

PVI Primer

For the uninitiated into this overlooked collecting field, Postage Validation Imprints.

These were introduced in 1992 in the San Diego area (April 16th according to John Hotchner) and then at Daytona Beach and Gainesville in Florida in the first week of May. Experimental PVI's began in Flushing, NY in August of 1974 (Ken Lawrence).

I am indebted to Hens A. Wolf for details on country codes and mail class codes sent to European addresses.

There are several different types but most contain the same information.



The figure above shows one type (which I'll designate Type IA) which contains information in three columns. To the left is the USPS emblem and the mail class code*. To the right is the information concerning date, postage paid, originating zip code, originating town and the ID number of the IRT (Integrated Retail Terminal). In the center is the bar code and receiving zip code. At the top is a pink line, this can vary from light pink to deep red. Note that it is not cancelled - the normal situation. Note how the ink has a tendency to fade in these early PVI's.

*The USPS seems somewhat loathe to use the Mail Class code, a code so hidden that postal clerks apparently do not know it, usually going with the defaults of 0000 and 9999. Of the 1,734 pieces in my collection, (last updated November 19th, 2007) the breakdown is as follows (note the EKU's (earliest known usages) and MRU's (most recent usages) are for those in my collection only):

Code	Total	Type IA	Type IB	Type IC	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type V	Type VI
0000	817	65	84	9	111	422	4	123	

		EKU 08/11/93	EKU 09/09/93	EKU 11/04/93	EKU 12/12/96	EKU 10/10/97	EKU 03/05/03	EKU 08/15/00	
		MRU 04/13/06	MRU 01/07/04	MRU 01/10/05	MRU 02/15/07	MRU 10/06/07	MRU 12/08/06	MRU 05/09/07	
9128									
Global Express									
9129									
Global Express Guarenteed									
9130	2				2 EKU 08/29/05 MRU 09/20/05				
9131	1				1 EKU 02/20/04 MRU 02/20/04				
9132									
GPM Global Express									

9139									
GXG									
Guarenteed									
9140	23				22 EKU 11/30/00 MRU 08/27/05	1 EKU 05/18/06 MRU 05/18/06			
9141	2								
9142	4				3 EKU 03/06/01 MRU 07/25/05				
9146									
Printed Matter to Europe (surface)									
9150									
Package Airmail to Europe									
9153	1				1 EKU 10/20/03				

					MRU				
					10/20/03				
9156					1				
Package	1				EKU				
Surface mail					10/16/04				
to Europe					MRU				
					10/16/04				
9160					1				
	1				EKU				
					12/03/99				
					MRU				
					12/03/99				
9170									
Printed									
matter									
airmail to									
Europe									
9206									
Book rate to									
South Africa									
9240								1	
Flat	1							EKU	
								05/24/05	
								MRU	

								05/24/05	
9241 Parcel post	2					2 EKU 09/28/04 MRU 10/13/04			
9242 Parcel post + surcharge	10					10 EKU 09/13/99 MRU 03/21/06			
9243 Printed matter	1					1 EKU 04/09/04 MRU 04/09/04			
9244 media mail	35					35 EKU 11/30/99 MRU 07/07/06			
9245 Library rate	1					1 EKU 10/26/05			

						MRU 10/26/05			
9251	22				22 EKU 03/11/03 MRU 05/10/06				
9252	25				25 EKU 02/06/03 MRU 12/21/05				
9261 1st class	507	2 EKU 10/30/04 MRU 11/15/04				478 EKU 03/25/00 MRU 07/13/06	10 EKU 12/05/03 MRU 12/05/05	14 EKU 02/14/04 MRU 04/28/06	2 EKU 02/03/05 MRU 09/19/05
9262 Priority mail	72	1 EKU 01/26/05 MRU 01/26/05				70 EKU 09/07/99 MRU 06/20/06		1 EKU 08/27/05 MRU 08/27/05	
9263 Flat	11					10 EKU		1 EKU	

						02/22/02 MRU 07/29/06		03/21/06 MRU 03/21/06	
9264	82	1 EKU 02/08/05 MRU 02/08/05			2 EKU 12/30/03 MRU 11/20/04	79 EKU 05/24/02 MRU 04/05/06			
9265	4					4 EKU 02/09/00 MRU 05/12/05			
9267 Priority	21					18 EKU 06/20/02 MRU 12/02/05		3 EKU 02/25/03 MRU 12/07/05	
9268 Certified	3					3 EKU 11/20/03 MRU 11/22/05			

9269									
Fast signature confirmation									
9999	85				85 EKU 05/05/00 MRU 09/08/05				
Total	1734	69	84	9	276	1134	14	143	2
		Type IA	Type IB	Type IC	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type V	Type VI

If anyone has numbers not listed above, please inform me.

