

THEMATICS

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Newsletter of *Thematics Southern Africa*/Nuusbrieff van *Tematika Suider-Afrika*

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ARTICLES FOR THEMNEWS

Most of the articles which appear in **Thematics** are sourced from a variety of available philatelic magazines; however, it would be wonderful to use more local articles. I have adjusted the newsletter to allow for local and longer articles. The request for articles remains as strong as ever.

FROM THE EDITOR OF THEMATICS

Dear Thematicists,

Once again the time is here to compile another newsletter. I have just completed another newsletter for my local club, and was able to source some good articles. But I try to make sure that both newsletters are as unique as possible. In this newsletter I will include another article about stamps in general and add some articles with a stronger thematic angle. Rather than writing a long-winded editorial, I have decided to keep it short and dive into the compilation immediately. In that case I may be able to send the newsletter on time, i.e. the first day of the month. I hope that you enjoy the contents, and that you may learn something that will improve your thematic collection and/or exhibit. Happy stamping.

Editor

THEMATIC MEETINGS / TEMATIESE BYEENKOMSTE

***First Saturday of the month** – The Pretoria Chapter meets at **10:00** in Greek Orthodox Church Hall, corner of Lynwood Road and Roper Street, (opposite UP main gate).

Contact: Helena Snyman 012-803-8922, 083-990-8953 or helena.snyman@gauteng.gov.za.

***First Saturday of the month** – The Western Cape Chapter meets at **09:30** in the Church Hall of the DR Church Bellville-Vallei, c/o Postma and St Andrews Street, Oakdale, Bellville.

Contact: Diederik Viljoen at 021-976-2661, 082-456-6653 or diederikaviljoen@gmail.com.

STAMP FAIRS

***First Saturday of the month** – The **Cape Stamp Fair** @ DR Church Bellville-Vallei, c/o Postma and St Andrews Streets, Oakdale, Bellville, Cape Town. **Contacts:** Ken Joseph 072-597-1287 ken@philatelicfriends.co.za Robbie Harm 082 925 7103, robertharm9@gmail.com. From 08:30 until 12:30. Please confirm the date of the next Stamp Fair, although reminders are sent via SMS/E-mail.

***First Saturday of the month** – **Pretoria Stamp Fair** @ Pretoria, Greek Orthodox Church, corner Lynwood Road and Roper Street, (opposite UP main gate) **Contact:** Paul van Zeyl at 012-329-2464 or randstamps@gmail.com. From 09:00, auction at 11:00.

***Second Saturday of the month** – **Kyalami Stamp Fair** @ Kyalami Country Club, 433 Maple Road, Kyalami from 09:00. **Contact:** Kenny Napier Kenny.napier@mweb.co.za or Clinton Goslin at 083-272-9367 or atlasauctioneers@lantic.net.

***Third Saturday of the month – QSA, Kyalami** @ Kyalami Country Club, 433 Maple Road, Kyalami from 09:00. **Contact:** Paul van Zeyl randstamps@gmail.com.

***Last Saturday of the month – Edenvale Stamp Fair** @ Edenvale Bowling Club, 6th Avenue, Edenvale. **Contact:** Kenny Napier Kenny.napier@mweb.co.za. From 09:00, auction at 11:00.

***Last Sunday of the month – Sunbird Stamp Auction** @ 1st Hillcrest Scout Hall, 16 Shortlands Road, Hillcrest from 09:00 until 13:00. **Contacts:** Kim Breytenbach sunbird.stampauctions@gmail.com.

THEMATICS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Pretoria Chapter – 3 June 2023

TSA Pretoria met as usual at the Greek Church at the venue for the stamp auction. There were 4 persons present with 4 apologies on a not-so-cold morning. We followed our previous pattern of Show and Tell with Marge showing a British war envelope with a thank you letter from a soldier for a balaclava received. It is from a L/Corp Lotz stationed in Piet Retief and addressed to Q Women Sewing and Knitting Circle, Bramley. Then Heinz Wirz continued with his very interesting banknote and coin story. He mentioned that the R20 banknote is the only one depicting a correct animal family as there is a mother, father and little elephant together. We showed him a group of R20s in number sequence which led to the information that with every 100 000 million banknotes of a specific currency, the numbering changes e.g. from R20 AB and numbers to AC and numbers. He then also showed us the 2011 R5 coin commemorating the Reserve Bank which is still the only coin worldwide with a banknote depicted on it. Again a very informative meeting.

Helena Snyman

WC Chapter – 6 May 2023

No report was received.

Reanie de Villiers

FACTS AND FEATS: THE POSTAL SERVICES

Trimmed stamps are those that have had part of their design removed before issue. The first example was in 1886 when Indian revenue stamps were re-issued for postal use after revenue inscriptions had been cut off at the top and bottom and a postage overprint applied to the remainder. Macao adopted a similar procedure in October 1887 when fiscal stamps had their upper or lower revenue counterfoils removed before overprinting for use as postage stamps. In 1892 Ecuador converted stamps, which had been overprinted for official or telegraphic use, back to ordinary postage stamps by trimming off the upper portion bearing the overprints. The French Indian Settlements issued fiscal stamps in 1903 cut in half. The upper halves were then overprinted for postal use.

Unified postage and revenue stamps were first issued in the UK on 12 July 1881. Previously



separate issues were made for postage and revenue purposes, but the Penny Lilac was inscribed **Postage and Inland Revenue**. The word **Inland** was omitted from subsequent stamps but appeared on the penny denomination till 1902. Only stamps up to the 2/6 denomination indicate that they could be used for postage and revenue, though higher



values were often used fiscally.

Stamps used abroad, in overseas post offices, agencies and consular bureaux, were a feature of international mail before the establishment of the UPU in 1874, and for some years thereafter. The first overseas post offices were the *bureaux étranger* established by the French in neighbouring countries, the first being opened in Venice on 24 March 1561 and suppressed on 3 November 1795. A French post office was opened in Rome about 1580 and functioned till 1793, being re-opened in 1801 and continuing until 1871. The first of these offices to have a postmark was in Geneva (**DE GENEVE**) by 1695 and from the same year date the name stamps used by French military forces at Courtrai and Suze (Piedmont) during campaigns in the War of the League of Augsburg. Permanent post offices and postal agencies were established by France and Britain in many countries during the nineteenth century to expedite the handling of overseas mail. Austria, Italy, Russia and India were among the other countries which operated post offices outside their own frontiers and used their own stamps, distinguished only by postal markings.

