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QUARTERLY

Multicolour birds
of India 1975

Stamps on
Census - A Theme

GUEST Editorial.

DO NOT BURY YOUR STAMPS

We have viewed a number of good collections in our country and it is our candid opinion that many stamp collectors do not know how to preserve their stamps in pristine condition. No doubt, it is extremely difficult to preserve stamps in perfect condition in this country as our climate is not a preserving one. Due to extreme heat in summer and dampness during monsoon we are likely to spoil our stamps if we do not know the art of keeping stamp collections in fine condition. After some time the mint stamps develop brown rusty spots, the gum becomes brownish and even the cards and covers get spoilt.

This is mostly due to the fact that stamp collectors at times do not open their albums under one pretext or the other for a long time. Some very ardently collect stamps for a couple of years and after forming a reasonably good collection leave it unattended for a number of years for one reason or the other. Some are unable to carry on due to lack of finance, some do not find time on account of pressure of work or some simply thoughtlessly neglect the collection and leave it at that for a long time thinking that nothing would happen. This is the common mistake everyone makes and ultimately the collector suffers.

Then what is to be done, you may ask. Well it is simple. Do not neglect and leave your stamp collection unattended for a number of years. Even if you stop collecting, open your albums and give them airing which is very essential. Even if you have nothing to add to your collection, turn the album leaves after a fortnight or so to give them the necessary air and light. If you have no interest in your collection then do not simply store it, better sell it when the going is good.

Mr. Arthur Blair the popular philatelic columnist has to say a few wise words to stamp collectors who thoughtlessly keep their stamp albums and covers unattended for a long spell in the cupboards. Mr. Blair states, "The stamps, covers and cards hadn't been looked at for years and when the albums were opened my heart sank; some of the stamps were surrounded by brown stains, spreading from the pages to the perforations; a few of the cards and covers were foxed on the surfaces. Whether this trouble was caused through inferior album pages causing a chemical reaction, or slight damp, it is

difficult to say at this stage. But one thing is certain, if these stamps had been looked at more often, perhaps shown to fellow collectors at society meetings, it is obvious that the fungus wouldn't have had a chance of starting. The moral is, of course, don't hide your stamps; show them to yourself, let others enjoy them, don't stack them away like a miser - keep them alive by letting them breathe the air frequently".

Late P.M. MEDHORA
India's Stamp Journal

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Monthly Second Sunday Meetings

With President
Mr. G. Balakrishna Das on the Chair,
21-members attended the meeting on
12.09.2014.

Mr. D.H.Rao, spoke on "Special cover of Madras day 2014". Continuing his series on stamps of the world Mr. Rolands Nelson, gave a brief compilation on "ANDORRA"

STAMP NEWS

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN INDIA

25.04.14 500 0.61 mill

The National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) is an organization that stands for the united expression of the Protestant and Orthodox churches in India.

Ever since its formation in 1914, the National Missionary Council, as it was then called, was actively engaged in the service of the church, society and nation. Later responding to the need for a united, Indian face, the National Christian Council was formed in 1923.



The Council was restructured as the National Council of Churches in India in 1979.

The NCCI, with its headquarters in Nagpur, continues to be a facilitator or inter-church togetherness and is committed to the well-being of the society.

The NCCI has 30 National Churches as its members. These churches have been committed to the service of the country through hundreds of educational schools and colleges, medical institutions like Christian Medical College & Hospital in Vellore and Ludhiana, and social service institutions such as orphanages, old people's homes, night shelters, ministries to people who are physically and mentally challenged, rescue homes etc. Christian organizations such as Bible Society of India (BSI), Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College, National Council of YMCAs, YWCA of India, etc are also members of NCCI.

Theme: Christianity, Churches, Buildings.

GOVIND BALLABH PANT HOSPITAL, DELHI

30.04.14 500 0.60 mill

Govind Ballabh Pant Hospital, also known as G.B. Pant Hospital, is a super specialty institute which was built in the memory of the great patriot, freedom fighter and statesman, Govind Ballabh Pant. Its foundation stone was laid in October, 1961 and it was inaugurated on 30th April, 1964 by the first Prime Minister of India, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru.



The hospital has come a long way since its inception. From a very humble beginning of 229 beds, it has now expanded to 691 beds. its tertiary care centre is now an internationally recognized institution for Cardiac sciences, Neurosciences, Gastro sciences and Psychiatric diseases. These super-specialties are backed by state-of-the-art departments of Radio diagnosis and Imaging, Pathology, Microbiology, Biochemistry and Blood Bank Facilities. It has offered super-specialty treatment to about 622665 patients from India and overseas in OPD during 2012.

It is one of the reputed centers for post-doctoral teaching and training in super-specialities, and is recognized for many a path breaking research. The institution has a unique recognition by both Medical Council of India and University Grants Commission as an independent post graduate hospital affiliated to University of Delhi.

Theme: Health, Medicine, Hospitals, Institutions

CHATTAMPI SWAMIKAL

30.04.14 500 0.70 mill

Chattampi Swamikal was born on 25th August, 1853 in Kannammoola, a village near Thiruvananthapuram. His parents named him Ayappan and affectionately called him Kunjan. He was known for his razor sharp intellect and academic excellence. Over the years, he came to be called as Chattampi and this remained with him for life.



In his youth, Chattampi swamikal tried his hand at various professions which included manual labour, documents writer, accountant and clerk. He traveled far and wide and did research on the Vedas and the history of Kerala. He mastered Astrology, Yoga, Medicine, Philosophy, Philology, Music and many other branches of knowledge, besides the Vedas, Upanishads and History. He was equally proficient in Sanskrit, Malayalam and Tamil. He believed that the knowledge enshrined in the religious texts should be made available to everyone and with this aim wrote 'Vedadhikara Niroopanam' which is considered a versatile and monumental work on the Vedas. He has 15 books to his credit.

He advocated the principles of ahimsa and vegetarianism. His book 'Jeevakarunya Niroopanam' is a masterpiece on this subject Another seminal concept that Chattampi swamikal propounded was that of the equality of all men and the formation of a casteless society which alone could reflect the true cultural heritage of India. He also advocated feminism and women's emancipation at a time when it was unheard of.

Chattampi swamikal attained Maha Samadhi on 5th May, 1924 at Panmana Ashram located some 18 kms north of Quilon.

Theme: Religions, Hinduism, Saints & Sages

DRUKPA LINEAGE OF BUDDHISM

14.05.14 500 0.62 mill

The Drukpa Lineage is a prominent Buddhist lineage in India. "Druk" in Tibetan means "Dragon". Tsangpa Gyare Yeshe Dorje, the founder of the lineage, named it "Drukpa" or lineage of the Dragons in 1206. He was known as the First Gyalwang Drukpa. At present, the 12th Gyalwang Drukpa Jigme Pema Wangchen is the spiritual head of the lineage.



This lineage is based in the Himalayas. Its followers are in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, the North East states, as well as in Nepal and across the Himalayan region.

The stamp depicts Hemis Monastery, which is a part of the Drukpa Lineage, and is one of the main Buddhist monasteries in Ladakh. This biggest and very richly endowed monastery of Ladakh was built in 1630. The guardian deities and the Wheel of Like can be seen here and are in good condition. It also has an important library of Tibetan style books and a very impressive and valuable collection of Thangkas, gold statues and Stupas embedded with precious stones. One of the largest Thangkas is also displayed every 11th year during the festival time.

The annual festival is held for two days in June-July, enlivening the courtyard of the monastery. During the festival time, various rituals and mask dances are performed in this courtyard. The festival of dances, where good triumphs over evil, is a colourful pageant.

Theme: Religions, Buddhism, Monastery.

