

Is Bill Gross' 1847 Collection the "Ultimate" Collection of United States 1847's?

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"Ultimate" Defined

The greatness of a philatelic collection is measured in two ways. The first is the degree to which the collection has captured all of the significant pieces. The second is by its standing in comparison to other collections of the same or similar kind, both past and present.

In Ferrary's day, his worldwide collection, by virtue of its extraordinary completeness and global scope, was considered the greatest ever formed, even surpassing Tapling's massive worldwide collection, which Tapling donated to the British Museum (now part of the British Library's philatelic collection). In more modern times, the goal of worldwide completion, which inspired Tapling, Ferrary and many past stamp collectors, has been generally superseded by the more practical, and arguably more rewarding, specialization in one subject, such as an individual country, issue or postal history topic.

As the scope of a collection narrows, there is a corresponding increase in the potential for a collection to achieve *ultimate* greatness. As defined by Webster, the meaning of *ultimate* is "the best or most extreme of its kind." To determine ultimate status, the population of surviving items must be thoroughly documented, and the collection must contain the best representative examples from that population. Simply being better than any other collection is not enough to achieve ultimate status. There must be the additional element of limited potential for expansion or improvement.

The reader may surmise from this article's title that, in this writer's opinion, the United States 1847 Issue collection exhibited by William H. Gross¹ has achieved status as the *ultimate* 1847 Issue collection. Such a bold statement should be supported by facts, and that is the purpose of this article.

To support the writer's contention that Mr. Gross has assembled what is essentially the ultimate 1847 collection, the following questions will be asked and answered:

- 1) Does the collecting area have a clearly defined boundary and well-documented population of surviving relevant material that is unlikely to change significantly overtime?
- 2) Does the collection include a diversity of items, reflecting the entire population of surviving material, and are the representative examples in the finest available quality?
- 3) Are there any "iconic" items in the collecting subject, and how many are in the collection?²
- 4) Which items meet the standard categories of philatelic significance: Earliest Documented Use, Largest Recorded Multiple, Largest Franking on Cover, and Only Recorded Example (of a variety,

postal marking or use).

5) Apart from judging what is included in the collection, is there any significant representative item or iconic item *missing* from the collection, and, if so, could one reasonably expect it to be present?

These questions are relevant to the *material* in the collection, but they do not address other transitory aspects of a philatelic exhibit, such as presentation, original research, competitive environment and judging. Those aspects of exhibiting can greatly influence the *award* an exhibit receives – or is denied – but they have little or no relevance to content.

Organization of the Gross 1847 Exhibit Collection

Before answering these five questions, the writer will provide a basic description of the Gross 1847 exhibit collection. This will be especially helpful to those readers who have never seen it displayed.

The exhibit is presented with the items mounted on 128 letter-size pages (8.5 by 11-inch). A standard exhibit frame holds 16 pages, and an eight-frame exhibit is the standard size for competition at the highest level.

An exhibit's title page should define the subject matter and outline its organization. The opening paragraph of Mr. Gross' 1847 title page states:

This exhibit is a study of the two first regularly issued stamps of the United States. It looks at the production of the 1847 stamps and their varieties (including deliveries, colors and shades, double transfers and the bisects). As well, a detailed review is made of the many domestic and international postal and auxiliary services usages. All elements of a traditional exhibit, from concept to demonetization, are studied.

The exhibit is organized into seven sections and 28 categories. Table A shows the exhibit plan.

