

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF THEMATIC PHILATELY



I have made a collection of stamps consisting solely of those that are ornamented with portraits. Certainly I did it for my own pleasure in the first place. But as I am an ardent lover of philately, and like to propagate it whenever I can, an equally strong motive was my personal desire to have this little collection at hand for the purpose of showing it to the initiated, with a view to converting them, if possible, into stamp collectors, or at least inspiring them with proper respect for the pursuit.

From an anonymous article published in *Stamp Collecting Magazine*, 1870

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS EXHIBIT



Postal stationery printed to private order (official postal card issued for the *Internationale Postwertzeichen Ausstellung - Wien, 1910*) sent from Wien to Dusseldorf, Nov 9, 1911 - Printed postage stamp (5 h.) on the reverse

With this understanding in mind, it is my desire that in viewing the work that follows along these pages many potential exhibitors become encouraged to learn even more about the wonderful world of Thematic Philately.



Since the very early days when postage stamps started being collected by the subject portrayed on them, one of the things that have made thematic philately so beautiful is the genuine pleasure of sharing this hobby with others.



As we know, one of the most important benefits derived from visiting philatelic exhibitions is the stimulating effect that uses to be produced in intending collectors, playing the many thematic exhibits a special role in this particular.

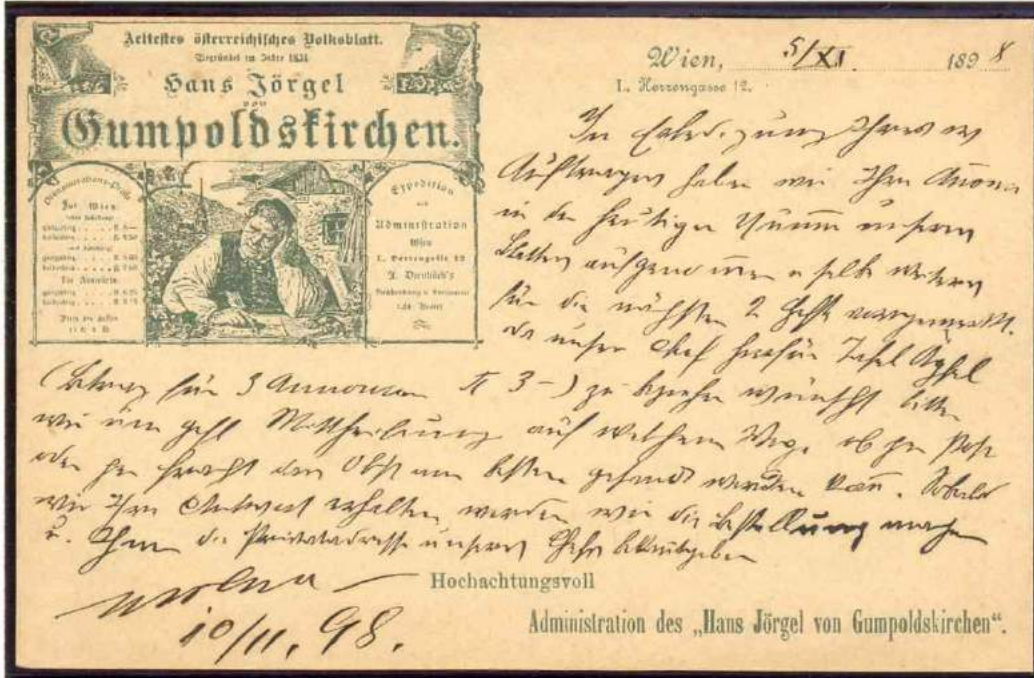


Postal stationery printed to private order (official postal card, *Internationale Postwertzeichen Ausstellung - Wien, 1910*) - postal indicium on the reverse

1. FROM THE PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG QUEEN TO THEMATIC PHILATELY

SENDING AND RECEIVING LETTERS IN THE STAMPLESS ERA

One of the things humans always enjoyed is to send or receive messages from other people.



Postal stationery (Austria, 2 k.) mailed internally from Wien to Wildon, Nov 5, 1898 - postal indicia on the reverse side

Most of the letters mailed by public or private post, or simply carried by messengers before the general use of postage stamps, had no envelopes, being written on sheets which were then folded in rectangular ways so that there remained a flap usually sealed with wax.



Pre-philatelic folded letter (Brazil) mailed from Santos to São Paulo, Aug 19, 1838, showing the cost (30 réis) for postage



In those distant days, the charge for sending letters was calculated depending on the number of sheets of paper and the distance traveled to the destination, being then collected from the addressee of the letter.



Stampless folded letter sent from Genoa to Rome, 1836, bearing indication of ship transportation (via *Napolitana*)

However, there was dissatisfaction on rates calculation – rates for letters sent by horseback, by coach, ship, etc – and many people who received the letter refused to pay for the delivery costs, for this the system failed and postal services turned to a means of prepaying postage.

P. P.

Bei Beginn der Winterzeit mit ihren langen Abenden äußert sich in unsrer geschätzten Kundschaft vielfach der Wunsch, auf ein Familienblatt zu abonnieren, dessen Inhalt ein angenehmer Wechsel von vielseitiger Unterhaltung und anregender Belehrung sein und das so zugleich zu einer dauernd wertvollen Bereicherung der Hausbibliothek werden soll. Von den mancherlei Blättern dieser Art empfehlen wir in solchen Fällen jetzt mit Vorliebe das Ihnen gewiß schon bekannte altbewährte und immer neue „*Dasheim*“, weil uns sein überaus reicher und gediegener literarischer wie künstlerischer Inhalt wie auch sein Preis von 2 M. pro Quartal es vor vielen andern hierfür geeignet erscheinen läßt.

Falls auch Sie geneigt sein sollten auf den am 1. Oktober begonnenen neuen Jahrgang zu abonnieren, haben Sie wohl die Güte die zur Rückantwort bestimmte Karte entsprechend auszufüllen.

