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Editorial

REVIEW 2006 Needed a 'Youth oriented' stamp issue policy

List of 2006 - Stamps is given inside in detail. On perusal of the list, a few points are explicitly noted from the collector's point of view, especially young collectors. Let us have our usual review, before analysing for those special points for the future of Indian philately.

- i) On the whole 46 issues have been brought out in 2006, with the month of February taking the issue honours with nine issues.
- ii) The "2006 - Year Pack" will have forty nine stamps of Rs.5/-, six stamps of Rs.15/-, seven miniature sheets and twelve maxim cards, totally costing Rs.700/- a lot of money indeed.
- iii) Along with single commemoratives, eight sets including two joint issues have been brought out.
- iv) Unlike previous years, in 2006, the issues have been generally spread out throughout the year except February with a concentration of nine issues and May with a single issue. A welcome trend, of course.
- v) Out of thirty six single commemorative issues, sixteen issues have been used to honour personalities.

Some fascinating points can be made out on further analysis. Looking into issues in depth, one can say 2006 is a year of 'maxim cards' and 'Tamil Nadu - Commemoration'.

After quite a number of barren maxim-card years, year 2006 saw a flurry of maxim cards. i.e., 3 sets of four, five, and three cards flooding the baskets of collectors. With all the confusions created by a few philatelic bureaus and counters, many new collectors have learnt what a 'maxim card' is. At the sametime, the pricing pattern of the sets, Birds (4 cards with one stamp each, Rs.60/-), Lakes (5 cards with one stamp each, Rs. 60/-) and Children's day (3 cards with 2 stamps each Rs.50/-) baffled the senior philatelists as well.

Coming to TamilNadu - Commemoration, out of the sixteen personalities paid tributes in 2006, eleven are from Tamilnadu. Further another six subjects pertaining to Tamilnadu have been commemorated, making Tamilnadu, the most represented state in India through stamps in 2006.

Always we talk about taking the hobby to young children in school and want to promote 'youth philately'. Such being the case, the expenditure on the hobby should be within the reach of school children with their pocket money. But the philatetic material issued by India post in 2006 - Stamps, first day covers, information sheets, miniature sheets and maxim cards - will go far above rupees one thousand. Compared to previous years the total cost has gone up very much. This situation is not a good augury for the promotion of the hobby and it is like 'killing the golden goose'.

Moreover, there should be a pre-planned, well organised, and adequately publicised issue system for philately like many other member countries of the Universal Postal Union. Such a system alone can help the collectors as well as the promoters in the development of the hobby in our motherland.



STAMP NEWS

G. VARADARAJ

01.11.06

500

0.4 Mill



Shri G. Varadaraj was a pioneer of education, business and industry as well as a Parliamentarian.

Born to Shri Ganga Naidu on 1st November, 1936 at Coimbatore,

Shri G. Varadaraj did his schooling from the Sarva Jana High School in Coimbatore. As a worthy scion of the PSG (Periaveedu Sama Naidu Govindaswamy Naidu) family, Shri G. Varadaraj proved as an astute businessman while promoting industry, education, science, sports, culture and social welfare. He supported the growth and development of the PSG group of educational institutions such as the Sarva Jana Higher Secondary School, the PSG college of Arts and Science, the PSG Industrial Institute, the PSG College of Technology and the PSG Medical College. As the Managing Trustee of the PSG group of institutions from 1978 to 1990, he founded the Institute of Medical Science and Research in 1985.

Shri G. Varadaraj was the founder of Rajashree Sugars and Chemicals Limited (RSCL) in 1987 in a most backward area of the Theni District of Tamil Nadu, which paved the way for the economic and social development of the area by providing employment opportunities to the local people.

Shri G. Varadaraj was a distinguished Parliamentarian. As a Member of the Rajya Sabha for six years from 1983, he served on several committees. He was also instrumental in providing landing facilities for Boeing jet flights in Coimbatore instead of at Sulur, which was about 35 kms away. He was Chairman/ President, Vice-President, Director and Member of many foundations and organizations such as Indian Cotton Mills Federation, Southern India Mills Association, Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Coimbatore) and Engineering Export Promotion Council.

He died on 23rd October, 1990 but his legacy lives on.

Theme : Personality, Industry, Education.

LALA DEEN DAYAL

11.11.06

500

0.4 Mill



The pioneer of photography in India, Lala Deen Dayal left a brilliant visual record of the lifestyle, events and monuments of late nineteenth century.

Lala Deen Dayal was born at Sardhana near Meerut in 1844. After studying at Thomson's Civil Engineering College at Roorkee, he became an estimator and draughtsman in the Department of Works in the Secretariat in Indore in 1866. Soon, he developed a keen interest in photography. He was encouraged by Sir Henry Daly, the Agent to the Governor General for Central India, who assigned him the task of photographing the royal visit of the Prince of Wales in 1875. Impressed by his talent, Sir Henry took Deen Dayal along with him on his tour of Bundelkhand. In 1882-83 Deen Dayal again toured Bundelkhand with Sir Lepel Griffin who was the Agent at that time. Eighty nine of his photographs of palaces, forts and temples in Gwalior, Khajuraho, Rewa and Sanchi were splendidly reproduced by the Autotype carbon process in Sir Lepel Griffin's "Famous Monuments of Central India".

Gradually his reputation grew, and the Nizam of Hyderabad, Mir Mahbub Ali Khan appointed him as his court photographer and also conferred upon him the title 'Raja Musavir Jung'. In 1897, Lala Deen Dayal was granted the Royal Warrant appointing him Photographer to Her Imperial Majesty Queen Victoria.

He set up studios in Indore, Secunderabad and Bombay. In 1893 his display of views of India received a special award at the World Colombian Exposition in Chicago.

He traveled far and wide in India, visited all the important places of interest and took more than 6000 photographs, which is supposed to be the largest collection ever held by any single photographer.

He expired in Bombay on 5th July 1905 at the age of 61.

The true-to-life quality of Lala Deen Dayal's photographs provide a rare pictorial glimpse into a bygone

era, the picturesque opulence, genteel grandeur and gracious charm of 19th century India, with whiskered nobility, hookah bearers, royal palaces, royal hunts and parades, elephant carriages, golden moments' captured on silver plates for posterity.

Theme : Personality, Photography, Pioneers.

CHILDREN'S DAY

14.11.06

500, 500 0.4 Mill each



बाल दिवस
Children's Day

The Universal Children's Day, celebrated on 14th November every year, is an occasion to renew our

commitment to the cause of children and re-dedicate ourselves to fulfilling their basic needs and rights. The day also coincides with the birthday of India's first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, fondly called 'Chacha Nehru' by children.

