The Royal Philatelic Society London

The London Philatelist

The Journal of
The Royal Philatelic Society London

Volume 132 November 2023 Number 1510

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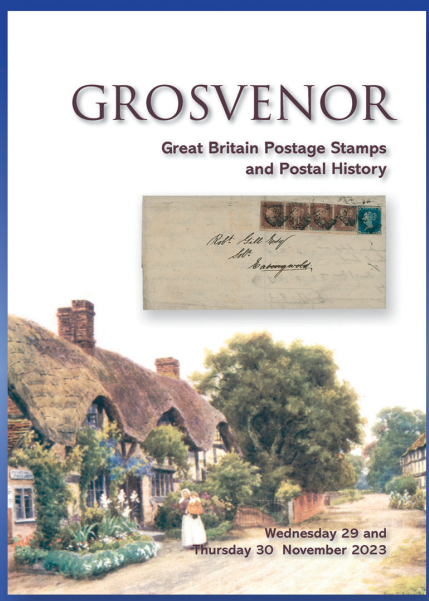
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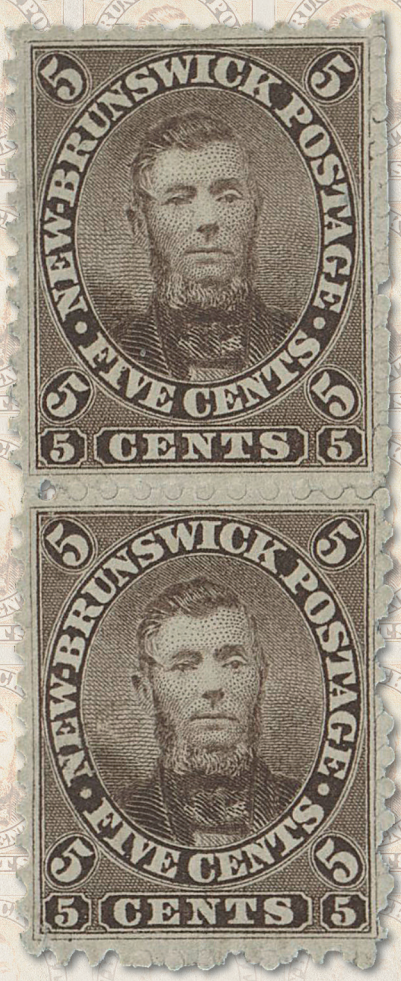
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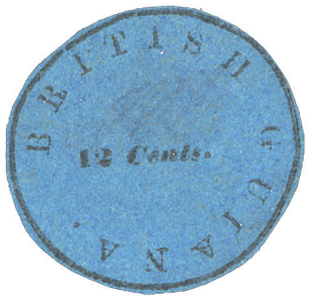
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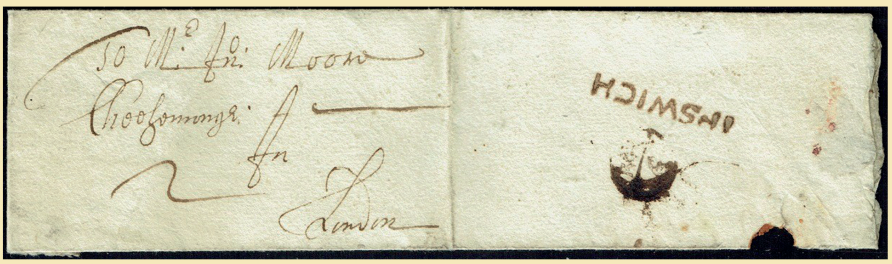
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From the Editor

Accuracy is the Twin of Honesty

One of the many positives in being Editor of *The London Philatelist* is that unlike those in the 'media', I am generally only tasked to deal with contributions based on matters of fact, or with opinions based primarily on undisputed facts, or interpretations which rely on properly evaluated facts. Of course, where primary documentary sources are not available, the diligent researcher wishing to announce a new interpretation of an element of their collecting area will build their argument on the material which exists. They will also include, where possible, a review of related material which may have no direct bearing on their specific point, but effectively provides an idea of the landscape out of which their particular focus has developed. What they should never do is to wilfully ignore material which contradicts their argument, or introduce items which are of a dubious character. I think that all contributors would agree with this approach to creating an article. I can think of only one example where a well intentioned author resolutely tried to defend a dubious stamp issue, which in some quarters is regarded as genuine, but in the eyes of the majority of experts in this Society is most definitely not. Needless to say, it was never published.

It may shock some of my readers, but believe it or not, I am not philatelically omniscient, even though in the nearly four years of editing the *LP*, my knowledge levels have increased hugely, thanks to the varied nature of your contributions. But huge gaps remain, and my levels of knowledge in some areas are still minimal. That is why we have peer reviewers. This Society asset is not necessarily an editorial 'get out of jail' card, but it hopefully prevents me from making the wrong call with anything that achieves the privilege of publication. Such a luxury is not that readily available in the wider world of media, particularly in news reporting, and is criminally absent in social media. We live in a time when one person's idea of a 'truth', motivated by blatant disregard for accuracy, becomes an accepted 'fact' once it receives the oxygen of media attention, be it mainstream or social. I would hate to be a future researcher of, say, social or political history and have to wade through the noise of opinion, misinformation and disinformation which presents itself as fact nowadays. Fortunately, philately is not like that, and the *LP* has always been a respected source of informed and reliable fact, and long may it stay that way.

More of a ramble than a rant, but hopefully you will indulge me, as ever. Alternatively, you can always write me a letter (aka an email). A bulging post bag (well, three 'letters', to be accurate) is guaranteed to make any Editor happy, and I am exactly that, as you will see in this issue. I am also always happy to publish original English versions of articles which have previously appeared in foreign language philatelic journals. A number have appeared previously (one of which won the Tapling Medal) and I am delighted to provide another in this edition, with Geoffrey Lewis's extensive and revealing research into the mysteries of the 1764 Spanish Colonies postal rates. Colonial Spain's naval loss has proven to be postal history's gain. Staying with a maritime theme, Tony Walker's *Story Behind the Cover* is one of far more modern research which may just have identified a sole (postal) survivor from a troopship which fell victim to a U-boat in WWI. Meanwhile, Rory Morrisey presents a very detailed profile of the Leipzig printers responsible for a number of classic issues of Thailand, in an article brought to life by a fortunate find in a German archive. Researchers who may have thought that nothing new would ever surface in relation to De La Rue archival material, may be pleasantly surprised by Peter Fernbank's revelation in this issue. The Society also announces a new publication on the Rhodesias and Nyasaland, and there are plenty of meeting reports and news of forthcoming exhibitions to hopefully engage your interest.

Letter to the Editor

Re 'Whither Stampex?', *From the Editor,* October, p132.
From Charles Oppenheim FRPSL

I was very interested in your comments about the lack of a Royal Mail presence at September Stampex. Whilst I was helping on the Royal's stand at the event, a lady came up to me to ask a question on behalf of her father, who lives in Russia and has apparently a major stamp collection there. He sent her to Stampex to buy every single stamp the Royal Mail currently has available – definitives, commemoratives, booklets – and had given her the funds for the purchases.

I mistakenly told her to "go to the upper area where Royal Mail will have a stand, and they will gladly fulfil your father's needs." So off she went, up the stairs, and I never saw her again. I shudder to think what funds she was prepared to spend, but it was presumably some thousands of pounds. This one purchase alone would probably have justified the cost to Royal Mail of the stand and of manning it, had it been present.

Ref : 'A Curiously Routed 1855 Cover from Helsingor to Kelso', Chris King RDP Hon FRPSL, 'The Story Behind the Cover', Number 39, October 2023, pp391–393
From Adrian Pearson

As a collector and researcher of postal history of the Crimean War I was very interested to read about the cover written 'off Elsinore' and sent to 'Lady John Scott' at Kelso in Scotland. I have not seen Crimean War mail routed via Stettin, though have since found this cover in a major auction catalogue.

Chris states 'Was it from the Baltic Fleet, assembled during the Crimean War 1853–56? Unfortunately not, since the blockade of Russian ports ended on 13 August 1854'. This date may have come from a reference in Wikipedia (*Baltic Fleet (United Kingdom)*) which is incorrect. The blockade of Russian Baltic ports by the allied British and French fleets continued from March to October 1854 and from April to November 1855. Between those dates, that is October 1854 to April 1855, the ships were either at Kiel or had gone back to Britain due to being unable to maintain the blockade because of ice in the Baltic. The 1855 blockade continued until November 1855, when again the ships returned to Britain for the final time.

The main postal route for British ships was originally a vessel which carried the mail to and from the fleet, but alternative arrangements were soon made via Kiel and Hamburg and occasionally via a few Danish ports by ships from the fleet calling there. The most commonly used routes are shown here:

Baltic Fleet Postal Rates

Date	*P.O. Notice*	*Route*	*Rate (per ½ oz unless noted otherwise)*
21 March 1854	19/1854	HM Ship/Pkt.	Seamen 1d, Officers 6d
May 1854	30/1854	Danzig	Seamen 5d, Officers 8d
November 1854	64/1854	Danzig	Route Discontinued
November 1854	64/1854	Kiel	Seamen 7d, Officers 10d
3 April 1855	22/1855	Kiel	Seamen/Officers 3d/¼ oz, 6d/½ oz
3 April 1855	22/1855	Danzig	Seamen/Officers 3d/¼ oz, 6d/½ oz

(Adapted from *The Royal Navy in the Baltic and Black Sea 1853–1856*, by Gerald Ellott MNZM RDP FRPSL FRPSNZ. Available at www.ellott-postalhistorian.com).

While the British fleet anchored at various places around the Baltic Sea as the blockade or other naval operations demanded, many of the surviving letters sent via Danzig carry the heading 'off Nargen'. This was the island of Nargen at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland near modern Tallinn (Revel) which was a good base to conduct the blockade of the Russian (including Finnish) ports around the Gulf.

To bring me back to my response to Chris, I refer to a another cover which was found by F. X. Piat de Wavrin and noted in an article in *Documents Philateliques*, No. 146, 1995. This shows a cover sent at the 3d concession rate to 'Scott Kelso'. It is stated to be postmarked 'DANZIG 3/8 3-4' and is dated from 1855. Working with Nick Anderton and with the help of other members and non members, I am currently attempting to update M. Piat de Wavrin's original database of DANZIG letters but as yet haven't traced this cover. If any member has any Danzig covers, they are welcome to contact me at adrians.pearson@virgin.net.

There is also an unpaid cover dated 2 August 1855 to Lady Scott at Spottiswoode, Lauder, Berwickshire, Scotland via Danzig. This was in the Grosvenor Philatelic Auctions sale of 18 November 2014, and is described as:

Lot 264 - 1855 (Aug. 2nd) stampless cover with manuscript "3", to Scotland via Danzig, "DANZIG/3/8/4-5" alongside, a few creases, otherwise fine.

Luckily for us there is also an illustration (courtesy of Grosvenor Philatelic auctions) which is in the same hand as the Elsinore cover. As you can see this also shows a faint 'LAUDER / AU 8 / 1855' receiving stamp and the manuscript 3 shows that it was sent at the 3d concessionary rate.



Thus, my conclusion relating to the cover via Stettin and Berlin that Chris highlighted is that it could have come from the British Baltic fleet via a ship calling at Stettin and there was a correspondent of Lord or Lady Scott in that fleet. As yet I have no candidate. Alternatively, as Chris states, it could have come from Lord John Douglas-Montagu-Scott sailing in the Baltic. Perhaps he then reached Danzig and sent the above letter 'by favour', via the British consulate, using the 3d concession rate. As far as I am concerned the jury is out.

Re 'Julian G. Clive: 'A Hungarian Stamp Dealer in His Majesty's Service', by Adriano Bergamini FRPSL and Denes Czirok RDP FRPSL, October 2023, pp.439–443
From Robin Sherman

I much enjoyed reading about the philatelic escapades of Julian G. Clive and although I knew his name that was about the the only thing I was aware of, until I read this interesting article. However, another person mentioned in the account was Bruce Conde, who, in Yemen, also referred to himself as Lt. Col. Abdurrahman Conde and later, after promotion, as Brigadier-General The Prince of Conde. It seems that he was born in California and his original name was Bruce Chalmers. Whilst I knew of him and the fact that he had a dubious philatelic reputation, I also discovered from this article, for the first time, that he was accused of being a dishonest philatelic fraudster.

I worked for a British bank in the Middle East for almost thirty years and in 1965 to 1967, when I was a junior officer in my early twenties, my career took me to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. This period coincided with the Prince of Conde's military (and philatelic) duties in Yemen, during which time,

the 'Prince' had an account with our Jeddah branch and he would visit the manager on the odd occasion to discuss his account operations. I remember him sweeping into the office one day, wearing a white bandana on his head, his black burnous-like cape flowing behind, which revealed a military-type uniform underneath. He had previously informed our manager that he was a member of French nobility but, at the time, our boss took that with a large pinch of salt.

One day, the postal clerk at the branch, knowing that I was a stamp collector, handed me a very attractive registered envelope from the Mutawakelite Kingdom of Yemen, bearing several colourful stamps and a cachet (illustrated with a sword) to the effect that the missive had been delayed by enemy action. This had been addressed to the bank by the Brigadier-General and contained a letter accompanied by a draft to be credited to his account. It was clear that the stamps had paid legitimate postage to Saudi Arabia. I was very pleased with the cover and inserted it into the corner of my desk blotter so that I would not forget to take it home at the end of the day. Despite this fool-proof memory jogger, I forgot the cover and next day, having rushed into the bank on a rescue mission, to my horror, it had disappeared! It turned out that a young Arab clerk couldn't resist the cover and had pinched it. However, he promised to bring it back next day and, true to his word, he did so. There was bad news though ~ he had cut all the stamps off and the rest of the envelope was in pieces! I blamed my own carelessness for the loss of a very unusual item.

Incidentally, quite a few other commercial covers are known, mostly to correspondents and companies in USA and one such addressee was Gayle J Raymond, of Texas, who will be known to many collectors as the recipient of unusual covers from a range of countries. All of these covers passed through the postal system without any problems relating to postage due, so there was certainly a non-fraudulent element to Conde's philatelic activities.

To my knowledge, commercial mail is known from the 'Prince of Conde' in the Mutawakelite Kingdom of Yemen right up until 1969, but I do not know what happened after that time. Certainly, some of the stamp themes were influenced by his American origin, such as the deaths of President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King. He even promoted the production of certain Yemeni postal stationery items which are now quite rare, commercially used.

Society Displays and Reports: A Polite Request

I would be grateful if Fellows or Members who have the privilege of presenting displays to the Society at Abchurch Lane would submit a preview for inclusion in this journal. This is not designed to be a challenging task, unlike the efforts expended in putting together the material for the meeting, writing and producing the handout, etc. A simple introduction, with an indication of the highlights, in approximately 300 words, will do the job. It also helps significantly if your preview can include two or three images.

Those giving the Vote of Thanks at the end of a meeting are expected to produce a report for the *LP*. There is no restriction on its length, only that it should be long enough to reflect both the effort that the presenter has put in to preparing their material, plus a comprehensive description of that material. Please liaise with the presenter to additionally supply me with images of any items featured in your report. In the past, any Fellow or Member who gave a display was required to provide a paper to this journal. This was basically the full content of the presenter's address to the meeting. That is no longer mandatory, you will possibly be pleased to know!

All previews should be provided in time to be published in the *LP* preceding a display. The cut off date for inclusion is around the fifteenth of the month preceding the date of the issue: for example, 15 November for the December issue. Reports would be welcome as near as possible to the Meeting date, although those held in the final ten or eleven days of a month will obviously not be published until the following issue. Regional reports continue to arrive in a very timely manner - thank you.

Tony Bard FRPSL, Editor

The Printers Giesecke and Devrient of Leipzig, Postage Stamp Production for Thailand (Siam)

Rory Morrisey

Hermann Giesecke and Alphonse Devrient founded their printing company in Leipzig in 1852. They were security printers and specialised in banknotes and securities, but they also printed a few postal items. They supplied the postage stamps, postal stationery and revenue stamps of Thailand (Siam) from about 1895 to 1914, plus a small number of other countries' issues, including Paraguay and Portugal.

One of the 'Fathers of Philately', R. W. H. (Harold) Row contributed an article published in *The London Philatelist* entitled 'The Plates of the 1905 Permanent Issue of Siam' (Row, 1918). These stamps, some of the best printed by Giesecke and Devrient (G&D), are to be covered in this article. Row had previously published his masterwork, *The Adhesive Postage Stamps of Siam* (Row 1910–1914), and his mother donated his collection to the British Museum in memory of her son who died young.



Figure 1. Giesecke and Devrient letterhead from 1904 showing their Leipzig printing works. This building has been renovated and still stands at Nürnberger Straße / Johannisgasse.



Figure 2. Some of the nineteenth century postage stamps printed by Giesecke & Devrient: (from left to right) 1863 Saxony 1 Neu Groschen, 1887 Paraguay 2 Centavos, 1888 Heligoland 2 Schilling private reprint, 1893 Paraguay 2 Centavos, 1894 Portugal 5 Reis 'Henry the Navigator'.



Figure 3. Postage stamps printed for Siam (Thailand) From left to right: 1895 Rejected Die, 1899 Profile Head, 1904 Temple of Dawn, 1908 Horseman/Jubilee, 1910 Garuda. All of these stamps feature King Chulalongkorn, also known as King Rama V.



Figure 4. Revenue stamps printed for Siam (Thailand) From left to right: 1897 Agriculture (Rice Paddy) Tax,1899 Court Fee (Rychakon) 'Long Green', 1915 Court Fee 'Erewan', the three- headed elephant. The last were printed in the middle of 1914 but could not be delivered because of the blockades of German shipping. They managed to beat the blockades by using a Danish East Asiatic ship, the S.S. Bintang out of Copenhagen in December 1914.

Over the years, lovers of Thai philately have tried and failed to find more about the G&D issues from original sources. The Leipzig company had been swallowed up by the East German state printers after World War 2 and all their records were said to have been lost. Part of the Leipzig printing works was destroyed by bombing, so it was assumed that everything had gone. A new printing company called Giesecke and Devrient, with some links to the old firm, was set up in Munich, West Germany, post-WW2 but they had no pre-war records.

It was clear from the work of Row and many others that there were some interesting aspects to the stamps, but it was difficult to make much progress. Then, in 2017, I received an email from Dr Thekla Kluttig of the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv in Leipzig informing me that they had a whole file of G&D documents (Sächsisches Staatsarchiv 21061) from the period in which I was interested relating to stamps produced for Thailand and others. There was far too much to copy so I would have to go and take a look for myself.

A Vast Treasure Trove

I did not know what to expect at the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv, but what I found was truly amazing. I was initially shown four huge bound volumes. Firstly, there were the file copy contracts for most of the stamp issues, plus letters to and from the Thai authorities, particularly the German Legation in Berlin. There were quotes, discussions, shipping records and some financial statements. The most incredible document was an inventory of all the printing plates that had been deliberately destroyed by melting down in December 1912. This document included records of the original engravings and the intermediate plates that had been required to produce the printing plates. I have called this the 'Destruction Inventory'. There was so much material that I had to return to Leipzig (a great place to visit, by the way) for a second time to complete my research.

Main conclusions

It was clear from the letters and from the Destruction Inventory that G&D mainly printed stamps from copper plates. They printed in letterpress (typography) and in recess (intaglio). They were inconsistent in the names they gave to their printing techniques, but letterpress was either *Kupferdruck* or *Buchdruck*, while recess printing was often called *Kupfertiefdruck*, but sometimes just *Kupferdruck*. They probably printed postal stationery using lithography (*Steindruck*), but this was unclear.

They initially quoted for the 'Temple of Dawn' issue using steel engraving, but in the end they employed copper plates. The quality of G&D's printing was usually very good, at least in the opinion of the author. They were significantly cheaper than De La Rue had been for earlier issues, approximately half the cost overall.

The archive records have enabled new conclusions to be drawn about the production of these stamps and a greater understanding of the numbers and quantities of the reprints. They also shed light on some of the reasons why Thailand had to surcharge to meet shortages of key values. A discussion of four major issues for Thailand follows: the 1895 and 1899 issues, called the Rejected Die' and the 'Profile Head', the 1904–1908 'Temple of Dawn' series and the 1908 'Horseman' or 'Jubilee' issue.

Two Related Issues for Thailand - the 1895 'Rejected Die' and the 1899 'Profile Head', both based upon the 1885 De La Rue Issue

Before any Giesecke and Devrient (G&D) postage stamps were produced, De La Rue had an exclusive ten-year contract (Cameron, 2001) with the Thai authorities for postal products that was set to expire on 29 September 1895. In the early 1890s the Thais had a serious falling-out with De La Rue over the quality of their stamps. The major problems were the effect of the hot and humid climate of South-East Asia on stamps that were printed in doubly-fugitive ink and apparently with unsuitable gum. The Germans who managed the Siamese Postal Department had advised that stamps could be obtained more cheaply from Germany.



Figure 5. Examples of the 1885 Thai definitive stamps from De La Rue, London. They were printed using doubly fugitive green and purple inks and were a unified design for postage and revenue following the pattern of De La Rue's stamps for the British GPO. This design was copied by G&D. (Enlarged 1.5x)

The Thais signed a contract with G&D on 5 March 1894 for stamps of 1 Att and 2 Atts denominations plus an internal post card at 1½ Atts. G&D essentially copied the De La Rue stamp designs, as instructed by the Thais, although a new vignette of the King was used. Stamps in this design are known as the 'Rejected Die' and were superseded by a similar issue known as the 'Profile Head' - see Figures 6 and 7.



Figure 6. Examples of the 'Rejected Die' stamps that were dispatched in 1895 and issued in error in October 1899. The 1 Att and 2 Atts values are known to have been used legitimately at Puket and elsewhere. The 3 Atts may have been genuinely used, but the 4 Atts and 10 Atts were never issued.

The 'Rejected Die' 1 and 2 Atts stamps and the post cards were dispatched from Germany at the beginning of September 1895, but they did not arrive at Bangkok until, probably, sometime in April 1896 – the reason for this delay being uncertain at present. There is a letter in the archive asking why they were delayed. The second payment was due after the stamps had been delivered, and it was made in May 1896.