Now, I find that the USPS has begun putting a code for countries into the area where the receiving zip is used on the vertically bar coded PVI's.

Again, I have no idea as to why specific numbers have been assigned to certain countries.

So far we have:

Andorra at 00117

Armenia at 00159

Australia at 00404 and 00405

Austria at 00113

Belgium at 00108

Bhutan at 00171

Bolivia at 00453

Canada at 00290, 00294, 00296 and 00299

Chile at 00457

China at 00418

Denmark at 00105

Egypt at 00206

Eire (at least Dublin) at 00126

Ethiopia at 00231

Finland at 00118

Japan at 00408

Luxemburg at 00109

Madagascar at 00260

Mexico at 00495

Netherlands at 00107

New Zealand at 00401

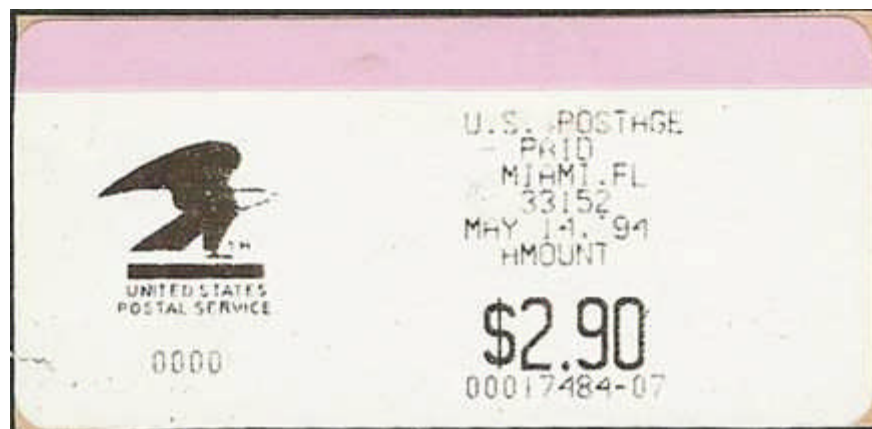
San Marino at 00114

Surinam at 00448

United Arab Emirates at 00195

United Kingdom at 00122 and 00144

Click [here](#) to see some examples.



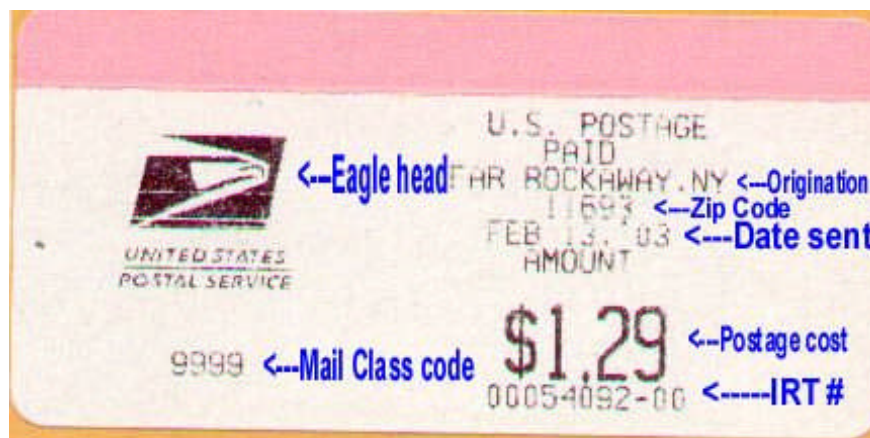
OK, the above example I have designated Type IB, with full eagle and two columns.



The above is Type IC, full eagle and bar code along base.



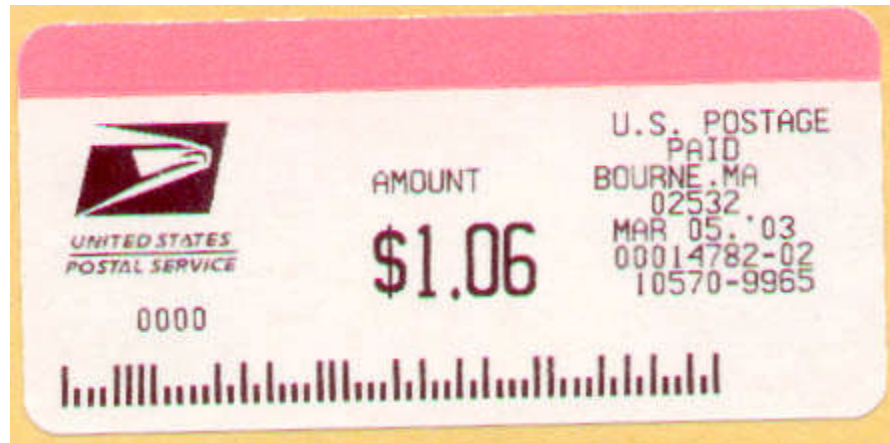
It seems that the same machine was capable of producing types IA and IB at the same time.



