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Capital Philately



Journal of the Philatelic Society of Canberra



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Contents	Page
Editorial	35
Postal History Column - Censorship E.C. Druce	37
Ausipex 84 - A Personal View Elsbeth Bodley	42
Jamaican Judicial Overprints - Are Revenue Stamps legitimate Philately? D. Ingle Smith	45
An Exercise in Plating A.G. Salisbury	49
Why Chess? K.P. Breitkopf	53
Reading About Stamps - On China Philately 'Phil Litt'	58

Editorial

In the last issue of "Capital Philately", the editorial dealt with the possible dangers to philately as a result of the growing complexity of the hobby, due to the ever-increasing flow of new issues, bringing with it limitations to any individual's areas of interest, bringing, in turn, reductions in the important fields of research.

The individual student is being forced into a narrower field. It is not enough for anyone to be totally expert in the philately of any particular country if he knows little about the general principles and practices of the hobby. In many ways, philatelic knowledge is more important than being actually in possession of the stamps in question, and this highlights the need for the serious collector to read and study widely, and to utilise the facilities of his own library or that of his philatelic society. The extension of knowledge on the part of its members is one of the most important activities of any society, and this has been a main feature of the policy of The Philatelic Society of Canberra for many years. Every society, however small, can make a major contribution to the progress of its members by undertaking a programme of education to broaden the horizons of its members beyond the accumulating and beginner stages.

Nowhere is the importance of education more important than in the criteria for the selection of judges, and every serious collector would do well to seek to attain the necessary qualifications. More and more attention is being given today to the selection of competent judges, particularly at the national and international levels. In Australia, the last couple of years have seen the rationalisation of the previous haphazard methods of selection of judges for each exhibition, and the introduction of a conscious and definitive scheme for their training. However, no matter how well-intentioned or how highly-motivated the individual judges may be, or how high may be their personal standards of integrity, the judges must have a degree of knowledge over the widest possible field, based on experience over a long period, so as to ensure that justice is done to the exhibitors at whatever level is concerned. Not every exhibitor is always satisfied with the verdict of the judges, of course, and there are safeguards inserted into the system by way of the review of one judge's opinion by other members of the team or the jury, but the initial responsibility lies with the individual judge, who must have the expertise for his job.

On a more practical note, the problems of imparting and absorbing philatelic knowledge may be seen in the production of such a publication as "Capital Philately", and it has been the consistent policy of the publishers to present as wide a selection as possible of articles and features on all aspects of the hobby. This brings problems which extend beyond those of thinking up and writing notes to interest and even instruct the reader. Any journal such as this depends on the ability to finance it, and it can survive only if there are sufficient interested subscribers to enable the bills to be paid. "Capital Philately" is provided to every member of The Philatelic Society of Canberra as part of the membership deal, and the associated costs are found within the Society's annual budget. In spite of the difficulties in containing costs so as not to place too great a burden on that budget, it is true that any enterprise in the publishing field can achieve economies in association with greater printing runs, provided, of course, that the copies can be sold. Thus the journal needs a much greater number of subscribers additional to the Society's membership. Costs are being kept to a minimum, consistent with a desirable element of quality, and there are no editorial or administrative overheads. In any financial situation, where expenses cannot be cut, then the only solution is to raise more income, and the continuation of publication of this journal will rely heavily on the success of seeking more new subscribers. The fact that "Capital Philately" in its first two years of existence has earned two high awards at international philatelic exhibitions is evidence of its merit as a contributor to philatelic literature.

THE POSTAL HISTORY COLUMN - CENSORSHIP

E.C. Druce

The information technology revolution of today highlights the importance of information in modern life. But the importance of information has been long recognised. Indeed, it was the recognition of the power of information that prevented the introduction of the direct antecedents of our modern postal systems until about three hundred and fifty years ago. Up until this time, apart from merchant posts, the mail was entirely royal mail - the correspondence of the court.

One method of making sure that only court (i.e. government) views were spread widely and contra views were not, was to restrict the ability of people to transmit information unless they were part of the government. However, private letter carriage did occur, often by the use of carriers or by private messengers. In England, one reason why King Charles I opened the royal post to private letters in 1635 was so that he could control and open private letters. The opening of mail to or from people suspected of being in opposition to the King was widely practised and continued for a considerable time. At a time when Civil War was brewing, information in letters was also of interest to the Commons. Willcocks, in his "England's Postal History" records that the Secret Committee of the Commons, 1844, quotes extracts from the Commons Journal of 1640-41 which show that every mail overseas was stopped and the letters read openly in order to discover the King's plans to obtain help from France.

The motivation to run the post was therefore not financial but power and this continued for the remainder of the century. The combination of opening the post to private letters and the ability to read such letters led to the introduction of postal censorship.

Censorship is introduced by countries whenever war is declared or other circumstances, such as local insurrections, occur. For example, about 1785 when the Grand Masters and the Inquisitors were locked in a power struggle in Malta, mail was intercepted. The Inquisitors in fact arranged for the interception of mail from a lodge in Malta to a brother lodge in Rome by the Roman postal authorities. By this means they demonstrated that members of the religious order had joined the secret society and so managed the outlawing of freemasonry in Malta under penalty of excommunication.

Another early example of censorship is a proclamation of the Governor of Gibraltar, in 1807:

"In future, all letters which are intended to be sent from this Garrison to Spain, whether by Land or Water, are to be first brought to the Secretary's Office for examination during small office hours; and any person who shall, after this warning, be detected in attempting to send or convey, any letter to Spain that shall not have been previously brought to the Secretary's office will be considered as a Spy who is holding correspondence with the Enemy, and punished accordingly"



However, the full force of censorship on a world-wide scale did not manifest itself until the two world wars of this century. The modern style of warfare and the increase in technological sophistication meant that there were many more secrets to keep and the humble letter became a prime target for those seeking to prevent the transmission of such secrets however inadvertant.

