



# SIPA Bulletin

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

### CONSIDER EXHIBITIONS

I have spent the whole of my philatelic life both amateur and professional, proselytising the gospel that "Stamps is Fun". As I write, the dust is settling from "Stamps", and one tries to see in perspective where exhibitions fit into the concept of having fun with stamps. Competitive philately is aimed at raising collectors' standards, and one of the points of having a hobby is that the better you do it, the more you enjoy it-golf is a case in point! One of the great pleasures of the hobby is that collectors please themselves just what and how they collect, and the individualist (and collectors are probably more individualist than normal people) explodes at the very thought of having rules to conform to, but rules for Exhibitions have evolved from the ideas of generations of experienced collectors, and at local, national or international competitions, they are intended as an interest of your collection; to have it a beginning, a middle and an end.

Basically, at local or at international level, judges consider Presentation, Condition of material, Writing Up, Importance of the Exhibit, philatelic knowledge/personal research, and rarity of items shown. Many collectors are discouraged by that "rarity clause", but every collector knows that there are items priced in shillings that never appear in club books or dealers' stocks. Allow for the judges knowing their subject, and rely on them recognising that your collection bristles with elusive stamps, which although they cost little or difficult to find. A good philatelic friend found himself engaged at a recent Exhibition as Judges' Labourer, and afterwards commented that he was delighted to find that the longest time the judges spent in discussion was over a collection in which no stamp could have been priced at more than ten bob (fifty new pence!).

Since "philatelic importance" is usually specifically mentioned, you cannot expect to obtain a major award for the study of a philatelically little known stamp. For instance, a study of the first issue of Siam would count for less than similar work on say, New Zealand's Penny Universal-stamps which are found in every general collection. Nevertheless, you could obtain a good award with a study of inexpensive

stamps-like Penny Universals-if you show the extent of your personal research and knowledge in your writing up. Don't worry too much if you have written up in pencil, type-writer, or copper-plate. This is a competition for stamp collectors not calligraphists, and judges pay less attention to your style than to the content of what you write. Keep a balance between stamps and write up, it is the stamps they want to see, with salient features highlighted, rather than a dissertation which might be fine for a specialist society.

Perhaps these ideas will give food for thought on how to get some new angle on your collection, on how to think in terms of re-arranging and re-writing those pages that over the years have "just grown". Remember, you turned off the telly because the play you were watching had no theme, no form, no story. Do not lose the viewers' attention in your collection because it lacks a shape. Maintain your audience interest by telling a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. A straight forward run through of one of each stamp issued may get an award in your local competition if well presented, but you must use thought and imagination to get anywhere at higher level. -Robson Lowe

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Our Second Sunday Meetings were held at the CPMG's Conference Hall, Anna Road, HPO, Chennai-600 002. (11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.) regularly where about 30 members attended with president Shri Balakrishna Das presiding. Patron Madan Mohan Das spoke on "Exhibits for exhibitions" in June 2006

## STAMP NEWS

### KURINJI

29.05.06

1500

0.8mill

Kurinji, the legendary blue and white flowers of the Western Ghats, is said to have given its name to Nilgiris (the blue hills around Ooty in Tamil Nadu and Wynad district in Kerala) and the plant itself is an indicator of the health of the ecosystem.

Flowering in the wilder hilly areas of the Western Ghats, Sahyadri ranges and Kodaikanal mountains in high altitudes of about 1600 metres, the flower is exclusive to India and some species are known to flower once in twelve years.

It is a gregarious shrub in the family of Acanthaceae, of the sub species of Strobilanthes group. The more important and famous among them is "Neela kurinji" or "Strobilanthes kunthiranus".

The kurinji plant occurs on the dry slopes and in gorges of the eastern side of the hills, where there is little or no tree forest. It is a tall bushy shrub, sometimes eight to ten feet high, and is covered with a profusion of bright blue bell-like flowers. All of them have a periodicity from eight to 12 years. After blossoming, the plants wilts.

The last blooming was recorded in 1994. Though it started blooming in December 2005, the flower in its gorgeous full bloom can be seen in 2006. The occasion of blooming attracts tourists from all over the world.

Systematic record of its blooming has been kept since 1838. When kurinji is in bloom, the honey gathered from the vicinity is said to be of special values. Legend has it that Muragam, the lord of kurinji land, put a garland of kurinji flowers when he married Valli. One poet praises a king as the "one who rules over a country where the kurinji honey is in plenty". It's true that when kurinji is in full bloom, the entire surrounding seems to pulsate under a bluish haze. The legendary kurinji is blooming in the mountains in the Year 2006, which would be a sight to cherish and preserve.

The pressures of development have led to cutting of forests leading to the shrinkage of green cover in the area. The home of kurinji, which had remained inviolate so far, has suffered damages in the last 100 years. There is urgent need to protect what is life of this beautiful flowering plant, which has been pushed into remote and inaccessible forests, hilly slopes and gorges.

The Kurinji has become a symbol for the bio-diversity of the Western Ghats, which has been declared one of the 18 "Hotspots" of the world.

Theme : Ecology, Flowers, Tamilnadu



## RAINWATER HARVESTING

05.06.06

500

3.0mill

Water is an extremely precious commodity. Essential for sustaining life on this planet. Water has traditionally been treated with reverence by all societies and cultures. However, the rapid growth of industrialization in urban centres, have contributed to pressures on existing water resources along with erratic and inadequate rain, and changes in rainfall patterns and availability of water around the world. As a result, there is now an increasing awareness of the very real threat posed by dwindling fresh water resources/

Rainwater harvesting, which entails collecting and monitoring rainwater for future productive use, is one of the major initiatives that can be pursued for augmenting our water reserves. While run-off water can be diverted into bare soil or ground for improving the ground water table, run-off water from roof tops and other built-up areas like pavements, parking lots, playground etc. can be channeled into suitably designed storage structures for providing a reliable water source around the year.

At present India uses only 10 to 20% of its annual rainfall. In fact, if collection and storage of rainwater is designed properly, it is possible for a family to live for a year on rainwater alone in areas with rainfall as little 100 mm per year.

With new techniques and technologies the designing and contribution of rainwater harvesting systems has become easier and more cost effective. In places where there is no roof or rocky outcrop suitable for rainwater collection, it is possible to construct an impervious surface on the ground itself. A drainage system has to be built to connect the water harvester to the reservoir, which may be a lake, pond, artificial ditch, trench, a well, or an underground tank.



Community participation is vital in order to carry forward the movement of conserving rainwater rather than allowing it to go waste. Hence, we need to educate people about the critical relevance of rainwater harvesting in today's scenario where water is becoming a scarce commodity. We also need to create awareness and inculcate a culture of water conservation combined with efficient management of water resources and prudent consumption of water.

Theme : Water, Resources, Ecology.

# SRI PRATAP COLLEGE, SRINAGAR

15.06.06

500

0.8mill

Sri Pratap College, Srinagar, is one of the most prestigious and oldest educational institutions in the State of Jammu & Kashmir.



The college came into being in 1905, when the famous Hindu School, Srinagar was upgraded by the Central Hindu College Trust, Benaras (to which it was affiliated). It was largely due to the efforts of Dr. Anne Besant, and Raja Daya Krishna Kaul, the Private Secretary of Maharaja Pratap Singh. The first Principal, Mr M.U. Moore, who was an Irish scholar of repute, took the institution to new heights of excellence.

In 1911 the college was taken over by the State Government and was renamed as Sri Pratap College after the name of the ruler of the state, Maharaja Pratap Singh. The College also got upgraded to the degree level in the same year, and was affiliated to the erstwhile Punjab University, Lahore, in 1912.

The institution had the distinction of being the only institution for imparting higher education in arts and science disciplines in the valley. After de-linking of the arts faculty in the year 1957, the College is now an exclusive Science College where Botany, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Zoology, Environment, Water management, Physics, Mathematics, Information Technology, Geology and Geography are taught.

The College takes pride in having produced alumni of repute who became leading figures in their respective fields.

Theme : Education, Institutions, Building

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## LINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF PHILATELY

Ian F. Finlay, M.A., DRS.MUS.SC., F.I.L., F.R.S.A.

Adhesive postage stamps are a valuable source of information on a number of subjects of interest to the linguist. The main territories in which the paths of philately and linguistics in the broadest sense overlap are:

- (a) linguistic history
- (b) alphabets
- (c) bilingualism

- (d) spelling reforms
- (e) vocabulary

Each of these points of contact will be illustrated in the following article.

