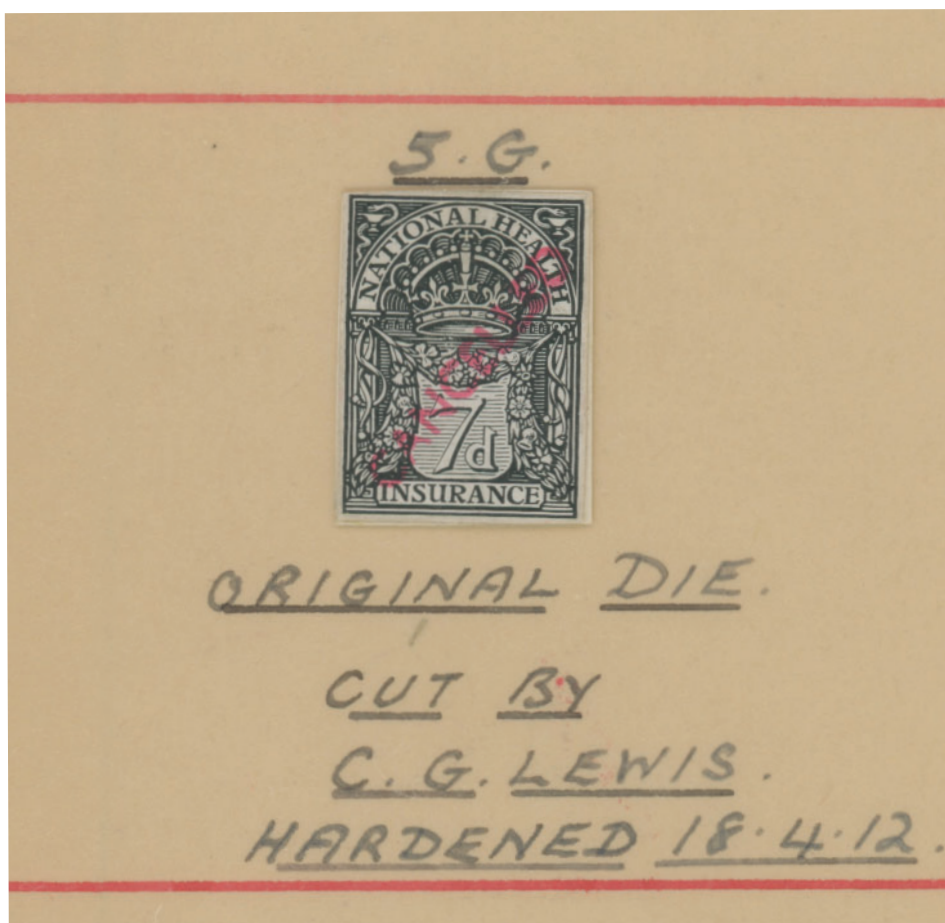


# *CollectorsClub Philatelist*

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## The Struggle Behind Britain's National Health Stamps

# H.R. HARMER

EST. 1940

FINE STAMP AUCTIONS

## Harmer Stamp Stories

### A Closer Look at Past Realizations and Future Offerings



There are covers that are rare, and there are covers that are beautiful. But only a small handful of truly remarkable items can lay claim to both, and it is these few philatelic gems that persist in the hearts and minds of collectors.

The New Haven provisional envelope shown here, by far the finest of the six entires known, is one such item. Having passed through the hands of the 20th Century's most important collectors—Ferrary, Hind, Caspary, Lilly, Haub—this cover has been off the market for 33 years and is now once again making its way to the auction block.

But what makes this particular specimen of the New Haven provisional so remarkable? The most important thing to know is that the ink used to produce these envelopes is notoriously unstable and the majority of surviving examples have faded considerably over the decades. In the 1880s noted stamp dealer Charles H. Mekeel even attempted to revive one such envelope with iron sulfate, completely ruining it in the process and demonstrating that the ink's volatility was known from an early date.

The fact that a New Haven provisional envelope survives in such pristine condition today is extremely lucky if not miraculous. Reprints have been produced on a number of occasions, allowing many collectors to own an impression from the original die. But for one collector on January 17, 2023, the opportunity will arise to own an icon of American philately. We look forward to adding that person's name to this cover's esteemed provenance.

## What Stories Will Your Collection Tell?

At H.R. Harmer we view ourselves as stewards of the hobby, dedicated to both preserving great collections of the past and building great collections of the future. Following the recent sales of the Provera, Challenger and Boulder Collections, and with several powerful sales forthcoming in the second half of the year, our team has proven its ability to expertly describe and market significant and specialized collections. When you consign with H.R. Harmer, you are joining a long list of discerning collectors who have appreciated the historical significance, romantic intrigue, and aesthetic beauty a world-class philatelic collection can embody. We pride ourselves in building strong relationships with our consignors and telling the story of their collection to our worldwide network of clients.

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 CCP are available  
 from the editor.



Essential Elements: In Postal Perpetuity by Richard A. Coffey	6
Kaufmann, Neil, Verge Win 2023 Lichtenstein Awards by Matthew Healey	8
The Struggle Behind Britain's National Health Stamps by Matthew Healey and Paul Ramsay	16
Postage Stamps as a Chronicle of History: The 1961 Stamps Honoring the Nicaraguan Military Academy by Martin H. Joyce	31
Noted in Passing on the Auction Block by Matthew Healey	44
<b>Book Reviews:</b>	
<i>Libia: Storia, Posta, Filatelia [Libya: History, Post, Philately (1940-1945)]</i> by Giorgio Migliavacca	50
<i>The Italian South Atlantic Airline (LATI)</i> by Giorgio Migliavacca	51
<i>Plácido Ramón de Torres: From Foundling to Master Forger</i> by Giorgio Migliavacca	52
<i>Proceedings of the First National Postal History Forum</i> <i>Public and Private: Allied for the tutelage of the Postal History Heritage</i> by Giorgio Migliavacca	54
<i>A Contemporary Account of the First United States Postal Card 1870-1875</i> (2023 re-issue with improvements) by Wayne L. Youngblood	60
Obituary: Donal Finbarr McCarthy	61

## Departments

President's Message .....	3
Editor's Notepad .....	5
Programs .....	5
Membership .....	62
Index to Advertisers .....	64

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# THE COLLECTORS CLUB

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The Collectors Club is open Monday through Friday,  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call ahead if intending to visit.

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*The Collectors Club Philatelist* is an international specialty journal serving the needs of hundreds of collectors worldwide. It serves as the journal of record for the Collectors Club as well as publishing stimulating and helpful articles for collectors of many levels and specialties. *The Collectors Club Philatelist* strives to publish accurate philatelic information and serves as a forum for communication among members of the Collectors Club.



# President's Message

Lawrence Haber

We begin a new year, and with that comes the promise of new beginnings. We turn the page saying goodbye to the past. The future lies ahead as we await the new year's promises. This is very true for our club. On Nov. 15, we closed the sale of our old clubhouse at 22 East 35th Street. Before the end of November, we signed a 15-year lease on our new clubhouse.

Closing the sale of 22 East 35th should be no surprise. The sales process was run with professionalism by our team at Cushman & Wakefield, and the price we obtained was full value. The building had innumerable memories, but the time to move forward has arrived and turn that page.

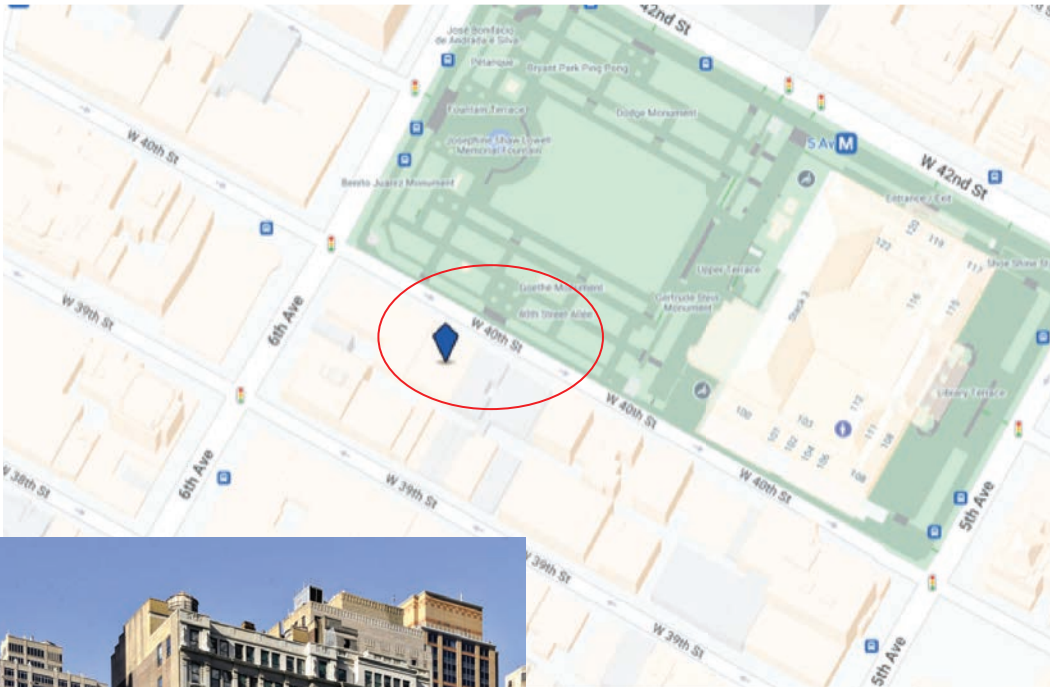
So, where are we going? Our new home is at 58 West 40th Street. That places us where we belong; between Penn Station and Grand Central terminal. Our 40th location is between 5th and 6th Avenues, on the south side of the street overlooking Bryant Park. Bryant Park itself is immediately behind the main New York Public Library. Technically, we have moved from Murray Hill to Midtown South.

Our new building was built in 1921 and has 17 stories. We occupy the entirety of the 1st-floor mezzanine. There are no other tenants on our floor. Each floor in the building has only one tenant. Our floor features floor-to-ceiling windows along the entire building width on 40th Street. The view overlooking Bryant Park is outstanding.

Although the building was built a century ago, our space is entirely up to date. High-speed internet: no problem. Capacity to carry the weight load of the library: no problem. Modern heating and cooling. Easy access for mobility-challenged individuals: no problem.

The space measures 7,480 rentable square feet. More important than some abstract measurement is the fact that we will fit the space and we will fit it well. Our architects measured the spaces we used at 22 East 35th and overlaid that onto 50 West 40th. The only thing we will lose is underutilized space or space that was wasted due to the design of the old clubhouse. The old clubhouse's floor plate was designed as two spaces, one in the front and one in the back, joined by the elevator and staircase lobby. Much of that connective tissue could not be used. Our new space is shaped like a rectangle, and very little space will be wasted. The elevators and restroom are on one side of the floor, maximizing space utilization.

You enter the building into a small marble lobby. This is not some vast NYC building with 55 stories and floors that occupy a city block. This is a "family" building, and we think you will feel the intimacy of the building as you enter.



There is 24/7 reception, and the elevator will take you one flight up. The elevator will open, and you will be in the Club when it opens – no doors to open or corridors to walk down. As you turn to the right, you will enter our main lounge, where you will meet other members and be able to look out over Bryant Park. If, alternatively, you had turned left, you would have been led to our new library space. In the center, between the library and the lounge, will be the presentation room,

fully outfitted with the latest technical equipment allowing us to reach members both in the room and around the world. Beyond these spaces, we anticipate two seminar rooms where small groups can gather, a modern pantry and restroom access that meets ADA standards.

We do not yet have a full design. We will have to build out the floor to our design. We are consulting with our architects and are working on the design now. Much work remains. But we did have a test fit run to make sure this space would work, and it will work. For those who can join us for in-house programs, the evening will begin in an elegant area to socialize with your friends; once the time is reached, we will walk across the room through a set of wide doors and enter the presentation space. The simplicity and ease we

will walk about may be startling at first. We have become very used to broken-up and disconnected spaces and awkward flows, that will not be the case here. We anticipate that the flow in the building will be very natural and smooth. It will be very exciting.

As the design firms up, we will share this with you and look forward to your reactions as we build our new home.

---

## Editor's Notepad

Wayne L. Youngblood

### A Few Quick Notes

Congratulations to this year's Lichtenstein Award winners, who are profiled on pages 8-12. This is the first time since the award was first bestowed in 1952 that there are multiple winners – in this case three – each one well deserving of this considerable honor! There was no award was given in 2000.

Congratulations also go to Steven M. Roth, winner of the Robert P. Odenweller Award for best article appearing the CCP. Roth's "Mail by Stage Coach: The Carriage of Mail Before 1860," a tremendous two-part article that appeared in the May-June and July-August 2021 issues of this journal.

Congratulations also go to Jean Wang, who was awarded "Best Presentation of 2022," for her Nov. 2 "Evolution of a Thematic Exhibit – Blood a Modern Medicine." A full writeup will appear in the next issue.

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## Collectors Club Programs 2023

Feb. 1	One Thing Leads to Another: Using European Mails to Understand Transatlantic Mails, <a href="#">Rob Faux</a>
Feb. 15	United Postal Stationery Society Special Program: Australian Letter Cards, <a href="#">Didier LeGall</a> ; Early Postal Cards of Britain and Spain, <a href="#">Don Heller</a> ; U.S. Official Stamped Envelopes, <a href="#">Dennis Schmidt</a>
March 1	Champion of Champions Roundtable: <a href="#">Gordon Eubanks</a> , <a href="#">Mark Schwartz</a> , <a href="#">Alfredo Frohlich</a>
March 15	Zeppelin Milestones a Century Ago in the 1920s, <a href="#">Cheryl Ganz</a>
March 29	The Navigators – Commonwealth of Australia High Values, 1963-1974, <a href="#">Jonas Hällström</a>
April 19	Westpex Special Program, <a href="#">Behruz Nassre</a>
April 26	American First Day Cover Society (AFDCS) Special Program
May 3	Scandinavian Collectors Club Special Program, <a href="#">Behruz Nassre</a>

More details found at [www.collectorsclub.org/events](http://www.collectorsclub.org/events)

# Essential Elements

## In Postal Perpetuity

Richard A. Coffey

Gazing at my bookshelf of stamp albums brings to mind the Texas idiom, all hat, no cattle – though I must say my hat is an impressive petroleum-based binder system, all neatly labeled.

I came to this circumstance in the spirited ignorance of youth, harvesting mixtures at 25¢ per, raiding dollar boxes and irritating dealers all afternoon for a nickel's worth of loot. Though advised to slow down and spend my paper-route money judiciously – if not intelligently – I continued to view stamps as treasure. My acquisition methodology resembled that of a hummingbird; flitting from flower to flower, rushing my nectar into a pair of Scott Internationals with which I aspired to become a generalist, a kind of subspecies of philatelist.