TABLE A – PLAN OF THE GROSS 1847 EXHIBIT

Section 1: Production History

- 1A. Contract & Contemporary Die Proofs
- 1B. Contemporary Plate Proofs
- 1C. Plate Make-Up
- 1D. Earliest Known Usage

Section 2: The Five Cents

- 2A. The Stamp
- 2B. Plate Varieties
- 2C. Printing Variations
- 2D. Deliveries & Shades

Section 3: The Ten Cents

- 3A. The Stamp
- 3B. Plate Varieties
- 3C. Printing Variations
- 3D. Bisects

Section 4: The Domestic Usages

- 4A. Domestic Mail
- 4B. Auxiliary Postal Services
- 4C. With Carrier Services & Local Post
- 4D. Route Agents: Railroads and Waterways
- 4E. Non-Contract Steamboats
- Section 5: Used Abroad**
 - 5A. British North America
 - 5B. Panama
- Section 6. Foreign Mails**
 - 6A. British North America
 - 6B. Western Hemisphere
 - 6C. British Isles
 - 6D. Europe via British Isles
- Section 7: Epilogue – After Demonetization**
 - 7A. Last Day of Validity & First Day of Demonetization
 - 7B. Stamps Not Accepted for Payment
 - 7C. Stamps Accepted for Payment
 - 7D. Used in Canada
 - 7E. Used in the Confederacy

The exhibit displays a total of 386 items. Table B shows the 386 items allocated into the seven major sections, and it provides a further breakdown into four different denomination categories: 5¢, 10¢, 5¢/10¢ combination, and 10¢ bisects.

TABLE B – ALLOCATION OF ITEMS BY SECTION AND DENOMINATION

%	Section	# Items	Five-Cent	Ten-Cent	5c & 10c Comb	10c Bisect
0.26%	Title Page	1			1	
3.11%	1. Production History	12	6	6		
39.38%	2. The Five Cents	152	152	0		
17.62%	3. The Ten Cents	68	0	58	0	10
24.09%	4. The Domestic Usages	93	61	26	5	1
3.63%	5. Used Abroad	14	5	9	0	0
10.36%	6. Foreign Mails	40	18	15	7	0
1.55%	7. Epilogue – After Demonetization	6	4	2	0	0
	Totals	386	246	116	13	11
		<i>100.00%</i>	<i>63.73%</i>	<i>30.05%</i>	<i>3.37%</i>	<i>2.85%</i>

1) Does the collecting area have a clearly defined boundary and well-documented population of

surviving relevant material that is unlikely to change significantly overtime?

Yes, and this is an important point to remember when the discussion turns to competition with other collections in other collecting areas.

The 1847 Issue was the first United States general issue. Although stamps were used in the United States mails before 1847 by private posts (1842), independent mail companies (1844) and provisionally at certain post offices (1845), the 1847 stamps were the first authorized by Congress for widespread distribution and sale at U.S. post offices. They were available and valid for only four years, at a time when the use of adhesive postage stamps in the United States was in its infancy.

The issue went on sale on July 1, 1847, and it was demonetized four years later, with June 30, 1851, being the last official day of validity. After the new 1851 Issue was released on July 1, the public was given a brief opportunity to exchange the obsolete 1847 stamps for the new issue. For this reason, unused examples are rare, especially in multiples. Surviving covers have been documented in an ongoing census. Although off-cover used stamps are plentiful, the more unusual examples have been identified from auction sale records.

Therefore, any given item may be compared with a well-documented population of surviving items, and, after more than 150 years of philatelic discovery, it seems unlikely that any significant or large number of new examples will be found.

2) Does the collection include a diversity of items, reflecting the entire population of surviving material, and are the representative examples in the finest available quality?

Diversity of Items

The 386 items in the Gross 1847 collection are categorized into 28 sub-sections of study (Table A). As the information in Table B shows, there is a mix of approximately two-thirds 5¢ items and one-third 10¢ items (including combinations and bisects involving the 10¢ stamp). Not shown in the table is the roughly even mix of proofs/stamps (182 items – 47%) and covers (204 items – 53%).

A relatively small number of proof items are included in the Production History section of the exhibit, because virtually all of the 1847 proofs and essays extant were “post-contemporary reprints...beyond the scope of this exhibit” (as stated on the title page).

The first three covers shown in the exhibit are located in the Production History section (Plate Make-Up and Earliest Known Usage). The first two have 5¢ and 10¢ stamps with huge straddle-pane margins showing traces of the positions in the adjacent panes. These are shown with a 5¢ single off cover, and the three together constitute all known straddle-pane examples, which prove that the 5¢ and 10¢ plates each consisted of two separate panes of 100 divided by an inter-pane gutter.

