholas*, *Youth’s Companion*, *Judge*, *Harper’s Weekly*, showed poster stamps in advertisements and included lists of companies to write for their stamps. Two publications promoted poster stamps but both the *Poster Stamp Bulletin* (1915) and the *Poster Art Stamp Supplement* (1915 – 1916) survived for only five issues each. Still these two publications provide us with much information about the poster stamps of this era.”

“Poster stamps were an alternative to magazine ads. These stamps were inexpensive to produce and deliver. They piggybacked on the mail. Hundreds of companies published thousands of poster stamps. These vignettes provide an interesting and comprehensive view of life and culture in the United States just before World War I. Stamps were published in cities and towns throughout the country. There were poster stamps advertising automobiles, banks, beverages, books, candies, cigars, cigarettes, cities & towns, coal, cosmetics, department stores, electricity, food, gas, home furnishings, hotels, insurance, ladies and men’s fashions, magazines, manufacturing & agricultural machinery, medicines, newspapers, ocean liners, office products, printing & graphic arts, recreation, restaurants, sports, tourism, toys & games, trains, etc.”