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Capital Philately



Journal of the Philatelic Society of Canberra



The Philatelic Society of Canberra
(Founded 1932)

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Editorial

There is an old saying that many are called, but few are chosen. This can be paraphrased or modified to point out that many enterprises are begun, but a lesser number survives. You could go further and say that you shouldn't start anything you cannot finish.

The Council of The Philatelic Society of Canberra considered for a long time a proposal that the Society should publish its own journal. Indeed, after a life of 50 years as one of the oldest cultural bodies in the Australian Capital Territory, it could be said that it is high time such a project was begun. However, the Council felt that it might not give a favourable impression to its enterprise if a publication was produced with a great deal of fanfare and trumpeting, only to founder, as so many similar publications have, after a shorter or longer period of progressive decline. So there were plenty of reasons why caution should be observed.

The Fiftieth Anniversary of the foundation of the Society in November 1932 seemed to be a propitious event which might well justify a commencement of publication, so here is what the Council presents to its members, as the primary captive list of subscribers. It hopes that the list of readers will gradually increase to cover philatelists outside the immediate membership, with the further hope that they will come to join the Society, or at least continue as subscribers, in the belief that a worth-while presentation is available to them.

If this journal is to continue as a viable project, it will need the active support of all the members of the Society. History tells of innumerable publications like this, often with far greater resources behind them, which have expired because the promises of support which preceded the confident inauguration failed to materialise. An enthusiastically-begun series of articles faded out after one or two instalments; a regular feature failed to appear because the organiser was too busy, or realised he did not have the ability to proceed; a key writer moved to another place; the list of contributing writers gradually diminished, until eventually the Editor was in the position of having to compose the whole magazine himself, and soon realised the futility of it all.

The Council has pondered on all these possibilities, and, commendably, has decided to commence the project. Now it remains for the membership of the Society to provide the wherewithal to enable regular publication of a journal which will present a serious contribution to what philately is about. A further development will be the encouragement of philatelists outside the immediate membership of the Society to make their own contributions.

This is not as hard as it sounds. Even if you have never written anything for publication, you will have some knowledge which others do not possess. This is a natural consequence of any kind of serious collecting, and it only needs a small degree of resolution to start the process of getting it into print.

Stamp collecting is a very individual undertaking, and the ways of going about it are many. Yet for the beginner, the problems can seem insuperable. It is only by association with others that some insight may be obtained as to how they go about their activity. This is where membership of a society is essential. So many people rush into the hobby without much idea of what is involved, and for them the charm and interest frequently do not survive long. On the other hand, for those who can see the endless possibilities of a life-time interest, the development of their collections will continue for many years. For many, the acquisition of copies of every new stamp issue which relates to their particular sphere of interest is the sole end of their activity. Yet this should be only the beginning. Not only do we need to collect stamps, but we need to study them, and access to philatelic literature and to a philatelic library can mean all the difference in the world when it comes to the development of a collection. No one can say truthfully that he or she has complete collection of any particular country or issue, or that they know all there is to know about some special aspect, but by pooling of knowledge, it is possible to set up a store of facts and information which will make it easier to travel towards that unattainable goal.

The Philatelic Society of Canberra has had all these aspects in mind, and, in presenting the first issue of this journal, initially for its own members, but hopefully for an even wider circulation, the Society would like to be the means of encouraging in some way the development of philately.

President's Message

I have much pleasure in sending this message with the first issue of The Philatelic Society of Canberra's Journal -"Capital Philately".

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Society's founding, and the launching of our Journal is an important milestone and a mark of our "coming of age".

Philately is sometimes spoken of as a "selfish" hobby and certainly it is one which allows everyone to follow his or her own particular interests and methods of writing up and displaying stamps. But at the same time, members of our Society know how much pleasure there is in sharing their interests, and the Society's many activities provide opportunities for acquiring both stamps and knowledge. This Journal now provides another opportunity and becomes a forum in which we can share our interests and knowledge with all members of The Philatelic Society of Canberra and with philatelists and collectors outside the national capital.

"Capital Philately" has been launched with the same faith in the future as that shown by the few people who called a meeting to form the Society in November 1932, when the world outlook was perhaps even gloomier than it is today.

The Council of the Society is most appreciative of all the work done by the Editorial Committee in preparing this first issue. I encourage all members to make their contributions to our Society Journal. This is a significant step in the Society's fifty years, and one in which all members can have a hand, and from which all philatelists can benefit.

Elspeth Bodley

President

Philatelic Society of Canberra

Editorial, continued

The Editorial Committee has had no previous experience of preparing a publication such as this, so its members acknowledge the wide opportunities for improvement. The pages of the journal are open to any kind of philatelic writing. Needless to say, what is written will be taken as the views of the perpetrator. If you agree or have any kind of comment on anything which appears, your contribution to the subject, whether controversial or not, will be most welcome. But don't lay any blame on the Philatelic Society of Canberra, and, except for what is contained in the Editorial of each issue, don't blame the Editor. As long as any material has worthwhile philatelic interest, he will publish it, and let the calumny fall where it will. Of course, any words of commendation or even praise, will not be despised.

Finally, what appears in the journal represents, unless otherwise stated, the original work of the author concerned, and any copyright will be retained by the Society and the Editor. As is usual in such cases, references in other publications will be appreciated, but approval for reproduction elsewhere should be sought in advance, as one of the normal courtesies.

KADAVU: FIJIAN PORT OF ENTRY, 1873-1876.

A.R.Tippett



One of the mystery postmarks of early Fiji comes from a steel canceller in the museum in Suva. It is a circular type with the inscription "P.O. KADAVU - FIJI" and no date. It opens up a whole book of postal history.

I want to pose the hypothesis that this canceller (which has been given a kind of status by being preserved with other Fijian artefacts in the museum) was prepared for use on the transshipment mails at Galoa, Kadavu, in the early 1870's, a venture of some significance for postal authorities in the Colonies of both New South Wales and New Zealand. Somehow the postal history of those colonies and also of Britain, U.S.A. and Fiji has to be brought together.