### (a) Linguistic history

Properly speaking, very few linguists have been portrayed on postage stamps. The honour of being the most frequently portrayed must, without doubt, go to Dr. L. L. Zamenhof (1859-1917), the Polish doctor who, in 1887, introduced Esperanto. Quite a number of stamps has been issued by various countries over the years in connexion with this "auxiliary" or, as some prefer to call it, "universal" or "international" language, which has succeeded in gaining a very much firmer hold than its many competitors.

The earliest issue relating to Zamenhof and Esperanto appeared in Russia— always a country active in issuing postage stamps to commemorate her own and other countries' celebrities—in 1927 on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of Esperanto (S.G. 504). The stamp bears a portrait of Zamenhof and the Esperanto "star" and was also issued in connexion with an Esperanto Congress held in Leningrad in the same year. Brazil issued two stamps in 1937 (S.G. 598 and 601) in connexion with Esperanto—one on the occasion of the ninth Brazilian Esperanto Congress, the second to commemorate the golden jubilee of the language. This second stamp bears the inscription "Ora Jubilee de Esperanto" encircling the globe. Bulgaria issued a stamp in 1947 (S.G. 650) on the occasion of an Esperanto



Dr. Zamenhof



Gutenberg



J. R. Gregg

Elihez Ben-Yehuda



A braille book

Education campaign



The Sorbonne



Congress. It shows a map of Bulgaria and the Esperanto star. Austria issued a stamp showing the Esperanto star in 1949 (S.G. 512) on the occasion of an Esperanto Congress in Vienna. Two stamps appeared in 1957 to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of Esperanto—one from Hungary (S.G. 1477), an airmail stamp showing a portrait of Zamenhof the other from Bulgaria (S.G. 1061), also featuring a portrait of Zamenhof. The centenary of Zamenhof's birth in 1959 was celebrated by his native Poland (S.G. 1105 and 1106) by two stamps, one bearing a portrait of Zamenhof, the other the Esperanto star and a globe. Two other countries were, so to speak, a year later with their centenary issues, namely the old faithfuls Brazil (S.G. 1023) and Bulgaria (S.G. 1167), their stamps not appearing until 1960! Both show portraits of Zamenhof. In 1962, Hungary issued a stamp on the occasion of the fourteenth International Railway-men's Esperanto Congress (S.G. 1795). It bears a representation of railway signals and the Esperanto star, plus the inscription "14. Nemzetközi Vasutas Esperanto Kongresszus". This same year was the seventy-fifth anniversary of the introduction of Esperanto and was commemorated in the Netherlands by a postal slogan reading "Esperanto—75 jaar internationaal taal".

Turning to a language which has in this century taken on a very real new lease of life as a means of communication, namely Hebrew, we find that a stamp was issued by Israel in 1959 (S.G. 169) to commemorate the centenary of the birth of E. Ben-Yehuda, who played such an important part in making this language once again a living vehicle of communication. The stamp in question bears a portrait of Ben-Yehuda.

Germany, in 1946, was no doubt too busy recovering from the effects of World War II to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of Martin Luther who, through his translation of the Bible, did so much towards the formation of Germany as we know it today. His portrait does, however, appear on a stamp issued by Western Germany in 1952 (S.G. 1075) on the occasion of the International Lutheran Assembly in Hanover.

Although not perhaps strictly speaking belonging to linguistic history, we should mention here two stamps which were issued, namely in Bulgaria in (S.G. 474) and in the United States" in 1952 (S.G. 1167), to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the invention of printing by Johann Gutenberg. The Bulgarian stamp shows a portrait of Gutenberg, while the United States stamp features a representation of Gutenberg and the Elector of Mainz together with the inscription "500th Anniversary of the printing of the first book, The Holy Bible, from movable type, by Johann Gutenberg".

The development of a special form of printing for the blind by Louis Braille (1809-52) has also been commemorated on postage stamps. France issued a stamp in 1948 (S.G. 1023) commemorating Braille and bearing his portrait. Brazil

commemorated the centenary of education for the blind in that country by a stamp, issued in 1954 (S.G. 910), showing a braille book and a portrait of Benjamin Constant. The Egyptian "World Health Day" issue of 1961 (S.G. 679) shows hands "reading" braille, while a Syrian stamp issued in the same year (S.G. 738) for the United Nations' campaign for welfare of the blind shows an eye and a hand "reading" braille. Russia honoured the 150th anniversary of Louis Braille's birth in 1959 by a stamp showing a portrait of him (S.G. 2353). A Belgian set, issued in 1962 (S.G. C706) in aid of handicapped children relief funds, contains a stamp showing hands "reading" braille.

While on the subject of special forms of "writing", we should mention a stamp issued by Cuba in 1957 (S.G. 522) to commemorate J. R. Gregg, a pioneer in the development of shorthand.

A French Red Cross funds issue of 1959 (S.G. 1448) shows a portrait of Ch. Micheldel'Epee (1712-89), a pioneer in the field of education of deaf mutes, who developed a sign language for them. The other stamp in this set (S.G. 1449) has a portrait of V. Hauy (1745-1822), a teacher of the blind.

The only lexicographer who seems to have attracted the notice of those who plan issues of postage stamps is Noah Webster (1758-1843), whose "Compendious Dictionary of the English Language" appeared in 1806. The 200th anniversary of his birth was commemorated by the United States by a stamp issued in 1958 (S.G. 1271).

Although illiteracy is, comparatively speaking, seemingly not a major problem in this country, there are many parts of the world, particularly Central and South America, where its extent and importance are such that reference to it has been made on postage stamps. Mexico issued a set of stamps in 1945 (S.G. 754 to 764) in connexion with a literacy campaign, bearing the inscription "Ouitemos la venda!—Campaña nacio-nal pro alfabetizacion". This same country also issued a stamp in 1946 (S.G. 786) in connexion with an education plan. It shows an adult pupil learning the vowels. A set issued by Ecuador in 1953 (S.G. 973 to 978) in connexion with the national education plan shows, inter alia, old people learning the alphabet (978) and the teaching of the alphabet (976). In 1956 Morocco issued a set of stamps in connexion with an education campaign (S.G. 37 to 41), one of the stamps of which (41) shows a child teaching parents the alphabet. In 1959 Haiti issued an obligatory tax set (S.G. 703 to 708) in aid of the education fund, bearing the inscription "Alphabetisation" against a background of the letters of the alphabet. The Republic of Mali celebrated the first anniversary of its independence by a stamp issued in 1961 (S.G. 29), showing a group of natives learning the vowels. Guinea issued a set in 1962 (S.G. 290 to 293) in connexion with a campaign against illiteracy in which a boy is shown at a blackboard on which French and examples of simple arithmetic are written

(290). In addition to these examples, Brazil, Ecuador and Portugal have, at various times, issued stamps in connexion with plans for adult and popular education.

Special courses for training translators and interpreters are a modern and, as yet, unfortunately rather isolated development. Germany, France, Austria and Switzerland were very much ahead of this country in this respect, although this position is now beginning to change. There is an excellent school for interpreters at the University of Saarbrücken, the



extremely well laid-out library of which is shown on a stamp issued by that territory in 1952 (S.G. 329). There is also a school for translators and interpreters at the Sorbonne in Paris, this building being portrayed on a stamp issued in 1953 by France (S.G. 1173a) as part of a set devoted to literary figures and national industries.

It is not unlikely that many of the translators and interpreters of the future will have been pupils of the European School in Luxemburg, which is shown on a stamp from that country issued in 1960 (S.G. 671).

### (b) Alphabets

The study of the various alphabets which are used to record, more or less phonetically and successfully, the multitude of languages spoken in the world today is a fascinating one, and postage stamps form an excellent vehicle therefor.

Amongst the world's oldest surviving alphabets are the runes, the earliest form of Teutonic writing. The runic stone at Jelling in Denmark is shown on one of the stamps from the Danish set of 1953 (S.G. 387), commemorating 1,000 years of Danish history.