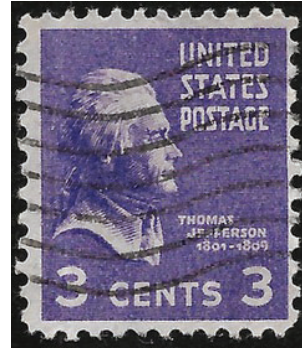
Like most collectors, my passion for postal treasure cooled and I fell in love with rock n' roll and a girl. Then it was the U.S. Navy and a university and a job and another girl and then, after years of sensible, judicious behavior, excepting an extended Beechcraft Bonanza period, I spied a Penny Black in a magazine article. There is nothing that refreshes the waning philatelic spirit like a Penny Black. The confident simplicity and power of the design smack of English Oak, the long-lived, broadly rounded tree with a proclivity to spread like the Empire itself. The stamp's got clout.

But how does one proceed, in the foyer of old age, with one nice stamp and many albums full of ... junk?

Perhaps the lemons/lemonade idiom has some utility. After perusing my horde of lemons carefully, I discovered that among them were a great many authentic postage stamps, stamps that bore real postmarks, stamps that had a trace of character, a socked-on-the-nose postal mark, or a smudge of postal misjudgment. These postage stamps are, in fact, informative. They are not junk; common, yes, but not junk. They represent most countries — and they are, to glorify them somewhat, the peoples' stamps. These are the stamps that were licked and slapped on envelopes to carry the world's letter mail for a century, from say, the 1860s through the 1960s. The stamps of this period were the worker-bee stamps of our age; they carried the mails at the height of letter writing, at the height of cheap postage, at the height of postal efficiency. They were not fascinating primitives, neither were they gifted with errors nor hunted for their varieties or anything else, and they were not scarce — every collector in the world could own a dozen of each in superb condition. So what's the point? Why collect such trifling pebbles? I'll skip the obvious idiom and suggest that



it was the common and abundant low-value postage stamps of our world that carried the daily mail, that shouldered the romantic burden of Herodotus' observation that "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."



These pedestrian labels were in their own time the official receipts of the world postal system. In my own country during my formative years, the 3¢ Jefferson, deep violet, Scott 807 carried the mail to and from the house where I grew up — carried the essential stamp packets and approvals and little glassines of philatelic treasure, carried Grandma's \$1 bill for my birthday, my letters to H.E. Harris, proposing that I wash stamps for them, and Mr. Harris' polite reply; the Jefferson stamp carried my valentine to Lucy and carried hers to Bobby, my arch-enemy. The violet Jefferson was the stamp of my childhood — and, for some reason, that's probably Freudian, I have only one specimen. There were more than 87 billion copies of that stamp in circulation during the 1940s and '50s and I have but one. I used to have a mint sheet of them, but two by two I used them for postage while I was in college during the 6¢ rate period, which is exactly how these little perforated proletarians have come and gone, these common labels that we would exorcise from our stock books. In 1957, when I scored a nicely centered Canadian Bluenose Scott 158, it was the three-penny 3¢ Jefferson that ferried my payment to the dealer and it was a couple of his Jeffersons that got the Bluenose back to me, safely. How can a stamp that worked that hard not be collectible?

**All Collectors Club presentations are currently held online,  
via ZOOM, beginning at 5:30 p.m. (Eastern).  
Although there is no cost, pre-registration is necessary.**



# Kaufmann, Neil, Verge Win 2023 Lichtenstein Awards

Matthew Healey

For the first time in the 70-year history of one of the stamp hobby's most prestigious awards, the Collectors Club has named three simultaneous winners of the Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award for Distinguished Service to Philately. They are Patricia A. Kaufmann and Randy L. Neil of the United States, and Charles J.G. Verge of Canada. The award was announced at the club's annual meeting on Jan. 11.

Kaufmann is the sixth woman to be given the award, while Verge is the third Canadian. The complete list of past awardees may be found at: [collectorsclub.org/about/awards/lichtenstein-award-winners](http://collectorsclub.org/about/awards/lichtenstein-award-winners).

The club's board of governors unanimously endorsed the decision to bestow the 2023 award to three people, whom the selection committee found to merit the honor equally. There has been no change in the award policy: in 2022, as in most prior years, the award went to a single winner, Chris Harman of the United Kingdom; in 2021, the award went to Mark Banchik of the United States and to Patrick Maselis of Belgium.



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You'll be glad you did...

Larry Haber, the president of the Collectors Club, said: *"Our Lichtenstein Award winners this year are three of the most outstanding contributors to philately. Each of them has worked to benefit our hobby in ways that will outlast them, and this award simply recognizes their achievements and contributions for what they are: distinguished."*

• • •

**Patricia A. (Trish) Kaufmann**, who lives in Delaware, is best known as one of the leading experts on Civil War philately, particularly the stamps and postal history of the Confederate States. This is an area she has collected and exhibited for more than 50 years, as well as being a dealer and auctioneer. Her leadership in the hobby has included serving as chair of the board of vice presidents of the American Philatelic Society, holding almost every role in the Civil War Philatelic Society, writing and editing extensively for the group's journal and books, organizing its conventions and – most important of all – leading its efforts in 2020 to rebrand the organization from the Confederate Stamp Alliance – broadening its scope, maintaining relevance and drawing new members.



Kaufmann was introduced to Confederate philately in 1965 by her first husband, Brian Green. Together, they won a grand award at Florex in 1972 for an exhibit titled *The Evolution of Confederate Postal History*. Though not a Southerner, she found herself hooked.

*"The luckiest thing that ever happened to me was becoming a dealer,"* she recalled in a December interview. *"I got to see things I would never have seen any other way."*

Taking a job with the dealer and auctioneer John W. Kaufmann, she quickly took on a prominent role in his firm, becoming one of the first women to call a stamp auction; the two were married in 1975. The Kaufmann firm, based in Washington, D.C., became one of the top stamp auctioneers in the United States. Among the treasures she gaveled was the first recovered "McCoy," one of the Inverted Jenny airmail errors (Scott C3a) from a block of four stolen in the 1950s. The stamp was sold on behalf of the American Philatelic Research Library, on whose board Kaufmann was the first woman to serve.

After her husband passed away in 1988, Kaufmann closed the auction business to focus on being a specialist C.S.A. dealer. Her research has led to numerous discoveries in Confederate postal history and stamp varieties. Some of these have upended catalog listings, most notably concerning the status of the 1861 3¢ Postmasters' Provisionals. She serves as a consultant to the Scott *Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers*, and her articles have won frequent awards. Her well-designed website, [www.trishkaufmann.com](http://www.trishkaufmann.com), is packed with useful philatelic resources.

Kaufmann continues to research and write extensively, and her articles appear regularly in the *American Philatelist*, *American Stamp Collector and Dealer*, *La Posta* and *Kelleher's Stamp Collector's Quarterly*, as well as the *Civil War Philatelist* and others. Her Dec. 2021 Collectors Club presentation, "Jenkins' Express: Dodging the Yanks along the Rappahannock River," was awarded Best Presentation for the year.

Kaufmann is married to Darryl Boyer, whom she met scuba diving off the Atlantic coast and who is "totally lacking the collector gene." Together, they ran a wreck-diving charter boat for 15 years, while she maintained her stamp business. "I was happy to have a physical and cerebral life at the same time," she says.

Besides Confederate States, Kaufmann has collected and exhibited 19th-century Valentines. She now collects vintage stamp boxes, as well as studying and adding to her extensive collection of Confederate fakes and fantasies.

• • •

**Randy L. Neil**, a lifelong native of Kansas City, is nothing if not a cheerleader for the hobby. A man of seemingly boundless enthusiasm and energy, he has played the role of innovator and booster throughout his 70 years in philately, particularly in exhibiting and publishing. He conceived, co-founded and led the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors in 1986, spearheading efforts to re-



vitalize and revolutionize the field of exhibiting in the United States and effectively inventing the idea of the international single-frame exhibit.

Neil also founded not one, but two, of the leading stamp publications in the United States today, *American Stamp Collector and Dealer* (publication of the American Stamp Dealers Association) and *Kelleher's Stamp Collector's Quarterly* (a promotional publication of the auction firm).

On top of this, his research and exhibit-building on the U.S. 2¢ red-brown of 1883-87 (Scott 210) established that "serious" philatelic work could be done with a cheap stamp. Neil is one of the few American collectors to have won grand awards in national competitions for both stamp and literature exhibits. He has held a number of offices including president of the APS and is a 2021 signatory of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists.

In a January phone interview, Neil recalled his philatelic beginnings. "When I was in fifth grade, I was given a stamp collecting kit for Christmas. I ignored it. Summer-time rolled around and my mother got it out of my closet and opened it herself."

Intrigued by his mother's co-opting of his gift, he found his interest awoken. His father ended up buying another kit for him and took him to visit all four of



the stamp stores in Kansas City – in one day. The first stamp Neil remembers buying was a jumbo-sized commemorative from Ecuador. At one of the stores, he met the three philatelists who would become his mentors: Tom Alexander, David Beals and Creighton Hart.

In 1955, egged on by a school rival, young Neil hopped a train to New York City to attend Fipex, the international exhibition at the now-demolished Coliseum. At the behest of Jacques Minkus, who was in charge of the youth section, Neil had entered his first exhibit: a one-page display of the 7¢ Liberty series stamp, which was released in January 1956, not long before the show.

Neil began writing a youth column for the *Weekly Philatelic Gossip* in 1956, as well as a column for *First Days*, the journal of the American First Day Cover Society. After attending the University of Kansas journalism school, he joined the organization of the new Kansas City Chiefs and started its cheerleading program, eventually writing the *Official Cheerleaders Handbook*, a bestselling textbook. Neil's career also included stints at CBS and as founder of the non-profit National Film Society.

With his firm, Neil Print Media, he remains active publishing the Kelleher's quarterly, and is currently working on an exhibit of postal history related to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

• • •

**Charles J.G. Verge**, who was born in Montreal and now hails from Toronto, is widely acknowledged as one of Canada's foremost living philatelists, although he has been active all over the world.

Verge has been an international leader in the organizing and judging of philatelic exhibits, serving since 1995 at more than 150 national and international stamp shows in North America, South America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Australia and, most recently, at Capex '22 in Toronto. For the International Federation of Philately (FIP), he acts as lead trainer and develops the curriculum for the jury academy.

He himself has exhibited in every major exhibit category except two (maximum cards and astrophilately). *"I believe that, as a judge, one should understand the regulations and complexities of exhibiting in all classes."*

A historian by training, Verge is the author of four books, including one on Canada's 1959 St. Lawrence Seaway 5¢ invert error, and countless articles. For many years he was the stamp columnist for the *Ottawa Citizen*, and he is a frequent contributor to the *American Philatelist* and *Canadian Philatelist*. He is also a past president of the Eire Philatelic Association.

Verge likes to stress the importance of research, especially in places philatelists often don't think to look. *"I find it interesting to do research in history, and bring in things nobody would have thought of,"* he said in a December interview. *"It's important to paint a broad picture."*

He cited as an example his exhibit on the U.S. 1959 Dental Health 4¢ stamp. *"I spent seven years researching this one stamp. I went through the Third Assistant Postmaster General's collection at the National Postal Museum. I went through the Bureau of Engraving and Printing files. Then it occurred to me to visit the headquarters of the American Dental Association in Chicago. In their archives they had a whole filing cabinet full of material on this stamp issue!"*

His book on the Seaway inverts included memos from ministerial archives, detailing behind-the-scenes activity to deflect the embarrassment of the snafu.

Even the most experienced philatelists can still learn, Verge says, recalling the time another judge took him aside at an international show and suggested he rethink the arrangement of his exhibit on Haitian revenues. *"He asked me to completely redo the development of the narrative,"* Verge explained. *"It hadn't occurred to me, but he was right."*

Verge has worked across borders to bring U.S. and Canadian philately closer together, for instance, by helping to broker reciprocity agreements over qualifications for national and international shows. As a member of the Council of Philatelists, advising the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C., he brought to bear his experiences as a board member of the Friends of the Canadian Postal Museum in Ottawa, where he helped curate some of the material in its collection.

Verge is a 2020 signatory of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. Away from philately, he enjoys spending time with his granddaughter, Lea, and collecting hockey memorabilia.

• • •

Alfred F. Lichtenstein (1876-1947) was widely considered one of the greatest American philatelists of the first half of the 20th century. The award in his memory was established by the Collectors Club in 1952, and its first recipient was Lichtenstein's good friend and co-founder of the Philatelic Foundation, Theodore Steinway.

More information can be found at [www.collectorsclub.org](http://www.collectorsclub.org)



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in your club:**

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## 2023 Edition

# Commonwealth & British Empire Stamps Catalogue 1840-1970

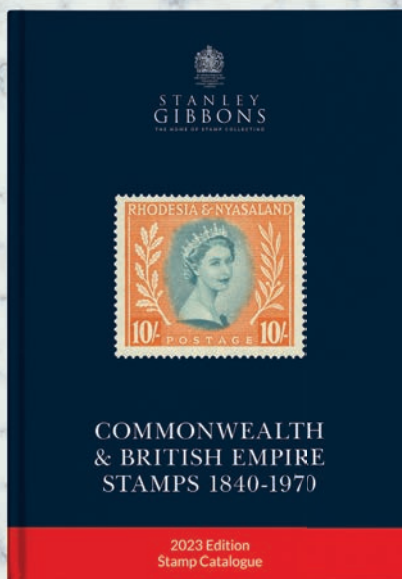
The 2023 edition of the Stanley Gibbons Commonwealth & British Empire Stamp Catalogue, still known as 'Part 1' to most, is now available to order.

This comprehensive Stanley Gibbons catalogue covers Great Britain, Commonwealth and Empire countries 1840-1970. The listings include perforation, paper and printing methods, major shades, watermark varieties, important plate flaws, errors, government telegraph stamps and booklets.

Guidance is given throughout the catalogue on subjects such as unusual usages, overprint settings and forgeries, with additional added to this latest edition.

## New for this edition

- Revisions to the Great Britain used abroad listings feature a number of new additions.
- The early issues of Ceylon have been reviewed following the publication of *Ceylon, The Pence Issues* by the Royal Philatelic Society London.
- The 'Wider and more open S' variety in the early official stamps of India are now illustrated with a fully priced listing.
- New notes on New Zealand counter coil pairs.
- New listing of India and Pakistan stamps used in Dubai.
- Illustrated notes on line and comb perforators now added to the Introduction.
- New varieties have been added to a number of countries, including Australia, Fiji and South Africa, while previously listed varieties are now illustrated under British East Africa, New South Wales, the Indian States and others.
- Helpful new notes added throughout, including Burma, New Guinea and Cook Islands.