Certain things are clear beyond speculation. First the canceller goes back beyond the history of Fijian postmarks in the colonial archives, and therefore belongs to the consular period - though not necessarily to the consular mails. Purves was aware of an early post office or agency in Kadavu, although this is the name of a comparatively large island, not a locality. The same authority also gives the 1890 list of postmasters, which shows Mr.A.H. Simpson as servicing mails to and from Kadavu. These mails in 1890 would have been sent uncanceled or pen-canceled to Suva, and have had super-imposed a Suva postmark. This would still pre-date the known Kadavu post offices, Vunisea (Government station) which used a pen-cancellation (P/C) and later a single line (S/L) before it boasted a circular date stamp (C.D.S); Tavuki (Kadavu West) S/L, and the mission stations at Naidiri and Richmond which used the P/C and S/L from time to time. This statement lines up with Campbell's handbook.

At this time we hear of A.H. Simpson as a store keeper (1892) in Kadavu (no location specified). It must have been at Galoa, as no other Kadavan post office was ever reported in the last century, though it would hardly have been the best locality for trade with the Fijians. He replied to the questionnaire on Fijian Depopulation in the 1890's, but is not mentioned in the Cyclopedia of Fiji a decade later, which has an exhaustive coverage of colonists and says that Kadavu "is not now much visited". There is some evidence, however, that Simpson was Griffith's agent for Fiji Times Express mails, which would put him back to 1870, and probably means that he was the person to use the mystery canceller. Kadavu continued to use the P/C's and S/L cancellers until very late in the present century. The first C.D.S. was Vunisea (26/9/16). We can safely eliminate any possibility of the museum canceller being recent.

Second, in the matter of its design, the canceller is a circular arrangement, with no surrounding circle. This type has only been used in Fiji between 1872 and 1875; that is, it must have been manufactured for the Cakobau Government, and maybe was used for a year after Cession. Like the first Cakobau postmark (the locally-made canceller) this one has no date. There are only three genuine known postmarks on Cakobau stamps. Could it be that we have to look also for a Kadavu C.D.S. on one?

The postal historian has to explore lines in several countries. The brief period of Galoa's history as a port of call bears on events in three directions, not to forget those in Fiji itself.

In New Zealand the possibility of a mail route across the Pacific had long been a dream. The legendary Baron de Thierry had dreamed of the cutting of the isthmus at Panama and the establishment of a mail linkage with Britain. As long as New Zealand mails had to be sent to Southampton via the Australian colonies there were problems and delays. Newspaper talk in the 1850's explored the possibility of using paddle steamers to each side of the Panama isthmus. A company was established and actually built ships for the Pacific run, but they were deployed to the Crimean front for carrying supplies and troops, and never did get to the Pacific.

The California gold rush added to the hope. As yet there was no transcontinental railway, but there was a rail system built from Colon to Panama and the question of a transpacific mail from New Zealand was raised again. The dreams of E.W. Stafford, the New Zealand Prime Minister, and his hopes in the West Indian Royal Mail came to naught after the company's disastrous failure with mails in Egypt, and bankruptcy. The rival interests of a "Panama Route" as against a "Suez Route" also imposed themselves on the history. Eventually in the 1860's four Intercolonial Royal Mail Steamers materialised. In 1868 600,000 letters were carried via Panama as against 70,000 via Suez. In spite of this, the Line went bankrupt.

Then in 1869 the trans-American railway was finished and the possibility of a fast mail service through San Francisco became a realistic idea, especially when we remember that the route across France to Marseilles (which cut four days off the time from Southampton by sea) had to be abandoned during the Franco-Prussian War.

In the early days of steam, with the passing of the sailing ships, a Pacific service had to provide some kind of coaling station en route. At this point Fiji and Honolulu were "pawns in the game", although the merchants of Levuka certainly did not look at it this way. The idea of ships from different directions meeting mid-way for the transfer of passengers and mails was nothing new. It happened at Malta, Alexandria and Ceylon on the Southampton/Australia run. Thus it was that Fiji, while not yet a British Colony became involved.

Granted, it took some time for New Zealand, New South Wales and America to come to terms, and for a while the two colonies attempted to work on their own. The stimulus in Australia was the jealousy between Sydney and Melbourne. Victoria outwitted New South Wales by contracting with the P. & O. Company for a Suez route service terminating at Melbourne, and New South Wales turned to San Francisco. The talk of the town was the intention of by-passing Fiji altogether, because of the poor shipping facilities at Levuka (then the capital). The Levuka merchants met in a public meeting and five merchants subscribed £300, and appointed Lt. G.H. Woods (of the New Zealand Survey Schooner "Edith") to undertake a survey

of the port. In due course he completed the task and became a major political figure in Cakobau's Government, in those formative days when he negotiated the acceptance of Fijian stamps in other countries.

However, the marine insurers would have nothing of it, and eventually it was Galoa Harbour in Kadavu, not Levuka, which came into focus.

On 26th April 1871 the A.S.N.Co., under the name Australian, South Pacific and Californian Line, designated the "City of Melbourne", the "City of Adelaide" and the "Wongawonga" for the service and included New Zealand in the project, and like the others, Fiji had to contribute a subsidy. All the correspondence about this is still extant for the historian.

Woods, now Minister of Land & Work (whose mail went forth in an envelope with a special embossed stamp) successfully negotiated a deal for Fiji in Sydney, although out of the possible localities of Levuka, Kadavu and Matuku, he had to settle for Kadavu. This meant the transshipment of mails and passengers at Galoa (for international) and across the isthmus to Namalata (for Levuka) contacts. The service got under way in 1873 - be it noted during the rule of the Cakobau Government. In December the vessel "MacGregor" was unloading mails and passengers. They were taken to Levuka in the "Pearl". The S.S. "Governor Blackall" (under N.Z. contract) arrived the day before with mails from Auckland and these were taken to Levuka in the cutter "Vivid". That is how it all began and Kadavu became a port of entry.

Each month three large ships ("Mikado", "Cyphrenes" and "City of Melbourne"), from N.S.W., N.Z. and the U.S. met at Galoa. There was no town there but the harbour was good. The historian has summed it up "the shore accommodation was wretched, consisting only of a few native huts, 3 or 4 small stores kept by Europeans and a whisky shop". When the ships no longer came, the stores disappeared.

The service operated until the end of the Cakobau period and after Fiji had acceded to the British Crown the A.S.N. Co. vessels still came until March 1876, and the port remained open until December. Meantime in Levuka the merchants were untiring in seeking direct shipping contact with the outside world. It brought goods and passengers but apparently no mails.