Even amongst European countries, there are several distinctive alphabets which differ to a greater or lesser extent from our own. They include Greek (to be seen on the stamps of Greece, Crete and the Ionian Islands and, more recently, on those of Cyprus), Irish, Icelandic (having, apart from certain diacritical signs, two distinct letters for the two "th" sounds found in the English words "thought" and "the") and, of course, the Cyrillic alphabet. This latter takes its name from St. Cyril (died 869) who, together with St. Methodius, was responsible for developing it—partly from the Greek alphabet. Both these Saints are commemorated on stamps of Bulgaria,

one issued in 1955 (S.G. 985) on the occasion of the 1100th anniversary of the first Bulgarian literature, and the other in 1957 (S.G. 1056) to mark the centenary of the canonisation of Saints Cyril and Methodius. The Cyrillic alphabet—with minor modifications—is used (or has been used at various times) on the postage stamps of Russia, the Azerbaijan Republic, Batum, Bulgaria, Finland, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia, Yugoslavia and the Ukraine. It is perhaps interesting to note that, of the Slavonic languages, Polish and Czech use the Roman alphabet.

Distinctive alphabets are also used in various of the territories now forming part of the Soviet Union, for example Georgia (see illustration).

Although using the Latin alphabet, certain European languages employ various accents and the like to modify the sound of various letters. Examples are French, German, Spanish, Hungarian, Czech and Polish. These, too, can be seen on the inscriptions on the postage stamps of these countries.

The Arabic alphabet is used to a wide extent in the Middle East and Northern Africa in such countries as Aden, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt and Syria. In certain cases, however, inscriptions on the stamps of these countries are also given in English or French. Arabic also uses a distinctive set of symbols for numbers.

Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs can be seen on certain stamps of that country, including the 1925 International Geographical Congress issue (S.G. 168), the 1937 issue for the fifteenth Ophthalmological Congress (S.G. 291) and the 1962 issue for the UNESCO Campaign for the preservation of Nubian monuments (S.G. 751). The Hebrew alphabet is used on the stamps of Israel although, in most cases, much of the wording is also given in English and Arabic as well. Inscriptions on the stamps of Ethiopia are normally in Amharic, although the name of the country is usually also given either in French or English.

India, Pakistan and Ceylon represent a linguist's paradise or nightmare, depending on the way in which one chooses to look at it. Suffice it to say that many of the various alphabets used in these countries are so fascinating that they almost make one anxious to learn the languages they are used to record. Bengali was used on the stamps of Gwalior, while Tamil is now normally used on the stamps of Ceylon.

Thailand (formerly Siam) and Burma also have distinctive scripts which can be seen on their postage stamps, that of Burma being particularly fascinating from the visual point of view.

Although certain characters are common to both Chinese and Japanese, the languages themselves are very different in their structure and nature, Chinese being monosyllabic while Japanese is polysyllabic and highly inflected. The characters, which were originally pictorial representations of the objects they represented, can be found on the postage stamps of China, Japan and Hong Kong.

The above notes refer to a very small section only of the



various alphabets and scripts used on postage stamps. The Middle and Far East will provide a vast amount of further material for those particularly interested in this subject.

### (c) Bilingualism

This phenomenon is found in various European countries and, in one case, we can even speak of quadrilingualism!

In Belgium, where French and Flemish (Dutch) are both official languages, we find, in most cases, that all inscriptions on postage stamps are in both these languages. An interesting example is found in the so-called "bandalettes" or "dominical tablets" attached to the issues between 1893 and 1914. These tablets were inscribed "Ne pas livrer le dimanche" and "Neit bestellen op Zondag" and could be detached from the main part of the stamp if the sender felt that the recipient would have no objection to delivery being made on a Sunday.

Belgium is also well known for its railway parcel stamps which are, in most cases, inscribed "Chemins de Fer" and "Spoorwegen", although more recent issues are inscribed "colis postaux" and "postcolli"—this latter word being sought for in vain in a Dutch dictionary, being a typical gallicism of the worst order.

The bilingualism of Belgium was also carried through to the stamps of the Belgian Congo, which were inscribed "Congo Beige" and "Belgisch Congo" or, more conveniently, "Belgisch Congo Beige". Inscriptions on the stamps of Ruanda-Urundi were also in both French and Flemish, although the two independent states into which this territory was split in July 1962—Rwanda and Burundi—seem to have given up the use of Flemish on their stamps.

Switzerland with its quadrilingualism (French, German, Italian and—most recently—Rumansh) does not attempt to have all inscriptions on her stamps in these four different languages. The earlier issues prefer the use of impartial Latin, for example "Helvetia", "Con-foederatio Helevetica", "Pro Juventute", "Pro Aero" and the like. Certain more recent issues have successive values in a set inscribed in German, French and Italian or, in some cases, part of the inscription in all three of these languages, such as in the 1960 publicity issue (S.G. 610) in which the 10 cent value is inscribed "Kampf des Krebs", "Lutte centre le cancer" and "Lotta contro il cancro". The 5 cent value from the set issued in 1954 (S.G. 553) to commemorate the centenary of the death of the composer of the "Swiss Hymn", P. A. Zwyssig (1808-54), likewise has the first words of the hymn in German, French and Italian, i.e. "Trittst im Morgenrot daher", "Sur

nos mon-tagnes quand le soleil" and "Quando blonda aurora". Rumansh does not so far seem to have made its philatelic debut.

Although Finland is not officially bilingual, its stamps have, since it ceased to be a Russian Grand Duchy in 1919, all been inscribed both "Suomi" and "Finland" and further texts on them have in many cases been in both Finnish and Swedish or, more recently, in impartial Latin.

Various languages are spoken in Yugoslavia, although the official language is Serbocroat. This is written in two different forms, one using the Latin alphabet (by the Croats), the other the Cyrillic alphabet (by the Serbs). Stamps of Yugoslavia consequently have all inscriptions in both these alphabets.

Certain of the stamps issued by the Irish Republic have inscriptions in both Irish and English, although the use of Irish now seems to predominate.

### (d) Spelling Reforms

During the past hundred years or so, the following European countries amongst others have officially adopted various major or minor changes in spelling or orthography: Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Portugal, Russia and the Netherlands. In certain cases, these changes have been radical enough to affect the normally brief inscriptions which appear on postage stamps.

Post-tsarist stamps of Russia for example bear witness to the abolition of certain letters (e.g. i) from the former Russian alphabet by the revolutionary government in October 1918, as shown by two stamps, one dating from 1917 (S.G. 175) and the other from 1930 (S.G. 573).

Spelling changes can best be followed in the stamps of the Netherlands, this country having had quite a number of official modifications in its spelling in recent years—much to the despair and annoyance of its older inhabitants!

Examples of such changes include: "vereeniging" (S.G. 385, 208, 570) which had in 1949 become "vereniging" (S.G. 706); "Roode Kruis" (S.G. 354) appears on the issues of 1953 (S.G. 769) and 1957 (S.G. 850) as "Rode Kruis". Further examples of the so-called "old" spelling are: "De Goudsche Glazen" (S.G. 392), which would now be written "De Goudse Glazen" and "visscherij" (S.G. 414), which has now become "visserij". The former "Nederland-sche Spoorwegen" (S.G. 499) have now become the "Nederlandse Spoorwegen", while the phrase "Dag van den Post-zegel" (S.G. 589) has now become "Dag van de Postzegel", as can, in fact, be seen from a Belgian issue of 1963 (S.G. 706).



The so-called " Gothic " or " Fraktur " type, formerly used for printing German, can be seen in some of the earlier German, Austrian and Danzig issues, as well as in several of the overprints used for German Post Offices in various parts of the world. Its use has now virtually been eliminated, except for special effects.



Possibly the most radical change in orthography occurring during this century has been the adoption by Turkey in 1928 of the Latin alphabet, in place of the modified version of the Arabic alphabet which had previously been used. This modern Romanised alphabet was devised by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, who is shown on a Turkish issue of 1938 (S.G. 1217)—commemorating the tenth anniversary of the introduction of the Latin alphabet—teaching it.

### (e) Vocabulary

The collector of postage stamps is offered a unique opportunity of learning a number of useful words and expressions in a large number of languages in a very pleasant and easily assimilable manner through his collection.

The local names of the various countries can be learnt from their postage stamps, for example Danmark (Denmark), Sverige (Sweden), Island (Iceland), Espana (Spain) and Magyar (Hungary). Also, in the comparatively rare cases in which the official name of a country is changed, this is, of course, reflected on its postage stamps. Thus, the stamps issued by the former Siam are all inscribed Thailand after 1950, while what was formerly the Gold Coast is now Ghana.

The early issues of such countries as Sweden, Norway, Italy, Russia and various South American countries had many of the values expressed in words as well as in figures, thus enabling one to learn the names of the numbers in the various languages—always one of the first steps in learning



any language.

It is possible that postage stamps could, at times, supplement or even supplant a dictionary, particularly in cases in which technical or industrial activities and plants or animals are portrayed on them.