Facts and feats

from Mackay, James, *The Guinness Book of Stamps*, Guinness Publishing Ltd, Enfield, 1988

Please note that the information used for this article has in many cases been overtaken by events – Ed

TIMELINE – FIRST MAN ON THE MOON



On 20 July 1969 the United States managed to land the spacecraft, The Apollo Lunar Module **Eagle**, on the moon in the Sea of Tranquility, and Commander Neil Armstrong became the first man to step on the moon. This was all made possible by the spaceflight **Apollo 11. Eagle**, piloted by Buzz Aldrin, landed on the moon at 20:17 UTC. Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon's surface some 6 hours 39 minutes later, making the now famous quote *One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind*. He stepped on the moon at 02:56 UTC on 21 July 1969. Aldrin joined him 19 minutes later, and they spent about two and a quarter hours together exploring the site they had named **Tranquility Base** upon landing. Armstrong and Aldrin collected 21.5 kg of lunar material to bring back to Earth. While they were walking on the moon, pilot Michael Collins flew the Command Module **Columbia** into lunar orbit. The lunar module **Eagle** was on the moon's surface for 21 hours, 36 minutes before lifting off to rejoin **Columbia**. Apollo 11 was launched by a Saturn V rocket from Kennedy Space Centre on Merritt Island, Florida, on 16 July 1969 at 13:32 UTC, and it was the fifth crewed mission of NASA's Apollo program. The Apollo spacecraft had three parts: a command module (CM) with a cabin for the three astronauts, the only part that returned to Earth; a service module (SM), which supported the command module with propulsion, electrical power, oxygen, and water; and a lunar module (LM) that had two stages—a descent stage for landing on the Moon and an ascent stage to place the astronauts back into lunar orbit. After being sent to the Moon by Saturn V's third stage, the astronauts separated the spacecraft from it and travelled for three days until they entered lunar orbit. Armstrong and Aldrin then moved into **Eagle** and landed in the Sea of Tranquility on 20 July. The astronauts used **Eagle's** ascent stage to lift off from the lunar surface and rejoin Collins in the command module. They jettisoned **Eagle** before they performed the manoeuvres that propelled **Columbia** out of the last of its 30 lunar orbits onto a trajectory back to Earth. They returned to Earth and splashed down in the Pacific Ocean on 24 July after more than eight days in space.



Armstrong's first step onto the lunar surface was broadcast on live TV to a worldwide audience. Apollo 11 effectively proved U.S. victory in the Space Race to demonstrate spaceflight superiority, by fulfilling a national goal proposed in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, "before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth."

UTC is Coordinated Universal Time, the time generally used as the basis for all clocks worldwide - Ed

International Society of World Wide Stamp Collectors and Wikipedia

An article by Christer Brunström in Linn's Stamp News Weekly of 21 November 2022

CONDITION IS EVERYTHING

The condition of a stamp, and its appearance, is arguably the most important factor in determining a stamp's value. Of course, supply and demand set the price of a stamp. The effect of supply is demonstrated by the Inverted Jenny 24-cent airmail stamp of 1918, with only 100 possible copies in existence (**left**). The C3a is much more valuable than the Scott C3, the regular 24-cent airmail stamp, which has a printing of more than 2 million. The effect of demand is shown by the \$1.92 special printing newspaper stamp of 1875 (**right**), which had only 41 copies sold, less than half the number of C3a, yet has a catalogue value of 5 per cent of C3a. Likewise, collectors demand stamps in excellent condition and generally avoid stamps in poor condition. This directly affects how much a collector is willing to pay for any given stamp. When collectors refer to a condition, they refer to the stamp's appearance both front and back. For this article, the condition will not refer to a stamp's centring, or "grade," which is typically meant by terms such as fine, very fine, extremely fine, and so on. All these terms imply that the stamp's condition is excellent, that is, the stamp has no faults.



Tears, scuffs, and stains, oh my

Stamps are quite fragile pieces of paper, easily damaged. Defects visible on the front of the stamp include tears, pinholes, scuffs and scrapes, creases, stains, foxing, colour changelings such as oxidation, heavy cancels, cancelled-to-order (CTO), pen cancels, punched cancels, being cut-to-shape, short or missing perforations, clipped or trimmed perforations, straight edges, and reperforations. In each case, even a minute example is enough to ruin a stamp's condition and make the stamp unsaleable.

Tears



Tears result from careless separation from the sheet of stamps, or from improper handling and storage (**left**).

The barely noticeable tear at the bottom of this otherwise well-centred, visually appealing stamp makes it undesirable for most collectors. At best, it would be considered a space filler.

Pinholes

In the early decades of stamp collecting, dealers would display their stamps for sale by mounting them on a board with pins.



Over time, collectors showed a strong preference for stamps not damaged by a hole, and this practice ended. Still, many very nice, well-centred 19th-century stamps exist with a pinhole, sometimes easily overlooked (**above right**).

Scuffs



A scuff or scrape can be considered a thinning of the stamp's front surface. These typically result from damage during mail handling, or improper storage (**left**).

This \$1 Patrick Henry definitive of 1955 has a noticeable scuff running through the word "postage."

Creases

Creases usually result from careless handling or improper storage. Sometimes hinged stamps in an album will bend and then crease when the pages are improperly turned (**right**).

This 10-cent Trans-Mississippi commemorative of 1898 has a diagonal crease running from the top to the left side of the stamp.



For very old stamps, sometimes the gum itself will crease the paper over a long period. Creases can be disguised by pressing the stamp. The crease is no longer visible, but the fibres are still broken.

As the fluid evaporates from this dipped stamp, creases become quite evident as areas that appear white before the rest of the stamp dries.

After soaking in watermark fluid, the damaged area becomes visible as a white area in the paper as the fluid evaporates (**left**).

Stains

Stains mar the surface of the stamp. Quite often, stains result during soaking when the dye of the paper transfers to the adjoining stamp (**right**).

The 40-cent Lillian Gilbreth definitive of 1984 on the left was stained by coloured paper during soaking. A normal copy is shown on the right.



Another unfortunate cause of stains is the use of cellophane tape for mounting the stamp. Over several years, the tape's adhesive reacts with the paper beneath it, quite often creating a brown stain (**left**).

Since the stain has become part of the paper itself, it is impossible to remove the stain without removing the affected paper. Today, some collectors use transparent ("invisible") tape instead of paper hinges to mount stamps. Over time even this "invisible" tape will damage the stamps. Related to stains caused by cellophane tape are the

stains caused by the adhesive on modern self-adhesive stamps. A prime example is the United States 10-cent Christmas adhesive. Within months after their issue, collectors found



these stamps turning brown as the adhesive reacted with the paper underneath (**left and right**).