Dr. John Dunmore Lang, a colonialist rather partisan to N.S.W. in her struggle with Victoria, and very much concerned with the speeding up of mails between Britain and the Colony, had things to say about the manner of transfer of mails and passengers at these transshipment ports. He had also been involved in a battle for cheaper postal rates. There is a long chapter in his "Historical and Statistical Account of N.S.W." describing his experiences at Kadavu. He had determined to take this route for the sake of experience and boarded the "Cyphrenes" on 11th April, 1873, reaching Kadavu on the 20th. (And by the way, this shows the Kadavu connection began at least eight months earlier than that generally believed). He found the local debate keen on the comparative merits of Kadavu and Levuka. The "Mongol" from New Zealand was there.

The "Mikado" was due from San Francisco. The "Cyphrenes" carried a cargo of coal for the "Mikado" which arrived a few days later. Coal, cargo, mails and passengers were sorted out and transferred. The "MacGregor" was also there, having been damaged on a reef, and left for Sydney after emergency repair with the lightest possible cargo - 70,000 light-weight coconuts. Some of the passengers were eloquent about the scheme. Then, after questioning the wisdom of Cession to Britain he went on to San Francisco in the "Mikado" leaving us an interesting narrative, full of statistical and other information about ships and their performance and the problems of transition in those days when mail services were shifting from sail to steam.

I feel quite sure that my hypothesis about that Kadavu canceller is correct. It is just what one would expect from Wood - to have a Kadavu canceller made at the same time and with the same pattern as the Levuka (Type 2 of Campbell) one which was to replace the home-made one. The dignity of an international mail connection would demand it. One wonders if somewhere in Britain, Australia, New Zealand or the United States there is somewhere awaiting discovery a Cakobau or Cession Fiji stamp with a Kadavu postmark.

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MEMBERS' WANTS

Each member of The Philatelic Society of Canberra is entitled to two free insertions under this heading each year. Such advertisements must not exceed 12 words, and their inclusion in any particular issue will depend on available space, at the discretion of the Editor.

Wanted - Australian Railway Parcel Stamps - E.C. Druce

Wanted - Foreign Post Offices in China and Korea - stamps, covers -
A.G. Salisbury

OVERSEAS NOTES

P.A. Wood.

In this, the first of my columns entitled "Overseas Notes", I wish to make it clear that I will not be dealing with new issues from overseas, but will try to provide interesting and informative articles on various facets of philately from overseas.

I have chosen to write about Perfins, more particularly about Great Britain Perfins. Often classed as Cinderellas, they are in fact very collectable philatelic items.

The term Perfin was coined from PERForated INSignia, an older term being SPIFS or Stamps Perforated with Initials of Firms.

It is probably fitting that the practice of perforating stamps with initials or other insignia originated in England, where the world's first adhesive postage stamp was issued in 1840.

Joseph Sloper is credited with the original idea for perforating stamps for identification purposes, but the idea was first proposed to the British Post Office by a member of the firm of Copestake, Moore, and Crampton, drapery merchants of London.

Before going into more detail, it will be easier if I recount a little of the history which led to the proposal.

Postage stamps, from their introduction in 1840, were recognised as a convenient and practical way to transmit small sums of money, and Post Offices were authorised to purchase unused stamps for face value from anyone who presented them.

This was of course a temptation to employees at a time when one could buy a good meal, and pilfering from the postage box became widespread.

Attempts were made by a number of means to try to stop the thefts, and one of the first organisations involved was the Oxford Union Society, founded in 1825, as a social and debating organisation. In 1859 the Society applied for, and received, permission to print the initials OUS between two wavy lines on the face of the stamps used by the Society. The Oxford Union Society may not have been the first to actually place a security endorsement on the face of a stamp, but they were certainly the first to gain official permission. The Post Office, however, quickly discouraged the practice, as it was thought to be a form of advertising.

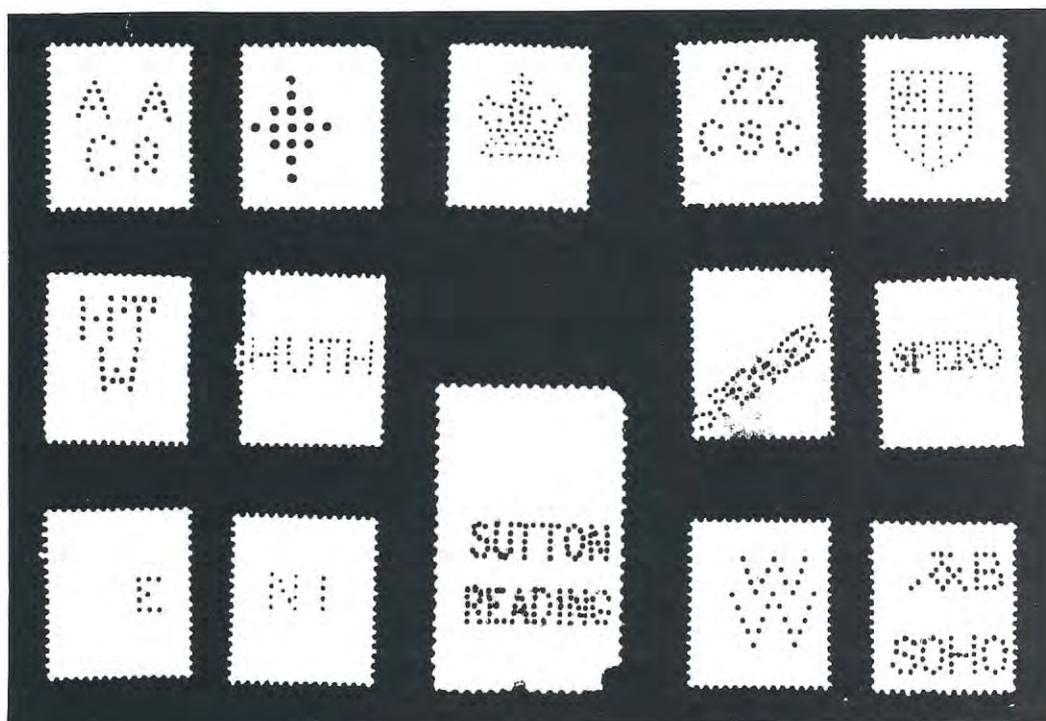
In 1866 J & C Boyd and Co. gained approval to their proposal to print the firm's name on the back of stamps before the gum was applied. This resulted in the first official underprints on stamps, but only five firms were involved, J & C Boyd; W.H. Smith; Copestake, Moore, Crampton and Co.; the Oxford Union Society; and the Great Eastern Railway.