In the meantime, the Thais ordered and took delivery of reprints of the De La Rue 1 Att and 2 Atts stamps, which arrived at Bangkok in early 1896 and were issued immediately. The G&D stamps were not issued. It is believed that the King did not approve of his likeness on the latter's stamps and forbade their issue (hence 'Rejected Die') but this cannot be the full explanation. If the King had seen and had disliked his portrait in 1896 when the first G&D postage stamps arrived, then the Thais would not have ordered three more values (3, 4 and 10 Atts) in the same design in 1897.

It seems likely that De La Rue were very annoyed with the Thai authorities for both copying their stamp design and ordering replacement stamps and a post card from Germany, while they still had an exclusive contract for postal products. What actually happened may never be known. However, De La Rue did supply four values of Letter-Cards similar to the contemporary British ones in October 1896, a year after the termination of their Thai contract. These were, apparently, not wanted by the Thais, because they were not issued until May 1901. The Thais paid De La Rue handsomely, so perhaps there was an element of compensation owed to De La Rue.

Continuing the story of the 'Rejected Die' stamps, the Thai authorities ordered additional values. The 10 Atts was ordered first, on 21 October 1895, in a letter from Dr Keuchenius of the Siamese Legation in Berlin. The 3 and 4 Atts stamps were probably ordered soon after, but no documentation was found in the archives. It is worth noting that the contract with De La Rue had lapsed by then. 'Millions' of the new stamps printed in Germany were reported in *The Straits Times* in January 1897 to have arrived at Bangkok. It is probable that the stamps would have been issued on the King's birthday later that year. At some point the King had to approve their issue. The story goes that he saw them and disliked his portrait, forbidding their issue.

The first consequence was that the Thai authorities had to get more surcharges printed on the old De La Rue stamps, of which there were fortunately plenty in stock. Secondly, G&D were approached to print a replacement series of postage stamps with a new portrait of the King.

In 1899, G&D delivered a new series of nine postage stamps based upon the design of the 'Rejected Die' but with a different vignette – the 'Profile Head' of King Chulalongkorn. Where possible, the plates made for the 'Rejected Die' issue (spandrels, frames and value tablets) were re-used in the Profile Head stamps.

All nine of the 1899 'Profile Head' issue stamps were printed using key and duty plates, even for values in a single colour. This is an indication that there was some urgency in completing the order. When there were reprints, new values and changed colours in 1904, the single colour stamps were printed from single plates, which was G&D's preference.

The first issue and reprints are mixed together in the Giesecke and Devrient Destruction Inventory (Figure 10) although the single colour and bi-colour printings are separated.

No first contract for the 'Profile Head' stamps could be found in the Leipzig archive files, but they were probably initially ordered in 1898.



Figure 7. Examples of the 1899 'Profile Head' definitive stamps from Giesecke & Devrient, Leipzig. They were printed using non-fugitive inks and had no watermark. They were closely modelled on De La Rue's 1885 stamps, via the 'Rejected Die' stamps of 1895–1899.

The Profile Head and, by implication, the Rejected Die stamps were printed by letterpress in sheets of 100 stamps, but the largest printing plate (Druckplatte) in the Destruction Inventory (Figure 10) is for ten stamps. The printers clamped ten of these together in a forme to print a sheet of 100 stamps. It is almost certain that the printing plates were in a 5 x 2 stamp format, which would be roughly the same size as a banknote, and they were placed in the forme in two columns of five plates in order to print a sheet 10 x 10 stamps in size.

'Rejected Die' stamps are relatively scarce, and few blocks have survived. Printing errors and varieties may have existed but are difficult to investigate now.

Oddities in the 'Profile Head' stamps have been known for a long time and it was suspected there were constant varieties. When sheets of the 1899 'Profile Head' issue are inspected closely, it can be seen that there is a repeating pattern of defects in the transfer of the engraving of the vignette. Row believed wrongly that the printing plates consisted of 100 subjects. How the varieties had occurred was a mystery for many years.

On each vertical half of each sheet, the first three vertical pairs ended up with defects and the fourth and fifth vertical pairs had none. The defects, or constant varieties depending on your viewpoint, can be seen in the vignette of the 1899 stamps and the bi-colour stamps of the 1904 issue in the lines of the collar and epaulette on the right.



Figure 8. Pair of the 1899 Profile Head 2 Att definitive stamps from either columns three and four or columns eight and nine of a printed sheet. The left stamp has two blobs in the epaulette and messy lines in the collar. The right stamp is assumed to be what was intended. The repeating pattern of the faults indicated is a characteristic of all the stamps of this issue printed using key and duty plates.



Figure 9 The advantage to the printers of using printing plates of ten subjects was that damage to a printing plate could be easily and quickly rectified by replacing a faulty ten-subject plate in the forme with another spare plate. Deformed frame lines such as this are very rarely seen on these stamps.

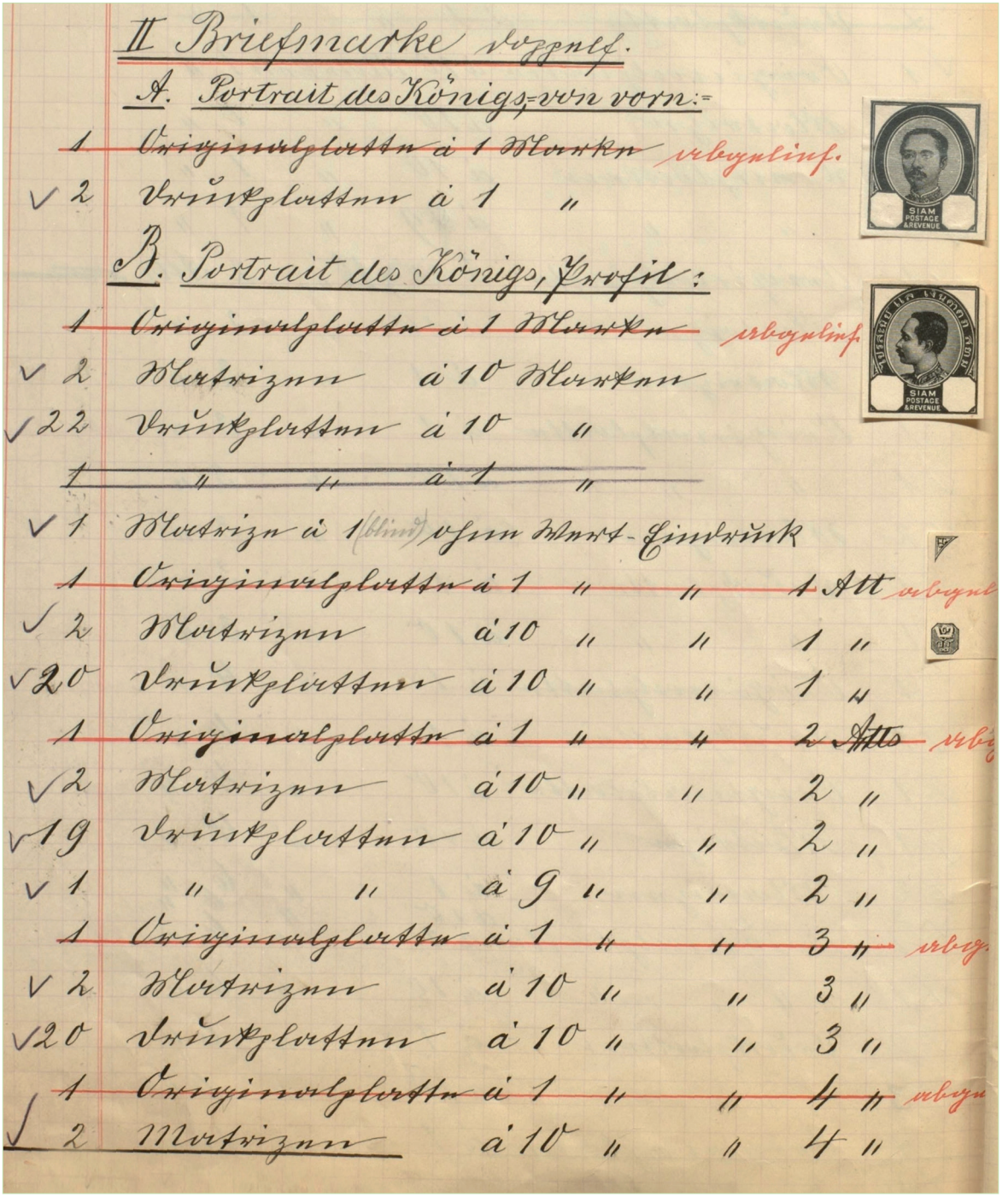


Figure 10. Page of the Destruction Inventory of the Rejected Die/Profile Head plates. (Cropped) The original relief engravings are crossed through and annotated in red abgelief[ert] (delivered), as they were sent to the Siamese Legation in Berlin. The page is headed 'Briefmarke doppelf[arbig]' or 'Postage Stamps two-colour'. All the items are Druckplatten (printing plates) or Matrizen (matrices). The printing plates for 10 stamps (or nine in one case) are shown for the key plate and the duty plates for values from 1 Att to 4 Atts.

The Destruction Inventory at Figure 10 shows only one remaining entry for the 'Rejected Die' design. This is assumed to be because all the matrices and plates that could not be re-used for the Profile Head design had been recycled.

The same duty plates previously used for the 'Rejected Die' issue were re–used for the 'Profile Head' issues. It appears that the key plate design made for the 'Rejected Die' stamps was somehow converted into a similar one for the 'Profile Head' by simply substituting the head vignette.

The Destruction Inventory shows some strange anomalies, for example, printing plates with only nine stamp images. Perhaps one image had been removed to help in the production of the 1904 revised values. Eleven or more printing plates were produced for each value, thus giving the printers spare plates if one were to be damaged beyond repair. Looking for constant varieties and errors owing to damage to the plates is difficult. Varieties (such as a bent frame line) cannot be tied to any sheet position as the ten-stamp printing plates could have been shuffled or replaced.

The contracts and some letters have enabled the determination of how many reprints were made and when they were ordered. Previously only overall totals for each value had been known. Details were published in *The Thai Times*, April 2018.

The 1904 'Temple of Dawn' issue

Despite his characteristic attention to detail and careful observations, R. W. H. Row was led to draw some incorrect conclusions about how these stamps were printed. Row thought they were 'surface-printed' (i.e. letterpress) and that there was 'combining of plates', using a common vignette plate inserted into frame plates to explain the strange variations of light and dark stamps on the same sheets and other anomalies.

These stamps, however, were printed in recess using copper plates, not 'surface-printing' as he had said. There is no raised feel to the print such as would be expected from printing in recess using steel plates, but hairline scratches on the plates can be seen on the printed stamps, particularly on the 1 Att, where dark hairlines in the colour of the vignette can be seen very easily against the orange-yellow of the frame. (Figure 11) In all cases, apart from two temporary exceptions, Giesecke and Devrient made new, single printing plates of 100 stamps (10 x 10) for all the single colour values.

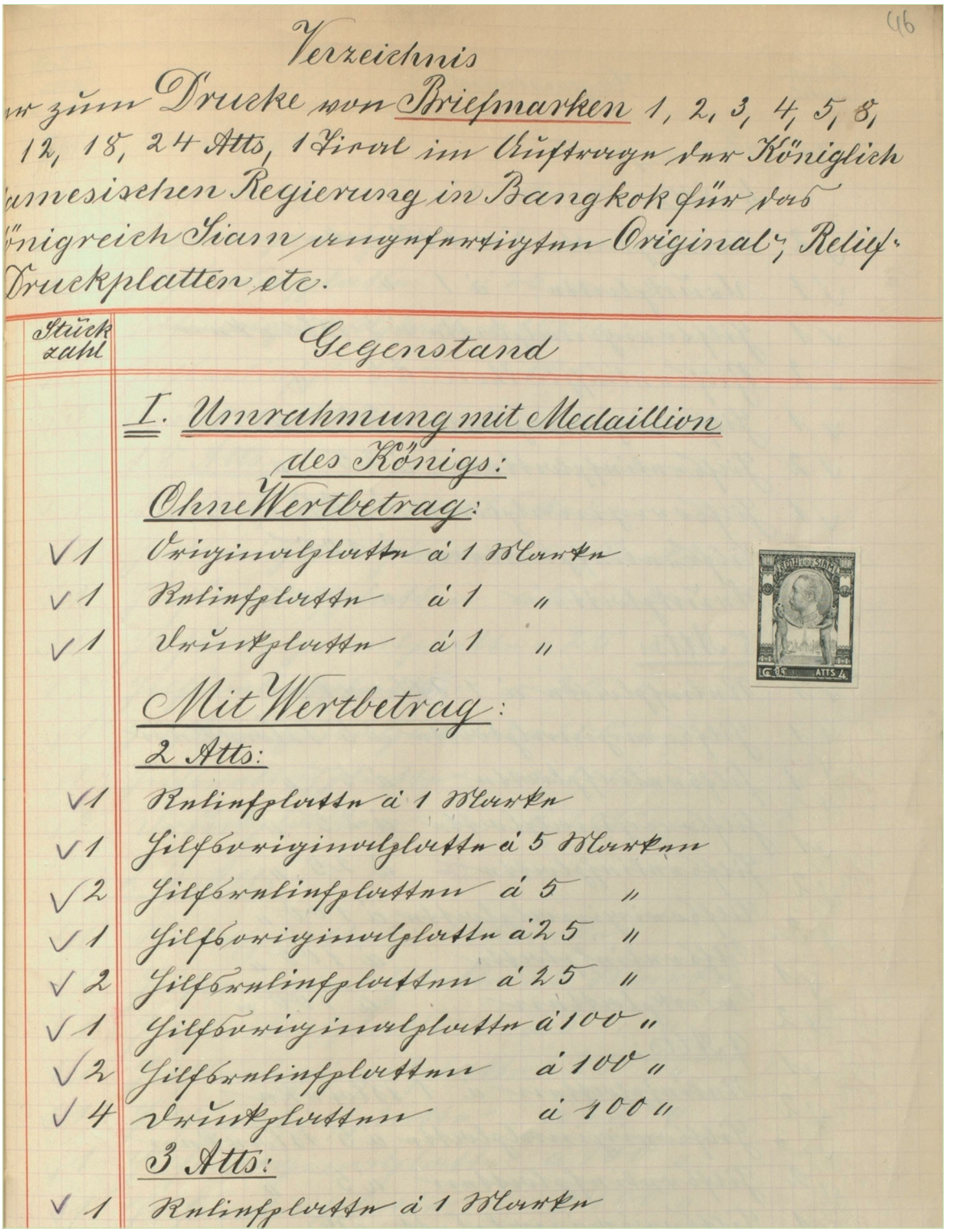


Figure 11 A hairline scratch showing in green at the top of the orange-yellow frame of a 1 Att 'Temple of Dawn' stamp. Scratches occur when the printer wipes off excess ink before pressing the inked plate on to the paper. They are more likely to occur with recess printing using copper plates than with steel plates because copper is softer than steel.

It is most instructive to inspect the G&D Destruction Inventory for the engravings and plates of the Temple of Dawn Issue. (Figure 12)

The method of creating the printing plates bears some comparison with that used on the 'Profile Head' stamps but involved more steps. The working dies were impressed five times in a row to make a helper plate (Hilfsplatte). It was at this point that constant varieties were introduced, which are evident on the bi-colour issues of this design printed in 1905 and 1906.

The key plate containing the vignette for bi-colour stamps and some of the frame (duty) plates were affected. Each helper plate of five was used to make a printing (i.e. recess) plate of five, then this was used in turn to make a helper plate of twenty-five. Finally, the large helper plate was impressed four times to make a printing plate of 100 stamps.



Verzeichnis
zum Drucke von Briefmarken 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 12, 18, 24 Atts, 1 Farbe im Auftrage der Königlich siamesischen Regierung in Bangkok für das Königreich Siam angefertigten Original-, Relief- Druckplatten etc.

Stückzahl	Gegenstand
	I. Umrahmung mit Medaillon des Königs:
	Ohne Wertbetrag:
✓ 1	Originalplatten à 1 Marken
✓ 1	Reliefplatten à 1 „
✓ 1	Druckplatten à 1 „
	Mit Wertbetrag:
	2 Atts:
✓ 1	Reliefplatten à 1 Marken
✓ 1	Hilfsoriginalplatten à 5 Marken
✓ 2	Hilfsreliefplatten à 5 „
✓ 1	Hilfsoriginalplatten à 25 „
✓ 2	Hilfsreliefplatten à 25 „
✓ 1	Hilfsoriginalplatten à 100 „
✓ 2	Hilfsreliefplatten à 100 „
✓ 4	Druckplatten à 100 „
	3 Atts:
✓ 1	Reliefplatten à 1 Marken

Figure 12. Page from the Destruction Inventory, Temple of Dawn issue, detailing the engravings and plates for single colour stamps without the value inserted (Ohne Wertbetrag; Original-, Relief- and Druckplatte), then moving to the 2 Atts value with value inserted (Mit Wertbetrag). The value seems to have been inserted on a single relief engraving that was then used to make a five-stamp helper plate (Hilfsoriginalplatte à 5 Marken).

This procedure led to a pattern of light and heavy printed impressions affecting the vignette and the frame of stamps occurring in particular columns on each sheet, which originally arose from the uneven pressure applied when making the five-stamp helper plates.

The patterns differ between different values, but they are constant down each column and across the sheet in two horizontal groups of five for all the bi-colour values of 1905/06 - 1 Att, 2 Atts, 4 Atts, 8 Atts and 1 Tical. The central vignette is printed heavily on all these values in columns 2, 4, 7 and 9 but lighter in the other columns. The frame is printed more heavily in columns 3 and 8 on the 1 Att, and in columns 4 and 9 on the 2 Atts and 1 Tical.

There were several changes in postal rates in 1906 and some new colours and values were needed. In two cases - the 2 Atts and the 4 Atts - the new stamps, delivered in December 1907, were in a single colour after having previously been printed in two colours. These two stamps were printed using the key and duty plates employed earlier. It appears that this was an emergency measure as both values were later reprinted using a single plate.

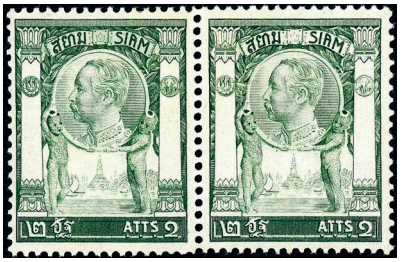


Figure 13. A pair of the 2 Atts Temple of Dawn new printing in yellow-green of 1907 using key and duty plates. The frame of the left stamp is heavily printed and the lines of shading in the top scroll can be easily distinguished, but not on the right stamp.

The single-colour issues of 1905/06 were unaffected by constant varieties within each printed sheet. However, there are differences in the heaviness of the impressions between the values according to their colour. Row noted that the dark colours were printed lightly, and the light colours printed heavily on the single colour issues. He believed that this must have been done deliberately by varying the depth of the impression on the printing plate

The 'Temple of Dawn' stamps, which are sometimes known as 'Wat Cheng', 'Wat Jang' or 'Wat Arun', are mostly printed very well. They are comb perforated and the perforations can be misaligned. No records of perforating were found in the archives ,and it is assumed that G&D sub-contracted or borrowed perforating equipment.

The archive files enabled the author to determine details of the re-orders and re-printings of the Temple of Dawn issue. There are, however, some problems to be resolved, such as why so many plates of the 3 Atts bi-colour value were produced. Details of all the printings were published in *The Thai Times*, the journal of the Thailand Philatelic Society, in August 2017.

The 1908 Longest Reign – 'Jubilee' or 'Horseman' issue

When King Chulalongkorn had been on the throne of Siam for forty years, he became the longest serving monarch of the current dynasty. Much rejoicing was to come, a new equestrian statue was ordered from France, and new high value stamps were required.

Some consider them to be the first commemorative stamps of Thailand, although they were intended to be and were used for many years. These high values, denominated from 1 Tical to 40 Ticals were also vilified by some philatelists, who could not understand why Siam would need stamps up to a value of over three pounds sterling, except to make money from stamp collectors. This allegation, as we shall see, was only partly true. By the way, the Thai Tical is the same as a Baht, the present-day currency of Thailand. The word Tical is a foreign term.

R. S. Le May explained that they really were needed for the sending of Chinese 'Clubbed Packets' (Le May, 1916). There were special arrangements for Chinese workers in Thailand to send money home to China using a number of agents, but the Thai authorities were determined to exercise their postal monopoly and not to lose revenue.

The agents would accumulate hundreds of money transfers at a time and take them to a single post office, Number 8, located in Yaowarat Road in Bangkok's Chinatown. The packages would be checked, and stamps affixed and cancelled by Thai Post Office staff. The packets were handed back to the agents who would arrange for their onwards transmission to China where they were distributed to the addressees and payments were made by local agents.

The packages usually arrived at the port of Swatow (now called Shantou) in Guangdong Province, China. Used stamps often bear the cancellation of Bangkok 8 post office (Figure 14) and sometimes also of Swatow.



Figure 14. A 1908 3 Ticals 'Horseman' cancelled at Bangkok 8 post office which was specifically opened to deal with Chinese clubbed packets.

The 'Jubilee' or 'Horseman' high value stamps were preceded by a provisional issue of fiscal stamps with values 10, 20 and 40 Ticals surcharged locally. The fiscal stamps had been printed by G&D in 1898 and were intended for use in relation to the payment of Court (Judicial) fees. To collectors of Thailand Revenues these are known as the 'Long Greens', for obvious reasons - see Figure 4. The Leipzig archives contain information on how the 'Long Greens' were originally printed but not the surcharges, which were printed locally in Bangkok.

The files in the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv tell the story of how the 'Horseman' stamps were produced in haste and also revealed details of their production.

The Director of the Siamese Postal Department at the time was a German named Theodor Collmann and he was back at Hanau in Germany for his health and on holiday in 1908. So it was convenient for him to organise with Giesecke and Devrient the production and delivery of these stamps. The Minister for Public Works, Prince Nares, wrote to him on 16 July 1908 and put him in charge.