This 10-cent Christmas issue of 1974 has stains caused by its self-adhesive. For comparison, the other stamp had its self-adhesive removed shortly after its issue in 1974.



The Scott catalogue values these stamps in the stained condition, implying that unstained stamps should command a premium. Stamp printers reacted to the problem by adding a coating between the paper and the adhesive. Stamp technology improved so self-stick

U.S. stamps became more prevalent in the 1990s and most stamps have been issued in that format since 2002. However, it is still too soon to tell if that will prevent the adhesive on modern, current stamps from eventually slowly reacting with the paper and staining it.



Collectors should save unused self-adhesive stamps with the backing paper cut, if at all possible, with margins extending beyond the stamp itself on all four sides (**left**). The USPS issues some self-adhesive stamps with roulettes in the backing paper, which makes for easy separation from the sheet of stamps. However, separating the stamp along the

roulettes exposes the tips of the die cuts, which can then make the separated stamp stick to anything it touches. Keeping a margin of backing paper around the stamp avoids this situation. Sometimes stains result when a fungus attacks the stamp's gum and paper in environmental heat and humidity. These are known as foxing or "tropical" stains (**right**).

Some collectors do not view these as a fault, but rather as proof that the stamps actually were sold in a post office in some exotic, tropical location. However, most collectors avoid stamps with stains. Some foxing can be removed from stamps without gum, such as used stamps, by carefully applying a diluted solution of bleach to the affected area, followed by soaking the treated stamp in distilled water. A stamp treated in this manner will still show signs of damage.



Oxidation



Oxidation refers to the reaction of a stamp's ink with sulfur in the atmosphere. This typically results in an orange stamp turning brown (**normal stamp left and oxidised right**). What occurs is that the chrome yellow pigment (lead chromate) reacts with sulfur. Other pigments containing lead, such as red lead, will show the same effect. Oxidation, better termed "sulfurization,"

can be reversed by applying a diluted (2 per cent) solution of hydrogen peroxide to a stamp without gum. Some have reported good results for gummed stamps by exposing the stamp to the fumes from a hydrogen peroxide solution.

Fugitive Inks



In a similar vein, some stamps around the turn of the last century were printed with fugitive inks. These inks would change colour in contact with water, as a means to prevent reuse. Some stamps from Great Britain and British colonies are notorious for this (**left**). As an extreme example, the ink on some Netherlands Indies stamps would dissolve in contact with water. Of course, such stamps are considered as having poor condition, although they do seem to appear quite often.

Cancels

Heavy cancels

Although not technically a fault, a very heavy cancellation detracts from the appearance of an otherwise sound postally used stamp (**right**). The heavy cancel completely obscures the fine details of the stamp, sometimes making identification impossible.



CTO

A CTO stamp is one cancelled to order, that is, a stamp sold by the post office already cancelled, not having seen actual postal use. Quite often post offices sold CTOs at a considerable discount from face value. A cancelled stamp with full gum can be reliably recognised as cancelled to order. Some post offices sold CTOs without gum. In these cases, or in cases of a CTO stamp that had its gum washed off, the cancel typically is much clearer and stronger than an actual postal usage cancel (**left**). Most collectors strongly prefer postally used stamps over CTOs. Some collectors consider a CTO as a variety of the underlying stamp and go so far as to collect these with full gum.



Pen cancels

Collectors generally reject stamps with pen cancels (**right**), even though a postal clerk used a pen to prevent the reuse of a stamp that missed cancellation. Used stamps issued by a few countries in the 19th century are a special case.



When this Venezuela 1-real Bolivar definitive of 1871 was in use, post offices lacked cancelling handstamps, and postage was cancelled by pen. In this case, the catalogue value refers to stamps with pen cancels.

These stamps were normally canceled by pen since postal marking devices were not available (**left**). The Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue usually includes a note about such stamps.



Punched holes

U.S. revenue stamps were sometimes cancelled with a pattern of punched holes (**right**). As noted in the Scott catalogue, these punched cancels detract from a stamp's value. Punched cancels should not be confused with perfin, which are a design of holes punched as an owner's mark before use. The Scott catalogue lists some government issued perfins (**left**).



The Australia 1-penny King George V stamp of 1926 with the perfin "O S" for official use.



Perf and imperf

Before perforations became common, some countries printed stamps with non-rectangular shapes. Postal patrons and collectors would often trim the corners to the shape of the image. Collectors consider such cut-to-shape stamps as damaged.



Somewhat related to this condition are perforated non-rectangular stamps with missing attached selvedge (**right**). Collectors strongly prefer these stamps with the selvedge attached, forming a square or rectangle (**left**).



Clipped

Clipped perforations result from separating the stamp from the sheet with scissors. Sometimes this state is unavoidable, such as in the United States' special printing stamps of 1875, which were mostly sold separately by scissors



(*right*). Apart from this special case, clipped perforations are avoided by collectors.

Incomplete

Incomplete perforation results in what is known as blind perforations. Although somewhat unsightly, these are not considered a defect (*right*).



Pulled perms



Like tears, short or missing perforations result from careless separation from the sheet of stamps. Sometimes this defect is described as "nibbed" or "pulled" perforations (*left*).

An 1898 U.S. 10-cent Trans-Mississippi stamp with missing perforations at the bottom right and right, as well as a missing top left corner.

Trimmed



Sometimes, collectors will come across stamps with perforations deliberately trimmed, to resemble a scarcer variety. For example, a stamp with perforations on all four sides might have the top and bottom perforations trimmed off so that the stamp resembles a much scarcer coil stamp (*left and right*).

The 1-cent Franklin is definitive of 1908 (*left*) and has trimmed perforations at the top and bottom, making it resemble the much scarcer coil version. For comparison, a normal copy of the same stamp is shown on the right. The height of the trimmed stamp is only 23.6 millimetres. This easily fits between the perforations of the normal stamp, which has perforations 23.8 mm apart. For reference, the correct height of the coil version would be 25 mm. In addition, a close inspection of the trimmed stamp shows traces of perforations along the bottom edge.



This situation might also occur when the imperforated variety is much scarcer than the perforated variety. Collectors should take care to recognize these manipulations when inspecting stamps that are more valuable as a coil or imperforate.