Italy, in 1950, issued an interesting set of nineteen stamps illustrating various provincial occupations, giving their names in Italian together with that of the region in which they are practised. These include the making of pottery (tornio) (S.G. 297), boat building (scab) (S.G. 301), and tending of sheep (greggi) (S.G. 307) and many others.

Students of Hungarian could also learn many useful words from a study of that country's postage stamps, particularly in the field of botany or zoology, as in the example shown.

Similarly, a student of Polish would learn the names in that language for various breeds of dogs from a set issued in 1963 (S.G. 1361 to 1369).

These examples could be multiplied almost indefinitely. Of special interest, however, are those postage stamps on which quotations are given in various languages, either as descriptions of the matter illustrated on the stamp or as direct quotations from literary works produced in the country in question. By this means, a student of chemistry, for example, could learn the Italian text of Avogadro's Law from a stamp issued by that country in 1956 (S.G. C462). It in fact, reads: "Volumi egualidi gas nelle stesse condizioni di temperature e di pressione contengono lo stesso numero di molecole". The well-known quotation from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg speech appears on a United States' stamp issued in 1948 (S.G. 1126) on the occasion of the eighty-fifth anniversary of the delivery of the speech. A stamp from Spain, issued in 1963 (S.G. 1667) in connexion with the freedom from hunger campaign, gives the Latin text of part of the Lord's prayer, i.e. "Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie". Students of mathematics will find the Greek name for the theorem concerning squares on the sides of right-angled triangles on a stamp issued by that country in 1955 (S.G. 743). Certain countries have put the text of various slogans on their postage stamps, particularly in connexion with plans for industrial development. Thus, we find on a Hungarian stamp issued in 1950 for the Five Year Plan (5 éves terv) "More and better textile fabrics" (Tobbé jobb textil anyag) (S.G. 1085).

(Courtesy : Gibbons Stamp Monthly 1966.)



## PRE INDEPENDENCE STAMPS OF INDIA

Late P. M. MEDHORA

India has a very fascinating postal history and equally fascinating are the Indian stamps. Much has been written about the postal history and the early classical stamps of India by eminent foreign philatelic writers like Hausburg, Martin Dawson and Smythies who took great pains to bring early Indian stamps in great prominence. Mr. Jal Cooper is another eminent Indian author who has to his credit a most readable and interesting book on "Stamps of India" and his other interesting publications are, "India Used Abroad" and "Early Indian Cancellations" which are to my mind excellent reference books for a keen student of Indian stamps. In spite of such wealth of reference books that are at the disposal of Indian stamp collectors, very few devote their time and money in studying the stamps of India and the other side lines like postal history, early lithographed stamps and their fascinating printing and early Indian cancellations.

### Short Postal History :

This vast country has passed from vicissitudes of time—it has seen good days as well as bad days. The country's history is full of strife and bickerings and it was because of this that the country was dominated by a foreign power for over a few hundred years. In the days of yore prior to East

India Co., there was internal postal service carried in a number of ruling states and also by zamindars by regular runners or on horses or mules but the postal service was on a very restricted scale.

East India Co., which was established in the year 1600 was mainly responsible in introducing regular postal service run on proper lines. The East India Co., having established, started its trading activities from three important centres that of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay. As the Company prospered very fast it realised that for exchange of business letters and other documents from one place to another a regular postal link was not only necessary but very imperative. The two trading centres at Madras and Bombay were asked to put up a regular post office in the year 1688. Between 1700 to 1760 a number of postal reforms were introduced. By about 1720 a weekly postal service was introduced between Madras and Calcutta and as the years rolled by a similar service was brought into effect joining Bombay. With the expanding trade and with the help of able administrators like Lord Clive and Warren Hastings the power and political influence of the East India Co. increased rapidly. The postal system which was once used for the Company and its staff only, was thrown open to the public. By 1837 British influence took its deep roots in the Indian soil and virtually the Britishers were in control of most of the strategic points in this country. The first Post Office Act of 1837-38 came into force and the postal service was put on better footing throughout the country. As there was no postage stamps, various strikes better known as Early Indian Handstruck Stamps' were introduced in three major presidencies that of Madras, Bengal and Bombay.

From the view point of stamp collectors those strikes applied to various letters offer a very interesting and fascinating study. A keen collector of Indian stamps if he wishes to bring completion must keep a few examples of these early Indian handstruck stamps in his collection. Some of these strikes are very rare and hard to obtain and fetch high prices. For a keen student of early postal history I would recommend that magnificent work in two parts on 'The Hand-struck Postage Stamps of India' by Col Hammond Giles.

### Scinde Dawks And 1854 Issues

To Sir Bartle frere goes the credit of ntroducing first stamps in this country. He was the Commissioner of Sind in those days and was an able administrator and a reformer. He decided to introduce cheap postal rate service in his province and with this view in mind he designed the first postage stamps of India, popularly known as Scinde Dawk stamps. No proper proof is available as to where the Scinde Dawks were printed but it is presumed that the credit goes to the famous printers De La Rue & Co.

The first to appear was the red Scinde Dawk. As it was very brittle stamp it did not remain in circulation for a long time and a new supply was ordered which was on white paper. From Stamp collectors' view the red Scinde Dawk is a great rarity in fine condition. First of all very few examples are known



in fine condition as invariably the copies are found in cracked condition.

The white Scinde Dawk stamp did not prove popular with the postal staff because when affixed on a white cover they were not easily noticeable to the postal clerks working at night in very dim light. So, out went the white Scinde Dawks, and in came the other variety the blue Scinde Dawks. The Scinde Dawk stamps remained in circulation for more than two years, from July, 1852 to 30th Sept 1854. There was a time—about fifteen years back the writer had sold four copies of white Scinde Dawks at Rs. 125/- per stamp and the blue Scinde Dawk two copies at Rs. 200/-each to a dealer friend. The position is quite different today as they have gone up in prices, but I would still say that do buy good or fine used copies at prevailing prices as these rarities are simply disappearing from the market. One word of warning—beware of forgeries, as there are crude as well as clever forgeries and one is likely to be duped.

It was Sir Bartle Frere's bold venture which was greatly responsible for issuing stamps throughout India in Oct., 1854. Full credit must be given to Capt. Thuillier for his hard work and sincerity of purpose for printing 1854 Indian lithographs. This devoted officer first succeeded in printing nine hundred sheets of half anna in vermilion colour. The sheets were first sent to Bombay but they were not issued to public for postal use. As further printing of the half anna vermilion cannot be had because that particular English vermilion ink was in short supply. Capt. Thuillier experimented with the Indian red ink but the result was not very encouraging. So he switched over to deep blue or indigo ink and was successful in putting up an excellent performance.



The first supply of half anna vermilion SG No. 19-arches were 120 stamps in a sheet but in the new printing of half anna blue there were 96 stamps in a sheet—8 x 12. Each sheet showing corner floral ornaments, some descriptive information, printer's name and date of production. There was a very heavy demand for stamps and so Capt. Thuillier had to work hard and fast by preparing one large 'Primary or Parent stone' of 96 stamps. To satisfy the overwhelming demand millions of stamps were printed and released to the various post offices. The first half anna stamps are known to exist in three different dies—viz, die I, die II and die III and it is interesting to know as to how this happened.

By constant printing, the printing stones got worn out and in spite of 'touches-up' and 're-touches' made to the worn out stones the impressions of stamps were not satisfactory. Therefore new printing stones were prepared with redrawing of some parts of the original design and such redrawing resulted in the new die, better known as die II. Further changes were made in the master die and there resulted a new die, known as die III. So one will find three



different dies of half anna blue. Out of three dies of half anna stamps, that of die II were printed in a small quantity and it is very difficult to come across fine used copies of die II. The second best is die III and the third best is die I. There was a time when good to fine used copies of all the dies were available at a very low price but our Indian collectors never paid proper attention to early classics and today they have gone up. It was truly a success story for Capt. Thuillier and so this hard working officer put on another great performance in offering a big quantity of one anna value in red colour. They were also printed in sheets of 96 stamps with the corner ornaments and descriptive inscription. As for the three different dies in one anna value the same story as that of half anna repeats itself. Out of the three dies in the one anna value the unused examples of die I and III are very scarce. Fine used copies of die III are hard to come across.

Those who are really interested in a deep and profitable study of 1854 half anna and one anna stamps are advised to possess or go through the masterly works on this subject by those very knowledgeable authors Col. Martin, L E. Dawson and E. A. Smythies. Very interesting and scholarly articles also appeared some years back under the pen of late Mr. D. E Wadia in India's Stamp Journal edited by Jal Cooper.