Prince Nares wrote another letter to Herr Collmann asking him to procure proofs of the 'Horseman' stamps from the printer for his collection. He explained that they should be printed on Chinese paper and that he particularly collected proofs, not the ordinary stamps.

The 'Horseman' stamps were recess-printed in small sheets of twenty five (5 x 5) stamps using copper plates. (Figure 15) The choice of colours was left to the printers. The timing for delivery was very tight and Collmann determined that they should be delivered by registered post via Munich and Italy, not the usual route for deliveries, which was through the north German ports. The stamps, according to Prince Nares' letter, were due to be issued on 15 November 1908.

2500 of each of the 10, 20 and 40 Tical stamps were the first to be dispatched on 6 October. The next, listed on a shipping note dated 21 October 1908, consisted of a part delivery of 1, 2 and 5 Tical stamps in two letters and a part delivery of 10, 20 and 40 Tical stamps in a packet. The 3 Tical stamp was missing at this stage. A further small delivery was dated 30 October, consisting of 2, 3 and 5 Ticals stamps and the balance of the order had been dispatched by 21 November.

The official date of issue had become 11 November but only the 10, 20 and 40 Tical 'Horseman' stamps were available in Bangkok. Some Temple of Dawn stamps of lower value had been overprinted and only four out of the five were issued on the 11th. The 3 Tical 'Horseman' stamp was reported to be available in the *Bangkok Times* of 25 November.

The 'Horseman' stamps were expensive. G&D's contract price was 6 Marks per thousand stamps plus 2,250 Marks for preparing the printing plates giving an overall cost of 3,420 Marks for a total of 195,000 postage stamps. Interestingly, the copy of the contract for the 'Horseman' stamps in the Saxony Archive is dated 2 October 1908, by which date the printing plates must have been well advanced and the first stamps had probably already been printed.

It was anticipated that purchases by collectors would be significant. The *Bangkok Times* reported that 4,000 Ticals-worth of the 10, 20 and 40 Tical 'Horseman' stamps was sold in the first week. The exchange rate of about 2 Marks to the Tical meant that the cost of the stamps had already been covered.

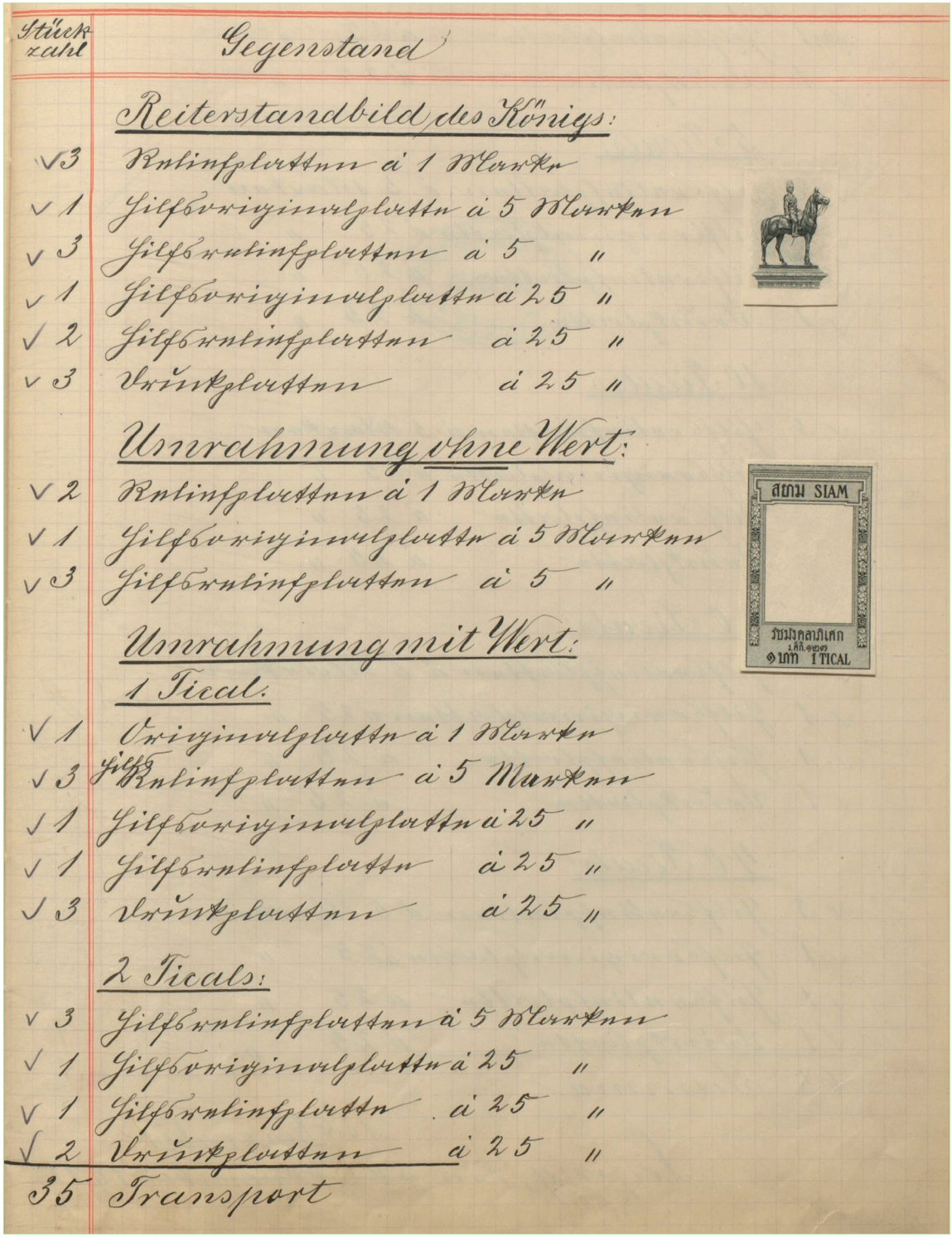


Figure 15. Page from the Destruction Inventory, Horseman issue, detailing the engravings (original and relief) and plates for the vignette, the frame without value (Umrahmung ohne Wert) , and the 1 and 2 Ticals with the value inserted (mit Wert). In each case intermediate helper plates were made with five images. There were three printing plates (Druckplatten) of the 1 Tical and two of the 2 Ticals.

Final notes

The trips to Leipzig and the contacts with many other philatelists and museums was a terrific philatelic journey. Considering Thailand alone there is much interesting information that could not be fitted into this article, such as the letter from G&D reacting to their losing the stamp printing contract in 1912.

There is certainly a lot more to discover in the Saxony State Archives. Other countries are represented, such as the contract for the Henry the Navigator stamps of Portugal. The 'Printing Technology' records gave details of each press and its operator and how long it took - and most that were seen by me were for bank notes and securities.

Please feel free to contact me with queries and relevant information: Rory Morrisey, HonSec@ThailandPhilSoc.org.uk



Figure 16. The 20 and 40 Ticals Horseman stamps hand stamped 'Specimen'. in Bangkok before being sent to the UPU. The values below 10 Ticals were not handstamped 'Specimen'.

Acknowledgements

My thanks go to Dr Thekla Kluttig and Julia Langbecker of the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv, Leipzig, Paul Skinner FRPSL of the British Library, London and Barry Attoe of the Postal Museum, London. In addition, several philatelists have helped me with my researches and translations. My apologies to anyone I have omitted: Prakob Chirakiti RDP FRPSL, Renate Springer FRPSL, Michael Waugh FRPSL, Chulaporn Karnasuta, Prakit Foongvanich, Alan Cameron, Anthony Johnson and George Humphreys.

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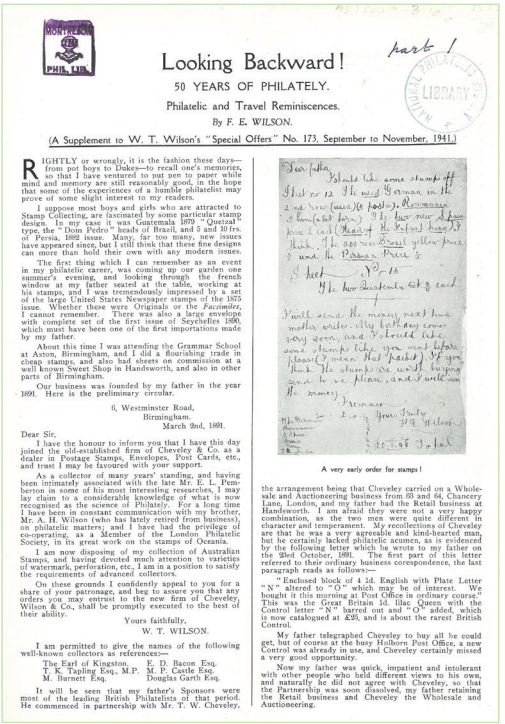
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The Research Hub

Research topic: The Three Wilsons: William Thomas Wilson ('WTW), Alexander Henry Wilson ('AHW') and Frank Ernest Wilson ('FEW').
Researcher: H John Wilson, h.john.wilson@gmail.com



Looking Backward!

50 YEARS OF PHILATELY.

Philatelic and Travel Reminiscences.

By F. E. WILSON.

(A Supplement to W. T. Wilson's "Special Offers" No. 173, September to November, 1941.)

part 1

RIGHTLY or wrongly, it is the fashion these days—from pot boys to Dukes—to recall one's memories, so that I have ventured to put pen to paper while mind and memory are still reasonably good, in the hope that some of the experiences of a humble philatelist may prove of some slight interest to my readers.

I suppose most boys and girls who are attracted to Stamp Collecting, are fascinated by some particular stamp design. In my case it was Guatemala 1879 "Quetzal" type, the "Dom Pedro" heads of Brazil, and 5 and 10 frs. of Persia, 1869 issue. Many, far too many, new issues have appeared since, but I still think that these fine designs can more than hold their own with any modern issues.

The first thing which I can remember as an event in my philatelic career, was coming up our garden one summer's evening, and looking through the french window at my father seated at the table, working at his stamps, and I was tremendously impressed by a set of the large United States Newspaper stamps of the 1875 issue. Whether these were Originals or the *Facsimiles*, I cannot remember. There was also a large envelope with complete set of the first issue of Seychelles 1890, which must have been one of the first importations made by my father.

About this time I was attending the Grammar School at Aston, Birmingham, and I did a flourishing trade in cheap stamps, and also had sheets on commission at a well known Sweet Shop in Handsworth, and also in other parts of Birmingham.

Our business was founded by my father in the year 1891. Here is the preliminary circular.

6, Westminster Road,
Birmingham.
March 2nd, 1891.

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have this day joined the old-established firm of Cheveley & Co. as a dealer in Postage Stamps, Envelopes, Post Cards, etc, and trust I may be favoured with your support.

As a collector of many years' standing, and having been intimately associated with the late Mr. E. L. Pemberton in some of his most interesting researches, I may lay claim to a considerable knowledge of what is now recognised as the science of Philately. For a long time I have been in constant communication with my brother, Mr. A. H. Wilson (who has lately retired from business), on philatelic matters; and I have had the privilege of co-operating, as a Member of the London Philatelic Society, in its great work on the stamps of Oceania.

I am now disposing of my collection of Australian Stamps, and having devoted much attention to varieties of watermark, perforation, etc, I am in a position to satisfy the requirements of advanced collectors.

On these grounds I confidently appeal to you for a share of your patronage, and beg to assure you that any orders you may entrust to the new firm of Cheveley, Wilson & Co., shall be promptly executed to the best of their ability.

Yours faithfully,
W. T. WILSON.

I am permitted to give the names of the following well-known collectors as references—

The Earl of Kingston.	E. D. Bacon Esq.
T. K. Tapling Esq., M.P.	M. P. Castle Esq.
M. Barnett Esq.	Douglas Garth Esq.

It will be seen that my father's Sponsors were most of the leading British Philatelists of that period. He commenced in partnership with Mr. T. W. Cheveley,

A very early order for stamps!

the arrangement being that Cheveley carried on a Wholesale and Auctioneering business from 63 and 64, Chancery Lane, London, and my father had the Retail business at Handsworth. I am afraid they were not a very happy combination, as the two men were quite different in character and temperament. My recollections of Cheveley are that he was a very agreeable and kind-hearted man, but he certainly lacked philatelic acumen, as is evidenced by the following letter which he wrote to my father on the 23rd October, 1891. The first part of this letter referred to their ordinary business corespondence, the last paragraph reads as follows:—

"Enclosed block of 4 1d. English with Plate Letter "N" altered to "O" which may be of interest. We bought it this morning at Post Office in ordinary course. This was the Great Britain 1d. lilac Queen with the Control letter "N" barred out and "O" added, which is now catalogued at £25, and is about the rarest British Control.

My father telegraphed Cheveley to buy all he could get, but of course at the busy Holborn Post Office, a new Control was already in use, and Cheveley certainly missed a very good opportunity.

Now my father was quick, impatient and intolerant with other people who held different views to his own, and naturally he did not agree with Cheveley, so that the Partnership was soon dissolved, my father retaining the Retail business and Cheveley the Wholesale and Auctioneering.

Looking Backwards!, Part 1, page 1.

For some months Nicola and Mihaela of the Library and Research section have been most helpful assisting me in gathering information on these three gentlemen. WTW and AHW were brothers and FEW was the son of WTW. My connection is that AHW was my great-grandfather. Until earlier this year I was only aware of AHW and that he was a 'publisher' based in London before retiring to Ireland c1890. The existence of a brother and nephew and their involvement collectively in Philately were entirely new revelations (see individual biographies).

In that regard, Frank Ernest Wilson privately published a series of seven articles/pamphlets between 1941 and c.1960 entitled *Looking Backward! 50 Years of Philately: Philatelic and Travel Reminiscences*. These articles contain many details concerning their philatelic businesses, with whom they did business, their philatelic successes and failures, their associates and their travels to many Exhibitions in the UK, Europe and North America from c1880–1960. However, despite everyone's best endeavours to put together a complete run of these articles, this is still proving challenging.

According to Brian J Birch (2018) the pages of these articles were not numbered, so he applied sequential numbering to them. Based on his numbering of pages (shown in squared brackets), the following is a summary of what I have in my possession and what is missing:

Part 1: 4 pages, [1–4], published with WTW's 'Special Offers'. Status: Complete;
Part 2: 6 pages, [5–10], published with WTW's 'Special Offers'. Status: Incomplete, pages 6, 7 and 8 missing;
Part 3: 5 pages, [11–15], no publication details. Status: Incomplete, pages 14 and 15 missing
Part 4: 11 pages, [16–26], F E Wilson, Torquay. Status: Complete
Part 5: 12 pages, [27–38], F E Wilson, Torquay. Status: Incomplete, page 38 missing
Part 6: 8 pages, [39–46], F E Wilson, Torquay. Status: Incomplete, page 46 missing
Part 7: 6 pages, [47–52], Mrs M S Wilson, Torquay. Status: Complete

In addition, FEW used the diaries and records meticulously maintained by himself and his father to compile these articles, the last of which was published in 1960. As FEW and his wife had no family, the question arises as to where all these records went? Perhaps they remain in someone's possession?

I am appealing to readers of *The London Philatelist* for any help they can provide in locating these missing pages and records and any other material that may help in documenting their philatelic lives.

Brief biographies of the Three Wilsons

William Thomas Wilson (1848–1932)
Commenced stamp collecting as a schoolboy living Birmingham c1860. Formed a close lifelong friendship with Edward L. Pemberton from 1866 and became a trusted associate proof reading and editing many of his articles. First letter published in *The Stamp Collector's Magazine* 1868. Initially he was employed as a salesman in the 'brass' trade, working for the Patent Nut and Bolt Co. and later Evereds, both of Smethwick.

In 1891, after his brother AHW retired, he went into partnership with Thomas Cheveley, Stamp Auctioneer of London, forming Cheveley, Wilson and Co. which was dissolved in 1892. He then became a sole trader, W. T. Wilson of Birmingham. He was famous for his 'Wilson Covers'. He purchased the 'de Coppett' collection of Mexico in New York in 1893 which comprised 15,000 varieties. He was associated with many famous acquisitions, e.g. W. E. Williams/Mackwood/E. D. Bacon collection of 30,000 varieties, Charles J. Tyas, M. P. Castle, as well as being entrusted with the disposal of noted collectionssuch as that of Sir David Parks Masson. He authored and published *Postmarks of Mexico 1856–1872* in 1927. He was a lifelong member of the (R)PSL from 1882 and an early member of the Birmingham Philatelic Society, of which he was President between 1893 and 1900. He presented the RPSL Archives with E. L. Pemberton's Note Book for 1867–1872 in June 1929, inscribed 'E L Pemberton 167, 2 Walmer Terrace, Soho Hill.' His son, Frank Ernest Wilson, joined him in business in 1902.

Alexander Henry Wilson (1851–1925)
Like WTW, he began collecting stamps as a schoolboy living in Birmingham c1860. Guided and tutored by his elder brother, and through their close friendship with Edward L Pemberton, he became Pemberton's 'clerk' c1870 and accompanied him to the South of England until his death in 1878. In his mentor's memory, AHW established Pemberton Wilson and Co., London, and launched *The Philatelic Record* in 1879 with Maitland Burnett as editor.

He was elected to membership of the (R)PSL in 1878 and was appointed sole business agent from 1878–1890, for the sale of the Societies' publications, beginning with *Spain and Colonies*. Elected an Honorary Member in 1907. Regarded as Tapling's 'favourite dealer,' he was entrusted by T. K. Tapling with the purchase of the 'Caillebotte' collection in 1887. He purchased the collection of Maitland Burnett, the best to come on the market after 'Philbrick'. Following a very successful career, he sold his business to Theodore Buhl and Co., and his half-share in *The Philatelic Record* in 1890-91, and retired to Ireland.

Frank Ernest Wilson (1878–1960)
FEW was collecting and trading stamps as a schoolboy in Birmingham. His fluency in French and German, as a result of two years' schooling in Germany and Belgium, directly benefited his father's business even before he became a partner in 1902. He was an expert on the stamps of Belgium from an early age. His first job was to prepare the collection of a Liverpool collector, which included part of the Earl of Kingston's collection, for the 1897 London Philatelic Exhibition, and for whom he subsequently worked on further occasions. He published the monthly Journal of the Philatelic Society of India during WWII, and compiled *'Who was Who' in Philately*.

Trading as William T Wilson of Birmingham after his father's death, and later from Sutton Coldfield, he sold the business c.1940 and moved to Torquay, Devon. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery was bequeathed the T D F Evans collection in 1940, and it was valued by FEW who was then contracted to arrange 1,989 pages containing 43,950 stamps! He attended the Birmingham Philatelic Society Golden Jubilee Dinner in 1937. He authored/published 'Looking Backward!' in seven parts between 1941 and 1960 and the 'Letters of Edward Loines Pemberton' in *The Stamp Lover* in 1952.

De La Rue's Private Day Books

Peter Fernbank FRPSL

It is reasonably well known within philatelic research circles that when the De La Rue archives were dispersed in the 1970s the philatelic records went to the National Postal Museum in London (now the Postal Museum) whilst the non-philatelic records (with a few exceptions) went to Reading University, both holdings being on long-term loan from De La Rue.

De la Rue's Day Books, now housed at the Postal Museum in London, have become a primary source of philatelic information for those seeking to determine the details of what values were printed when and the number of stamps printed at each separate printing for the various colonial territories. Those initially dispersed to the Postal Museum run from Book A to Z, followed by Book AA to AO, the series covering 1857 up to 1938 This means that anyone seeking all the printings of a particular territory up to the early QEII issues would have to obtain the post-1938 printings from the Crown Agents' Requisition Registers at the British Library.

On a recent visit to Reading University (on a completely different topic) it was pointed out to me by a colleague beforehand that their on-line catalogue listed Day Books AP to AZ (Book AS was missing) and BA to BD, these covering the period 1938 to 1954 and being a continuation of the series held by the Postal Museum. In a perfect world these should be held in one location, the Postal Museum, and I have brought this anomaly to the attention of the relevant authorities in Reading, who are investigating the matter. There are a number of problems to be resolved before any physical movement of the anomalous volumes could take place.

It would seem that the series from 1938 to 1954 were a later dispersal of the remaining Day Books by De La Rue, possibly carried out by someone not familiar with what category of material to disperse to where. Curiously, the missing volume from Reading's holding, Day Book AS, turned up at the National Postal Museum, believed to be in the late 1990s.

In the meantime, the other volumes covering the period 1938 to 1954 reside in the De La Rue archive at the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading University, under the catalogue number MS 937 28/242-255.

How a Prize Helps Solve the Mystery of the 1764 Spanish Colonies Rates

Geoffrey Lewis RDP FRPSL

In 1764, postage rates were proclaimed for mail between Spain and its colonies. For many decades, there had been no postal charges on such mail.

The sender could pay for the postage, or the letter could be sent unpaid so that the addressee would pay the postal charge. Someone in Spain would pay the same rate for an outgoing letter and for an unpaid incoming letter of the same weight. Likewise, a person in the colonies would pay the same postage rate on an unpaid incoming letter from Spain, as on a prepaid letter to Spain. However, the rates payable domestically in Spain were quite different from the rates payable in the colonies.

The *real* was the unit of currency. In the colonies, the one-*real* coin was made of silver, and was 2½ times more valuable than the one-real coin used in Spain, which was made of the alloy vellon.

The regulations specified the postage rates for the first four weight steps (for letters weighing up to 1¼ oz). If the postage was paid in Spain, these four rates were 4, 9, 12 and 16 *vellon reales* (the plural of real). If paid in the colonies, the four rates were 3, 5, 7 and 10 silver *reales*. With the exchange rate of 2½, it was much cheaper to pay the postage in Spain for a letter of any weight, than to pay the postage in a colony.

In Spain, the postage fee for a double letter (9 reales) was more than twice that for a single letter (4 reales). However, in the colonies the double letter rate (5 reales) was less than twice the single rate (3 reales). The author has always been puzzled as to why rates were proclaimed with such obvious anomalies. Is it possible that there really was some good reason in 1764?