Natural straight edges

From the 1870s into the 1930s, U.S. stamps printed with flat plates were issued in panes with straight edges. This occurred when full sheets were printed and perforated without perforations in the space between panes, resulting in stamps on the outside of the pane having one or two (at the corner) straight edges (*left*).



This 5-cent Panama-Pacific commemorative of 1915 has straight edges at the left side and bottom, indicating it came from the lower left corner of the pane of 70. Only one out of 280 of these 5-cent stamps would share these characteristics.

Although such stamps would be scarcer than their four-sided neighbours, collectors generally shun stamps with straight edges, since they resemble stamps with clipped perforations.

The straight edges at the right and bottom of this 10-cent Jefferson Memorial definitive of 1973 show that it came from a booklet pane. Less than 20 per cent of these booklet pane stamps share these characteristics.

Stamps with straight edges can also originate from U.S. booklet panes (*right*).



Reperforations

Reperforations result from attempting to enhance a stamp's value by perforating a naturally occurring straight edge on a stamp with three perforated sides, or by altering an imperforate stamp by adding perforations (**below left**).



All four sides of this stamp have fake perforations. Note the uniformly straight perforation tips. It actually is a trial colour-proof with fake added perforations.

Such alterations can be very difficult to detect, enough that a seller in good faith will sell a reperforated stamp unaware of the alteration. Close examination of a stamp more valuable perforated than imperforated is a

must.

This 2-cent definitive of 1912 is an imperforate stamp with perforations added at the top and bottom, to make it appear as a more valuable coil stamp. A digital comparison of the top and bottom perforation rows, as seen below, shows that the two rows are not parallel.



If the rows of perforations on the opposing sides of a stamp are not exactly parallel, then that strongly suggests that the stamp has been reperforated. Using modern technology to scan a stamp, and then using digital images to match the opposing perforations, simplifies this task (**right**).

The back of the stamp

Defects that affect the back of the stamp include thins, pencil and ink markings, missing gum, disturbed gum, and regumming. Although a hinge mark is not a defect, some collectors are willing to pay a premium for a never-hinged stamp.

Markings

Some collectors make a habit of writing the catalogue number on the back of the stamp after they've made the effort to identify it. Although a very light pencil mark should, in



theory, be easily erased, all too often a heavy-handed pencil inscription, or even worse, ink, is impossible to erase (**left**).

The heavy hand used to inscribe the catalogue number on the stamp on the left makes the marking impossible to erase. The ink notation on the stamp on the right makes it unacceptable to most collectors.

More confounding is the practice of marking the back of a never-hinged stamp (**right**).



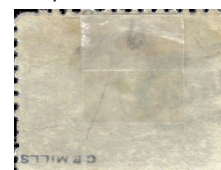
This stamp cannot be treated as never hinged because of the pencil marking.

Although technically such a marked stamp is still never hinged, it cannot command the premium of a never-hinged stamp. Collectors generally prefer stamps without any such marks. Collectors who insist on marking their stamps



should consider placing their notes on a hinge, which can be safely removed with the proper technique. On the other hand, there are markings on the backs of stamps that are welcomed by most collectors. These are the signatures of experts (**left**).

Although it was never the practice in the United States, for many decades experts in Europe would sign or mark the back of stamps. European experts developed a system where the placement of the mark would indicate whether a stamp was mint or used, with or without an overprint, imperforate or perforate, and so on. Sadly, crooks eventually learned to forge these marks. A genuine expert's mark should not detract from the condition of the stamp, but collectors should not accept its validity without question. There was an era when dealers marked the backs of valuable stamps (**right**).



C.F. Mills, a stamp dealer, marked the back of the stamp above as an advertisement.

These should not be regarded as guarantees, rather, merely as a note that the dealer

once sold that stamp.

Regumming

Given the premium some collectors are willing to pay for never-hinged stamps, it was inevitable that regummed stamps began to appear. Regumming removes all traces of hinging and conveniently covers any thins. Regumming is sometimes evident as gum that is too perfect. Gum tends to crack or wrinkle over long periods. For a stamp more than a century old, perfectly smooth gum is a clear sign of regumming (**left**). Valuable unused stamps with gum should be submitted to an expert for a detailed analysis regarding regumming.



Thins

Thins are caused by removing a hinge without soaking, which results in a hinge being thin (**right**).



The thin at the top of this stamp was caused by the improper removal of a hinge.

Sometimes a novice collector will try to remove a stamp from its cover by peeling it off, which can easily cause a large thin (**left**).

The large thin on this stamp was apparently caused by peeling the stamp off its envelope.

An unusual type of thin affects a few stamps of Germany. The 1935



Ostropa souvenir sheet and the 1937 Zeppelin stamps were printed with gum containing sulfuric acid. The gum quickly turned brown and then started to attack and thin the paper. On the souvenir sheet, this is most evident in the watermark (**right**).

This 1935 Ostropa souvenir sheet of Germany has been badly damaged by its gum.

When the stamps were issued, collectors were advised to remove the gum if the stamps were intended to be kept for collection. Unused stamps of these two issues are considered in good condition only if they have no gum. Stamps of these two issues with gum are considered damaged.



Gum

Collectors today expect unused stamps that were originally issued with gum to have that original gum. Early in the 20th century, some collectors feared that the gum would eventually stain the paper of the stamp. These collectors proceeded to wash all their mint stamps free of gum. However, over time, those fears have been shown to be mostly groundless. Unless the stamp was issued without gum, stamps with missing gum, besides the exceptions mentioned earlier, are considered damaged. Disturbed gum results from improper storage in high humidity or heat (**left**).



This example of disturbed gum shows ink from an underlying stamp transferred to the gum.

Tropical gum is a specific type of disturbed gum. Certain kinds of gum turn brown when subjected to high heat and humidity. The gum then stains the underlying paper (**right and below right**). These examples of the 1913 Mauritania 1-centime definitive compare a stamp with tropical gum (**left**) with a normal stamp, which has been stained by the brown tropical gum.





An extreme example of improper storage is a stamp stored in a clear acetate mount. Over time, the acetate shrinks, first glazing the gum, and then eventually shrinking the stamp inside (**below left**). The reality of the stamp market today is that never hinged stamps sell for a premium over hinged stamps. Collectors must realize that a stamp with an extremely light, minute hinge mark is still hinged, and cannot be considered never hinged. In cases where the premium is substantial, a certificate stating that the stamp is never hinged is necessary.