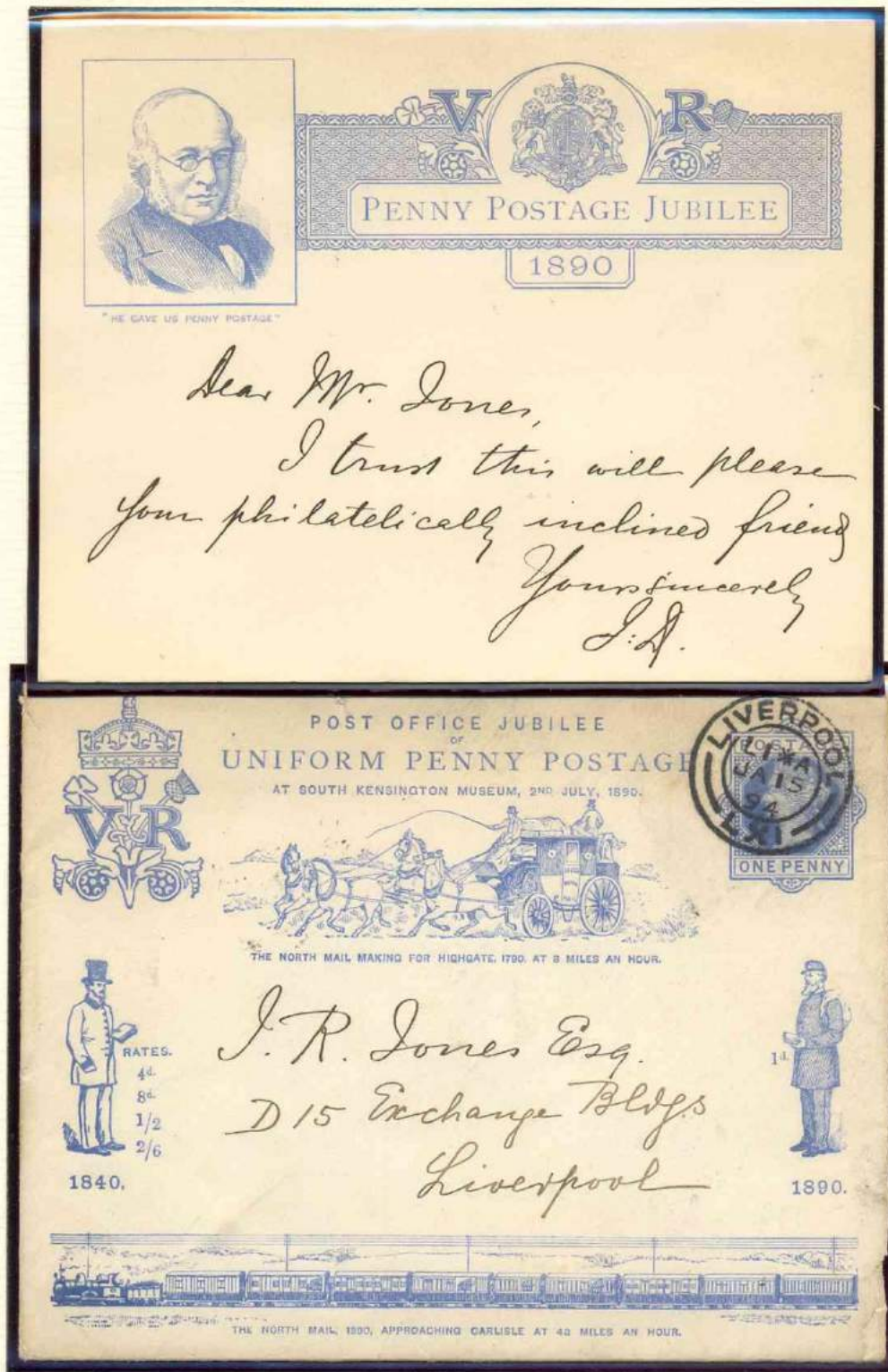
Hochachtungsvoll

German private (Hansa's) paid reply postal card, 1895 – postal *indicium* (Berliner Verkens, 2 k.) on the reverse side

1.1. The coming of postage stamps

ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMPS, A HILL'S REVOLUTIONARY IDEA

Although a number of people laid claims that they invented the postage stamp, the idea of an adhesive stamp to indicate prepayment of postage was part of Sir Rowland Hill's 1837 proposals to reform the British postal system, in which the postage fee was to be paid by the sender and not the recipient, and at the same rate: a penny a half-ounce, the payment receipted by placing a small piece of printed paper on the outside of the letter – the stamp!



Postal stationery (envelope) issued for Penny Post Jubilee (1890), with commemorative insert bearing the portrait of Sir Rowland Hill, mailed internally in Liverpool, England, on Jan 15, 1894

1.1. The coming of postage stamps



Of course, there was a great involvement of many British citizens on Hill's proposal, which were debated in Great Britain for a few years, coming to be instituted in 1840.

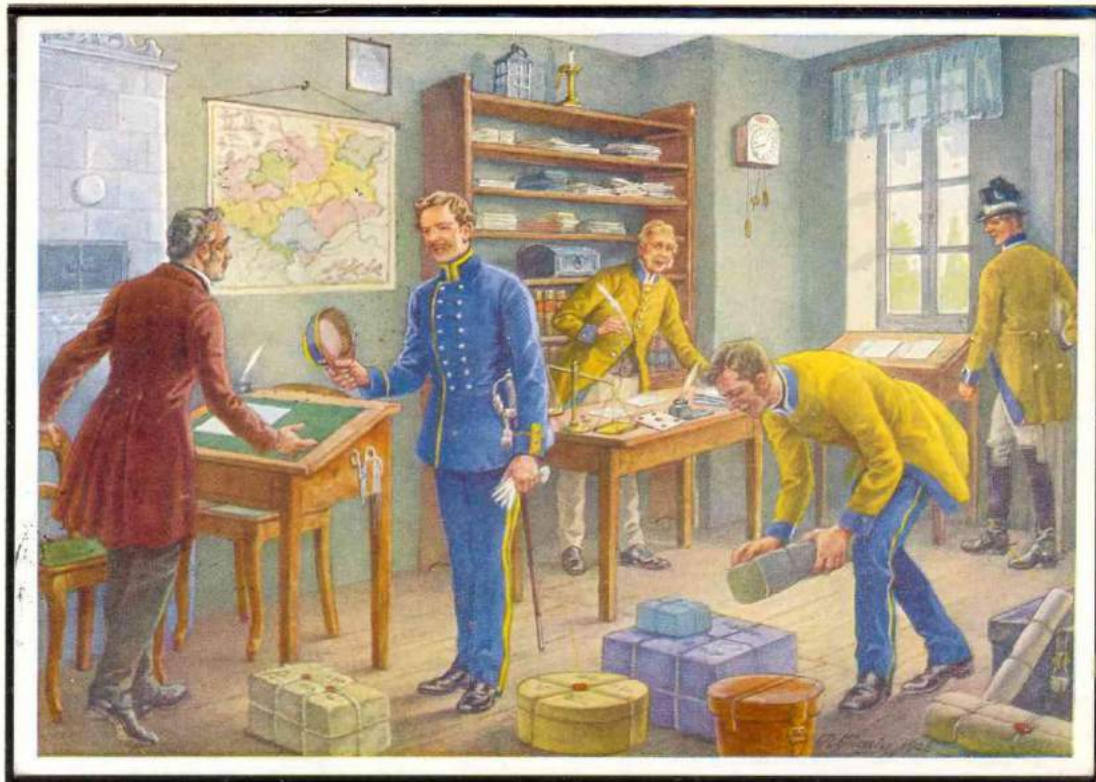


Thus the concept of the prepayment of postage has been credited to Rowland Hill, who introduced the adhesive stamp to serve as evidence that an amount was paid for delivering a correspondence.



Dry print

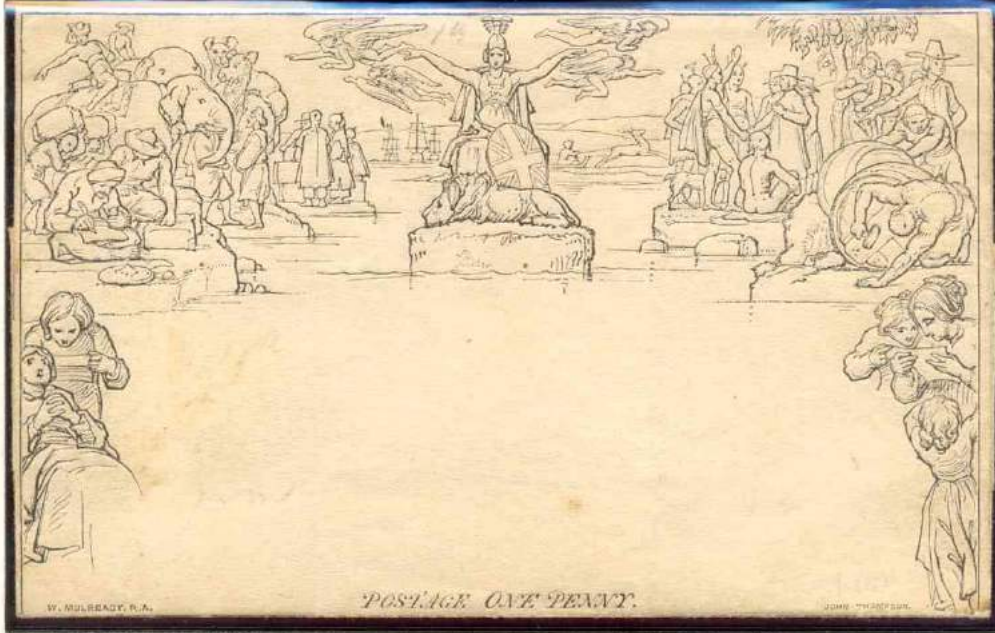
With this simple and practical initiative, Hill made the whole process of posting a letter much more affordable and easier, being soon adopted by other countries that followed with their own stamps.