The department of Posts brings out stamp on Children's Day every day, which is designed by a child. To select the stamp design, the department organizes an All India Stamp Design Competition. The theme for this Competition was 'My favourite mythological hero' or 'My favourite fairy tale'.

This year's stamps are based on paintings made by Master Keval Thakkar, a student of Amariyoti Saraswati Vidyalaya Kalvibid, Bhavnagar, Gujarat and Master Shivanna T.Madvi, a student of Dada Vaidya High School, Curti, Ponda, Goa, Maharashtra who won the first prizes in the Group I and II respectively in the competition. Miniature sheet is based on a painting made by Anu Vijayan of Kerala who won the first prize in the Group III in the Competition.

Design of the First Day Cover is based on the painting made by Sagar Sen of Morning Star School, Agarpara, West Bengal who won second prize in Group III. The three maxim cards depict paintings done by Kumari Pallavi Majumdar of Vidya Bharti Girls' High School, New Alipore, Kolkata, Winner of second prize in Group II. Ms. Shi Ipa S.Kulkarni, of Prathmik Marathi School, Solapur, Maharashtra, winner of second prize in Group I and Master Mitrajit Sharma of Faculty Higher Secondary School, Guwahati, winner of Third Prize in Group III.

Theme : Children, Children's day, Paintings, Mythology.

HIMALAYAN LAKES

16.11.06

500 Each

3.0 Mill each



The word 'lake' conjures up a vision of blue, tranquil waters, boats with semi-recumbent revelers, and other paraphernalia of a tourist resort all set against a lush and beautiful backdrop. The lake eco-systems are, however, of significance and under threat. On the one hand they are vulnerable to pollution, and on the other hand their vulnerability means that they can be excellent sensors of environmental change.

Known for their pristine beauty, the Himalayan Lakes of India, surrounded by towering snowcapped peaks, have inspired travelers, pilgrims, painters and adventure seekers. From Jammu & Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh, the Himalayan ranges are dotted with a galaxy of lakes of remarkable beauty. Most of these lakes are found at altitudes of less than 5000 meters and, interestingly, the size of the lakes diminish with altitude.

One of the most classically beautiful lakes is the Chandratul in Lahaul and Spiti District of Himachal Pradesh that connects the areas of Spiti and Lahaul. Surrounded by snow and acres of scree, this deep blue lake has a circumference of 2.5 KM, and is the source of river Chandra. Situated at a breathtaking 4300 meters above sea level, the lake itself was probably formed at the end of the last ice age when the glaciers retreated, leaving behind considerable dead ice masses, which on melting formed large lakes.

Roop Kund is situated at a height of 5029 meters from sea level on the lap of the Trisul Massif. This is called the 'Mystery lake', after human skeletons and remains of horses were found here. This magnificent lake is surrounded by rock-strewn glaciers and snow clad peaks.

Tsangu in Bhutia language literally means "the source". This tranquil lake is located at an altitude of 12310 ft. on the Gangtok Nathula Highway. The lake is about 1 KM long, oval in shape, about 15 meters deep and is considered sacred by the people. Its cool, placid waters mirror the enchanting beauty of the surrounding Alpine

forests which are home to some rare animals like the Red Panda, the Brahminy Duck and a variety of other birds.

Sela Lake, which is also called Paradise Lake, is situated on the way to Tawang, alongside the world's second highest motorable pass, i.e. Sela pass (13,714 ft. approx.) in Arunachal Pradesh. The height of the lake is approximately 13500 ft. The lake is in round shape and its circumference measured about 2.1 KM, and it is 6 meters deep. The lake abounds in trout and is surrounded by ice almost round the year.

The Tsomori Lake or 'Mountain Lake' is an enchanting expanse of water ringed by mountains, located about 240 KM from Leh, in Rupshu Valley of Jammu & Kashmir. The lake is situated at an altitude of about 4267 meter from sea level, near a small village called Korzok. 15 miles in length and 3-4 miles in width, the lake is home to many rare migratory birds. The area is rich in wildlife including the 'Kyang' (wild ass), red fox, and the snow leopard, and the lake area is also known for the colourful nomadic people who live there.

Theme : Nature, Mountains, Himalayas.



THE TRIBUNE

24.11.06 500
0.8 Mill each

The Tribune is one of the oldest newspapers of India. It has played a major role in the awakening of the people. The newspaper owes its origin to

Sardar Dayal Singh. It was during his sojourn in England and travels in Europe that he realized the importance of the press in the life of a nation. Although as early as in 1872 a weekly "Civil and Military Gazette", had started in Shimla, there was no organ to give voice to the people of India. This prompted Dayal Singh to start "The Tribune" as a weekly from Lahore on February 2, 1881, the year Vernacular Press Act was repealed.

This first issue of The Tribune carried a long editorial expressing the foundational principles of the paper and laying down guidelines for the future. It said : "Our appearance in the field of journalism is to meet a crying want of this part of India, namely, an English journal for the presentation of 'native' opinion".

As the mouthpiece of the people, The Tribune carried 20 articles on the need of education in Punjab on modern

lines through the medium of English with the very first issue onwards.

Ideals espoused by The Tribune were truly nationalistic, as it professed to champion the cause of the people regardless of class or creed, and to stand for the welfare of the masses, even as it meant withstanding the pressure of colonial government or facing adversities and restrictions, including litigations.

The fearless journalism practised by the Tribune soon came to test when within 10 months of its launch, it confronted the Government over biased reporting in the Civil and Military Gazette on the Multan riots, thereby winning people's confidence and acclaim from other newspapers across the country.

The Tribune witnessed a major crisis at the time of partition. Trustees of the Tribune decided to continue its publication from Lahore, but the circumstances compelled them to shift to Shimla where the India edition started. Later it was shifted to Ambala and after a few years, to Chandigarh, where it has been flourishing.

The glorious history of 125 years of The Tribune is a shining example of the true ideals of journalism.

Theme : Journalism, Freedom struggle.

150 YEARS OF FPO

08.12.06 500 Each
0.4 Mill each



In the long and glorious history of the Indian Army, Army Post Offices have played a pivotal role in maintaining the morale of the troops. Being a part of the national postal system, Field Post Offices have served as a connecting link between the troops places in far-flung locations guarding the frontiers and their families back home.