Additional factors

Some factors can increase the value of a stamp over one in simply sound conditions. These include unusually wide margins, a vivid colour, attached selvedge, or an interesting cancel. Especially in the 19th century, the space between rows of perforations would vary in a sheet of stamps. Occasionally, this resulted in a stamp with very broad margins (**right**).

This 3-cent Washington is definitive of 1879 and has unusually broad margins.



Such stamps are usually very desirable, and command a premium in the market. Over time, the colours in the dyes used for printing stamps tend to fade. What may have been once a vivid pink 150 years ago may now look more like a



dull grey. This fading accelerates with exposure to light and heat. As a result, some stamps from the 19th century with bright colours become more desirable. Attached selvedge on a stamp from a margin of a sheet can enhance the condition of that stamp. For example, one subset of collecting is plate number singles (**left**).

The attached selvedge showing the plate number makes this \$5 postage-due stamp of 1930 quite desirable to some collectors.

As described earlier, heavy, unreadable cancels are undesirable and detract from a stamp's condition. However, a well-centred (socked on the nose) cancel can make the stamp more interesting than one with a corner cancel (**right**).

The well-centred, easily legible cancel improves the value of this 3-cent commemorative of 1935. The cancel is dated the first day of issue, in the first-day city, Hartford Connecticut, making the stamp even more desirable.



Every collector is free to collect the stamps that interest them, regardless of condition. Collectors sometimes accept a stamp in poor condition as a space filler. However, the collector should realize that condition will have a large impact on the desirability of the stamps to other collectors, and their ultimate value.

The Author Thomas Bieniosek expertizes stamps of Poland and Argentina for the American Philatelic Expertizing Service (APEX). He has presented programs for the APS Summer Seminar for many years. Tom is a current director of the American Philatelic Research Library.

An article by Thomas Bieniosek in the America Philatelist of June 2023

MARIE-ANTOINETTE AND MUSIC

Archduchess Maria Antonia Josepha Johanna of Habsburg-Lorraine was born in Vienna on 2 November 1755 as the fifteenth child of Maria Theresa of Austria. At fourteen she married the heir to the



throne of France. After her husband acceded to the throne as Louis XVI on May 10, 1774, she became Queen of France under the name of Marie Antoinette. She was guillotined on October 16, 1793, a victim of the French Revolution.

Whether Marie-Antoinette deserves a place in music history remains a matter of debate. *"Now Marie-Antoinette's discernment in artistic values was by no means outstanding, neither in music, nor in painting, nor literature. She had a certain natural taste, but not one that was self-examining, just casually curious, one that obediently follows every new fashion and is enthusiastic about everything that is socially recognized as a flash in the pan"*, wrote Stefan Zweig in 1932 in his well-known biography **"Marie-Antoinette, Portrait of an Average Character"**. For Patrick Barbier (**"Marie-Antoinette et la Musique"**, 2022), on the other hand, she was *"the most music-loving and musical queen in France's history"*. Where is the truth? This question can be answered in six steps illustrated by stamps.

1. Mozart:

On 13 October 1762, the six-year-old Mozart played for the imperial family in the Hall of Mirrors at Schönbrunn Palace. Wolfgang received a sumptuously embroidered gala outfit for his performance (it was customary to give away discarded children's clothes of the Archdukes to subordinates). He wears this outfit in a well-known painting by Pietro Antonio Lorenzoni. Georg Nikolaus von Nissen, the husband of Mozart's widow, writes in his **"Biography of W.A. Mozart"** (1828): "We have the following anecdote from this trip. When the boy was once with the Empress, the archduchesses, among whom was the later unfortunate Queen of France, took him around. He fell on for him the unusually slippery floor. One of the princesses didn't care; the other, Marie-Antoinette, picked him up and was kind to him. He said to her: 'You are good; I want to marry you'; she told her mother, and when she asked Wolfgang how he came to this decision, he answered: 'Out of gratitude; she was good to me whereas her sister cared for nothing.'" Unfortunately, this anecdote, which is not found in any older source, is probably too good to be true. Mozart never met Marie-Antoinette again, despite his long stay in Paris in 1778.



2. A mediocre musician:



Like all children of noble families, Marie-Antoinette had music lessons. At the imperial court in Vienna, she studied harpsichord, flute, harp and singing with Christoph Willibald Gluck. However, it remains unclear how long she studied with Gluck and what the composer was responsible for. The books about Gluck present different opinions and funnily enough, the Wikipedia articles in German, French and English give differing instrument lists ... Jean-Georges Noverre was responsible for the dance lessons. The English writer Horace Walpole wrote, *"She does not dance to the beat, but the beat is to blame"*... In Versailles, Marie-Antoinette primarily perfected her harp playing, her favourite instrument. However, that so few sources praise her playing is a bit disconcerting for a queen. *"As with everything else, she had casually tried to make music, the piano lessons with Master Gluck in Vienna hadn't gotten her very far, she dabbled on the harpsichord and as an actress on the stage and as a singer in intimate*



circles" (Stefan Zweig). Marie-Antoinette did not excel as a composer either. From her pen there is only the melody of the romance "C'est mon ami" to a text by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian (1755-1794).

3. Where is the queen's harp?:



Several harps preserved in various European cities are said to have belonged to the Queen. But there is no written evidence to prove this. In France one finds highly decorated instruments by Jean-Henri Naderman (1734-1799). That these instruments inscribed "J.H. Naderman Maître Luthier Facteur de Harpe ordinaire Madame la Dauphine" (later "de la Reine") identify him as a purveyor to the court, but do not prove that the instrument belonged to the Queen. One of Naderman's harps from the Music Museum in Paris is featured on the stamp from France. It shows, next to the instrument, the name of the harp maker and the date 1787. Some stamp catalogues describe the instrument as the "Queen's Harp",

which is not correct.