The art of postal censorship had developed during the Boer War at the same time that army postal units became a common part of the British Army. The first unit, the Post office Rifle Volunteers was set up in 1882 and was sent to Egypt following the bombardment of Alexandria. During the Boer War both the British and Boers censored mail - both private and military - and because of the relatively large volume of mail copies are not hard to come by. On the other hand, censored mail from the Australian Contingent is scarce.

The fact that large numbers of prisoners were taken in the Boer War led to censorship of mail from Internment Camps. Boer prisoners were scattered through many then British colonies, always with a fair distance of ocean between them and home! Thus censorship of prisoners of war mail can be found at this time from Bermuda, Ceylon, St. Helena and Gibraltar.

Censorship was brought to a fine art during the first world war and there is a plethora of censor markings. Collectors divide such markings into two general groups - those applied to civilian mail and those applied to military mail. The former group are postal censor marks and they are either control marks or "passed censor" marks. Control marks are used to indicate to Postal Authorities that the letter has passed through the Censor's office and can be delivered and to also indicate to other Censors that it has not been examined. In the case of Aden, these markings are unusual, being usually either a large capital P or a large capital reversed S.

The Aden cover illustrated shows a "passed censor" mark indicating that the letter has been examined and cleared for delivery to the addressee. In this case the code AB-105 indicates the Chief Censor, presumably because the letter was registered.

Military censor marks are often similar to this one and are usually coded to identify the censor. Collectors can have endless fun trying to tie particular censorship numbers to particular military units in the field. The search for numbers can also use up a fair amount of time and patience - Aden had 120 different military censorship markings during the period 1914-19!

Censorship labels also came into use during the first world war and they were used to re-seal opened letters. However, it was during the second world war that labels came into their own.

They incorporated both the information that the item had been examined and also the identification of the examiner and thus handstamp markings are relatively rarer on civil mail compared to the first world war. However, military mails is usually handstamped, and the advent of the Air Force increased the number and types of military markings.

The second cover is an example of the use of a censor label on the left hand margin, note "Examiner 1273". A Mr Traub had written a letter from London to New York in German in 1941 (brave or foolish?). The censor had refused to pass the letter and it had been returned to the sender as the second label indicates. In addition the stamps were cancelled by a straight line "POSTAGE REFUNDED" which, apart from the "POST" is difficult to see.



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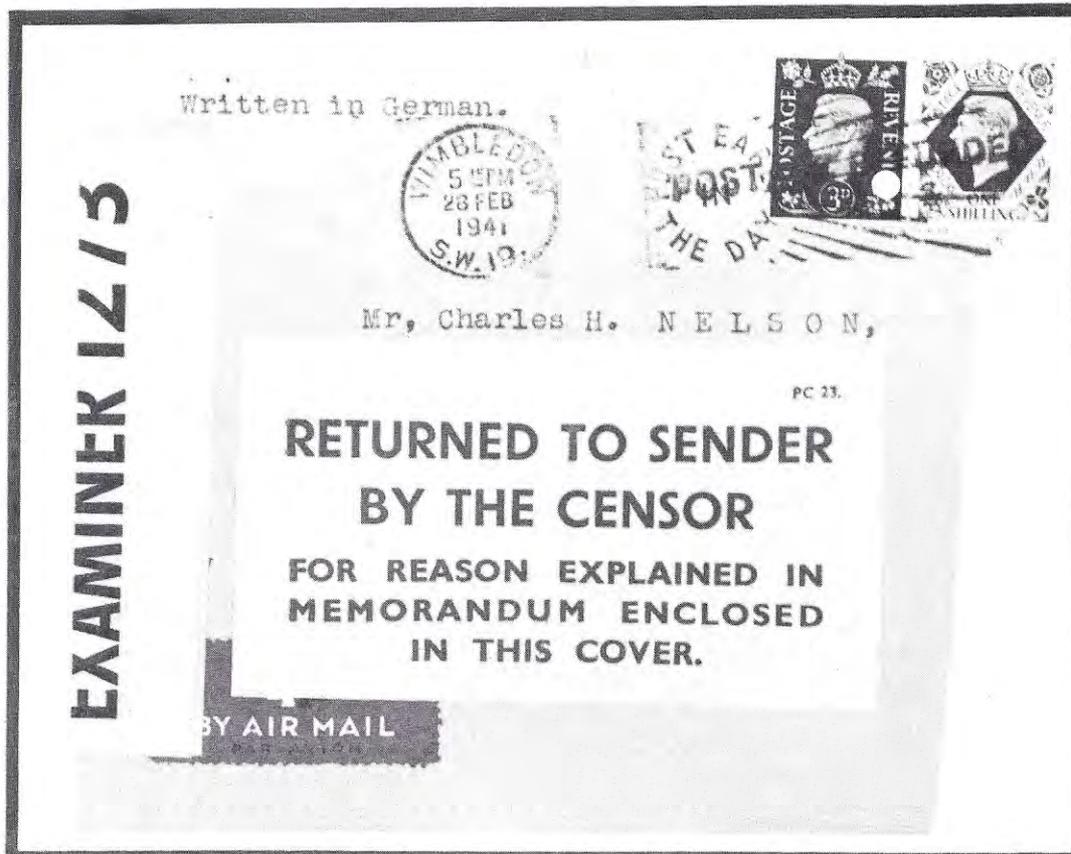
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The whole story of postal censorship has not been told and I know of no book exclusively on the subject. It is perhaps this point that persuaded me to pen these lines. Not, I hasten to add, to do the job myself but to counter the claim that there's nothing left to study in postal history or if there is, then it's too expensive. Any young collector interested in branching into postal history could well look at postal and military censorship. In the case of Australia there is little known, or at least little published, and material, especially from the second world war, is common and cheap. A wide open inexpensive field that would repay serious study over, say, a ten year period with a medal at a national or perhaps international philatelic exhibition. Good hunting.