The Field Post Offices accompanying the Expeditionary Forces abroad were called as Field Forces Post Offices (FFPOs). The first Field Force Post Office came into operation during 1856 to accompany the British Expeditionary Forces to Persia. This FPO functioned at Bushire from 12 December 1856 to 02 October 1857. The second FPO functioned at Mohamasa (present Khorramshahi) from 24 March 1857 to 16 May 1857 and third FFPO at Kharaj from August 57 to 04 February 1958.

Field Post Offices initially provided all major postal facilities except payment of money orders and Indian Postal Orders. Gradually FPOs became an integral part of the Army and are set up, worked, controlled and closed under the orders of the Army's own postal organization, the Army Postal Service (APS). Raised as a war time postal organization till World War II, the Jammu and Kashmir operations in 1947 had brought in the need and necessity to have it as a permanent organization of the Indian Army. Initially the Army Postal Service, which controls the Field Post Offices, was affiliated to Army Service Corps till it became a separate entity on 01 March 1972.

The most important contribution of the Field Post Office in the life of a soldier is that it keeps up his morale. The postal facility is not only extended to the Army but also to the Air Force, Border Road Organization, Rashtriya Rifles and other Para Military Forces like Assam Rifles, BSF and CRPF. The recent introduction of PIN code for Army units with '9' as the first index number enables the Army mail move with the soldier.

The Field Post Offices are fully Mobile and equipped to function in tents, trucks, bunkers, and even in open air as befits their Army role. However, in the changing IT environment FPOs are also functioning in well built, well equipped accommodation. With the provision of computers in every FPO, the counter operations have been automated to give fast and hassle free services to the customers. In its 150th year, the FPO is marching ahead to extend all the postal facilities and premium services to their clientele. The FPOs have made a giant leap forward in their mission to serve the soldiers with zeal and dedication both in peace and war for the last 150 years of its existence.

Theme : Postal system, Army, Army Postal Service, World Wars.

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg

10.12.06 500

0.4 Mill



Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg was a German theologian, missionary and scholar who made India his home and did pioneering work in bringing the West close to the Indian Culture.

He arrived in Tranquebar on 9th July 1706, with a purpose of introducing German Lutheran pietism to the people who were following various Bhakti cults, but his encounter with people and their culture transformed him

and he became an expert of Indian culture and religious heritage.

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg initiated a new way of learning Tamil language, and translated the New Testament into Tamil.

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg translated most of the Tamil grammatical prose into Latin. He composed the first Grammatical Dimalica, which was published in 1716 in Halle, Germany.

In 1711, he wrote 'Malabarian Gods' in which he quoted long passages from 176 works including Sivavackiam, Gnanavenba, 64 Thiruvilayadal Puranam, Udalkuru Thathuram etc. The second book was 'Genealogy of Malabarian Gods' in which he incorporated 145 letters written by Tamil Scholars.

Ziegenbalg introduced a Tamil printing press in Tranquebar in 1712. The 'Nirubam', a small circular, marked the first printing.

He was instrumental in establishing the first school for girls in 1710.

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg marked the beginning of an interesting chapter in Indo-German relationship.

He died in 1719 in India.

Theme : Leaders, Pioneers, linguistics, printing.



SANDALWOOD

13.12.06

1500

0.3 Mill

Prized since time immemorial for its fragrance and medicinal properties, Sandalwood enjoys a very special status in India. An intrinsic part of Hindu religious rituals and social customs, Sandalwood finds mention in Indian classical literature and scriptures dating back to 2000 BC, including the "Ramayana", the poetry of Kalidasa, as also Buddhist texts which attribute it to the Bodhisatva Amitrabha.

The Sandalwood tree is currently found in India, Sri Lanka, Australia, China, Taiwan, Hawaii, and some other South Pacific islands. In India the tree grows in the southern

deciduous forests of the Western Ghats and the Deccan plateau, mainly in the States of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Botanically known as "Santalum album" the Sandalwood tree belongs to the Santalaceae family and is a semi parasite. It is interesting to note that the sandalwood tree is not felled. Instead the tree is uprooted in the rainy season, when its roots are rich in the precious oil. It is said that one ton of the heartwood can yield upto 60 Kgs of oil.

Apart from its oil, the sandalwood tree is also valued for its wood and bark. The powdered bark is an important ingredient in the making of "Agarbattis" or incense sticks, and the wood is used for carving. Skilled artisans work to fashion the wood into caskets and panels, statues and figurines of deities, and into temple doors.

Made into a powder or paste, the wood has been used in traditional medicine, along with the oil, to treat a variety of ailments ranging from snakebites, respiratory tract and digestive complications, to skin problems, and also to nourish and beautify the skin. The fragrance of sandalwood is useful in aroma therapy, to relieve stress and depression, alleviate anger and aggression, and to foster calm and tranquility. Above all, the oil is prized for its wonderful fragrance. Its warm, sweet, slightly spicy woodnotes, are long-lasting and distinctive, yet mild enough to blend harmoniously with other aromas to create an endless variety of perfumes.

Little wonder then that sandalwood is a very precious commodity. Commerce in sandalwood dates back to the beginnings of trade in India and Indian sandalwood is now quite rare and expensive. In 1792, the ruler of Mysore (part of present day Karnataka) had declared the sandalwood as a royal tree and, even today, no individual in India may own a sandalwood tree. All sandalwood trees in India are owned by the Government, and their harvest is strictly controlled.

Theme : Trees, Flora, Botony, Perfumery.



**STUDY OF PHILATELIC LITERATURE IS A MUST
FOR ACHIEVING HIGHER COLLECTING
STANDARDS
L.G.SHENOI**

It is but human nature to try to attribute glamour to one's activities however mundane it might be. Stamp Collectors are no exception, The term 'Stamp Collector'

was too common-place, too matter-of-fact to glorify their hobby and, hence, they coined the word 'Philatelist' so that they might indulge in the glory of a term, the meaning of which perhaps was not very clear even to Georges Herpin who invented it. Thereafter we justified this term by creating a near-myth by defining a Philatelist as a collector who not only collected stamps, but also studied them. Really? How many collections that are paraded in the competitive section of an exhibition bear the stamp of advancement through study? In my opinion, not a high percentage! The Indian philatelist is, alas, too reluctant to undertake the strenuous exercise of study of stamps, their content and background. In fact, many Indian Philatelists neglect the study of philatetic literature which impart knowledge on these aspects.

The types of philatelic literature available to the Indian philatelist for study are quite numerous. I shall discuss them under the following headings :

- 1) Books
- 2) Periodicals
- 3) Catalogues
- 4) Auction catalogues
- 5) Information sheets
- 6) Postal Regulations, Notifications etc.
- 7) Allied Literature

1. Books

Philatelic books constitute a treasure-house of knowledge which should be the endeavour of every 'Philatelist' to acquire. They can be conveniently subdivided into : (a) Basic Books; (b) Guide Books; (c) Specialist Books.

