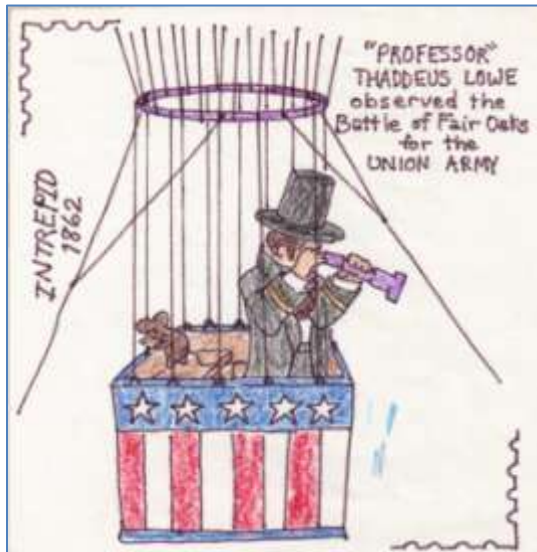


The Evolution of Anon E Mouse Cachets 1983 Hot Air Balloons

In 1983, when the four Hot Air Balloon stamps were issued, I was still drawing each original cachet design by hand on a 3-1/4" square piece of paper and slipping it into a regular #6 envelope, for tracing over.

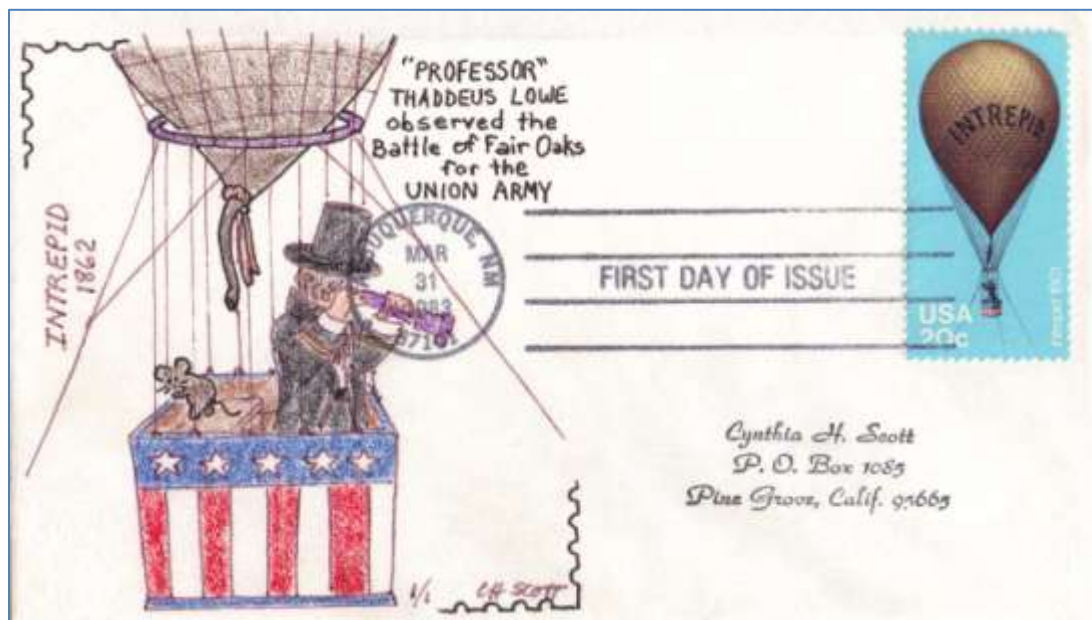


Here is a scaled-down image of one of those pieces of paper, which some collectors might call a design "proof."