The next type has just the head of the Eagle. I will designate this as Type II. Note only two columns.



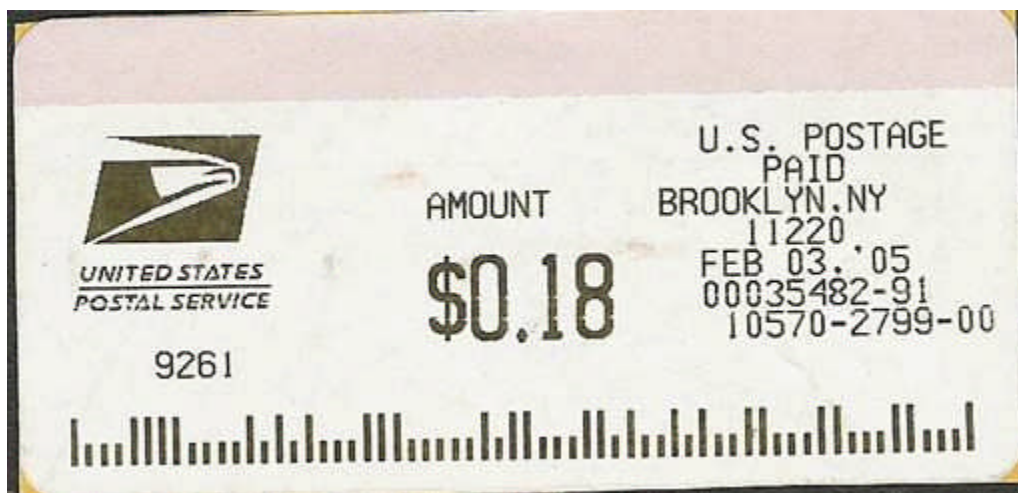
The next, designated Type III, has a full length bar code and again with the receiving zip underneath it.



The next, designated Type IV shows the information in three columns and additionally has the receiving zip code under the IRT # and a bar code along the base stretching from the "P" of "Postal" to the fifth digit of the receiving zip code.



The most recent example, designated Type V, is similar to Type IV except that the bar code only extends from beneath the "P" of "Postal" to the decimal point of the paid amount.



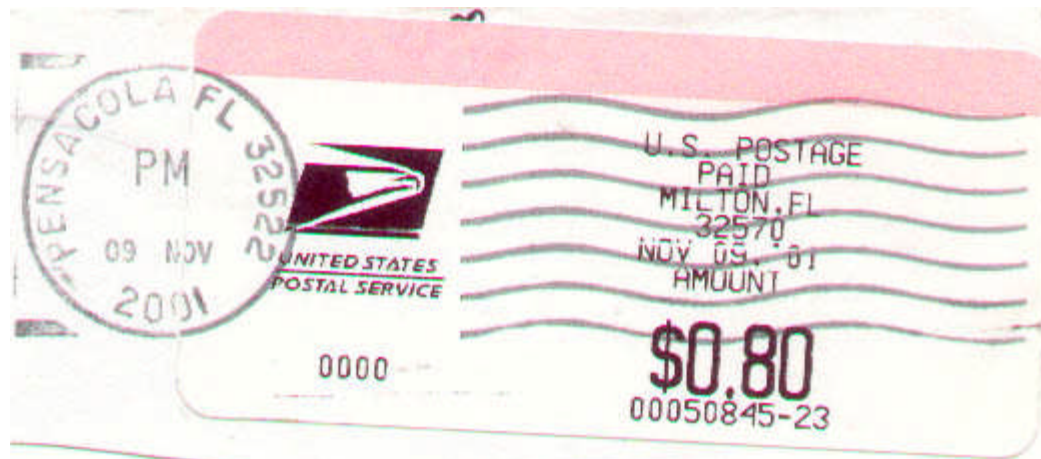
Type VI - I only have one of these but it has been confirmed by Joe Angelucci, so Bar code extends all the way to the right with a 5-4-2 zip code.