The Basic Books well on the essential knowledge a philatelist should possess if he or she were to pursue stamp collecting in a systematic and informed manner. There are many books, old classics as well as new ones, published in the English Language which would come under this category. One can list many titles, perhaps about fifty; but the four outstanding books I have come across are :

- i) 'Stamp Collecting' by Stanley Philips;
- ii) 'The Foundations of Philately' by Winthrop S. Boggs;
- iii) 'Standard Handbook of Stamp Collecting' by Richard Mc.Cabeen; and
- iv) 'Fundamentals of Philately' by L.N. and M. Williams.

Some of these have been accepted as authorities treatises and, accordingly, revised, editions have been published from time to time. A perusal of the List of Contents of some of these books would indicate the extent of information and knowledge they seek to impart.

The book by Stanley Philips is divided into 3 parts and Appendices. The 1st Part deals with The Story of the Post; The Coming of the Postage Stamps; Stamps and their uses; Commemorative and Charity Stamps; Life and Anatomy of a Postage Stamp; Stamp Printing; Errors and Varieties; Overprints and Surcharges; Designs and Inscriptions; Stamp colours and their names; Stamp Sheets and Booklets; The Other Side of the Stamp; Postmarks and Obliterations; Forgeries, Reprints and Fakes. Part 2 deals with : The (Collector's) Outfit; How to Get Stamps; The question of Condition; How to Identify Stamps; Arranging the Collection; The Specialist; The World's Stamps; Stamps of the Second World War; New Ways of Collecting; 'Stunt' Collections; Air Stamps and Covers; The Money side of Stamp Collecting. The 3rd part deals with: The Stamp World; Great Collectors and Famous Collectors; The Stamp Library; Behind the Scenes; How to Become a Stamp Dealer; Treasure Trove; Governments as Stamp Dealers; The Hobby of a Thousand Faces. The Appendices deal with: Stamp Currencies; Philatelic Terms in Three Languages; Stamp Inscriptions Translated; The Meaning of Overprints.

The 'Standard Handbook' is divided into 5 Parts. Part 1, Introduction to Stamp Collecting, deals with: Starting a Collection; Expanding the collection; What to Collect; Albums; Storage of Duplicates and other unmounted stamps; Accessories and their use; Condition; Preparing Stamps for Mounting; Speciality and Sideline Collections; Cancellations of Stamps Off Cover; Arranging and Writing Up Collections. Part 2, Postal History and Cover Collecting, discusses; Covers and Postal Marking; Aerophilately; Postal Stationery; The Universal Postal Union; Early History. Part 3 deals with Miscellaneous Subjects; Collectors and Collecting; Unusual users for Stamps. Part 4 Technical Matters deals with; Paper; Printing; Colour; Gum; Separation; Overprints and Varieties; Grills and Varieties; Designs; Errors; Varieties; Essays, Proofs, Special Printings, Forgeries. Part 5 Classification and Identification, discusses : Classification; Identification of Stamps; Monetary Units; Table of the World's Stamps; Principal Latin-Letter Inscriptions, Overprints, Postal Markings and Design Symbols; Glossary of Special Terms.

The 'Fundamentals' which to my mind, deals with more than Basics and hence should be really 'basics and beyond', discusses: Philatelic Trends; Aims of Collecting; Paper Water-marks; Stamp Design; From Design to Issued Sheets; Printing Problems and Varieties; Printing Characteristics : Intaglio Printing; Photographic Printing; Embossing; Relief Printing; Inks and Colour; Gum; Separation.

I shall list the contents of only one Chapter in the 'Foundations'. Chapter 11, 'How Stamps are made: The Process', discusses: Preliminary products leading to the Completed Die, Typography (Typewritten Stamps, Handstamped adhesives, Type-Set Stamps, Hand Engraved Plates, Letter Press Printing, Varieties peculiar to the Typographical Process, Lithography or Planography (off-set Printing, Photo-Lithography, Hand-drawn Stones, Stones with reproduced designs, Folder Transfer; Intermediate Stones or Reports, Substituted Transfer, Touch-ups and Retouches (Erroneous Transfers), Engraving or Intaglio (Line engraving, Hand-engraved Plates, Mechanically produced stamps), Varieties peculiar to mill and die produced Plates, Rotary Press Plates, Dry Printing, Rotary Photo engraving, Photo-gravure, Rotogravure, Embossing, Albinos, General Printing Varieties, How to tell by which method the Stamp was Printed.

I have listed these contents in detail to emphasise the extent of knowledge a philatelist must seek to possess. Without this basic knowledge it is not possible to 'study' the stamps-the hallmark of a 'Philatelist'.

Guide Books form a class of their own in imparting philatelic knowledge. Such guides have been written for the young as well as adult collectors in various branches of Philately. With Philately now coming out in various types of blooms, guide books have been published on many subjects. 'Stamp Collecting', 'Forming a Specialised Stamp Collection', 'Thematic Stamp Collecting', 'Philatelic Exhibiting', 'Collecting Postmarks', 'Introducing Postal History' - these are some of the titles of low-priced 'Guides' published by the famous philatelic firm of Stanley Gibbons. Other similar guides have been published in England, USA, Canada and India. Some of the titles published by the American Topical Association also fall under this category.

The field of Specialist Publications (Treatises / Books/ Hand-books/ Specialist Studies) is vast, varied and varying in the depth of knowledge it imparts. For the

traditional philatelist and postal history collector of India and Indian States there are many specialist books published on the stamps and postal history of India and the old Indian States. 'The Encyclopedia of British Empire Stamps, Vol.III', the various publications of the Philatelic Society of India on Handstruck Postage Stamps, the classic stamps of 1854, Jal Cooper's books on Stamps of India, Early Cancellations, India Used Abroad, India Used in Burma etc., the treatises published on the stamps and postal history of Alwar, Bhopal, Cochin, Dungaipur, Gwalior, Indore, Travancore etc. are books which an Indian philatelist has necessarily to study in case he wishes to make his collection sparkle in the light of knowledge. Forming a part of this storehouse of knowledge are the various books on Postal History of India written by Clarke, Hamilton, Mulk Raj Anand, Brig. D.S.Virk etc. The 'Handbook of Indian Philately' being published by India Study Circle for Philately in the U.K., 'Encyclopedia of Indian Postal Stationery' by Manik Jain, 'The Silver Key to the Golden Treasure of Indian Philately' by Manik Jain and S.B. Kothari, 'Guide to Indian Postal Stationery' by Derek Lang, 'Slogans and Special Postmarks of India' by Bayanwala are also notable additions to the specialist literature on Indian Philately.