### Two Annas & Four Annas

Where as the half anna and one anna stamps were printed in sheets of 96 stamps and lithographed, the two annas stamps were printed in sheets of 80 stamps 8x10 and were typographed. In the top and bottom margins it is inscribed, "EIGHTY TWO-ANNA POSTAGE STAMPS" and "PRICE TEN RUPEES" respectively. In half anna and one anna stamps there are a number of 'retouches' and 'touches-up', in two annas such intricacies are not to be found. The stamps appear with two different watermarks and it was late Mr. C. D. Desai who brought to light the new watermark. Nearly seven million stamps were printed of this value and those stamps with an extra outer line (frame line on all four sides) are scarce. There are a number of shades and the rare one is two anna emerald green.

The East India Co., prospered by leaps and bounds and with increased prosperity the volume of work at the post offices also shot up. The postage rates were increased so there was a need for issuing a higher denomination stamp. The four annas value in two colours blue and red was released on

13th Oct. 1854 There were in all five printings. The first printing was in wide setting with only twelve stamps in a sheet, each stamp separated with a blue wavy line. As the sheets were small and the demand was great the stocks were dwindling fast

and in quick succession further two printings in wide setting were made with some difference in the head and frame dies.



The sheets of twelve stamps were found small and inadequate so Capt. Thuillier decided to improve upon his method of setting and printing. The size of the sheet was kept the same as before but he decided to put the ' stamps closer on the sheet and thus instead of 12 stamps in a sheet he brought out 24 stamps in a sheet and this printing is known as fourth printing, close setting. on so doing the wavy lines between the two stamps were not incorporated in the design and the stamps were placed 2 mm apart from each other. This very close setting was found unsuitable so there came out the fifth printing of this value with stamps placed 4 mm apart from each other and this last printing is popularly known as fifth printing medium setting.

In four annas also there are a number of re-touches and fine examples of worn dies, different head dies and frame dies, centre shifted or double which provide an excellent study. This value was not printed in big quantity and as majority of them were used in post, it is extremely difficult to obtain mint copies. Fine or superb used copies with four corners and wide margins all round are fast disappearing from the market. This glamorous group will not be complete if that great rarity 'Head Inverted' is forgotten or not taken note of. Recently it was offered in an auction in America where it realised a fantastic price

Note must be taken of other varieties the serrated perfs. or pinperf of 1/2 an. die I; 1 an dies I & II and 4 as. die II. This is believed to be unofficial yet they are listed by Gibbons Most of them were used in Madras circle but some are known with Bombay postmarks. The writer had one fine used example of 1 an die III serrated perfs which is unlisted by Gibbons. The above copy is genuine as I hold the same with the certificate of genuineness from the Royal Philatelies Society dated 28th Feb. 1936.

There is also a very fine range of early essays and proofs some of them are very rare. Those early essays are hard to find such as the famous 'Lion and Palm Tree' essay prepared by Col. Forbes and the first essays prepared by Capt. Thuillier. Reprints were made later on in 1883, 1889, 1891, 1894, 1905 and 1916. For a full account the best reference books are Robson Lowe's Encyclopedia Part III and Mr. Cooper's Stamps of India' Book.

### Queen Victoria Stamps From 1855 to 1890

After the fascinating lithographed stamps there came a supply of stamps from London Printed by De La Rue & Co., Five values that of 1/2 an; 1 an; 2 as; 4 as and 8 as. were printed on no watermark paper in sheets of 320 stamps, four panes of 80 stamps and they were perforated 14 all round. The values that of 4 as and 8 as. on thick glazed bluish paper which are listed as SG Nos. 35 and 36 by Gibbons. • All other values were printed on white paper and they abound in shades. These no watermark stamps No. 35 to 49 are extremely difficult to obtain in fine mint condition. Even the used copies that one can get are hardly in superb condition as out of hundreds of stamps one may come across only a dozen or two may be fine copies.

There are many star items in this group and they are the bisected stamps used on covers and imperforate pairs. No

doubt it is not possible to get all the imperforate pairs but it is advisable to keep one or two imperforate pairs in ones collection. The biggest pitfall is that of bisected stamps used on a piece or on a cover. I have seen only a couple of genuine examples of bisected stamps used on pieces. Most of the bisected and imperforate singles that are hawked around used on pieces are nothing but dangerous forgeries. Very few collectors know that these bisected were used in Start Settlement only, so be careful about the forged Postmarks.

Another rare item is 2 as. yellow-green No. 50 which was printed but not officially issued. In spite of it being officially not issued some used. example are known which are worth possessing. The other very elusive items are imperf between vertical pair of 1 anna brown No. 39a examples of which I have never come across and double impression of 1/2 anna blue and 1 anna brown, actually I possessed stamp printed double of 1/2 anna blue which was brought from one of the London auctions about twenty years back.

In the year 1865 the same series as above from 1/2 annas to 8 annas No. 54 to 65 with some variations in shades were issued on water-mark paper known as 'elephant head watermark'. In this group also mint stamps in perfect condition are difficult to obtain. Even fine used copies are hard to come across and the most difficult stamp either mint or used is 8 annas value No. 65. The imperforate pairs of 8 pies purple; 1/2 anna blue and 2 annas orange are very rare. I have seen the first two but so far I have not come across an imperforate pair of 2 annas orange.



The other two important stamps either mint or used are the six annas provisional stamps Nos. 66 and 68. From 15th Aug. 1863 the 1/2 oz. letter rate to U.K. via Marseilles was fixed at 6 annas. 8 p. and an order for this new value was placed with the printers. In the mean time to tide over the difficulty the Foreign Bill stamps of 6 annas denomination was overprinted 'POSTAGE' in green ink with the words 'FOREIGN' at the top and 'BILL' at the bottom removed. The overprint 'POSTAGE' appears in two types. The great rarity is No. 66 showing the overprint inverted. Be very careful in buying these stamps as many forgeries are known. Only a limited number of stamps were overprinted (about 166400) with the result mint stamps are very scarce and whatever used copies that are available are mostly in poor condition.

Between 1857-1876 further new values were added such as 9 pies, 6 as; 6 as. 8 p; 12 as. and Re. 1 for postal purpose. Out of this I consider 9p; 6 as 8p; 12 as; and Re. 1 Nos. 11, 77-79 and 82 are hard to obtain in fine used condition. The star item is the imperf pair of 6as 8p value example which are hardly to be seen.

He W3 corns to the end of stamps with the inscription 'East India Postage' Over and above the stamps. One could very easily expand ones collection by adding a galaxy of die proofs essays, and stamps overprinted 'SPECIMEN' and

'CANCELLED'.

## Empire of India

On 1st Jan. 1877 Queen Victoria assumed the title of Empress of India and the inscription on the stamps was changed from East India Postage to India Postage. A new set of stamps from 1/2 an. to Re. 1 was printed and released in 1882. Once again the stamps were printed by De La Rue & Co., on star watermark paper in sheets of 240 stamps in two panes of 120 stamps—12 x 10. There is nothing of importance in this series except two very good errors of 1/2 an. bluegreen and 2 as. blue SG Nos. 85a and 92 a showing the stamps printed double or what we call 'double impression' Genuine examples are extremely difficult to obtain so it is advisable to buy from a very reliable source or preferably with the certificate of genuineness from B.P.A. or Royal Philatelic Society. Looking to their scarcity, they are grossly under priced in Gibbons catalogue.

Between 1890-1900 further new values and change of colours and surcharges appeared but they are not of great importance. The high values Rs. 2, 3 and 5 (SG Nos. 107-109) are getting scarce either mint or used as the demand is increasing day by day. Another interesting item is the surcharge 1/4 anna on 1/2 anna blue-green showing stamp printed double and the surcharge double variety. In 1898 postage rate of new paper was reduced from 1/2 anna to 1/4 anna so to meet the demand this provisional surcharge was made. Both these errors are very difficult to obtain and they too seem to be under priced.

## Edward VII and Geo. V Stamps

By 1900 the volume of trade in this country and with overseas increased tremendously so to cope up with the demand of high denomination stamps, in 1902 the Edward VII set was issued upto Rs. 25. The composition of the sheets for all the values upto rupee one was the same as before that means 240 stamps in a sheet whereas the high values from Rs. 2 to Rs. 25 were in the sheet of 96 stamps eight panes of 12 stamps 4x3. In this group most of the stamps are easily available but I would like to make special mention about the scarcity of fine used examples of Rs. 3, 5 and 25 denominations. There was a time when they were easily available at very cheap rates. Twenty years back Ed. Rs. 25 (No. 147) was openly offered at Rs. 75 in fine mint or used condition but today the story is different.