German postal stationery (card) of 1938 – postal *indicium* on the reverse side

1.1. The coming of postage stamps

As part of his postal reforms of 1840, Rowland Hill rather favored the use of envelopes or wrappers (printed in black ink on cream paper) indicating that postage had been pre-paid.



Mulready wrapper (postage One Penny) unused, issued in 1840



He commissioned William Mulready to prepare a design to illustrate the frontal area of the precut sheets and envelopes when folded, having the artist pictured Britannia sending out winged messengers to the four corners of the globe, or the countries under British Control.



Mulready wrapper (postage One Penny) sent from London to Cheltenham, May 25, 1840



- 1 Wyon City Medal 1837. The world's first adhesive postage stamp issued in 1840 was based on Courbould's line drawing from the Wyon Medal. This head was used for all stamps of the Queen's reign
- 2 Mulready envelope 1840
- 3 The 'Penny Red' 1841
- 4 'Maltese Cross' cancellation

Postal stationery (air letter) issued by the British Post Office, 1980

At the same time, artists and engravers were working on the adhesive labels bearing a representation of the profile of the monarch, Queen Victoria, as seen on the City Medal of 1837.

On May 6, 1840, it was issued to the public the *Penny Black* (so nicknamed from its face value and its color), as well as its corresponding red cancellation, and, two days later, another stamp, the *Two Pence Blue* was released in the same design.



Penny Reds replaced the *blacks* in 1841 because of the advantage of showing up the black cancellation better.



Folded letter franked with an unperforated Penny Red, mailed internally to Bedale (North Yorkshire) on July 23, 1845

1.2. The hobby of philately in its beginnings



Postal stationery printed to private order (official postal card), Austria, 1910

The interest in stamp collecting quickly followed the coming of the first postage stamp and led to the emerging of one of the most popular hobbies that mankind has yet discovered – the Philately.



In the middle 1850s, there were collectors of all ages quietly gathering different kinds of postage stamps and/or postal stationeries they could find.



So, with the birth of postage stamps came also the birth of philatelists, as they have become known.



Cover for the "Erster Österreichischer Arbeiter Briefmarken Sammler Verein Wien" with special cancellation, Sep 21, 1932

1.2. The hobby of philately in its beginnings

THE ROLE OF STAMP DEALERS & PHILATELIC PUBLISHERS

It is interesting to note that the founding of the early firms of stamp dealers was contemporary with the very beginnings of the rising hobby of stamp collecting.



Indeed, by the late nineteenth century, trading in stamps, albums, catalogues and other philatelic accessories was a really significant business occupation.



So, with the philatelic trade, Philately began to be taken seriously and became very popular.



Cover of the stamp dealer "Gelli et Tan" (Brussels) bearing stamps with advertising labels, posted on May 20, 1949

1.2. The hobby of philately in its beginnings



J.B. Moens, dealer and publisher

Since the issuance of the first postage stamps, postal stationeries and other postal, collectible items, various philatelic journals, stamp magazines, and also books devoted to the hobby of Philately appeared in Europe, North America and many other countries of the planet.



All these publications contain valuable information that have benefited philatelists all over the world.



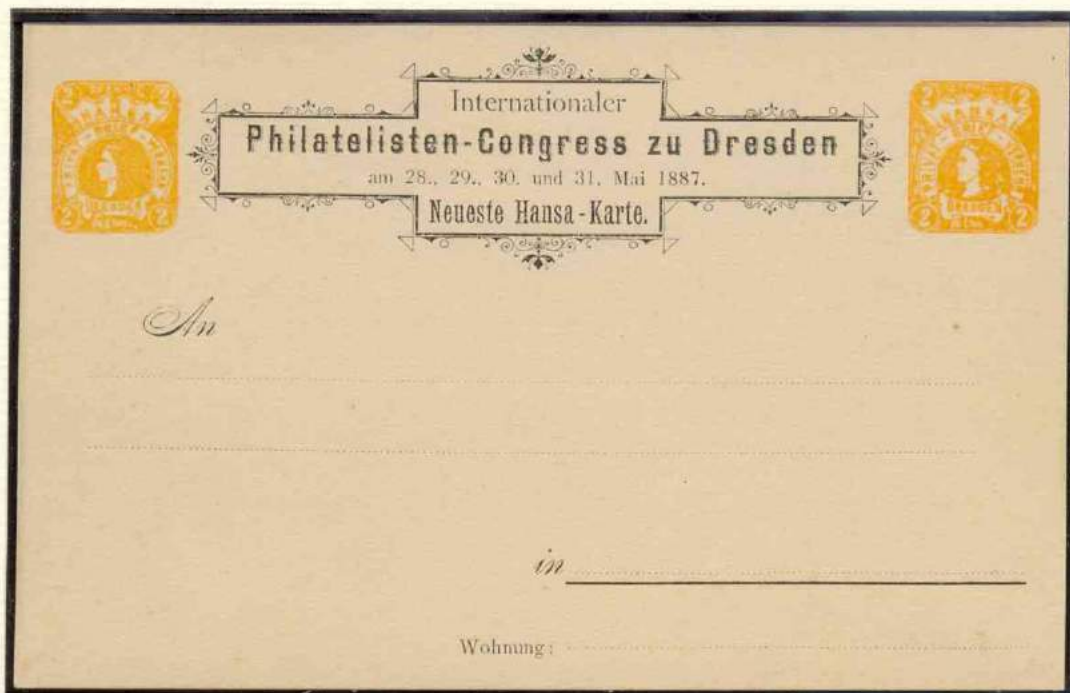
1.2. The hobby of philately in its beginnings

IMPORTANCE OF PHILATELIC EVENTS



Postal stationery (Bayern, 5 pf) sent from Nuremberg to Schwabisch on Nov 3, 1906, postal indicium on the reverse

The popularity of stamp collecting came to be seen at various philatelic meetings and congresses from the late nineteenth century, in which collectors were working to consolidate the hobby, also spreading knowledge regarding forms of collecting.



Postal stationery (private post - Hansa) issued for the "International Philatelic Congress of Dresden", May 28-31, 1887

1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

COLLECTING "ALL WORLD" STAMPS



In the early days of philately, most collections were generally "all world", made with stamps taken off letters from different countries of the planet, and for then it was possible for the philatelists to build a fairly complete "universal" collection using the stamps issued by postal administrations.



Folded stamped (6 c) letter mailed internally in Spain from Cadiz to Pamplona (Navarra) on Feb 7, 1852

But soon there were many more stamps and more people collecting them, which forced the philatelists to create boundaries around their own collections, as, for example, restricting the number of countries, defining a period of time, or selecting the types of stamps for collecting.



Postal stationery (Deutsche Reich, 5 pf) mailed from Stuttgart to Berlin, June 1, 1907, postal *indicium* on the reverse

1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

TRADITIONAL PHILATELY



Postal stationery (Austria) printed to private order (official postal card issued for the "14. Österreichischer Philatelistentag"), bearing special cancellation – *indicia* on the reverse

Essentially, Traditional Philately includes all aspects of the story of the stamp, such as studies involving the way from the essays (via proofs) to the issued stamp, with its printing phases and all kinds of varieties.

Traditional Philately – taken as the mother of all philately – covers what many people think of as the hobby of stamps collecting.



In this branch of philately, postage stamps use to be collected in a systematic way by country (or region), dates, and face values, in a logical sequence shown in catalogues.