Stock Code **R2813-22**  
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Illustrated in A.F.Basset Hull (1911)  
Philipp von Ferrary (1922)  
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# The Struggle Behind Britain's National Health Stamps

Matthew Healey and Paul Ramsay

The modern welfare state in the United Kingdom – the government's promise that no one should end up destitute – began in earnest with the National Insurance Act of 1911.

This groundbreaking legislation, fathered by then-Chancellor of the Exchequer David Lloyd George, had two parts. Part I provided mandatory health insurance to a majority of workers, while Part II offered insurance against unemployment to a smaller group. The idea was that ill health or lack of a job should not drive one into poverty. It was not a new idea: Germany, under Bismarck, had rolled out a similar program in 1884, and the ascendancy of the Liberal Party during the reign of King Edward VII (1901-10) ensured that the principle of a prosperous state looking after its less fortunate citizens had the necessary political currency. The act passed despite vocal opposition, a testament to Lloyd George's political skill. It received Royal assent on Dec. 16, 1911, and took effect on July 15, 1912.

Implementation rested on three-part weekly payments. Each worker and his or

Figure 1 (above right and right). Satirical postcards making fun of the new National Health Insurance program introduced by Lloyd George were the social media of 1911.

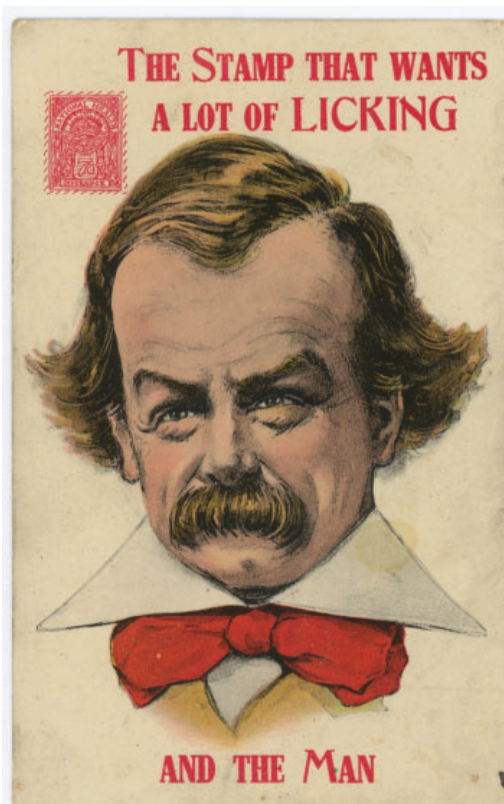






Figure 2. Fourteen Health Insurance stamps and three Unemployment Insurance stamps were issued in 1912. They would soon be joined by many more denominations.

her employer would make a combined contribution, to be effected by affixing a stamp to a card. Parliament kicked in a further (smaller) amount to top off the scheme's funding. For example, in the case of health insurance, a typical adult male paid fourpence a week, deducted from salary; his boss paid 3d, affixing a 7d stamp to the worker's card; the government then allocated a further 2d. The slogan "Ninepence for fourpence" became Lloyd George's rallying cry to drum up public support across Britain.

If that worker fell ill, he or she would then be entitled to free medical care and, if unable to work, could draw a weekly benefit of 10 shillings initially and then 5 shillings indefinitely. This was popular with workers, but drew considerable ire from employers, doctors and the Conservative Party. Numerous satirical post-cards of the day, of which a couple are shown in Figure 1, lampoon the man, the plan and its postulated side-effects.

There were 14 stamps in the first health insurance series – rivaling the range issued for postage – and a further three, initially, for unemployment. These are shown in Figure 2. Unlike postage and revenue stamps, which ended up in the hands of the collecting public, insurance stamps affixed to cards were generally sent back to the authorities for retention and eventual destruction – which is why today, most are very hard to find.

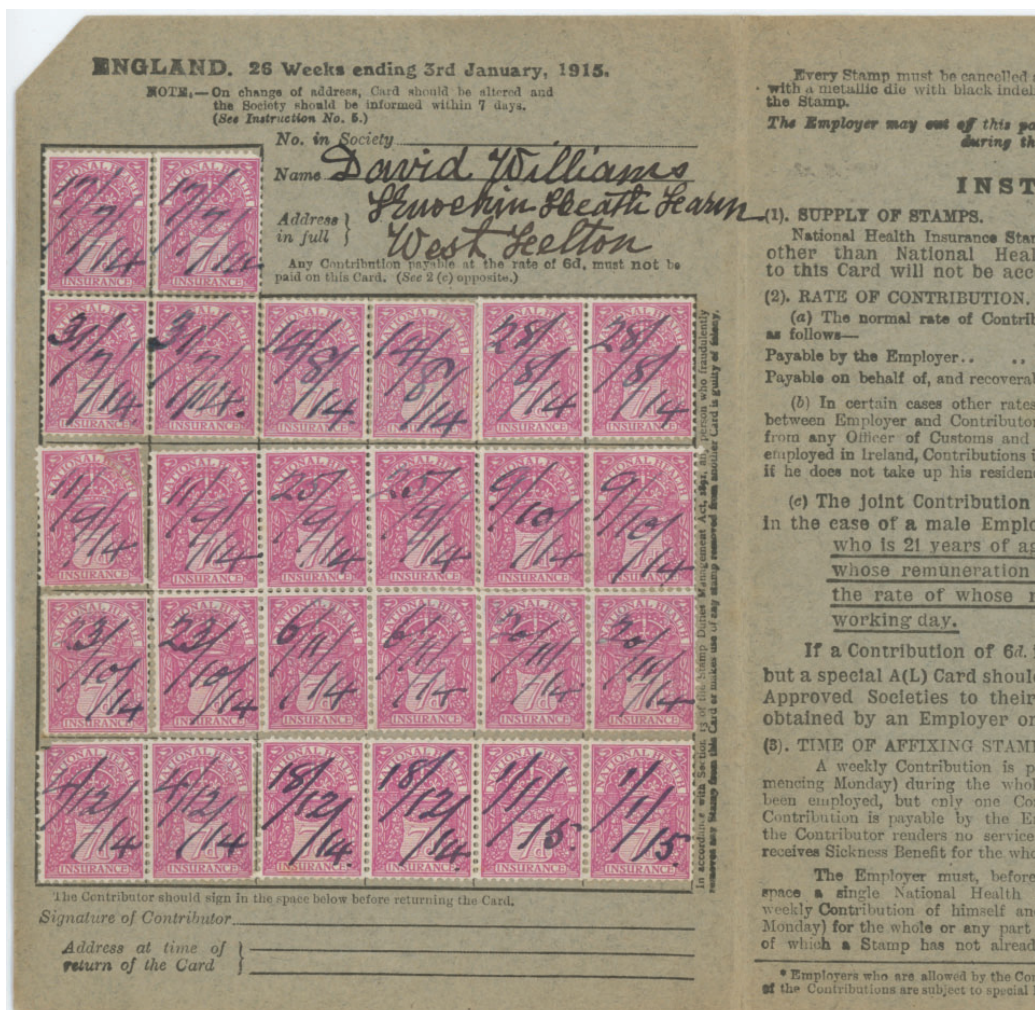


Figure 2a. A stamped health insurance card (digitally cropped), issued in Great Britain in 1914 to an employed adult male. The 26 seven-pence stamps, each canceled with a manuscript date, represented half a year's contributions. It is not known how the card escaped destruction.

During the first rate period up to 1920, the 7d Health Insurance stamp was produced and used, by far, in the greatest quantities out of the series, with a requisition of 450 million stamps during the first year alone. By comparison, fewer than 6 million 7d postage stamps were printed during the last several years of King Edward VII's reign. An example of a 1914 stamped health insurance card bearing 26 examples of the 7d stamp is shown in Figure 2a. It represents half of that year's contributions.

The other 13 denominations of the initial series were produced in much smaller quantities. However, within two to three decades, the range of rates for different types of workers in different sets of circumstances would vastly increase, as each rate had to be met by a single stamp so as to fit neatly on the printed cards; by the onset of World War II dozens of denominations had been produced – all of the same diminutive design and some of them in quite bizarre amounts such as 12 shillings, 5 pence ha'penny.



It is astonishing, therefore, to think that the insurance stamps nearly didn't come into existence at all.

A file of official correspondence held at the U.K. National Archives in Kew was recently examined and photographed at our request. It reveals the serious consideration given at the highest levels of government, during the winter of 1911-12, to an alternative scenario: the use of Great Britain postage stamps to pay the weekly health insurance contributions.

Had this idea come to pass, it would have represented a vast and historic expansion in the use of postage stamps for an entirely new purpose. Given that nearly all insurance stamps were destroyed after use, it would have accounted for a sizable gap between numbers of postage stamps printed and numbers in circulation for much of the 20th century, and significantly lowered philatelists' widely accepted estimates of normal survival rates.

There is no better way to tell this fascinating tale than to delve straight into the Kew archive.

The preserved correspondence begins in December, 1911, between top civil servants at the various Departments responsible for enacting the new scheme. The cast of characters, some of whom are shown in Figure 3, is a who's-who of the prewar civil service's best and brightest, whose combined efforts brought about a revolutionary shift in the way British society operated.

Historians have noted that it was the experiences of this group in bringing the National Health and Unemployment Insurance programs to fruition that opened everyone's eyes to the potential of what an ambitious, energetic and well-run civil service could achieve. In spite of this, the correspondence reveals how they were – at times – just making things up as they went.

At the top is a handwritten memo on plain paper dated Nov. 12, 1911 – before the Royal assent had even been given – from Ernest J. Strohmenger, a top official at the Treasury who, within two years, would serve as Deputy Comptroller of



Figure 3. Among the many civil servants who contributed to the development of the Health Insurance program and debated using postage stamps to track weekly insurance payments were Ernest Strohmenger (upper left), Robert Chalmers (upper right), Ernest Gowers (lower left) and John Bradbury (lower right).

National Health Insurance. It is addressed to William J. Braithwaite, an economist and respected civil servant who had been sent by Lloyd George on a fact-finding visit to Germany during the crafting of the Insurance Act:

*I have seen Sir Alexander King and Mr. Bennett of the Stamping Dept and find that it is most important that steps should be taken at once to obtain a design for the stamps.*

*It is suggested that if use is made of a design for the 'King's Head' that has already been approved by the King it will be unnecessary to do more than cable for authority to use it.*

*The attached design was approved for certain Colonial stamps & seems suitable for the purpose of the National Insurance stamp.*

Alas, said design is no longer attached, but we can be reasonably sure it was the one provided by De La Rue in November 1911 to replace the ill-fated Downey head.

Below Strohmer's signature are further notes in different hands, as Braithwaite circulated the memo to John Bradbury, another architect of the National Health Insurance scheme and soon to be Joint Permanent Secretary to the Treasury (his name is familiar to currency collectors as the signer of 1914 pound notes), and then to Robert Chalmers, recently chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, who had become Permanent Secretary to the Treasury in 1911 (in 1913 he would move on to become Governor of Ceylon). It reads like a modern email chain:

*I think approval should be obtained at once, if we are not to be held up in July.  
I have spoken to Sir R. Chalmers about it. – W.G.B., 11/12/11*

*I agree. – J.B. 12/12*

*Mr. Gowers, please say whether C. of Ex. approves submission of design acc'y  
for HM's approval. – R.C. 12/12*

Ernest Gowers was Lloyd George's private secretary; a year later the chancellor named him to the N.H.I. Commission and in 1927 he would become chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue and undertake a reorganization of the coal industry. Gowers is best remembered today for his World War II leadership of the Civil Defence and as the author of *Plain Words*, a primer on clear bureaucratic writing.

A couple of pages later, we find Gowers's handwritten reply to Bradbury, on House of Commons embossed notepaper:

*The Ch. of the Exch. inclines towards a special design without the King's head. Sir. R. Morant's views, which I obtained by his instructions, you will find below. I do not know whether the suggestion to have an entirely new design is practicable, in view of the urgency of the matter? – E.A.G., 14 Dec 11.*

Robert Morant, Permanent Secretary of the Board of Education, begged off, however, writing, "I don't think this question of the best kind of stamp is one

on which I can pretend to have a useful opinion..." before going on to say he thought it preferable not to have a King's head.

The next page is again from Strohmenger, this time on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's crested notepaper, datelined "Treasury Chambers, Whitehall S.W."

*Mr. Bradbury, I have ascertained that the suggestion to have an entirely new design is practicable if the Commissioners of Inland Revenue can take action at once.*

*The Inspector of Stamping informed me that in his opinion there would be less risk of successful forgery if the 'King's Head' were part of the design. –  
E.J.S. 18/12/11*

To use the King's head or not to use the King's head? More than a week was spent debating this question, summarized in a handwritten note from Bradbury to Gowers:

*The two alternatives are:–*

- (1) *The "Colonial" King's Head*
- (2) *A design without the King's Head*

*I do not think it matters which is adopted but it is important that a decision should be arrived at at once and the King's permission to use the Colonial Head or to dispense with His Head should personally be obtained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer by telegraph.*

*If the King's Head is not used, some such device as a Crown or the Royal Arms with suitable inscription would be appropriate. – JB 18/12*

Two days later, Gowers replied that Lloyd George preferred the latter option.

There follows a somewhat tatty red-and-blue Eastern Telegraph form, shown in Figure 4. It is rather remarkably datelined "KINGEMPERORSCAMPSUKHIBAR" and addressed to "Prime Minister London"; that is, Herbert H. Asquith (Lloyd George would succeed him as prime minister in 1916).

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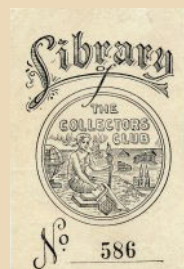




Figure 4. This telegram from Camp Sukhibar in Nepal relayed King George V's consent to the printing of insurance stamps. Courtesy The National Archives (U.K.).

Sukhibar (we had to Google it) is in Nepal, where His Majesty had gone tiger-hunting for the month of December. The message is terse, and somehow manages to miss the main point:

*King approves printing stamps but what inscription*

It is signed "Stamfordham" – the King's private secretary, Sir Arthur Bigge, who is shown in Figure 5, along with His Majesty on the back of an elephant.

A small piece of notepaper shows a round-robin of scribbles settling on the inscription "National Health Insurance." Gowers registered Lloyd George's approval on the 23rd.