4. An effective patron:

Like many monarchs, Marie Antoinette was a patron to artists. She did this almost exclusively to benefit musicians. The first of these was Gluck, who tried unsuccessfully to have his opera "Iphigénie en Aulide" performed in Paris. Marie-Antoinette was informed of this by the Austrian ambassador, and despite many intrigues, the Paris Opera managed to force the performance of the opera in 1774. However, this was probably due more to a recommendation from Maria Theresa than to the Queen's



understanding of the innovation in Gluck's music. In any event, the performance marks an important moment in music history: "After each aria, Marie-Antoinette demonstratively applauds from her box. Just to be polite, the brothers-in-law and the whole court have to join in the clapping, and so, despite all the intrigue, the evening becomes an event in music history. Gluck had conquered Paris" (Stefan Zweig). Five premieres followed: the French version of

"Orphée et Euridice" (1774), "Alceste" (1776), "Armide" (1777), "Iphigénie en Tauride" (1779) and "Echo et Narcisse" (1779). Thereafter, Marie-Antoinette favoured



the arrival of foreign artists in France. Three of them were Italian: Niccolò Piccinni (1728-1800), Antonio Sacchini (1730-1786) and Antonio Salieri (1750-1825). Her favourite composer, whom she supported the most, was André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (1741-1813), who became



"Director of the Queen's Private Music" in 1787. However, this did not prevent him from later composing works to celebrate the Revolution and Napoleon (see Musikus 148). The Queen was also the founder of two important institutions: the "Ecole royale de Musique et de Déclamation" (1784, forerunner of the Conservatoire), and the Theatre for the Italian Repertoire ("Théâtre de Monsieur", 1789).

5. Haydn:

Marie-Antoinette more than once attended the "Concert de la Loge Olympique", conducted by the composer and conductor Joseph Bologne de Saint-George (1745-1799). It was there that in 1785 Haydn wrote the six "Paris Symphonies". It is believed that the Queen was particularly fond of Symphony No. 85, the Allegretto of which is based on the theme of the French song "La gentille et jeune Lisette". This is probably why this symphony bears the nickname "La Reine" (since 1786). The Queen's only notable failure was that she neglected to make the Chevalier de Saint-George head of French opera, probably because his mother was a slave from Guadeloupe.



6. The dulcimer player:

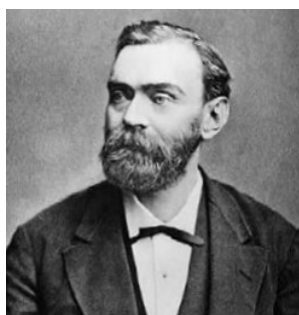


"La Joueuse de tympanon" (the dulcimer player) is one of the most extraordinary music machines of the 18th century. It is the work of two German artists: the watchmaker Peter Kinzing (1745-1816) and the cabinet maker David Roentgen (1743-1816). The figure actually plays, for it is the mallets held by its hands that make the strings of the instrument vibrate. This 'jukebox' can play eight different pieces of music. Only one has been identified so far, the "Aria de la Bergère" (Song of the Shepherdess) from Gluck's opera "Armide". The dulcimer player was bought by Marie-Antoinette in 1785. She gave the jukebox to the "Académie des Sciences". Since 1864, "La Joueuse de tympanon" has been on display in the "Musée des Arts et Métiers" in Paris.

An article by Bernard Dormy in Der Musikus No 154 of March 2023

ALFRED NOBEL AND HIS LEGACY

On his death in 1896 Alfred Bernard Nobel left the bulk of his considerable fortune in trust to establish five prizes in peace, physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine and literature – the Nobel Prize awards. Using stamp issues from around the world, The author looks at how Nobel, his prizes and past winners have been recognised on stamps.



Every year in early October there are announcements about the Nobel Prizes, international awards in six specific areas, peace, physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature and economics. Alfred Bernard Nobel (1833–96) (**left**) a Swedish businessman, chemist, engineer, inventor and philanthropist was born in Stockholm at Norrlandsgatan 9 (**right**), the fourth son of Immanuel and Caroline Nobel. In 1842 the family relocated to St



Petersburg to join Immanuel who had moved there in 1837 and prospered as a manufacturer of explosive mines and machine tools. When the family returned to Stockholm his brothers, Robert and Ludvig, remained in Russia. Alfred was involved with the explosive compound nitroglycerine, which when combined with other substances, such as kieselguhr, and fine sand, gave the stable explosives dynamite, blasting gelatine, ballistite, (a precursor of cordite) – he patented all of these compounds. When he passed away in 1896, he left

behind what was then one of the world's largest private fortunes. Besides the royalties on his patents, of which he had 355, he owned more than 90 factories manufacturing explosives and ammunition. He also had a significant number of shares in his brothers, Robert and Ludvig, Nobel Brothers Petroleum Company, Branobel, based in Baku, Azerbaijan. At the time Baku was producing more than 50 per cent of the world's oil. On



27 November 1895, he signed his last will and testament, which featured on the combined stamp issue of Germany and Sweden (**left**). As he had no immediate family, the bulk of his fortune was left in trust to establish five prizes in peace, physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine and literature. The assets were to be invested in a fund consisting of safe securities. At the time Nobel's testament led to much skepticism and criticism and thus

it was not until 26 April 1897 that it was approved. The Nobel Foundation, a private organisation, was founded on 29 June 1900 specifically to manage the finances and administration of the Nobel Prizes. His total fortune, adjusted for inflation, would be worth over US\$250 million today. The current value of each prize is about US\$1,100,000. A prize in economics was established in 1968 by a donation from Sweden's Central Bank to the Nobel Foundation to commemorate its 300th anniversary and the first prize was awarded in 1969. It is administered by the Nobel Foundation and although not a part of Nobel's testament it is generally regarded as the Nobel Prize in Economics.

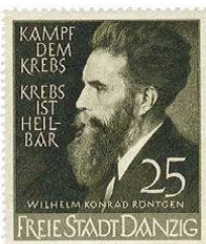


The first prizes



On 10 December 1901, the fifth anniversary of Nobel's death, the first Nobel Prizes, in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine and literature, awarded by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, were presented in Stockholm, and the Peace Prize was awarded by the Norwegian Nobel Committee in Christiania, now Oslo. The winners all received a medal (**left**). The later Economics Prize is also awarded at the ceremony in Stockholm. The 1901 winners, all seen on stamps, were: chemistry – Jacobus

Henricus van't Hoff (**right**), Netherlands, for the discovery of the laws of chemical dynamics and osmotic pressure in solutions;



physics – Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen (**left**), Germany, in recognition of the discovery of the remarkable rays subsequently named

after him, in English X-rays; literature – René François

Armand Prudhomme (**right**), France, poet and essayist whose works showed a rare combination of the qualities of both heart and intellect; and physiology or medicine –



Emil von Behring (**below left**), Germany, for his discovery of a diphtheria



antitoxin. Röntgen is shown receiving his award from Swedish Crown Prince, Gustaf, in the Great Hall of the Royal Academy of Music on a 1995 Swedish stamp issue (**below**). The

ceremony was followed by a banquet at the Grand Hotel. In a short ceremony on 10 December

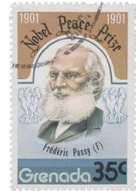
at Stortinget, the Norwegian Parliament, the 1901

Peace Prize winners were announced, in absentia,





by Jorgen Gunnarss Løvland, representing the Nobel committee. The joint winners were Henri Dunant (**below left**), Switzerland, co-founder of the Red Cross and Frédéric Passy (**right**), France, economist and pacifist, a founding member of several peace societies and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Red Cross has been awarded the prize three more times.