King Ed. VII ruled for a short period or so in 1911 when Geo. V came on the throne another new series was released from 3 p. to Rs. 25. As for the low values upto 12 annas there were 56 stamps in a sheet, four panes of 64 stamps 16x4 and the high values were printed in similar fashion as Ed. VII high values. This series abounds in a number of shades. Due to heavy demand the high values Rs. 15 and Rs. 25 are getting scarce in fine mint condition as well as in fine postally used condition. The major error is the centre omitted in one

rupee value which is a star item.

There are some errors in surcharges which are worth possessing-some of them like 1/2 an. surcharge double and inverted; surcharge omitted in pair with normal and some errors in the provisional NINE PIES on 1 anna like surcharge double and surcharge inverted are extremely scarce. Here also collectors are warned against forgeries of all the above surcharges. And last but not the least is that very scarce error of the double print of 1/2 an yellow-green (155a).

### Stamps Printed at Nasik Security Press

For a long period of about seventy years De La Rue & Co, printed and produced some fine stamps for this country. The government was contemplating in establishing a printing press in India but for some unforeseen circumstances it was delayed for one reason or the other. The first printing plant was established at Nasik and the plant started operating from 1st April, 1926. The composition of the sheets was the same as before but there was only one difference and that the stamps were printed on paper with multiple star watermark instead of single star water mark. The whole set of Geo. V from 3 p to Rs. 25 came out practically in the same colours as before. There is nothing of importance except that there are two tetebeche pairs of 1 an. and 2 as, values. If the high values Rs. 15 and 25 are missing from your collection do not wait long-buy them at best.

For the first time three pictorial sets that of 1925 Air Mail, 1931 Inauguration of New Delhi and 1935 Silver Jubilee were issued. The first two sets are worth possessing. In the air mail set there is one good error which is better known as 'tree top missing' in the 8 as. value which is recommended in pair with normal. In the 1931 Inauguration of New Delhi set there are some fine examples of 'centre design printed double'. Clear centre double examples are scarce.



In the later issues of Geo. VI there is nothing special to mention. Most of the stamps in this series are easily available except Rs. 15 value in fine used condition.

### Service Stamps

As the volume of official correspondence increased, the authority decided to have separate stamps for official purpose. On 1st Aug. 1866 complete sheets of 320 stamps of 1/2an 1 an. and 8 ans., on no watermark paper and 1/2 an., 1 an., 2 ans. and 4 ans with watermark elephant head were over-printed and issued with the word 'Service' in small letters. The sheets were over printed in Military Orphanage Press, Calcutta. As the stamps were printed in small quantity it is difficult to obtain either fine mint or used copies. Varieties such as wide and more open letter no dot on letter 'i' and no stop after 'Service' are hard to come across. The major error is the 'Service' overprint



inverted on 1/2 an; 2 as. and 4 annas values. These are really outstanding errors. To tide over the shortage as many as 500 sheets of 8p purple were also overprinted 'Service' in 1872. One may come across a number of clever as well as crude orgeries of the 'Service' overprint. A number of stamps of 8p value are known with the forged overprint as well as with the forged postmark. Beware of reprints and dangerous forgeries.

The star items of the 'Service' group are foreign bills and fiscal stamps on blue enamelled paper overprinted with the word 'SERVICE' and 'POSTAGE' in green ink. The quantity printed was very small. There were 18,000 stamps of 2 annas; 20,000 stamps of 4 annas and only 2000 stamps of the 8 annas value. Mint stamps are very rare and good used examples are very scarce. Reprints were made but the reprints can 'be distinguished from the genuine stamps by the size of the overprints. Those who have not got SG Nos. 015 to 019 in their collections are advised to pick them up when the going is good.

Between 1867-1873 further supply of stamps overprinted Service in large letterings on stamps bearing watermark elephant's head from 1/2 an. to 8 annas were supplied by De La Rue & Co. The stamps of this series are not so scarce except two scarce stamps that of 1/2 anna blue die II No. 022 and 6 as. 8p. (No. 030b). Nearly 196 sheets (62,720 stamps) of the 6as. 8p. were received at Bombay but they were not issued and officially recorded as destroyed, it seems the whole stock was not destroyed as a number of mint stamps have appeared on the market.

In the year 1874 the overprint 'Service' was changed and a new overprint reading HMS was applied by De La Rue for all the official stamps. In the Queen's official stamps there are some very rare items with the overprints double as well as inverted, examples of which are simply unobtainable. Keep in mind 1/2 an. blue and 1 an. brown (Nos. 036-037) with the overprint in blue-black ink and rare errors overprints inverted and double Nos. 038a, 040a, b, 050a, b. But once again be very careful, buy these errors from only reliable source. These items in my mind are grossly under priced as I have hardly come across a couple of them. Other varieties such as overprints shifted are not to be neglected. All the stamps of this series exist with the overprints 'Specimen' or 'Cancelled'.

The official stamps of Ed. VII and Geo. V are fairly common. There are some very deserving items in the high value provisional issues and the two out standing items are Re.1 or Rs. 25 (Geo. V) showing surcharge inverted (No. 0103a) and the most difficult item Rs. 2 on Rs 10 green and scarlet (No.0104). There are a number of other provisional errors which were formerly listed by Gibbons but were removed from the catalogue after some time. These provisional errors are not to be neglected, if one can get a few examples they are worth keeping in ones collection. Besides there is a very fine range of Essays of high value provisionals in Ed. VII and Geo. V complete details of which can be obtained from Col. Hammond Giles article on the subject or from Cooper's Stamps of India book.

In Geo. V single star 'SERVICE' stamps there are a couple of fine items worth possessing 1/2 anna yellow-green and 1 anna aniline carmine showing overprint double are not easily obtainable. 1 anna chocolate an imperforate pair with the SERVICE overprint and the provisional error 'ONE ANNA' on 1 anna chocolate (No. 0107a) should not be missed. There are a number of provisional errors but space does not permit to describe them at length.

In my opinion pre independence stamps offer a fascinating study but somehow our own Indian stamp collectors have neglected the stamps of their own country. It should be the pride and privilege to collect the stamps of one's country as extensively done by stamp collectors of other countries. When a number of publications on Indian stamps containing wealth of knowledge are available at reasonable prices, why should we not read them and study them. If this article gives some fillip and inspiration to some Indian collectors to collect the stamps of their own country, then I would feel, I have done my duty towards Indian philately.

(Courtesy : SIPEX Souvenir 1985)



## GENTLE GIANTS OF FOREST AND SAVANNAH

Richard S. Oliver

Elephants have filled man with awe and respect for thousands of years, from early depictions of cavemen hunting mammoths, to the many films currently on TV devoted to the largest of all living land mammals.

Dating back 37 million years elephants and their ancestors all belong to the Order Proboscidea (meaning "long-snouted"). Most of the early ancestors had elongated, flattened lower jaws and tusks, which they used for scooping up vegetation from marshy areas. These early elephants were found on all continents except Antarctica and

Australasia. The most identifiable of prehistoric elephants were the Woolly Mammoth and the Mastodon (two million to 10000 years ago) from which modern-day elephants have evolved. (Illustrations 1 & 2)

Only two species remain today. The African elephant ("Loxodonta africana") can be further divided into two subspecies, the forest elephant, which is the larger of the two, and the savannah elephant. African elephants live in nearly every type of habitat that the continent has to offer, excluding the pure desert regions. The exception to this is the desert elephant of Namibia, which is remarkably adapted to living in the semi-desert conditions of the northwest corner of this country. The Asian elephant ("Elephas maximus") can be divided into four distinct sub-species, namely the Indian, the Ceylon, the Malayan, which is the hairiest of all living elephants, and the Sumatran. The latter two are highly endangered.