The third cover follows on the next page. This cover from New York City to Indianapolis with a

pair of 10¢ stamps is the only recorded July 2, 1847, use of the issue. Postmarked just one day after the stamps went on sale, it is the earliest documented use of the issue. There are no known 1847 Issue covers postmarked July 1.

In the Five Cents and Ten Cents sections, 220 stamps and covers are displayed on 45 pages to show the largest recorded multiples, blocks, sheet-margin copies, plate varieties (double transfers, recuts, short transfers) and printing variations (slight doubling of designs, fold-overs) for both values.

Within the Five Cents section there are 77 items on 14 pages under the sub-section “Deliveries and Shades,” which is a specialized study of the shades and impressions grouped by delivery, derived from “the seminal work of Wade Saadi.”

Within the Ten Cents section, nine covers and one piece are shown in a complete representation of 10¢ bisects, including matched pairs of vertical and diagonal bisects (a “matched pair” is one stamp divided into two bisects and used on separate covers), diagonal bisects from all four corners on separate covers, and the only genuine horizontal bisect in private hands (tied on piece). An eleventh bisect on cover is shown in a subsequent section.

The Domestic Usages section comprises 84 covers (and nine off-cover stamps with unusual cancellations) displayed on 44 pages. This relatively large section of the exhibit includes a mix of 61 5¢ and 26 10¢ items, plus five combination 5¢/10¢ covers and one 10¢ bisect cover (in addition to the ten bisects in the preceding section).

The Domestic Usages are grouped into sub-sections of Domestic Mail, Auxiliary Postal Services, Carrier Services and Local Post, Route Agents and Non-Contract Steamboats. A brief description of these sections follows:

- The Domestic Mail section is essentially a study of the rates in effect during the 1847 Issue period; for example, the 5¢ under and 10¢ over-300 miles rates, and multiples thereof, and the 40¢ transcontinental rate.
- The Auxiliary Postal Services broadly labels several categories of mail or postal markings, such as Registration, Part Paid, Missent, Forwarded, Advertised, Way Mail, Too Late and Wheeling VA Control Grids.
- The Carrier Services and Local Post sub-section is an important one in the 1847 period, because of the great rarity of certain combinations and carrier/local issues. Included in the exhibit are 18 covers, including six with the 10¢.
- Railroad route agents' markings, which are found on numerous 1847 covers, are represented by twelve covers in the Route Agent section, but additional examples are found in other sections. For example, the Rush cover bearing a 10¢ strip of six and the “Philada. Railroad” straightline

is displayed on the Largest Recorded Multiple page (along with the 10¢ block of six with original gum). Similarly, the Little Miami R.R. datestamp is found on the cover with a strip of five and single 10¢ as an example of the 6-times 10¢ rate for a distance over 300 miles in the Domestic Mail section. Finally, the Michigan Central Railroad datestamp is on the famous “Heidelberg” 5¢/10¢ combination cover to Germany, which is located in the section of mail to Europe via the British Isles.

- Waterway route agents' markings are represented by four covers, followed by the Non-Contract Steamboat Markings, shown on six covers.

The Used Abroad section is one of the most interesting. There are ten covers in the British North America group and four in the Panama group. Eight of the ten BNA covers have 1847 stamps that were applied in Canada or in combination with Canadian stamps (the other two originated in Canada and have 1847 stamps affixed in the U.S.; another 10¢ Used from Canada cover is displayed in the Epilogue section). Three of the four Panama covers have stamps applied at Panama City, where they were made available by the U.S. mail agent, Amos B. Corwine. The fourth was mailed at Chagres with the 20¢ rate paid by a pair of 10¢ stamps applied there (the only recorded example of this rate paid by 1847 stamps).

Foreign Mails are represented by 40 covers, including 18 with 5¢ stamps exclusively, 15 with 10¢ stamps exclusively, and seven covers with 5¢/10¢ combinations. They are divided into geographic sections: British North America (15), Western Hemisphere (2), British Isles (12) and European destinations via British Isles (11).