Not issued: green & brown



Violet color omitted

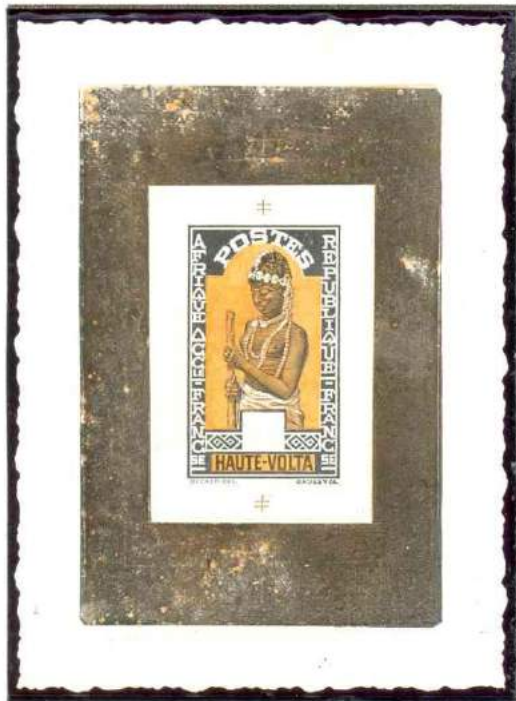


Imperforated



Stamp as issued

1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days



Color proof from Upper Volta "Hausa woman" stamp, 1928

Material appropriate to traditional philatelists includes, among others: items related to the production of postage stamps, varieties and errors, local stamps, watermarks, overprints, perfins, all kinds of postal labels, and so forth.



The searching for relevant and relatively rare items is a challenge for all collectors who aim to really demonstrate his philatelic knowledge.



Legends omitted, fleet of Cabral (Brazil, 1968)



Essay for the first Brazil's commemorative series (1900)



1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

POSTAL STATIONERY

Postal Stationery collecting was born in the late nineteenth century, with the issuance of the first postal products bearing an officially authorised pre-printed stamp, or any other device or inscription (*indicium*) indicating that a specific face value rate of postage had been pre-paid.



Postal stationery (Deutsche Reich) mailed from Bern to Bienne (franked with additional stamp of 5 Pf), July 3, 1900

Collectors in this category of Philately make their collections with unused and/or postally used items of stationery produced for postal purposes, and from a particular country or associated group of territories.



1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

The most common forms of postal stationery include envelopes, letter cards, letter sheets and aerograms, postal cards, wrappers (newspaper bands), among other printed forms.



Other categories of stamped documents produced by the Posts can also be included in postal stationery collections, as for example postal orders.



1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

AEROPHILATELY

In the beginning of the twentieth century, with the development of aviation, airmail services were expanded and postal administrations started issuing special stamps to be used on mail carried by air, which stimulated various collectors to collect and study postage stamps and covers connected with the carriage of mail by air.



Thus, Aerophilately represents essentially a study of the development of air mail services and a collection of postal documents transmitted by air, bearing evidence of having been flown, or which was intended for flight.



50 c. overprint inverted



Cover mailed from Amsterdam to New York on Sep 3, 1954 (with metermark 15 c. franking), carried on KLM aircraft that crashed at Shannon, Ireland, bearing handstamp *Salvaged from KLM crash at Shannon* in violet

1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

By the way, these collections may also include mail recovered from aircraft accidents or incidents, such as these covers from the mailbag of the *Baby Clipper* (S-43 B – Panam).



Covers from the seaplane *Baby Clipper*, which crashed against a rock near Cobras Island, Brazil, Aug 13, 1939



Mention is also to be made to Astrophilately, a modern branch in which philatelists can build collections based on historical, technical and scientific aspects related to space research and space programmes, using all kinds of appropriate material related to the space exploration.



1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

POSTAL HISTORY

A Postal History collection consists of material carried by, and related to, official, local or private mails and other postal documents illustrating a given aspect of postal history.

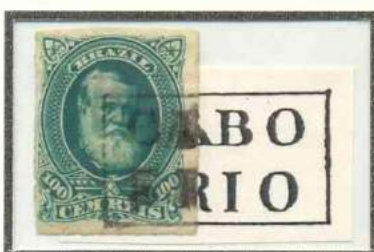


Folded letter (Italy) mailed from Comune de Marano to Rome (franked 10 c.), postmark *Ambulante*, July 28, 1876

It also involves the detailed study of postal cancellations and other markings on covers, as well as mail routes, rates, usages, services, functions, methods of transport, and activities related to the history of the development of postal services and the changes that occurred.



Postage stamps having clear and legible postmarks have good use.



Postal stationery (private post "Neujahrs Verker - Packetfahrt") mailed internally in Berlin, Jan 9, 1886

1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days



Collectors were commencing this aspect of the hobby in the 1930s, examining postal history since the pre-adhesive period and broadly emphasizing the routes for transportation of mails, postal rates, etc.



Pre-stamped folded letter, San Donino (Italy) to Barcelona (Spain), transit by Sardinia, Sep 3, 1843



The analysis of postmarks gives the philatelist the chance of studying and explaining the development of one or more postal services, as well as the practical usage of postal regulations.

Marcophily is a sub-class that embraces classifications and/or studies of postal markings on covers and letters, postal stationery, adhesive stamps and other postal documents.

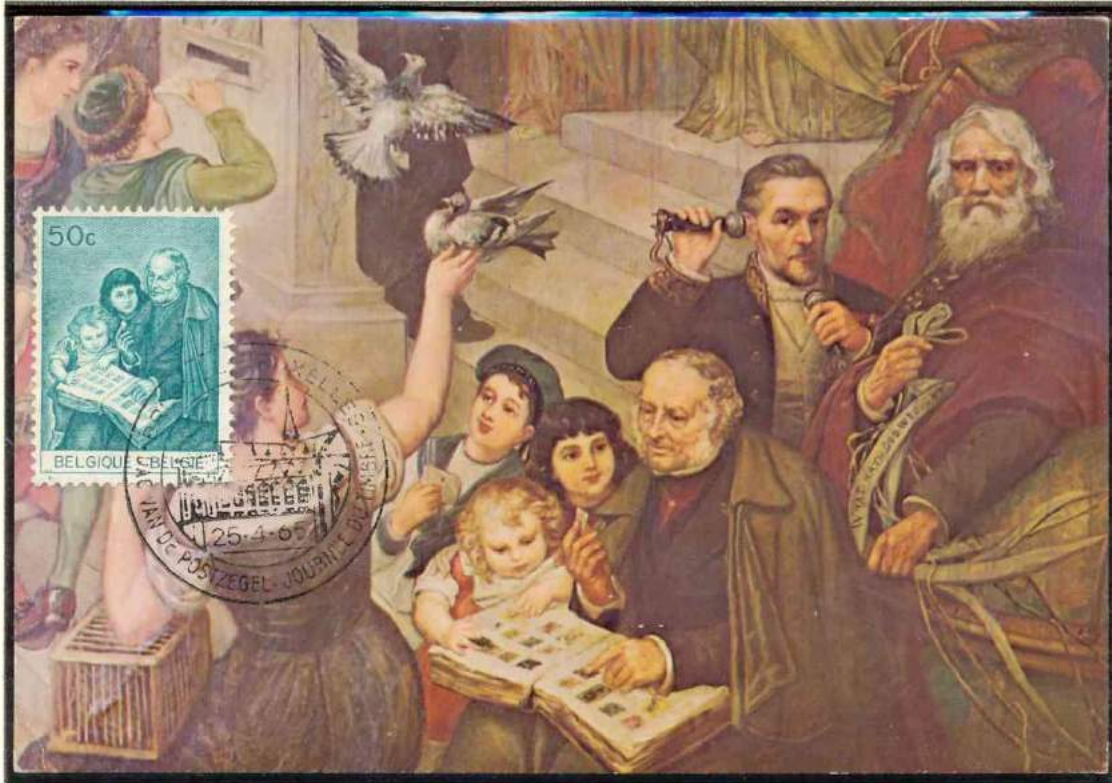


Stampless cover (p.p. 10 paid) sent from Twyford (England) to Aix-en-Provence, France, Sep 17, 1849