Next is a letter – typewritten, hallelujah – from Strohmenger to Frederick Atterbury, Director of Stamping at the Inland Revenue, dated Dec. 22:

*Dear Mr. Atterbury,*

*Braithwaite who has gone away for a few days has asked me to write to you with reference to my conversation with you last week on the subject of the Health Insurance Stamps. It has now been decided that we should have a special design without the King's head - a Crown or the King's Arms with Inscription "National Health Insurance" are suggested and we shall be very glad if steps can be taken at once to get designs prepared with a view to saving time when the official communication is sent.*

*Our idea at present is to have a slightly smaller stamp (say, a square of the*



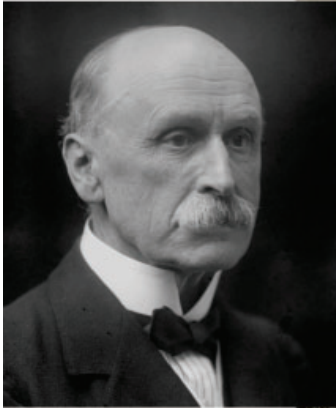


Figure 5. The king, seen here with his rifle atop an elephant, was hunting big game; the telegram was signed by his private secretary, Sir Arthur Bigge, Baron Stamfordham (inset).



*width of a postage stamp) and as the stamps will be affixed to cards we should like to have the watermark plainly seen on the face of the stamp.*

*I am enclosing a rough provisional estimate of the number and varieties.*

– EJS

Two days later – Christmas Eve – the king had moved on to Camp Kasra. Bigge sent another telegram:

*King approves of inscription for insurance stamp*

On Saturday, Jan. 6 1912, an ad hoc “Stamp Committee” met in Bradbury’s room at the Treasury, with himself, Atterbury, Strohmenger and Archibald G. Bowie representing the Post Office. The bombshell was dropped in the first sentence of the minutes:

*It was suggested that ordinary postage stamps should be used and the objection that this would involve loss of revenue was held to be without force.*

*After a full discussion it was unanimously agreed that postage stamps should if possible be used.*

*The only serious objection was urged on behalf of the Post Office and was to the effect that the Post Office might be reluctant to pay on the certificate of another Department. It was arranged that Mr. Bowie should discuss this point with the Post Office authorities & report to the Committee on Monday the result of the discussion.*

*The Committee then passed to a discussion regarding the denominations of the stamps and it was agreed, subject to a further discussion with regard to the 13 weeks stamps, that Estimate no. 2 should be adopted.*

*It was arranged that the Committee should meet again on Monday (8th Jan.) at 11:30.*

The minutes of that Monday's meeting are not in the file, but the said draft report follows, running to 11 typed pages, relaying all the pros and cons discussed by the committee. It is dated Jan. 8, 1912, and begins in all-caps: "MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIPS..."

It begins with some throat-clearing and notes that no formal decision has yet been taken on issuing separate insurance stamps; it lists the pros and cons, then comes around to the suggestion of using postage stamps:

*We are aware that this suggestion was considered by the Departmental Committee of Unemployment Insurance and dismissed upon the strength of objections taken by the Post Office. In that case, however, the objections to a distinctive stamp are far less formidable.*

After remarking that only three denominations would be needed for unemployment (2d, 4d and 5d) and that they would be used in bulk by large employers, it gets to the point:

*For the Health stamps not less than 14 separate denominations will be required, and they will be used not only in every factory and workshop, but in an enormous number of private houses as well - often even in the streets - and frequently one at a time.*

There follows a rambling list of the pros and cons of using postage stamps, several of which are at odds with what the Post Office would say next, and generally favors the pros:

*To sum up, the use of ordinary postage stamps for the purposes of both kinds of Insurance has the following advantages.*

- (1) Public convenience*
- (2) Avoidance of complications arising from use of inappropriate stamps*
- (3) Economy of manufacture, storage, handling and stocktaking*
- (4) Simplification of accounts between local Post Offices and Postmaster General.*

In reality, as the memo explains, the chief problem with the idea of using postage stamps for insurance contributions was that until all the millions of cards had been collected from around the nation at the end of the year and the stamps in them totaled up by hand – a process that would conceivably take weeks – nobody would know the size of the fund available to pay out health and unemployment insurance claims. Indeed, such a fund would not exist, as the Post Office would only be able to guess at the remittances it had to make.

There follows a further two-page note from the Post Office headed "National Insurance Act 1911 – Memorandum on proposal to use Postage Stamps for collections under the Act."

From the GPO's point of view, they were being asked to expend their own resources, financial and otherwise, in collecting revenues on behalf of another Department – while that other department would have final say over how much money it then “clawed back” at the end of the year. As the GPO saw it, the proposal would “so seriously hamper the administration” of its affairs that it would require the assent of the postmaster general, Herbert Samuel, who happened to be away for another week.

Far from being happy with the small windfalls from postage stamps being used for insurance, the Post Office could see only headaches:

*(a) For a period of years (until the Insurance business has settled down) the Post Office would not know the amount of its own revenue until some months after the close of the financial year. At present, the Inland Revenue share of postal receipts being a settled figure, the Post Office can estimate closely its own revenue 10 days after the end of each month, so that its payments into the Exchequer for the year can only be upset by fluctuations of business in the last month of each financial year.*

In other words, sorting out the monies for “postage” vs. “revenue” from the current sale of stamps wasn’t too hard, but using postage stamps for insurance purposes would make a right mess of Post Office accounts. In a roundabout and self-centered way, it raises essentially the same objection as the 11-page memo from the Committee. The G.P.O. memo carries on, getting technical:

*(b) The Insurance collections may reach a total equal to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Post Office gross receipts from postage stamps, say £23,000,000.*

*(c) If postage stamps were used, it would be extremely difficult if not impossible to modify the unit payment to Sub-Postmasters for the sale of postage stamps as fixed by the Select Committee on Post Office Wages. The payment is now 8 units per £1, a unit being valued for salary purposes at .37 of a penny. About  $\frac{1}{2}$  of postal revenue accrues at Sub-Offices so that the unit payment on (say)  $\frac{1}{2}$  of £18,000,000 worth of insurance stamps would amount to £111,000*



Figure 6. Had things gone a little differently, vast quantities of the 7d postage stamp would have been printed and distributed for use on insurance cards. This early essay of that stamp, using the ill-fated Downey portrait, shows several elements its designer, George Eve, incorporated into both postage and insurance stamps.

a year. As Insurance stamps will certainly be sold in larger quantities than postage stamps, the Post Office was contemplating an allowance to Sub-Postmasters of  $\frac{1}{4}$  or even  $\frac{1}{8}$ th of the 8 units per £1. The additional cost for Sub-Postmasters' salaries would therefore approximate £90,000 or £100,000 a year.

Translation: under the existing arrangement the G.P.O. would have to pay sub-postmasters an arm and a leg to sell all those extra postage stamps, whereas they'd only pay them a token bonus to sell a separate type of insurance stamp. The memo concludes:

*Pending the Postmaster General's return, it is suggested that the Committee should formulate the alternative of a separate issue of stamps for insurance business. The Secretary agrees.*

With that, the proposal to use postage stamps for insurance was dead. Bowie had misjudged, and we can presume that Samuel, after returning to London, put the final nail in the idea. The minutes of the Jan. 15 meeting of the insurance stamp committee sum it up:

*Decided for reasons urged by Board of Trade & the Post Office as stated in their draft report that*

- (1) suggestion for use of postage stamps should not be put forward*
- (2) distinctive stamps for Health & Unemployment [2 special types] should be issued...*

Interestingly, none of the arguments considers the fact that the king had already agreed, nearly a month prior, to the issuing of separate stamps.

Further correspondence during February, March and April reveals how questions of stamp format, colors, sheet layout, watermark and other details were hammered out. Dies were engraved at the Royal Mint, including the 7 pence shown on the front cover. In June, the first National Health Insurance and Unemployment Insurance stamps appeared, distributed through the post office and directly to certain large employers – the British Army in India, for instance, took a large quantity of 3d stamps.

The insurance stamps are charming little adhesives, brightly colored and slightly smaller than a postage stamp. The idea that the watermark should be visible from the front was abandoned as impractical. The Health Insurance



Figure 7. Unemployment Insurance stamps were designed by Henry Wilson with a central motif of a sailing ship, emblematic of the Board of Trade. This framed proof was bequeathed to the Victoria and Albert Museum by the artist's daughter.



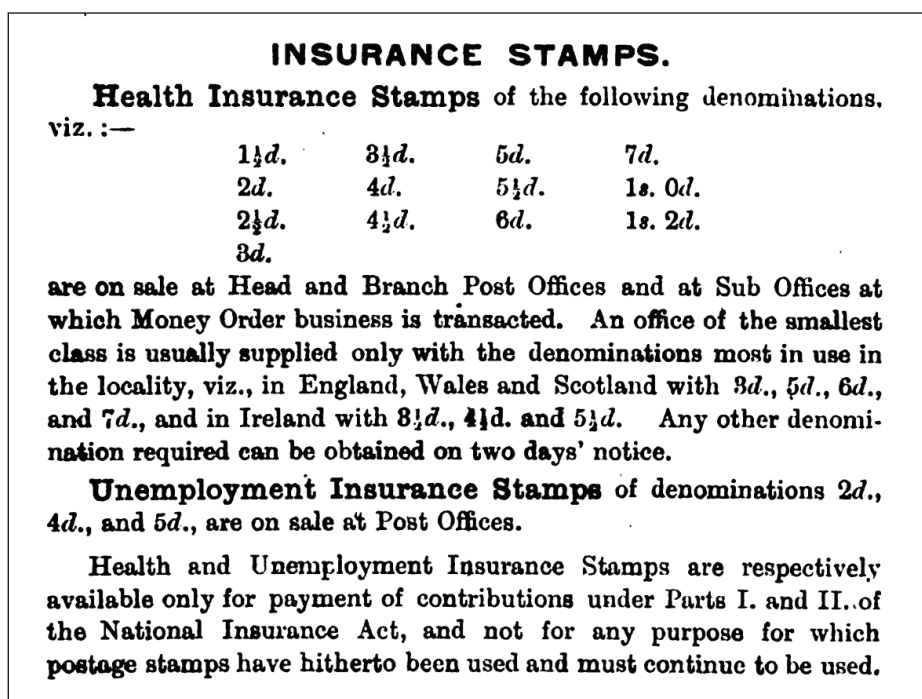


Figure 8. Excerpt from a 1913 edition of the *Post Office Guide*, detailing the Health and Unemployment Insurance stamps available from post offices throughout the United Kingdom.

stamps were designed by George Eve, who also gave us the “pillar” and “wreath” frames of the King George V postage series, the Post Office Savings Bank deposit receipt stamps and Postage Due labels.

Figure 6 shows an engraver’s sketch of Eve’s preliminary design for the 7d postage stamp, still bearing the ill-fated Downey head. Elements such as the crown and caducei in this essay bear a striking resemblance to motifs on the health stamps, showing that the two concepts were never very far apart.

The Unemployment stamps, which were the same size but in a horizontal orientation, were designed (somewhat less successfully) by a silversmith named Henry Wilson. A proof in a small frame, bequeathed by his daughter, is held by the Victoria & Albert Museum (Figure 7).

Within the year, additional denominations were added, bringing the number of different health stamps to 24. An excerpt from a 1913 edition of the *Post Office Guide* details what stamps were available at the time. That item is shown in Figure 8; in this case it was 13 different.

In 1925, pension insurance was folded into the scheme, resulting in a change in inscriptions.

After World War II, health, pensions and unemployment insurance were consolidated and the two kinds of stamps were replaced by a single National Insurance series. These eventually tallied some 800 different denominations and colors, lasting until computerization made them obsolete in the late 1980s.



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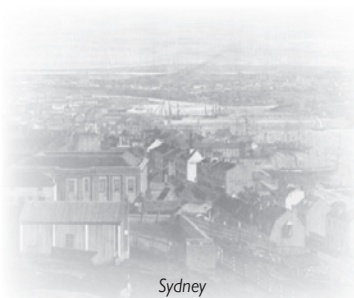
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# Postage Stamps as a Chronicle of History: The 1961 Stamps Honoring the Nicaraguan Military Academy

Martin H. Joyce



Figure 1. The Academy Honor Guard shown on the stamp in the center carries the colors of Nicaragua and the Military Academy (also seen in the stamp on the left). The stamp on the right features the Academy's standard.

The year 2022 marked the 75th anniversary of the end of United States' direct support for the Nicaraguan Military Academy. The Academia Militar de Nicaragua (AMN) was established on Nov. 9, 1939, and formally opened in 1940. For its first eight years, the United States provided direct military leadership support for the creation and administration of the academy. Modeled after the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, N.Y., the AMN served as the noncommissioned officers and officer candidate schools, and staff college of the Guardia Nacional (Nicaragua's National Guard).

To commemorate the AMN's 20th anniversary, Nicaragua issued a set of stamps in 1961. Two of the six designs for these stamps feature four U.S. Army officers, five West Point graduates and President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The story behind these stamps and the individuals who appear on them recounts a key piece of U.S. foreign policy in Central America during the Roosevelt administration that continued well into the latter half of the 20th century.

\* \* \*

Nicaragua, situated between North and South America, with coastlines on both the Pacific Ocean and Atlantic Ocean (Caribbean Sea), was considered a

strategic location for a canal connecting the two oceans long before the Panama Canal was constructed and opened in 1914. It continued to be considered a viable site for a second, alternative canal (and still is). The United States Marines occupied Nicaragua from 1912-33, during the Banana Wars, a series of conflicts between 1898 and 1934 when the U.S. military invaded various Latin American countries. American military interventions in Nicaragua were designed to stop any other nation from building a Nicaraguan Canal.

Nicaragua's Guardia Nacional (National Guard) was established during the American occupation. Nicaraguan President Juan Bautista Sacasa appointed Anastasio Somoza García as Chief Director of the National Guard in 1925.

U.S. forces took command of the Guardia Nacional from 1927 until their departure from Nicaragua in 1933. Though a National Military Academy was established in 1930 under U.S. Marine Corps leadership, this effort fell apart following the Americans' departure. Somoza García led a military coup in 1936 to oust Sacasa, and then resigned from the Guardia Nacional to run for president. Following his victory, Somoza García reappointed himself Chief Director.

During a state visit to the United States in early May 1939, President Somoza met with President Franklin Roosevelt. In addition to discussing the possibility for an interoceanic canal, Somoza made a request for U.S. military support to reopen the Nicaragua Military Academy. Following the meeting between the two heads of state, the request was formalized and agreed upon in an exchange of letters between Somoza and Roosevelt dated May 22, 1939. Somoza's request stated:

*"In view of the desire of the Nicaraguan Government to reopen the Military Academy of the National Guard for the purpose of facilitating the adequate training of officers of that organization, it is requested that an arrangement be concluded for the detail of a qualified officer of the United States Army to act as director of the Military Academy."*<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with President Roosevelt's stated "Good Neighbor Policy" for promoting friendly relations with the nations of Latin America, Roosevelt responded:

*"In accordance with your request the Department of War has agreed to assign a qualified officer to act as director of the Military Academy of the Nicaraguan National Guard..."*<sup>2</sup>

President Somoza's success in garnering U.S. support for the establishment of the AMN significantly enhanced his foreign policy prestige at home, while helping him to build a loyal officer corps.\*

\*Similar support was also provided to long-established military academies in nearby El Salvador and Guatemala. From 1931-1945, five U.S. Army officers filled the role of director at Guatemala's Escuela Politécnica near Guatemala City; from 1941-1953, five U.S. Army officers filled the role of director at El Salvador's Captain General Gerardo Barrios Military School in Antiguo Cuscatlán.