Section 3 of this article examines the surviving covers in philatelic hands sent from any of the colonies to Spain. The author knows of only eighteen covers in the period from 1764 to 1779, the year in which the rates were replaced. All these letters were single weight except for one.

Manuel Arango Echeverri (2020) described a large holding of letters mailed in Lima in 1779. These were carried by the ship *La Perla*, which was captured by the British as a prize on its way to Spain. The British National Archives retains this group, and there are approximately 1,500 items which have postal markings or rate marks applied by the Lima Post Office. The senders of some letters had paid postage. The majority were sent unpaid, and on each non-single letter the Lima Post Office wrote the postage amount due. The author was surprised that this was done, because it was in the different currency of reales vellon, and the Lima Post Office would never receive any share of these payments.

Section 6 looks again at the known covers, trying to determine whether each rate mark was written or stamped in a colony or in Spain. The author then realised that the mystery behind the 1764 rates was simple - no number was duplicated. In 1764 almost all Post Offices in colonies had no handstamps, and they would just write the rate number on the cover. Upon arrival in Spain, the post office would recognise by its number whether the letter had been paid or not.

It is important that the content of this article is available to a wider audience by being published in English in this journal. This article explains the rates on some of the earliest known international mail from a whole group of countries. It shows how the examination of mail in archives can assist the study of postal history.

1. Background

The Seven Years War of 1756 to 1763 was fought between Britain and France. Much of the fighting occurred in the Americas and to a lesser extent Asia. Consequently, there was a lot of fighting between ships of the two navies. There were frequent naval blockades, which severely disrupted all commercial shipping worldwide. France ultimately lost many colonies including Canada, Louisiana and some parts of India.

Spain was aligned with France and found it difficult to maintain contact with its colonies. From 1762 to 1763, Spain and Britain were at war. Havana was occupied by the British in 1762. Manila was occupied by the British from October 1762 to April 1764.

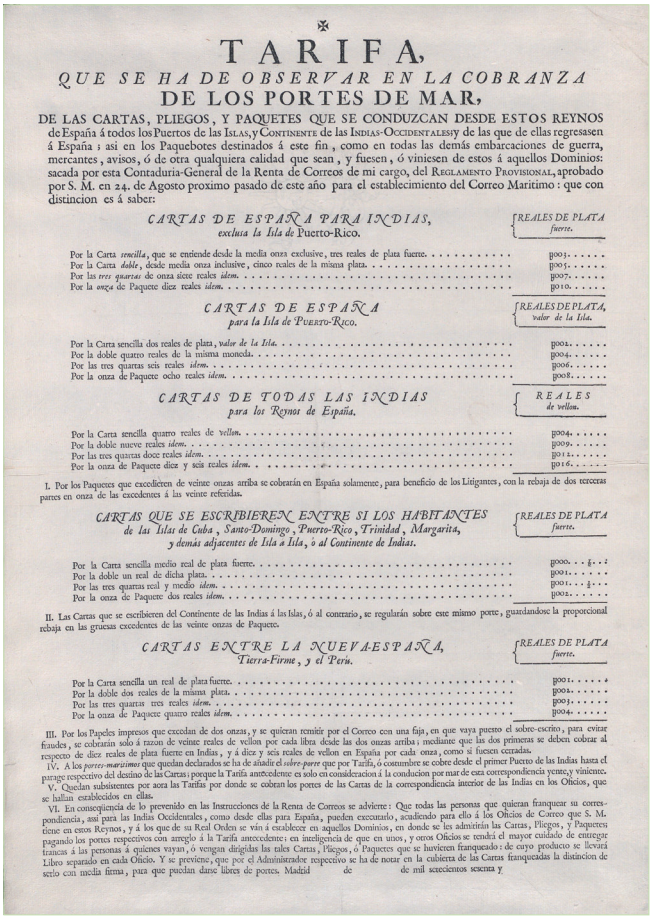
After the War had ended, Spain decided to improve its communication with its overseas colonies. It planned to establish a regular shipping service to its colonies. In 1764, the first line of ships sailed to Havana. In 1767, a new line of ships sailed to Buenos Aires.

It cost money to provide the shipping service. One way of offsetting some of the expense was to charge postage fees on letters carried between Spain and its colonies. Since 1720 there had been no postage charges for such letters. Herráiz (2015, p81) lists the rates operating between 1628 and 1720.

2. The 1764 rates

On 6 August 1764, King Carlos III signed a Royal Decree establishing a new packet service, the ***Correos Maritimos***, which could be translated to English as the 'Sea Post'. The regulations can be seen in Herráiz (2015, starting on pp81–84). José Antonio Herráiz has sent the author a 47-page manuscript copy of the complete regulations signed by the Marquis of Grimaldi, Spain's Secretary of State. This document is held at Sevilla in the Archive for the Americas (*Archivo General de Indias*). The Royal Decree is sometimes called the Royal Order.

The regulations specify the postage rates for various mail items, including letters sent between Spain and the colonies. Figure 1 shows a document which was prepared by Ayllon, a director of the Spanish Post Office. It lists the rates specified in the Royal Decree. This document was sent to post offices.



TARIFA,

QUE SE HA DE OBSERVAR EN LA COBRANZA DE LOS PORTES DE MAR,

DE LAS CARTAS, PLIEGOS, Y PAQUETES QUE SE CONDUZCAN DESDE ESTOS REYNOS de España á todos los Puertos de las Islas, y Continente de las Indias-Occidentales; y de las que de ellas regresasen á España; assi en los Paquebotes destinados á este fin, como en todas las demás embarcaciones de guerra, mercantes, avisos, ó de otra qualquiera calidad que sean, y fuesen, ó viniesen de estos á aquellos Dominios: sacada por esta Contaduria-General de la Renta de Correos de mi cargo, del Reglamento Provisional, aprobado por S. M. en 24. de Agosto proximo pasado de este año para el establecimiento del Correo Maritimo: que con distincion es á saber:

CARTAS DE ESPAÑA PARA INDIAS, exclusa la Isla de Puerto-Rico. — REALES DE PLATA fuerte.

Por la Carta *sencilla*, que se entiende desde la media onza exclusive, tres reales de plata fuerte. . . . . 0003.
Por la Carta *doble*, desde media onza inclusive, cinco reales de la misma plata. . . . . 0005.
Por las *tres quartas* de onza siete reales *idem*. . . . . 0007.
Por la *onza* de Paquete diez reales *idem*. . . . . 0010.

CARTAS DE ESPAÑA para la Isla de Puerto-Rico. — REALES DE PLATA, valor de la Isla.

Por la Carta sencilla dos reales de plata, *valor de la Isla*. . . . . 0002.
Por la doble quatro reales de la misma moneda. . . . . 0004.
Por las tres quartas seis reales *idem*. . . . . 0006.
Por la onza de Paquete ocho reales *idem*. . . . . 0008.

CARTAS DE TODAS LAS INDIAS para los Reynos de España. — REALES de vellon.

Por la Carta sencilla quatro reales de *vellon*. . . . . 0004.
Por la doble nueve reales *idem*. . . . . 0009.
Por las tres quartas doce reales *idem*. . . . . 0012.
Por la onza de Paquete diez y seis reales *idem*. . . . . 0016.

I. Por los Paquetes que excedieren de veinte onzas arriba se cobrarán en España solamente, para beneficio de los Litigantes, con la rebaja de dos terceras partes en onza de las excedentes á las veinte referidas.

CARTAS QUE SE ESCRIBIEREN ENTRE SI LOS HABITANTES de las Islas de Cuba, Santo-Domingo, Puerto-Rico, Trinidad, Margarita, y demás adjacentes de Isla a Isla, ó al Continente de Indias. — REALES DE PLATA fuerte.

Por la Carta sencilla medio real de plata fuerte. . . . . 0000. . . ½. . .
Por la doble un real de dicha plata. . . . . 0001. . . . . .
Por las tres quartas real y medio *idem*. . . . . 0001. . . ½. . .
Por la onza de Paquete dos reales *idem*. . . . . 0002. . . . . .

II. Las Cartas que se escribieren del Continente de las Indias á las Islas, ó al contrario, se regularán sobre este mismo porte, guardandose la proporcional rebaja en las gruesas excedentes de las veinte onzas de Paquete.

CARTAS ENTRE LA NUEVA-ESPAÑA, Tierra-Firme, y el Perú. — REALES DE PLATA fuerte.

Por la Carta sencilla un real de plata fuerte. . . . . 0001. . . . .
Por la doble dos reales de la misma plata. . . . . 0002. . . . .
Por las tres quartas tres reales *idem*. . . . . 0003. . . . . .
Por la onza de Paquete quatro reales *idem*. . . . . 0004. . . . . .

III. Por los Papeles impresos que excedan de dos onzas, y se quieran remitir por el Correo con una faja, en que vaya puesto el sobre-escrito, para evitar fraudes, se cobrarán solo á razon de veinte reales de vellon por cada libra desde las dos onzas arriba; mediante que las dos primeras se deben cobrar al respecto de diez reales de plata fuerte en Indias, y á diez y seis reales de vellon en España por cada onza, como si fuesen cerradas.

IV. A los *portes-maritimos* que quedan declarados se ha de añadir el *sobre-porte* que por Tarifa, ó contumbre se cobre desde el primer Puerto de las Indias hasta el parage respectivo del destino de las Cartas; porque la Tarifa antecedente es solo en consideracion á la conduccion por mar de esta correspondencia yente, y viniente.

V. Quedan subsistentes por aora las Tarifas por donde se cobran los portes de las Cartas de la correspondencia interior de las Indias en los Oficios, que se hallan establecidos en ellas.

VI. En consequencia de lo prevenido en las Instrucciones de la Renta de Correos se advierte: Que todas las personas que quieran franquear su correspondencia, assi para las Indias Occidentales, como desde ellas para España, pueden executarlo, añadiendo para ello á los Oficios de Correo que S. M. tiene en estos Reynos, y á los que de su Real Orden se van á establecer en aquellos Dominios, en donde se les admitirán las Cartas, Pliegos, y Paquetes; pagando los portes respectivos con arreglo á la Tarifa antecedente: en inteligencia de que en unos, y otros Oficios se tendrá el mayor cuidado de entregar francas á las personas á quienes vayan, ó vengan dirigidas las tales Cartas, Pliegos, ó Paquetes que se huvieren franqueado: de cuyo producto se llevará Libro separado en cada Oficio. Y se previene, que por el Administrador respectivo se ha de notar en la cubierta de las Cartas franqueadas la distincion de sello con media firma, para que puedan darse libres de portes. Madrid de de mil setecientos sesenta y

Figure 1. Announcement of the new 1764 rates for maritime mail. This was distributed to post offices.

i. Letter units

Rates were listed for four weight units. In Figure 1, for each type of rate, there are four separate lines corresponding to the actual amount for each weight unit. The descriptions of the four units are:

- Single: less than half ounce.
- Double: any letter from half ounce inclusive.
- Three-quarters of an ounce.
- One ounce.

The precise rules for the letter units were not explicitly stated except for single letters. I believe the rates for letters weighing half an ounce or more, were as follows. Each step included all letters whose weight was in a range of a quarter of an ounce. A letter with a weight that was a precise number of quarter-ounces was included in the higher step. For example, the third unit included letters weighing at least ¾ oz but less than one ounce, and the fourth unit included letters weighing at least one ounce but less than 1¼ oz.

ii. Two currencies

The Spanish Colonies used coins made of silver. These were more valuable than the coins used in Spain, which were made of an alloy called vellon. In the Colonies the unit of currency was called the *real plata* ('silver real') or sometimes *real fuerte* ('strong real'). It was worth 2½ times more than the Spanish currency called the *real vellon* ('RV').

Any letter sent between Spain and its colonies could be paid either by the sender or the receiver. If paid in Spain the postage rate was expressed in reales de vellon, but if paid in the Colonies the rates were in *reales plata* (RP).

Why did the colonies have a more valuable currency than Spain? It was because of the silver mines at Potosi in current-day Bolivia. This was the most productive silver mine ever known.

iii. The rates

There were two sets of rates depending on the currency. For each set of rates, the Royal Order listed four values corresponding to the four basic letter units.
For mail between Spain and the Colonies the rates were:

Place of payment	Currency	Single	Double	Three-quarters	Ounce
Colonies	Real Plata	3	5	7	10
Spain	Real Vellon	4	9	12	16

Several times throughout this article, I want to refer to a sequence of four rates. I will use the notation {RP:3 – 5 – 7 – 10} and {RV:4 – 9 – 12 – 16}, where the currency is abbreviated to 'RP' or 'RV'. There are three anomalies in these rate sequences:

1. They are not consistent with the exchange rate. One real plata was 2½ reales de vellon.
2. If paid in the colonies, the cost of a double letter (5) was *less than* twice the cost of a single letter (3). If paid in Spain, the cost of a double letter (9) was *more than* twice the cost of a single letter (4).
3. Why not use the standard sequence {RV:4 – 8 – 12 – 16}, where every step increases by the same amount?

iv. My interest

I have been fascinated with these 1764 rates since 1990 when I was collecting Philippines postal history. The earliest postage rates on mail from the Philippines were the 1764 rates. As a mathematician, I was puzzled by the anomalies in the rate sequences. I always wondered if there was some rationale to this choice of rates. A few years later, I extended my interest to pre-adhesive mail to Spain from anywhere, but particularly to letters from Spanish colonies to Spain.

For over 30 years I have looked through all available sources such as auctions, dealer stocks, books and articles, and collections at exhibitions. I have now located a grand total of only 18 covers from all the colonies to Spain, posted before the next rate started on 1 September 1779. When several of these covers reached Spain, the new rates were in effect.

v. The rates of 1779

There were different rates for different colonies, recognising the higher cost for transport to/from more distant colonies. The new rates only affected postage fees paid in Spain, either for an unpaid letter from a colony to Spain, or for a paid letter from Spain to a colony. The colonies continued to charge the 1764 rates on letters paid there.

The new rates commenced on 1 September 1779. Because the payment was collected in Spain, all rates were in the Spanish currency, reales vellon. The units were weight-based, where one ounce was divided into 16 *adarmes*. A single letter was up to 5 *adarmes*. Higher weight letter units were in 2-*adarme* weight intervals.

The colonies were divided into nine postal groups or demarcation zones. A letter from a colony was to be struck with a handstamp indicating the postal demarcation. If an unmarked letter arrived in Spain, the Post Office at the arrival port, usually Cadiz or Corunna, would stamp it with the name of the zone.

Demarcation	Includes	Single letter	Ounce letter
Islas de Barlovento	Cuba, Puerto Rico	4	16
Caracas	Venezuela	4	16
Nueva España	Mexico	6	24
Guatemala		6	24
Santa Fe	Colombia	6	24
Buenos Aires	Argentina, Uruguay	6	24
Peru		7	28
Chile		7	28
Filipinas	Philippines	7	28

There are many cases where different demarcations have the same set of rates. This system was structured in such a way that it could be possible that in the future, these specified demarcations could have rates different from each other.

3. Known covers sent from the colonies to Spain during the period of the 1764 Rates

I have records of 18 covers. This section contains a description of each cover. Later sections will refer to these covers, so I will reference each cover with a two-part numbering system. The first number refers to the originating colony, and the second is a sequential number. For example, all covers from Argentina are in the third group, so are numbered as C3.1, C3.2, C3.3, and so on.

One of the major goals of this article is to explore whether each rate mark was applied in Spain or in the colony. For the rate marks relating to the carriage from the colony to Spain, this section will only describe the mark, while Section 6 will analyse where the mark was applied. A few rate marks relate to other segments of a cover's journey, and these rates will be explained in this section.

Spain and Spanish writers of the eighteenth century followed some general rules when abbreviating words. The first one or more letters of the word were written, followed by a superscript writing of the last one or more letters. Manuscript rate markings for 'reales' were abbreviated in two ways.

- After the numeral the abbreviation is 'r' with a superscript 's'. This is referred to as '4 r^{s}', as in Cover C1.1 (in Figure 2).
- Before the numeral the letter 'r' is written. This is referred to as 'r6' as in Cover C3.4 (Figure 8). This looks like the letter 'n'.

Several covers have a hand-stamp 'YNDIAS'. This is the Spanish word for the Americas.

Some covers went via Spain to their destinations at Rome and Genoa. Spain had post offices in both these cities.

I have not considered letters between the Canary Islands and Spain. There was a 1762 decree specifying the rates for such mail, and all rates were in reales de vellon.

i. Covers from Mexico

Cover C1.1. See Figure 2. Veracruz to Deba (or Deva), a town in the Spanish province of Guipuzcao. Dated 8 January 1770. Inscribed 'via San Sebastian'. Black YNDIAS. Rate Mark 1: 'Vale 4 r^{s} de V^{n}' (4 reales vellon). Rate Mark 2: Manuscript 4 r^{s}, situated to the left of 'D' for Deba.

ii. Covers from Cuba

Cover C2.1. See Figure 3. Havana to Barcelona. 11 October 1773. Red 'YNDIAS' applied at Cadiz. Rate Mark 1: Handstamp '4' in red. Rate Mark 2: Manuscript 'r5'.

Cover C2.2. See Figure 4. Havana to Genoa in Italy. 27 August 1775. Red YNDIAS as on Cover C2.1. Black M on reverse, as part of the M and crown stamped at Madrid. Rate Mark 1: Handstamp 4 in red. At the top right corner is a Genoa manuscript rate mark '£1:18' for 1 lira 18 soldi, the single rate from Madrid to Genoa.



Figure 2. Cover C1.1. Veracruz to Deba in Spain, 1770. Two manuscript notations of 4 reales.



Figure 3. Cover C2.1. Havana to Barcelona, 1773. Handstamp '4'. Manuscript 5 reales.



Figure 4. Cover C2.2. Havana to Genoa in Italy, 1775. Handstamp '4'.

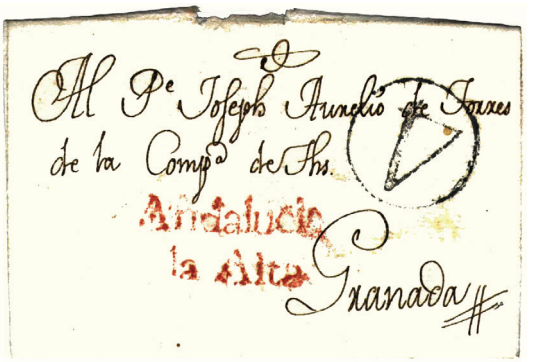


Figure 5. Cover C3.1. Cordoba du Tucuman in Argentina to Granada, 1764. '4' in a circle.

iii. Covers from Argentina

Cover C3.1. See Figure 5. Cordoba du Tucuman to Granada. 31 October 1764. Red 'Andalucia la Alta' of Cadiz. Rate Mark 1: Black '4' in a circle.

Cover C3.2. See Figure 6. Buenos Aires to Cadiz. 21 March 1767. The first postal mark is the black 'PORTVGAL' applied at Badajoz, the Spanish town near the border with Portugal. This letter was carried by ship to Portugal, probably landing at Lisbon. It was then carried overland via Badajoz to Cadiz. Red 'YNDIAS' of Cadiz. Rate Mark 1: Red '4 R^{S}' mark. The letter was then turned inside out, and mailed to the town of Eybar. There is a red 'ANDALUCIA ALTA' of Cadiz, and a manuscript '5' for the Spanish internal rate of 5 cuartos from Cadiz to Eybar.



Figure 6. Cover C3.2. Buenos Aires to Cadiz, 1767. 'PORTVGAL'. 4 reales.



Figure 7. Cover C3.3. Buenos Aires to Sevilla, 1775. Handstruck '4 RS' in rectangle, struck twice. A much taller '4' followed by a smaller 'R'.

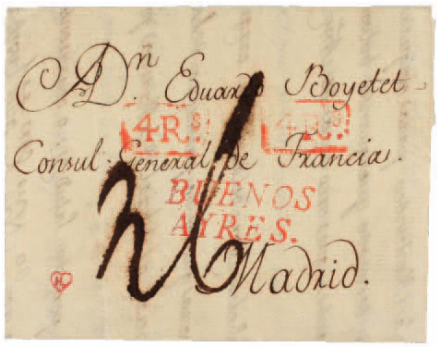


Figure 8. Cover C3.4. Buenos Aires to Madrid, 1779. Handstruck '4 RS' in rectangle, struck twice. Manuscript 6 reales.



Figure 9. Cover C3.5. Buenos Aires to Madrid, undated. 12 reales.

Cover C3.3. See Figure 7. Buenos Aires to Sevilla. 1775. There is a Buenos Aires mark inscribed 'B^{S}. AIR.^{S}'. Rate Mark 1: Handstruck '4 R^{S}' in rectangle, struck twice. Rate Mark 2: A much taller handstruck '4' followed by a smaller 'R'.

Cover C3.4. See Figure 8. Buenos Aires to Madrid. 6 August 1779. Red 'BUENOS AYRES'. Rate Mark 1: Red handstruck '4 R^{S}' in rectangle, struck twice. Rate Mark 2: Manuscript 'r6'.

Cover C3.5. See Figure 9. Buenos Aires to Madrid. Undated. Red 'YNDIAS'. Rate Mark 1: Red handstruck '1', '2' and 'R' for 12 *reales*.



Figure 10. Cover C4.1. Peru to Cadiz, 1766. Inscribed 'por Panama'. Manuscript '4'.

iv. Covers from Peru

Cover C4.1. See Figure 10. Peru to Cadiz. 1766. Black handstamp PERÙ. Inscribed 'por Panama'. This routing refers to one of several routes from Peru to Spain – by sea to Panama, overland to Portobelo, by ship to Spain probably via Havana. Rate Mark 1: Manuscript '4'.



Figure 11. Cover C5.1. Santiago de Chile to Vitoria, undated. Handstruck '4 RS' in rectangle. Manuscript 6 reales.

v. Covers from Chile

Cover C5.1. (Figure 11.) Santiago de Chile to Vitoria. Undated, but probably 1779. Red handstamp 'CHYLE'. Rate Mark 1: Red handstruck '4 R^{S}' in rectangle. Rate Mark 2: Manuscript '6 r^{s}' for 6 reales.

vi. Covers from the Philippines

Cover C6.1. (Figure 12.) Manila to Rome. 30 December 1775. Red 'ANDALUCIA ALTA' of Cadiz. Rate Mark 1: Manuscript '3'.