AUSIPEX 84 - A PERSONAL VIEW

Elsbeth Bodley

Well, AUSIPEX 84 has come, with its increasing build-up of anticipation over the last couple of years, and has now passed in a whirl of adrenalin and adjectives -- superb ... sad ... friendly ... tremendous ... stimulating ... exhausting!!!!

When John Gartner attended the Society's First National Philatelic Convention in October 1980, a few weeks after Sydpex, he mentioned that Melbourne was planning a really big stamp exhibition as part of Victoria's sesquicentenary celebrations in 1984. It is obvious that the Organising Committee had put in a lot of work since then, and in fact philately in Australia has become much more organised during this same period. The Australian Philatelic Federation (formerly the Australian Stamp Promotion Council) has become a member of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (F.I.P.), the international body controlling philately, including stamp exhibitions.

F.I.P. accreditation of AUSIPEX brought with it minimum entry requirements for the competitive classes and also led to the setting up of a system of accreditation of National and State Judges, and of exhibitions.

Melbourne is fortunate in having its Exhibition Building which provides a very large area for exhibitions of all kinds, and in a pleasant setting quite close to the centre of the city. Despite the posters and all the publicity material illustrating the high dome of the Exhibition Building, AUSIPEX was held in a new and extremely modern annexe with mirror-glass exterior walls built at the northern side of the 1884 building. The original part of the main building is being renovated. As an aside, I could not help but be impressed to realise that the Exhibition Building was erected to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of Melbourne. What a busy fifty years it had been, from uninhabited bush to a flourishing city. Many of whose high-Victorian style buildings still remain; what fantastic growth that was! And what vision and foresight those first settlers had in planning for the future as they did.

The sad note of the exhibition was, of course, to hear on my arrival on Sunday 23rd September that Ron Hyeronimus had died early on Saturday morning. His job as A.C.T. Commissioner for AUSIPEX had been very important to him and in fact Ron did travel to Melbourne to deliver many of the A.C.T. entries, his last duty as Commissioner.

It was good to hear later that his entry of Australian Commonwealth had been awarded a well-deserved Gold Medal.

And now for some of the other adjectives I listed earlier - the friendliness of the Exhibition, of everyone there and, indeed, of everyone in Melbourne with whom I came in contact, was quite outstanding. Stamp collecting can be a lonely interest at times, and non-collectors cannot comprehend its fascination. One of the joys is joining a Society and finding other people with similar passions and interests - and one of the benefits of a big exhibition is to enable people from all over the world to meet, exchange and share their enthusiasm and interests. Everyone there shared a common interest, and one felt free to make comments and strike up a conversation with others inspecting the display frames or looking at dealers' stocks.

The Court of Honour was one of the well-publicised highlights of the Exhibition. After reading of other overseas exhibitions and hearing of the long queues to see the Court of Honour, I was very impressed with the accessibility of the displays at AUSIPEX. Security guards were certainly there and very much in evidence, but one did not have to queue up, and it was possible to move freely around the area and take as long as one wished on particular items. The "Post Office Mauritius" was obviously the centrepiece and was set off in its own glass case, but one could still get one's nose within a few inches of it! The full sheet of Penny Blacks, the early Australian States stamps, and the very wide variety of displays provided by many of the judges, meant that there was something for everyone, whatever one's collecting interest. Any attempt to describe it in more detail tends to end up like a catalogue, and the Court of Honour material is all well described in articles in the AUSIPEX catalogue.

The quality of the competitive displays was quite breathtaking. For a lot of us the first reaction on seeing some displays of our own particular field was overwhelming and we felt like crawling away and giving up! However, the fascination of such a wealth of material kept drawing me back to particular exhibits and in fact I found that I could only take in a few frames at a time. Philatelic indigestion sets in rather quickly on such a rich diet! Before long, one got accustomed to the material and could become quite blase about seeing, for instance, two four-margined Penny Blacks on cover on the same page, one dated 6 May 1840, and the other 7 May, the first and second day of use of postage stamps!

Exhausting was another adjective I used. The three exhibition halls were very large and one of the statistics I heard was that a walk up and down each row of frames in all the halls covered two

miles. As I kept dashing from one end to another to see friends, displays or dealers, I must have covered far more. Comfortable shoes are essential at such events!

One of my few criticisms of the Exhibition related to the opening hours - 12 noon to 10 p.m. on most days. This made for very long days indeed, and I found that by closing time my mind was so wound-up that it was very hard indeed to slow down and relax. Being in a hotel made it impossible to sleep in. Once inside the exhibition halls one left the wet and cold Melbourne weather behind, and the daylight, and lost all sense of natural time. I can only conclude that the late closing hour was to encourage those Melbourne people who had to work during the day, but the evenings generally tended to be rather quiet, particularly after 9 p.m., and I am sure many more people would have been happier with earlier opening and closing times.

Stimulating ... well, AUSIPEX certainly stimulated philately throughout Australia before the event, and I am sure its effect will continue. I have met several people who have been spurred on to consider putting their own entry in a future national exhibition. I met a mother and her 7-year-old daughter who had come for a quick look out of mild interest and had returned for a second day's look, and decided to start a thematic collection together. The Victoria Police who were on full-time security duty all seemed to enjoy themselves and I saw one small group admiring a cover one had bought. I couldn't resist interrupting and asking whether they had been stamp collectors before the Exhibition (they weren't!) so perhaps there will be some recruits for the Police Stamp Club.