Figure 2a (right). Stamps issued in February 1940 to mark Anastasio Somoza García's 1939 state visit to the United States. A key outcome of the visit was Roosevelt's support for reopening Nicaragua's military academy.

Figure 2b (below). The words "Buenos Vecinos" ("Good Neighbors") appear on several of the stamps, reflecting Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor Policy" towards Latin America.



Nicaragua issued a set of 10 stamps in February 1940 to mark President Somoza's visit to the United States (Figure 2a). The stamps were printed by the American Bank Note Co. and are classic examples of the engravers' art. The design depicting Somoza's address to the U.S. House of Representatives (Figure 2b) is sufficiently detailed to allow the identification of those in the scene when compared with a Times World Photo of the event.<sup>3, 4</sup>

The three designs featured the U.S. Capitol, Somoza addressing the U.S. House of Representative and the Trylon and Perisphere from the New York World's Fair and Tower of the Sun at the Golden Gate International Exposition.

U.S. Army Maj. Charles L. Mullins (USMA 1917) was assigned as the first director of the AMN, and was commissioned a colonel in the Nicaraguan Army. In his column "Hoosier Vagabond," famed correspondent Ernie Pyle described the six-day trip that Mullins and his wife took to reach Managua in the summer of 1939, first by boat to Panama, and then on a freighter up the Pacific coast. They were able to live a relatively posh existence in Nicaragua versus what they would have been able to afford on an Army major's salary back in the United States.<sup>5</sup>





Figure 3. A May 1942 news clipping showing AMN Director Mullins presenting awards to distinguished cadets.

Mullins established the academy at Campo de Marte, the site of the Nicaraguan Presidential Palace and military complex constructed in the late 19th century near the center of Managua. The AMN formally opened Feb. 1, 1940, with a class of 50 cadets beginning a three-year program. Though most were pro-regime political appointments, each new cadet had to pass a rigorous exam to gain entrance. Similar to West Point, the academic curriculum placed a heavy emphasis on mathematics and science.<sup>6</sup> The Academy colors and standard shown on the stamps in Figure 1 were a gift of the United States Military Academy.<sup>7</sup>



Figure 4. Stamp honoring the 20th anniversary of the Nicaragua Military Academy, featuring Charles Mullins, Anastasio Somoza García and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

An interesting video, posted by Eduardo Manfut, Dec. 27, 2012, may be found at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=90E0RVzj1eg&t=2s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90E0RVzj1eg&t=2s)



In an April 1941 memo to President Roosevelt, former U.S. Senator Sherman Minton, (D-Ind.) wrote:

*"I understand your suggestion to President Somoza of Nicaragua that he establish an academy for the training of officers was adopted. I understand also that Colonel Mullins of the United States Army has constructed the 'Little West Point' of Nicaragua and is training their army ... When I recently visited Nicaragua, I saw this little school in the course of construction, and noticed with what enthusiasm they went about its establishment."*<sup>8</sup>

U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull signed a formal agreement between the two countries in May 1941, to renew the initial two-year agreement for an additional two years. Under the terms of the renewal, Mullins had been promoted to brigadier general in the Nicaraguan Army earlier that year in February 1941. President Somoza also awarded Mullins the Nicaraguan Presidential Medal of Merit. During his assignment, Mullins also served as chief of the military mission to Nicaragua and Costa Rica. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army in 1940, and colonel in 1941.

Under Mullins' leadership, the AMN was developed into a first-class institution. Though he had hoped to remain long enough to see the first class graduate, Mullins left his role as director in June 1942. He went on to be promoted to major general in the U.S. Army, and assumed command of the 25th Infantry Division. Mullins led that division at the Battle of Luzon during the Philippines Campaign of 1944-45, and was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

While Mullins was departing his post in Managua, Anastasio Somoza Debayle – the third child of President Anastasio Somoza García and his wife Salvadora Debayle – was entering West Point with the Class of 1946. The younger Somoza, along with his older brother Luis, had previously attended LaSalle Military Academy, a Catholic school run by the Christian Brothers in Long Island, about two hours southeast of West Point. Following his state visit in 1939, President Somoza had visited his sons at LaSalle, followed by a formal visit to West Point, likely setting the stage for his son's future enrollment. Somoza Debayle was admitted under West Point's "Foreign Cadet Program," begun

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in 1816 “as a foreign policy tool to provide a means for the United States government to improve relations and to foster stability with friendly nations.”<sup>9</sup>

Mullins was succeeded by Col. Fred T. Cruse (USMA 1907). Following service with the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) in Europe during World War I, and a brief assignment in Washington, D.C., Cruse spent most of his career in a variety of assignments throughout Central America. Like Mullins, Cruse was appointed as a brigadier general in the Nicaraguan Army and served as the director of the AMN from June 1942 until January 1944, overseeing the graduation of the first class in February 1943. Of the first class of 50 cadets, 38 graduated as infantry lieutenants. Following his service in Nicaragua, Cruse went on to serve as military attaché in Guatemala until October 1945, retiring shortly thereafter.

The agreement to provide a director for the AMN was renewed in 1943 and again in 1945. Col. LeRoy Bartlett Jr. (USMA 1930) succeeded Cruse as director, and concurrently served with the U.S. military mission in Bolivia. Commissioned in the Army Corps of Engineers, Bartlett had served as head of the United States Hydrographic Office in the Nicaraguan Canal Survey Office several years earlier. He once said that he believed that he was the only U.S. military officer ever to hold three commissions simultaneously with State Department approval: colonel in the U.S. Army, colonel in the Bolivian Army, and brigadier general in the Nicaraguan Army.<sup>10</sup>

Following his service in Nicaragua, Bartlett later transferred to the U.S. Air Force when it was formed in 1947, and served as Air Engineer of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe during the construction of 150 NATO airfields from Norway to Turkey.

In 1946, Lt. Col. John F. Greco (USMA 1930) was appointed as Bartlett’s successor. Also that year, Anastasio Somoza Debayle graduated from West Point. Upon his return to Nicaragua, he was appointed chief of staff of the Guardia Nacional by his father. Though not yet 21 years of age, the younger Somoza was head of the nation’s armed forces. About that same time, President Somoza decided not to run for re-election, presuming that his elected successor would fill the role as a puppet under Somoza’s guidance. This did not work out to Somoza’s satisfaction, and former president Somoza staged a coup in 1947. U.S. President Harry Truman withheld U.S. support for the Somoza regime, and



Figure 5. The six directors who followed Charles Mullins during the AMN’s first 20 years. **Rear** (L-to-R): Cruse, Bartlett, Greco. **Front**: Nicaragua-born directors Somoza Debayle, Francisco Boza Gutiérrez (1956-58) and Elías Monge Hernández (1958-60).

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Greco was recalled in July 1947. Greco went on to serve in several command and staff assignments in Europe, Korea and the United States before retiring in 1959.

Upon Greco's departure, Anastasio Somoza Debayle was appointed the first Nicaraguan-born director of the AMN in addition to his role as chief of the Guardia Nacional. Somoza Debayle was the fifth West Point graduate in succession to fill the role as director since the AMN's founding in 1939.

President Anastasio Somoza García was assassinated in September 1956. Luis García Debayle (the eldest son) was appointed acting president, and was elected president in his own right the following year. Though his rule was less heavy handed than that of his father, civil liberties continued to be restricted, and corruption was widespread. Anastasio Somoza Debayle took a more active role in his older brother's government and turned the role of AMN director over to Nicaraguan Army Col. Francisco Boza Gutiérrez. The younger Somoza continued to head the Guardia Nacional and was the second most powerful man in the country during his brother's rule.

The AMN celebrated its 20th anniversary in 1959 during the presidency of Luis Somoza. To commemorate the event, Nicaragua issued 12 airmail stamps in January 1961. The values included 20 centavos, 30c, 35c, 40c, 60c, 1.05 córdoba (printing of 200,000 each); 25c, 45c, C\$1.50, C\$2.00 (100,000 each); and C\$5.00 (50,000) (see Figures 1, 4, 5, 6; stamps not pictured are similar to these). Two



Figure 6 (above). Anastasio Somoza Debayle (L), and his brother, President Luis Somoza Debayle.

Figure 7 (below). A first-day cover featuring one of the two imperforate sheets of six values. The flags shown on two of the stamps include the flag of Nicaragua and the flag of the Nicaragua Military Academy. The cachet on the envelope and the 40c stamp feature the Academy's motto, "Honor, Patria y Disciplina" (Honor, Country and Discipline), similar to West Point's motto, "Duty, Honor, Country."





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imperforate souvenir sheets were also issued, each containing six values reduced in quantity (20,000 each, Figure 7).<sup>11</sup> The four-color photogravure images were printed by the firm of Joh. Enschedé en Zonen, which was established in Haarlem (Netherlands) in 1703. Royal Joh. Enschedé continues to be widely recognized as one of The Netherlands' finest printing houses.

In 1969, and again in 1971, several stamps from the series were revalued and overprinted "RESELLO" (Figure 8).

Figures 8 a-c (right, below). The revalued stamps from 1961.



Although Luis Somoza declined to run for reelection in 1963, the two brothers ensured that the presidency continued to be filled by politicians loyal to the Somozas. As a result, Luis remained the de facto leader of Nicaragua until he suffered a massive heart attack in Managua in 1967 and died at the age of 44.

Following his brother's death, Anastasio Somoza Debayle served as president until 1972. Like his father, the younger Somoza ruled as a dictator, tolerating little opposition. He ran for re-election in 1974 for a term anticipated to continue until 1981. Nicaragua issued a set of five stamps in 1975 celebrating Somoza's re-election (Figure 9).

Although the stamp shown in Figure 9 indicates Somoza's anticipated term in office as 1974-81, he was ousted from the presidency in 1979 by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Somoza and senior leaders of the Guardia Nacional fled the country. The AMN was closed by the FSLN that year. Somoza was assassinated in Asunción, Paraguay, on Sept. 17, 1980.



Figure 9. One of a series of five stamps issued by Nicaragua in 1975 to mark Anastasio Somoza Debayle's re-election in 1974.



Figure 10. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Guardia Nacional in 1977, the Military Academy souvenir sheets were overprinted "1927 1977 50 ANIVERSARIO / Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua."

West Point's Foreign Cadet Program (now known as the "International Cadet Program") has continued to be the subject of considerable discussion. Since the first international cadets were admitted, more than 500 have graduated. A 1997 study argued that its justification as a foreign policy tool was supported in fact. Many international cadets have become highly placed leaders in their governments, including three countries' presidents: Anastasio Somoza; Fidel V. Ramos (USMA 1950), president of the Philippines from 1992-98; and José María Figueres (USMA 1979), president of Costa Rica from 1994-98. (Ramos has been honored on several stamps issued by the Philippines.) The study called out Somoza in particular:

*"Not all graduates completely internalized the Academy's ideals as illustrated by Anastasio Somoza Jr. ... His regime was credited with the deaths of over 50,000 Nicaraguans during the revolution and was accused of many human rights violations. Despite his violation of the Academy's espoused values, his son was still admitted with the [West Point] Class of 1977, although he did not graduate. His dictatorship represents the potential backfiring of the program."*<sup>12</sup>

Col. Fred Cruse, the second director of the AMN, died in 1949, less than a decade after serving in Nicaragua. However, retired Gen. Mullins, and retired colonels Bartlett and Greco, were all living at the time they were honored on the 1961 Nicaraguan stamps. They are among a very small number of West Point graduates who can claim a similar distinction of having been depicted on a



postage stamp while still living (including President Dwight Eisenhower, Gen. Douglas MacArthur and astronauts Frank Borman and Buzz Aldrin, all of whom have appeared on stamps issued outside the United States).

Collectively, the postage stamps depicted here – and the military and political stories behind them – cover nearly 40 years of Nicaraguan history and the role of the United States as it tried to ensure a pro-U.S. democratic stronghold in Central America. They also reflect the esteem to which the U.S. Military Academy has been held around the world, and its role in these endeavors. Each time these stamps are viewed in a collection, or change hands among collectors, an opportunity arises to rediscover this history, and view it in the context of the years that have passed since they were issued.

\* \* \*

Martin (Jay) Joyce is a 1974 graduate of the United States Military Academy. He is the author of *Postmarked West Point: A US Postal History of West Point and its Graduates*, a vermeil award winner at the 2021 Great American Stamp Show and author of “The West Point Post Office: 1815-1981: Keeping It All in the Family – Nepotism, Paternalism and Political Patronage, ...and Dedication to the Corps,” published by *La Posta* in 2022.