2014 FIFA WORLD CUP

12.06.14 2X500, 2 X 2500 0.50 mill each

The Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) is organizing the 20th FIFA World Cup from 12th June, 2014 at Brazil. The month long football battle, an ultimate test of endurance, zeal and mettle, is an eagerly awaited championship every four years.

The Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the governing body of football, was founded in May, 1904 in Paris with seven original members: France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands,

Spain (represented by Madrid FC), Sweden and Switzerland.



The association is responsible for holding the World Cup every four years. Ever since the first competition in Uruguay in 1930, FIFA's flagship has constantly grown in popularity and prestige. World Cup was organised three times in the 1930s in Uruguay, Italy and France, before the Second World War put a 12-year stop to the competition. When it resumed in 1950, the FIFA World Cup was hosted by Brazil.

The 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil is one of the most awaited sporting events. Remaining true to its mission 'Develop the game, touch the world, build a better future' the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Brazil has taken up the task to communicate the importance of the environment and ecology. Its mascot Fuleco can play a key role in creating environmental awareness. The term is a fusion of two words 'futebol' and 'ecologia'.

This year 32 teams have been divided into eight groups (A-H) with each group comprising of 4 teams. The matches will be played from 12th June, 2014 to 13th July, 2014. The competition will start with the Group Matches followed by the Round of 16, Quarter Finals, Semi Finals and the Finals on 13th July, 2014.

Theme: Sports, Foot ball, World cup

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A Stamp is born...

MULTI COLOUR BIRDS FROM INDIA

DHIRUBHAI MEHTA

The beautiful multicoloured set of bird stamps, the second in the series for Birds, had a ceremonious send off in Bombay on April 28, 1975 at the Hornbill House. The Bombay Natural History Society who hosted the function for the release of the stamps were highly appreciative of the design, the colour scheme etc. and have since been well received.

The stamps were formally presented to Dr. Salim Ali and J. P. Irani (Designer) at the function in Bombay by

Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Minister of communications, who specially came down to Bombay to be present at the function and participate in the ceremonies for the release. Mr. Daljindeu Singh, Senior Member (Postal Operations), P & T Board and other senior officers of the Post Office and leading philatelists were also present.

The set of four stamps is in the denominations of 25 p. (Indian Pitta), 50 p (Black-headed Oriole), Re. 1/- (Western Tragopan) and Rs. 2/- (Monal Pheasant). Two stamps are in vertical format and two in horizontal. The selection of the colourful birds goes well in the set.

Indian Pitta (25 p) is a gaudy thrush-like passerine bird possessing a loud clear double whistle, found throughout Peninsular India. Black headed Oriole (50 p) is brilliant golden yellow-and-black bird found almost throughout India, moving singly or in pairs they make a charming scene. Western Tragopan (Re. 1/-) is one of the most colourful of the four species of tragopan or horned pheasants inhabiting the Himalayas. Monal Pheasant (Rs. 2/-) is found through the Himalayan ranges. The cock has a highly refulgent metallic black plumage while the hen is a plain-looking mottled brown bird.

The story behind the multicolour bird stamps is fascinating and will make interesting reading. Behind the issue is the hard labour put in by the designer, the technical expertise, assistance and care in the selection of the birds appeared on the stamps provided by the experts, the careful work of the Design Sub-committee and the printing at the Security Press which has already made the bird set popular. The Nasik Security Press had the co-operation of Metal Printers Co., of Bombay who helped in colour scanning etc. which gave the true colour reproduction of the original designs.

India is endowed with a wide variety of birds known for their forms and colour the vivacity of their movements and sweetness of their songs. These birds are ever a source of beauty and joy and make the environment colourful, happy and gay. It was therefore decided by the P & T Department to issue a set of stamps on birds. After having installed the multicolour plant several multicolour stamps were planned and the bird set was one of them, inspite of the fact that a set of bird stamps was already issued in 1968. While the 1968 series was well appreciated by the collectors at home and abroad mainly due to the multicolour effect of the stamps which were produced on two colour photogravure it is believed that the limitations of the Nasik Press did not do justice to the colourful, birds of India. It was also felt that, the the new series of bird stamps would be very popular and should receive a warm welcome from all quarters. The added -list of the admirers were the Natural History people.

When the multicolour printing plant at the India Security Press was commissioned, it was felt that the vast and colourful flora and fauna of the country be depicted on our stamps in their natural colours in addition to wide variety of subjects. Until then the process available was one and two colour photogravure. It was also felt that more of the popular themes be selected. Accordingly, the Miniature Paintings were printed and made clear

appearance followed by the Masks series. Multicolour has been used for other commemoratives also and many of them have become popular for their artistic design, colour-scheme and naturality. In the prestigious series, the birds came third the other two being Miniature paintings and Masks.

The bird stamps have been produced by the department with the technical assistance of. Dr. -Salim Ali, the world renowned ornithologist and naturalist and designed by J.P. Irani of Bombay who has specialised in scientific bird painting. Irani has done great deal of work on bird designing, for various book illustrations of Dr. Salim Ali and others and has to his credit the designing of the bird stamps for Royal Bhutan's Postal Administration.



Immediately after the Philatelic Advisory Committee decided to include a set of bird stamps in the 1975 programme, S. P. Chatterjea, Director of Philately along with the writer had a meeting with Dr. Salim Ali in Bombay at the latter's residence by the end of June 1974 seeking his advice on bird stamps. The doyen of Natural History and renowned expert on birds readily agreed to help even at his ripe age and also agreed to name the birds for the stamps. He suggested an experienced renowned young artist who would be willing to design the bird stamps under his supervision. He was requested to suggest about sixteen names of birds from which the final- selection would be made for a set.

For the new series, Dr. Salim Ali gave a long list of birds in July 1974. They included Pinkheaded Duck, Jerdon's Courser, Mountain Quail, Great Indian Bustard, Black-headed Oriole, Finn's Baya, Indian Pitta, Yellow backed Sun bird, Crimson-breasted Barbet, Blossom headed Parakeet, Himalayan Monal Pheasant and Blood Pheasant. All the birds are more or less belonging to the Indian sub-continent and non-migratory.

From amongst the list of sixteen birds, a short list was prepared by the Design Committee and a selection of eight birds was made and it was decided that after the

rough designs were submitted by the artist a choice for four designs could be made.

A meeting was then arranged with the artist, the writer and Dr. Salim Ali at the latter's residence when the bird stamps issued by different postal administrations were reviewed and discussed at great length. Mr. Irani himself is also interested in bird stamps and has collected a fairly large variety of them which were very useful. Mr. Irani prepared sketches, the layout and the design under the supervision of Dr. Salim Ali. By August 74 Mr. Irani submitted four designs and further four designs by middle of September 74 which were then considered at the Design Sub-Committee which met by the end of September 74 and selected the designs of the four birds, the Indian Pitta, Blackheaded Oriole, Western Tragopan and Himalayan Pheasant

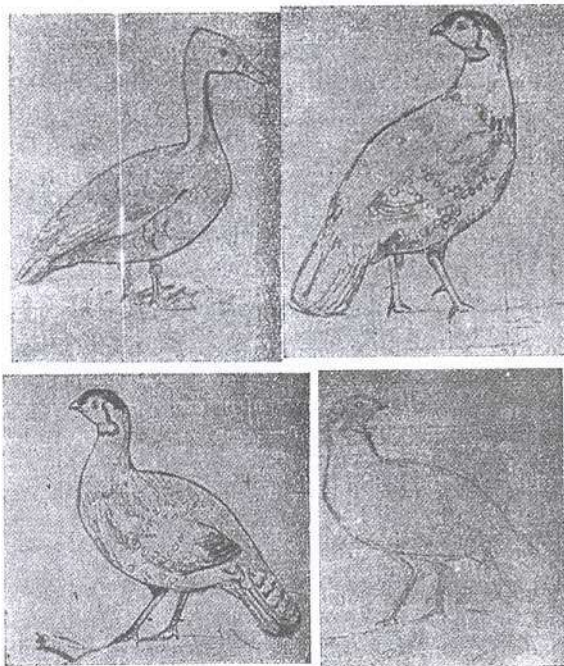


The Design Sub-committee members appreciated the designs. The designs were much nearer to the colours of the birds and there were hardly any adverse comments. The selected four birds, the colour scheme, the shape of the stamps were kept in view with the result that there were two vertical and two horizontal stamps.