In 1867 the firm of Copestake, Moore, Crampton and Co. was the subject of a major theft of stamps from their Plymouth Office, and shortly afterwards applied to the Post Office to perforate their stamps with the letters S.C., the initials of the senior partner. The firm argued that this could not be construed as advertising, but would enable it instantly to identify its postage, but the Post Office was not convinced.

As mentioned earlier, the original idea was probably that of Joseph Sloper, who in 1868 invented a machine to perforate railway tickets, and about a year later, patented a machine to perforate the date into the tickets.

Sloper, having had his services sought by the Copestake Co., attempted to persuade the authorities of the efficacy of his invention and the Copestake proposal, and after several rebuffs, the Post Office relented and on 13th March 1868 wrote to Sloper to say that the Postmaster-General, the Duke of Montrose "will not object to the perforation of postage stamps.....with a view to protect merchants and others, as far as possible, from the theft of stamps used by them."

A year later a Post Office Circular of 1st March 1869 officially informed postmasters of the approval of Sloper's perforating system.



Examples of British Perfins

Since that time, right up to the present day, thousands of firms, local government authorities, hospitals and Government Departments have perforated stamps to prevent misuse, not only with initials but with full names such as SUTTON READING, coats of arms, numbers and crowns.

The British Government Departments known to have used stamps perforated with initials or a symbol are:

Admiralty Transport Department
Board of Trade
Crown Agents
Department of Scientific and Industrial Research
HM Office of Works
HM Stationery Office
Ministry of Munitions
Public Trustee Office.

Well over 13,000 different GB Perfins have been identified, including stamps perforated C of A at Australia House.

You will all be aware that Australia has its own Perfins, the best known of which are the Perf OS varieties. Several State Governments continue the practice of puncturing stamps to prevent misuse, notably New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

For those who may wish to pursue the subject further, there are Societies which specialise in Security endorsements and the Security Endorsement and Perfins Society of Great Britain is one such; for further information, write to P. Stockton, 15 London Road North, Pognton, Stockport, Cheshire, England. A catalogue/Album for GB perfins is published by Dr Harvey Tilles, PO Box 5466, High Point, North Carolina 27262 USA.

THE STAMPS OF IRELAND

E.C.Druce

Nineteen seventy two marked the 50th Anniversary of the first issue of Irish postage stamps. They appeared on 17th February 1922 and consisted of the then current G.B. set (apart from the one pound value) overprinted in Gaelic. Since that time the Irish Free State, and subsequently the Republic of Eire, have issued a total of over 300 stamps. They include provisional overprints, definitives, commemoratives, postage dues and airmail stamps as well as postal stationery items and booklets.

Provisional Issues

Current GB KGV values were overprinted in Gaelic "Provisional Government of Ireland, 1922" and issued on 17th February 1922. The provisional issues were necessary whilst the Post Office investigated the whole subject of stamp printing, production of dies, erection of strong rooms, and above all, the production and control of watermarked paper.

The original contract for overprinting was awarded to two Dublin printers, Dollard Printing House Dublin Ltd. and Alex Thom & Co. Ltd. Dollard held the contract for all the values except that for the 1½d, 2d, 6d and 1s, which was given to Thom.



"Provisional Government of Ireland 1922" - Provisional Issue.



"Irish Free State 1922" - Provisional and First Definitive Issues.

On 17th February 1922 three different types of overprint went on sale: (1) Dollard low values with a long tailed 9 in 1922; (2) Thom low values with a normal 9 and a stop after 1922 and (3) Dollard high values with a long tail to the 9 and a wider overprint in four lines as opposed to five lines for the low values.

Unfortunately some of the Dollard low value overprints were in a dull black colour and it was difficult to see them against the dark background of some of the values, particularly the 9d. Between 1st April and July 1922, the 2½d, 4d, and 9d values were overprinted from the same plates in a reddish ink. Later printings show the overprint in a carmine shade. Black overprints were not withdrawn, so the two issues were on sale side by side.

In June 1922 the Dollard contract expired, and due to damage to equipment caused by the Civil War, was not renewed and the contract passed to Thom who used their normal 9 and stop after 1922 overprint. At the same time they endeavoured to improve the overprint by altering the ink by the addition of blue to the original black. These became known as the blue-black overprints. The 2½d, 4d, and 9d values continued to be overprinted in red but with the normal 9 overprint.

At this time a third printer entered the scene. It was not possible for the Dublin printing houses to overprint the rolls needed for coils. The contract for overprinting the coil stamps (½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d) was awarded to Harrison & Sons Ltd., the London printers who also printed the basic stamps (except for the 6d value). These coil stamps, which were issued on 19th June 1922, can be distinguished by the long "i" of "Rialtas" and the slightly wider overprint.

There was one further issue of "Provisional Government" overprints and this consisted of the high values 2/6d, 5/- and 10/- which were overprinted by Thom for the first time and issued 17th-25th October 1922. They are characterised by a narrow overprint (20.75mm for the third line, as against 21.5mm for Dollard overprints) and blue-black overprint. They were only on issue for a little over two months and are among the rarest of Irish stamps.

The new Irish definitive stamps were not ready by December 1922 and because of the changed political status it was necessary to alter the overprint to read, in Gaelic, "Irish Free State 1922". The overprinting was in black, with the 2½d, 4d and 9d once again in red. Two different types of black ink were used, dull and blue-black. The blue-black is the most common and is unique to the 1½d, 5d, 10d and 1/- values. All values were issued over a space of five weeks (11th December 1922 - 16th January 1923).

Once more the production of coil roll overprints was entrusted to Harrisons. The overprint can be distinguished by the constantly raised second "e" of "Eireann" giving the word a curved look.

Beginning in December 1922, the first regular definitive set began its haphazard introduction and all values to 10d were issued by December 1923 and the overprinted issues were phased out. However the high values 2/6d to 10/- were not issued until September

1937! Several reprints of the high-value overprints were necessary. The first, in August 1925, is distinguished by a narrow date (5.0mm as opposed to 6.0mm). However, identification is further complicated by the issue in May-June 1927 of the composite date settings, the 1922 width alternating between 5.0mm and 6.0mm on adjacent stamps. Further confusion arises with the fact that in 1927-28 the old 6.0mm wide date setting was used on a further overprint. However a small ink dot between the "S" and "a" of "Saorstat" is a good guide to this printing.