The exhibit concludes with three pages devoted to the Epilogue section, comprising six covers showing the last day of validity, first day of demonetization period, use of stamps after demonetization (not accepted and accepted), used from Canada in 1852 and used from Augusta GA during the Confederate period.

Quality of Items

Condition of material in an exhibit collection is usually a nebulous factor, because each item is held in a mount, the pages are in protective sleeves, and the whole exhibit is behind protective plexiglass. Unless the fault is obvious, it is practically impossible for judges who are not intimately familiar with the collecting subject to determine if an item is entirely sound.

Further complicating matters is the tendency of many exhibitors to accept items with minor faults (or even small repairs), as long as the appearance is attractive, which stretches a budget with little or no risk of being downgraded by judges. There is a much higher percentage of faulty material in exhibits – especially among off-cover stamps – than will be found in non-exhibit collections.

The Gross 1847 exhibit collection is unusual, in that almost every one of the more “routine” stamps, blocks and covers is among the finest known of its kind. The section of 5¢ Deliveries and Shades has virtually no “good enough for display” stamps – that is, suitable to show the shade and attractive on the face, but with a fault. In fact, many of the stamps were among the finest examples owned by renowned 1847 collectors, such as Judge Emerson, Caspary, Rohloff, Grunin and Ishikawa. The reason for this atypically high level of quality in an exhibit collection is that Mr. Gross bought many highlights of auctions since 1993, and he acquired the Wade Saadi 1847 collection intact. These stamps were carefully chosen for soundness and quality, and their value is far greater than that of faulty counterparts which could have been substituted as representative examples.

In a quick perusal of the exhibit pages, this writer counted 50 sheet-margin examples of the 5¢ and 10¢ stamps. That might be a record number of sheet-margin 1847 stamps in one collection. Included in this group are several phenomenal full-corner examples and the only recorded vertical 10¢ pair with corner sheet margins.

The cancellation strikes are uniformly clear and complete, eliminating the need for tracings or illustrations of the complete cancel. The covers are free of serious faults or repairs, with a few necessary exceptions (the presence of a repair is noted on the exhibit page, as required by exhibiting rules).

3) Are there any “iconic” items in the collecting subject, and how many are in the collection?

Definition of “Iconic”

What exactly does the writer mean by *iconic* items?

Other noted philatelic writers have used different terms to describe the most significant philatelic items. The Williams brothers wrote their books about “Stamps of Fame” and “Rare and Famous Stamps.” Donna O’Keefe and Linn’s published a series of books about “Linn’s Philatelic Gems.” Dr. Norman S. Hubbard coined the term “Aristocrats of Philately” for the legendary exhibits of rarities he organized for Anphilex in 1971 and 1996, and Interphil in 1976.

The writer’s use of the word *iconic* to describe a philatelic item denotes a measure of enduring importance/visibility, rarity and demand, which remain powerful after the test of time. To reach *iconic* status, according to the writer’s definition, a philatelic item must meet *all three* of the following criteria:

- 1) As a stamp or cover, it must have essentially unique characteristics which are immediately recognizable and distinguish the item from all other philatelic items. For example, the famous Dawson cover with a Hawaiian 2¢ Missionary stamp is iconic, whereas all of the other 2¢ Missionary stamps are rare and valuable, but not necessarily of iconic status. On the other hand, the British Guiana 1¢ Magenta is iconic, because it is unique.

- 2) The item must be rare, and its rarity must be reasonably certain and lasting. For example, the most important item of WWII Japanese-American Internment Camp mail cannot be considered iconic, because its rarity has not yet stood the test of time.
- 3) The item must have widespread demand. The rarest and most important cover in East End Long Island postal history will never be iconic, because the number of collectors who might want such a thing is small and unlikely to grow. On the other hand, the largest block of the 10¢ 1847 Issue has been in demand by a countless number of collectors since it first became known to philately.