During one of his private visits to Nasik, Mr. Irani visited the Security Press to study the limitations of the Press and discussed with Mr. Chitnis, Dy. Master, Designs, the finer points of the bird designs. Mr. Irani also showed the rough sketches to the writer for layout. The pencil sketches were done by Irani under the personal supervision of Dr. Salim Ali, as also the final colour designs.

The Design Sub-Committee returned the roughs having selected the layout requesting final designs. The Committee in fact commented that in their opinion the drawings for the stamps were beautiful. The final art work was produced by Mr. Irani six times the final stamp size,

leaving the space for Bharat/India, the denomination and the name of bird. The final art work for the four values without overlays is also shown here. The art work had been completed and delivered by him in about August / September.



The art work was supervised by Dr. Salim Ali. The artist had been provided with reference books containing colour illustrations from which to prepare his designs. Actual bird specimens were provided by Bombay Natural History Society from their magnificent collection for doing the final art work. He himself has a collection of bird stamps which also became handy. The illustrations made were perfect and true to the original colour reproduction and the Design Sub-Committee hardly had anything to comment upon.

Out of four birds selected, the final art work of designs were received from Mr. Irani by the end of November. The inscription including the names of the birds both in Hindi and English was to be done at Nasik. Shri Benoy Sarkar, a member of the Design Subcommittee had very kindly agreed to discuss typography with Shri P. B. Chitnis, Dy. Master (Designs), India Security Press at the same time to finalise the layout of the inscriptions, the name of the birds etc. Initially, it was decided not to have the name of bird but later, it was felt, this would be necessary.

With the art work completed, the project was passed on to the printers, the India Security Press who were ready for multicolour photogravure. Here the first task was to select the colour in which each stamp was to be printed and to separate the colours. The colour separation was done with the help of Metal Printers. The Metal Printers have the equipment to do the colour separation etc, which they did as a matter of great pleasure and took up the challenging work. For each colour, both continuous tone and line negative were produced enabling the design to be reproduced as near to the original colours as possible.

In the multicolour work for the bird stamps, it was a very difficult problem to get the various colours and therefore the assistance of the Metal Printers Company of Bombay was sought. They have colour scanning machine which was very useful. The metal Printers Co. wrote to me that they had given a complete guidance for converting the art work into a colour transparency so that no details of the original work would be lost and the colour balance maintained. These transparencies were operated by them on their Colour Scanner, utilising their research in respect of neutral grey balance having the perfect gradation keeping in view the original transparency and also the fine details are not lost.

In all this preparation work, it is frequently essential to view the negatives for each colour separation together to ensure that the final stamps will be correctly produced. From the final negative, proof printing plates are prepared so that the quality of the production may be seen. The proofing is carried out on the same machine which later printed the stamps. The Security Press lacks a special proof machine.

At the end, it is more than satisfying for the writer to get a letter from Mr. Irani in which he writes "I am much thankful to you for the efforts put in by you to achieve this end, and to make this India Bird Series' stamps a great success with advance press and other publicity. Your idea about autographing the first day covers was also great".

(Courtesy: Philatelic Journal of India, 1975)

THE BAHAMAS 1967 WOODFREE PAPER STAMPS

H. MORERON BLACK

THE STORY of how the woodfree paper printing of the 1967 issue of the Bahamas was saved for "TM" collectors, just before the stamps became obsolete in April 1971, has been well told by O. J. Urch himself, in an article published, in Stamp Collecting, July 29, 1971; I have now been able to examine these stamps and to establish some of the technical details of this printing, and it is clear that these stamps are of much greater interest than might have been supposed.

Urch concentrated his efforts, on the 12 stamps in the series whose shades are obvious at first sight, mainly because of the softer shades of blue and green in the vignettes, and it is these 12 values that have been catalogued by his firm. The main difference in these stamps, however, is in the paper, and it is now established that the 3-, 8-, and 15-cent values also exist on this whiter, woodfree paper. When the stamps are examined under the ultra-violet lamp, the difference in the paper is quite startling. Whereas the original printings appear as a dull and rather muddy color, the woodfree stamps light up with a fluorescence that is almost electric!

One wonders, whether Urch would have neglected the three other values if he had happened to have an ultra-violet lamp with him in Nassau!

The woodfree paper is probably the same as the one used for the ½ d value of Tristan da Cunha which was reported in Stamp Collecting, July 22, 1971. The three additional values on woodfree paper are apparently very scarce, as they have thus far been offered by only one dealer (M. & N. Haworth), while several firms have offered the set of twelve values, some of which at least must have come from the original Urch Harris stock, as the only examples of the 4 cents, 12 cents, and the S3 values sold by the Post Office were purchased by Urch. From the figures he gave, there can only be 1,220 complete sets of the woodfree paper stamps.

I have been fortunate in obtaining plate-number pieces of most of the woodfree stamps, and the plate numbers are in all cases different from those of the original printing of 1967. New litho vignette plates were used for every value of the woodfree printing, and these were all numbered "2", except in the case of the 11-cent value which can be found with the red plate number "2" or "3". It is intriguing to note that in many of the values the vignette plate numbers have been transposed. On the 4 cents, for example, the red plate number "2" is situated below stamp 99, with the light blue vignette number "2" below stamp 100. However, on the original printing the red plate number "1" was below stamp 100, with the light blue plate number "1" below stamp 99. This transposition of the vignette plate numbers occurs on the 2-, 4-, 5-, 8-, 12- and 50-cent values. I have not seen the 15 cents, but it does not occur on the other values. The 3 cents is the only value to show a new frame plate, where the number "2" occurs below stamp 98, in place of the original plate number "1".

IN THE CASE of the 10 cents stamp, the plate maker seems to have made an error in the original printing, since the two vignette plate numbers "1" are superimposed one upon the other under stamp 100, necessitating the addition of a rather crude hand-drawn "1" in purple below stamp 99. In the woodfree printing this has been rectified, and the transposition results in a blue "2" appearing below stamp 99, with a purple "2" below stamp 100. No example has been recorded of any plate number "2" appearing on the original printing of 1967,

A recent letter from the printers, Bradbury Wilkinson & Co., reveals that only one reprinting was made of each value, and that this was done in 1969, when new litho plates were needed for each value because of deterioration suffered by the original plates. Presumably, this was because of flood damage in the printing works in August 1968. The printers also reveal that because there was insufficient paper available of one making, the 4 cents denomination was printed on paper with PVA adhesive instead of the usual gum arabic which was used for all the other values. They explain the transposition of the vignette plate numbers by saying that the plate maker probably switched the positions unwittingly because none of the old plates would be available for comparison, and because the printers are not permitted to retain file copies of whole sheets for reference.

The printers have kindly supplied me with the total number of stamps, ordered for the 1969 reprinting, and I reproduce them in the table below, together with the plate numbers and the most important features of the woodfree stamps. In the table the symbol "T", indicates that the vignette plate numbers have been transposed, and the symbol "G" indicates the presence of guide lines in the margins.. (See Chart.)