Whatever one's interests in the whole wide world of philately, AUSIPEX must have had something to stimulate one's imagination or ambitions, and I am sure its effects will be felt for a long time. Certainly it was a show never to be forgotten!

* * * * *

Laurie Higginson, a long-time member of The Philatelic Society of Canberra, died on 3rd December 1984. He had been a member since the mid-1950's, although his service had not been continuous, as after retirement he had moved temporarily to Fiji in recent years. However, on return to Canberra, he resumed interest in the Society. He served as Vice-President in 1957-58, and as Secretary in 1958-60, and became President in 1960-61.

The Society was represented at the funeral by the Editor, who is a former President.

* * * * *

**JAMAICAN JUDICIAL OVERPRINTS - ARE REVENUE
STAMPS LEGITIMATE PHILATELTY?**

D. Ingle Smith

To some philatelists, revenue stamps will always be legitimate; to others they will remain illegitimate, or worse. However, there are cases where revenue stamps can contribute to the information in the Stanley Gibbons Catalogue, which generally is restricted to stamps used for postal purposes. An instance of this is afforded by the "Judicial" overprints of Jamaica.

The exact date of issue of the first Jamaican Judicial overprints is uncertain, but it was probably during 1898. The stamps were used for the payment of various Court fees, and were often cancelled with an oval date-stamp from the R(ural) M(agistrates) Courts of the fourteen parishes which have for long formed the local government division of the island. There are several noteworthy features of the Judicial overprints which are poorly described in the literature.

The type of Judicial overprints has remained completely unchanged from their first issue in 1898 until after Independence in 1962. No error or variation of any kind has been reported, although the overprint is in red on a limited number of values, rather than in the usual black. A provisional listing of the Judicial overprints is given in the accompanying Table, and examples of the differing stamps are illustrated. For the later issues the listing is based on the information in Barefoot and Hall (1980). The stamps which were also used, without the overprint, for postal purposes are shown, with their Stanley Gibbons catalogue numbers. Barefoot and Hall do not give information on the



watermark for the Q.E. II issue of 1953 but examples in the author's collection are all on single Crown over CA paper. However, Barefoot and Hall list a 1969 decimal issue which is also on the QE II keyplates, but in a smaller format.

From the Table it is clear that many stamp issues were produced only in the overprinted form for revenue purposes. This applies to some of the K.G. V values, as well as to all the K.G. VI and Q.E. II key-plate issues. None of the "unlisted in Gibbons" stamps has been reported without the overprint or used for postal purposes. Complete sheets of the 6d and 1/- Q.E. II values of 1953 in the author's collection show no plate numbers or other marginal markings. This is in contrast to the K.G. V stamps used both for postage and with Judicial overprints, which have plate markings repeated four times on each sheet. The Q.E. II sheets comprise 120 stamps, consisting of two panes of 60, divided by a central gutter.

These features have some interest for the postage stamp philatelist, but perhaps of more interest is the light which the Judicial overprints shed on the dates of issue of some of the stamps used for postal purposes. The multi-Crown CA 1/- brown (S.G. 53) is given in Gibbons as first issued in November 1906. This information appears to have been abstracted from Collett et al. (1928, p. 92), where it is stated "the 1/-, in brown, has been given as issued in 1905, but the date of 1906 is better substantiated." However, examples of the 1/- brown with the Judicial overprint pre-date November 1906. The earliest date seen is 12th January 1906, as illustrated. Thus the revenue form of the stamp gives some information additional to the catalogue.

Gibbons gives November 1908 as the first issue of the multi-Crown CA 2/- Venetian red (S.G. 55). Collett et al. are a little more cautious, and mention an earlier printing, invoiced on 8th July 1907, which was probably on multi-Crown paper. However, an example of this stamp with the Judicial overprint, dated 13th August 1906, is illustrated.

Thus, even though the Judicial overprints of Jamaica show little variation or error in over eighty years, they do assist with information on the dates of first issue of the corresponding postage stamps. Of course, the overprints could have been issued before the postal issues. The manuscript dates shown are considered to be reliable evidence, as they were used within a legal framework, where one would not expect inaccuracies.

References -

- Collett, G.W. et al., 1922, Jamaica - Its Postal History, Postage Stamps and Postmarks. Stanley Gibbons, London.
- Barefoot, J. and Hall, A., 1980. British Commonwealth Revenues, J. Barefoot (Investments) Ltd., York.

JAMAICA JUDICIALS

Table

1898-1962

Reign	Queen Victoria		King George V		King George VI		Queen Elizabeth
	Crown CA	Mult. Crown CA	Mult. Crown CA	Mult. Script CA	Mult. Script CA	(new colours)	Crown CA
3d	x 21	x 46	x 62	x	x		
6d	x 23	x 51	x 64	x	x		x
1/-	x 24	x 53	x 65	x	x	x	x
2/-	x 25	x 55-6	x 66	x	x	x	x
4/-					x		x
5/-	x 26	x 67	x 67	x	x	x	
6/6d							x
8/6d			x	x	x		x
10/-			x		x	x	x
£1			x		x		x

Information from Barefoot and Hall 1980

The numbers shown relate to S.G. listings of stamps used without the overprint for postal purposes.

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AN EXERCISE IN PLATING

A.G. Salisbury

The "Stamp Collector's Encyclopaedia" by R.J. Sutton (Hutchison's, 1955) defines "Plating" as the "re-construction or re-assembly of a sheet of stamps by collecting specimens", and this article will attempt to show what plating is all about.