There is a tendency among competing exhibitors to challenge this concept of *iconic*, arguing that iconic items are *expensive*, but they are no more important than the most significant item in another collection (usually the one belonging to the person making the argument). This is when the three criteria of Philatelic Icons come into play, especially #3. It does not matter if an item is the “earliest,” the “largest,” the “rarest” or the “only known,” if the collector demand for such an item is limited to a small group. The demand must be broad and longstanding. For example, just because two wealthy collectors decide to collect Ugandan Missionary issues and drive the prices up to stratospheric levels does not mean the rarest item of Ugandan Missionary issues will share the pedestal with the Dawson cover. For more than 100 years the Dawson cover has been one of the top five items in philately, and its value has been determined not only by what it is, but by widespread and enduring demand.

Iconic 1847 Issue Items

The 1847 Issue is the first United States General Issue and one of the world's earliest classic issues; therefore, the most important 1847 items take on iconic status in the broad field of philately. The same is true for Great Britain's Penny Black and Two-Pence Blue, Brazil's Bull's Eyes and other classic first issues.

Naming iconic items in a collection is tricky, because of the subjectivity involved. The writer will present his choices from the Gross collection, knowing full well that some readers will dispute the presence of certain items on this list, and assert the worthiness of other items missing from the list. In addition to naming iconic 1847 items in the Gross collection, the writer will also identify the few items he considers iconic which are missing from the collection. One can already hear the cries of “what about this item?” from those who consider an unmentioned 1847 stamp or cover iconic.

Here are the 12 items in the Gross 1847 exhibit collection which the writer claims are iconic, by the definition offered above. They are numbered for reference purposes, not ranked in importance.

- 1) July 2, 1847, cover with 10¢ pair – the earliest recorded use and only recorded July 2 cover.
- 2) 5¢ block of 16 with original gum – the largest recorded multiple.³

- 3) 10¢ block of 6 with original gum – the largest recorded unused multiple and the largest block in private hands.
- 4) The Rush cover, bearing a 10¢ strip of six – the largest recorded multiple on cover.
- 5) The Waukegan cover, bearing a 10¢ sheet-margin strip of four – the finest quality multiple of the 10¢ on cover.
- 6) The only recorded matched pair of 10¢ 1847 vertical bisects (two separate covers).
- 7) Strip of four 10¢ used from San Francisco – the only recorded use of the 1847 Issue on a 40¢ rate cover from California.
- 8) 5¢ and Canada 3d Beaver mixed franking from Canada to U.S. – the only recorded combination of the U.S. 1847 Issue and Canadian stamps with both tied by the Canadian cancel.
- 9) 5¢ strip of five and Canada 3d Beaver mixed franking from Canada to England via U.S. – the only recorded combination of an 1847 multiple and Canadian stamps.
- 10) 90¢ triple 30¢ rate cover from Panama to the U.S. prepaid with nine 10¢ stamps (one partly torn off) – the largest recorded 1847 Issue franking.
- 11) 5¢ and 10¢ strip of three on Retaliatory Rate cover to Belgium – the only recorded Retaliatory Rate cover to this destination.
- 12) The Heidelberg cover to Germany with combination of 5¢ strip of 5 and 10¢ – the only recorded combination of its kind.

In the writer's opinion, there are only four iconic 1847 items missing from the Gross collection, and they will be discussed in the answer to question #5 below.

4) Which items meet the standard categories of philatelic significance: Earliest Documented Use, Largest Recorded Multiple, Largest Franking on Cover, and Only Recorded Example (of a variety, postal marking or use).

The Gross 1847 exhibit is designed to explain the subject matter to the viewer by providing a narrative along with the representative examples of each aspect of the issue. To accomplish this objective and to create what James P. Gough calls “Impact,”⁴ the *key* items are presented. For the same reason people go to a great art museum to see the most renowned works of art, philatelists are impressed by exhibits that display the most significant items. But what defines an item as *key* or *significant*? In philately, it is typically the earliest, the largest and the rarest (“only recorded”).