BAHAMAS 1967 ISSUE ON WOODFREE PAPER

S.G.	Value	Order	Vignette Shades	Pape	Plate No.	Sold	
295a	1c	800,000	Much deeper red		White	1222	G
296a	2c	500,000	Softer blue and slate		Very white	122	T
297a	3c	5,000,000	Yellower green		White	222	
298a	4c	1,000,000	Brighter blue (PVA)		Very white	122	T 1600
299a	5c	1,500,000	Brighter blue		Purple tone	122	T
	8c	3,000,000	Softer blue and green		White	122	T
301a	10c	200,000	Very pale blue		White	122	T
302a	11c	6,000,000	Very pale green		Very white	123	G
303a	12c	2,000,000	Paler green		Very white	122	T 1520
	15c	4,000,000	Duller yellow		White	1222	
305a	22c	400,000	Softer blue		Very white	122	
306a	50c	200,000	Very pale blue		Very white	122	T
307a	S1	300,000	Brighter blue		Very white	122	1500
308a	S2	200,000	Darker grey		Very white	122222	1220
309a	S3	200,000	Lighter blue & brown		Very white	122	1220

These figures give an interesting indication of the usage of the various denominations, and one cannot help wondering how many copies of each value were sold over the counter of the Post Office as they came into use in the normal way before the issue was taken off sale April 26, 1971. The October 1971 issue of the British Caribbean Philatelic Journal reports that a special trip to the docks at Nassau was made by John V. Saunders to get for Urch the sheets of the 4 cents, 12 cents, \$1, \$2, and \$3, which had not been unpacked before that day. All the other copies of these values were presumably destroyed, but other values on wood-free paper may have been in use at Nassau for some time before Urch's visit. In view of the obvious scarcity of these interesting stamps, I would strongly advise any collector of the Bahamas to complete his set, and by putting them under the lamp, to enjoy a new philatelic experience.

(Courtesy : American Philatelist, Feb 1973)

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THE THING CALLED PHILATELIC KNOWLEDGE

RUSTOMJEE F. SHROFF

Philately and stamp collecting are popularly regarded as being one and the same thing, and individuals interested in stamps and the collecting of stamps are usually called philatelists at least by the laymen able to pronounce that title. In the ranks of the hobby, however, philately and stamp collecting are not regarded as synonyms, and a stamp collector is not necessarily a philatelist.

That's why exhibition committees generally state in their prospectuses that the philatelic knowledge displayed in an entry will be given weight by the judges. Such committees generally consider that nothing more than a well-stocked pocketbook is required for the simple collecting of stamps, and so, to make their exhibition more than a display of adhesives which have been purchased and mounted, they recognize the work of the philatelist in the study of stamps. But references to philatelic knowledge, often puzzle collectors and others unfamiliar with the more recondite terminology of our hobby and the rather strict definitions which usage has placed on words popularly accepted as having a broad meaning.

When a new stamp is issued by the United States, the Netherlands, or Antigua, the stamp collector is satisfied, when he obtains a copy of the stamp for his collection and a few extra copies perhaps for trading and speculative profit. But mere acquisition of a stamp won't satisfy a philatelist, for more potent than his possessive instincts is his desire to know all there is to know about a stamp. This will illustrate the essential difference between a philatelist and a stamp collector - at least according to philatelic usage.

Now only a sketchy outline of the technique of a philatelist's study of a stamp can be given in an article of this kind. On top of that, philatelists are continually exploring new fields, and there are distinct specialties in philatelic research just as there are in collecting. But philatelic studies, even though they may not follow certain distinct and conventional paths, are alike enough in one way, for the philatelist regards stamps as the subjects of his researches, and stamps give him "his principal sources of information.

For instance, the philatelist will want to know why a particular stamp was issued. A stamp generally appears for a good reason. May be that reason is the simple one of raising a little money to help some government balance its budget, but the reason is there nevertheless. This country issued a seventeen-cent stamp because that denomination not only covered certain parcels post rates, but likewise paid the minimum registry fee and letter postage. The three-cent stamp this country has been using since 1932 was issued because of a change in the letter postage rate. And to the philatelist the "why a stamp was issued" is generally the first point he investigates.

Then the philatelist will want to know how a stamp was issued. This will include much more than the source of the design and the process selected for production of the adhesive. Of course, the philatelist will be more than casually interested in the method of production, and he'll possess a fairly comprehensive understanding of the processes of Typography, line-engraving, Lithography and Photogravure. He'll try to find out why the stamp was typographed instead of being produced by lithography. And possibly in his study of a stamp he'll find out that some varieties of the stamp were typographed and others lithographed, and he'll want to find out why.

The manner of separation used on the stamps will come in for a lot of study. The casual collector may not be

able to differentiate between perforations and a roulette, but the philatelist will and he'll go much farther than the obvious difference. It's because of the philatelists that stamps are collected according to perforation differences. Philatelists worked out the system of perforation classification and the perforation gauge. And philatelists discovered the perforation differences in the Panama-Pacific series of the T.J. S. so that the collector has to obtain eight stamps instead of the four which would be catalogued had not the philatelist discovered that some of the Panama - Pacific stamps were perf. 12, while others were perf. 10. Anyone who's made anything like a careful study of the catalogue has been amazed by the multiplicity of perforation varieties. Well, the philatelists are responsible. They'll discover several different perforations while going through a lot of stamps, and their studies establish that there have been several printings of the stamp, or that several establishments shared in its production.

For in all his researches the philatelist will keep asking himself the reason for the difference in the stamps he studies. Why, is the most significant word in the language to the philatelist.

The paper on which a stamp is printed is of major importance to the philatelist. To most people, paper is paper, but the philatelist recognizes all kinds of paper and the watermarks found in papers-well, they constitute virtually a field to themselves. Nearly every collector knows that many paper varieties are catalogued in the nineteenth century, issues of our own country, but there are plenty of paper varieties on modern issues. In fact, ' one leading philatelist stated recently that paper researches would be the principal method of separating the many printings of the various denominations of the 1922-38 general series.

In his study of a stamp the philatelist will want to know how it reached the public. Was it on general sale in the country issuing it, or was it available only at certain points? Was its sale restricted or free? Was a limit placed on the period at was valid for postage, or was it available for use indefinitely? These are some of the questions a philatelist seeks to answer as he carries on his studies. Recently the news-papers have been full of the news of the discovery of a rare copy of one of our nineteenth century stamps. It's the can-collation which gives the stamp its value, for the examination by philatelists of thousands of copies of this stamp showing dated cancellations have never brought to light a date earlier than the one found on this stamp. And any one who's gone through the U. S. Specialized Catalogue knows about the numerous cancellation varieties.

Well, the studies of the philatelists have revealed the relative sacracity of various cancellation varieties and catalogue listings have been affected thereby. Of course, in recent years, collectors have been so busy keeping up with new issues they haven't demonstrated a lot of interest in cancellation varieties, but the philatelists are studying them.

In fact, there is no limit to the fields a philatelist may explore in his study of stamps. Plate numbers were

ignored until philatelists began to study them. Other philatelists studying cancellations on U. S. stamp discovered that stamps were sometimes cancelled before being placed on mail matter. That brought pre-cancel collecting into being. Philatelists collecting pre-cancels and studying them, discovered that some pre-cancels were made at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the result of these studies was the birth of the specialized collection of Bureau pre-cancels.

A stamp collector may be a philatelist, but as these paragraphs may indicate, a philatelist is much more than a collector. In this article it was necessary to differentiate rather strictly between stamp collectors and philatelists, since the writer wished to bring out how philatelic knowledge differs from ordinary knowledge.

