

## *In This Issue*

Not long ago, **Abed Najjar** discovered a potentially world-class philatelic rarity in a cover with an irregular strip of three of the **Great Britain 1858–79 Rose-red Plate 77** stamps. Up to this date, only ten copies have been known, all singles, and all are considered great rarities. After being turned down by two expert groups, he continued with new research into this group of rarities, and he has uncovered some fascinating information that may force a reconsideration of the concept of how these came into existence. This article presents the facts known about the existing copies and information about the stamps on the cover. A subsequent article in the next issue will discuss the possible ways these could have originated.

A puzzle of some sixty years concerns **Holland's Track-Boat Markings** and whether they are genuine or not. **Kees Adema** returns to show how X-ray fluorescence has provided an answer to this philatelic conundrum. As is true with other investigations of this sort, scientific findings by non-philatelic investigators may not always be as thorough as they should, and that perhaps they look for the wrong things. Adema made use of the services of Dr. Gene Hall, of Rutgers University, who was also a key figure in the investigation of the Grinnell forgeries, for his final decisive work.

Long-lost stamps sometimes turn up after many years. **Wolfgang Maassen**, of Germany, tells of the resurfacing of a mysterious copy of a **1d Post Office Mauritius** that was known only in the literature in the form of a black and white photo. Here it is shown for the first time in color, with added background information.

**Jan Berg**, of Stockholm, who is currently winning large gold medals with his collection of early Samoa, has a knack of finding amazing items that are almost too good to exist. Here he tells of a twelfth **Samoa Express Cover**, to add to the small inventory of eleven that were known until now, and which is now in his collection.

In **Cover Story**, **Ed Grabowski** tells of a strange correspondence that is connected to a “mentalist” of the early twentieth century. **Professor A. Victor Segno and the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type** shows that even in the most unusual of accumulations of covers one can find rare combinations, in this case a cover from Port Sandwich, New Hebrides, at the 50c overseas registered rate. The story of what the mentalist promised to do is almost as fascinating as the cover itself.

**On the Cover:** The cover to Brussels with three copies of the Plate 77 of the 1d rose-red of Great Britain, with check letters in all four corners. This cover is discussed, along with the ten other examples of the Plate 77, in an article that raises many questions about this ultra-rare variety.

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### **Change of Program**

The scheduled speaker for **October 15** regrets that it will be necessary for him to withdraw for health reasons. We are pleased to announce that **Cheryl Ganz**, Chief Curator of Philately at the **National Postal Museum**, has agreed to step in and to give a presentation on the current status of programs at the museum, which is celebrating its fifteenth anniversary. This promises to be an evening that will be both informative and delightful.