On page 5 of the Gross exhibit, he presents the first of the “Earliest” uses – the July 2, 1847, cover from New York City to Indianapolis with a pair of 10¢ stamps – and further on other Earliest uses are displayed. There is the earliest use of the 1847 Issue in Philadelphia (July 6), the earliest 1847 cover to British North America (July 17), the earliest possible transatlantic use of the 1847 Issue (July 16 sailing

from Boston), the earliest 1847 cover to France (September 29) and the earliest 1847 cover to Germany (February 1, 1848). That is a total of six Earliest covers in relatively significant categories (as opposed to the earliest use from Podunk, Ohio).

Multiples are well-represented in the Gross collection, which could mislead the uninformed into believing that 1847 multiples are common. They are, in fact, quite rare.⁵ There are nine 5¢ blocks, including the block of 16 (largest recorded), different shades (unused and used), two major plate varieties (the only recorded block with Type D double transfer and the only recorded block with recut upper left frameline, both unused), and *all three* of the blocks known on cover (block of four domestic use, block of four to Canada, and block of five to England). The largest recorded unused multiple of the 10¢ (the block of six with original gum) is followed by both of the used blocks in private hands (two others are in institutional collections). No 10¢ blocks are known on cover.

In addition to 5¢ blocks, there are nine strips of three or larger, including the unused strip of eight of the Orange Brown (Scott 1b, the largest recorded unused multiple of this shade) and eight strips of varying sizes on separate covers, including the largest 1847 multiple known on cover (strip of ten). Among the 5¢ strips on cover are the U.S.-Canada mixed franking with a strip of five, a strip of three plus 10¢ pair to Nova Scotia (Retaliatory Rate), a strip of three plus 10¢ to Ireland (24¢ treaty rate) and a strip of five plus 10¢ to Germany (the Heidelberg cover).

In addition to the three 10¢ blocks, there are 14 strips of the 10¢, including 12 on covers. This rather remarkable group includes the Rush cover to France (strip of six – the largest 10¢ multiple known on cover), the Waukegan cover (finest known strip of four), the only known 40¢ rate cover from California with 1847's (strip of four), three covers used from Panama (including the largest recorded 1847 franking with 90¢ in stamps) and the Retaliatory Rate cover to Belgium (10¢ strip of three and 5¢ single).

There are numerous Only Known examples shown in the exhibit, some of which represent highly specialized aspects of the stamps and their use. However, for postal history specialists, many of the covers are highly significant uses of the first issue in the U.S. and international postal systems. A quick summary follows.

- Only known 1847 cover from Minnesota Territory.
- Only known 1847 covers with six- and seven-times multiple 5¢ rate.
- Only known 40¢ rate from California with 1847 stamps.
- Only known 20¢ rate from Chagres with 1847 stamps.
- All three 1847 and Canadian mixed-franking covers (two from Canada, one to Canada).
- Four of the ten known 1847 Retaliatory Rate covers: the Rush cover to France (strip of 10¢);

5¢/10¢ combination to Nova Scotia; 10¢ strip of three to England; and 5¢/10¢ combination to Belgium.

— Only recorded 1847 cover to Egypt.

5) *Apart from judging what is included in the collection, is there any significant representative item or iconic item missing from the collection, and, if so, could one reasonably expect it to be present?*

There are many outstanding 1847 items in other collections. For example, the Gordon Eubanks 1847 collection includes a spectacular illustrated Free Trade and Peace propaganda cover with the 5¢ 1847, an item which is arguably the greatest of all illustrated 1847 covers. There is no comparable illustrated cover in the Gross exhibit collection.

However, in the iconic class, there are only four 1847 items which, in this writer's opinion, could be added to the list of 12 items in the Gross collection to form a complete list.

The first is the pair of 1847 hand-drawn essays in the National Postal Museum collection, which were of uncertain provenance for many years, but now have been tied to a contemporary letter from the printers, Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson (also in the NPM collection).