Essentially a collector and a philatelist differ because one is satisfied to acquire stamps, while the other studies them. And it is important to realize that the philatelic knowledge is the study of stamps themselves and not their geographical, historical, bio-graphical, or ethnological background. At a recent exhibition one of the judges characterized a certain frame which was rather striking as being little more than piece of designing illustrated with stamps. Well, this statement might be expanded to include many of the articles which appear in the magazines devoted to our hobby for many of them aren't really much more than essays on geography, biography, history, or some other mundane subject, illustrated with stamps. Now this isn't a criticism of such articles. They have a definite place in philatelic literature even as exhibition frames produced in a strikingly artistic manner have a place in exhibitions. This hobby of stamp collecting is broad enough in its scope to include everything. All the same such "essays illustrated with stamps" aren't philatelic literature in the strict sense of the word. A book on history as told by postage stamps is interesting, yet it doesn't compare as philatelic literature with the .King John book on twentieth century postal issues of the United States. An article giving the biography of some man pictured on a postage stamp makes that stamp mighty interesting, yet no article of that sort will hold the place in philatelic literature which Frank Julsen's articles on the nineteenth century postal issues of the Netherlands will hold. And no club where the members meet to exchange stamps and compare their albums will contribute as much to pure philately as an organization like the Bureau Issues Association which is sponsoring valuable philatelic researches which have already affected catalogue listings materially.

No doubt this article has stepped on a few toes, and if so, the writer is sorry. This article was not written to disparage any phase of collecting or the activities of any collector or philatelist. The stamp-collecting is fundamentally an individualistic hobby, and the collector or philatelist is at liberty to follow any paths he may find pleasing. But many of the more recent recruits to our hobby fail to realize the possibilities for research in the postage stamps they place in their albums. And apparently they're not always familiar with the activities of pure philately or the accepted meaning of this thing called philatelic knowledge. This article, of course, has done no more than hit the high

places. But the pure philatelist studies stamps first and foremost, and the results of his studies are the basis of philatelic knowledge. (COURTESY: WM. W. WYLIE).

GYMNASTS ON STAMPS

TOM KING

THE earliest ideals behind physical training and exercises were the disciplining of the body as well as the mind and hence, to the Greeks at any rate, it was as important to perform in a graceful manner at games and races as it was to win.

As the Olympic, Panathenaic, Delphian and other Games were part of the rites in connection with the worship of the Gods of Greece, it was held that only by the strict discipline of the body could the Gods be fittingly honoured. The last of the ancient Olympic Games was held in A.D.384, and thereafter the spirit of the Games lapsed, to be revived only after 1,500 years.

When, as a result of the efforts of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the Olympic Games were revived in 1896, certain events of a gymnastic nature were included, and during the first three decades of this century these events were altered and changed from time to time at the behest of the host nation for the current Olympiad. De Coubertin, by the way, is been honoured on the stamps of several countries.

Since 1948 the gymnastic events have been standardised, and now comprise Parallel Bars, Horizontal Bar, Pommel Horse, Vaulting Horse, Rings, and Free-standing or Floor Exercises. At one time there were, in addition, Rope Climbing, which was included in 1896, 1904, 1924 and 1932, and Indian Clubs in 1904 and 1932.

Women's gymnastics were a long way behind those of the men so far as the Olympics were concerned, and it was not until 1928 that women's events were included. These now include Floor Exercises, Parallel Bars, Vaulting Horse, and, peculiar to women, the Beam.



Taking gymnastics as a whole, there is a good representation in the stamp album, including some really excellent samples of each event. Conversely, there are a number from some of the eastern European countries which have that curious look which one associates with some of the more extreme of the cubist painters!

Quite apart from the Olympic Games, there are a number other big competitions, both national and international, which include gymnastics as well as some international meetings devoted solely to this particular branch of sport.

Other prominent people associated with gymnastics have also been commemorated, like Ivar Wilksman, known in Finland as the "Father of Gymnastics", the centenary of whose birth was marked by the issue of a special stamp in 1954.



Sweden also honoured one of the most famous of all the pioneer physical culture experts, the late Professor P. H. Ling, who invented the Swedish method of physical training known as the Lingadem, by the issue of two stamps on the occasion of the Second Lingiad in 1949.

Behind the Iron Curtain there is also the Czech, Miroslav Tyrs, who with a compatriot, Juidrich Fugner, founded the movement known as "Sokois" way back in 1862. Their portraits appear on special stamps issued by Czechoslovakia in 1933, on the occasion of the Ninth Sokol Congress.

With so many events to be decided at the Olympic Games it is hardly surprising that only a comparatively few stamps have been devoted to gymnastics; few, that is, compared with the flood of stamps which have poured out from all and sundry since the war, many coming from countries which have little if any connection with the Games and which have seldom, if ever, sent any representatives.

To return to the Olympics, 1936 saw the first gymnastic event stamp which I can trace. This was a Horizontal Bar shot from the host nation, Germany, and was the only one to be issued before the First World War. In 1952 the Helsinki Games produced some more in the shape of stamps from Monaco (Vaulting Horse), Hungary (Beam) and Yugoslavia (Floor).

Four years later, for the Melbourne Games, there was a Horizontal Bar from Russia, showing a sensational dive finish to a performance. Hungary again featured the Beam, showing their Gold Medallist, Agnes Keleti, doing a backward handstand bend. Bulgaria and Poland (both Beam) completed the tally.

Rome, in 1960, gave us Parallel Bars from Morocco, Rings from San Marino, Beam from Russia, and Floor Exercises from Bulgaria, Roumania and, of all places, Mongolia!

Even before stamp collectors and competitors had begun to get their breath back, some countries were already planning their issues for the 1964 Games in Tokyo! As host nation, Japan got in very early with a series of pre-Olympic issues, all in "diamond" format. As early as 1962 they had a Beam on one of these stamps, and Albania also had a Horizontal Bar on another pre-Olympic issue. They were followed in 1963 and 1964 by a host of other countries, the pace hotting up as the Games themselves became nearer.



From the multitude of issues from all and sundry for Tokyo, I have seen gymnastic subjects from the following (and I may have missed some at that!): Mongolia, Monaco, San Marino, Hungary (two), Russia, Egypt (two), Dubai (set of 10!), Formosa, Bulgaria, Albania, Roumania, Burundi, and Japan. No doubt Mexico, in 1968, will be even bigger and better!

It is noteworthy that there have been far more women's events featured on Olympic issues. Possibly some of the eastern countries feel that western collectors are more likely to buy stamps with women on them than those that depict men.

Mind you, there have been far more gymnastic events shown on stamps outside the Olympics. Down in the south-eastern corner of Europe there are held at regular intervals events called "The Balkan Games", and these have been commemorated by the various countries in whose capitals the games have been held. Bulgaria held the games in 1931, and Yugoslavia in 1947, and both produced stamps which showed Parallel Bars being used, and at the Eighth Balkan Gymnastic Congress held in Sofia in 1935, which produced another Parallel Bars stamp, and the Ninth Congress held in 1939, also in Sofia, which gave us a Horizontal Bar.

Another international event, the European Games, has produced a few gymnastic stamps. The fifth series of these games, held in Belgrade in 1963, resulted in three examples, from Yugoslavia-Parallel Bars, Pommel Horse and Rings.

Japan has always been a great nation for physical exercises, and so it is not surprising that gymnastic events have been featured on several of her annual National Sports issues. We had Rings in 1950, Floor Exercises in 1955, Parallel Bars in 1957, Vaulting Horse in 1960, (Horizontal Bar in 1961, and a lady doing the splits in 1963!) There is also an event called the Women's Gymnastic championships, and another known as the

European women's Athletic Championships, and also the Spartacist names, all of which appear to be of eastern European origin, at any rate so far as the stamps issued for them are concerned. Those I have seen come from East Germany (Parallel Bars and Beam), Roumania (Beam) for the first-med event, and a Vaulting Horse from Roumania for the and. The Spartacist Games are largely a product of Russia and Czechoslovakia, with a Vaulting Horse from Russia in 1959 and a woman doing the splits in 1956. The Russian contribution included a rather futuristic team of men doing exercises for their Second National Spartakiad 1960.