It also seems that the same machine is capable of producing the Types III and V, PVI's.



A strange one, has IRT # and my zip code but nothing else to indicate postage rate or date.



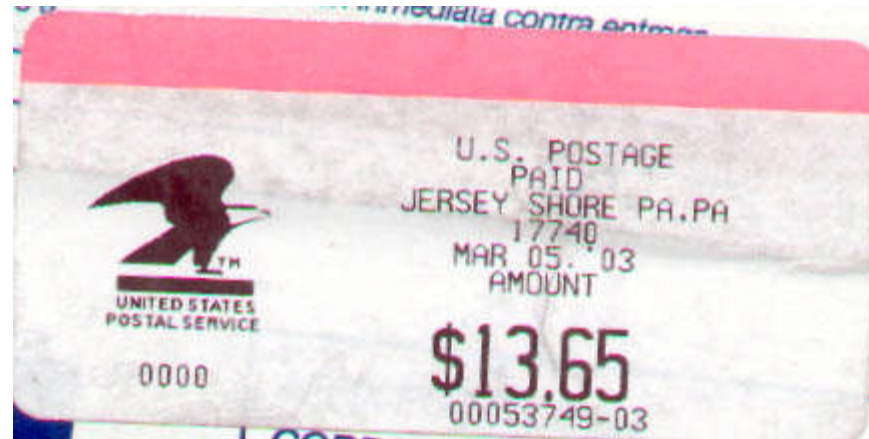
Sometimes the PVI did not escape the cancelling machine.



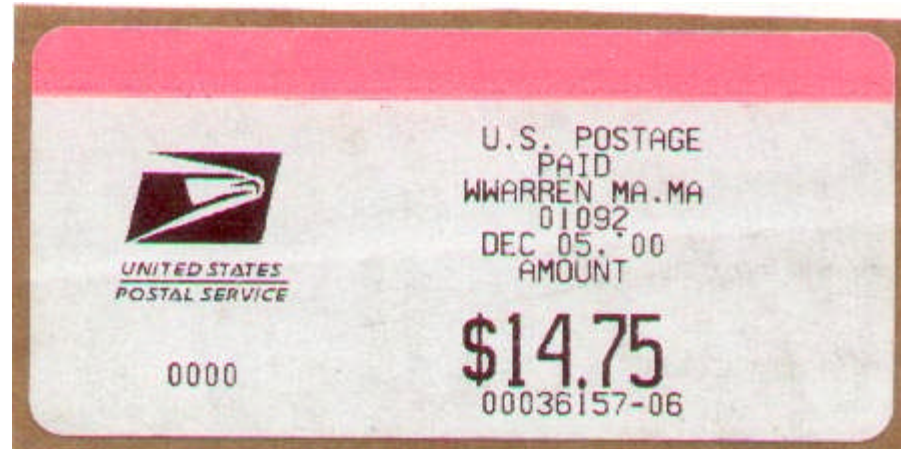
With valuable items the post office sometimes got carried away.

This was also used to mark correctly paid mail handed in at PO counter.

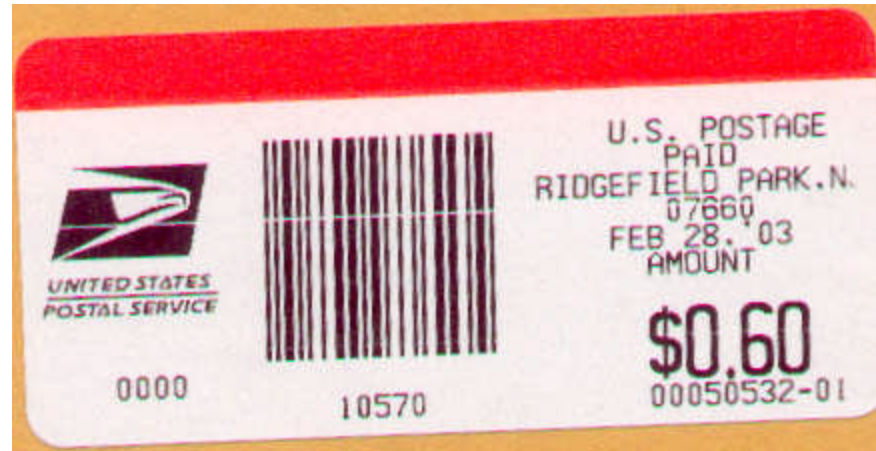
Used extensively during anthrax crisis.