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# Noted in Passing on the Auction Block

Matthew Healey

*What follows are a few notable items from recent auctions that were advertised in the Collectors Club Philatelist. Members who do business with these firms should be sure to thank them for their support of the CCP. If you have spotted—or personally bought or sold—an item you feel is worthy of inclusion in the next round-up, no matter the price, please drop a note to [secretary@collectorsclub.org](mailto:secretary@collectorsclub.org)*



## The Colorful Postal History of Alsace-Lorraine

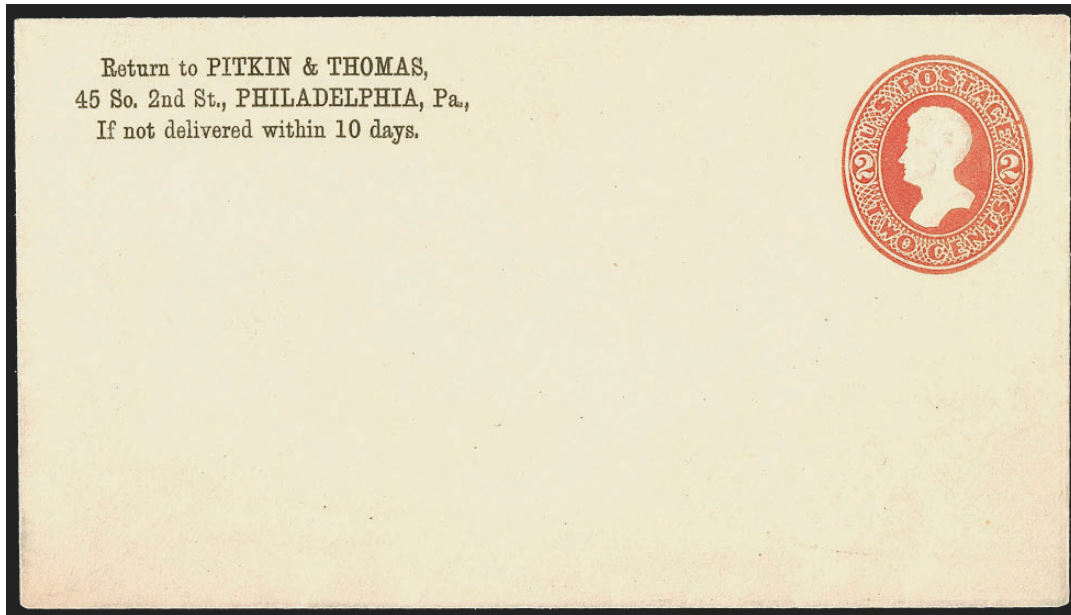
€ 35,380

Heinrich Köhler, Wiesbaden, Germany, 379th auction, Sept. 19-24, 2022, Lot 6129.  
Further details at [www.heinrich-koehler.de](http://www.heinrich-koehler.de)

Franco-Prussian War postal history is fascinating because the conflict marked a major turning point in the history of Western Europe, a transition into modern warfare and a preview of how conflicts would be fought in the 20th century. The postal history likewise offers a foretaste of areas that would become common in the 20th century, including military administration, prisoner-of-war mail and so forth. Adding to its appeal, it is often multilingual and illustrates the overlap of cultures and nationalities that typifies life in the heart of Europe. The cover shown here, the apex of a run of French-Alsatian dual-franking covers in this sale, is also a rare surviving registered cover from the period. It bears French stamps of three different issues: a strip of three 25c Ceres, a 5c bare-headed Napoleon III and a 10c Napoleon Laureate, all canceled with a blue straight-line “CHARGÉ.” It also bears a 10c and a 25c pair of the Alsace-Lorraine provisionals, canceled by Gross-Blittersdorf circular date stamps of Dec. 6, 1871. A quaint red registry label and blue “Paris/Etranger” receiver complete the picture. (Nowadays, the village is known by the French version of its name, Grosbliederstroff, and, according to Wikipedia, you can walk across



the Saar River on a footbridge to Kleinblittersdorf, on the German side, and hop a tram up to Saarbrücken.) So many echoes of history in this unique, fully-prepaid, double-rate registered cover, credibly described as the standout postal history item of this short-lived country. (Realization includes 22% buyer's premium.)



### One-of-a-Kind Find

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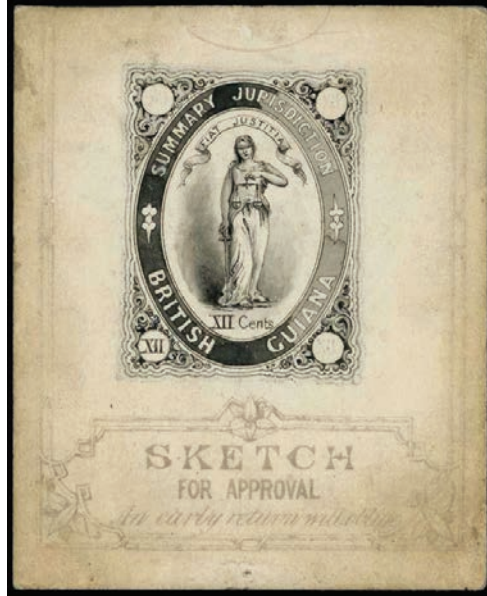
*Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, New York, Porter W. Venn II collection of U.S. postal stationery, Oct. 20, 2022, Lot 2605. Further details at [www.siegelauctions.com](http://www.siegelauctions.com)*

What made the late Porter Venn's collection of U.S. postal stationery, in Siegel's words, "without doubt the finest and most comprehensive ... ever formed?" Simply put, "He sought to acquire every die, knife, envelope size and watermark variety" – not to mention paper color – some of which are so rare as to be unique. Venn's preference was for mint entires, but there were instances where a particular envelope stamp is unknown thus, so he had to settle for a used example or a cut square. This sale, a good example of a "definitive" showing of an area, boasted more than its fair share of five-figure rarities. One that stood out as much for its backstory as its simple beauty and extreme rarity was this 2¢ vermilion-on-amber envelope (Scott U157, UPSS 357) issued in 1881. It is the only known entire example (three cut squares exist), having been discovered in 1940 in a dealer's shoebox of 5¢ covers. (Realization includes 18% buyer's premium.)

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### **Justice May be Blind, but Somebody Wasn't Following Instructions      £ 4,560**

*Stanley Gibbons, London: Michael Medlicott collection of British Empire revenues, Oct. 26, 2022, Lot 25. Further details at [www.auctions.stanleygibbons.com](http://www.auctions.stanleygibbons.com)*

The growing popularity in recent years of archival material – the sketches, essays, die proofs and other items documenting the genesis of issued stamps – has brought more and more such material to market. This is no less true for revenues than for postage stamps. The sale of this collection showcased some breathtaking revenue items from the far corners of the British Empire. While realizations for issued revenue stamps still tend to lag behind those for postage stamps of comparable rarity, the same cannot be said of archival gems, such as this pen-and-ink sketch for the British Guiana Summary Jurisdiction stamp series, dating to around 1865. Prepared by an unidentified artist at the storied stamp-printing firm of Waterlow, it was clearly not meant to leave the studio except for a brief review; a message near the foot reads, with classic Victorian circumlocution, “An early return will oblige.” In the event, nobody did oblige and, as Gibbons notes, “this is the sole example of original Victorian Waterlow artwork we have ever seen or heard of, for any issue.” (Realization includes 20% buyer’s premium.)

### **Somebody Got Double Crossed      \$ 142**

*H.R. Harmer, New York, October Postal History sale, including the Graham Booth collection of transatlantic mail, Oct. 26-27, 2022, Lot 1017. Further details at [www.hrharmer.com](http://www.hrharmer.com)*

Serendipity often plays a role in the creation of the best postal history items: the delightful combinations resulting from coincidence and sheer luck are what make collecting such a joy. This cute cover, which once belonged to the great collector of Lincoln-themed stamps, Bill Ainsworth, managed to travel from Chicago to New York ... via Liverpool. It was posted in early Feb. 1871 – the exact date in the blue CDS is obscured – franked with a 6¢ Lincoln Bank Note issue. It passed through New York on Feb. 11, where it was



put aboard the *City of Antwerp* for the Atlantic crossing to its destination in England. It reached Liverpool on Feb. 22, and was promptly sent right back by Brown, Shipley and Co., a local forwarder. A British 3-pence stamp, paying the return crossing, is tied by a Feb. 23 Liverpool duplex cancel. Upon its return to New York, the Lincoln was canceled again by a red CDS in early March. Colorful indeed, and delightfully inexpensive for such a fascinating double-franked cover. (Realization includes 18% buyer's premium.)



## O, Colorful Canada

C\$ 1,404

Sparks Auctions, Ottawa: *The Daniel Cantor collection of Canada Queen Victoria Leaf and Numeral issues*, Oct. 27-29, 2022, Lot 123. Further details at [www.sparks-auctions.com](http://www.sparks-auctions.com)

Advertising covers are a collecting area unto themselves, but in auctions they often get mixed in with ordinary postal history. Devotees with the patience to comb through

listings of ordinary covers looking for classic commercial memorabilia will be rewarded when a stunner like this jumps out, just the way our forebears would have been thrilled more than a century ago, when a piece like this first arrived in someone's mail. Full-color printing was not yet commonplace at the start of the 20th century, so a chromolithograph cachet like this, advertising a maker of fruit syrups to be blended with soda water, did more than just announce the company name: it provided a captivating keepsake for a society reared on scrap-collecting. The pretty 2¢ red Queen Victoria Numeral, tied by a Toronto wavy-line cancel of Nov. 9, 1902, almost seems like an afterthought. (Realization includes 17% buyer's premium.)



### Trash to Treasure

A\$ 88,500

*Abacus Auctions, Melbourne, The Don Pearce collection of South Australia, Nov. 9, 2022, Lot 1027. Further details at [www.abacus.auctions.com.au](http://www.abacus.auctions.com.au)*

The unissued South Australia "Shilling Violet" is one of the most famous rarities in Antipodean philately – indeed, it is one of the rarest stamps of the entire British Empire. The firm of Perkins Bacon in London printed and delivered a press run of some half a million of these stamps to the colony in 1855, but when the parcel arrived Down Under, there was concern that the color might lead to their being confused with the six pence deep blue of the same design, so the entire lot was destroyed. The only survivors emanate from a partial sheet of 24 retained by Perkins Bacon. Six bear the firm's infamous "Canceled" hand-stamp, four reside in institutional collections and three are unaccounted for, leaving just 11 unused examples – several of which have faults – for collectors. This rejoined pair, with mostly good margins and great color, may be the only thing close to a surviving multiple. (Realization includes 18% buyer's premium.)

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### Black Beauties

£ 7,320

*David Feldman, Geneva: Autumn auction series, incl. the Hausman collection of British Empire, Dec. 5-9, 2022, Lot 61012. Further details at [www.davidfeldman.com](http://www.davidfeldman.com)*

The Penny Black is not a rare stamp by any means, until you start looking for multiples in perfect condition. Blocks of four are the quintessential “next level” for philatelists, shifting attention to aspects of the stamp art that may not be apparent in a single example, such as their spacing in the plate or their method of separation (if any). Stamps are mechanically reproduced artworks, and nowhere is this better observed than in a foursome. But foursomes are hard to find. Given that most letter mail in 1840 was paid at the 1d single or 2d double rate, strips and blocks of the Penny Black are scarce. Those with full margins, like this block from Plate 2, and safeguarded from damage for nearly two centuries, thanks to being on piece, are downright rare. The crisp, red Maltese cross cancellations are but the cherry on top. (Realization includes 22% buyer’s premium.)



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# Book Reviews

**Bruno Crevato Selvaggi and Piero Macrelli, *Libia: Storia, Posta, Filatelia* [Libya: History, Post, Philately] Volume I, ISBN 978-88-94203-12-7, hardbound, 215 A4 pages replete with mostly color illustrations, in Italian (including a two-page abstract in English), Rimini 2022, Published by AICPM, €60 + postage, available from Associazione Italiana Collezionisti Posta Militare (contact: [info@aicpm.net](mailto:info@aicpm.net)).**

This is the first in a series of volumes on comprehensive history, postal history and philately of Libya; indeed a colossal task. This first volume deals with geography and history of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania from antiquity to the 1800s. Volume I ends at the eve of the Italo-Turkish War which culminated with Italy acquiring Libya.

During the first half of the 19th century, European economic penetration had increased, which included Italian traders in Tunisia, Tripoli and, to a lesser extent, Benghazi. In 1907 the Banco di Roma opened branches in Tripoli and Benghazi. From a postal viewpoint, in 1869 Italy opened a consular postal agency in Tripoli; by 1881 it became a post office. From 1874-89, the Italian definitive stamps overprinted “Estero,” created for Italian post offices abroad, were used to frank outgoing correspondence posted at Tripoli’s postal outlets. In 1901, the French opened a post office in Benghazi; letters from Libya to Italian destinations date back to the 1600s.

Nevertheless, the true pioneer of postal service in Libya was the Ottoman Empire; Tripoli was connected with Constantinople by regular Ottoman steamships and ships from other steamers. Although not corroborated by tangible evidence, it is possible that by the 1860s there existed an internal postal service in Tripolitania. Other alternatives of routing outgoing mail via forwarders became available by the late 1870s, when mail sent to Italy was routed via Malta, where it was franked and forwarded to its destination. This procedure was also used by the French traders who used forwarders with contacts in Malta.

Volume I includes a catalog of Ottoman post offices (page 103-167); similarly, the volume includes a 23-page catalog of Italian and French post offices in Libya, as well as a catalog of the known frankings from the Italian post office in Tripoli. The telegraph service is also discussed and is well documented.



While this lavishly produced book is a feast for the eyes, it provides a lot of information not previously known or recorded. The endless gallery of vivid illustrations guides the reader through complexities that are simplified by the visual aspect: a picture is worth a thousand words, but in this case the captions are also very detailed and useful.

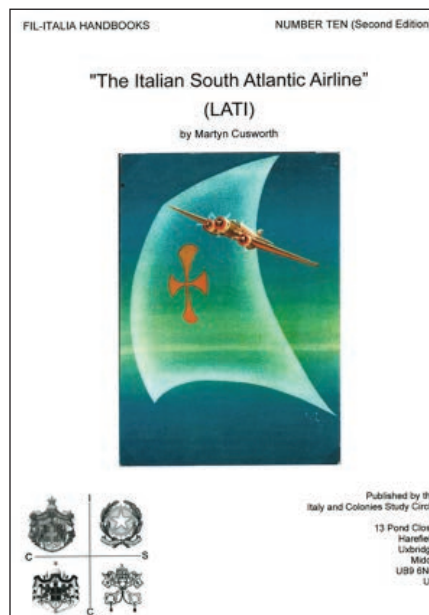
Meticulous research has enabled Crevato-Selvaggi and Macrelli to present this noteworthy book that will enable many collectors to enjoy a greater appreciation of a complex area of research as Libya.

— Giorgio Migliavacca

***Martyn Cusworth, The Italian South Atlantic Airline (L.A.T.I.), Fil-Italia Handbooks Number 10, second edition (August 2022), published by The Italy and Colonies Study Circle in 2012 and now in 2022; ring-bound, 174 pages, 8¼ by 11¾ inches, mostly colored illustrations throughout and maps, £35 + postage from ICSC Secretary A.C. 3 Pond Close, Harefield, Uxbridge, Middx, UB9 6NG United Kingdom, andycharris@blueyonder.co.uk***

This expanded second edition is the product of much improved collaboration among the increasing number of LATI collectors and a number of articles published by The Italy and Colonies Study Circle. The 2012 edition was sold out and the new one now includes a most useful Ala Littoria Route Network in 1938, shortly before LATI service started.

The book starts with a chapter that explores the Italian South Atlantic developments and aircraft deployed. This is followed by the early LATI route: Rome (G, Marseillew, Casablanca, Guidonia) Villa Cisneros, Dakar, Natal, Rio de Janeiro. Sal Island, in the Cape Verde Islands archipelago, was transformed into a working base; this move by the Italian government was taken very seriously by Great Britain.



The third chapter delves into publicity material, cards and stationery, as well as labels for baggage and parcels, airmail labels, seasonal greetings cards, publicity envelopes and official service envelope.

Extensive German and Italian censorship and censorship of Axis mail to the United States, as well as extraordinary Brazilian censorship, add interest to this type of intercontinental mail.

The inaugural flights and the deadly crash in Morocco are well researched; the extension of the service to Argentina materialized in June 1941 after a long gesta-



tion. Westbound mail included correspondence from Eastern Europe, the Balkan Slovakia, Bohemia and Moravia, as well as Belgium and Holland to South American destinations.