Cover C6.2. (Figure 13.) Manila to Rome. 6 July 1778. Rate Mark 1: Manuscript '3'.

Cover C6.3. (Figure 14.) Manila to Rome. 2 August 1776. Red two-lined 'MA / NILA' in oval. Rate Mark 1: Manuscript '3'. Rate Mark 2: Red ornate handstamp inscribed '4.U'.

Cover C6.4. (Figure 15.) Manila to Rome. Undated, probably 1778 or 1779. Red two-lined 'MA / NILA' in oval. Rate Mark 1: Manuscript '3'. Rate Mark 2: Red ornate handstamp inscribed '4.U'. Rate Mark '3': Red handstamp '7R'.



Figure 12. Cover C6.1. Manila to Rome, 1775. 'ANDALUCIA ALTA' of Cadiz. Manuscript '3'.

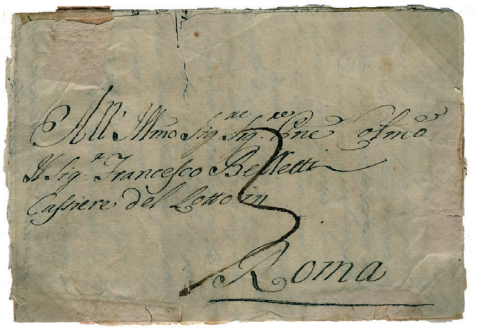


Figure 13. Cover C6.2. Manila to Rome, 1778. Manuscript '3'.



Figure 14. Cover C6.3. Manila to Rome, 1776. Manuscript 3. Ornate handstamp inscribed '4.U.'



Figure 15. Cover C6.4. Manila to Rome, undated. Manuscript 3. Ornate handstamp inscribed '4.U.' Handstamp '7R'.

Cover C6.5. Manila to Rome. Identical markings to Cover C6.1. 8 February 1776.

Cover C6.6. Manila to Rome. Undated, probably 1778 or 1779. Identical markings to Cover C6.4. George Alevizos, Lot 875, September 2005 auction.

All these covers from the Philippines are from the one correspondence from Niccolo Belletti to his brother Francesco in Rome. There were two routes from Manila to Spain. One was by the Galleon sailing across the Pacific to Acapulco, then overland across Mexico to Veracruz, and then by Spanish ship.

Because of prevailing winds, ships left Manila for Acapulco in the months of May to September. The other route around Cape of Good Hope, had not been used by Spain because of fear of attack by British or Dutch ships. In the peace after the Seven Years War, this route was used by Spanish naval frigates, the first being the 64-gun *Buen Consejo* in 1766.

For the Indian Ocean route, ships left Manila in the months of October to April to avoid monsoons. The month of departure on a Manila letter is the best way to determine its route. (Peterson & Lewis, 2000, Chapter II).

vii. Covers of unknown origin

Cover C7.1. (Figure 16 for the front and reverse.) To Cadiz. 1767. Red 'YNDIAS'. Red MARZO. Red framed '1767'. Rate Mark 1: Manuscript '4'.

Cover C7.2. (Figure 17.) To Cadiz. Black 'YNDIAS'. Rate Mark 1: Manuscript '4'.



Figure 16. Cover C7.1. (Left: cover front) Unknown origin to Cadiz, arriving March 1767. 'YNDIAS', 'MARZO'. (Right: reverse) Manuscript '4', framed ;1767'.



Figure 17. Cover C7.2. Unknown origin to Cadiz, undated. Black 'YNDIAS'. Manuscript '4'.

Both these covers are addressed to the same person, Joseph de Roxas in Cadiz. Both address him as captain of a ship of the Royal Navy (Capitan de Navio de la Real Armada). The two covers have quite different handwriting, as can be seen by looking at the 'd' and 'z' in 'Cadiz'.

From the early 1750s until 1767, Cadiz stamped the date of arrival on some incoming letters with postage owing from foreign places. Most surviving examples are on letters from Genoa to Cadiz. Two marks were used to denote the date, both with the same ink. The name of the month was stamped on the obverse, and a framed rectangular mark incorporating the year on the reverse.

Cover C7.1 is stamped this way with 1767 on the reverse, and 'MARZO' (Spanish for 'March') on the front, both in the same red ink. Cover C7.2 does not have any date mark, suggesting it arrived in Cadiz in 1768 or later.

On Cover C7.1, 'YNDIAS' is stamped in a different red ink from the two Cadiz date marks, so was done at the origin. Kouri (2019, page 22) describes the distribution of ten examples of this 'YNDIAS' device to Havana and other Spanish ports in the Caribbean. This letter was sent from one of these cities. This example is earlier than any listed in Kouri's article. Cover C7.2 was also stamped with one of these devices, possibly at a different city, because the 'YNDIAS' mark is black, and the sender's handwriting is different.

4. The Voyage of *La Perla*

The frigate *La Perla* (Spanish for 'The Pearl') sailed out of Callao, the port of Lima, on 12 May 1779 under the command of its captain Joseph Perez del Muente. The bulk of its cargo was agricultural produce like fruits, cocoa and quinine (Spanish *cascarilla*). It also carried some gold and silver as well as mail. It sailed south down the coast of South America. The voyage round Cape Horn was much easier from the Pacific to the Atlantic, because of the strong prevailing westerly winds of the Roaring Forties. When the ship approached the Azores Islands on 29 October 1779, it was attacked and captured by two private British ships, *Sprightly* and *Shark,* under the command of James Bett and William Waring respectively.

As part of the War of American Independence, France became involved on the side of the Americans, so Britain and France were at war again. Being an ally of France, Spain declared war on Britain on 22 June 1779. This happened during the voyage of *La Perla*, so its captain and crew were unaware that their country was at war with Britain. If they had known, they would have taken more steps to avoid capture. They almost certainly would have thrown the mail overboard. *La Perla* was sailed to the port of Falmouth in England, where a Prize Court was held.

'Prize' was the term used to describe a ship and its cargo captured during armed conflict. A Prize Court would determine whether the capture was done legally according to various rules. The captain and crew of the British ships received a share of the value of the prize. Britain retained possession of any mail captured, including the mail carried by *La Perla*. Such mail is now deposited in the National Archives at its location in Kew Gardens, in suburban London.

5. The mail carried by *La Perla*

The archive contains approximately 1,500 items of mail from the Lima Post Office carried by *La Perla*. This is an extraordinary quantity, particularly as I have located a mere 18 covers from all Spanish colonies to Spain during the 15-year period of the 1764 rates.

Some of the larger mail packages contained various folded letters, which were intended to be mailed in Spain by the recipient of the package. In the Archives, these internal letters were often separated from the original package wrapper. I will use the term 'non-postal letters' for those without any postal markings.

i. Three studies of the *La Perla* mail

Manuel Arango Echevarria from Bogota, Colombia, is a member of the Royal Hispanic Academy of Philately and Postal History (Real Academia Hispánica de Filatelia e Historia Postal). He went to London in 2018 to study the mail of various Spanish prizes. The *La Perla* mail was by far the largest of these holdings. In 2020, he published a detailed report of what he found. He spent two weeks in the building, and took excellent photos of all items. Scanning was not allowed, as it might cause damage. I have been in correspondence with Manuel, and thank him for sharing with me his photographs, and his experience.

The Prize Court in 1779 did an examination of the mail carried by *La Perla*. A consecutive number from 1 to 1993 was written in ink on every item, whether it was a letter with postal markings or a non-postal letter. The Prize Court tabulated how many items were addressed to each location.

Professor Xabier Lamikiz (2010) studied the mail extensively. He was particularly interested in the merchants involved in Spain's mercantile trade with its colonies. Lima and Cadiz each had many hundreds of active merchants. The content of the letters gave him many insights into the people involved in this trade, and he studied the non-postal letters just as thoroughly as the postal letters. I was very interested to learn of the importance of people from the Basque area. A significant proportion of the merchants of Cadiz in the south of Spain, came from the Basque region far away in the north of Spain.

ii. Broad description of the mail

From a philatelic viewpoint, there is a lot of duplication. Almost all the items originated at Lima. All were written within weeks of the departure of *La Perla*, from late March until 10 May 1779. Cadiz was the most frequent destination, followed by Madrid, so that three-quarters were addressed to these two cities. Most others were addressed to different parts of Spain.

The condition varies. Although most items are in very good condition, there are quite a few that have been damaged. This is particularly the case for the outer wrappers of heavier items, which were opened by the Prize Court.

In this article, I illustrate ten letters carried by *La Perla* (Figures 18–27). In describing various characteristics of *La Perla* letters, I can refer to one or other of these Figures.

The original numbering from 1 to 1993 was done in 1779. Some numbers were written on two items such as '399A' and '399B'. Arango could not find items for more than a hundred numbers. Usually, the number was written in the upper right corner such as '32' on Figure 20, and '335' on Figure 22. On the cover in Figure 19 the number '1046' is written over the 'FRANCA' mark. Sometimes the number was written on the reverse, like '685' on Figure 18.

In 2014, the National Archive extended this sequence to 2111 for papers which had never been numbered, or which had been separated from a numbered item. These later numbers were written in pencil, the number being enclosed in square brackets, for example '[1994]'.



Figure 18. 'LIMA'. 'FRANCA'. '5 de Pta' on reverse.

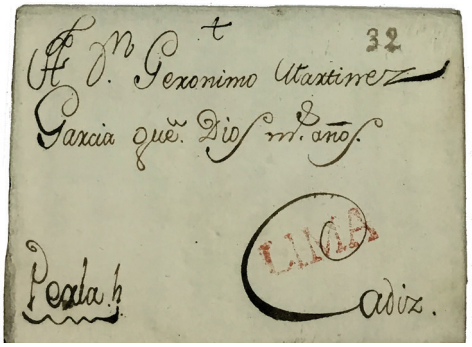


Figure 20. LIMA. No rate mark, so single letter.



Figure 19. 'LIMA'. 'FRANCA'. '20' on the reverse.

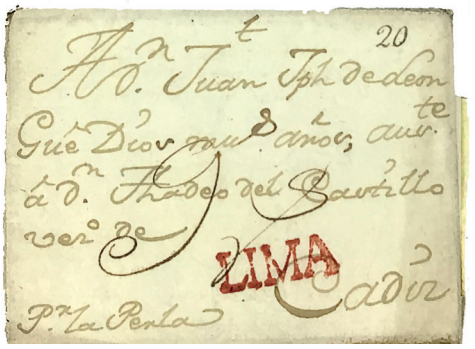


Figure 21. LIMA. 9 reales.



Figure 22. LIMA. 12 reales.

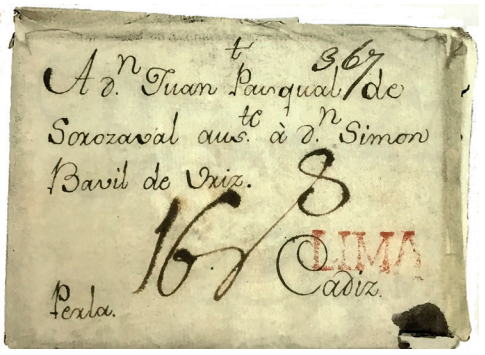


Figure 23. LIMA. 16 reales.

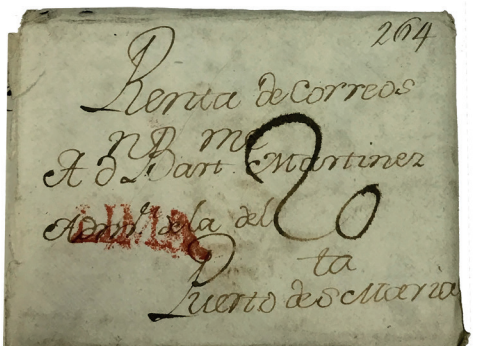


Figure 24. LIMA. 20 reales.



Figure 25. LIMA. 24 reales.

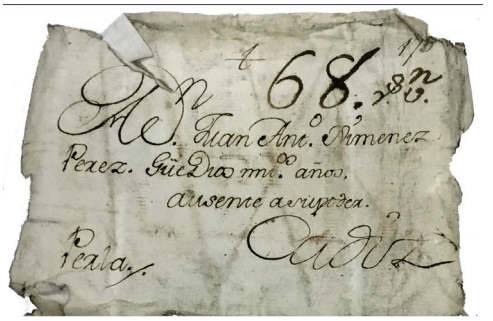


Figure 26. '68 rs vn'. Without 'LIMA'.

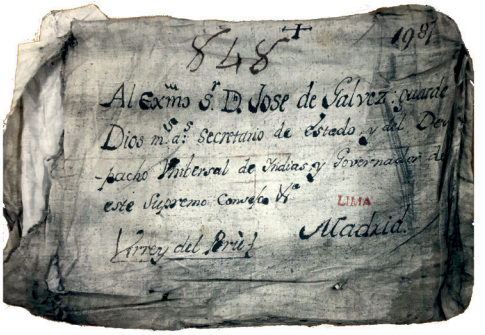


Figure 27. 'LIMA'. '848'. Weight of 53 oz.

iii. All mail originates from Lima

Arango examined every item that went through the mail, and all were marked and/or rated at the Lima Post Office. Except for some redirected covers (discussed below), he concluded that all items originated in Lima.

Lima was the wealthiest city in the Spanish colonial empire. It is reasonable to expect that the majority of letters originated from the capital. However, there were other cities and towns elsewhere in Peru which had post offices.

Lamikiz concluded that 98% of the *La Perla* items had been sent from Lima. He stated that the remaining 2% were from Callao, Arequipa, Valparaiso, Lambayeque, Jauja and Cañete. Arango would certainly have reported any letter with a postal marking from these places.

I can think of two possible reasons for this apparent discrepancy. Lamikiz was primarily concerned with the internal contents of the letters. Firstly, he would have read the contents of the non-postal letters, and some of these may have been written in these other places, and sent to someone in Lima for forwarding to Spain. The second reason is that the port of Callao did not have a post office in 1779, so any letter written there had to be taken the very short distance to the Lima Post Office for processing.

iv. Redirected covers

There are several covers which were addressed to Lima, but the addressee had since departed for Spain, so they were redirected at Lima. One was from the Peruvian town of Cuzco and has 'CUZCO' and 'FRANCA' marks in black, and at Lima it was redirected to Spain and stamped with a red 'PERÙ' mark of Lima. One letter originally from Spain was unpaid, and it was stamped with the 'LIMA' mark. The other letters originally from Spain had been sent prepaid, and these were stamped with the red 'PERÙ' mark. These covers are described and illustrated by Arango on pages 63–67.

v. Certified letters

There are certified letters which are stamped with 'CERTIFICACION A LIMA' in red. The previous earliest recorded date of this mark was 1796. Postage had been prepaid on these. These are discussed by Arango on pages 60–63.

vi. Letters to foreign destinations

Lamikiz states that there were letters addressed to eight destinations outside of Spain. The number of letters to each destination is shown in brackets: Rome (12), Genoa (3), Bayonne France (3), Paris (2), Auch, France (1), Asparren, France (1), Lisbon (1) and London (1). It is very likely that this information came from the 1779 tabulation of destinations.

It is not surprising that Rome and Genoa are destinations, as we have seen letters to these destinations in Section 3. Arango illustrates two letters to Rome – one is postal (p75) while the other is non-postal addressed to Pope Pius VI (p73).

Lamikiz (p101) states that the Prize Court distributed nine letters to their destinations. Surely the letter to London would have been sent on. Similarly, the letter to Lisbon, in England's ally Portugal. The remaining seven letters are likely to be the seven addressed to France. That would explain why Arango did not refer to letters addressed to these nations.

vii. How many letters have postal marks?

José Antonio Pando, the director of the Lima Post Office, prepared an official document (Arango, p51) giving statistics on the number of letters to be sent with *La Perla*. A second document (Arango, p52) summarised some additional letters. These documents give the number of letters and the postage cost for both paid and unpaid letters. There are totals for single, double, triple and other letters. There is also a dissection by destination: Cadiz, Madrid and other.

According to Pando's two documents, there was a total of 1503 mail items despatched by *La Perla*. Of these, six were certified, 242 were sent with postage paid and 1,255 letters unpaid. Lamikiz reported that there were 1,529 mail items. Arango found only 1,462 postal items.

viii. Letters with postage paid

These are easily identified. They are struck in red with 'LIMA' and 'FRANCA' (the Spanish word for 'paid'). The amount paid was written on only five covers, all on the reverse. The rates written are 5, 15, 20 (two instances) and 25. Figure 18 shows a cover with '5 de p^{ta}', with plata abbreviated. Two others have the rate written in this style. Two covers just have a number written on the reverse, like '20' in Figure 19.

Many of the paid covers without rates are very definitely not single. So, in May 1779, Lima stamped all prepaid letters with 'FRANCA', and usually did not write the amount of payment on the cover.

ix. Unpaid letters

All were stamped with 'LIMA', with the sole exception of the cover in Figure 26. Single letters have no amount written, such as Figure 20. Every other letter has the amount written on the obverse. The most common rates are:

- 9 *reales* for a double letter (Figure 21).
- 12 *reales* for a triple letter between ¾ and 1 oz (Figure 22).
- 16 *reales* for a letter weighing one to 1¼ oz (Figure 23).
- 20 *reales* for a letter weighing 1¼ to 1½ oz (Figure 24).
- 24 *reales* for a letter 1½ to 1¾ oz (Figure 25).

Many other higher rates are present. Figure 26 shows a cover rated 68 reales for 4¼ to 4½ oz. The two highest rates are both addressed to the same address in Madrid. These are the outer covers which each contained a large stack of reports and other documents. One of these was rated 416 reales for a 26 oz sending. Figure 27 was rated at 848 reales for a 53 oz package. James Grimwood-Taylor (2020, pp75–84) lists the highest recorded postage rates on pre-1840 mail to, from and within Britain. The two heaviest items weighed 83½ and 23 oz. These two items from *La Perla* are each heavier than every recorded surviving British mail item but one.

Except for the 9 reales rate for double letters, all rates are divisible by four. Lima rated these covers at 4 reales per ¼ oz of the lower boundary of the weight step. On a majority of these unpaid letters, the rate is just written as a number as can be seen in Figures 22, 24, 25 and 27. On the other covers, the rate is written as a number followed by 'r^{s}' for *reales*, as can be seen in Figures 21 and 23. Figure 26 is very interesting because the number, '68', is followed by 'r^{s} v^{n}' for *reales vellon*.

The author was genuinely surprised that there was a systematic practice of writing the amount to be collected on every unpaid non-single letter to Spain. Why should Lima Post Office write these amounts when (1) it had no control over collecting the postage fees; (2) it would not receive any money from their collection in Spain; and (3) the amounts were in a foreign currency?

x. What if La Perla had arrived safely in Cadiz?

The arrival date would have been after 1 September 1779, so the new rates in Spain were in force. Paid letters would be delivered without any further charges.

The Cadiz Post Office would have written the new rate on unpaid letters. The 'LIMA' mark without the 'FRANCA' mark was sufficient to recognise unpaid letters. The minimum amount was 7 *reales (vellon)* for letters from the Peru postal demarcation. Because the weight steps in the 1779 rates were 2 *adarmes* (one-eighth of an ounce), there would be some letters that were single under the 1764 rules, but not single under the 1779 rules.

The cover in Figure 26 had no 'LIMA' mark, so it would have been stamped with a PERU mark to indicate its origin. Its weight was 4¼ oz. The new rate was 28 *reales* per complete ounce (so four times 28) plus 7 *reales* for the extra ¼ oz, a total postage fee of 119 *reales vellon*.

6. Analysis of the rate marks on the covers to Spain

This section will analyse the rate marks on the 18 known covers from Spain's colonies, in the light of the study of the *La Perla* correspondence.

i. Unpaid letters arriving during period of 1779 rates

We will first examine the unpaid letters which arrived in Spain on or after 1 September 1779. These were probably mailed from the colony in 1779, but letters from the Philippines, the most remote colony, may have been despatched in an earlier year. The 1779 rates were described at the end of Section 2. If an unpaid letter arrived in Spain on or after 1 September 1779, the new rate was written at the Spanish entry port. The rate depended on which of the nine postal demarcation zones the letter had come from.

Spanish internal postage rates were usually expressed in cuartos, and the practice was to simply write the number without indicating the denomination of *cuartos*. Any Spanish postal charge expressed in any other currency unit needed to have some abbreviation for that denomination. The rates on mail from Spanish colonies were expressed in *reales de vellon*. There were two ways of writing this denomination in manuscript (1) 'r^{s}' after the number or (2) 'r' before the number. There were 8½ *cuartos* in one *real de vellon*.

Cover C3.4 from Buenos Aires (Figure 8). There is a manuscript mark of 6 *reales*, the correct 1779 rate for a single unpaid letter from this origin. Consequently, we can conclude that the handstruck '4 R^{S}' in rectangle was applied in Buenos Aires.

Cover C5.1 from Santiago de Chile (Figure 11). It was stamped with the mark CHYLE at origin. It appears that Chile only stamped an unpaid single letter with the place of origin, the same way that Lima did in the *La Perla* archive. The letter was carried overland to Buenos Aires, where it was stamped with the '4 R^{S}' in rectangle. When it arrived in Spain with other mail from Buenos Aires it was rated at 6 *reales*, the rate from Buenos Aires. The lucky recipient saved one *real*, as the 1779 single rate from Chile was 7 *reales*.

Cover C6.4 from Manila (Figure 15). Also Cover C6.6 with identical markings. Upon arrival in Spain, these letters were rated as 7 reales, the single rate from the Philippines. This means that the ornate '4.U' handstamp was applied at the origin in Manila. It referred to the rate of 4 *reales vellon*, for an unpaid letter. Although the character looks like 'U', it is actually 'V' for *vellon*. In Spain the characters 'U' and 'V' were used with some interchangeability, as can be seen in the PORTVGAL mark on Cover C3.2.

ii. The same marks used on other unpaid letters

Cover C3.3 from Buenos Aires (Figure 7). This has two different marks of 4 reales. The discussion of Cover C3.4 above shows that the framed mark was applied at Buenos Aires. The other mark was applied in Spain.