Also available to the thematic collector are a plethora of titles on various topics/ subjects/ themes. There are virtually hundreds of titles available for him to choose from. handbooks have been published by the American Topical Association on a host of topics, Specialist Handbooks published by Societies devoted to the study of a particular topic and Topical Handbooks published in various parts of the world by various firm and institutions. These handbooks give a treatise on the chosen theme and list the stamps pertaining to the theme. A Bibliography of Monographs, Handbooks and Catalogues compiled by the American Philatelic Research Library about 3 years ago has a list of such publications extending to 34 pages. A further supplement has been published recently. These bibliographical compilations have been reprinted by the Philatelic Congress of India for use by Indian Philatelists. While writing this piece, I glanced through the 1988 edition of Roger Koerber's Price List of Philatelic Literature. Out of about 90 pages of the catalogue, only one page was devoted to Topicals Thematics, as the firm mainly deals in literature pertaining to Traditional Philately and Postal History. But, even so there were listed quite a few publications which would impart knowledge to the Thematic collector. Some of the publications listed are : Rotary Internaional on Stamps, Worldwide Cancellations of the

Olympic Games, 1906-1960, American Topical Association Handbooks on Aircraft (Jet Planes on Stamps) Astronomy and Philately; Birds; Cooking, Receipes, Menus, Food; Education on Stamps; Fairy and Folk Tales on Stamps; Fishes, Amphibia and Reptiles; Flags; Flowers; Holy Family, Christmas on Stamps; Horses on Stamps; Insects, Seashells; Lion's International on Stamps; Mammals; Map Stamps; Masonic Stamps; Medical (5 volumes); Music on Stamps; Plants, Trees, Flowers on Stamps; Railway Stamps; Religion on Stamps; Science Stamps; Sports and Recreation Stamps; Stamps on Stamps; Watercraft on Stamps; Women on Stamps (2 volumes).

2. Periodicals

These are philatelic journals published periodically. Included also are non-philatelic periodicals carrying philatelic information. They consist of (1) Commercially run periodicals; (2) Society News Bulletins (3) Bulletins issued by Study Circles; (4) Periodicals published by Postal Administrations.

In India we have, in the chronological sequence of publication history: 'The Philatelic Journal of India', 'The Empire of India Philatelic Journal', 'Ind Dak', 'Signet', etc. in the first category. Prominent in the third category and 'India Post' the official organ of the India Study Circle for Philately in the U.K. and the Bulletin of the India Study Circle for philately in Germany (in the German Language). In the fourth Category are periodical bulletins issued by the Great Britain Post Office, Australian Post Office, Swedish Post Office, South Korean Postal administration etc. They invariably carry quite a number of informative articles on the stamps/ postal history of the country.

It is obvious that philatelists who do not subscribe to any of these periodicals deny themselves the opportunity to be educated on current-developments in the philatelic world, whether it be philatelic research, thematic studies or postal history information, besides stamps issued around the world.

3. Catalogues

In this Category are Stamp Catalogues, with stamp prices indicated which are issued peridically-normally annually-by Catalogue Publishers such as Stanely Gibbons, Scotts, Michels, Yvert, Borek, Siegel etc. The Trade Price Lists issued by the philatelic trade also belong to this category. These catalogues and lists give details of stamp varieties available.

4. Auction Catalogues

The catalogues of Auction Sales published by famous Auction Houses such as Christie's, Robson Lowe, Habsburg Feldman, Harmers, Schiffs, Sotheby's, Stanley Gibbons etc. are a source of information and knowledge, not always available in Stamp Catalogues. This particularly so in respect of Postal History, Aerophilately etc. Catalogues of Postal Bids Sales also fall within this category. Some of the Auction Catalogues issued in this country are also a source of information and knowledge. The Auction Catalogues issued by Luhadia Auctions are fine examples.

5. Information Sheets/ Leaflets

Many postal administrations issue information sheets/ leaflets in respect of their new releases. They give quite a lot of information regarding the technical specifications, designers and printers of the Stamps and the subject of the stamp designs. Many of these details would not be available in the catalogues of these stamps.

6. Postal Information

A Postal History collector requires to acquire knowledge of postal organisations and their operations to be able to present his collection meaningfully. He will have to consult P.O. Guides; P.O. Manuals and Regulations, Classified Lists of Post Offices, P.O. Circulars etc. for the purpose.

7. Allied Literature

Treatises on Social, Economic and Political History, Maps and Atlas, and non-philatelic literature pertaining to collecting themes have to be studied by a philatelist who is a thematic, postal history or aerophilately collector.

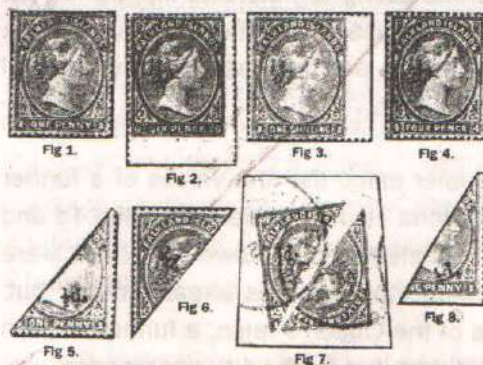
The field of literature available for gaining philatelic/ thematic/ postal history knowledge is vast. I have given particular emphasis to Books-basic, guide and specialist - as they constitute the main source of essential knowledge required by a philatelist. Acquiring such knowledge, no doubt, calls for devoting a lot of time and effort to such a pursuit. But, then, time and effort well directed are the prime ingredients of the make-up of a good collection.

(Courtesy : Karnapex 1988)

YOUTH FORUM

THE FALKLANDS POSTAGE STAMPS FROM 1878

GEOFFREY MOIR



The stamps of the Falkland Islands have always been popular, especially following the invasion of ten years ago.

This year marks the 400th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Falkland Islands by Captain Davis in HMS Desire. The first landing was made by Captain Strong in the sloop Welfare; the first settlement was established by the French at Port Louis on East Falkland in 1764, with the first British settlement the following year at Port Egmont on Saunders Island on West Falkland. The early history of the islands was in many ways quite traumatic, until the Union Jack was raised once again in January 1833. The Falkland Islands have been under settled and established British Government ever since, except for the brief horrendous period in 1982.