The final overprinting was in 1935 when the re-engraved G.B. stamp was used, easily distinguished by the background to the King's head being composed of horizontal and diagonal lines.

These Irish Free State overprints on the high values are difficult to recognise. Some guidelines are:

S.G. No.	Printing	Ink	Date Size	Medallion Background	Other Characters
64-66	1922	Blue-black some black	6m	Horiz. lines	
83-85	1925	Black	5mm	Horiz. lines	
	mid 1927	Black	Alt.5/6mm	Horiz. lines	
86-88	late 1927	Black	6mm	Horiz. lines	S.a
99-101	1935	Black	6mm	Horiz. + diag. lines	

Definitives

In a public notice issued on 1st February 1922, the Postmaster-General of the Irish Free State invited designs for stamps to supersede those of G.B. The stipulation was that they be symbolic, not embrace any representation of a personal nature and inscriptions had to be in Gaelic characters. A payment of 25 pounds was made for each successful design.

Originally three designs were accepted, the map of Ireland for low values under one shilling, the Celtic Cross for low shilling values, and the arms for the high values. However in the latter half of 1922, civil war had disrupted the country, and when the first values of the definitive set began to appear in 1923 (the 2d was issued in December 1922 at some post offices), these ideas had changed somewhat. An additional design had been added, "the sword of light" and these four designs were used for values up to 1s. At this time it was intended that the high values should be issued in designs showing the Bank of Ireland, the Old G.P.O., and the Customs House. However, they were finally issued in 1937, and bore an allegorical design of St. Patrick.

These definitive designs continued in use until 1968, when the new definitives were issued. The plain designs and the long life of 45 years led to considerable disinterest in Irish stamps on the part of collectors.

Two changes were made in this set. The original issue was on paper with the SE watermark; from 1940-49 the issue gradually

appeared on E watermarked paper, and finally in 1966-67 the 3d and 5d values appeared on chalk-surfaced paper. The high values watermarked SE were only on issue for 6 years (8 years for the 10/-) and are relatively scarce.

Coil stamps were also issued from 1924. They were made up in paste-up strips of 10 (vertical) and 12 (horizontal). In 1933 an experimental issue of the 1d appeared imperforate at sides except for a single perforation below the top perforations. Later it was issued perf 15 x imperforate and lacking the single perf. The $\frac{1}{2}$ d value was issued imperforate at top and bottom and the 2d appeared in two different forms, imperforate x 14 and perf. 15 x imperforate. This latter stamp is the rarest of normally-issued Irish stamps; only 4 mint singles, 2 mint pairs and a mint strip of 5 and twenty-five used copies are known!

A new series of definitive stamps was issued in four instalments in 1968-69. The designs, selected in an international competition, were by the Munich artist Heinrich Gerl. The competitors were asked to submit designs associated with early Irish Art. Altogether four designs were used: a stylised dog based on an ancient brooch design from County Kilkenny ($\frac{1}{2}$ d to 6d); a stag based on a design from a hanging bowl from Kent (7d to 1/9); a winged ox based on an illumination in the Gospel Book of Lichfield from Lichfield, England (2/6, 5/-) and an eagle based on the 8th century illumination Imago Aquilae in the Corpus Christi College Library, Cambridge (10/-). Coil stamps with a different perforation were issued in 1970.

These designs were also used on the new decimal definitive set issued on 15th February 1971. A se-tenant coil strip of 1p, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ p and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ p also appeared. (To be continued)

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SOME THOUGHTS ON THE 5/- SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE STAMP

A.G.Salisbury

This stamp was printed in sheets of 80, comprising two upper and two lower panes each of 20 stamps, each pane consisting of four horizontal rows of five. After printing, the sheets were divided between the panes and issued as Post Office sheets of 20. Each such sheet had a "JOHN ASH" imprint in the centre of the bottom selvedge, below stamps 2, 3 and 4 of the bottom row.

The total printing, according to the Australia Post Handbook "Australian Commemorative and Air Mail Stamps 1927 to 1951", at page 14, was 72,800 stamps, or 3,640 issued sheets of 20. This means that the maximum possible number of imprints is 3,640. These are usually found in strips of three, but occasionally one sees a single stamp (R4/3) with imprint attached, but in such cases, the left and right ends of the imprint are missing, because the complete imprint, as already stated, extends below R4/2 and R4/4 as well.

In spite of the very small printing, there always seem to be some of these stamps being offered for sale or at auctions. However, even though this may possibly result from a rapid, or at least continuous, turnover of some copies because of the favourable prices obtainable, the frequency of sale can give an exaggerated impression of availability. Some unknown number of copies must have been used for normal postal purposes at the time of issue, and many of these probably would not have survived. There are copies in existence with heavy parcel cancellations, and if it were not for the generally unacceptable status of second-class copies, these might well command a premium on account of rarity, or at least on account of evidence of genuine use.

Then there were a few used on first-day covers, particularly with the postmarks of the various special post offices established to mark the celebrations accompanying the opening of the Bridge. Finally, a significant number of copies was used to provide cancelled-to-order stamps, mainly for incorporation in the collections of current postage stamps which were sold at that time by the Post Office as Specimen sets.

The December 1977 issue of the official Philatelic Bulletin gave some interesting information about these Specimen sets. It was recorded that the sets made up for sale between 1932 and 1943 included a C.T.O. copy of the 5/- Bridge stamp, and that this caused a "heavy demand" for the sets. In spite of this, the numbers of sets sold never reached high figures, and a publicity drive for two weeks in 1936 resulted in the sale of only 550 sets. The Bulletin continued that two years later the annual sales were well under 1,000 sets, and that later on the figures were:-

1939-40	1,260
1940-41	560
1941-42	1,360
1942-43	6,720

Later in 1943, orders were running at the rate of about 150 per week, and, as mentioned above, supplies of the Bridge stamp ran out in that year.

In passing, one wonders what effect on sales in 1942-43 resulted from the influx of servicemen from the United States of America into Australia. The catalogue values for the stamp as shown in the Australian Commonwealth Specialists' Catalogue are interesting:-

	Mint	Used
1941	\$2.00	\$1.50
1943	2.50	1.50
1945	6.00	4.00

By pulling a few figures out of the air, one would think that there could have been about 15,000 stamps issued as C.T.O. copies in the Specimen sets, which comes to about 20% of the total printing. By far the greater proportion of the "used" copies seen today are in this category, and the total number of used copies (comprising C.T.O. and genuinely used) which could possibly exist today might be as low as 25,000.

