

G81 - A Broken Heart. Another Reason the “Grinnell Missionaries” are Forgeries.
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“It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”
Antoine de Saint-Exupery (1900 - 1944).

Further evidence that the genuine 13¢ Type I Missionary in Grinnell’s possession was used as a model to create the “Grinnell Missionaries” comes from an examination of the central heart in the left side ornaments as shown in Figure 1.

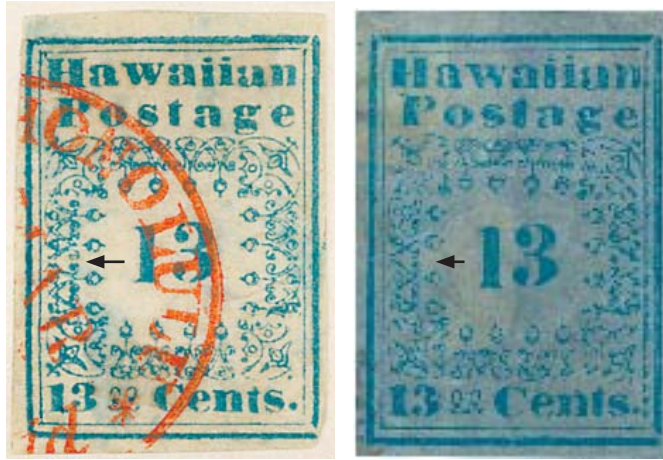


Figure 1. Genuine Missionary and “Grinnell Missionary”.
Photo Credit: Arrigo G81, G31.

Two genuine missionary stamps were recently discovered on the “Grinnell Card of 10” and some people believe these were used as the models for creating the “Grinnell Missionaries”. While the exact method of forgery has not been confirmed, it has been suggested that photography and/or tracing of the design was employed to make the “Grinnells”.

The goal of this project was to identify a feature or features on the genuine Type I stamp that were misinterpreted by the forger and transferred to ALL of the “Grinnells” of every denomination AND not present on any of the other genuine stamps.

This article will focus only on the left central heart in the side ornaments. The three features are the misjoined heart curl, the tight ball curl and the “seed pod”.

The genuine stamp in Grinnell’s possession (#G81) shows a break on the lower heart arc. This same break also appears on other genuine stamps (#7, #35, #114, #149). While the heart arc break is NOT a unique feature to genuine missionary stamps, it is what the forger presumably did in interpreting this area that makes for an interesting study.

First, examining a black and white scan of the heart break on #G81, the direction of the heart arc from the lower curl is unclear because of the break. The forger thought the curl came straight down and attached to the flower feature so he drew it as such.

Secondly, #G81 also shows the lower heart curl is slightly overinked causing the curl to appear as a blob. The forger, not knowing what to do drew it as a tightly curled ball with fine details.

Thirdly, the top heart curl has a central dot or smudge between the final terminal point of the curl and the outer (or rightmost appearing) curl arc. This makes it appear as a closed loop or “seed pod” on the genuine stamp. Again, the forger misinterpreted the design and changed the curl into a “seed pod”. These features are shown in Figure 2 below.

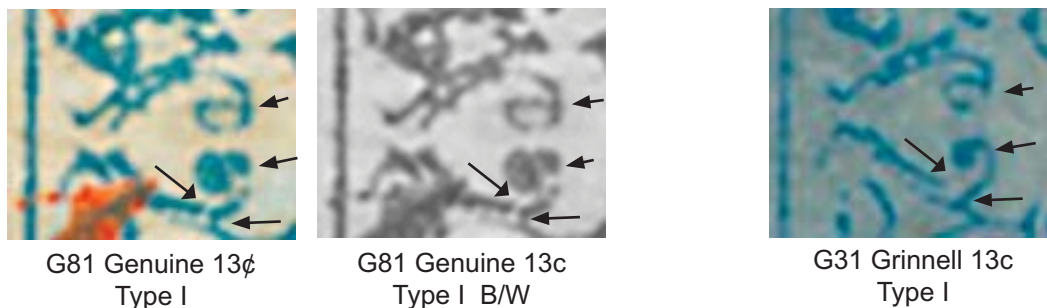


Figure 2. Comparison of Heart Features. Photo Credit : Arrigo G81, G31

I believe the forger may have used an enlarged, possibly black and white photograph of the original as a guide. Areas of natural printing features with smudges and ink dots become fine line details that are incorrect. How can this be? How can a smudged feature suddenly become a fine-lined, completely different feature? This is indicative of having been drawn or traced incorrectly.

Table 1 answers the questions “Do Type I ‘Grinnell Missionaries’ show evidence of incorrect drawing in of design based on misinterpretation of three design elements of the left central heart feature?” and “Do genuine Type I Missionaries show the same three design elements?”. Several stamps could not be examined due to cancels obscuring the heart, or being heavily repaired stamps. My observations are limited to the scans of stamps available but I am confident that other examples will show the same pattern.

ALL of the Type I Grinnells, for ALL denominations (18 examples), show the heart arc directly attached to the flower base, the tight ball curl and the "seed pod". The genuine stamps DO NOT show these features (17 examples).

Proponents will claim the broken heart feature is due to a break in the ornament and the piece working itself into a different position, resulting in the attached heart arc. If this is the case, the Grinnells would have to be printed after the genuine stamps, AFTER THE BREAK occurred. But how could the Grinnells be both a late printing and exist with early period postmarks?

The other argument will be different ornaments were employed. How is it that these three features appear on ALL of the Grinnells, yet match the misinterpretation of a break and overinking of the genuine example in Grinnell's possession? And how do otherwise smudges features become fine-line details on the Grinnells? Again, impossible.

I believe this research supports the theory that the genuine Missionary in Grinnell's possession (G81) was used as a model for making the "Grinnell" forgeries.

	Broken Heart arc joined,			Broken Heart arc joined,
2¢ Genuine	Seed Pod and Tight Curl?		2¢ Grinnell	Seed Pod and Tight Curl?
#2	No		G2	Yes
#4	No		G10	Yes
#7	No		G47	Yes
			G51	Yes
			G57	Yes
			G58	Yes
			G59	Yes
5¢ Genuine			5¢ Grinnell	
New #10	No		G20	Yes
#35	No		G62	Yes
#41	No		GC5*	Yes
#60	No		GC6*	Yes
#61	No			
#65	No			
#67	No			
#70	Unsure, cancel obscures			
#YA1	Unsure, cancel obscures			
13¢ Genuine			13¢ Grinnell	
(G81)	YES!, Appears as such and is THE MODEL for Grinnells.		G29	Yes
#86	No		G31	Yes
#89	No		G34	Yes
#114	No		G37	Yes
#119	Unsure, cancel obscures		G66	Yes
#137	N/A, repaired Dawson item		G69	Yes
#139	No		G69	Yes
#141	No			
#143	No			
#149	No			

* GC : Refers to Grinnell card of 10, GC5 is fifth on the card, GC6 is sixth.

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