

Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award Robson Lowe 1970 Recipient



For a second year in a row, the Board of Governors of the Collectors Club has unanimously voted the *Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award* to a Britisher. Robson Lowe, the well-known professional philatelist with his famous address, 50 Pall Mall, London will receive the 1970 medallion for "distinguished services to philately."

Most all professional philatelists have to confine their activities to the commercial side. Being an active stamp dealer and conducting frequent stamp auction sales demand so much time that little is left over to be able to spare some further time to any other services to philately. For more than 50 years, Robson Lowe has been a prominent exception.

A Very Versatile Career

One wonders where Robson Lowe has found the time to do all the things he has done. It seems that he is expanding his business every year. Besides London, he has auction sales in Bournemouth; and in recent years also on the European Continent. Years ago, he had an office in the

United States. Besides all this, he publishes magazines and books. Furthermore, he himself has authored magazine articles for both American and British periodicals and also more than a few books. One of his latest books is a fine one — "The British Postage Stamp of the Nineteenth Century" (see *COLLECTORS CLUB PHILATELIST* Vol. 48, pages 45-46).

Mr. Lowe has given over many years an exceptional amount of time to the service of philately. For instance, he has been very active in both the organization and management of the last two London International Exhibitions in 1960 and 1950; also he is active working for the 1970 London International that will be staged next September.

The British Philatelic Association (B. P. A.) has been the beneficiary of Robson Lowe's philatelic knowledge, experience and services since 1945. He has been very active on its Expert Committee. This work led to one very important consequence — the publication of "the Jean de Sperati Personal Records on His Counterfeit Stamps" in 1956. Mr. Lowe was the key worker on this project. This infamous French forger in his old age was anxious to see if he could capitalize on the records of his counterfeits that he still possessed. Robson Lowe arranged for the B. P. A. to purchase these and then publish them in a book that reveals how de Sperati operated. Thus, his counterfeits that had deceived many were now laid bare so that the deceptive sale of Sperati counterfeits was severely curtailed with the appearance of the book. Recently, Robson Lowe was elected President of the B. P. A.

Worldwide Traveller

Philately has seldom, if ever, seen one who has travelled the world more and wider than Robson Lowe. For example, he has made more than 50 visits to North America. He has exhibited and lectured several times at the Collectors Club in New York. The last time was just a few months ago, when he spoke and exhibited his collection of the Private Posts of New York City on November 5, 1969. Two years ago, he visited 22 East 35 Street on his way back from a long trip to India, Australia and New Zealand. He is always "on the go."

Also, in recent years he has written several articles for the COLLECTORS CLUB PHILATELIST. One in 1964 on "Blood's Penny Post" aroused much interest.

Space limitations do not permit a complete listing of all the Low publications — his auction sale catalogues with color plates, his periodicals and handbooks. Instead, only some that we think are the more outstanding will receive a brief mention.

In this writer's opinion, the Robson Lowe's "Regent Encyclopedia and Catalogue Of British Empire Stamps" have contributed much to philatelic knowledge. This is so, because the books offer information and pricings of material that is of interest to collectors but is not found in the standard catalogues. Volume 1 appeared in 1947 followed every few years by a new volume on British philately and postal history. The series came out on a geographical basis — Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australasia; only America remains to appear.

The 19th Recipient

The Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award was first awarded in 1952. Robson Lowe not only becomes the 19th recipient but also the third Britisher to receive this high honor. The list of the previous medalists is as follows:

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| *1952 Theodore E. Steinway, New York, N. Y. | 1961 John J. Britt, New York, N. Y. |
| *1953 Dr. Clarence W. Hennen, Chicago, Ill. | *1962 Mrs. Louise B. Dale, Red Bank, N. J. |
| *1954 Dr. Carroll Chase, Amherst, N. H. | 1963 Henry M. Goodkind, New York, N. Y. |
| *1955 August Dietz, Sr., Richmond, Va. | 1964 Vincent G. Greene, Toronto, Canada |
| 1956 Sir John Wilson, London, England | 1965 Alvaro Bonilla Lara, Santiago, Chile |
| 1957 Harry L. Lindquist, New York, N. Y. | 1966 H. D. S. Haverbeck, Bernardsville, N. J. |
| 1958 Winthrop S. Boggs, E. Orange, N. J. | 1967 John R. Boker, Jr., Scarsdale, N. Y. |
| *1959 Gen. C. W. Wickersham, Cedarhurst, N.Y. | 1968 Herbert J. Bloch, New York, N. Y. |
| 1960 J. R. W. Purves, Melbourne, Australia | 1969 H. R. Holmes, Hants, England |

*Deceased

Postal History Pioneer

Another noteworthy contribution of Robson Lowe has been his stimulation of interest in British postal history — in fact, postal history all over the world. For years, the staid, traditional British philatelist clung to his study of stamps and their production. Postal use and services both pre- and post 1840 had received very little attention. Through the publication of literature and then specialized postal history auction sales, Robson Lowe made many an ardent British postal historian. Also, he did much to popularize this specialty by organizing a group devoted to the study of British postal history.

The remarkable career of Robson Lowe has been highlighted by his tireless energy. The more remarkable aspect seems to be that as the years advance, the pace of his work accelerates rather than tapers off. He began collecting stamps as a young schoolboy in England before World War I. Even in school, he started trading and offering others stamps at prices less than the London stamp trade was pricing them. This stimulated a strong taste later for a career as a

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professional philatelist. Robson Lowe founded his business in London on May 6, 1920. May 6, 1970 will be the 50th anniversary.

His pen never seems to run dry. Just within the last year or two he has co-authored "The Colonial Posts in the United States of America, 1606-1783." Also, last year he published "Guatemala Part 1" (see Vol. 48, page 369).

Within the last few years, Mr. Robson Lowe was appointed by the Post Office of Great Britain to be the professional philatelic adviser to the National Postal Museum. Also in Eire, he is the only Englishman to serve on Ireland's Stamp Design Committee. This appointment came to Robson Lowe because it was believed that he was very knowledgeable about printing and also knew the Stamp Act.

It is planned to present the 1970 *Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award* to Robson Lowe at our Annual Awards Dinner that will take place this year on May 13, 1970 again at the famous oldtime New York restaurant, Luchow.

(H. M. G.)