In the "classic" period of philately, stamps were often printed by relatively primitive methods, which resulted in each cliché or impression on the plate being identifiable because of minute differences caused by the processes of duplicating from a common die. As very few complete sheets of such issues have survived (mainly because philatelic research was then insufficiently developed, and there was little reason to retain complete sheets, anyway), the later researcher encounters considerable problems when he attempts to re-construct a sheet from whatever mint or used copies can be acquired. He may be able to distinguish individual or single copies because of their flaws or other known features, but he cannot easily allocate each one to its proper place on the full sheet. Indeed, it is hard, sometimes, to determine the format of the printed sheet, or even the number of stamps contained in it.

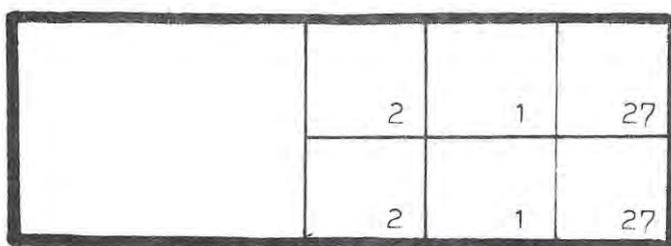
This is a problem which relates to the older stamps, and, in very many cases, it has been possible, by painstaking work over a long period, to build up most, if not all, of the copies of a particular stamp into what is known as a "re-constructed" sheet. The process by which this is achieved can be illustrated by a current example from an Australian issue.

It should be stated (obviously) that there is no plating problem with modern stamps, where full sheets are readily accessible, and may be bought over the post office counter. By studying a full sheet, all of the existing constant flaws or other features may be noted, and their position listed. Then when the collector arms himself with large numbers of bulk used copies, he may seek out those with the distinguishing flaws and allocate them to the positions on the full sheet which he already has studied. This is "plating" in reverse. He knows the sheet positions before he commences his research.

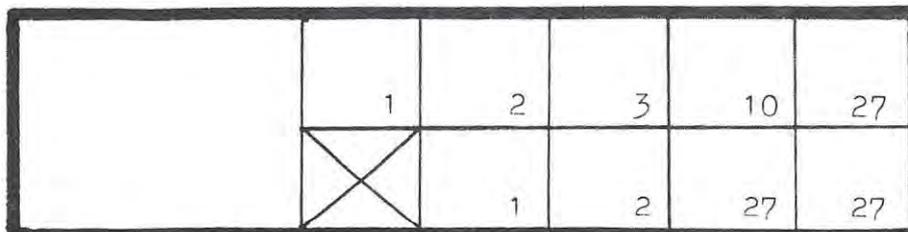
How then does he go about plating an early issue? The first requirement is a sufficient number of used (or mint) copies, which, by the very nature of things, usually come in singles. However, pairs, strips, blocks and other multiples are available, and single copies with sheet selvage can be found. Clearly, a copy with selvage attached will provide the valuable clue that it comes from one of the edges of the sheet. If it has selvage on two adjoining sides, so much the better, as it thus comes from a corner position. If the copy has a distinguishing flaw, the next task is to find a pair or other multiple containing a stamp with the same

flaw, and by acquiring vertical or horizontal strips or pairs, the relationship between stamps each with its own flaw, can be built up gradually. A large block, of course, is a valuable bonus.

This is a long-drawn-out business, and can take a considerable time and thorough search, but a full description is not required here. However, a good illustration of what plating is all about can be demonstrated from the recent Australian postage stamp folders - one valued at 60¢ and the other at \$1 - containing stamps of five different denominations showing designs of the flowers and leaves of the Eucalyptus tree (SG 870-874; ASC 864-868). These stamps in folder covers were produced by Joh. Enschede and Sons, of The Netherlands, at a time when the basic postal rate was 27¢ for a letter, so that the primary unit stamp in them has that value. The folders contain other combinations of stamps in values which can be used to make up, for example, the new 30¢ rate which came into force in October 1983. The basic format of the two types of folders is shown in the diagram.



60c. pane



\$1 pane

THE "EUCALYPTUS" FOLDER PANES

The outer edges of each pane of the two types are imperforate, so that every stamp shows a "straight-edge" on one or two sides, and this is indicated in the diagram by heavy lines. The spaces between the individual stamps are perforated.

It will be seen that the fifteen stamps contained in a set of the two kinds of pane are as under -

- 1¢ - four copies, two of which are imperf. along the top edge, while the other two are imperf. along the bottom edge;
- 2¢ - four copies, two imperf. along the top edge, and two imperf. along the bottom edge;
- 3¢ - one copy, imperf. along the top edge;
- 10¢ - one copy, imperf. along the top edge;
- 27¢ - five copies, two of which are imperf. at the top and right, two imperf. at bottom and right, and one imperf. at bottom only.

A further point to note is that two copies of the 2¢ value and one copy of the 1¢ may be found with perforations at the left edge, and with an unprinted margin attached at the left side. Furthermore, the left position of the bottom row of the \$1 pane comprises a label showing a grey St. Andrew's Cross, and this may be found in combination, either vertically with a 1¢ stamp imperf. at the top, or horizontally with a 1¢ stamp imperf. at the bottom.

If we did not have available copies of the two types of pane, how would we go about plating from a quantity of used copies of these five denominations?

The first step would be to segregate all the available copies into the five values, whether they were singles, pairs or other multiples, and, as a first indication, the numbers of each would vary greatly, having regard, for instance, to the fact that the 3¢ and 10¢ stamps each occur only once in fifteen copies. These two stamps have imperf. top edges, so they can be allocated tentatively to a place in the top row of one of the panes. The next easiest value is the 27¢, in three types. Two are imperf. at the top and right edges, which places them at the extreme top right corner of a pane (but not yet definitely to a particular pane) while two are imperf. at the bottom and left, which places them at the extreme bottom right corner of a pane. The fifth type is imperf. at the bottom only, which allocates it to a position on one of the bottom rows.