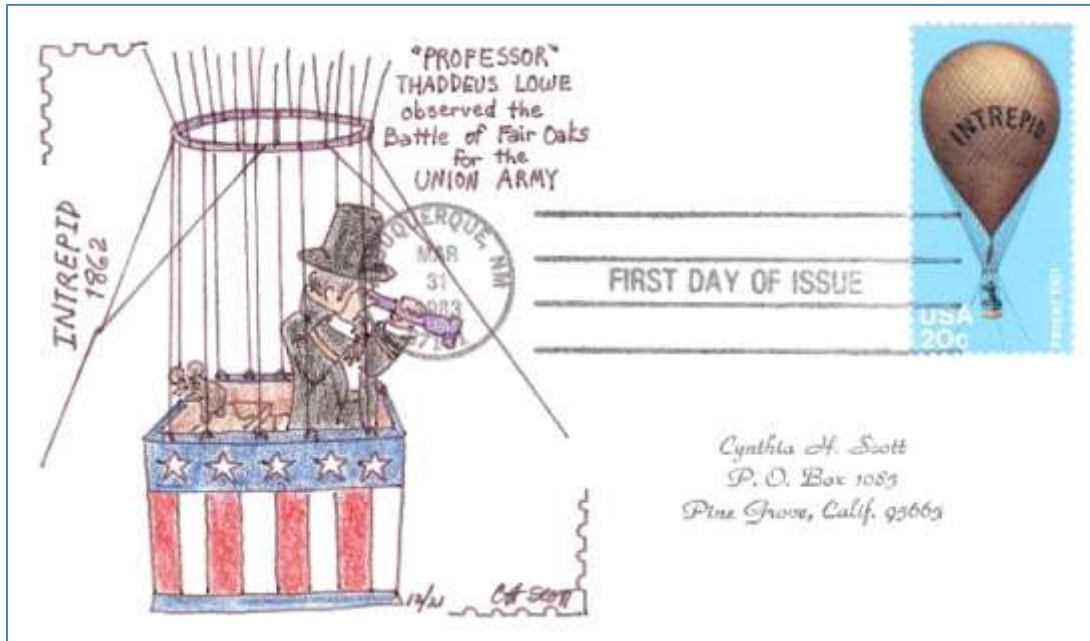
Notice the blue pencil marks to the right of the Intrepid; those were color tests. I was probably interrupted in the coloring process (possibly for days) and forgot which pencil produced the desired shade of blue. This was actually my second design for the Intrepid 1862 stamp.

In the first attempt, I drew the bottom part of the balloon. It just didn't look "right," and I finally realized that in the stamp image, the balloon was much higher above Professor Lowe. I didn't want to waste the cover or the stamp, so had it serviced anyway. Here is the one of one first design for this issue:



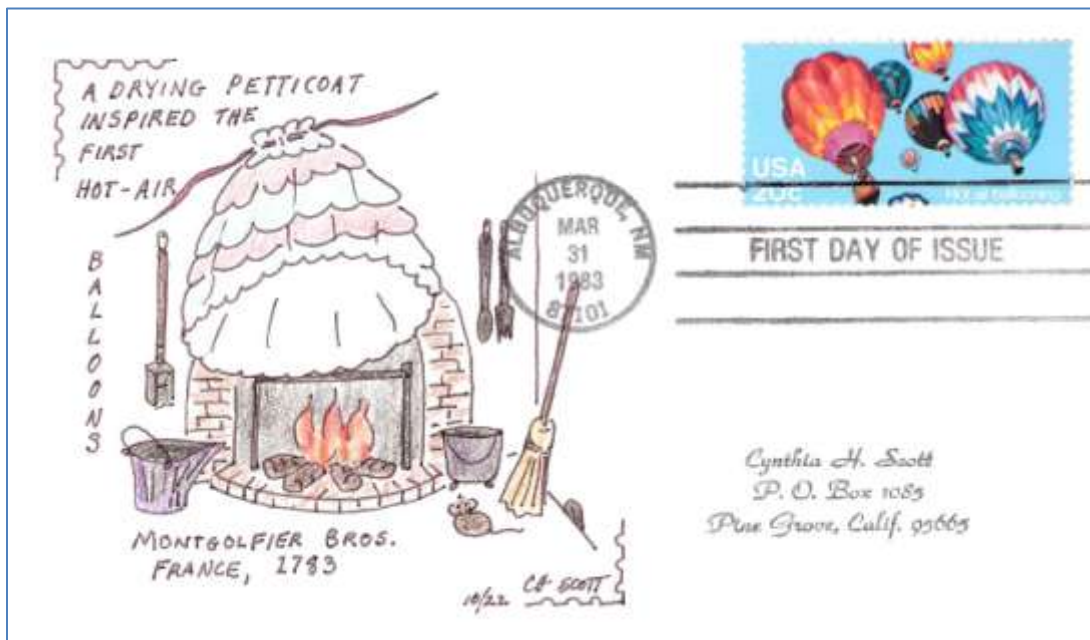
Here is the second design. There were 21 copies made. Now that decades have passed, I can see that I must have switched pens while drawing these. The text on the

original design (one of one above) is still dark black. The rope lines on both cachets and the text in the second design have faded to purple.



