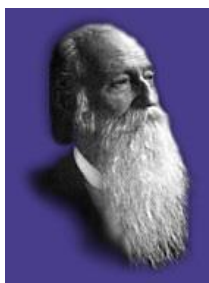
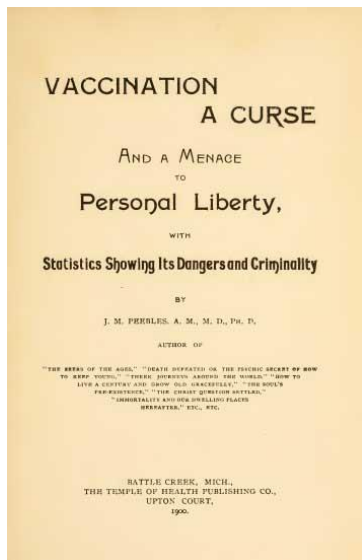


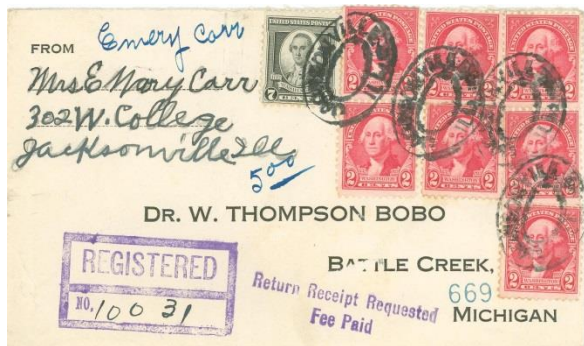
# Philately & International Mail Order Fraud

## Dr James W Peebles and W Thompson Bobo and the Dr Peebles Institute of Health

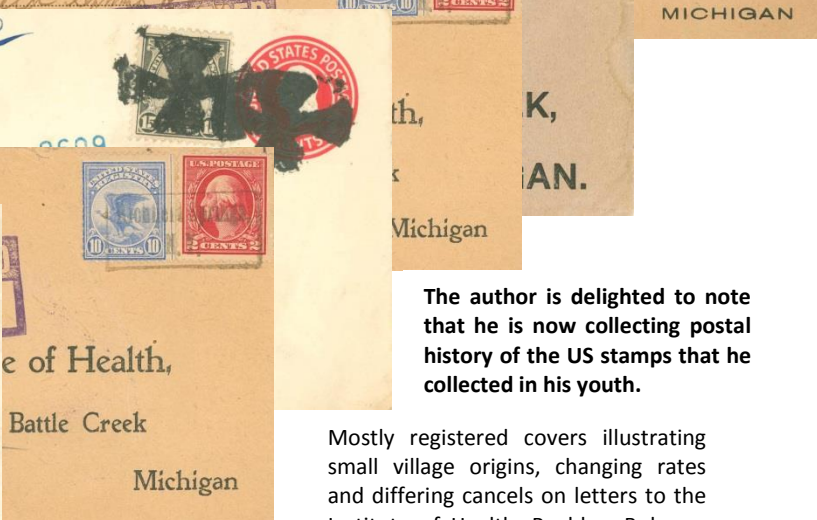
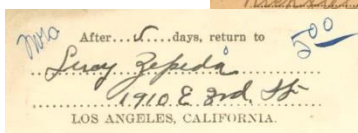
At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a group of American Fraudsters used the efficient international mails to promote schemes to defraud the public. Among the most successful and Americentric was the Dr Peebles Institute of Health of Battle Creek, Michigan. The scam was simple: clients would write with a description of their ills, and the Institute would provide prescriptions at \$5 each, about \$50-\$100 in today's purchasing power, guaranteed to cure their ailments. In fact, the prescriptions contained nothing beyond water, ethanol and simple inorganic salts. The fraud began in 1900, with Dr Bobo taking full control on Dr Peebles death in 1922, and ended in 1935 the year after Dr Bobo took his own life.



Shown in the center are portraits of Drs Peebles and Bobo. Beyond his firm commitment to fraud, Dr Peebles was strongly opposed to vaccinations as the title page at the left shows. At the right a standard ad for the Dr Peebles Institute of Health offering a free information booklet and then prescriptions to order.



Letter posted at the 21c rate franked with Washington Bicentennial issues.



The author is delighted to note that he is now collecting postal history of the US stamps that he collected in his youth.

Mostly registered covers illustrating small village origins, changing rates and differing cancels on letters to the Institute of Health, Peebles, Bobo or newly created entities to avoid the police for prescriptions or information. [edjig@alum.mit.edu](mailto:edjig@alum.mit.edu)