The earliest known correspondence dates from 1827, a letter of France, whilst the earliest recorded use of a black frank 'FALKLAND ISLANDS PAID' impressed on cover is January 1869. That of a red frank, with the same wording, on cover is November 1876. The population was now increasing rapidly and this, with the shipping trade around Cape Horn, led to more correspondence.

When a request for postage stamps was finally granted, only two values were designed and printed, a 1d and 6d (Figs 1 and 2), the former to cover what was to become known as a printed paper rate, and the latter the ordinary letter rate to all countries. However, this was considered inadequate and a request for 1/- and 5/- values was made, but the 1/- value only was added in 1878 (Fig. 3). A total of 20,000 was printed for each of the three values.

However, in 1879, an amendment was introduced to the postal rates between all members of the Universal Postal Union, of which the Falkland Islands is one, with the rate being reduced from 6d to 4d (Fig.4). Thus, in 1879,

a further total of 20,000 of the 4d value was sent to the islands. All stamps were printed on unwater marked, thin greyish paper prepared by R. Turner of Chafford Mills: on a limited number of the 4d value some letters of this name appear. It is also interesting to note that the die for the Queen's head of this first issue, and the subsequent issue of 1883, was the same as that used for the original Transvaal stamps of 1878.

Four years later came the first values of a further issue of Queen Victoria stamps. Initially, only the 1d and 4d, now printed on watermarked Crown CA paper, were prepared to augment those stamps already in use but, during the course of the Queen's reign, a further thirteen printings were produced (five for the 4d): one wonders why so many were required. I feel the answer lies partly in the fact that, although the population numbered around 2,000, a printing quantity of between 10,000 and 20,000 stamps did not go far for the inhabitants of a group of islands whose links are with Britain and whose internal communications were poor. Philatelic demand was also growing.

Printing was, perhaps, not as efficient as today, for colour variations are rife, no fewer than twelve being recorded on the 1d from the scarce dull claret (20,000) to the much more common pale red (120,000) and orange red (60,000). There are, too, some watermark varieties, the Crown CA being sideways to the left or right in some printings, namely those of 1885 to 1887. The watermark itself is not always centrally placed, as the stamps were slightly taller than those of similar format for other colonies, resulting in the misplacement of some watermarks.

The year 1891 was crucial, for a change in the postal rates came about with the reduction for the United Kingdom and Commonwealth to 2½d per ½ oz. A notice was placed in the Post Office which read :

Government Notice

Notice is hereby given that on and from 1 January next letters posted for Great Britain, India and the Colonies will be charged at the rate of 2½d the single rate instead of 4d as hitherto. Until the arrival of 2½d stamps the 1d stamp cut in two diagonally may be used for halfpenny stamps, thus:

Thus came about the famous bisect, the subject of much speculation (Fig.5)



It is important to appreciate that the population had, by this time, risen to 1,800. When the Kosmos steamer arrived in port, it only remained for two days at the most, sometimes only a matter of hours, so the majority of people in

Stanley tried to answer their incoming mail in time to catch the mail boat before she left. That maximum of two days was truly busy at the Post Office and certainly many of the bisects, already prepared, were permitted to pass through without the proper surcharge of ½d being added.

There are varieties known; specialists confirm these as being genuine. Yet it is quite obvious they could also be result of forgery, and it is extremely difficult at times to come to any clear decision.

The two best known are the 'raised stop' and the 'broken 2'. Handwritten overprints also exist and were probably genuinely done by the senders, although they could so easily have been forged (Fig.6). There is also no doubt that some were posthumously surcharged.

The new ½d and 2½d stamps were not received until December 1891; when a notice was issued in January 1892 stating that the use of the provisional was no longer acceptable, it was realised that such bisects could become of considerable value. Check whether examples have been cancelled with a cork cancellation or the circular Falkland Islands datestamp, for the latter was almost certainly applied to stamps surcharged by favour (Figs.7 and 8).

It is worth examining the quantities printed of the 1d value. The first printing was 10,000; subsequent printing were 20,000; but the greater demand was caused by the increased population, and the introduction towards the end of 1898 of an internal rate of 1d per oz, and the Imperial Penny Post (a standard rate of 1d per ½ oz between all countries in the British Empire). Three more values were

added in 1895: 2d (Fig.9) for registration; 9d for small packages not exceeding 1 lb; and 1/-. The 6d design was retained from the original issue of 1878, but its colour changed from blue-green to orange-yellow or yellow (Fig.10).

In 1878 a request for a 5/- high value was rejected: just 20 years later, two high values (2s 6d and 5/-) were produced (Figs 11 and 12). These beautiful stamps lasted for some 30 years until the introduction of the famous Whale and Penguin issue.

Queen Victoria passed away in 1901; her son, King Edward VII, became monarch-but there was a three year gap before the one and only definitive set for his short reign was placed on sale in the islands (1904).



It was fortunate that there remained a surplus of Queen Victoria stamps to meet increasing postal demands, for two problems caused the delay. First, planned was a new Multiple Crown CA watermarked paper, so the issue was held back rather than have two printings. Second, there was a long, and sometimes quite irritating, correspondence concerning the actual design; the finished version is the only Edwardian issue from Commonwealth countries where the head of the monarch was not surmounted by the Crown, and one of the very few where either or both of the words 'POSTAGE' and 'REVENUE' have also been omitted (Figs.13 and 14). To add to the confusion, there was considerable disagreement on the final colours, especially of the higher values (Fig.15). The stamps were recess printed by De La Rue.

The final design was by Emil Fuchs, an Austrian artist. The first consignment of the 1/2d, 1d, 2½d and 3/- values was probably dispatched on the Oropesa of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company which arrived in

Stanley in March 1904. They were printed in ten rows of six stamps, except for the 3/- which, being of a larger format, came in five rows of six stamps. The usual specimen overprints were prepared and the 2½d value is known with an inverted watermark.

The 1/2d and 3/- values reveal numerous scratches and spots which may be used to good effect to identify individual stamps on the plates. There are over 40 such marks recorded on the 1/2d, 37 on the first plate used and a further ten are on the second plate, while the 3/- reveals 21 such marks.

In trying to ascertain how these blemishes occurred, remember that the greatest demand was for the two lower values: there were, in fact, three printings of the 1/2d value and five for the 1d. Could it have been that these imperfections or marks appeared when the plates, having been kept in storage, were taken out again for the subsequent printings?

The first two printings of the 1/2d value can be distinguished by shade and paper thickness. The third, in addition to paper thickness and perforation differences, has marginal framelines and the right-hand selvedge is imperforate (Fig.16). The 1d value is not nearly so easy to differentiate. The second printing has the watermark sideways, but otherwise reliance must be placed on paper thickness and perforation, as well as shades. There are marginal framelines on some printings, whilst others have identification marks in the centre of the selvedge.