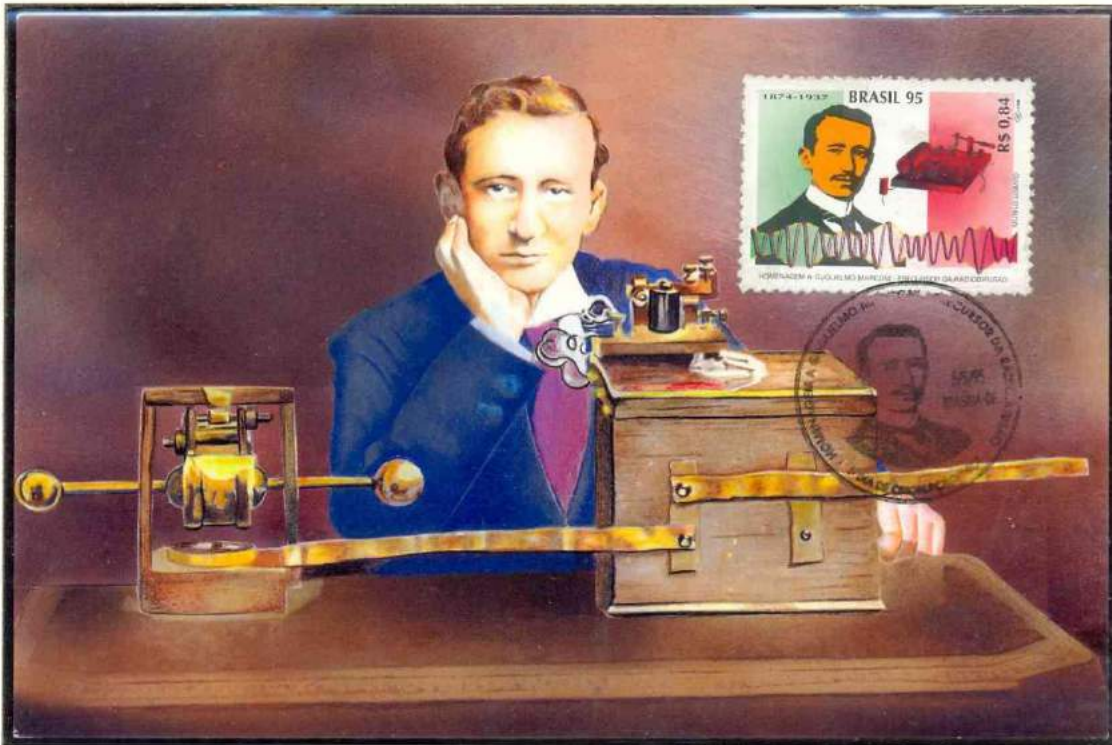
1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

MAXIMAPHILY

By the turn of the nineteenth century, the rise in the use and collecting of postcards, associated with the emergence of pictorial stamps, led to the opening of a new branch of the hobby, the Maximaphily, which consists of the collection of *maximum cards*, i.e. postcards bearing a suitably canceled stamp.



Collections of Maximaphily are exclusively composed of maximum cards, which should conform to the principles of maximum possible concordance between these elements: the postage stamp, the picture of the post card and the cancellation; the closer the connection, the better the concordance.



1.3. Ways of collecting since the early days

THE YOUTH IN PHILATELY



The popularity of stamp collecting also reached the youth since the early days of the hobby.



But it was only in the years after World War II that postal administrations started developing their stamp-collecting programs targeted particularly at children and teenagers.



In fact, many have stimulated the participation of youth in philately by the issuance of stamps with beautiful designs that better fit their tastes.



Russian postal stationery (postal card), 40 k., unused – postal indicium on the reverse



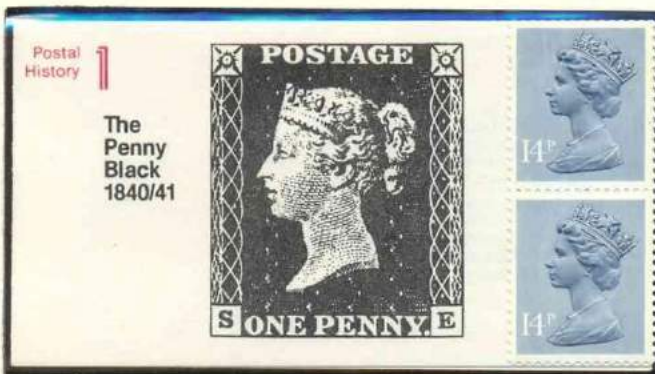
1.4. The origin and growth of thematic collecting

THE PHILATELIC ITEMS THAT STARTED IT ALL

It is assumed that the beautifully engraved profile of the young Queen Victoria on that little rectangle of paper, together with the artistically elaborated illustration of the *mulreadies*, marked the moment when postal items collecting based on the subject of the designs printed on them was first possible.



So to say, this was the moment when the pictorial appeal firstly attracted the early collectors moved by a "thematic" orientation, giving these pieces of art the status of "philatelic items that started it all".



Stamps booklet (England) allusive to the Penny Black (all stamps inside)



Two Pence *mulready* envelope (front part, without folded sides) mailed internally in England to Caleford, 1840

1.4. The origin and growth of thematic collecting



Postal stationery (Bayern, 5 Pf. – cachet "Ludwig III – King of Bayern") of 1914, postal *indicium* on the reverse side
As we know, in the early years of Philately most designs of postage stamps were prosaic and did not exactly give rise to being chosen as the starting point of a "pictorial" collection.



Folded stamped letter (cover) mailed internally in France from Dole du Jura to Dijon (Côte d'Or) on May 11, 1849
Nevertheless, some of them constituted an attractive picture gallery of "mini portraits" that came to be, quite possibly, the first theme popularized as the subject of "picture collecting".



Cover mailed internally in England from Colchester to Coventry, Sep 18, 1854

1.4. The origin and growth of thematic collecting

COLLECTING BY THE SUBJECT PORTRAYED ON THE STAMP

In the 1890s, postal authorities of several countries placed a great deal of weight on the artistic arrangement and started issuing colorful stamps and attracting postal items featuring a plethora of interesting subjects for collectors.



Cover franked with a Four Pence pair sent from Cape Town (South Africa) to Oxford (England), Jul 13, 1854



So, the emergence of more attractive stamps provided a great stimulus to collect them for the subject portrayed on them rather than for the country and year of issue or its postal use.



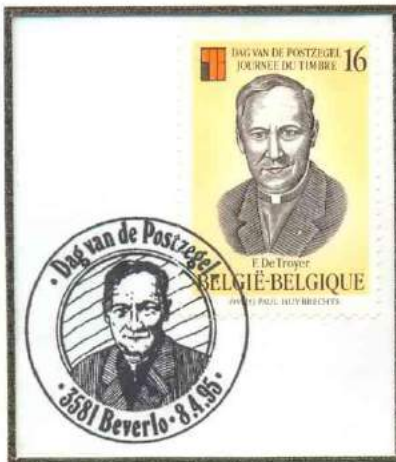
Although this new way to collect was based on postage stamps at the first stage, many other philatelic elements (such as postal stationeries) began to appear in these collections over the years, paving the path to what is known today as Thematic Philately – born without this name.