Moscow also went in for their own Gymnastic Games and for the 14th of the series, held in 1958, two stamps were issued, one showing Rings and the other a Beam.

East Germany's own event is the Sports Festival, held annually. Here, there is a Rings stamp from the Second Festival in 1956, and a Pommel Horse from the Third Festival in 1959. Another Rings is featured on a stamp from the Czechs, who held a Sokol Congress in 1951.

Quite apart from organised gymnastic meetings, such as the foregoing, there are also a number of countries which have issued gymnastic stamps just for the fun of it! These have usually been either to mark a suitable anniversary or, more commonly, as part of a sports set, usually issued as propaganda for the country concerned or, as has happened in one or two countries, to raise funds for sporting associations and clubs.

Whatever the reasons for their issue, there is no doubt but that the stamp albums of the world have richly benefited thereby. Countries like Hungary, Poland, Finland (Finnish Sports Association), Austria, San Marino, Spain, and even Korea, have all contributed, but none so handsomely as Liechtenstein, which issued in 1957 what I consider the best of all the gymnastic sets: four stamps in photogravure showing Rings, Horizontal Bar, Vaulting Horse and Parallel Bars.

There are also a number of stamps depicting various facets of physical training which do not fit into any of the recognized gymnastic events. Brazil, for instance, has performers on what appears to be a circular ladder. Bulgaria has a man with what look like some queerly-shaped dumb-bells, and on another stamp some women exercising with hoops. The same country also had a trio of men and women doing a pyramidal hand balance! China had a series of early-morning exercises (shades of 1984!) on a long, long set in 1952, and East Germany has featured women swinging Indian clubs. Czechoslovakia has had stick exercises and medicine-ball work. Indian, or rather Persian, clubs appear on some of the stamps of Persia in 1953, and those of Afghanistan in 1961.

So, taking it all round, if you want to form a collection of stamps with gymnastic designs, there are plenty to choose from.

(Courtesy: Stamp, Collecting, March 1996)

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WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE USE THE WORD 'RARE'?

ROB HOLLEY

One of the great pleasures of our hobby is its diversity. Everything from classic stamps and ancient letters to airmail etiquettes and the latest first day covers, souvenirs, thematics, revenues, postmarks, they all have a part to play, and each one has a special place in someone's heart. However, while we can all enjoy the enthusiasms of others we remain very far from sharing them. How often have we had the virtues of a stamp issue extolled at a club display only to find when we come to view it afterwards that, really, the design and colours were quite unremarkable and certainly not as well-crafted and beautiful as our particular favourite. A visitor showing us a page of shades will wax lyrical about an unrecorded example he has discovered and will happily admit to having parted with a substantial sum to buy it, only for the difference to be almost imperceptible when we examine it later. We have to conceal our incredulity on these occasions which is not always easy - in fact, it is embarrassing how superior we can feel about other collectors' addictions at times! The owners, in turn, would be equally oblivious to the charms of our treasures I am sure and just as astonished at what we had paid for them. But this is only how it should be. How dull if we all followed the same collecting path.

The Effect Rarity Can Have

But there is one thing which unites all our enthusiasms, or obsessions as others may see them, thus providing a common denominator of appeal across the whole spectrum of collecting. No matter what our particular interest may be or whatever our puzzlement at the collecting interests of others, our admiration can immediately be invoked at the sight of a rarity. And it does not necessarily have to be a well-known rarity from a popular country, or even a stamp or a cover come to that. If we are told that we are looking at one of only three known examples of whatever it is that has taken our fellow-collector's fancy we can immediately understand his pride in it. We become as one in a brotherhood of appreciation. It might be a printing error, a shade, a double overprint, a deviant watermark, a rogue perforation, a missing colour, or even a postage rate, we don't seem to mind, although the impact of the rarity will almost certainly be greater if it is a special stamp or a cover, as we will probably be looking at not just a variety, i.e. something with a small difference that sets it apart, but an object in a select group of its own such as the 'Post Office' pair of Mauritius. Two items from my own collecting area, Malaya, sold at auction in recent years, one a variety, the other in the latter category, demonstrate the effect rarity can have.

In 2006 the discovery example of a 10c. stamp from the 1951 set of the Malayan State of Perlis with the watermark error, St Edward's Crown, fetched almost £16,000 at a time when it was catalogued at a mere £4000 (Fig 1). In an auction in Singapore in 2011 a 15c. stamp of the 1937 Straits Settlements issue was knocked down at a

figure in excess of £1100 (with add-ons) because it bore a unique example of the postmark of Western Depot, a postal agency in Singapore open for only a few months in 1941 (Fig 2). Heady front-line collecting area but, being the only one known, these items are (at the present moment) in the ultimate category of rarity - that of uniqueness, thus giving them the aura exuded by such stamps as Sweden's famous 3 skilling banco and British Guiana's 1c. black magenta, although they lack the advantage these two have of it being unlikely there is another similar example waiting to be discovered (Figs 3 and 4). Oddly enough, some may recall the rumour circulating some years ago that a second copy of the 1c. magenta had been found and taken to the then-owner of the first (millionaire Arthur Hind, I believe) who bought it and, astonishingly, is supposed to have set fire to it to ensure the original remained the sole example. Apocryphal I'm sure, but rarity has the ability to do that sort of thing to collectors, including bidding sums they may regret the day after! On the other hand, haven't we all asked ourselves the question: 'How long will it be before I see another, if ever, and what will I have to pay for it then?'

What Does It Mean?

Curiously, however, despite its universal appeal and its propensity to send collectors stuff, as relatively modern Malaya is hardly a front-line collecting area but, being the only ones known, these items are (at the present moment) in the ultimate category of rarity - that of uniqueness, thus giving them the aura exuded by such stamps as Sweden's famous 3 skilling banco and British Guiana's 1c. black magenta, although they lack the advantage these two have of it being unlikely there is another similar example waiting to be discovered (Figs 3 and 4). Oddly enough, some may recall the rumour circulating some years ago that a second copy into a state of mild delirium, there appears to have been no attempt to set down what is really meant when the word 'rare' is used. Leaving aside its culinary meaning, my Chambers Dictionary defines it as 'sparse; seldom encountered; uncommon' which is not much help as dealers and auctioneers will often use these terms (except for 'sparse' perhaps), but only when they are talking about scarcity, not anything they regard as rare. 'Rare', as I think every collector would agree, is to be reserved for something extra specially scarce, at the top of the tree. But how near the top does it have to be? Can we put some sort of figure on it? Robson Lowe in his Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, and what a remarkable work of reference that is, way ahead of its time, provided the only measurable guide to rarity that I have come across in his 'Code Letters to Valuation' (of stamps of course) which he sets out in his Explanatory Notes, and these are worth repeating:

- > C Common. Worth 1 shilling (5p) to 5 shillings (25p)
- > S Scarce. Worth 5s. 6d. (27p) to £1
- > R Rare. Worth £1, 1 shilling (£1.05) to £5
- > V Valuable. Worth £5, 5 shillings (£5.25) to £20
- > VV Very Valuable. Worth £21 to £50
- > VVV Very, very, very valuable. Worth over £50

On the face of it this seems very straightforward because we are thus able to see exactly which stamps Robson Lowe thought were rare, or rare when the Encyclopaedia was published, and as rarity is comparative, we can also see what stamps he considered to be very rare (V), very, very rare (W) and, last of all, very, very, very rare (VW). But, there is a snag here, for as soon as one uses price to define rarity one runs into the problem of demand which, rather than scarcity or even rarity, is the main determinant of value. In fact, a valuation confuses the issue completely because demand varies enormously from stamp to stamp, cover to cover or postmark to postmark for many different reasons. As is often said, a stamp may be the only example of its kind in the world but if no-one wants it, what is it worth? And the answer, I'm afraid, must be nothing.