The 1¢ stamps fall into two groups, either imperf. at top or bottom only - two of each - and the same applies to the 2¢ value.

The next step is to look for multiples, and here, with the introduction of the 30¢ postal rate, strips of three can be found easily, comprising one each of 1¢, 2¢ and 27¢. The diagram shows that there are two basic formats of such combination strips, wither of 2¢, 1¢, 27¢, or 1¢, 2¢, 27¢. The first format is imperf. either at the top or the bottom; if imperf. at the top, then it must be the top row of a 60¢ pane, but if it is imperf. at the bottom, it must be the bottom row of that same pane. A strip of 1¢, 2¢, 27¢ can be found only imperf. at the bottom, which identifies it as

part of the bottom row of a \$1 pane. If it has the label with the St. Andrew's Cross still attached, so much the better.

Reverting to the 27¢ value, if it can be found in combination with another denomination, then it may be plated as under -

- (a) with a 1¢ stamp attached, it must be from the 60¢ pane, and the fact of its being imperf. at top or bottom will allocate it to the top or bottom row respectively of that pane;
- (b) if it has a 10¢ stamp attached, or another 27¢ or a 2¢, it must be from either of the rows of the \$1 pane.

Vertical pairs can be identified and reference to the diagram shows -

- (c) the 2¢ in combination with another 2¢, or a 1¢ in combination with another 1¢, must be from the 60¢ pane;
- (d) a 2¢ in combination vertically with a 1¢ below it can only be from the \$1 pane;
- (e) a 2¢ with a 3¢ above it can only be from the \$1 pane;
- (f) a 27¢ in combination with a 10¢ or another 27¢ horizontally must be from the \$1 pane, while if it is joined with a 1¢, it must be from the 60¢ pane, and the imperf. edges will determine whether it comes from the top or bottom row.

Used copies of these stamps, which are still current, can be found easily, and the foregoing account will demonstrate how plating is done, based on logic and observation. Such an elementary exercise, of course, is not true plating in the sense in which the early researchers had to carry out their laborious work, but it does illustrate the principles under which they operated.

In the case under discussion, we know the answer before we start on solving the problem, but to try to carry out such a plating study is a stimulating task for the would-be student, and may lead on to far more sophisticated work on other stamps whose features may not be so simple.

Postscript:

The foregoing description takes no account of individual constant flaws or other variations arising in the printing of the stamps, as distinct from the obvious variants in the imperf. edges. In fact, there has been a great deal of valuable work done by the Australian Commonwealth Philatelic Group into constant printing varieties on the stamps and other parts of the issued panes in these folders. These, for example, could enable positive identification of two stamps which appear singly to be the same, (e.g., a 27¢ value imperf. at top and right, or a 1¢ imperf. at bottom), without the need to discover the same stamp in combination with something else. Full details of these constant flaws have been published in the Group's journal "Stamp Talk", from G.P.O. Box 919, Adelaide, South Australia, 5001.

WHY CHESS?

K.P. Breitkopf

My first practical introduction to the game of Chess was during life shared in a tent on Active Service under the patient tuition of a fellow soldier. After learning the specific roles of the chess pieces, the game's limitless dimensions soon demanded much of my time. Some time later when the "stamping bug" re-emerged, I realised one day that the two interests could be combined, and suddenly I found myself a collector of philatelic material associated with chess. Let me share with you now my approach to this form of collecting, as it was for me a learning process.

Where to Begin

My earliest recollection of a chess stamp was the Swiss issue of 1968 (SG 757) a plentiful item which caught my eye well before I recognised such words as Steinitz, Capablanca or FIDE (the International Chess Federation). Nonetheless from then on I began looking for stamps with a chess motif like a check pattern or a chess piece.

In the 1970s I chanced upon such issues as that of Lebanon 1973 (SG 1157), showing a craftsman against a chess pattern, the 50th anniversary of FIDE of Hungary 1974 (SG 2887-93), Romania 1966 (SG 3345-50) for the 17th Chess Olympiad and the odd item from Croatia featuring the familiar check pattern.

Then I sought out fellow-collectors and joined The Philatelic Society of Canberra. What an enormous world opened to me. Suddenly I could discuss topics with people who enjoyed the hobby and were only too willing to help answering my questions. I browsed through the Society library and found a couple of booklets called "Checkmate". Amazing! I was not, in fact, the first person to be interested in this field, for here was a Catalogue on the subject with all those chess stamps and postmarks. I now ventured to correspond with the authors of those booklets. Then came the joyous moment when I found a fellow chess collector in the Society. She introduced me to booklets of the American Topical Association, which has a "Chess on Stamps Study Unit". Thus I ventured further afield and discovered a thematic wonderland.

To Exhibit or Not: That is the Question?

I recall quite vividly my first very nervous venture into exhibiting. It was at a January "Member's Night" when our Society encourages its members to provide short 5-page displays, resulting in a regular pot-pourri. As yet I had no methodology or clear-cut order in my collection but the venture provided opportunity for writing up. I was re-assured to see from the items displayed, that there were other novices also at this preliminary stage. Then

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there was a thrilling bonus when the member moving the vote of thanks, remarked about "The Turk" stamp, Hungary 2 Ft. 1974, (SG 2891) which I had included in one of my five sheets. It features Kempelen's chess automaton, and here was a real live comment about my exhibit.