All this, of course, is only surmise, and the real figures, if they were only known, could be somewhat different. However, while no definite conclusions can be drawn, and having regard to the non-survival of many genuinely used copies, it does appear that a used copy may well be scarcer than a mint one. Perhaps it may be that at some future time, the price for a used copy will approach more closely the price of a mint one than it does at the present.

There is no difficulty in acquiring this stamp, provided one has the money, and, even though current prices (which have levelled out somewhat in the last couple of years) seem enormous when compared with those prevailing even ten years ago, they are reasonable for a stamp which must always be in deficient supply. When it is considered that, of the millions of collectors in the world, the greater number can never hope to complete their Australian collections by having the 5/- Bridge stamp, it is only to be expected that the price will rise steadily. Popularity of an issue is one of the main determining factors in fixing price, and, even if high prices deter would-be buyers, and divert their attention towards other cheaper stamps, I feel that money spent on a copy of the 5/- Bridge deserves a high priority.

Value is only relative to demand, and there are many scarcer stamps which can be bought much more cheaply. High-value Kangaroo stamps overprinted for use in New Guinea are far cheaper than the unoverprinted normal Australian versions, yet they are far scarcer. Then, Rosenblum in his handbook on Papua points out that the 5/- Lakatoi was surcharged with a new value of 1/3d at about the same time as the 5/- Bridge was issued. Only 20,000 copies were surcharged, yet it is catalogued by Stanley Gibbons at only £3.50 for a mint copy, compared with £750 for the Bridge stamp. A set of seven stamps was issued in Mongolia in 1977, and only 2,000 sets were printed, yet the Gibbons catalogue value for the complete set is only £1.33!

The only conclusion to be drawn for this is that the 5/- Bridge stamp continues to be one of the most desirable issues for acquisition.

THE POSTAL HISTORY COLUMN

E.C.Druce

One of the pleasures of being associated with something brand new is that on any topic one can begin at the beginning. Through this column on postal history I shall try to bring to you its many facets ranging from the rarest items to the most mundane of postal markings.

Robson Lowe is a name synonymous with postal history, and it was he who coined the phrase "The science of stamp collecting is called philately, the humanity is called postal history".

On the philatelic learning curve, postal history appears somewhat later than stamps. And for people who only collect mint stamps, (or even more narrowly, the gum on the back of mint stamps) it never appears at all.

However, for those who recognise the intrinsic worth of a stamp which clearly shows that it has carried out its allotted task, postal history is just around the corner with pastures greener, thrills unlimited and territories unconquered.

My first tentative steps into postal history were as an escape from collecting the stamps of the British colonies issued during the Queen Elizabeth's reign. There had to be something more to life than waiting for the new issues to arrive through the mail. So I started collecting the postmarks of the small offices on current stamps. If you think that is easy, then remember that the island of Saint Lucia in the West Indies with a population of some 80,000 has 48 post offices.

Once the bug had bitten there was no more confinement to just usage in Elizabeth II's reign. The aesthetic combination of miniature work of art (the stamp), the need for the particular stamp, the postal markings and address, gathered together on an envelope or card meant that every cover of whatever vintage became an eye-catcher. So more and more covers were slowly added, some bearing 'dull' stamps that, on their own, had kindled no joy.

Such collecting did in fact trigger a desire to collect those stamps which had formerly been unfairly dismissed as dull. The collecting wheel had turned full circle.

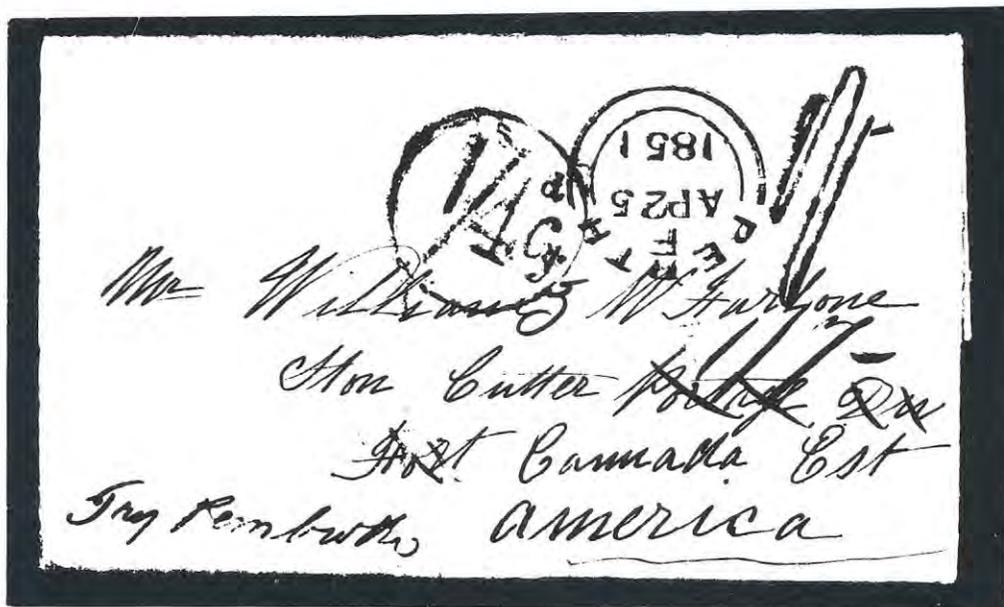
There are other spin-offs to collecting postal history; for example, a stamp collector may well shy away from postal stationery, but a postal historian would be attracted to every used item and hence an interest in postal stationery is often a welcome side effect!

The dawning of my interest in postal history was followed by acquisition of postal history auction catalogues. Suddenly one of those flashes of light occurred - philately does not begin in 1840 or, if you collect Australian Commonwealth by the catalogue, in 1913. Philately begins with the dawning of man's first communication using the written word.

Thus it is possible to collect not only two thousand-year-old papyrus letters, but also fourteenth-century letters from the old Merchants of Venice and the correspondence of a Europe moving

towards the Industrial Revolution, as well as mail markings currently applied by post offices worldwide.

In this column I shall be exploring the many facets of postal history including markings, rates, routes, postal reformers and personages, acts and broadsheets, as well as the market, the literature and sources of supply. I would appreciate comments and queries and even offers to be a guest star in the column.



