



**EMPIRE STATE
POSTAL HISTORY
SOCIETY**

APS UNIT 28

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CHASING PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION CANCELS

By Alfred Carroccia

The Pan-American Exposition was held in Buffalo in the summer of 1901. The theme of the exposition was the promotion of commercial and social interests among the countries of the western hemisphere. The fair attracted thousands of visitors with its colorful buildings and gothic statues.

Among the many innovations introduced was that of electricity due to Buffalo's proximity to the power of Niagara Falls. The event would be infamously remembered for the assassination of President William McKinley at the Temple of Music on September 6, 1901.

All collectors are aware of the bicolored stamps which were issued to honor the exposition, but most overlook the myriad of postal markings that marked the period between May and November 1901. These markings can be divided into hand stamps and machine cancels. The machine cancels also had a number of slogan cancels. Cancels, particularly the machines, appear common but it should be noted that these some are valued at a premium especially those cancelled on certain dates.

There is a Pan-American Station cancel, but it is not known if there was a post office on the grounds. It is believed that the mail was picked up on the grounds and transported to the nearest post office. There is evidence that the railway mail system had a fully operational railway post office car on the grounds. The RPO marking that is documented is rare leading to speculation that the rail car did not have many visitors. Most of the International machine cancels had the letter "D" in the die space of the cancellers indicating the mail was deposited in a post office drop slot on the exposition grounds.

If you are looking for a challenge try collecting the postal markings of the Pan-American Exposition. There are plenty of documented varieties of these markings to pursue even if you cannot afford the more elusive items. ■