The Influence Of Demand

Furthermore, differences in demand will have a bearing on how we regard rarity. The existence of, say, a hundred copies of a particular stamp in a country with relatively few collectors will not seem much of a rarity to them as a high proportion of their number may own one, but only a hundred existing of a British stamp will make it seem to be a great rarity indeed, and its value will be considerably above the other as a result. Sometimes, we think in reverse, i.e. if a stamp is of high catalogue value then it must be rare. I once saw the PUC £1 described as 'rare' in an auction catalogue, although the same catalogue illustrated a row of them. I conclude from this that some GB collectors regard the PUC £1 as a rare stamp despite the fact that the records state 61,000 were issued, of which, despite the legendary boycott, a great many must have survived. Or is this just another example of a dealer being over-optimistic? Misconceptions and confusions of this sort is what a rarity index should help to resolve.

For interest's sake I tried to count the number of stamps in Robson Lowe's listing of the Straits Settlements which were priced between a guinea (£1, 1s.) and £5, i.e. those he regarded as 'rare'. I lost count, there were so many of them. Mr Lowe, it seems, had a different idea of what constituted rarity to the one I possess. But Robson Lowe was a dealer, value was what he had to live by, it was his bread and butter. A collector thinks differently, and I believe that most would agree that rarity must depend on the absolute number that exists, or at least on the number that have found their way on to the philatelic market. Almost impossible to establish? Perhaps so, but one must have a stab at it if some sort of rating is to be established.

It is necessary here to emphasise that, when it comes to stamps, it is numbers in existence, or thought to be in existence, rather than 'numbers printed' (or 'overprinted') or even numbers sold, that are important. 'Numbers printed' and 'numbers sold' may sometimes be the same though not always, but it is most unlikely that 'numbers sold' and 'numbers used' will ever tally, although in the past the differences between them were rarely large, the majority of stamps being used by the general public and ending up in the WPB.

Current Rarities

Today the situation is likely to be reversed, at least in the case of commemorative stamps, as the majority of the latter go into stamp albums, complete with gum, rather than on envelopes, even if one includes first day covers. This will obviously have an effect on the totals of mint stamps that survive but what about their used counterparts with fewer being needed for postage? Significant scarcities do not appear to be happening as yet although commercial covers bearing higher-value commemoratives franking the obscurer rates may have a scarcity value one day, and even the odd rarity could occur. Is anyone collecting them I wonder? If not, perhaps they should. Differences in the numbers of stamps 'sold' and the numbers which have 'survived', these being the only figures a rarity index is concerned with, -will depend on the nature of the stamp issue itself. The survival rate of stamps like the Royal Silver Weddings, for example (or the PUC £1), will be far higher than 'run of the mill' definitives.

I am struck by the number of times I read in auction catalogues 'only four known' or 'only two other blocks recorded'. There seems to have been an impressive amount of record-keeping done in some territories, particularly in the popular countries such as the former dominions and certain islands. I wonder who keeps records such as these? Whoever it is, they must have had regular access to almost every auction catalogue that has ever been printed, and over a considerable period of time, as well as possessing a working knowledge of the hobby's major collections, and dial's not the whole of it. When I have looked up old catalogues going back years I have found it very difficult to make sure I am not counting the same item over and over again, particularly in the case of mint stamps and especially before catalogues were so bountifully and clearly illustrated as they are now.

Personal Experience

A national judge once told me he disregarded such information when he saw it included in the writing-up of an exhibit as he had no way of knowing whether it was either accurate or up to date. He preferred to remember how often he had encountered the relevant item over the years and, as he was a judge of long experience, this rough and ready guide must be as good as any. He also observed, en passant, that, in his view, numbers known were like the visible part of an iceberg, those yet to be discovered the equivalent of its submerged eight-ninths. He may have been exaggerating a little for effect but the remarkable things that are beginning to emerge on e-Bay on a daily basis suggest that he may have a point. Are our super record-keepers keeping an eye on this source also I wonder?

Like the judge, I am coming to the conclusion that, apart from the celebrated rarities which are probably well recorded and known, estimating numbers based on personal memory may be as good a way as any, i.e. how many one can remember seeing or hearing about over the course of a collecting lifetime, and presumably, the older one gets the more reliable this information should be. That is to say, after 50 years one should have a better idea than

ROBERT A. DUNBAR

after only ten or, to put it another way, to hear of only five in 50 years is a better indication than just one in ten years. Unfortunately, there is a snag here too, i.e. the older one gets the more suspect one's memory becomes.

A Starting Point

This all begs the vital question which is at the very heart of 'rarity' and the creation of a recognised table to measure it. What should the maximum number be of any particular philatelic item noted in, say, 50 years of collecting, to justify it being labelled 'rare'. Is it three, six, ten? Or am I completely off-track and it should be ten, 20, 30, or maybe more? Collectors of, say, Malaya - where 100 goes a long way - and GB specialists may find it difficult to agree, but a compromise must be found if a consensus is to be achieved. Then there is the 'iceberg' factor to take into account, i.e. the numbers still undiscovered. As these will be diminishing, on second thoughts, perhaps not, as these figures will be notional at best and will only serve to make the totals bigger without adding anything to our rarity index. With all this in mind, and using an adaptation of the Robson Lowe table, I suggest the following as a starting point, acknowledging that R, RR and RRR have been used before, I believe by Fred Melville:

- > R Rare. No more than 50 thought to exist.
- > RR Very rare. No more than 20 thought to exist
- > RRR Very, very rare. No more than ten thought to exist

These numbers are purely arbitrary as I can get no unanimity amongst my collecting friends and colleagues. Perhaps readers will have some ideas because there must be some point in most collectors' minds when 'very scarce' merges into 'rare', but before anyone points out that use of this table will still involve value judgments of one sort or another, I would say that is inevitable. In the absence of some all-seeing, universal recorder of every stamp and item of postal history in the world, personal estimations will have to be made based on our own experiences and our ability to recall them, but the acceptance of a numerical guide would at least make us think more about the word 'rare' before we use it and so go some way to converting the concept of rarity from a vague impression into something of greater substance.

Meanwhile, let us continue to enjoy it in whatever form it takes.

(Courtesy: American Philatelist, 1980)

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'That great and mass action involving the whole population of this country': thus the description by the Polish Post Office, in an advertisement in a British stamp magazine, of Poland's fifth successive census, held on December 8, 1970. Poland issued two special stamps, thereby adding to the already considerable number of 'census' issues.

The present form of census—that is, a total count of the population of a country at a particular point of time—derives ultimately from the registration conducted by the Roman officials known as censors. Into the number of adult males and the extent of their property. These early surveys seem to have been held primarily for the purpose of tax assessment, though it is not definitely known how they were conducted, or even who was eligible for inclusion. A 25l. stamp issued by Italy in 1951 to mark its ninth annual census depicts an ancient survey in progress, with a seated official recording names (S.G. 802). Held on November 4, 1951, the census revealed a total population of 47,515,537, an increase of almost twenty millions over the figure returned in Italy's first census, conducted in 1871.

There is an insight into another early form of census afforded by two stamps issued by Japan in 1920 to mark the first census held in that country, on 1 October the two values (S.G. 198/9) depict a censor of the seventh century at work, in a pose not unlike that of his Roman counterpart. Further census stamps appeared from Japan in 1930 (curiously inscribed to mark a second census, though the census of October 1, 1930 was, in fact, the third), and in September 1965 to mark the country's tenth national survey. The 1930 issue featured a map of the country, the 1965 issue (S.G. 1009) employed a more abstract design symbolising 'population', with stylised figures superimposed on a globe. The 1965 census revealed the astounding total of 98,281,955 inhabitants, with a density of 265.9 per square kilometre.