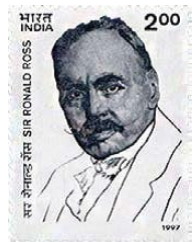


Initially, the award ceremonies were relatively low-key events, but as the awards are now considered the most prestigious prizes in the world, the award ceremonies, as well as the



banquets in Stockholm and Oslo on 10 December, have been transformed from local Swedish and Norwegian arrangements into major international events that receive worldwide coverage by the print media, radio and television. The 1901 winners, all Western continental Europeans, are seen together on the Sweden and Norway stamps shown **left**. The following

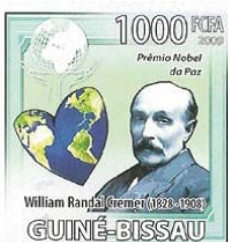
year, the British physician Ronald Ross was awarded the Physiology or Medicine Prize for work on the transmission of malaria, becoming the first British prize winner. In 1906 Theodore Roosevelt won the Peace Prize for negotiating peace in the 1904–5 Russo-Japan war and was the first non-European to win a prize. Ross was born in India, the son of a general in the British Indian Army, and was the first winner born outside Europe. India honoured him with a stamp in 1997, marking the centenary of the publication of his discovery that malaria can be transmitted to humans by mosquitoes (**right**).



There are numerous USA stamps showing the former president, the one illustrated **left** is from the series Celebrating the Century 1900s. The first Economics Prize was awarded in 1969. The winners were Ragnar Frisch, Norway, and Jan Tinbergen, Netherlands, both for work in economics. Tinbergen is featured in the 1995 Netherlands series of prize winners' stamps (**right**), but the author has been unable to find a Ragnar Frisch stamp. British

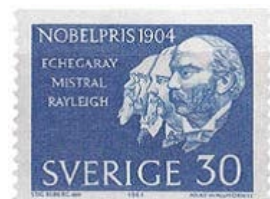


achievements have not been neglected; up to 2021, there have been 137 British prize winners. The second winner of the Peace Prize and the first British-born winner was William Randal Cremer 'for his longstanding and devoted effort in favour of the ideas of peace and arbitration' (**left**). In 1904 the British scientist's Baron Rayleigh (John W Strutt) and Sir William Ramsay were awarded prizes in physics (for the discovery of the rare gas argon) and chemistry (for the discovery of the rare gases neon, krypton and xenon) respectively. Rudyard Kipling, also born in India, the son of British parents was the Literature Prize winner in 1907, the first writer in English to receive the prize. At the time Kipling was the youngest prize winner. Another early winner was J J Thomson, the discoverer of the electron, who won the Physics Prize in 1906. It is noteworthy that six of his research assistants were awarded the Physics Prize and two the Chemistry Prize as well as his son. Some early winners are honoured on Swedish stamps (**right**).



Early British winners appeared on these 1964 Swedish stamps, which included Baron Raleigh for physics and Sir William Ramsay for chemistry, who won in 1904. In 1906, J J Thomson won the Physics Prize and in 1907 Rudyard Kipling was the literature winner

The first British winner of the Economics Prize was Sir John Hicks, who won jointly with Kenneth J Arrow (USA) in 1972.



Anniversaries



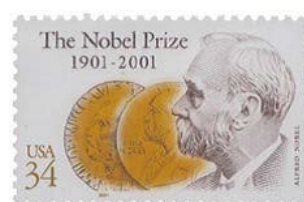
Various anniversaries in the Nobel story have been noted with stamps. Monaco issued a stamp in 1983 for the sesquicentennial of his birth (**left**) and Montenegro for the 175th anniversary of his birth in 2008. The 50th anniversary of Nobel's death in 1946 was commemorated by two Swedish stamps (**right**).



Germany issued a stamp to mark the 50th anniversary of the award to Röntgen (**left**), which was also the 50th anniversary of the prizes. In 1996 South Africa produced a sheet of nine Nobel Prize winners and Nobel for the centenary of Nobel's death. The Nobel stamp was also used in a miniature sheet marking the centenary of the dynamite factory in Modderfontein (**right**). The factory is now a walk-through museum. The 75th anniversary of the prizes showing the winners, except the Peace Prize, are seen on the 1976 Uruguay stamp with four of the 1901 winners, Emil von Behring, Rene Sully Prudhomme, Wilhelm K Röntgen and Jacobus H P Van'Hoff.



Centennial of the prizes



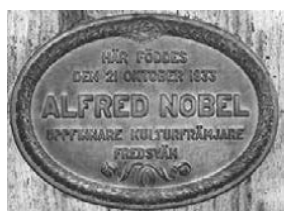
The centenary of the prizes in 2001 was marked by numerous countries. Nobel was featured on the Sweden and USA joint issue (**US stamp left**), as well as issues from Bosnia and Herzegovina (**below**), Monaco and Macedonia. Norway marked the centenary of the Peace Prize on 14 September with a set of eight stamps



showing seven of the winners and Alfred Nobel. Albania issued a series of four stamps with previous winners, including American Ferid Murad, co-winner of the 1988 Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology, who was of Albanian descent (**left**). Great Britain had a series of six stamps for the centenary, one for each prize. Chemistry is featured in the second class with the carbon 60 molecule, known as buckyball; physics is shown on the 65p airmail stamp with a boron molecule hologram; literature on the 45p stamp has a micro text of T S Eliot's *The Addressing of the Cats*; physiology or medicine has a 40p stamp with a green cross; the Peace Prize is represented by an embossed dove on the E stamp and the first class stamp with a red and blue globe is for economics (**right**).



Stockholm



Stockholm has not forgotten Nobel, although his birth house at Norrlandsgatan 9 has been demolished. The plaque is now located at the present building at Norrlandsgatan 9 (**left**). The Nobel Museum was opened in 2001. It is situated in the former Stock Exchange Building, one of Stockholm's most beautiful 18th-century. There is a Nobel bust at the Karolinska Institute, a research-led medical university at Solna in the Stockholm suburbs (**right**). The annual Nobel banquet is now held at City



Hall and there is a Nobel relief on the outside colonnade down by the water. Nobel is buried in Stockholm's Northern Cemetery, appropriately on Alfred Nobels Allé, among several Swedish nobles and well-known citizens. The name Nobel will be remembered in perpetuity as element 102, first identified in the 1950s, is named Nobelium, in Nobel's honour.