Cover C6.3 from Manila (Figure 14). The ornate mark was applied in Manila, as per the analysis of Cover C6.4. It was indeed inscribed '4.V' for the rate of 4 *reales de vellon*.

iii. 'Vellon' specified in the rate mark

If an abbreviation for *vellon* appears in the rate mark, then this was done in a colony in order to distinguish whether the *real* was *plata* or *vellon*. We have seen this for the ornate Philippines mark on Covers C6.3 and C6.4.

Cover C1.1 (Figure 2) written at Veracruz. It has two manuscript marks for 4 reales. The 'Vale 4 r^{s} de V^{n}' was written by the Veracruz Post Office. The '4 r^{s}' was written in Spain.

iv. Letter sent via Portugal

Cover C3.2 (Figure 6) written at Buenos Aires. Its first mark is the 'PORTVGAL' applied at Badajoz when entering Spain. It is likely to have been carried by a Portuguese ship to Lisbon. Somehow, Cadiz recognised that the cover was from a Spanish colony in the Americas, so stamped it with 'YNDIAS', and correctly rated the postage due as 4 reales.

v. Another letter leaving Buenos Aires without postal markings

Cover C3.5 (Figure 9) is from Buenos Aires. Like Cover C3.2 it had no postal marks until it arrived in Spain. Upon arrival, it was stamped with 'YNDIAS' to indicate the origin. It has the rate of 12 *reales* for a triple rate letter weighing ¾ to 1 oz. Of all the known covers in philatelic hands carried under the 1764 rates, this is the only one which was not a single letter. A triple letter seemed very heavy, until we saw the abundance of heavy letters carried by *La Perla*.

vi. The remaining covers

There are nine remaining covers. Covers C2.1, C2.2, C3.1, C4.1, C7.1 and C7.2 all have a rate mark of '4', either manuscript or handstamp. Covers C6.1, C6.2 and C6.5 all have a manuscript '3'. In all these cases there is no specific indication of *vellon* or *plata*. '4' is the rate for a single unpaid letter, and '3' is the rate for a single paid letter. These are the two basic rates, so no other notation was needed.

vii. Covers with manuscript '3'

All the covers with the manuscript '3' were sent from Manila to Rome. When this article was sent for review, members of the Academvs' editorial board felt that '3' may have been written in Rome. They consulted Italian colleagues, who confirmed that 3 baiocchi was the internal rate for a letter in Rome.

The author has two covers of the same period from Manila to Rome carried by French ships. They do not have the manuscript '3'. They were carried by French ships, so were not processed by the Manila Post Office. Upon arrival in France, they were stamped with French postal marks and were carried by the postal system via France to Rome.

The author also has a scan of the front of a cover from Manila to Lima. This was processed by the Manila Post Office and has a manuscript '3'.

The author is very confident that the manuscript '3' was written by the Manila Post Office, and not in Rome.

7. The Eureka Moment

After three decades, I can now see the mystery behind the 1764 rates. The special thing about the sequence {RP:3 – 5 – 7 – 10} and the sequence {RV:4 – 9 – 12 – 16} is that no number appears in both sequences. If a letter arrived in Spain with the number '3', '5', '7' or '10', then the Spanish Post Office knew that postage had been paid, but if the number was '4', '9', '12' or '16' then postage was due from the addressee.

When the rates were set in 1764, most Spanish colonial post offices had no handstamps. Tizon lists all known pre-philatelic marks of Spain and its colonies. Only two colonial marks dated before 1764 are listed: a single mark for each of Havana and Veracruz (Tizon, 2004, pp1087, 1277).

The Post Office in the colony only had to write a number on the front of the cover, and Spain would know whether the postage had been paid or not. The 1764 rates were devised prior to a technological innovation – the widespread use of handstamps.

Spain did produce some handstamps inscribed 'YNDIAS', the Spanish word for the Americas (Kouri, 2019, p22). Ten devices made of bronze with wooden handles were manufactured in Madrid in October 1764. They were sent to Puerto Rico and Havana, and from there distributed to Spanish post offices on the Caribbean coast. Letters to Spain could be stamped with 'YNDIAS', but the rate was still needed so that Spain could determine whether the postage had been paid. Covers C7.1 (Figure 16) and C7.2 (Figure 17) are covers with the 'YNDIAS' mark and the numeral '4' for the rate.

Over the years, many of the larger colonial post offices locally produced their own handstamps. These could be the place name, or 'FRANCA' (Spanish for 'Paid'), or the more common rates. They each produced their own choice of handstamps. Some, like Lima, decided to not write the paid rate, or the unpaid single rate.

i. The special case of Puerto Rico

The 1764 rates for unpaid mail from Spain to the colony of Puerto Rico was {RP:2 – 4 – 6 – 8} payable by the addressee. This set of rates is lower than the rates {RP:3 – 5 – 7 – 10} for mail to all other colonies.

There is some justification for a cheaper postage rate to Puerto Rico because it was the colony closest to Spain. If these cheaper rates {RP:2 – 4 – 6 – 8} were used on prepaid mail from Puerto Rico to Spain, then the number '4' would appear in that sequence and also in the unpaid sequence {RV:4 - 9 - 12 - 16}. If Spain received a letter from Puerto Rico with the number '4', it was ambiguous as to whether it was a paid double letter or an unpaid single letter.

ii. The 1764 cover from Tucuman

When I first wrote this article, I sent a draft to Yamil Kouri RDP FRPSL. He used to own Cover C3.1 (Figure 5), and he sent me a scan of the contents. The sender very clearly dated the letter as 31 October 1764. Yamil believes that this cover was carried privately to Cadiz, and put in the mail there. The '4' represents the Spanish internal rate of 4 *cuartos* from Cadiz to Granada. I agree with him. At LONDON 2022 the exhibit of José Maria Vazquez de lan Torre showed a 1766 Spanish internal letter from Cordoba to Granada with a similar rate mark of '5' in a circle of dots.

I am convinced that both circular numeral marks were stamped at the destination of Granada. The 1764 Royal Order had only just been published in Spain, and could not have been sent to Tucuman by the time the letter was written. The cover is an example of how mail had to be sent from the colonies to Spain, before the introduction of the 1764 postal reform.

iii. Reduction of 1764 rates in *reales plata* in parts of South America

The information in this paragraph is from Sitja (2009, pp56–57) and Herráiz (2015, pp289–291). Due to an order by the viceroy Amat, the cost of paid mail from Peru to Spain was reduced on 21 August 1767 to {RP:2 - 4½ - 6 – 8}. These lower rates are in the same proportion as {RV:4 – 9 – 12 – 16}. It was still the case that no number appeared in both sequences. These new rates were also used in Chile, Buenos Aires and Montevideo.

In 1777, a new administrator in Lima, José Antonio Pando, reverted to {RP:3 – 5 – 7 – 10} for prepaid mail to Spain. These rates applied to the *La Perla* mail, such as Figure 18 which was paid at 5 *reales plata*. The other jurisdictions Chile, Buenos Aires and Montevideo continued to use the lower rates.

8. Further Comments

Cover C2.1 from Havana to Barcelona has a handstamp '4', which was applied in Cuba as a 4 real de vellon unpaid letter. There is also a manuscript 5 reales mark. I agree with Yamil Kouri (2019, p39) that the 5 *reales* was written and collected in Barcelona, and the extra real was for the large distance from Cadiz to Barcelona.

Covers C6.3, C6.4 and C6.6 from Manila to Rome all have a manuscript '3' for 3 *reales plata* paid in Manila. Each of these covers also has an ornate handstamp for 4 *reales vellon* for an unpaid letter. It is hard to explain how the Manila Post Office considered each cover as both paid and unpaid. When Covers C6.4 and C6.6 arrived in Spain, they were treated as unpaid letters and re-rated at the new rate of 7 *reales vellon*. It is probable that Cover C6.3 was also treated in Spain as unpaid, as the magnificent ornate '4V' mark was more prominent than the dull manuscript '3'.

There was possible duplication of some higher rates on both paid and unpaid letters. The lowest such number is 20. In *reales plata*, it represents a paid letter weighing 2 oz in Figure 19. It also represents in reales de vellon an unpaid letter weighing 1¼ oz in Figure 24. Such letters should not have caused confusion in the Spanish post office because the weights were quite different.

i. Continuing use of 1764 rates by colonies after 1779

The 1779 rates only affected postage rates paid in Spain. The colonies continued to charge the 1764 rates in *reales de plata* for letters paid there.

For a short while, some colonies continued to mark the 1764 rate in *reales de vellon* on unpaid letters going to Spain. However, the Philippines persisted with this practice into the next century. Figure 28 shows an undated cover from Manila to Vitoria. In Manila it was stamped with a red oval mark inscribed '4.V.' for 4 *reales vellon*, the 1764 rate for a single letter to Spain. It looks like '4.U.', just like the mark in Figures 14 and 15. In Spain the postal charge was 8 *reales*, the rate for a single letter from the Philippines according to the next set of rates effective from 1 January 1805. The oval '4V' mark is definitely from Manila, as it is known on a cover from Manila to Guatemala. Two covers are known from Manila with a similar oval mark inscribed '9.V.' for a double letter.

An earlier version of this article was written in 2021 and published in Spanish (Lewis, 2022) in *Academvs*, the most important philatelic journal in the Spanish language.

Acknowledgements

The author has been greatly assisted by many people in the preparation of this article. The most important is Manuel Arango (Colombia) who described the wonderful archive of letters carried by *La Perla*. Manuel has been extremely helpful in sharing his information and images. Yamil Kouri RDP FRPSL (United States) read the first draft and provided some important comments. Jesus Sitjà RDP (Spain) also provided many helpful comments, and he also helped me in his role as editor of Academvs. Pablo Reim FRPSL (Argentina) and Antonio Cuesta (Spain) each provided an image of a great cover. José Antonio Herráiz (Spain) provided me with copies of original documents from Spanish archives. Christian Preusse (Germany) sent me a scan of Cover C6.5. I also wish to thank Henrik Mouritsen RDP FRPSL (Denmark).

Sources of illustrations

José Antonio Herráiz, Figure 1; Yamil Kouri RDP FRPSL, Figures 5, 6 and 11; Jesus Sitja, Figures 7 and 16; Pablo Reim, Figure 9; Antonio Cuesta, Figure 14; Manuel Arango, Figures 18 to 27, covers from *La Perla*; Figure 8 was illustrated as Lot 1010 in the Soler y Llach auction of 31 January 2019. All other Figures are from the author.

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The Story behind the Cover – 40

Salvaged from HMT *Cestrian*?

Tony Walker FRPSL

Identifying the origins of salvaged mail from land, air or sea disasters when the cover may be badly damaged, can offer huge challenges, with otherwise helpful information lost for ever. During times of war this is exacerbated by official censorship of pertinent information. However, perseverance pays as the following item from World War One demonstrates.

The much travelled opened-out cover (Figure 1) is a standard size OHMS envelope, addressed to '9028 Pte. Robert Newman, 122 Coy ASC (Army Service Corp), Salonika Force'. It has a partial official seal at the top, the remainder of which would have been attached to the envelope flap on the reverse which is also missing.



Figure 1. The opened-out salvaged cover noted on acquisition as 'from unidentified ship'.

Private Newman was an Army reservist called up at the start of the war and joined the 2nd Battalion Suffolk Regiment on 10 October 1914 in France. At some point thereafter he was probably transferred to the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment and went with them to Salonika direct from Marseilles or via Alexandria in Egypt. arriving between 23 and 29 November 1915. Pte. Newman was awarded the S.W.B. (Silver War Badge), indicating that he had been wounded at some time.

The ASC often received seconded soldiers who were wounded and not fit for service with an infantry battalion. Many men returned home from Salonika due to malaria.

The oval cachet, at bottom left on the envelope front indicates that the letter entered the postal system at 'BAPO X' on 26 April 1917 (arrowed), the Army Post Office base at HQ Salonica. The letter then circulated in late April–early May 1917 around Salonica on the north west coast of the Aegean Sea, and inland further north to the Struma Front (Figure 2a), before returning to the 3rd Echelon GHQ on the road near Lembet, where the red manuscript 'No Trace records 3 Ech. Sal. (Initials) 7 / 6 / 17' was added as shown in Figure 2b. This enabled the final incomplete land-based cancellation to be confirmed as 'ARMY POST OFFICE / X / S(XII)' also dated '7' (June 1917).

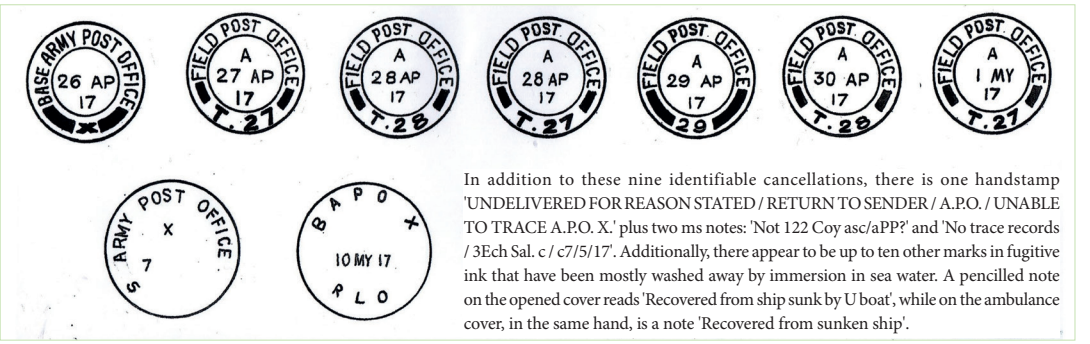


Figure 2a. The chronological sequence of eight Base and Field Post Office cancellations as the postal system looked for Pte. Newman before ending up at BAPO X on 10 May at the R. L. O. (Returned Letter Office).

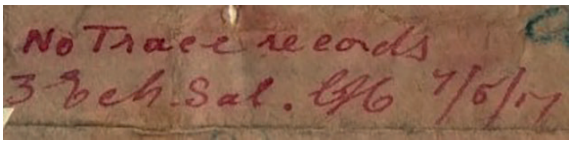


Figure 2b. The manuscript note of 7 June 1917 and the accompanying incomplete cancellation of the same date.

There are a number of other marks and partial marks on the envelope, which are largely illegible through water damage. The 'Ambulance Cover' into which the damaged envelope was placed has the oval cachet 'DIRECTOR ARMY POSTAL SERVICE / crown / E.E.F.' (Egyptian Expeditionary Force) indicating the damaged envelope had arrived at Alexandria in Egypt. With the date of 7 June 1917 established, the War Diary of the DDPS (Deputy Director Postal Services) records only the loss of one ship during June of that year on the Salonica–Egypt route, HMT *Cestrian*. The ambulance cover has the manuscript endorsements 'Letter enclosed' and in pencil 'received from sunken ship'.

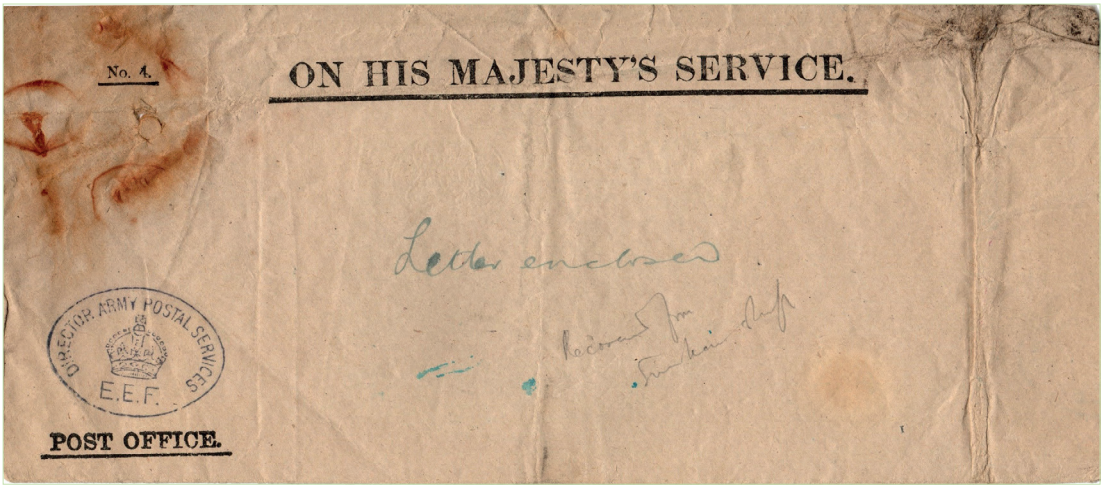


Figure 3. The ambulance cover.

The troopship HMT *Cestrian* left Salonika on 23 June with 5 bags of mail for Alexandria and 11 bags for Port Said. She was torpedoed by the German submarine *UB-42* on 24 June 1917, four miles east of Skyro in the Aegean Sea. Despite carrying 800 troops and horses, only three crew members were killed in the explosion. The excellent discipline of the troops was the sole reason there were no losses, and Captain Edward Thomas of HMT *Cestrian* was awarded the MBE for his exemplary conduct.





Figure 4. Captain Thomas and HMT Cestrian*, before and after.*

The photograph of the *Cestrian* sinking was taken by an Alfred Patrick of the South Northamptonshire Hussars and subsequently made into a postcard.

No other salvaged postal items have been recorded from HMT *Cestrian*, and probably will not be in the future, there being only 11 bags of mail on board at the time, and this was badly damaged.

It was not uncommon for larger ships to carry several thousand bags of mail. The Cunard liner *Orduna,* for instance, landed 5,000 bags at Liverpool in March 1917 after an Atlantic crossing from New York.

Acknowledgements

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Forces Postal History Forum

The Gazette

news, meetings, events and reports

Forthcoming Meetings and Events at 15 Abchurch Lane or by Zoom – Season 2023–24

7 Nov. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Sandeep Jaiswal – *Some of My Favourite Indian States Items.*
9 Nov. at 5 pm: Howard Hughes – *The Maltese Cross*.
23 Nov. at 1 pm: Peter Chadwick – *GB Postal History prior to 1840*.
5 Dec. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: John Stimson and Brian Hart – *The Chalon Portrait.*
7 Dec. at 1 pm: Richard Berry – *Classic Afghanistan, including the First and Second Afghan Wars. From the Camellia PLC Collections.*

2024

9 Jan. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Eric Scherer – *Struggle for Dominance.*
11 Jan at 5 pm: Luc Selis – *The Ocean Lette*r.
25 Jan. at 5 pm: Julian Tweed – *GB Express Mail*.
6 Feb. at 1 pm [by Zoom]: Paul Watkins – *Occupied France in WWII.*
8 Feb. at 1 pm: West Midlands Region.
22 Feb. at 5 pm: Jonas Hällström RDP – *Manoeuvre Warfare, Viewed through the Theories of the Nature of War*.
5 Mar. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Terje Heskestad – *Southern Norway.*
7 Mar. at 1 pm: Joseph Hackmey RDP – *Barbados and Grenada*.
21 Mar. at 1 pm: The British Thematic Association. Showcasing the World of Pictorial Collecting.
2 April at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Susan Taylor and Graham Stockdale – *The Anguilla Story.*
4 Apr. at 5 pm: Lars Engelbrecht RDP – *Newspaper Wrappers: The Ugly Ducklings of Postal Stationery*?
18 Apr. at 1 pm: The President's Display – *The Pacific Steam Navigation Company*.
2 May at 5 pm: Graham Winters – *Golf: A Good Walk Spoiled*.
7 May at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Jon Aitchison – *Europhilex—One Year to Go.*
16 May at 5 pm: Pat Grimwood-Taylor – *Iceland*.
30 May at 1 pm: Lars Boettger – *A Selection from the Current Most Prominent Collections of Luxembourg,*
4 Jun. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Simon Richards – *Numeral Cancels.*
13 Jun. at 5 pm: Daniel Ryterband – *The US Civil War*.

To participate in Zoom Displays, there will be an invitation to participate posted on the Society's website – and it costs nothing. Before the talk takes place a reminder will be emailed by Eventbrite with the required link for the Zoom presentation, meaning a simple 'click' will ensure the talk and display can be viewed. All talks begin at 3 pm (UK time).

Forthcoming Philatelic Events

2–5 Nov.	Australia	PERTH 2023 National, Gloucester Park Racecourse, Perth
18–19 Nov.	UK	Leeds Philatelic Society, Dawson`s Corner LS28 5TA
27 Nov.–2 Dec.	Thailand	THAILAND 2023, Grand Postal Building, Bangkok
18–21 Apr. 2024	Australia	FIAP Regional International, Melbourne, Victoria
28–30 Mar.	UK	Qualifying Exhibition, RPSL, 15 Abchurch Lane, EC4
31 May–2 Jun.	Norway	NORDIA 2024, Skjærgårdshallen, Langesund
*15–19 Aug.	South Korea	PHILAKOREA, Dongdaemun Design Plaza, Seoul
17–20 Oct.	Denmark	HAFNIA 2024, Øksnehallen Halmtorvet 11, Copenhagen
26–28 Oct.	Germany	Internationale Briefmarken-Börse Ulm, Messe–Ulm, 89073
7–11 May 2025	UK	EuroPhilEx, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham

*Dates still await confirmation.

Forthcoming Regional Meetings of the RPSL – UK and abroad

11 Nov: North Midlands at Waltham on the Wolds – Mike Siverns, 0115 9333697, michaelsiverns@btinternet.com
11 Nov: West Midlands at Knowle, Solihull – Gerald Marriner, 07846 006982, gerald.marriner@gmail.com
24 Nov.: Southwest at Tom Cobley Tavern, Spreyton – Ian Pinwill, 01645231113, i.pinwill@byinternet.com
10 Mar. 2024: North West with SPH at Bowdon – Martin Davies, 07710 573659, kuitman@btinternet.com

Membership News

Announcement of New Members as Approved by Council

The following new members, whose membership applications have been duly approved in accordance with the articles of association of the Society, have now been elected by Council. We wish them a long and enjoyable membership.