The idea of exhibiting matured. A couple of years later the Society was asked to contribute a display for an Interstate Exhibition - 15 sheets this time. Then came the big event for me, the Third National Convention at Canberra in 1984. This presented me with the urgency of sorting out my growing collection and determining a format. I tried several schemes, and discarded them, but eventually settled on a 7-part arrangement, and rearranged my collection once again, organising it as follows:

- (1) Introduction and History: This included stamps depicting for example, an ancient games table for Senet found in an Egyptian tomb, with a checked pattern and chess-like pieces (Egypt SG 846) and Moorish art in Spain featuring a chess lesson in progress in a tent (Yemen SG R346)
- (2) Chess Accessories and Equipment. This featured the familiar chess board and various pieces and some human connections like deaf people (Poland SG 957-958), depicting human hands indicating chess movements, and the Italian Marcostica "living" chess parade (SG 1711).
- (3) Chess-Related Personalities. These included Steinitz (Cuba SG 2276), Lasker (GDR SG E1108), Capablanca (Cuba SG 2278), and others. There were also St. Theresa, the patron saint of chess (Spain SG 2694), and Lewis Carroll, author of "Alice in Wonderland", who used chess to relieve insomnia (Mali SG 905-907).
- (4) Chess Tournaments and Competitions. This was the real heart of the collection, covering World Championships, Grand Prix, etc., like Monaco 1967 (SG 885) and the International Women's Match between Hungary and Yugoslavia, featured by a postal cancellation used by Gyor in Hungary in July 1977.
- (5) Chess Philately by Country. This was a miscellany, including the Caxton issue of Great Britain in 1976 (SG 1016) and all sorts of other countries.
- (6) Chess-Associated Philatelic Material. This covered chess post-cards, cancellations, correspondence cards, etc.
- (7) Chess-Related Peripheral Items. These were badges, emblems and so on, such as the Spanish "Losada" Arms, which features a chess-board pattern (SG 1949).

With this rearranged structure for my collection, I now considered the 30 sheets required for the Canberra Exhibition. The Third National Convention was a huge success and I swelled with pride to see my own exhibit up in the frames, overhearing comments

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about it, and seeing its description in print, and its recognition with a Certificate of Merit by interstate judges.

Was exhibiting worth the effort involved? The answer must be an unqualified "Yes". Immeasurable experience is gained by exhibiting. Comparisons with other exhibits indicate certain areas for improvement. The desire to share one's interest with others is fulfilled. The winning of awards is not the primary focus (although in a way it is "icing on the cake"). One looks at his own exhibit with a degree of reality, and the experience and lessons learned are the real substance.

Three lessons I learned by participating in the Exhibition were the great importance of -

- (a) Following basic guidelines. The booklet "Guidelines for Exhibiting Topical Collections" published by the Thematic Society of Australia (1982), when it is re-issued in its updated form, should become a standard reference.
- (b) Avoiding too wide a coverage. I should have been satisfied with, say, the History and the Tournaments of Chess.
- (c) Letting the Display do the talking. It should be interesting enough to catch the eye, not too stereotyped, and sprinkled with a variety of philatelic material - miniature sheets, covers, cancellations, etc.

Where To Next?

The wonderful thing about life is its never-ending learning experiences. Now that I am firmly entrenched in thematic chess as my field of philatelic interest, undoubtedly I shall exhibit again and improve on my earlier efforts. Meantime, in passing, I note that New Zealand used a chess theme for a postal cancellation on 28th December 1979, featuring the Rook for the New Zealand Chess Centenary at Upper Hutt, and one looks forward perhaps to some similar recognition from Australia Post - a slogan maybe, to coincide with a particular event such as Canberra's Doeberl Cup, or even an actual stamp issue, be it solo or part of a "sports" set.

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READING ABOUT STAMPS - ON CHINA PHILATELY

Phil. Litt

Dear Readers,

I hope you won't be cross with me, but I simply must tell you this. Old Mr Saresburg is no doubt well-known to you, but beneath his mild exterior there lurks the soul of a rabid extremist in the grip of an obsession! Mind you, I didn't know this myself until I asked that question the other day. Having heard he was a good contact on China, I dropped in on him. "How did you get interested in China, Mr S?" I says - and then I saw that unholy light kindle in his formerly placid eye!

"Ahh! 'Bout thirty five years ago it was, Phil, when someone gave me an accumulation of old Tibetan stamps. That's what began it." Alas, dear readers, often have you heard that told, and it's a grim warning. Never, dear readers, never give parcels of rare old stamps to starry-eyed youngsters. You might be the unwitting cause of a life-long obsession! In Mr. S's case, that one thoughtless action resulted in a lifetime's pursuit after rarities, acres of letters, and even, you've got to believe me dear readers, even a trip to Hong Kong for the sole purpose of Philatelic Pursuit in the true sense of the words. Ah me, it was a sad story, and I never would have believed it of the dear old fellow.

Shaking off my horror, I pressed on. "Not Tibet, Mr. S - it's China, I thought, was your interest." Says he, "Coming to that, Phil. Tibet was where it began." I think he saw I was disturbed by the look in his eye, as he shaded it with one hand before going on. "I was fascinated the more I looked at the old stamps, and then I got interested in the stamps of the 1911 Chinese Occupation when they over-printed Chinese stamps with trilingual inscriptions in Chinese, English and Tibetan. From there it was an easy jump to Mongolian stamps, and then into China's stamps, both the central and provincial issues. Later on, of course, I got into the Japanese Occupation issues." "Of course," I murmured, still shaken by the appalling picture of unholy enthusiasm that had pervaded the old man's life. Then I took a grip on myself.

"Books, Mr. Saresburg - my dear readers would like to know what books you have used and found helpful."

"Right, Phil. Not an easy question to answer, you know, because there is so much written on so many parts - catalogues, provincial studies, specialist studies of this or that, then also a lot in Russian, Chinese and Japanese as well. Best I just show you some

of the ones I use, Phil, and you can take your pick." So we were off!!