An article by Michael Peach in Gibbons Stamp Monthly of December 2022

Compiled by Robert Harm 29 May 2023

PHILATELIC TERMS: N-4

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Naval Cancellation



The collection of covers bearing the cancellation of US naval ships is a popular branch of philately in the United States. The first post offices on US naval vessels were established on 1 July 1908 aboard 69 ships. Since then many different types of cancels have been used, ranging from rubber hand stamps to machine cancels. A cancellation classification system used by naval cover collectors was developed in the

late 1920s by Dr Francis E. Locy and is called the Locy System. A branch of naval cancellation collecting that has enjoyed considerable popularity involves cacheted covers marking the various stages in a ship's life. Cacheted covers will be prepared for such events as keel-laying, launching, commissioning, and so on.

NCE

This is an overprint found on the general issues of the French colonies for use in New Caledonia.



ND HRVATSKA



This is an inscription found on some stamps of Croatia issued during World War II.

ND HRVATSKA RATNI DOPRINOS

This is an inscription found on some postal tax stamps issued by Croatia in 1944.



Negeri Sembilan

The above spelling of Negri Sembilan is the spelling of the Malaysian state of Negri Sembilan used on the Malaysia omnibus issues featuring orchids (1965) (**right**) and butterflies (released in 1971).



Negri Sembilan

This is a state on the Malayan Peninsula facing the Strait of Malacca and just to the south of Selangor. Negri Sembilan was a member of the original Federated Malay States from



1895. It used the famous *Leaping Tiger* design of the federation from its inception in 1901 until the states resumed individual stamp issuing in 1935. Negri Sembilan accepted British protection in 1874 and became a state of the Federation of Malaya in September 1963. The first stamps were issued in 1891 and consisted of issues of the Straits Settlement overprint Negri Sembilan. When the state resumed issuing its own stamps in 1935, its stamps featured its coat of arms. Since 1965, stamps of Malaysia have been issued, but some of the stamps still carried the name of Negri Sembilan.

NE PAS LIVRER LE DIMANCHE



This inscription is found on a tab attached to stamps of Belgium used between 1893 and 1914, also known as *Dominical Labels*. This is the French inscription and there was a Flemish inscription as well reading *Niet Bestellen op Zondag*. The English translation would read *Do not deliver on Sunday*. Because of religious objections to the Sunday delivery of mail, the Belgian Post Office decided to give mailers a choice as to whether their mail was to be delivered on Sunday or not. If there was no objection, the mailer simply removed the perforated label (or tab) from the stamp before applying it. This is not a problem in this day and age as delivery of mail on Sunday is something of the past. The terms *Bandalette* and *Banderole* are sometimes used to describe these labels, which should only be collected and attached to the stamps. The Netherlands and Bulgaria issued a separate stamp (an extra cost), which was to be added if the mail was to be delivered on a Sunday.

Nesbitt Envelopes

George F. Nesbitt & Co. printed US-stamped envelopes from 1853 to 1870. The dies used by Nesbitt are identifiable and can be distinguished from those used by the Plimton Manufacturing Co., the Morgan Envelope Co., and others, according to postal stationery experts.



Neurope

This is a dated expression used by collectors in the years following WWI. It was intended to refer in a somewhat disparaging way to the issues of many new political entities created by the rearrangement of Europe following the defeat of the German-Austro-Hungarian and Turkish empires in WWI. The word is a contraction of New Europe. It was considered at the time that many of the stamps issued by these new countries were created to raise funds from their sale to collectors, proving that there are few ideas in the world that are new. Not many of those countries survived WW2, and those that did, the ones located in Eastern Europe were only nominally independent. The term is no longer relevant today.

Never hinged

The term **never hinged** (NH) is used to describe the state of a stamp that has never had a stamp hinge applied to its gum.

New Britain



The ex-German island of Neu Pommern was captured by Australian forces during WWI and renamed **New Britain**. After the war, it was mandated To Australia and became part of New Guinea. Germany's Kaiser's Yacht key type stamps inscribed **Deutsch Neu-Guinea** were overprinted **G.R.I.** The well-

known G.R.I. overprint and 3d surcharged on registration labels were utilised in this area.

New Brunswick



Few collectors think of the former colony of New Brunswick, now a Canadian province, without recalling the colony's postmaster-general whose portrait on a stamp cost him his job. The story of Charles Connell, who was held responsible for causing his own portrait to be used on the 5c value of the 1860 issue, is well known. The stamp was never issued and was replaced by another 5c stamp



featuring the famous Chalon portrait of Queen Victoria.

These stamps were burned, but as we know some always survive. About 50 of these stamps are known in philatelic hands. The colony of New Brunswick was created from the French North American province of Acadia and was part of the colony of Nova Scotia. Its capital is Fredericton. The colony joined the Confederation on 1 July 1867. The first stamps of New Brunswick were issued on 5 September 1851, followed by a second series in 1860 because of a change to decimal currency. On joining the Confederation in 1867 it became a province of Canada using their stamps.

Newfoundland



Newfoundland was first visited by John Cabot in 1497, but the island was only claimed by Sir Humphrey Gilbert for England in 1583. He established a settlement that later became St John's, the island's capital city. Fishing quickly became the mainstay of the island's economy, which in turn was contested by the French. France relinquished its rights in the area through the Treaty of



Utrecht in 1713, and the islands St Pierre and Miquelon are now the only sign of a French presence. The island went through political and economic upheavals until the people chose to become part of Canada on 1 April 1949, as the latter's 10th province.



Newfoundland has a long philatelic history and the first stamps were released in 1853, and the stamps issued (depicting scenes of the island and some of the more obscure members of the Royal family) became very popular with collectors. The island has maintained its popularity to this day. A

philatelic puzzle has been the 10c value of the 1897 series, which claims to depict Cabot's ship, *Matthew*. But the ship is identical to the ship depicted on the 3c stamp in the US 1893 Columbian series which purports to show Columbus' ship *Santa Maria*. Since both stamps were printed by the American Bank Note Company, it seems likely that the design was a stock cut that the company had handy and that the drawing is more symbolic than accurate in both cases.

Compiled by Robert Harm 9 June 2023