W. D. WESSON.

CANCELING-STAMPS.

No. 195,552. Patented Sept. 25, 1877.

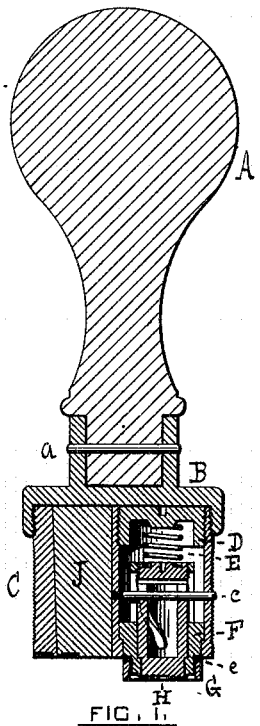

FIG. 1.

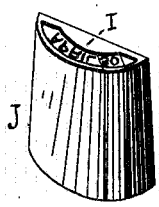

FIG. 3.

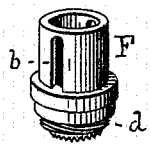

FIG. 5.

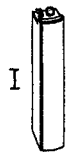

FIG. 4.

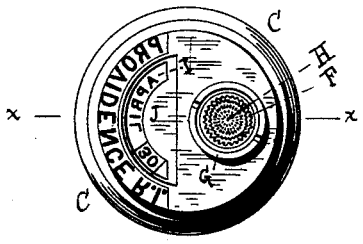

FIG. 2.

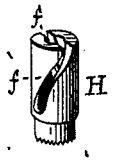

FIG. 6.

FIG. 7.

ATTEST.

Warren R. Pierce

INVENTOR.

Walter D. Wesson

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WALTER D. WESSON, OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF HIS RIGHT TO AVERY B. FOSTER, OF SAME PLACE.

IMPROVEMENT IN CANCELING-STAMPS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **195,552**, dated September 25, 1877; application filed May 16, 1877.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WALTER D. WESSON, of the city and county of Providence, in the State of Rhode Island, have invented a new and Improved Canceling-Stamp; and declare the following to be a specification thereof.

In the accompanying drawings like letters indicate like parts.

Figure 1 is a vertical section of my invention on the line *x x*. Fig. 2 is an end view, showing the face of my stamp. Figs. 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are detail views.

My invention is designed to be used in the canceling of postage, revenue, or other stamps. Great loss is sustained by the Government in the repeated use of stamps which have not been sufficiently canceled, and which, being removed from the envelope or paper, are cleaned of the postmarks by treatment with acid or otherwise. The use of my canceling-stamp effectually destroys the stamp and renders it worthless for further use. This it accomplishes by obliterating it with ink in the usual manner, and especially by tearing out or from the stamp a portion thereof, so mutilating it that it cannot be restored.

My invention is especially designed to be used in connection with the postage-stamp invented by me, and for which I have applied for Letters Patent of the United States. That stamp is only partially gummed, leaving the central or other defined portion to lie upon without adhering to the envelope, so that the piece torn out is wholly detached and taken away from the remainder of the stamp. Useful results, however, can be obtained by the use of my invention upon stamps prepared in the usual manner.

My invention consists, essentially, in a circular perforator, within which turns (by means of a spiral slot engaged upon a fixed transverse pin) a mutilator having a series of teeth or points.

The handle A is set into and fastened within the socket B by a pin, *a*. The case C, which contains the working parts, is screwed into the socket B. The case C has two compartments, one for the working parts and one for the types. Within the former the nut D furnishes a bearing for the spiral spring E. This spring also bears upon and crowds outwardly the perforator F, (which is separately shown in Fig. 5.) This perforator is tubular, and has two longitudinal slots, *b*, opposite each other, and has a vertical movement upon the fixed pin *c*, which passes from side to side through the slots *b*. The lower edge of the perforator consists of sharp points, which together make a circle of perforations through the stamp, and define the piece which is to be taken out. By means of a screw-thread, *d*, the obliterator or metallic ring G is fastened to the perforator F. An india-rubber washer, *e*, is placed between the perforator F and the obliterator G. Within the parts F and G, and concentric with them, is the mutilator H, (shown in Fig. 6,) having a vertical spiral motion by means of two spiral slots, *f*, upon its opposite sides along the fixed pin *c*. The face of the mutilator H is a series of sharp teeth or points, which, in turning, as above described, seize and tear out the piece of the stamp defined by the perforations, leaving a ragged edge all around, and effectually defacing and destroying the stamp. In the other compartment of the case is the type I. The types are convex on their upper long side and concave on the inner, (see Figs. 3 and 4,) and are slightly wedge-shaped. They are set within the block J, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, and bear against the inner surface of the socket B. The name of the post-office is cut in the margin of the case C.

The operation is as follows: The parts F, G, and H project beyond the face of the case C, being crowded outwardly by the spiral spring E. The canceling-stamp, being first inked on a pad, as usual, is struck upon the postage-stamp. The obliterator G imprints the usual cancellation upon it. The perforator F at the same instant pierces the postage-stamp with a circle of perforations, and then, by the force of the blow, is driven upward within the case, traveling upon the fixed pin *c* by means of its vertical slots. At the same time the mutilator H, traveling on the pin *c*, by means of its spiral slots *f*, gives a slight rotary motion to the set of points or teeth, and so tears or twists out of the postage-stamp that part circumscribed by the perfo-

rations. When this work has been done the types imprint the date and name of post-office in the usual way. As the canceling-stamp is withdrawn the spiral spring brings the working parts back to their former position. The obliterator G, being screwed upon the perforator F, graduates the depth of the perforations.

The mutilating parts are preferably placed eccentrically within the circle of the face of the case C, in order to allow the date and name to be printed outside of the postage-stamp. It is obvious, however, that these working parts might be placed concentric with the postmarker.

I am aware that it is not new to use an annular cutter or knife to deface a postage-stamp. Such a cutter makes a clean continuous cut, not only through the stamp, but also through the envelope itself, exposing or injuring its contents, and it is found practically impossible to graduate the cutter to so fine a distance as the thickness of a single layer of paper. When a postage-stamp is gummed upon an envelope in the usual way they become so solidly united as to form but a single thickness, and a cut through one must penetrate through the other, the difference in thickness being almost inappreciable. With my improved postage-stamp, for which this my canceling-stamp is particularly designed, the center of the postage-stamp, being ungummed, lies as a separate layer upon the envelope, and can be cut without injury to the envelope beneath. The perforator, indeed, has a vertical motion, but at the worst can only make a circle of fine piercings in the envelope, while the mutilator H has a horizontal rotary motion, and can affect only the outside layer of paper, which is the postage-stamp itself. The perforations are useful to enable the mutilator to tear out a certain definite piece, and to leave a ragged edge.

I claim as my invention and desire to secure by Letters Patent—

1. The combination of the rotating mutilator H, the annular perforator F, and the obliterator G, all arranged as specified, and operating substantially as shown and described.

2. The improved canceling-stamp herein described, consisting of the handle A, socket B, case C, nut D, spiral spring E, slotted perforator F, fixed pin *c*, obliterator G, spirally-slotted mutilator H, type I, and block J, substantially as described.

WALTER D. WESSON.

Witnesses:
J. ERASTUS LESTER,
WARREN R. PERCE.