In Europe, particularly in Italy and Germany, there are accounts of local countings as far back as the 15th century, while the first systematic attempt at covering a whole country would seem to have been made in England and Wales in 1695, though no national results of this survey survive. The year 1703 saw a census in Iceland, and other countries gradually followed suit, albeit in rather spasmodic fashion. One of these early surveys was carried out in Norway in 1769, an event recalled by the two commemorative stamps (S.G. 640/1) issued for its bicentenary. Both are in a modern multicoloured design, one of them, featuring punch cards, reminding us of the increasing use of computers to process the masses of statistical information thrown up by the census.

It is, however, the United States which can claim the distinction of having inaugurated a series of regular national censuses. Its first federal census was conducted in 1790 and since then there has been a census each decade., A Mexican commemorative (S.G. 966) for the

national census held on 8 June, 1960 portrays Count S. de Revillagigedo who was closely associated with the 1790 survey. The Mexican returns for 1960 showed a total population of 34,923,129, expected to increase to over 48 millions by 1970; two stamps (S.G. 1164/5) were issued for the 1970 census, one employing in its design a huge question mark superimposed on a number of smaller question marks. An earlier issue from Mexico, on 1 October 1939, had marked the seventh census to be held; the six stamps employ various symbolic designs to represent commerce, industry, agriculture etc., and include three diamond shapes for the air values (S.G. 637/42).

The first British census was taken in 1801, as was the first in France. Early censuses were handicapped by poor techniques, though these gradually improved, and in 1897 Russia became the last major European power to inaugurate a modern census. By 5 January 1959, when an 'all-union' census was held in the U.S.S.R., the staggering total population of 208.8 millions had been enumerated, an increase of over 80 millions on the 1897 total. Two special stamps (S.G. 2294/5) appeared in December 1958 to herald the census, one featuring the census emblem, the other depicting a census official with 'a worker's family'.



In recent years there have been many advances in the techniques of census taking, thanks in no small part to the work of such organisations as the UN Population Commission and the Committee on the Census of the Americas, though such problems as the colossal expense and, in certain countries the illiteracy of the population, have not yet been overcome. Stamp designers too have had their problems in coping with the problem of representing a census on stamps and have, generally, trod a few well-worn paths. Maps and graphs, for example, have proved extremely popular. Thus, Argentina marked its 1960 census: with 6 p value (S.G. 997) showing the country and off-shore possessions; Brasil held its fifth

general census in 1941 and one of the two stamps S.S. 644/6 publicising the event featured a globe with Brazil lit by Spotlight, while map and graph were combined on two later issues (S.G. 800/1) for the 1950 census; Chile in 1953 marked its twelfth nation census with four values (S.G. 423/6) again featuring map and graph, though the thirteenth census, on 29 November 1960, brought designs (S.G. 531/2) depicting buildings and the face of a man, woman and child.

Iraq conducted a census on 14 October 1965, revealing a population of just over three millions and three stamps (S.G. 411/3), again featuring a graph, appeared in November of that year. Nearby Jordan had held its first census in 1961 and one 15 f. stamp (S.G. 424) commemorated the survey; here the graph is accompanied by two groups of Jordanian families. South Korea noted its 1966 national census with a design depicting a map of the country filled to capacity with inhabitants (S.G. 491), though an earlier issue from the same country for the 1949 census (S.G. 112), had limited itself to one Korean citizen, and even he takes second place to the typography and lay-out with the three values (S.G. 273/5) from Kuwait in 1965 for its census, we are back, with the graph. And there it is again on the two Panama stamps (S.G. 812/813) for the 1960 census in that country. Rumania's two census issues have employed the map as main ingredient of their design; the 1930 set (S.G. 1187/90) has one value with a map and 1930 superimposed, three values with a Rumanian woman holding a census form; the single value issued in 1948 (S.G. 1925) reverted to a map and date design the map placed between two groups of citizens. The returns, incidentally, showed a 1930 population of 18025884 falling in 1948 to 15872624.



The country which has contributed most issues to our theme is Turkey, with designs which have included both the traditional and the slightly different. The country's third census, taken in October 1940, was heralded by four stamps (S.G. 1262/5) on which are shown the returns for the earlier censuses of 1927 and 1935 and a pen ready to fill in the 1940 total. As it happened, the 'missing figure' on the stamps is 7, the total return having been 17,8209,50. By October 1945 this had become 18,790,174 four stamps and a miniature sheet (S.G. 1342/5, MS 1345a) depicted a very detailed census form being filled in. With the 1950 census we are back to the map design, this time complete with census statistics (S.G. 1433/4) which showed a population rise of about two millions. 1955 brought four values (S.G. 1592/6) portraying on a map five pairs of increasingly taller men and women, the place to be occupied by the 1955 brought four values (S.G. 1592/5) portraying on a map five pairs of increasingly taller men and women, the place to be occupied by the 1955 pair occupied temporarily by a question mark; in fact, the pair were now only two out of a total of 24,064,762 people in 1960 the census brought two values (S.G. 1918/9), one deriving its design from a graph including outlines of human faces, the other conveying the idea of 'population' in symbolic fashion. And in October 1965, by which time a population of over 31,000,000 was being counted, three values (S.G. 2125/7) appeared; of these the 100 k value introduced a novel touch in the form of a huge eye.

If the issues of Turkey have occasionally tried to break away from the traditional, those of Venezuela have just about reached rock-bottom. In 1950 there was a long set, all in the same uninspired design, for the Census of the Americas. The sixteen values (S.G. 912/927) show North, Central and South America, with statistical information thrown on top of the map. And for its own census in 1960, the first set of ten values (S.G. 1346/1355) had nothing to offer from the point of view of variety, though the idea of the symbolic towering skyscraper was quite novel. An even longer set (S.G. 1356/1370) silhouetted man and child against outlines of a bull's head, indicating that this was also the year of a third farming census. The number of bulls counted is not, apparently, recorded, but the humans numbered 7,523,999.

Census issues which avoid the map/graph/statistical approach have been very few. Among the more enterprising to have managed to do so could be noted the set issued in 1959 by the Dominican Republic (S.G. 806/8); the three values include a head and shoulders view of President Trujillo and, issuing from a horn of plenty (the cornucopia), a drove of animals. Egypt marked its first census in June 1966 with a 10 m design (S.G. 886) showing the census emblem beside a montage of human faces and above a view of city spires, minarets and towers. A census emblem appeared also on the 75 s value (S.G. 418) issued by Indonesia in 1961 to mark its first census, which announced a population of 97,085,348. Persia conducted a census in October 1966, revealing a population of 25,781,090; the special stamp issued the next month (S.G. 1483) provided one of the most original

designs in our theme, with its view of fingers being counted affording a strong contrast to contemporary computerised techniques! As for the Ryukyu Islands stamp of 1960 (S.G. 78) to mark their national census, the design, featuring a stork, would seem to have little census association; or was the designer thinking of the endless number of babies the stork would add to the statistics? The 1960 census in North Vietnam brought two designs (S.G. N128/9) featuring, predictably perhaps, a view of Vietnamese workers, women and factories.

Should we stop to ask 'Is there any purpose in all this work on a census? What good is it?' we might find the correct answer in our stamp albums-on, to be precise, the 5c value of the January 1970 set from the Dominican Republic (S.G. 1059) on which we are told 'Statistics review past experiences in order to formulate the future'. And stamp-designers too might well have a good look at past issues-and their future formulations might just be fractionally more interesting.

(Courtesy: Stamp Monthly, October 1973)

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