As an illustration of postal history, I have started off with a cover from Scotland to Canada East (now Quebec). The postal rate at this time was one shilling by British packet and two pence local delivery (1/2d). The shilling due to the British Post Office on this unpaid letter was signified by the sigmoidal mark in the upper right corner. Canadian currency, which was still expressed as shillings and pence, was devalued so that about 14 pence currency equalled one shilling sterling. With the local delivery charge the amount due was one shilling and four pence currency denoted by the circular handstamp. On the one hand, a very ordinary cover but on the other, one which demonstrates the postage rates across the Atlantic in 1851 and a record of Canadian monetary history before the decimalisation in 1859.

READING ABOUT STAMPS

'Phil. Litt'

The other day, a nice lady came up to me and said, "Phillip, I'd like you to do something for me". I agreed, of course, as the request had been accompanied by a sweet smile, and I knew she wouldn't be after taking advantage of me - well, she was a nice lady. But - oh heavens - she only wants me to write a column on useful books for stamp collectors. Me! When will I ever learn?

Anyway, I retrieved a little self-respect by dictating what I would write about, and what I would not do. I really told her. "Of course, Phil dear; you'd know best". No nice lady is going to put anything over me.

So that is what this column is going to do. I want to look at various philatelic subjects, and talk about the books which may be found useful to collectors whose main interest is in those subjects. I want to talk about both simple and advanced areas of philatelic interest, so that beginners will find some help from some articles and specialists from others. Each issue will try to deal with one area, such as a beginner stamp collector's library, thematics, Australia, philatelic periodicals, collecting Australian States, postal stationery, specialist areas, e.g. Australia King George V, stamp forgeries, and so on.

Now don't run away with the idea that I'm clever enough to do this all by myself. What I will be doing is finding someone who knows about a subject and asking him what books he has found helpful, and why. That way we will get to pick the brains of lots of collectors, instead of the rather meagre diet of books that old Phil Litt knows about.

Naturally if you find I have tried to write about your particular area of interest, and have missed out some important goodies, let me know, so that I can share your comments with others. A letter addressed to Mr. Phil. Litt, care The Philatelic Society of Canberra, P.O. Box 382, Civic Square, A.C.T., 2608, will get your contribution on helpful literature out where it can help everyone. Also, if you want me to write on the books for a particular subject, let me know.

What I will NOT be doing (as I firmly told the nice lady) is trying to write a column of book reviews on current or newly printed literature. Plenty of magazines do that already, and they're better at it than I am, anyway. If we want to cover the scope of this column in a word, our main interest is to be bibliographic. How's that? ("Gee, Phil...")

So, having got that off my chest, I will now begin. Ahem. The best place to begin is at the beginning, and so I want to suggest some of the books that a beginning stamp collector either should have or should know about, so our theme for today is "BASIC BOOKS".

Take young Bill for instance. His Gran really got him interested in stamps by giving him one of those big packs of "2,000 Stamps of all the World (Guaranteed no duplicates)", plus a small

stamp album, and he'd been having fun with them. He had started sticking them in (he knew about stamp hinges), but after filling up the page for India, Great Britain and the USA and one or two others, he began to run into troubles with (apparently) no page for some countries, queer country names, some stamps with no name he could read, and so on. He'd been talking to some of his mates, too, and had heard some rather lofty comments on odd-sounding things like watermarks, perf. something, etc. That was when he came to me for help.

I suggested that first of all he go along to the stamp dealer's shop and see if he had any helpful books. He did that, and came away with two little books which cost him only \$5 the two, but were pretty good value, I thought.

Bill's first book, "What Stamp is That?", answered a lot of his queries better than I could. This attractive little Seven Seas publication deals with the puzzling things you find written on stamps of other countries (such as "Hungary - inscribed Magyar Posta" or "Iceland - inscribed Island"), and had lots of pictures to help you identify stamps with Cyrillic, Semitic, Oriental and other scripts that puzzle collectors both young and not-so-young. It also has tables of world currencies (at last, I have found out that a krone has 100 ore and not the other way around), overprints and their meanings, numerals in six different scripts - wow! I found that I, Phillip Litt, was picking up things I'd been unsure of for years, so guess what, I've got a copy for myself, too. Would you believe it?

Bill's second book, "Let's Collect Stamps", by Ervin J. Felix, was likewise a happy choice. It is a very practical handbook on ways to do things, - like how to soak stamps while having due care for the ol' blue-lined envelopes, useful accessories, types of collections, comments on stamp values, plus quite a good glossary of philatelic terms. I told Bill he'd chosen well.

There were a few other books Bill had seen but couldn't afford, although his friendly stamp dealer had said they were good books too. One of them, "Stamps - A Collector's Guide" by Bill Hornadge, \$4.50, I didn't suggest that he buy - not, mind you, because it isn't good. It handles the same area of practical concerns as the simpler "Let's Collect Stamps", but does it at a level rather too mature for a 12-year-old lad. I fancy that when Bill has been collecting for a couple of years he could well buy himself a copy of the Hornadge, as it would broaden his operational techniques a little, and it has a lot of anecdotal interest as well.

Two others he saw were Melville's "Stamp Collecting", in the "Teach Yourself" series, and Stanley Phillips' "Stamp Collecting" published by Knight Books. These are really good sources of information. Nothing makes a hobby more alive for a kid (or for anyone, for that matter) than finding out how stamps were first used, learning about their printing, being aware of forgeries, knowing some of the special ways in which stamps are collected, and

so on. That's what made these books interesting and useful for my young mate. Actually, the stamp dealer hadn't tried to sell them to Bill, as he did not have them in stock. He was just showing young Bill some of his own books. Bill was a bit down in the mouth about this, until I told him that he could probably get them from his local Public Library.

The other one Bill saw was Bennett & Watson's "Philatelic Terms Illustrated", published by Stanley Gibbons for \$9. Gibbons, by the bye, put out a large number of practical little handbooks that I commend in a general way to beginners and others of all ages. At this stage, Bill didn't really need this one, but I told him to save up for it. I could have loaned him my copy, but, well, I find I need to have it by me. Then again, Bill's my friend, and too often loaned books result in lost friends. This particular Gibbons handbook, by the way, is not merely a beginner's book, but should be in every collector's library. Test yourself (dear reader) - what, for the philatelist, is a classic, an essay, a plug, a killer, a tab or a duplex? - you'll find them all, plus many more, in this invaluable little handbook to informed philately.