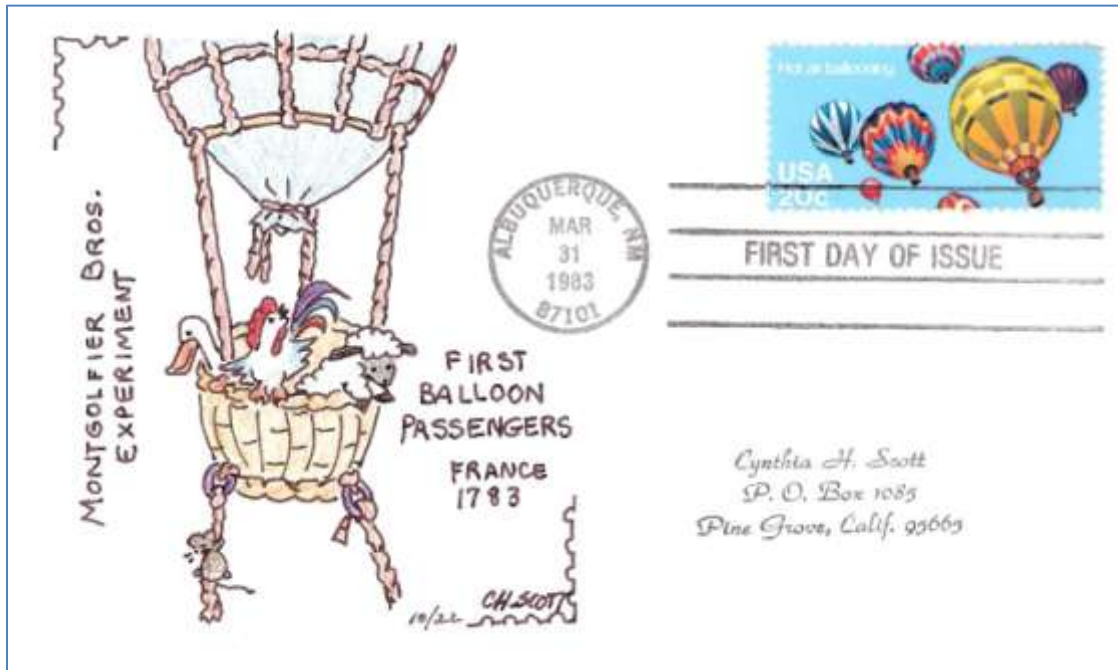
Anon E. Mouse cachet 90, Sc 2032

I had several ideas for this set of four stamps, so made a different cachet for each one. Here is the Petticoat design:



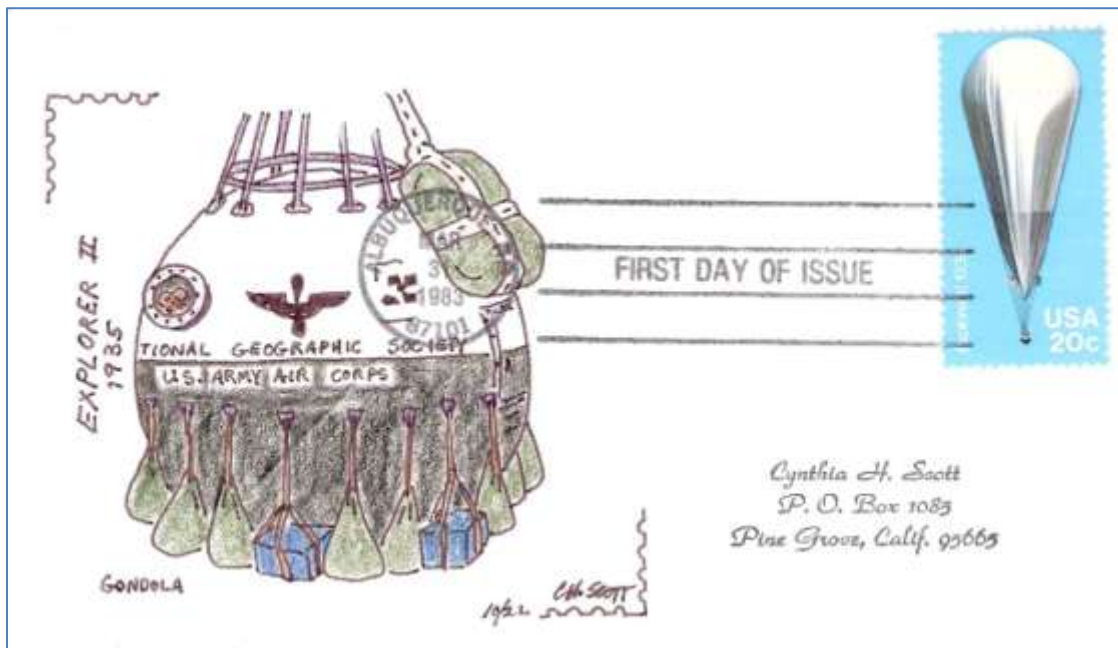
Anon E. Mouse cachet 91, Sc 2033

When researching the history of hot air balloons, I was especially intrigued by the fact that the Mongolfier brothers used farm animals as test passengers. My imagination probably doesn't match their choice of animals, but I had fun drawing this scene:



Anon E. Mouse cachet 92, Sc 2034

I found a *National Geographic* magazine with an article about their hot air balloon named Explorer II. The photographs were good models for my drawing in this cachet:



Anon E. Mouse cachet 93, Sc 2035