The African elephant is the larger of the two species. The African has a straight back and a flat forehead while the Asian has a rounded back and a domed forehead. The African also has bigger ears. The trunk of the African elephant has two fingerlike tips while that of the Asian only has one. The trunk is used for breathing, for plucking leaves from trees, for pulling up grass and conveying this food and water to its mouth. If the trunk is severely damaged or paralysed the elephant will be unable to feed and may soon die. (Illustration 3)

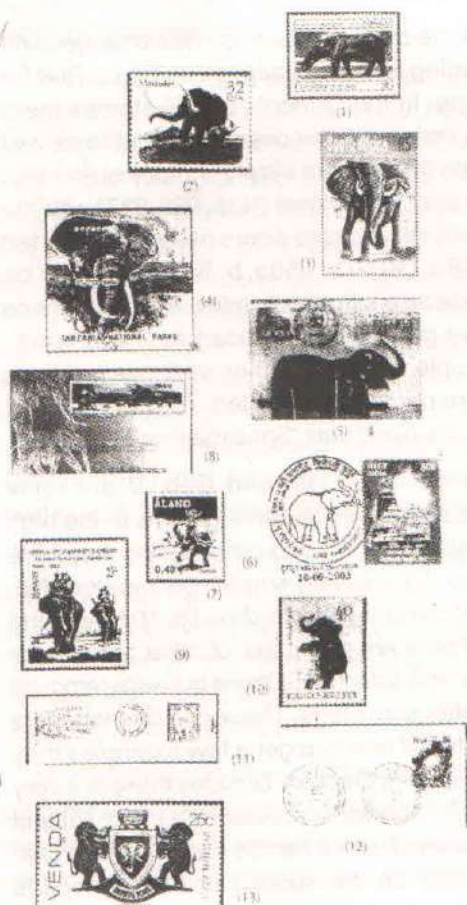
An African elephant's most distinctive feature is its tusks, which are in actual fact enlarged and protruding incisor teeth. Both male and female have tusks. Most female Asian elephants do not have tusks while most males, except those found in southern and central India, also do not have tusks. Elephants use their tusks as digging tools to get at water and salt in the ground or for ripping up roots but very seldom as weapons. (Illustration 4)

Because of the elephant's great size and in spite of its thick skin it is quite susceptible to the ravages of insects and heat. As a result elephants have a daily grooming ritual, which consists of rolling in mud and hurling dust over its body. Water is vital to everyday existence and elephants spend many hours drinking and bathing. (Illustration 5)

Elephants live in highly structured groups. The size of herds varies considerably. A herd normally consists of the matriarch, a mature female who heads the group, younger females, calves of various ages, and some immature males. Mature bulls leave the herd and form their own bachelor groups. Bulls will join family groups during the breeding season and in times of danger. (Illustrations)

### Elephants and men

Elephants have had an influence on the lives of men in one way or another for thousands of years. They have captured the wonder and imagination of artists almost from the time the first primitive human painted the symbol of an elephant on a cave wall. They have appeared in Indian and



African art. They have been associated with religions in their home regions, particularly in the Hindu religion where they have been depicted as gods and where they adorn the architecture of temples.

They have appeared in the writings of man, from Aristotle in ancient Greece, to the more modern stories of Jules Verne and Rudyard Kipling, and children's stories such as "Winnie the Pooh" and "Dumbo", and in films such as "Baby Elephant Walk" and on TV.

They have appeared in the zoos of ancient Syria and in the infamous "circuses" of the Roman Empire. On a more light-hearted note they have starred in the modern circuses from the late 1700's. We all remember the famous circuses of P. T. Barnum, Chipperfields and Boswell-Wilke. (Illustrations 8 & 9)

African elephants certainly can be trained to perform tasks for man, but the Asian elephant has a much longer working tradition, particularly in the logging industry. They have been used in Indian ceremonies and processions and more recently in elephant-back safaris. (Illustration 10)

On a serious note man has used them as war-elephants. Records show that Alexander the Great, in 326BC, encountered them war-elephants when his army invaded India. Marco Polo brought back reports of elephants in Chinese armies. The most famous use of war-elephants was by Hannibal of Cartage in 219BC when he crossed the Alps in his attack on the Roman Empire.

### **Elephants in danger**

Although elephants are the largest of living land mammals, they are under constant threat of extinction. From earliest times they have been hunted for their ivory and meat. With the advent of the gun the situation became much worse. The so-called "great white hunters" of the 19th century shot thousands during their expeditions into the interior of the "dark continent" of Africa. Despite man's efforts to halt the trade in ivory the ever-increasing world demand and high prices paid, encourage poachers to risk their lives killing elephants.

Further stress comes from the exploding populations of Africa and Asia. The ever-increasing demand for land brings elephants into conflict with man virtually on a daily basis. Drought and war are further problems.

But man is endeavouring to rectify the situation. Trade in ivory has been banned and many countries set aside land for conservation purposes. Zoos are doing their job by bringing the elephant to a wider audience.

### **Elephants and Philately**

When I started my collection of elephants, I thought it would be an easy task. But this was not to be. Many countries have issued stamps featuring elephants, whether it be the animal itself or as toys, handicrafts, in children's tales/films, or stylised. Then when one turns to collecting postal stationery, postmarks or meter marks one opens up a can of worms, as there is a never-ending stream of such items. One just has to look at Southern Africa with its postcards,

booklets and postmarks. India in particular is awash with such items as they appear in the emblem of many Indian states. Just look at the prestamped postcards issued by Travancore-Cochin in 1948/49. Even local and national stamp exhibitions have special covers with first day cancellations featuring stylised elephants. The more one looks, the more one finds.

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(Courtesy. Themnews, South Africa 2004)



## **TRAVANCORE - COCHIN**

### **ITS POTAGE STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY**

**FRANK M.COWEN & J.DEVASYA**

#### **PART 1**

On April 1, 1951, the Department of posts and Telegraphs of the Republic of India absorbed the last postal system of an Indian feudatory state, that of the state of Travancore-cochin. It was about this time that the authors began a serious study of this last independent state postal services which was established on July 1, 1949, as a result of the political amalgamation of the two states of Cochin and Travancore. We believe that the story presented herein will be a surprise to many philatelists who are generally relegated the postal emissions of the Indian states to about the same position as those issued by local posts. The more important native states were actually independent nations tied by treaty to the British Raj which ruled India proper. These states were allowed to maintain army, establish communication and transportation system within the state, supervise education, expand agriculture and industry, levy taxes, establish law and order by their own methods. It was only in the fields outside communication, transportation, foreign affairs, foreign trade and the general defense of India that the British exercised power. It was an ingenious colonial system enlarged and maintained by expert British policy over a period of one and half centuries. By giving the zealous Indian princes these rights and privileges, the United Kingdom was able to keep a firm grip on the sub-continent without the necessity of maintaining extensive internal security forces. The princes rarely got out of land. Perhaps the harshest lesson was learned by those unfortunate rulers who cast lot with the native mutineers in the Indian mutiny of 1957. The triumph of Her Majesty's forces resulted in the division of many states, the dethronement of defeated maharajas, the award of large tracts of land and additional power to faithful rulers.

The maintenance of an independent postal system was one of the prerogatives enjoyed by the majofeudatory princes. Although the British continually tried to unite

these posts with the Indian posts and Telegraphs Department, they were only partially successful. The central Government was never willing to go to the extreme of forceful submission. Two of these states who clung to their rights in this regard were Cochin and Travancore. Then the Dominion of India was established in 1947, it was obvious that force would be employed by New Delhi to bring to an end a disunited communications system.

It is unfortunate that the records and histories of the native posts in India have received such scanty attention. Part of this is due to the lack of cooperation by the feudatory states when information was requested; part is due to the lack of interest by past philatelists in setting down such a story. We are all indebted to those few specialists who avidly studied the postal paper of the states and recorded their findings for posterity, but we can only regret that they were not moved to show the same interest in postal history. However, even today, it is possible to construct a portion of this story, and stimulate similar interests in other states by philatelists. We hope to compile similar records of the Anchals of Cochin and Travancore. Any help offered by others will be greatly appreciated.

In making this study, the authors have had to rely upon whatever information could be collected piecemeal and numerous sources. The official records were gathered together one by one since little or no help could be obtained from ex-officers of the Anchal. Several gaps still exist in our knowledge of the brief period of 1949 - 1951. It is to be hoped that access to important files may be obtained. So that the history of the postal systems can be recorded for the benefit of posterity. The philatelic press, to our knowledge, contains little important data on the South Indian Anchals; even the stamps of such states as Cochin and Travancore have received only brief mention, most of which is confined to the pages of the Philatelic JOURNAL OF INDIA and a few English journals. It is true that the postal emissions of these states lack the "Glamour" of many other states. It is remembered that the Cochin, Travancore and Travancore - Cochin Anchals served the primary function of providing the people of their states with a fairly efficient communications system. There is little evidence of catering to stamp collectors, a record few modern nations can equal.