Name	Location
Betty Benson	Tennessee, USA
David Fritz	New York, USA
Ronald Giffler	Florida, USA
Jason Greenwald	Pennsylvania, USA
James Hill	Ohio, USA
Radoslav Misek	Czech Republic
Satish Nayak	Texas, USA
Norma Nielson	Oregon, USA
Aamir Rauf	Buckinghamshire
Roger Saks	Ohio, USA
John Sawicki	Pennsylvania, USA
Jimmy Shively	Texas, USA
César Silva	Portugal
David Wood	Ohio, USA
Roger Wood	West Midlands

We Announce With Regret the Death of the Following Member:

Alan Tonge of Barnet, Greater London (joined 1 May 2015)

Society News

2024 Subscription Rates

Subscriptions are payable on 1 January each year. The subscription rates for 2024 are as follows:

- U.K. Town members, living within a 40-mile radius of Charing Cross:
  £250 (if paid before 31 March 2024); £270 (if paid after 31 March 2024).
- U.K. Country members, living outside the 40-mile radius of Charing Cross:
  £175 (if paid before 31 March 2024); £195 (if paid after 31 March 2024).
- Overseas members: £160 (if paid before 31 March 2024); £180 (if paid after 31 March 2024).

Those who pay after 31 March 2024 will be able to request copies of *The London Philatelist*, that they may have missed, from the Administration Office upon payment of the appropriate postage.

A member whose subscription remains unpaid after 30 June 2024 will be deemed to have left the Society.

Steven Harrison FRPSL, Hon Secretary.

Standing displays required

We are delighted to announce that standing displays will be returning later this season. The displays will be able to be viewed on all non-meeting days in the first-floor meeting room and will be available for Fellows, Members and visitors to view at 15 Abchurch Lane for around six weeks at a time.

As it stands, we have used all our available displays and we are seeking the support of Fellows and Members to offer new displays for 2023–2024.

This is an ideal opportunity to share your collections, especially if you are a collector who has only a limited number of frames written up, or indeed if you are an overseas member who is not able to get to London in person.

If you would like to show around eight frames of material, please contact Gwynne Harries FRPSL, harriesg@rpsl.org.uk, who will be very pleased to hear from you. If you don't have that number of frames, do not worry. Any combination of twelve sheets will be fine, as smaller submissions can be held over and multiple displays combined accordingly.

Please remember that the pages are simply high-resolution scans (300 dpi preferred), from your collection and **not** the actual material. So for overseas members this is a great opportunity to show your material without having to worry about customs regulations!

When the display is taken down the files will be kept and made into a book for the library, thereby keeping a record of your collection in perpetuity.

Thank you in anticipation of your support. Gwynne's inbox is open and waiting!

EuroPhilEx BIRMINGHAM 2025 – Update

Arrangements for the next mid-decade British International Exhibition, EuroPhilEx BIRMINGHAM 2025, are progressing well.



It will be held at the National Exhibition Centre Birmingham, the first time a British International has been held outside London, from Wednesday 7 to Sunday 11 May 2025. The NEC is located near the centre of the country, close to several motorways and junctions, with over 16,500 parking spaces. It has its own railway station and is adjacent to Birmingham International Airport.

The exhibition will have over 2,000 exhibition frames and has FEPA Patronage and FIP Recognition. **All FIP classes are available and it is now open for entries**. To enter an exhibit please go to the website at http://www.europhilex2025.co.uk and fill in an entry form. This is the process for all entries, not just those from the United Kingdom. Entries can be accepted from anyone living in a FEPA country, which is most of Europe, or anyone elsewhere in the world that is a member of a Society affiliated to a European national federation, for example, The Royal Philatelic Society London, the Great Britain Philatelic Society, the Malaya Study Group etc. To clarify, all Royal Philatelic Society London Members and Fellows worldwide are eligible to enter. The website also shows opportunities for Supporters, Patrons and Sponsors who we encourage as major exhibitions of this type rely on the generosity of some collectors, dealers and auction houses.

There is more space available for dealers than at London 2022, with a total floor area of up to 10,000 square metres, so we hope to have a large number attending. Details of trade stand prices can also be found on the website. A package of offers for Societies will appear shortly. Meeting rooms will be available at very reasonable rates and there will be a Society Showcase event for one day of the exhibition. The Sunday afternoon will feature a live auction and there will be interesting presentations throughout. Watch out for a series of collectors' souvenir sheets starting next year.

Anyone that would like to receive more information and regular updates can register their interest on the web site. EuroPhilEx BIRMINGHAM 2025 will be one of the largest, best and most enjoyable exhibitions of the decade. Please put the dates in your diary now.

Web site: https://www.europhilex2025.co.uk Email: enquiries@europhilex2025.co.uk

British National Exhibition at the RPSL – 28–30 March 2024

The next United Kingdom National Exhibition will be held at the Royal Philatelic Society London from Thursday 28 to Saturday 30 March 2024. Held over four floors there will be about 150 frames covering all UK and international classes. It will be open from 10am until 5pm daily and the American Tea Room, the Members' lounge, will be open throughout serving refreshments. There will also be three dealers present, Bill Barrell. Stanley Gibbons and David Griffiths, who between them will offer a wide rage of stock from most counties. A special souvenir sheet is being issued that will be available free to everyone attending.

A new innovation at this exhibition is that for the first time there will be a sub-class for three dimensional philatelic objects. This could include things like postbox-shaped money boxes, stamp cases, vintage albums, philatelic medals, writing implements and all manner of philatelic paraphernalia. It will be judged as part of the Ephemera Class. The frames that were acquired for the *Clash of Empires* exhibition are being used for this. Each entry will be allocated one frame with four shelves and is priced as a single-frame entry. Why not be one of the first to enter this interesting new category?

The exhibition is open for entries now through the ABPS website at www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions. The cost of exhibiting is the standard charge of £25 per frame.

Forthcoming exhibitions

The Following forthcoming events will be available to RPSL exhibitors and attended by Members and Fellows. The Society will have stands at many of them.

Thailand 2023 World Stamp Championship. 27 November–2 December 2023 at the Grand Postal Building, Bangkok, Thailand. FIP Patronage, under the auspices of FIAP. Entries closed. Website www.thailand2023 wsc.com. 2,500 frames and dealers' booths.

British National Exhibition. 28–30 March 2024 at the Royal Philatelic Society London.See top of page.

Efiro 2024 Specialised World Stamp Exhibition. 16–19April 2024 at the National Library, Bucharest, Romania. FIP Patronage and FEPA Recognition. Entries closed. Website www.efiro.ro. 2,000 frames and dealers' booths.

British Northern National Exhibition. 19 and 20 July 2024 at York Racecourse. Bookings open at www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions. 300+ frames and dealers.

Mare Balticum 2024. 26–28 July 2024 at the National Museum, Tartu, Estonia. FEPA Recognition. Entry deadline 29 February 2024. Website www.marebalticum.ee. Contact the UK Commissioner Jon Aitchison at jonaitchison.uk@outlook.com. 500 frames and dealers' booths.

PhilaKorea 2024. 15–19 August 2024 in Seoul, Korea. Not open for entries yet and entry deadline not announced. FIP Patronage, under the auspices of FIAP. Contact the UK Commissioner Simon Richards at simon@sidebell.co.uk.

Hafnia 2024 European Stamp Exhibition. 17–20 October 2024 at Oksnehhallen (the old Ox Hall) in central Copenhagen, Denmark. FEPA Patronage. Website www.hafnia24.com. Contact UK Commissioner, Steve Harrison at sharrison500@btinternet.com. 1,300+ frames and dealers' booths.

EuroPhilEx BIRMINGHAM 2025 International Exhibition. 7–11 May 2025 See previous page for details. Commissioner Daphne McMillan at daphne@europhilex2025.co.uk.

The Third Crawford Festival, 25–26 June 2024



Next year's festival will take place on 25 and 26 June and will focus on auction catalogues. So please save the date in your diaries and if you have a proposal for a paper or session then please contact Nicola Davies daviesn@rpsl.org.uk.

Nominations are now open for the 2024 Crawford Medal. To be eligible, the book must be on a philatelic subject and have been published and available for sale in 2022 or 2023. The book does not have to be published by the Royal Philatelic Society London or be written by a Royal member and nominations are accepted from any individual, society or body even if they are not Royal members.

Nominations should be sent to Nicola Davies, Head of Collections, at The Royal Philatelic Society London, 15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW or emailed to her at daviesn@rpsl.org.uk to arrive by 31 January 2024 at the latest. A non-returnable copy of the nominated book must be supplied to the RPSL library by that date if it does not already have one.

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

The Society of Antiquaries of London,
Burlington House,
Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE.
www.sal.org.uk/

The Society of Antiquaries of London advises that they are holding two events in November, which they hope may be of interest to RPSL members.

1. Thursday 9 November: *Remembering the Destruction of the Old Bridge at Mostar 30 Years On*. This symposium will explore not only the destruction of the Stari Most and its impact on Bosnians, the neighbouring regions and the wider world, but will take a critical look at its rebuilding that was promoted as a landmark project of the international community in postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina and scrutinise whether these aspirations for reconciliation and reintegration were achieved.

Tickets for in-person attendance are £5 (which includes lunch) and free for online guests. Bookings can be made at www.sal.org.uk/event/mostar-brigde-symposium/

2. Wednesday 29 November 2023: *Collections & Research Day*, which will explore the research potential of our archives, library and museum collections at Burlington House, and discover how our digitisation and cataloguing is progressing, and how this is enhancing research potential.

Tickets for in-person attendance are £5 (which includes lunch) and the event is free for online guests. For those coming in person, there is a special deal for this event, which is 3 months free Affiliate membership. Affiliate membership provides access to the SAL Library and the workspace, wifi and up to four books can be borrowed. Bookings can be made at www.sal.org.uk/event/cr-2023/

Details of all the Society of Antiquaries' forthcoming events can be found at www.sal.org.uk/events/

Previews of Forthcoming Meetings at 15 Abchurch Lane, Season 2023–2024

9 November: Howard Hughes FRPSL – *The Maltese Cross*

Following the successful campaign for postal reform in Great Britain and Ireland, it was decided to introduce postage stamps and postal stationery from 6 May 1840 to indicate the prepayment of postage.

In the lead up to this date, the postal authorities were presented with the task of determining how these tokens could be marked or defaced to prevent their fraudulent re-use. The method decided upon was to cancel them in ink using an obliterator specially designed for this purpose. This innovative obliterator was referred to as the 'post office stamp' or the 'obliterating stamp' but is nowadays known as the Maltese Cross.

The use of the Maltese Cross provided a number of challenges to the post office and modifications to the obliterating ink and to the design itself were tried before it was finally replaced after 4 years in use. Lessons learnt throughout this process would enable authorities throughout the world to benefit by not making the same mistakes.

This display takes us through the life story of the Maltese Cross, illustrating its introduction, the use of different inks and modifications in design (both official and unofficial), the use of the handstamp for purposes other than its raison d'être, dissatisfaction with the design leading to the replacement of the obliterator and, finally its use after it should have been replaced.

The apparent simplicity of this story belies a rich variety of usages and also allows the illustration of a wide range of postage stamps, postal stationery, trials, notices and ephemera.

The exhibit on which this display is based was awarded the Grand Prix National at LONDON 2022.



Figure 1. The earliest known postal use of the Maltese Cross. A stampless letter dated 4 May 1840, two days before the obliterator should have been used. It has possibly been struck in error.

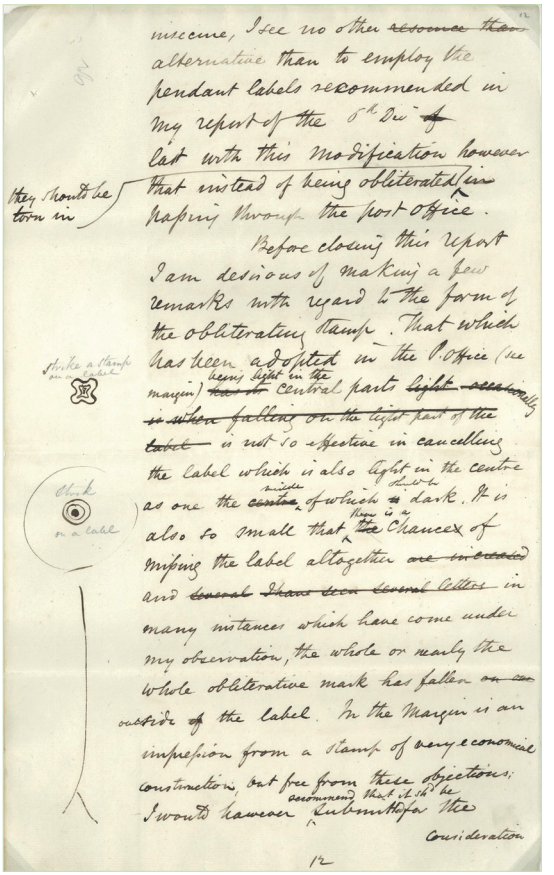


Figure 2. A page from Rowland Hill's copy of the final draft of his letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Report on the Obliteration of Postage Stamps *sent in September 1840. The letter itself is in the National Archives but this version is identical with the numerous alterations showing Hill's evolving thoughts. This page is critical of the design of the obliterator and makes recommendations regarding a more functional design.*

Previews of Forthcoming Meetings at 15 Abchurch Lane, Season 2023–2024, cont'd

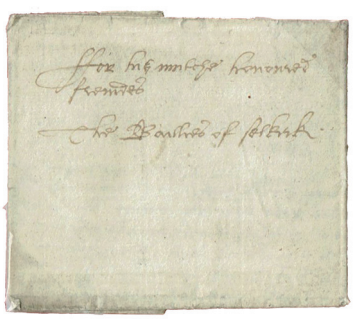
23 November: Peter Chadwick FRPSL – *Aspects of GB Postal History prior to 1840*

British Postal History is exceptional. Britain pioneered a postal system accessible to the general public. Charles I tried to earn income from the expansion of the Royal Posts, while Henry Bishop successfully organised the embryonic public postal service to it a meaningful and profitable utility. He essentially changed the focus of a postal service from one dedicated primarily to the Court, to one which put the public need first and incidentally included the needs of the Sovereign.

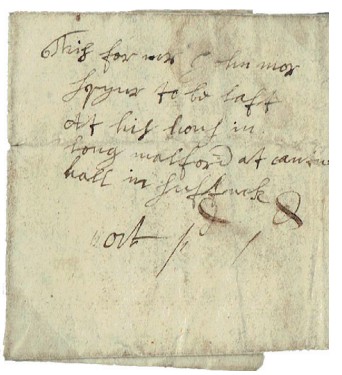
Bishop's management flair found its true calling in the rapid creation of bye-posts off the newly formulated main post roads. From this foundation came the cross posts and local posts – all before the logical advent of Penny Postage in 1840. These developments, backed by entrepreneurial capital, were to help in the creation of Britain's industrial revolution.

This idiosyncratic display will try to tell the story of these developments by using key items (averaging 280 years in age) of postal history, and these document the postal service's expansion in the era before stamps, in both England and Scotland. Although many of the items on display could be described as rare or unique, the aim is to present material which illustrates unknown facets of our postal history. It will also cover the experiments – some successful, other less so – brought about by technological innovations such as mail coaches – and illustrate the Post Office's ongoing battle against various forms of fraud.

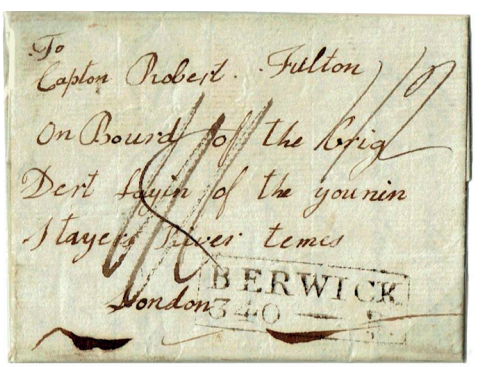
Having extended the post to North Britain, mainly to ensure communication channels with English garrisons there, the resulting imposition of a London-centric business model (totally unsuited to most of Scotland) resulted in grassroots initiatives to make the system function. An excellent example was the delivery of mail using boats, where the landscape dictated that was the most efficient method of distribution – a fact that would never have occurred to the originators of postal regulations in London.



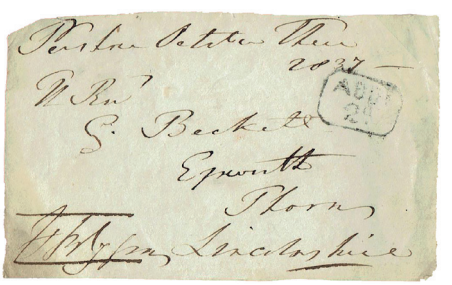
1675 Burgh Post. Private post operated by the burgh of Newburgh, used here to send a letter to the bailies of Selkirk.



1680. A letter sent by the failed first attempt by Dockwra, with Murray and Chamberlen, to provide a penny post.



1812. Special delivery by boat, to boats moored on the River Thames: charged 1d extra by post office.



1837. The unique 'Addl 2d' of the Thorne Fifth Clause Post, the only example of this type.

Previews of Meetings at 15 Abchurch Lane, Season 2023–2024, continued.

5 December [By Zoom]: Brian Hart and John Stimson FRPSL – *The History of the Chalon Portrait*

Brian Hart is a New Zealander with a lifelong interest in the stamps of that country and the related Pacific Islands. He has a particular interest in the design origins of these stamps, and the craft related to stamp storage.

John Stimson is Chairman of The New Zealand Society of Great Britain; a member of the Royal's Council and is well known for collecting and researching postal history to and from New Zealand in Victorian times. He has garnered much from past historians and researchers but has learnt that what is published, and often repeated, is sometimes incorrect. John seeks corroboration and relishes in challenging established beliefs or records, so researching the history of the Chalon portraits was a joy and a fascinating activity.

This Zoom presentation will outline the results of their research into the history of the time (1837) when Chalon painted Queen Victoria in her robes of accession, and what followed thereafter. The ability to search online archives, such as Queen Victoria's journals, have added context and evidence perhaps not available to past historians and philatelists. Brian and John hope others will challenge them, and provide new information that adds to the story of perhaps the most famous portrait known to philatelists across the globe.



'The Chalon Sketch.'
(Source: Ian P. Greig, 'The Chalon Sketch of Queen Victoria undertaken on Her Majesty's first visit to the House of Lords, 1837', The London Philatelist, *September 2022, pp366–368)*



'The Chalon Portrait.'
(Source: BALaT [Belgian Art Links and Tools], https://balat.kikirpa.be/photo.php?path=X003156&objnr=20022949&lang=en-GB)



'The Portuguese Chalon.'
(Source: The Postage Stamps of New Zealand 1855-1873. The Chalon Head Issues. *R. P. Odenweller, 2009.)*

Reports of Meetings: Season 2023–2024

14 September 2023: South Atlantic Islands including Ascension, St. Helena, Tristan da Cunha, the Falkland Islands and the Falkland Islands Dependencies from HM The King's Royal Collection

Report by Kim Stuckey FRPSL





Rod Vousden FRPSL, Acting Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection, shown here with President Mike J. Y. Roberts FRPSL, and Sophie Carr, who assisted with the display. (Photo credit: John Ray FRPSL)

On 14 September we were treated to an exceptional display of South Atlantic Islands including Ascension, St Helena, Tristan da Cunha, the Falkland Islands and the Falkland Islands Dependencies from HM The King's Royal Philatelic Collection. This was presented by Rod Vousden FRPSL, Acting Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection.

There was a complete run through of the stamps from Queen Victoria to the end of the reign of King George VI, which allowed us to see for the first time the Tristan da Cunha first set of KGVI stamps. There was a huge number of artists drawings and colour proofs for all the South Atlantic Colonies. Seeing artist sketches for both the 1933 Falkland Islands and 1934 St Helena Centenary sets in superb detail, you wondered if the same artist at Bradbury Wilkinson produced both sets of sketches.

It was also nice to see blocks of four of the Falkland Islands 1929 Whale & Penguin issue; this was disliked by the Islanders as the whale is depicted floating on the surface, which indicates it has died!

There were some pleasures hiding in amongst the collection, the 1937 Coronation FDC from St Helena addressed to Princess Elizabeth of York actually came from HM The Queen's own First Day Cover collection. Also there was an artist drawing for a King Edward VIII St Helena definitive.

The overall thought in viewing the collection was what fresh colours there were, which, coupled with the stamps being in blocks of four really help to provide a superb reference collection.

Thanks to Rod Vousden FRPSL for his skill and enthusiasm in curating this South Atlantic collection, to Sophie Carr who assisted Rod, and also for the Gracious Permission of His Majesty The King for allowing this display to take place.

Reports of Meetings: Season 2023–2024, continued

27 September 2023: David Cordon – *Bermuda 1617 to 1970*

Report by Simon Richards FRPSL



David Cordon receiving his certificate from President Mike J. Y. Roberts FRPSL (left), with Vice President Simon Richards FRPSL. (Photo credit: John Ray FRPSL)

Some 101 Fellows and Members attended this wonderfully comprehensive display of Bermuda accompanied by ten guests, four of the members were attending their first meeting. Our presenter has exhibited widely with outstanding results and this may explain the wide range of overseas members who attended, with representatives from Peru, Sweden, Croatia, Germany, China, India and the United States, and possibly elsewhere.

David showed us 42 frames full of very high quality material. He has a truly comprehensive collection of the island, lacking only the Postmaster Provisionals. In its earliest days Bermuda was known as the Somers Isles and David showed us the earliest and third earliest letters in private hands, the first from 1617.

Postal History filled the first six frames and included a strong showing of the three Bermuda associated Crowned Circle paid marks and some very scarce Bermuda Ship Letter marks. A frame of military mail showed both Soldier and Officer concessionary letters as well as Blockade Runner covers from the US Civil War period.

The six frames of Queen Victoria stamps were simply stunning and no wonder it won the Silver Mailcoach at Stampex 2028 and a large gold in London 2022 even though five frames. The Moncrieff cover may be the most well known item but the blocks sparkled and the 'Three Pence' local overprint blocks were this reviewer's highlight.