The first consignment of the remaining four values, the 2d, 6d, 1/- and 5/- (Fig.17), was probably despatched on the Panama, arriving in Stanley in November 1904. Although the format of the 5/- was the same as the 3/- (five rows of six stamps), that of the lower values was changed to six rows of ten stamps.

Varieties are virtually unknown, except for the occasional inverted or reversed watermark.

With sealing and whaling becoming common in the South Atlantic in the early part of the 20th Century, especially in the Dependency of South Georgia, and as the major proportion of those employed were of Scandinavian origin, demand for the 2½d rate stamps to

foreign countries meant that a further supply was required. Thus, in 1911, a second printing was ordered and probably dispatched on the Orissa to arrive in Stanley in February 1912. However, by that time, King Edward VII had died and, within four months, the first issue of the new monarch, King George V, had arrived. Thus the second printing of the 2½d value had a short life (Fig.18). It has a distinct shade, and the perforation should be noted, that of 1904 being 13.9 x 13.9, whereas that of 1912 measures 14.1 x 14.1.



Fig 20.



Fig 21.



Fig 22.



Fig 23.



Fig 27.



Fig 25.



Fig 24.

A similar situation arose for the second printing of the 2d value (Fig.19), although the numbers involved are considerably fewer. Its use was somewhat limited: some were used in partnership with a ½d to make up the 2½d rate of foreign countries, but its greatest use was for the registration fee of that time.

King Edward VII died in 1910: for the reign of King George V the design of the stamps remained much as for the two previous reigns, with the portrait of the monarch. However, the words 'POSTAGE' and 'REVENUE' were now inserted on either side of the Crown surmounting the King's head (Fig.20): this made it necessary for the King's head to be somewhat smaller. The higher values also remained, with two extra values included, a 10/- and 1 (Fig.21).

Despite previous experience, a considerable number of printings were produced, and variations in shades seem to predominate. However, I believe that there are some mitigating circumstances. The quantities printed were considerably higher, so it could not have been the lack of appreciation of demand.

There was change in the watermark in the paper from Multiple Crown CA (1912-20) to Multiple Script CA (1912-1928).

Whilst there were considerable quantities produced for the first printing in June 1912, only seven months later, in January 1913, another consignment of virtually the same quantities for each value was required, and one wonders why. It appears that collecting was becoming far more popular and, as the Crown Agents did not start supplying dealers until 1921, dealers had to apply direct to the Falkland Islands for their stocks. In 1912, sales more than doubled, and the first printing disappeared at a fast rate.

There is no doubt that restrictions imposed by the exigencies of the First World War contributed to the situation. It became necessary to change the source of paper, resulting in a deterioration in quality. This caused a change in the perforation method employed from comb to line, and variations in shade.

In conjunction with this set came a need for the two higher values, 10/- and £1, in 1913. As there was some confusion in distinguishing the 5/- red on white paper with the 10/- red on green paper, a second printing of the 5/- was produced in maroon (Fig 22). The only other colour change occurred on the 2½d value with multiple script CA Watermark. A change in the foreign letter rate from 2½d to 3d from 1922 to 1926, linked with Universal Postal Union colour regulations, necessitated a colour change for the 2½d value from blue to purple on yellow paper (Fig 23). When the rate reverted to 2½d in 1926, the colour returned to blue.

The idea of paying a tax on postage during war-time was not new: the idea was employed during the First World War. In the Falkland Islands, the order for such a tax came into effect in October 1918, and was stated to remain in force until six months after the signing of the final Peace Treaty. That came about in June 1919, but the order was not rescinded until February 1920. Even then, the remainder of the War Tax stamps were still valid for postage and remained in use until 1922; indeed, some are known used well after that date.

On three values only was overprinted 'WAR TAX' - ½d, 1d and 1/-. On all letters, 1d extra was charged for the first ounce, with ½d for each additional ounce (Fig 24). One shilling had to be paid on every parcel. There were

no fewer than five overprintings, and a wide range of errors has been recorded, so that the "WAR TAX" overprints have become a complete study in themselves.

There are some covers and pieces known cancelled from South Shetland Islands, and bearing an oval cancellation (Fig 25). In this case, it is believed the stamps were purchased by the postmaster himself, payment being made by returning to Stanley the normal unover-printed stamps.

From the start of the reign of King Edward VII, the whaling industry at South Georgia had grown (at one time, eight whaling stations were in operation), the four largest whaling stations being Grytviken, Stromness, Husvik and Leith, with only one post office, at Grytviken, the official port of entry to the island, to serve the requirements of all employees. It was in 1911 that the then Post Master, J. Innes Wilson, requested 'SOUTH GEORGIA' for use in the Dependency, and some steps in their preparation were taken, only for the request to be rejected at the time as being unnecessary.

If these stamps had been produced, it might well have denied Falkland Islands specialists one of their choice pieces, and one which has created more discussion than any other, namely the provisional overprint on the 2½d value. It was customary for the Postmaster to travel to Grytviken at the start of each whaling season and take a reasonable supply of stamps to meet all postal rates. In 1928, on arriving in South Georgia, he found, as the foreign letter rate had been reduced from 3d to 2½d, that it was not long before supplies of the ½d value were used up. A telegram was sent to Stanley.

The story of this provisional is told in the correspondence between Nelson Jones, Clerk of the Magistrates in South Georgia, and a Dr Cooper.

'I regret that on this occasion this letter will of necessity have to be brief as the mail is due to close early in the morning, however, I am writing mainly to let you know of a surcharged stamp which is in temporary use and am enclosing a copy on account of the great interest you have shown in Falkland Island stamps. The issue has occurred on account of a shortage of ½d and 2½d stamps current denominations and in the delay of the arrival of the SS Fleurus with supplies. This issue has been authorised by wireless by the authorities at Port Stanley

and had effect from the 3rd instant, and will automatically close on the arrival of the craft mentioned, which expected on or about the 22nd February, 1928.

The Magistrate when at Leigh when enquiring into the loss of the SS Scapa asked Mr Hannsen of the Leith Station to make a die for us, this he did and the stamps have been surcharged. As a matter of fact, I have surcharged the majority of them myself.

'The first evening we surcharged 750 but I cannot say how many will be required, personally I hope it will not be many as it is a darned monotonous job. In the telegram of the authority we have been instructed to reserve about, 8 and at least I think so, for HM the King, You will observe that the current 2d value is the one being surcharged 2½d in black cancellation ink (Fig 27).