I didn't see Bill then for a few months. When I did catch up with him, I found that he had matured a lot in the level of his interest. He was, in fact, rather disgruntled. He had heaps of stamps, and was getting snowed under. He felt there ought to be more pattern to it. "Mr. Litt", says he, "how do I know the right order to put my stamps in? Like my Australian stamps - there are lots with the same picture and value but in different colours. How can I put them into sets?"

So I had to tackle the knotty question of catalogues as an aid to sorting a collection. Luckily we both had time just then to go to the library, and I was able to show him quite a large range of stamp catalogues and talk about the different ways they listed the stamps. Of course, Bill had to make up his own mind what sort of collection he was going to build up, but I was able to show him how different catalogues could help him. For instance, I showed him the difference between comprehensive listings and simplified listings. As it happened, Bill wasn't far enough along the thorny way to be worried yet about differences of watermark, perforation, paper, ink or gum (to name a few), so for starters I showed him the two Seven Seas publications, "The Australasian Stamp Catalogue" and "The Pocket Australian Stamp Catalogue". The little Pocket job is a bit limited, even for young Bill. It is a simplified listing, that is, it lists the stamps only on the basis of their differences in appearance, and takes no account of things like perforation, watermark or paper thickness variations. So it is helpful only on the most superficial level, helping the novice arrange things in some order. I has nice coloured illustrations, and so can be helpful at times.

The larger "Australasian Stamp Catalogue", on the other hand, (usually abbreviated ASC) is an interesting mix of simplified and comprehensive listings. Australia is listed comprehensively (i.e. each issue is shown with its varying features of watermark, perforation, etc), but with simplified listing as an optional extra

for the pre-1936 stamps. The Australian States and Territories are added with, for the most part, listings on a simplified basis only. It also gives a good beginner guide to Postal Stationery. Although Bill looked at both these catalogues, he was drawn mainly to the ASC. So I suggested to Bill that his Australian stamps based on this catalogue would be a challenging way for him to start to come to grips with perforation and watermark differences - and, truth to tell, he was getting pretty excited about it.

So much for the cheaper catalogues we saw. They are fun to use, and for the young collector they are a good introduction to the area of philately that, I think, is the really exciting part, when we start to find out what a treasure hunt it can be. I remember that young Bill was startled at one thing - his eyes were suddenly opened to the wider dimensions of postal stationery. Somehow he just hadn't ever thought about collecting whole envelopes.

Then, just before we left the library, I (very gently, I hope) introduced him to some of the major catalogues, Scott, some of the Continental items, some specialised catalogues, and of course Gibbons. We did pull off the shelf the two major Gibbons catalogues - the "Stamps of the World" for simplified listings of each country, and the Stanley Gibbons Part 1 "British Commonwealth". Just for fun we compared the simplified listing of New South Wales in the Australasian Stamp Catalogue with the comprehensive listing Gibbons gives it in the British Commonwealth catalogue. You know, I think young Bill is hooked.

So that, dear readers, is that for now. We've just been looking at some basic literature which helps the stamp collector to tackle his hobby in an informed and practical way. And whether you're a youngster like Bill or a beginner of advanced age and feeble gait, you still need the basics. And the books Bill and I shared will, I think, prove helpful to you too.

Cheerio, Phil Litt

The following books were cited: (approximate prices only)

- Seven Seas Stamps - What Stamp is That? \$2.00
- Felix, Ervin J. - Let's Collect Stamps - Wisconsin, 1976 - \$3.00
- Hornadge, W. - Stamps - a Collector's Guide - Review Publications, Dubbo, 1980 - \$4.50
- Bennet & Watson - Philatelic Terms Illustrated - Stanley Gibbons, 1972 - \$9
- Stamps of the World - Stanley Gibbons (annual catalogue) - 1982 edition, about \$50
- British Commonwealth Catalogue - Stanley Gibbons (annual catalogue) - 1982 edition, about \$40
- Australasian Stamp Catalogue - Seven Seas Stamps, Dubbo (annual catalogue) - 1982 Edition, about \$7
- Pocket Australian Stamp Catalogue - Seven Seas Stamps, Dubbo (annual catalogue) - about \$2
- Phillips, Stanley - Stamp Collecting - paperback - Knight Books - 1969
- Melville, F. J. - Stamp Collecting - "Teach Yourself" series - English Universities Press, 1966

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"In China, the postage for inland mails has remained unchanged for the past 32 years, a rare phenomenon in the world's postal service today". (P.2, China Philately, Summer 1982).

Yes, it costs only 2 cents (in Australian currency equivalent) to post a letter to your own district or 4 cents (surface) or 5 cents (airmail) to post a letter to anywhere in the country. Those were the postage rates in 1949 and they are still the postage rates in 1982.

There is nothing unusual in those static postage rates. In fact, in a timeless land like China, the postage rate once remained steady for thirty centuries from the beginning of the Chou Dynasty (1066 B.C.) to the end of the Ching Dynasty (1911 A.D.). In those days, if you wished to post a letter, whether it was written on a piece of bamboo or a piece of mulberry paper, all you had to do was to go to the post-station in the nearest larger village or town, hand over your letter to the post-station attendant and pay him one chien or an equivalent copper coin. Your letter would be carried by station relay across the country to its destination.

Even after the introduction of the adhesive postage stamps to the larger cities on the East coast in the fourth year of the reign of the Emperor Kuang Hsu (1878 A.D.), the post-station system, like Cobb & Co. in the 19th century Australia, was still operating in many parts of the Empire. The postage rate was still one chien or an equivalent copper coin.

P.LEE, a stamp dealer based in Canberra, is certainly not as static as the postage rates in China. His prices rise or fall in accordance with the prevailing market conditions, but always remain competitive: whether buying or selling. If you are thinking of buying or selling anything philatelic, why not contact

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	HND	23 x 30.5	Padded	32 White	360	2 Glassine	\$22.00
	S 4160	23 x 30.5	Padded	32 Black	228	2 Glassine	\$25.00
	HKSD	23 x 30.5	Padded	32 Black	288	2 Acetate	\$33.00
	HN 48	23 x 30.5	Padded	48 White	480	2 Glassine	\$30.00
	HN 64	23 x 30.5	Padded	64 White	640	2 Glassine	\$38.00
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