Pictorial postal stationery (postal card), private post (Hansa) mailed internally in Königsberg, Germany, Mar 23, 1900

1.4. The origin and growth of thematic collecting

FRANS DE TROYER, AN ENTHUSIAST OF THEMATIC PHILATELY

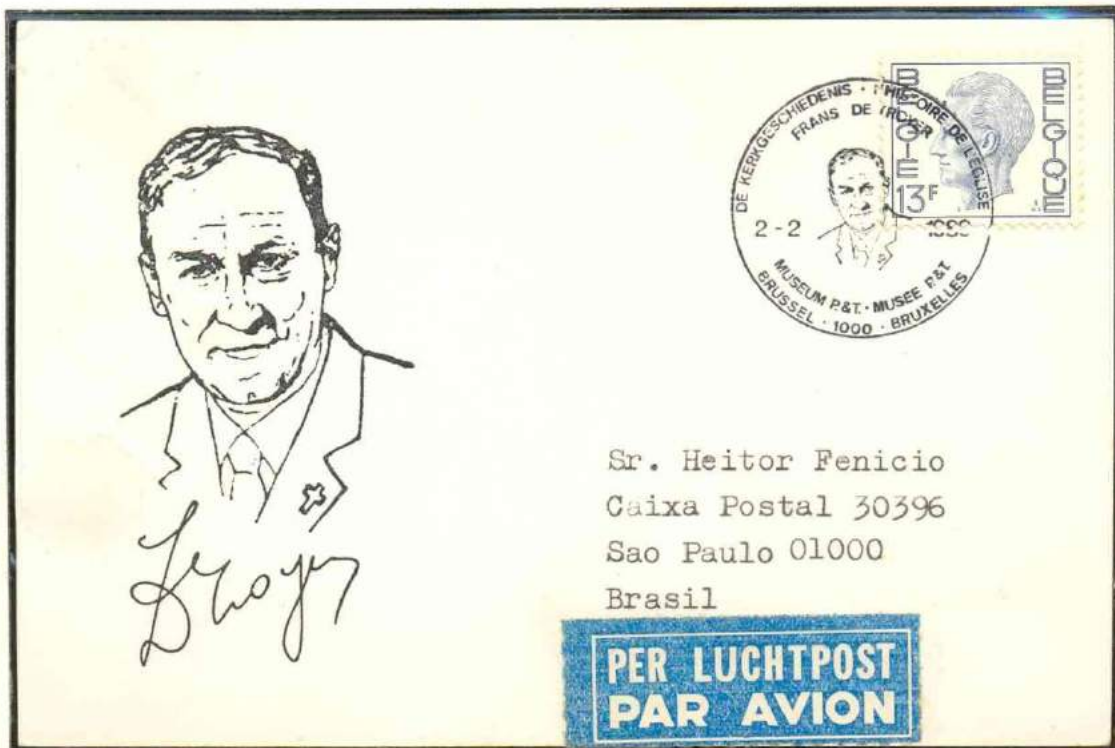


In the 1930s, various philatelists were working to recognize this new form of collecting.

One of the pioneers of thematic philately was the Belgian priest Frans de Troyer (1914-1977), who, for his efforts, came to be President of the FIP Thematic Commission.



De Troyer also served as General Commissioner for the THEMABELGA (1975), the first international exhibition of thematic philately held (in Brussels) under FIP auspices.



De Troyer used to say that "thematic collecting adds a new cultural dimension to the philatelist's life" and, since his death in 1977, he has been meritoriously honored by various postal administrations.

1.4. The origin and growth of thematic collecting

THE FUN OF THEMATIC COLLECTING

Part of the fun of thematic collecting is to choose one's own subject and treat it in one's personal way, with no limitations.



There is no country or period of time in which the thematic collector may not hopefully and fruitfully go searching for adequate material.

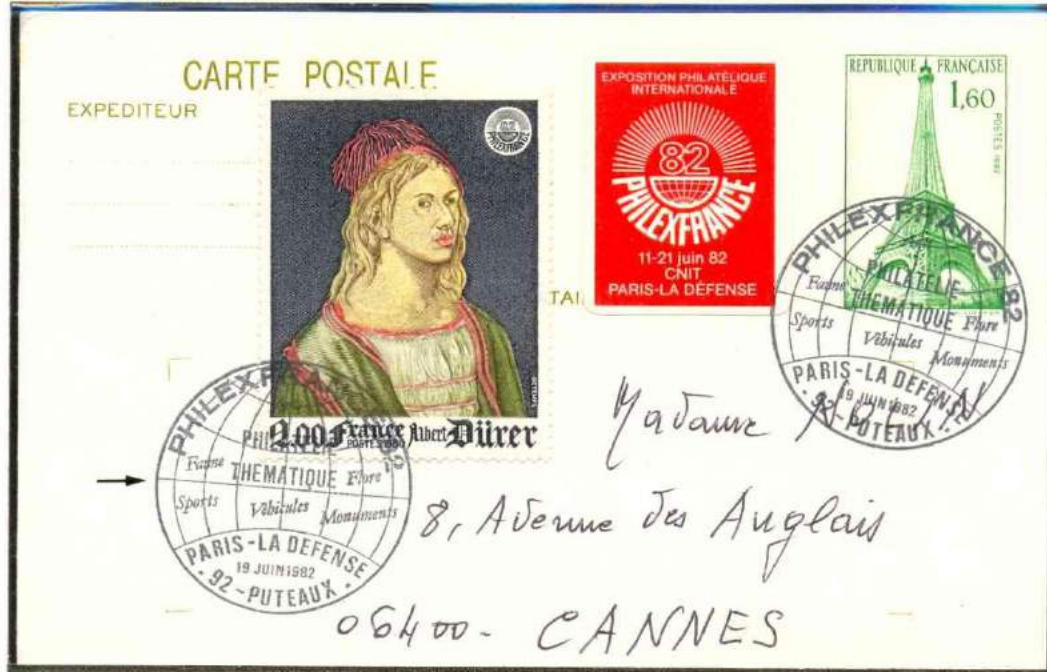


That means that thematic collecting stresses the design of the item rather than countries of issue, and for all that, the combination of the rare with the common and the old with the new is the "name of the game" in this branch of philately that is the preferred option of the new entrants to the hobby.