'As you are aware, this 2½d denomination is postage for letter rate to Norway and we have about, 2,000 Norwegians engaged in the whaling industry - more or less 2,000 more Norwegians than 2d stamps!

'We surcharged the stamps on the 2 February and only 12 were sold for the mail on the 7 February, leaving the SS Albuerto - this being the first official day of issue.

'Would advise you to take care of this Specimen as there does not seem a huge rush for them considering we only postmarked a dozen by the 1st mail, i.e. the Albuerto. Wonder if the 750 will be sold? Will let you know what transpires.'

Instructions started that four blocks were to be made available for His Majesty's collection, two to be cancelled and two left unused. One's mind reverts to all that has been both said and written concerning material cancelled to order, and here it is being done for such a prestigious collection.

De La Rue had printed Falkland Islands postage stamps since the original King Edward VII issue of 1904, and they were asked to submit designs for a new definitive set to be issued in 1929, but they did not receive the contract. It went to Perkins Bacon and Co, and so came to an end one era of postage stamp printing.
(Courtesy : Stamps Magazine, June 1992).



STAMPS 2006

Sl. No.	Details	Date of Release	Domination Rs.
1.	Pongal	12.01.06	5
2.	AV. Meyyappan	22.01.06	5
3.	N.M.R. Subbaraman	29.01.06	5
4.	Third Battalion-Sixth Regiment	01.02.06	5
5.	President's Fleet Review	12.02.06	5,5,5,5
6.	Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer	18.02.06	5
7.	Thirumuruga Kirubananda Variyar	18.02.06	5
8.	Tamilavel Uma Magheshwarar	18.02.06	5
9.	Devaneya Pavanar	18.02.06	5
10.	St. Bede's College, Shimla	24.02.06	5
11.	Gemini Ganesan	25.02.06	5
12.	Don Bosco Salesians in India	27.02.06	5
13.	Singaravelar	02.03.06	5
14.	World Consumer Rights Day	15.03.06	5
15.	Indian Agricultural Research Institute	30.03.06	5
16.	62 Cavalry	01.04.06	5
17.	India-Cyprus Joint Issue	12.04.06	15,15
18.	Calcutta Girls High School	21.04.06	5
19.	Pannalal Barupal	28.04.06	5
20.	Kurinji (Miniature Sheet)	29.05.06	15
21.	Rain Water Harvesting	05.06.06	5
22.	Sri Pratap College, Srinagar	15.06.06	5
23.	Indraprastha Grils' School	08.07.06	5
24.	Voorhees College, Vellore	10.07.06	5
25.	The Vellore Mutiny	10.07.06	5
26.	High Court of Jammu & Kashmir	29.07.06	5
27.	Pankaj Kumar Mullick	04.08.06	5
28.	Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited	14.08.06	5
29.	Ma. Po. Sivagnanam	15.08.06	5
30.	University of Madras	04.09.06	5
31.	L.V.Prasad	05.09.06	5
32.	Indian Merchants' Chamber	07.09.06	5
33.	India-Mangolia Joint Issue	11.09.06	15,15
34.	Endangered Birds of India (Set of Miniature sheet & 4 Maxim Cards)	05.10.06	5,5,5,5
35.	Madhya Pradesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry	12.10.06	5
36.	Bishwanath Roy	31.10.06	5
37.	G.Varadaraj	01.11.06	5
38.	Himalayan Lakes (Set of Miniature Sheet & 5 Maxim Cards)	06.11.06	5,5,5,5,5
39.	Lala Deen Dayal	11.11.06	5
40.	Childrens' Day (set of Miniature sheet and 3 Maxim cards)	14.11.06	5,5
41.	The Tribune	24.11.06	5
42.	World AIDS Day	01.12.06	5
43.	150 Years of Field Post Office	08.12.06	5,5,5,5
44.	Bartholomeus Ziegenbalg	10.12.06	5
45.	Sandalwood (Miniature sheet)	13.12.06	15
46.	Stop Child Labour	26.12.06	5,5,5,5



FRANK AND FEARLESS IN THE SKY

Peter Jennings

Every first air mail has a story behind it, and there is a special thrill about collecting envelopes and postcards flown across dangerous and uncharted terrain by intrepid pioneer flyers in a variety of machines.

The first public air mail did not do by aeroplane, but by manned balloon during the siege of Paris in 1870. Balloon-Montes, though unsteerable, were the only way to escape the Prussians. Amazingly, the majority of more than 60 flights between September 1870 and January 1871 successfully crossed enemy lines, carrying thousands of missives.

On the other side of the world, during February 1897, Fricker's Great Barrier Pigeon Agency opened for business, in New Zealand. As a result of urgent demands by the Great Barrier Island community for a speedier means of communication with Auckland in the North Island, Mr. Joseph Smales, a mining promoter, negotiated with Mr. Walter Fricker of Auckland, for the establishment of a regular pigeon post service to operate from Okupu.

Two years later, a rival company called the Great Barrier Pigeon Agency was formed, and a special flimsy Pigeon Mail form produced.

After 1904, the population of the Great Barrier Island dwindled considerably because of mines closing down, and four years later a cable was laid from Great Barrier Island to the mainland at Port Charles. There was no longer a need for the Pigeon post.

Meanwhile, in Great Britain during 1907, the public had an opportunity to buy and send souvenir post cards in the balloon Mammoth, sponsored by the Daily Graphic newspaper, to break the world's record in long-distance ballooning.

Manned by three aeronauts, including the proprietor of the balloon, Mr. J. L. Tannar, Mammoth lifted off from Crystal Palace, London, on October 12. Later most of the cards were thrown out when the balloon crash-landed about 100 miles north of Gothenburg in Sweden. A number of cards were subsequently posted back to England by Mr. A. V. Mickov, a local teacher. Like the pigeon post, these cards are now very valuable.

Three years later, the first air mail flight in Great Britain took place at Blackpool on August 17, 1910. When special cards purchased by the public were carried in an aeroplane piloted by Mr. C. Grahame-White. Due to bad weather, the flight, organised by The Empire Illustrated, covered a distance of only seven miles.

The cards were subsequently taken to London and posted in the ordinary way.

The world's first official airmail flight was made in India the following year in connection with the United Provinces Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition, held at Allahabad.

The mail of about 6,500 letters and cards was flown on February 18, 1911 by the French aviator H. Pequet from the exhibition grounds to Naini Junction five miles away. A special circular postmark in bright magenta was applied to the stamps.

[Reprinted from The TIMES (London), 7 JANUARY 1997].



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