Two missing icons fall into the category of Largest Recorded Multiples. One is the famous “Bandholtz” block of 14 of the 10¢ 1847 in the Hirzel collection at the Swiss PTT Museum, which is pen-cancelled and ranks as the largest multiple of the 10¢ 1847 (the Gross collection has the largest unused multiple). If and when the block of 30 of the 5¢ with original gum and full sheet margins ever enters the public record, it will certainly become an iconic item; therefore, it is counted here as the third missing icon.

The fourth and final 1847 icon absent from the Gross collection is the cover from New York City to San Francisco with the double 40¢ rate paid by eight 10¢ stamps, which was last sold in the 1992 Siegel auction of Dr. Leonard Kapiloff's collection, before Mr. Gross started acquiring major items.

Of the four items, two are in institutional collections, one has never been publicly shown or made available for acquisition, and the fourth has not been available since Mr. Gross started seriously collecting stamps 20 years ago.

Bill Gross – In the Right Places at the Right Times

The writer contends that the Gross 1847 collection is not only the ultimate 1847 collection, but that it is superior to any 1847 collection ever formed, and, in fact, it could not have been formed at any other time in the past.

The reason is simple. At all other points in history, the material – in particular, the iconic items – were never available at the same time. By collecting during the 20 years from 1993 to 2013, Mr. Gross was in the right places at the right times. Although there was fierce competition during those two

decades, Mr. Gross simply outbid or outlasted his competitors.

What follows is a necessarily brief synopsis of the various collectors who have specialized in 1847's, beginning at the start of the 20th century.

During the period from 1900 until the 1930's, the major 1847 collectors were Henry C. Gibson Jr., Senator Ernest R. Ackerman, Judge Robert S. Emerson, Frank R. Sweet, Edward S. Knapp and Alfred H. Caspary. Much of the great 1847 material was held by these collectors, and important items were scattered across many other collections.

As these collections were dispersed in the 1930's, 40's and 50's, the two largest known blocks were acquired by Philip H. Ward, and many of the iconic covers were acquired by Philip G. Rust, a farmer in Georgia who was married to a member of the du Pont family. When the Frank R. Sweet reconstruction of the 10¢ 1847 (including the Bandholtz block of 14) was offered by H. R. Harmer in 1960 on behalf of "the present owner," the anonymous owner was, in fact, Philip Rust.

After the second World War and into the 1960's, important 1847 collections were formed by Emmerson C. Krug, Jack Dick, Howard Lehman, Katherine Matthies, J. David Baker, Creighton C. Hart and John D. Pope III. In 1963 the 5¢ and 10¢ blocks were acquired from the Ward estate by Raymond and Roger Weill and sold to their client, Benjamin D. Phillips. The blocks returned to the Weills after the brothers purchased the entire Phillips collection intact for \$4.07 million in 1968, and they remained in the Weills' domain for the next ten years.

Beginning in the late 1960's, Marc Haas became a force in the 1847 market, along with Paul C. Rohloff. They were joined in the 1970's by Louis Grunin and Ryohei Ishikawa, who started forming major 1847 collections. At the same time, Dr. Leonard Kapiloff began acquiring important 1847 covers as they appeared at auction (he bought the Rush cover in 1971 when Philip G. Rust sold it through H. R. Harmer). To a more modest degree, Philip T. Wall, Henry Stollnitz and others built significant 1847 collections in the 1970's and 80's.

When Duane Garrett emerged on the scene in the late 1970's, Grunin's 1847 collection, including the 5¢ single and Canada 3d mixed-franking cover, was sold to Garrett in a transaction brokered by Andrew Levitt. Sometime around 1979 or 1980, the Weills sold the two 1847 blocks to Ishikawa, who displayed them in his Grand Prix U.S. 1847-69 collection. Ishikawa also bought the 5¢ strip and Canada 3d Beaver combination cover from Robert A. Siegel, who brokered a private transaction on behalf of Philip Rust.