Germany generated the largest percentage of LATI mail to and from South America; on the other hand, mail from Germany to Far East is scarce. Eastbound mail discussed in this book includes the correspondence from Brazil; Rio de Janeiro was, in fact, a crucial hub for both Brazil and Portugal. Informative sections deal with Eastbound mail from Mexico, French Antilles, French Guiana, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Chapters 8 and 9 examine the end of the LATI service, while Chapter 10 deals with the aftermath of the LATI service. A specific appendix provides a listing of South Atlantic crossings.

— Giorgio Migliavacca

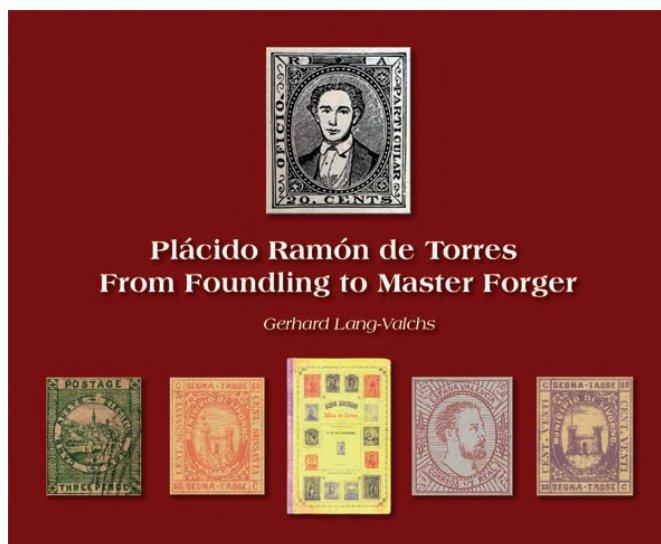
**Gerhard Lang-Valchs, Plácido Ramón de Torres: From Foundling to Master Forger, paperback, 126 pages 21 by 26 cms, profusely illustrated with mostly color photos, Cieza 2020, €10 + shipping €10 (to Europe) other destinations contact author [Paypal payment welcome]. Contact: langvalchs@hotmail.es.**

Part One is aptly titled “Tracing a Forger’s Footprints”; the author first encountered the name of Torres in a well-known book by Varro Tyler titled *Philatelic Forgers: Their Lives and their Works*, where only a 20-line profile was spent on Torres’ life and activities.

A few years later, while the author was researching the history of Andorra, he came across the Torres name once more as he examined a letter to the Andorran administration to offer his services to establish a planned postal administration for the micro-state.

Nothing ever came of it, but the author continued his research and spoke to a stamp expert about Ramón and related suspicions. The conversation moved on to a Torres stamp album and catalog illustrated with some – or possibly most – of the forgeries created by its publisher.

These suspicions grew and the author contacted other experts, who did not



take him seriously. After untiring exploration of specialized internet sources, he was beginning to place some pieces of the puzzle where they belonged.

This book is the result of six years of unremitting research; in due course the author wrote a number of articles published by magazines in Europe and overseas.

Torres went on to new adventures, such as the Melilla bogus, which he created with the approval of the commander of an expeditionary force of 25,000 men. The result was a set of 51 stamps to be used by the soldiers fighting the Margallo War. In February 1894, as the conflict was coming to an end, the police arrested Torres and confiscated the Melilla stamps and related printing materials, including postmarks. His colleagues who had benefitted from Torres' creativity were also put behind bars. The arrests made headlines, but four days later the gentlemen were released after Torres produced the Melilla commander letter giving him *carte blanche*. The confiscated items were duly returned.

Ramón and his associates went on to fabricate and mail a number of covers franked with the stamps created by Torres; these initiatives were boycotted by Spanish stamp dealers. Nevertheless the Torres forgeries of early stamps were reaching a vast and acquisitive number of European collectors.

The aforementioned actions showed that Torres had been a somewhat unknown and untalented forger. Further research revealed that he had improved his skills in Italy, where the Florentine stamp dealer E.C. Usigli saw the potentials of the young Spanish apprentice. The experienced dealer and the young man drew the lithographic forgeries Usigli and his friend Count Bonasi sold in Italy and the rest of Europe.

In 1871-72, Torres moved to Leghorn building up his own business, continuing, however, the "forging cooperation" with Usigli and Bonasi until 1874, when the trio fell apart and the Spaniard had to leave Italy forever.

His next venture was a stamp business in Barcelona where the only dealer had given up and closed his door. Torres' price-lists were publicized in Italy under the alias of Rosendo Fernandez; the ads offered "authentique" stamps. Needless to say, his reputation was in tatters throughout the old continent.

He was also in demand among stamp magazine editors, as they regularly needed black-and-white illustrations of old and new stamps. One buyer of his illustrations was Jean-Baptiste Moens. Torres illustrations were also used in the United States and Australia; inscription errors were deliberately made to titillate demand. Chapter 14 examines Torres' stamp catalog and illustrated album; the use of Spanish for these publications limited their success outside of Spain.

Another chapter delves into forged postmarks, a veritable can of worms; at this point in time Torres had important contacts with Fournier and German operators (in Berlin and Hamburg). The illustrations business was in high demand: *"Another strange collaboration was that with the Austrian stamp dealer Sigmund*

*Friedl. He presented in 1877 his first stamp catalog. The illustrations used are the ugliest I have ever seen in a European catalog. Ironically, they turned out to be made by Plácido. The only explanation I could find for such a strange fact is, that Friedl had initially not enough money to purchase the current Torres-illustrations ...” says Lang-Valchs.*

Pages 105-119 contain a forgery gallery, with about 300 examples of countries all over the world with their typical (forged) cancels. A chapter on how to discover Torres’ creations and an extensive bibliography conclude this well produced and most useful and interesting book

— Giorgio Migliavacca

***Various Authors and Speakers, Proceedings of the First National Postal History Forum Public and Private: Allied for the tutelage of the Postal History Heritage (Jan. 28, 2022, Giustiniani Palace, Rome), color dust jacket, hardbound, 69 A4 pages replete with mostly color illustrations, ISBN 978-88-945287-3-2, published by Post Horn, Milano 2022, €30 + postage [5€ Italy, 15€ Europe Z1, 20€ USA/Asia/Africa Z2, 30€ Oceania Z3] available from the publisher (contact: segreteria@cifo.eu)***

This book, written by several hands with the support of the main philatelic and postal history associations, is intended to be a contribution to clarify the well-known controversy concerning the lawfulness of ownership for the purpose of collecting and the marketability of letters, covers and postcards addressed to a public institution and public administration.

The aim of this book is to highlight the court rulings that confirm the inadequacy and non-existence of the crime of holding stolen goods that leads to dismissals and acquittals that have resulted in enormous costs for the state and for the investigated collectors and dealers. This would not have happened if there was a less invasive and expensive method of verification that has respect for those who have kept these noteworthy documents that otherwise would have been tragically destroyed following the dismantling of shelves overloaded with old papers that reflect bureaucracy more than history.

In his preface to the proceedings of the First National Forum on Postal History, President of the Federation of Italian Philatelic Societies Dr. Bruno Crevato-Selvaggi, RDP, FRPSL, summed up the reasons for convening the forum, which was held in Rome in January 2022 with the following words: *“Philately is a recreational and cultural activity with a consolidated tradition, of great depth, of enormous*





*reach and scope, and of great interest, whether it deals only with stamps, or is interested in entire documents; recent episodes that have seen Italian philatelists victims of legal actions based on arguments then not accepted by the Courts have aroused justified fear among the philatelists, bewilderment in the environment and uncertainty about its future. The Italian philatelists – and I act as their spokesperson – demand a clear word, a clear interpretation of the law, the acknowledgment of a political, administrative and human affair that has unfolded in Italy even before the Unification of our nation. But, if philately is a magnificent recreational and cultural activity, postal history – if considered a collecting activity – is otherwise a discipline of scientific research, which communicates with both the academic and the collecting world.”*

The following information was gleaned from the aforementioned proceedings.

On Saturday, Jan. 11, 2015, a group of friends, passionate about postal history, met in Modena during the “La Mutina” philatelic event and convention to exchange opinions and ideas, concerned by the seizures of postal documents and the launching of legal proceedings against two Piedmontese dealers advocated by some archivists and superintendents of cultural heritage. The Group decided to search the state archives for documents that demonstrate how the papers subject to the initiation of judicial investigations, and consequent criminal proceedings, are lawfully possessed as they enter the collecting circuit following the removal, ordered by the Italian State, from the archives.

Two years later, Giuseppe Buffagni, who in the meantime had taken on the role of Coordinator of the Modena Group, organized a meeting at the Philatelic Numismatic Society of Modena. Thirty attendees were present, including Attorney Giorgio Khouzam, sent by the centenerian Federation of Italian Philatelic Societies; Eng. Avanzo of the Sassone publishing group; Paolo Gazzera and Valentinotti’s lawyer who had been following the legal proceedings against the mother who owns the commercial business of historical postal material managed by Giovanni Valentinotti.

On May 2, 2017, Senator Carlo Amedeo Giovanardi, during the session No. 815 of the senate, highlighted the issue of confiscation. On June 4, 2017, in Rome Giuseppe Buffagni, Paolo Gazzera, Giovanni Valentinotti and Senator Carlo Amedeo Giovanardi, gave an interview on the situation of postal history items’ seizures, aired by local television networks.

On July 18, 2017, at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism (MiBACT) in Rome, Dr. Lawyer Gino Famiglietti, Director General of the Archives, accompanied by Dr. Micaela Procaccia and Dr. Mauro Tosti Croce, met a delegation of philatelic and postal history professionals.

These proceedings of the 2022 First Postal History Forum are intended to be a contribution to clarify the now well-known story on the lawfulness of possession for collection and research purposes and of the marketability of letters and correspondence addressed to governmental institutions. The aim of those activists

involved was to avoid judicial procedures that, in light of the sentences passed in judgment, demonstrate the enormous cost for the state and for the investigated, ending up later in filings and acquittals.

While there is no doubt that certain papers, correspondence or documents in the past, were property of the local public administration, it is by no means implicit that by ending up in public archives they were to remain there permanently.

Even in pre-unification states, in the north, central or south of Italy, the "old paper" was not thrown away or destroyed, but considered "economically" and therefore put up for sale. For example: a Palermo Notice of 1859 whereby *"the Royal Government has authorized the sale by public auction of the old and useless papers accumulated by the General Administration in the year 1853 ... Article 1 - Those who want to wait for the purchase ... they will not be able to offer ... a smaller sum below 6 ducats and 33 grana per 100 kilograms ..."* And, the fact that in 1859 the "old paper" of 1853 was put up for sale, suggests that there was an obligation to keep bills and invoices for 10 years (as it is still required in the new millennium), then in Sicily this term was five years, whereby the Public Administrations could get rid of the "old paper" by giving some compensation to individuals who had done this regularly for years.

And that these alienations were not episodic or local is also demonstrated by Article 15 of the Royal Decree No. 2552b of 1875, which provided, with reference to the acts of the courts and administrative offices, that "printed matter, duplicates and those papers that do not have the character of official deeds, which, with a license given in writing by the head of the judiciary or office, can annually be sold or destroyed."

In 1861 in Viadana, a Mantuan municipality, announced the sale of 14 bags of "old papers" of the Municipal Archives to obtain the money necessary for the purchase of badges for the uniform of the mayor ... *"among these papers was the financial statute of the Cavalcabò dated 1392 written in Gothic on parchment, and well preserved! ... what an atrocity..."* perpetrated by the State.

A recently rediscovered document is essential to explain and make people understand how things took place at the end of World War II (and even before!) in Modena and throughout Italy. In the 1940s and 1950s, it occurred that even private individuals asked public institutions to *"Have ... at the related price ... of the Archive paper ... even in hundreds of kilograms."* And there were even some municipalities that, with a specific resolution of the council, confirmed by the Prefecture, sold "archive waste," as in this case of 1947 for 12 + 27 hundreds of kilograms. In more recent years – in 1999 – from the Coriano Recyclable Dry Waste treatment plant in Rimini, now belonging to HERA SpA, were purchased, obviously with regular invoice and transport document, 9,600 kilograms of paper referable to the waste made by the Prefecture of Pesaro at the current price of the paper used for pulping.

These sales and transactions to private concerns are well documented and referenced in the appendix of this book.

Regarding the “fairy tale” of the obligation that such paper scraps must necessarily go to the pulping plant, which unfortunately has certainly happened many times, their rescue (read expensive purchase) by scholars and collectors is to be considered a crime or a merit? It is also emphasized that the concept of “destruction” of archive waste and the mandatory nature of their sending to pulp does not appear in any standard, until the legislative phase which has introduced in 2003 the concept of *privacy*.

Also, the quantity present on the world market of these papers (it is assumed that it is at least a few tens of millions of pieces – just to highlight the mass of possible material on the market: during World War I the Italian post office had machined 4 four billion pieces) undoubtedly demonstrates that the scraps were only partially destroyed and, eventually, they ended up in the hands of collectors and were studied by generations of scholars and history lovers.

For their part, collectors and the organizers of the forum have emphasized that they *“reaffirm our absolute availability in the face of detailed reports of theft to collaborate in the research of the stolen material and ask that these reports be made public so that collectors and dealers can be warned and pay attention to. Yes, yes we therefore hope that, in close collaboration with the Institutions and Investigating Authorities, it will be possible to concentrate the protection work correctly, distinguishing well what must be safeguarded and recovered for public use.”*

The arguments on the collectors, scholars and learned lawyers side are summed up in the following statement: *“As you can see, the significance of many papers is not only compatible with the guidelines of what was to be discarded and sold, but indisputably highlights the uselessness of the information contained in such papers and documents, their exclusively administrative (bureaucratic) value, and ultimately the absolute absence of requisites that would classify them as a Cultural Asset. In preparing this endeavour, a general analysis was made and we also entered into the individual*

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details. First of all, it should be noted that the documents are from every part of Italy, from the north (Lombardy, Piedmont ... ) to the far south (Campania, Sicily ...) and in addition to the Kingdom of Italy and various pre-unification states such as: Kingdom of Sardinia, Austrian Lombardy-Venetia, Grand Duchy of Tuscany, Papal States, Kingdom of the Two Sicilies etc...) and of the period from the early 1800s to the mid 1900s and even later on ...)"

Some 48 instances of public archives purgings that took place between 1834 and 1858, resulting in the disposal of the discarded papers, are documented and reported in this book.

**By definition:** Cultural assets are movable and immovable things that have artistic, historic, archaeological, ethno-anthropological heritage, archival and bibliographic interest, as well as things spotted by the law or based on the law which are testimonies of civilization (Section 10 of the Cultural Assets Code).