"Catalogues first Phil. The Gibbons catalogue is quite good and I use it a lot - I'm speaking of the Sectional Catalogue on China, part 17. N.C. Yang's catalogues are always good - here, look at the sixth edition I received just recently" - showing me a 1984 printing well set out with colour illustrations - "and this one by K.C. Yu can be helpful too, although his ideas on English spelling are a bit original now and then. These here are official publications that talk mostly about currently available material - one printed in 1957 by the Directorate-General of Posts, and this other one printed in 1959 by the China Philatelic Company; while they are not very helpful, you often find bits in them that other books don't mention, so they're worth picking up if available cheaply. Then - look, you wouldn't think that politics got into catalogues, but here's L.F. Livingston's "The Postage Stamps of China, Japan and Tibet" - totally lacking all Communist issues!

"But the really valuable thing, Phil, hard-to-get but worth having at any price, is this!" His hand trembled slightly as he showed me his prized possession. "It's Ma's 'Illustrated Catalogue of the Stamps of China', printed in 1947. I call it the China Collector's Bible, Phil. It's not just a catalogue, but it delves into postal history, and has masses of essential background like printing and design details, numbers produced, and so on. I tell you Phil, anyone that wants to get serious about Chinese Philately must have Ma.

"Phil, another thing - any new collector would be wise to back up his use of these catalogues with some general helps - the field's so diverse, you see. Here's two little items I've found helpful. First is a typescript item put out by 'China-Stamps' in Hindmarsh, South Australia, 'An Introduction to Chinese Philately' (1955). The other is a series of articles Ronald F. Lankester wrote for the magazine 'The Philatelist' that I've put together here - 'China 1927 to 1949'.

"Chances are, Phil," he went on, "that your readers may not be interested in the whole field of Chinese Philately. There are catalogues that deal only with dependencies or provinces, like this one printed in Budapest in 1978, 'Catalogue of Mongolian Stamps', or these two useful items on Tibet by H.D.S. Haverbeck, put out by the Collectors Club in New York about 1952 - 'The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Tibet', and 'Tibet, Further Discoveries'. Or this is an excellent work on Manchukuo, the definitive treatment in fact, by Helen K. Zirkle, 'The Postage Stamps and Commemorative Cancellations of Manchoukuo/Manshukoku, Manchou Tiko, Manchukuo', that the Collectors Club put out in 1964."

I tell you, dear readers, the pile of books was really growing before me, and the placid Mr. S was barely into his stride! But I pressed bravely on - "What do you think is the very best on Tibet, Mr. Saresburg?" - not that the fire needed fuel from my questions!

"Was just going to tell you, Phil. A noted authority on Tibet is Mr. Arnold Waterfall. He and I have corresponded on Tibet, and I must commend his fine work, 'Postal History of Tibet'. Mine's the second edition printed in 1981. He starts with the British Mission in 1903 and its Field Post Offices in Tibet. He's very helpful in his study of the primitive 1933 printings - twelve separate woodblocks lashed together and inked and printed by hand when needed, fascinating! Tell your readers to get his book - they'll not be able to resist it!" A dire warning, readers - look at it if you dare!!

"Then too, Phil, there are books that handle smaller and more specialised parts. William E. Jones has these two little books, 'The Gold and Silver Currency Stamps of China and Formosa', and 'The Nationalist Currency Issues of China, including Commemorative Stamps and Military Post Offices,' printed in Hong Kong in 1952 and 1955 respectively. Also, Phil, China-Stamps has a couple more typescript items worth having, 'The Postal Savings Stamps of China' (1956), and 'Stamps of the Treaty Port Local Posts of China' (1957). Another helpful specialist item I've picked up is this typescript item by Carl W. Ehlerding, 'Bilingual Postmarks in Modern China' (1971).

"Club magazines have given me good specialist help too, Phil. I've already shown you some publications of the Collectors Club in New York. An Australian club published a magazine for a while, that's the China Stamps Collector's Club of Australasia, whose unfortunately short-lived journal went from October 1956 to some time in 1961."

I thought I'd better turn off the flow of information, but I had one question still for Mr. Saresburg that underlined the chief difficulty I (and many others) had struck in trying to collect these stamps. "Mr S -these places are so very - well, foreign! How have you got over these difficulties? You know, 'far-away places with strange-sounding names', and those awfully queer writing systems? It must take loads of study."

"Ah no, Phil, not really. Matter of fact, it's great fun. Getting a feel for the people and their culture is important, and I've always found the National Geographic Magazine a tremendous help. It really makes the stamps come alive! Then the languages - they're interesting and you get to recognise the important Chinese

and Japanese characters without too much trouble. And Russian, well it's fairly easy to learn the alphabet and make some sense of the Mongolian stamps." Even so, dear readers, I was beginning to see how important it was to have an obsession! Mr. S was casting aside difficulties as if they didn't even exist! He added a quick comment about Tibetan - "People don't realise, Phil, that Tibetan writing is alphabetic. See here, this little book has helped me greatly in studying the Tibetan stamps." He flourished a tiny manual, 'Tibetan self-taught' by one Pradhan, published in Kalimpong (a small place in India near the Tibetan border) in 1959. And as a final touch, Mr. S added modestly, "But I've never been able to make any headway in Mongolian script." Brothe-e-er! I tottered out, my dear readers, a shattered wreck.

Later, however, Mr. Saresburg showed me some of his Tibetan treasures, and I began to see just how absorbing they could become, if I had the books to help me, if I had a yen (pardon me) to study strange languages, if I was in the grip of an obsession, if... if... say, readers dear, I don't suppose anyone has a stack of old Tibetan stamps he doesn't want?

Yours distractedly,

Phil Litt.

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'China 1927 to 1949' printed in various issues during 1970 - 72.

I must acknowledge the expert assistance of Mr Alan Salisbury in
the preparation of this article. He is not, OF COURSE, the placid
old man depicted in this (almost) fictitious interview.

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