After Garrett tired of his 1847's (or possibly for personal financial reasons), the collection was sold intact to Dr. Kapiloff in a private deal negotiated by the late Harvey Warm and Siegel. This acquisition put Dr. Kapiloff in a position to begin exhibiting. With the help of Stanley M. Piller, he began showing

his 1847's in national and international exhibitions. At Ameripex in 1986, Ishikawa showed his U.S. 1847-69's, Grunin displayed his 1851-57 Issue covers, and Dr. Kapiloff exhibited his 1847's. It was an extraordinary moment in philately.

From 1981 to 1992 the Ishikawa and Kapiloff collections made it impossible for anyone else to form a truly outstanding 1847 collection. Ishikawa owned five of the iconic items (#s 2, 3, 5, 9, and 10 on the list in this article), and Dr. Kapiloff owned seven others (#s 4, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12, plus the 80¢ rate cover to California).

When Dr. Kapiloff sold his collection through Siegel in 1992, the major contenders were John R. Boker Jr. and Guido Craveri. Boker had started collecting 1847's a few years earlier and bought heavily from the Creighton C. Hart collection when it was sold in 1990. Craveri turned his attention from Europe, Great Britain and South America to the United States, and, like locusts over a Kansas wheat field, he swept the market, devouring everything from major items to a seemingly endless number of small-town uses. Also present at the 1992 Kapiloff sale was the late John Salomon, who represented a wealthy client, for whom he acquired the 80¢ rate cover. Harvey Mirsky bid in the Kapiloff sale as he started to assemble his 1847 collection, which he eventually turned into a Large Gold exhibit.

The 1993 Christie's sale of Ishikawa's collection changed the dynamics of the market. In that sale Boker and Craveri were challenged by two new contenders. Colin Fraser, a Christie's employee, was on the phone with an anonymous bidder who was later revealed to be Joseph Hackmey. Charles and Tracy Shreve bid in the room, speaking with Bill Gross by phone as they acquired major items throughout the auction, including the two 1847 blocks and the Waukegan cover.

From 1993 to 2010, the field of competitors was reduced one by one. Boker sold his collection to Gross in 1994 in a private transaction brokered by Andrew Levitt, Sonny Hagendorf and the Shreves. Craveri liquidated his collection in various auctions held by Harvey Bennett. Gross acquired Wade Saadi's specialized 1847 collection. Finally, Joseph Hackmey sold his collection to Gross in 2010 in a private transaction, which occurred after the Geneva-based firm of David Feldman had announced they would offer the collection at auction. The private deal was brokered by Feldman and Spink-Shreves. It allowed Gross to preclude competition from his biggest rival in 1847's, Gordon Eubanks.

As the chronology of the 1847 market shows, there was never an opportunity to assemble all of the great 1847 items into one collection until after the Kapiloff and Ishikawa dispersals in 1992 and 1993. Even then, it took another 20 years for Mr. Gross to outbid and outlast his competitors. After incorporating their holdings into his own, the material was distilled down to the 386-item exhibit collection shown in Australia and Brazil.

It does not seem to be overstating the case to say that Mr. Gross has assembled the ultimate 1847

collection.

Endnotes

1. The collection was shown at the World Stamp Expo 2013 in Melbourne, Australia, and at the World Philatelic Exhibition Brasiliana 2013 in Rio de Janeiro.
2. The writer defines an item as iconic if it is instantly recognizable as one of the most important pieces in philately. An expanded definition follows later in this article.
3. The existence of a block of 30 of the 5¢ seems quite certain, but until the item is publicly disclosed and made available for examination, the block of 16 is the largest multiple on record.
4. Gough, James P., "BRASILIANA 2013 and Issues from the Exhibiting Perspective, Part One", *The Philatelic Exhibitor*, Volume 27, No. 4, Whole No. 108, Fall 2013. For insight into the thought process of a leading national and international philatelic judge, this article is strongly recommended. It helps to explain how jury decisions are reached, based on Mr. Gough's personal experience
5. A census of 5c 1847 multiples -- proofs, unused and used -- was published in 1996 by Mal Brown in *Chronicle* 171. There are 29 blocks of issued stamps in the census.