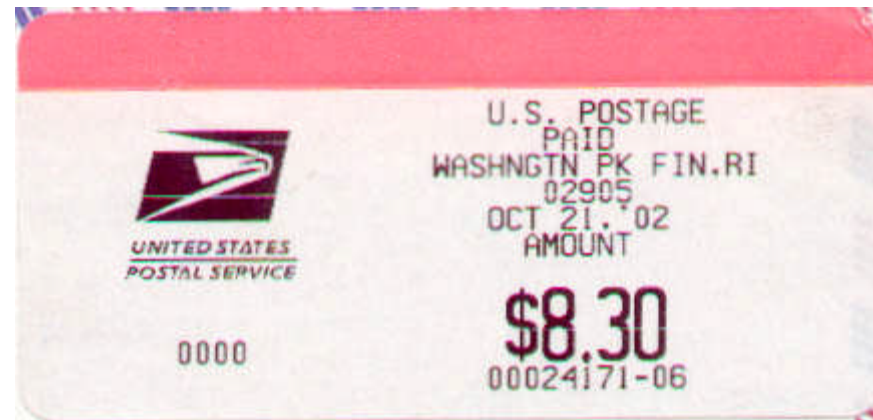
Sometimes the programmer got carried away and repeated state name.



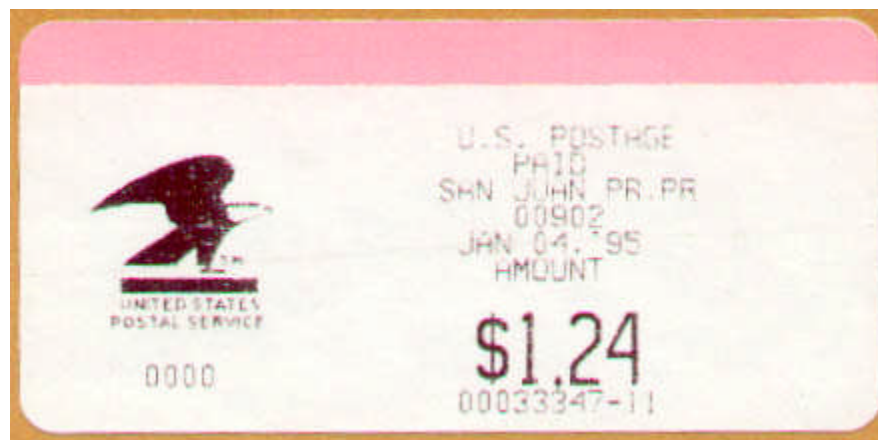
A programmer with a stutter in both town and state name.



Sometimes it looks like programmer ran out of room for state name.



At other times the programmer engaged in shorthand. Washington I follow. PK = park or peak. Fin. it has been suggested stands for either finance or financial. RI = Rhode Island. The Zip code is actually for Cranston, Rhode Island.



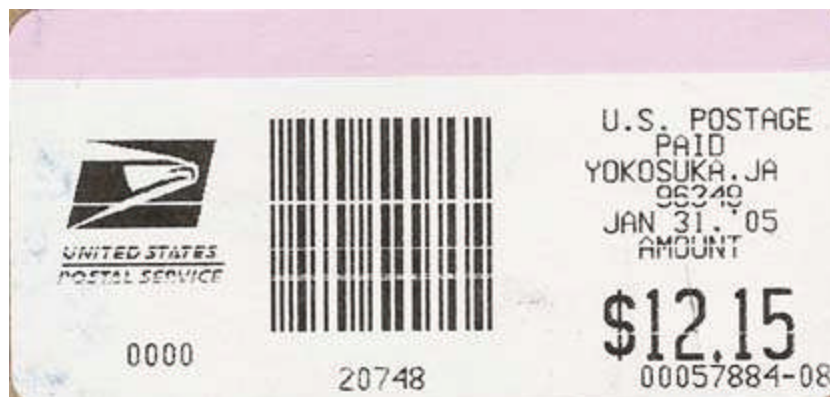
One can also find PVI's for territories, again with a stutter for Puerto Rico.



An uncommon PVI - that of the Army Post Office



An oddball, two PVI's with different mail class codes.



An even rarer one, an overseas PO, this time from Yokosuka, Japan

Thanks to Steve.



And, saving the best for last, only one of four I've seen in well over a thousand PVI's, an inverted PVI.

Thanks to "nomad".

Many thanks to the people who have supplied PVI's for this primer, especially Marty, Terry, Jim, Burton and Ed.