Dr. Giulio Perricone, president of the Sicilian Philatelic Union for more than 12 years, pointed out: *"Our hope is that all the forces involved understand well that the spirit that motivates collectors is the preservation – and certainly not the depletion – of the cultural heritage ... and therefore the desire to collaborate and not to oppose ourselves with the organs state institutions. I want to share an episode on this occasion. I am president since 2009 of the Sicilian Philatelic Union, which had Attilio Negri among its founding members in 1947. As he was returning after years in Prisoners of War Camps, he noticed on a platform of the central station of Palermo some wagons loaded with correspondence from Sicilian archives donated to the Red Cross. He asked if could buy the material and did so. He resigned from the bank where he worked (he already had the passion for philately) and opened a shop, the Trinacria Philatelic Studio. After 60 years, the shop became virtual and is now run by his son."*

Senator Carlo Amedeo Giovanardi (Golden Roll of Italian Philately) summed up the disconcerting scenario as follows: *"The passion of collectors to research and collect letters, of very little economic value, but perhaps addressed to their Municipality of residence and / or to Municipalities of their Region, pieces of paper worth 3-4 Euros sold by the Red Cross, which even had its headquarters in Rome's Palace of Justice; for some Superintendents it has been likened to a crime of receiving stolen goods. Indeed, a brilliant Superintendent, to the objection that collectors have saved a heritage that would have been lost, saving it from pulping, he argued that being state property once seized had to be macerated! There are those who want to safeguard a heritage by taking it away*

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*from private individuals to entrust it to the state eventually send it to the pulping plant, or has it run for all the superintendencies of Italy, to check if the municipalities are interested in their conservation, with the good result of seeing millions of pieces of paper seized end up in the basements to feed the mice!"*

State Counselor and International Association of Philatelic Experts (AIEP) president Thomas Mathà offered another perspective: *"I would like to present two examples that illustrate how difficult it is to assess the importance of archives over time. The first example is the archive of the merchant Georg Anton Menz of Bolzano, one of the most important commercial correspondences of Europe; from about 1780 to 1840 he did business with over 500 traders throughout Europe. This archive was and has always been private, the heirs of the Menz (the Toggenburg Counts) have sold tens of thousands of these letters to private individuals today adorning hundreds of collections all over the world. But later the rest was given on loan to the Mercantile Museum of Bolzano, where today there are about 200,000 letters, a true historical heritage. Finally, the provincial archive of Bolzano has also purchased from a private seller a remaining accumulation of about 1,500 letters, so for us today it is difficult to match the property to the single object. The second example is the archive of the director of the Botanical Garden of Bologna, Antonio Bertoloni, who lived between 1775 and 1869, one of the most important botanists in Italy and in Europe. This archive was dispersed between 1970-80; contrary to what it might seem from the mere address, these items have never been part of the botanical garden archive (a public institution), but it was his correspondence, then sold by the heirs over 100 years ago. Later on, a part of this correspondence was purchased by the University of Bologna (the purchase documents are found together with the correspondence); this makes us understand that the address is not always a proof of public administration property (today)."*

To conclude, mention must be made of a similar forum held in the early 1970s at a stamp exhibition staged at the 1400s Hall of the University of Pavia: speakers included Paolo Vollmeier, Carlo Giovetti, Prof. Vito Salierno and other prominent postal history scholars. Attendees included the Superintendent of Pavia's State Archive, who most likely did not appreciate my well-received quote of an old adage: *"Now that all the horses have run out of the stable it has been decided to close its doors"*; months later I visited the said state archive and had a nice conversation with the superintendent. First of all, strangely enough, there was nothing linked to postal history in that archive from which I could expand the postal history of my town narrated by a soon-to-be-published book of mine. However, he was probably trying to tell me something when he showed me a piece of illuminated parchment in poor condition, adding that he was busy in salvaging hundreds of pages of an illuminated book used a century earlier by one of his predecessors to "protect" the shelves of the archive.

This review is longer than expected, but it will surely interest foreign readers. This book is a must for all good lawyers internationally and in Italy, as well as collectors who have been horrified by some recent bureaucratic twists and turns.

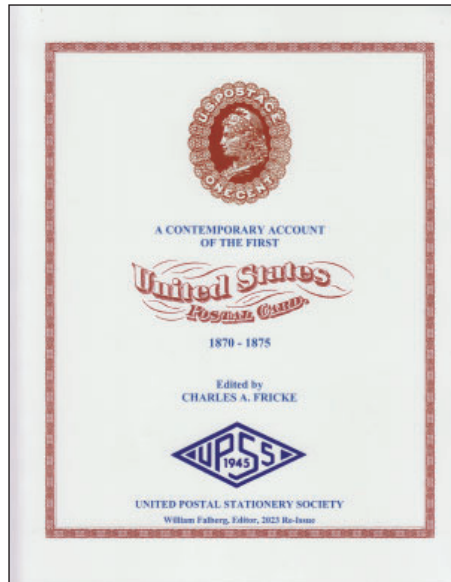
— Giorgio Migliavacca

**Charles A. Fricke and William Falberg, editors, *A Contemporary Account of the First United States Postal Card 1870-1875* (2023 re-issue with improvements), softbound, 148 8½-by 11-inch pages plus cover pages, mostly color illustrations, ISBN 978-1-7351629-6-6, published by United Postal Stationery Society Chester, Va., \$46.50 postpaid to members, \$57 postpaid to non-members, international orders contact [upsspubs@aol.com](mailto:upsspubs@aol.com), may be purchased online at [www.upss.org/code/publications.php](http://www.upss.org/code/publications.php)**

Just in time for the sesquicentennial of the release of our nation's first postal card, this book, first published in 1973, has served as the basic guide to the 1¢ Liberty postal card for the past half-century. Originally edited solely by Fricke, the 2023 edition has been "remastered," so to speak, with corrections, additions and modifications from the original 6- by 9-inch publication, edited by William Falberg.

Since Fricke's collection has long since been dispersed, replacing the original black-and-white images with color wherever possible was a challenge ably met; so much so, in fact, there is a special appendix (D) giving information on all images replaced and whether it is the same or a similar use of the card. But this is incidental to this seminal work.

For those unfamiliar with this long-out-of-print book, *A Contemporary Account of the First United States Postal Card, 1870-75*, tells the story of this much-studied card, from prequel to epilogue.



Sesquicentennial you say? Why is the book dated 1870-75? The actual postal card was released May 12, 1873, but the circumstances leading up to its development and release date back earlier. On Nov. 15, 1870, the report of the postmaster general contained information he received about a "new system of correspondence" lately adopted by North Germany and Great Britain for facilitating letter correspondence. I won't spoil the story, but, suffice it to say, the ultimate result was the 1873 Liberty postal card.

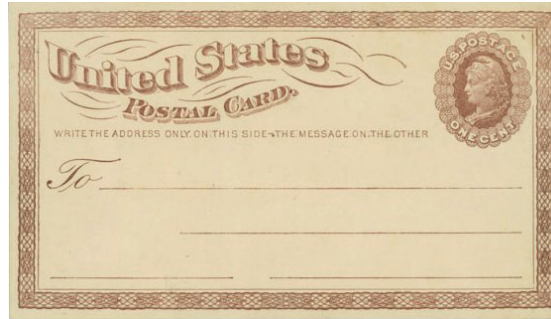
Various chapters include the forerunner period (1869-72), the preproduction period (June 1872 to January 1873), the production period (January to May 11, 1873) and the production periods of both the large and small watermarked types of the first U.S. postal card.

Prior to our own postal card, Fricke and Falberg explore the first postal cards in the world (from Austria and Hungary), and trace the development through Germany, Great Britain and the so-called Lipman forerunner and other, similar, forerunners.



Once it was decided the United States would produce a postal card, the book traces pre-production issues and then the actual release of these postal cards.

From there, Fricke and Falberg look at the release of the card, first days, early releases and other production and uses of this card.



From there, various exotic uses, fancy cancels and unusual examples are explored, as well as a few production variations, all ably illustrated with highly relevant examples.

There is also a “postproduction period” (1875-77), which explores other various facets of the card, including plate varieties and other unusual uses of the card.

The appendices are also highly useful for both the researcher and specialist, as they include full monthly calendars for the time involved and the aforementioned listing of image replacements in the volume.

This is much more than a simple reprint. If you have an interest – however latent – in our nation’s first postal card, you’ll find much of interest and relevant use in this “new and improved” version of a classic work.

— Wayne L. Youngblood

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## Donal Finbarr McCarthy

Long-time member, Donal Finbarr McCarthy, 89, passed away at his home on the Dec. 13, 2022, surrounded by family. Donal is survived by his wife of 64 years, Maureen, and his children and grandchildren.



Don was a lifelong New Yorker, graduating from Regis High School, Manhattan College and a law degree from Columbia University. He served in the U.S. Army in Korea. He spent most of his legal career at Consolidated Edison, Inc., and Long Island Lighting Co.

Don was committed to his many interests, including the Boy Scouts of America and was recognized with The Silver Beaver Award in 2006. He served on local government boards and councils, as president of The Council of Greater Manhasset Civic Association, Manhasset Democratic Club Zone Leader and as president of the Westbury Democratic Club.

As a member of the Collectors Club and the British Empire Study Group, he presented his collection of China Treaty Ports during a British Empire Night program. He was always willing to share his knowledge and willing to learn as well. Don will be missed by the many club members who knew him.

# The Collectors Club

**Membership Update: Oct. 11 through Dec. 13, 2022**

*We are pleased to welcome the following new and reinstated members.*

Approved by the Board of Governors:

**Nov. 22, 2022**

## Resident

Fritz, David New York, N.Y.

### Non-Resident

Davis, Gerald    West Windsor, N.J.

## Overseas

Helland, Paal Berg                      Oslo, Norway

We regret to acknowledge the recent death of longstanding overseas member Simon Greenwood of London U.K.

Congratulations to our new members. A membership certificate will be forwarded to the address on file for each. Please keep us updated as to current address and email so that we can continue to serve you. Electronic outreach is increasingly important as we continue to expand our offerings. Our website ([www.collectorsclub.org](http://www.collectorsclub.org)) receives ongoing enhancements based on member feedback. Please contact us at [info@collectorsclub.org](mailto:info@collectorsclub.org) with feedback, comments or questions.

Dues notices for 2023 have been sent to members' email addresses. If we do not have a current, or valid email address, an invoice will be sent by mail. If you would like to update your contact information, please contact our Executive Secretary Andrea Matura at: *[info@collectorsclub.org](mailto:info@collectorsclub.org)*.

Please advise our office of address changes or other membership updates in a timely manner at [info@collectorsclub.org](mailto:info@collectorsclub.org). We recognize the many members who have taken advantage of our online facility for applications and dues/donations payments. We look forward to your making use of our website and live-streamed programming. Your membership number is key for allowing access to our archived programming and resources.

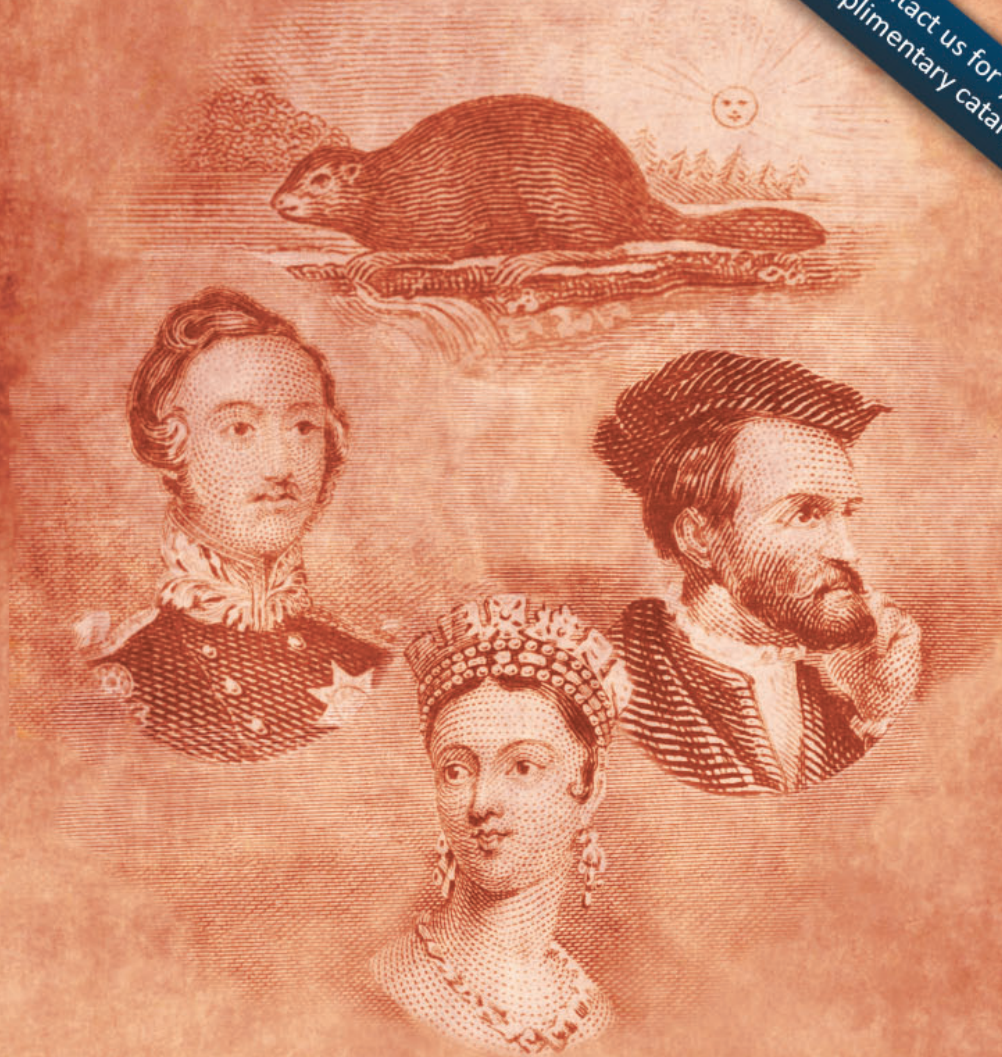
Respectfully submitted,

Mark E. Banchik, Membership Co-Chair

Lawrence Hunt, Membership Co-Chair



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## Index to Advertisers

Page	Advertiser	Page	Advertiser
43	Colonial Stamp Company	28-29	Heinrich Köhler
14-15	Corinphila Auctions Ltd.	35	Le Timbre Classique
63	Eastern Auctions, Ltd.	Inside Back Cvr.	Schuyler Rumsey
37	David Feldman	Back Cover	Robert A. Seigel
39	Christoph Gärtner GmbH	30	Sparks Auction
13	Stanley Gibbons	64	Minuteman Press
Fr. Inside	H.R. Harmer, Inc.	57	Vidiforms Co., Inc.

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