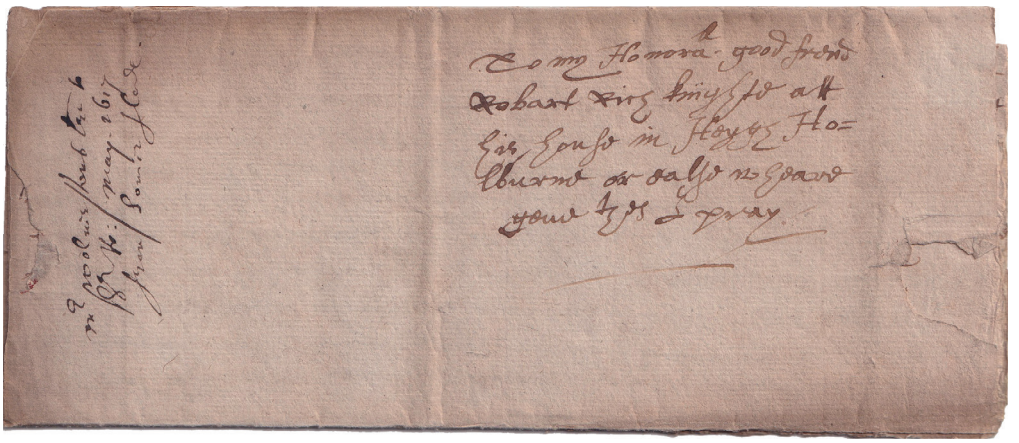
David is rightly proud of his 'Docks' issue frames showing the stamps of the Edwardian era, but he should also be pleased with his stunning material from the reigns of his son and grandson. Bermuda was one of the colonies that used the 'Nyasaland' keyplate for the high values and these frames were also most impressive with large blocks, control blocks and almost all the various varieties beloved by the collectors of these issues. Bermuda had a head tax on plane travel and the 12s 6d value goes well on a plane ticket, though it seems only six or so survive.

Taking us up the end of the pre-decimal era, David showed us some fine material from the Elizabethan era including a frame on the 1962 Buildings set with some intriguing printing errors. The final row of the display showed five frames of Bermuda's postal stationery and the McCorquodale Specimen Registered Envelopes attracted much comment as it reflected a type not seen before. As with the postage stamp material this part of the display incorporated a very substantial proportion of the extant proofs, and also illustrated how scarce the later stationery material is to find used.

In the formal proceedings at 5 pm, David revealed that he had actually met the doyen of Bermuda (and British Honduras) collectors – Sir Henry Tucker, when David was still an inexperienced collector. David's ambition is to build up the best Bermuda collection and this must be the best extant, Sir Henry's collection was dispersed almost 50 years ago to.

All present were hugely grateful to David and his partner Julie Lunn, for bringing this magnificent collection all the way from Bermuda to show us. Our thanks too for the splendid 48-page booklet which accompanied it.

Highlights from *Bermuda 1617 to 1970*



1617 letter, the earliest from Bermuda in private hands.



1865 1s essay produced for the first stamp issue of Bermuda.



1874 essay on the One Penny of the 'THREE PENCE' overprint which was produced on the 1s stamp. Originally, it is believed that a pane of 60 stamps was overprinted: one block of six and three blocks of four are recorded (including a number of singles).



1875 provisional One Penny on 1s with variety "no stop". One of two recorded mint examples, the other being in the Tapling collection.



The 'Moncrieff' cover, bearing all three values which were overprinted in 1875 due to the shortage of the One Penny stamp.

Reports of Meetings: Season 2023–2024, continued

12 April 2023: Bill Hedley FRPSL, Dénes Czirók RDP FRPSL and Adriano Bergamini FRPSL
Hungarian Rhapsody – 400 years of Postal History

Report by Lillian Swift FRPSL



The presenting trio—left to right: Adriano Bergamini FRPSL, Bill Hedley FRPSL, Dénes Czirók RDP FRPSL (Photo credit: John Ray FRPSL)

We were delighted to welcome three renowned, diligent, philatelic innovators. They presented a wonderful display, and this was a memorable event. Their tremendous display gave us the opportunity to examine extremely rare material, tracing the story of Hungary's turbulent background in seven logical sections:

Frames 1–8. *The Post in Hungary's Story up to 1900.* Bill Hedley.
Frames 9–16. *Hungarian Letter Mail, 1750–1850.* Dénes Czirók.
Frames 17–24. *The Austrian Post in Hungary, 1850–1867.* Adriano Bergamini.
Frames 25–29. *The Independent Hungarian Postal Administration, 1867–1875.* Adriano Bergamini.
Frames 30–34. *Incoming Mail to Hungary, 1850-1900.* Adriano Bergamini.
Frames 35-42. *Foreign Mail from Hungary, 1875-1900.* Dénes Czirók.
Frames 43–45. *The Hotel Posts of Sienbenbürgen, 1895-1926.* Bill Hedley.

The Royal Philatelic Society London has a reputation for staging events which show 'the best' and today was no different, this was the best display of Hungarian Postal History that some of us will ever see. The diverse material collected ranged from Adriano's classical collection, Dénes's material based on over 40 years of research, to Bill's ability to present Postal History, starting with his superb first frame introduction. The extremely well-coordinated display, together with hard work of scientific proportions, enabled us to grasp aspects of Hungary's rich history. Bill, Dénes and Adriano will continue to inspire postal historians of the future.

The 'rhapsody' was developed by serious study and reflects Hungary's links with so many other European countries and cultures. The material displayed was not exclusive to Hungary.

A Hungarian Rhapsody, which belatedly marks the centenary of the 'Treaty of Trianon', was worth the three-and-a-half year wait. This spectacular event was originally planned for 2020 by Past President Richard Stock FRPSL during his term of office. Bill, Dénes and Adriano wish to thank Richard, together with our current President, Mike J. Y. Roberts FRPSL, for including the display in his programme. Thanks also go to Roger Morrell for helping to produce the booklet for the event.

Highlights from *Hungarian Rhapsody – 400 years of Postal History*



The 'Sisi' Cover *(Bergamini Collection): 18 August 1875. 3rd weight step (20-30g) registered letter from Temesvár to Château de Sassetot le Mauconduit in Normandy with two 3 Kreuzer stamps of the 1871 Engraved issue and nine 10 Kreuzer stamps of the 1874 issue. The rate was made up of 3 x 25 Kr + 21 Kr registration, total 96 Kreuzer. The only known letter with this franking, one of the greatest rarities of Hungarian philately. Elizabeth of Hungary (1837–1898), nicknamed 'Sisi' in the family circle, was Queen of Hungary from 1867–1898, through her marriage to Emperor and King Francis Joseph I. In the summer of 1875 she was a guest at the Château de Sassetot le Mauconduit in Normandy.*



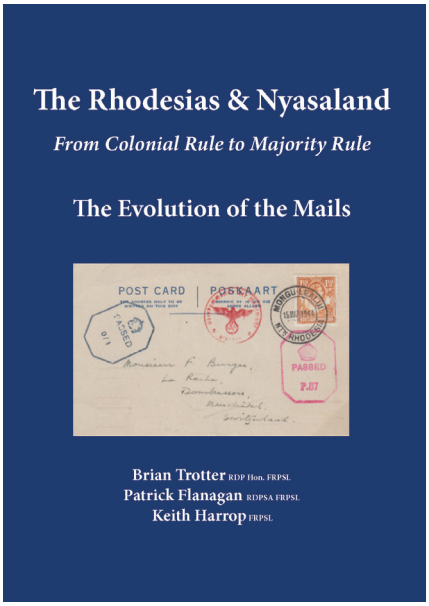
The Zanzibar Cover *(Czirók collection):* ***18*** *November 1886. 5th weight step (60–75 gram) registered letter from Kolozsvár to the Imperial and Royal Austrian Hungarian General Consulate, Zanzibar. Franked with 10 Kr + 5 x 20 Kr = 110 Kr. (Zanzibar did not join the Universal Postal Union until 1 April 1895. The postage fee from 1 September 1876–31 May 1892 was 20 Kr / 15g (sea post tariff). Count Teleki, the addressee, was a well-known African researcher who had discovered the Rudolf Lake, the Stefanie Lake, and the Teleki Volcano.*



BISTRA Hotel Post Stamps *(Hedley collection): The largest known block of 6 Heller stamps used by the private postal service that carried mail twice-weekly during the summer season between the mountain holiday resort at Bistra in the Southern Carpathians (then Hungarian, now Romanian) and the nearest town, Szász Szebes (now Sebeș). 6 Heller was the rate for postcards and letters.*

Announcing a New RPSL Publication

The Rhodesias & Nyasaland. From Colonial Rule to Majority Rule. The Evolution of the Mails
Brian Trotter RDP Hon FRPSL, Patrick Flanagan RDPSA FRPSL and Keith Harrop FRPSL
ISBN 978-1-913015-26-8. Retail price £54, Members' Price £49.





This book is primarily a book about philately – but including elements of social history to help set the philately in context. The book provides an overview of the philately of Rhodesia during the period from Colonial Rule to Majority Rule. The book also offers fresh insights as well as a considerable amount of new information.

Over the years a significant number of articles and books have been published on the philately of Rhodesia, especially on the early postal history. However, if any part of Rhodesian philatelic writing has been a little less well served, it is the period after the British South Africa Company relinquished its administration.

This book traces the parallel evolution of the mails of the three territories, their coming together as the ill-fated Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and its inevitable break up after only ten years. Nyasaland became the Republic of Malawi shortly after the break up of the Federation, with Northern Rhodesia following relatively soon afterwards as the Republic of Zambia. However, Southern Rhodesia soon became Rhodesia, and when no agreement could be reached with the British Government on the terms of independence, Rhodesia unilaterally declared independence from Britain.

After a protracted period of sanctions and armed conflict with guerrilla organisations seeking independence, this was finally achieved in 1980, some 16 years after the break up of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The social and political aspects covered in the book include WWII and the Rhodesian Bush War. Souvenir covers record the main political events that finally led to majority rule in all three territories. The scope of the book is large, and therefore, of necessity, it provides only an overview of the evolution of the mails of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland in the period under discussion. The available information from primary sources is sometimes incomplete, and therefore, both published and unpublished research by previous authors has also been taken into account. Hopefully, it will provide much information that is of use to the majority of collectors of the postal history of the region.

Postal history purists, with some justification, feel that only commercial mail constitutes postal history. However, the milestones commemorated by especially contrived First Day and First Flight covers and other special event covers, do highlight these special events, and are used to do so in this work

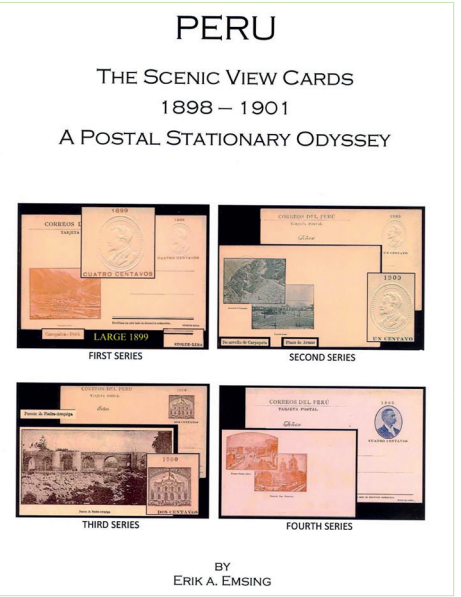
Book Review

Compiled by Gwynne Harries FRPSL

Peru: The Scenic View Cards 1898-1901 – A Postal Stationery Odyssey.
Erik A. Emsing, 2023.
Softback, 212 pages, ISBN 979-8-9874496-0-8

ID No. 30407

Reviewer: Alan Warren RDP FRPSL

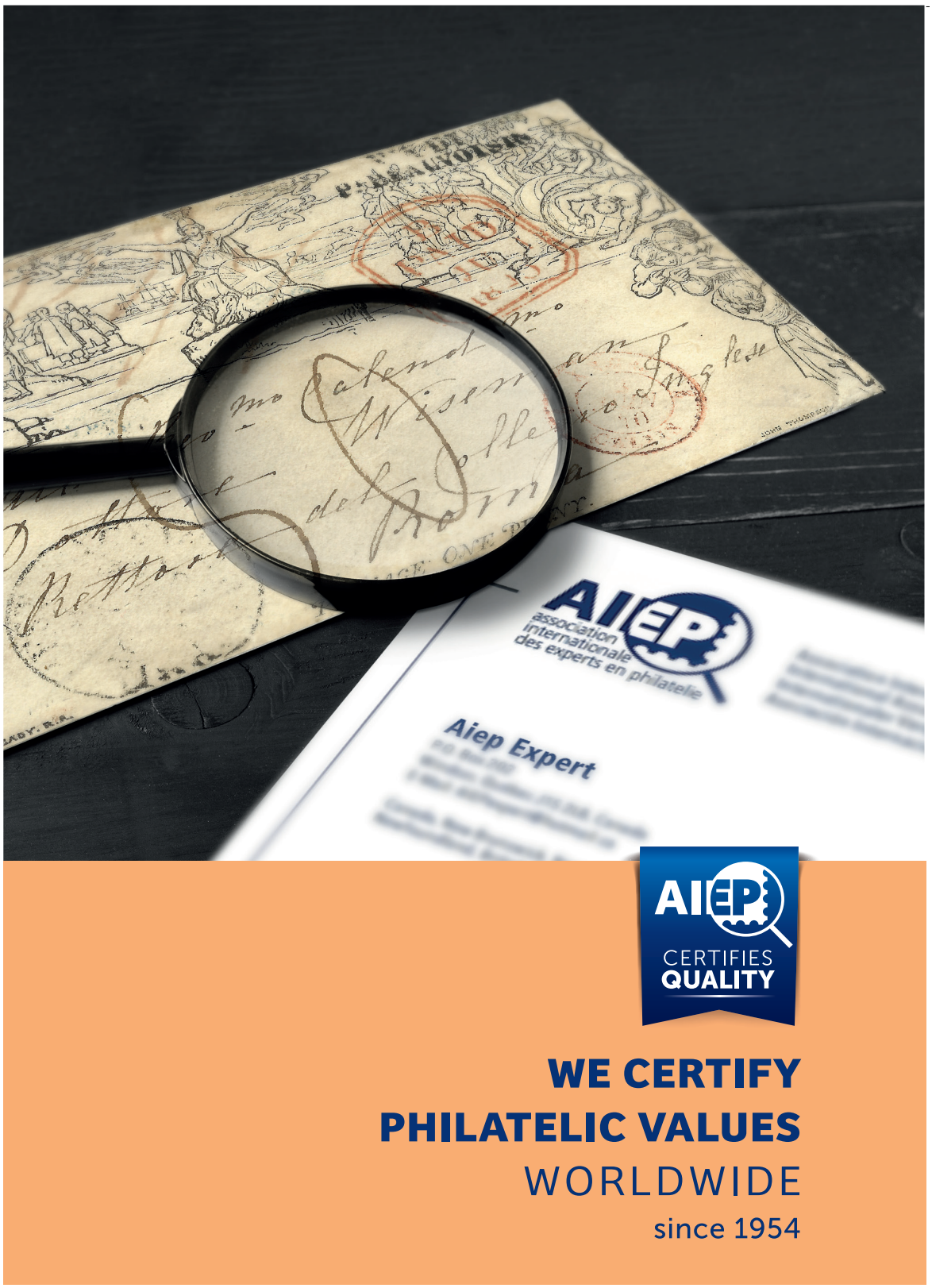


Peru's first postal stationery was a set of preprinted envelopes in five different values issued in 1875. However, the focus of this catalogue is on four different series of scenic view cards released between 1898 and 1901. The front of the card was imprinted with the address lines, the year date, and the value by letterpress in black. Photos of various buildings and scenes around the country were printed in one of four colours, either on the left side of the card front, or enlarged on the backs.

The first series was sold at the Peruvian pavilion at the 1900 Paris World Exposition, as well as locally at post offices in Peru. The other three series were released domestically in the ensuing years. The author describes the layout of the designs, the sequence of printing the text and then the photographic scenes, and the four types defined by clearly repeated varieties.

Introductory material includes profiles of key personnel responsible for the cards such as photographers, dealers, and the printer. Estimated print quantities are proffered along with a census of the known cards today, mint and used. Two major formats were used for the scenic cards—single views and double views.

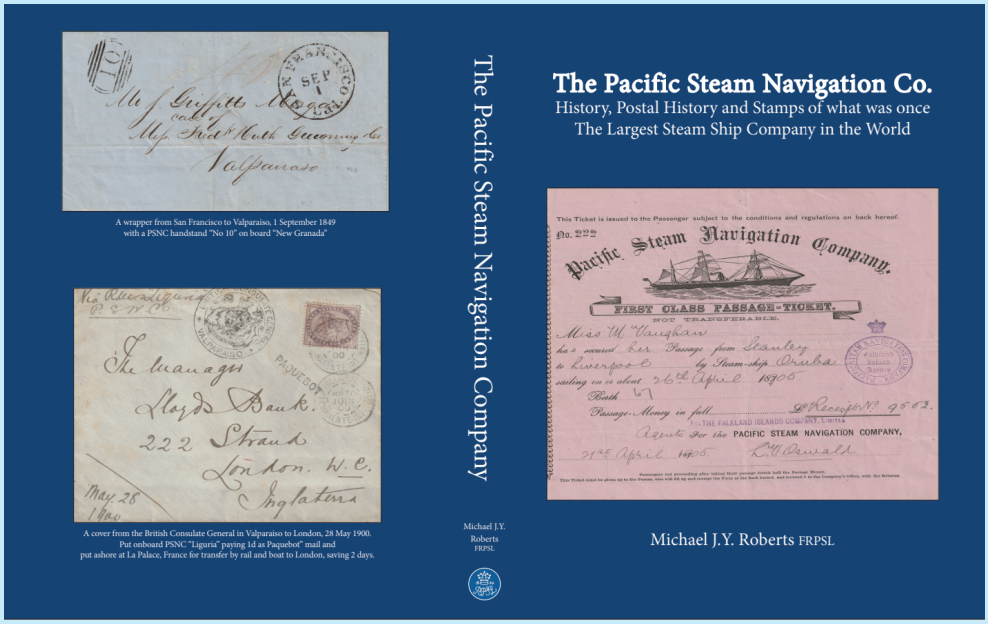
An extensive discussion follows on how to use the catalogue, with descriptions of the numbering system, a rarity scale in U.S. dollars, printing errors, occasional different names for the same scenic view, and an alphabetic index of scene names. The catalogue proceeds first with the single scenic cards followed by the double view cards. Each one is illustrated with denomination, known varieties, rarity, and name of photographer, editor, and printer. The concluding part of the catalogue is a series of spreadsheets and cross-references tying the data together. A bibliography provides print and internet sources used in compiling the catalogue. This definitive study of the scenic postal cards will be the major resource for collectors.


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The Pacific Steam Navigation Co.
History, Postal History and Stamps of what was once The Largest Steam Ship Company in the World

by Michael J. Y. Roberts FRPSL

ISBN 978-1-913015-20-6



Retail price £60, Members' Price £54.

Author Mike Roberts describes this new publication as follows:

"This book is intended to provide a broad commercial background to this historic Steam Ship Company and it is hoped that it will appeal to some outside the narrower philatelic world.

Having set a broader scene, I then set about updating all the philatelic and postal history data before applying this to the known examples in each of the relevant categories, whether they be the 'VAPOR' marks, the numbered hand stamps or the postage stamps themselves.

I have tried to incorporate all the necessary tools for the postal historian to be able to analyse existing and new material, so a full list of vessels, vessel movement, timetables and postal rates are all included.

The additional chapters concerning the development of company contracts, British Post Offices on the west coast of South America, cargo services and publicity help to give the fullest picture and give the reader some knowledge of the non-philatelic material available to the collector."

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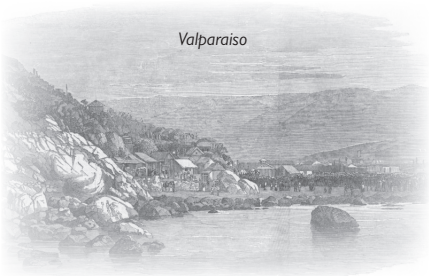
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Review · 382nd Heinrich Köhler Auction · March 2022

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► **Chile** 1854, Gillet printing 5 centavos burnt siena strip of four used with 2nd. London printing 5 centavos brown-red and Desmadryl 10 centavos blue on cover from Caldera to Valparaiso.
Provenance: Joaquin Galvez (1979)
Jean Dupont (1981)

START PRICE: EUR 20,000 **HAMMER PRICE: EUR 36,000**

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► **Lübeck** 1859, 1 shilling orange (2) together with 2 shilling brown and 4 shilling dark green on cover to Reval in Estonia (Russia).
Provenance: Rarities offer W. van Arkel (1920s), John R. Boker Jr. (1986).

START PRICE: EUR 40,000
HAMMER PRICE: EUR 230,000



▼ **Oldenburg** 1852, 1/10 thaler yellow in a strip of four on cover from Brake to Australia.
Provenance: John R. Boker Jr. (1988)

START PRICE: EUR 30,000
HAMMER PRICE: EUR 150,000

▲ **Mecklenburg-Strelitz** 1864, ¼ groshes orange in a pair with 3 groshes brown on postal stationery cover 1 goshes pink from Neustrelitz to Theodore Rondel to Paris.
Provenance: Gaston Nehrlich (62. Heinrich Köhler, 1929), Max Oberländer (1950)

START PRICE: EUR 100,000
HAMMER PRICE: EUR 230,000



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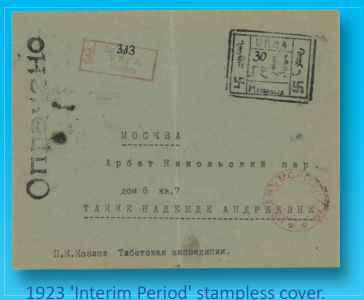
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