The authors make no apology for integrating the study of postal stationery so closely with the adhesive stamps. It is our belief that any postal history would be incomplete without including all "carriage - paid" items. Specialists in all philatelic fields are again acknowledging the existence of post cards, envelopes, wrappers and the letter sheets, certainly a gratifying trend.

Mr. Cowen assumes the entire responsibility for the conclusions reached in this paper and wishes to express his deeply - felt gratitude to this Indian Co-worker for the countless hours and expense involved in gathering the voluminous data which made this study possible. It is not often that one is so fortunate in his choice of a collaborator.

## CHAPTER I. THE STATE OF TRAVANCORE - COCHIN

Travancore - Cochin consists of the former Indian Madras States of Cochin and Travancore and the formerly British

held coast towns of Tranggasser and Anjengo. The port of Cochin, long in British hands, is now under the direct jurisdiction of the Central Government which is modernizing its important port facilities. The state is known as the Malabar Coast Region. Travancore - Cochin is bounded by the state of Madras on the North and East, by the Arabian Sea on the South and West. The total area is 9, 143 square miles making it one of the smallest state in the Republic of India.

The northeastern zone is heavily forested, the Western Ghats (mountains) rising to 8000 feet, ANAI MUDI being 8, 841 feet above sea level. The Central sector consists of uplands and plains, and the west, a littoral coastal strip. The principal rivers are the Periyar, Paubai, Kalluda and Western Tambravarani. They provide much inland water communication. The largest lakes are Vembanad Lake in the West coastal region and Periyar Lake in the mountainous region of the East.

The climate of the whole area is generally temperate, the heavy rainfall encouraging much cultivation to support the population of 9,280,425 making it the most densely populated state in India (1,015 person per square mile) except for the enclave of Delhi, the Indian Capital. The staple foods of the people are rice, fish and tapioca with agriculture being the chief occupation. Among the important crops grown in the State are rice, tapioca, yams, beans, grain, pepper, rubber, ginger, turmeric, tea and cardamon. There are also dense coconut plantations as well as groves of fruit trees such as areca, jack, tamarind, cashew and mango.

The forests are well - wooded with teak, ebony, blackwood, rose - wood and ampili. The fauna consists of the elephant, leopard, bison, bear, the sambar and a variety of small game.

The state is well advanced industrially, its factories producing ceramics, electrical goods, pottery, fancy articles, sanitary equipment, sugar, chemicals, pharmaceutical products, rubber, glass and plywood. Power for these plants is supplied by the important Pallivasal Hydro - electric Works. Salt is refined on a commercial scale for domestic use and export. Other exports include coconut products, pepper, tea, rubber and fish. The Republic of India has recently shown a great interest in the Thorium rich Monazite sands of the Travancore seacoast as potential source of atomic energy.

The Natives of the state are noted for their ivory works. Craftsmen produce exquisite objects of art from the tusk of the South Indian elephant which are prized throughout the world.

The State has the highest percentage of literacy in India, both male and female being over 50% and rising rapidly. There are almost one million students in some 4,000 educational institutions. Thus the citizens of the State rank much above most of India in educational attainments. For this reason South India, including Travancore - Cochin, produces a large number of the leaders in the new Republic. A great part of the credit for these advancements must be given to the enlightened governments provided by the progressive rulers of Cochin, Mysore, Travancore and neighboring states.

Prior to the amalgamation of the States of Cochin and Travancore on July 1, 1945 there was no direct rail

communication between the two. In Cochin a railroad proceeded north from Ernakulam, the capital, through Trichur to Shoranur in Madras Province where connections were made to Calicut on the Malabar Coast and Coimbatore in the western interior. Similarly, in Travancore, a railroad left Trivandrum, the present Capital of the new state and the former capital of Travancore, and proceeded north and east through Quilon and Punalur to Tinnevely in Madras province. On June 28, 1949, three days before integration, the governments of the two states provided through - express mail services by motor bus between Trivandrum and Ernakulam Via Kottarakkara - Muvattupuzha, the eastern route and at the same time, improved and lengthened the existing passenger are bus services. Surveys are underway to provide direct railway facilities between Trivandrum and Ernakulam.

The people of the new state are descended from the earliest settlers of South India. Because of natural barriers and excellent fighting abilities were able to withstand the great Mogul invasions which destroyed the early Hindu dynasties of the North. They speak Malayalam, a Dravidian language peculiar to the Malabar Coast region, Tamil another Dravidian Language spoken south of Trivandrum and English. The majority of inhabitants are Hindu in religion (60%) but a significant minority (32%) are Christians, the majority being Syrian Christians who claim to have been founded by St. Thomas the Doubter, the Moslems (8%). St. Francis Xavier (1506 - 1552), the famous spanish Jesuit missionary, traveled and worked in much of what is now Travancore-Cochin. Small colonies of Jews, who evidently wandered here after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, exist in Cochin. Members of wild tribes still inhabit the forests of the east.

The ex-Maharajas of Cochin and Travancore both claim descent from the Chera Rajas who were ruling in 'KERALA' as early as the Third Century, B.C. The former ruling dynasties, claiming Kshatriya rank are matriarchates, descent being through the female line. "KERALA" was a familiar name to the ancient Greeks and Romans who conducted some trade with that kingdom. European contact was brief, however, until the early years of the 16th century when the Portuguese, led by Vasco Da Gama, first landed on the Malabar Coast. By 1542 they had established settlements and 'factories in many areas of the region. Their power was extended and maintained by such leaders as Francis of Almeida and Alfonso de Albuquerque for sixty years with no serious rivals. This 'Golden Era' for Portugal did not last long. Union with Spain under Philip II in 1580 was followed by a gradual decline in which the Dutch, acting the lowlands obliged Philip to close the port of Lisbon to the enterprising Hollanders for purposes of exploration. The Dutch East India Company was formed and commercial treaties signed with rulers in Java and Bengal. After several naval engagements extending over some years, the Northern Europeans got the upper hand. Thus after 1663 most of the important places on the Malabar Coast fell into their hands. In the meantime the growing French and British Powers in India forced the gradual decline of Dutch Power. By the early part of the 19th century the British were the acknowledged masters. It was during Lord Minto's governor generalship (1807 - 1813) that Cochin and Travancore were placed under British control.

The modern history parallels that of the other important feudatory states under the British Raj. Relations had been generally good and the Europeans rulers were content to let well enough alone.

Under the forceful direction of the late Sardar Patel, first Deputy Premier of the Dominion of India, the native states acceded to the independent state between 1947 and 1949. This policy, which many British and Indian Citizens claimed could not be done peacefully, was a complete success in most areas, bloodshed resulting only in Hyderabad and Kashmir. The latter state is still in dispute between India and Pakistan, although mainly occupied by the former. The proud Indian princes and chieftains were pensioned off or given jobs as governors of the new areas which resulted.

The Government of India's policy was to amalgamate the smaller states along with surrounding centrally - controlled areas into larger units or states. In Travancore and Cochin this came about on July 1, 1949, When, with proper ceremonies in the Council Chamber of the Secretariat Building at Trivandrum at 10.30 a.m. the legislatures of the two states heard of the Covenant, signed by the Maharajas of Cochin and Travancore, read by the Secretary of the Indian States Ministry. Following this the Chief Justice of the United State came forward and read the Maharaja of Travancore's letter to the States Ministry, Government of India, agreeing to serve as Raj Pramukh (Prince - President) of the United States of Travancore and Cochin. His Highness then took his seat as the Prince - President, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the Premier and six other ministers chosen by him. With the playing of JANA GANA MANA, the Indian National Anthem, the ceremonies of integration were brought to a close.

For administrative purposes the state is divided into four districts or divisions. Trichur, the northernmost, also called Cochin, comprises all the ex-state of Cochin except for a few small isolated enclaves and a small portion of northwestern Travancore, Ernakulam the former capital of Cochin, the ancient principality of Granganore, the important towns of Alway and Trichur are located this district.

Immediately south of Trichur (Cochin) lies the Kottayam District which includes all of the former Travancore division of the same name, except the portion awarded to Trichur and the former eastern Travancore division of Devicolum. The town of Kottayam and the peak of Anai Mudi are located in this section.

The southern districts of Quilon and Trivandrum comprise the same areas as the ex-Travancore divisions of the port of Alleppey. Trivandrum, the capital of the new state and the former capital of Travancore is located in the latter along with the important trading town of Nagercoil. Cape Comorin, the Southern extremity of Indian, is part of this district.

- To be continued

(Courtesy: The Collector's Club Philatelist)