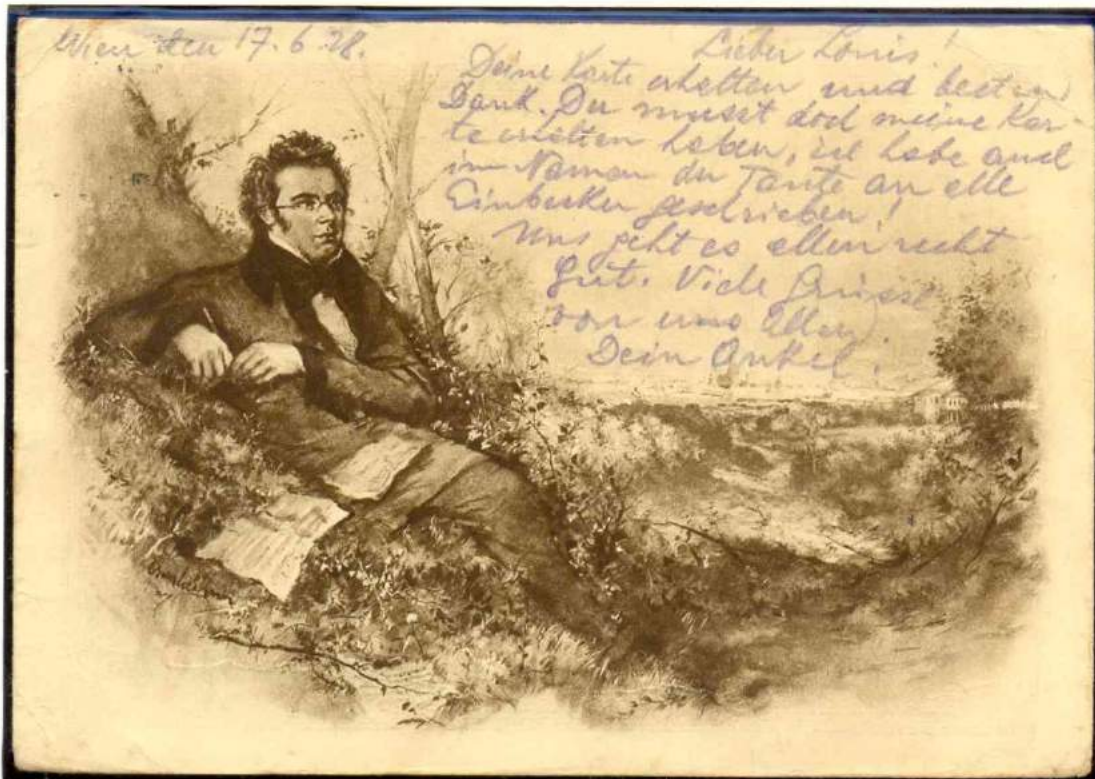


1.4. The origin and growth of thematic collecting

In summary, a thematic collection, of which the exhibit is a part, develops a theme or illustrates an idea following a logical plan and using the motives offered by a variety of appropriate items.



Like in many other artistic creations, mounting a thematic collection for exhibiting demands inspiration and the final result should be an original treatment of the subject matter, with an innovative approach and a touch of personal style.



Postal stationery (postal card), Austria, mailed from Wien to Einbeck, Germany, Jun 17, 1928 – postal *indicia* on the reverse

2. PHILATELIST FIRST, THEMATIC NEXT: SKILLS & BASIC KNOWLEDGE

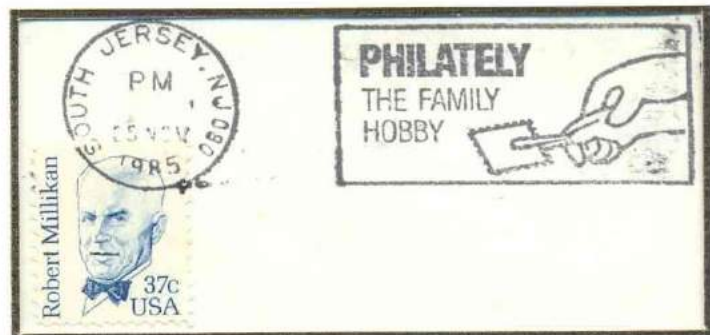


It is expected that the intending thematic collector has already had some general knowledge of conventional philately before going into thematic, and the merit of starting with the philatelic side (an essential aspect) is that the thematic life will be easier.

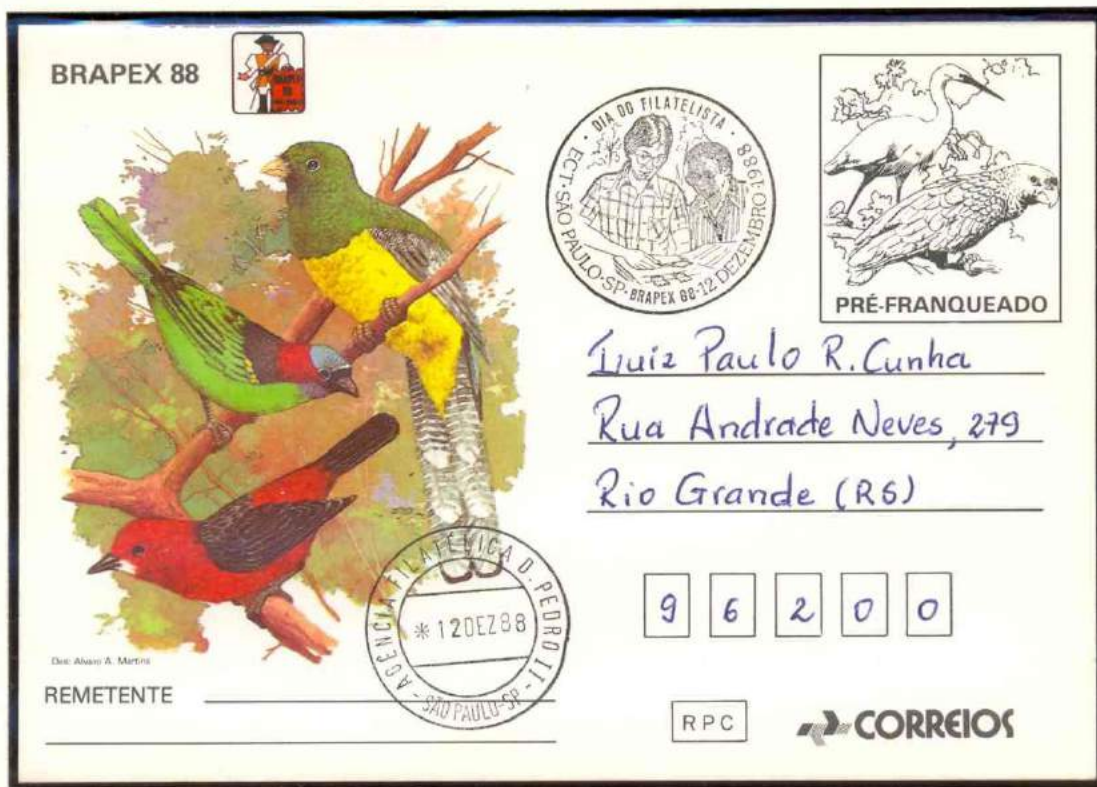
Of course, there are benefits to be gained by having a sound knowledge of philately, both in respect of terminology and practical work.



Black proof



The knowledge and practice of philately should also be pursued in parallel with thematic collecting.



2.1. The role of stamp clubs and philatelic societies

THE ROLE OF STAMP CLUBS AND PHILATELIC SOCIETIES



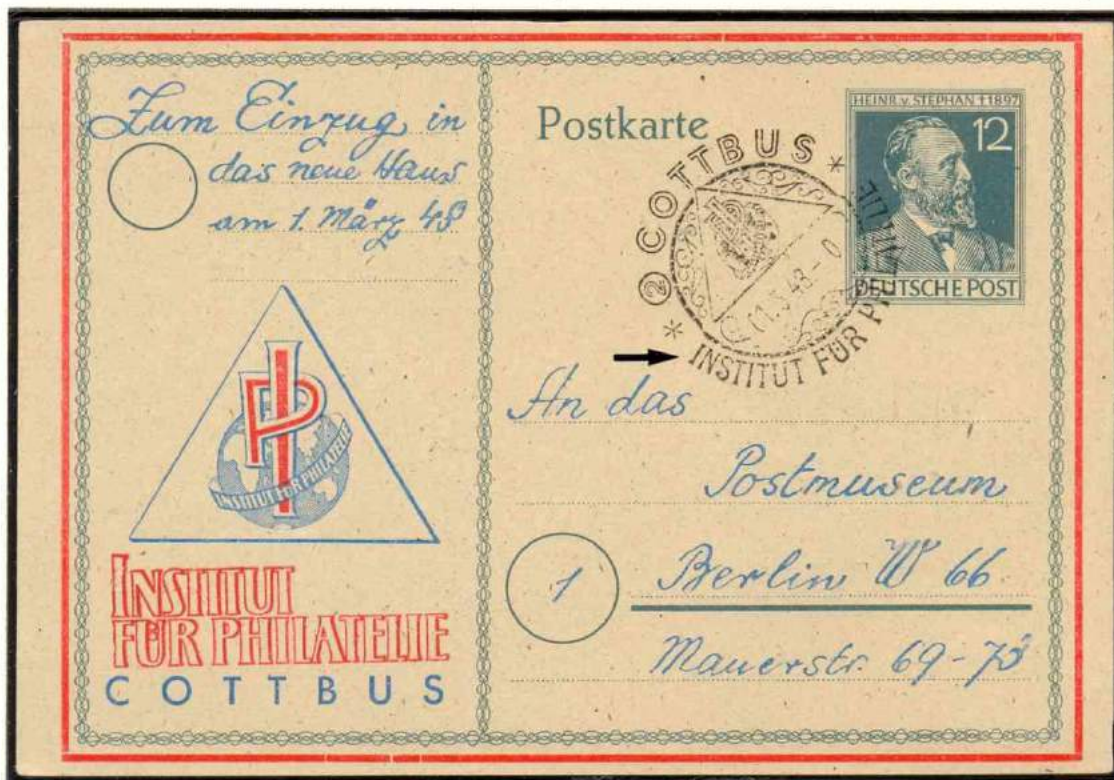
Since the early days of the hobby, the role of stamp clubs and philatelic societies has been of utmost importance to the development of philately.



