

Synopsis for
“Dodd Was Dead:
Tracing the Origins of a Popular Illustration”

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this article is to show that William Dodd was not the cachet maker for Mellone/Planty 772-32, and to provide the trail of research we followed in identifying the actual cachet maker, as well as the printer of these cachets.

TREATMENT: Following a brief introduction showing that William Dodd had been dead for over 21 years by the time that the cachet was used, the narrative follows in chronological order the investigation into identifying the actual consigner/seller of the cachet, as well as the printer of the cachet.

SIGNIFICANCE: The article presents information not previously published or available to the general philatelic public. Until this article was published the cachet in question was incorrectly attributed to “Dodd”. Through in-depth research including searching through contemporary newspapers, genealogical records, interviews, etc. (see list of references at end of article) we were able to conclusively identify the real sponsor of the cachet, correcting a long-standing inaccuracy.

ORIGINALITY: Presented as a first person account, the story allows the reader to follow the evidence and clues along with the author as more information about the cacheted FDCs is uncovered. The information provided in this article has never been published before.

RESEARCH/KNOWLEDGE: Information presented in this article is the result of original research by the authors. Facts were double-checked, and sources for information are identified in the end notes. The authors’ research started with the discovery of an 1856 pamphlet which bore the exact same image as was used on the cachet attributed to “Dodd”.

TECHNICAL: All sources of information are identified in the end notes and in the article text. All publications used as references are listed in the end notes using typical bibliographic format.

Layout of the article was performed by Al Starkweather, editor of *First Days*, and I was provided a proof of the article prior to publication. It is editorial policy of *First Days* not to use captions for illustrations, but to merely identify the illustrations by figure numbers, as red, numbered dots on the images. In general I agree with the placement of the illustrations relative to the text as arranged by Starkweather. Note that Starkweather passed away prior to this edition of *First Days* and this article were published. The issue was edited, retaining Starkweather’s format and editing, by the new editor, Martin Kent Miller.