In fact, joining a stamp club the novice can find the best guidance he needs with the purpose of becoming a real philatelist and exhibitor too.



It is important to note that Philately is organized on a hierarchical basis, being the clubs the basis of this organization: most of them serve a locality or region, while others serve a particular subject.



2.1. The role of stamp clubs and philatelic societies

The existence of such clubs and other philatelic organizations has been of considerable importance for young collectors and also for newcomers interested in learning more about this attracting hobby.



If the collector belongs to a stamp club, opportunities of exchanging experiences with others will be increased and many things can be learnt from fellow veterans.



Additionally, the beginners can meet other philatelists with similar interests, see their collections, swap stamps and other philatelic material directly with them, and participate in auctions that use to be regularly promoted by the club.



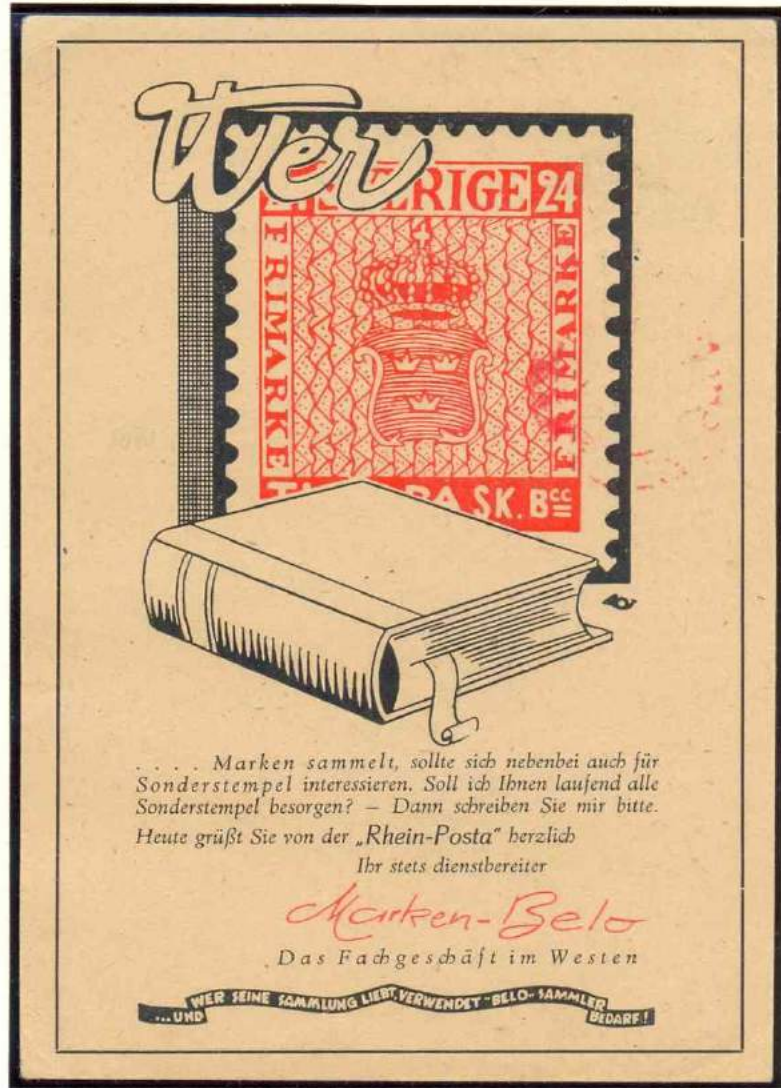
Cover sent from São Paulo to Estrela, Brazil, with special cancellation allusive to the Brazilian Association of Thematic Philately, Sep 11, 1971



In other words, they must know how to adequately preserve and classify their philatelic accumulations, using for that some essential accessories.



All collectors should have certain skills and also a sound knowledge of how to properly handle stamps and how to store their philatelic items.



Postal stationery (card) printed to private order (Marken-Belo's, philatelic dealer), 5 Pf, mailed from Aachen to Dresden, Germany, Apr 19, 1947 – postal indicia on the reverse



The collector's chief accessories comprise simple articles designed to assist in preserving, storing, studying and classifying philatelic items, and a beginner may count himself well set up for a good start with *catalogue*, *specific album*, *tweezers*, *magnifying glass*, *watermark detector*, *perforation gauge*, *stockbooks*, and *mounts*.

TO ASSIST IN STUDYING AND CLASSIFYING



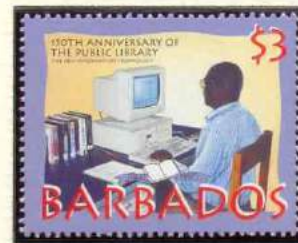
The *stamp catalogue*, a standard reference for philatelists, is an illustrated listing of the various postage stamps from a country (or countries) in a chronological order, generally with prices indicating the current retail value of each stamp.



Certain famous ("universal") catalogues have a worldwide coverage, while others are specialized for more popular themes.



In recent years, with the Internet, some catalogues exhibit an on-line version while others are available in other media.



Many countries have their own national catalogs, usually put out by a leading publisher or stamp dealer.

2.2. Collector's chief accessories

Stamp albums are the nearly universal means for keeping postage stamps, used by most collectors around the world.



In its most basic form, the stamp album is a book, often loose-leafed in order to allow for expansion, in which a collection of postage stamps may be safely stored and displayed.



Some of them have illustrated spaces for every stamp according to the catalogue and the manufacturers use to offer annual updates for the stamps issued during the previous year.

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G. m. b. H.
Papierwarenfabrik
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ASCHERSLEBEN

2.2. Collector's chief accessories

A magnifying glass is a convex lens that is used to produce a magnified image of an object, being useful for perception of details, such as the many intricacies of engraved designs on some stamps, hidden defects on pieces, and fakes or forgeries.



Black proof



Imperforate below



It is a vital tool for many people, being indispensable for attentive philatelists.



Offset of a magnifying glass



Shift of the color black

It is really one of the first accessories a collector will like to have, even if his eyesight is excellent.



TO STORE AND CARE FOR PHILATELIC ITEMS

It is important to observe that philatelic material not only need to be kept safe and secure; they also need to look good, i.e. in perfect condition.



Most collectors store stamps in a *stockbook*, a book that allows them to arrange their items in neat, easy-to-see rows, having the advantage that they can be easily inserted and removed.



Stockbooks have pages available in either white or black card, with glassine or crystal clear strips into which the stamps and other items are to be placed.



Collectors also use stockbooks as a good place to keep duplicate or unsorted postage stamps.



2.2. Collector's chief accessories

Whenever possible, all stamps should be handled only with *tweezers* (*stamp tongs*), special tools made for this purpose, so as not to cause damage, dirt or grease marks.



Once the facility for using tweezers has been gained by the collector, these tools will be found invaluable, particularly for the tasks of handling and sorting postage stamps.



They are essential for the work with postage stamps, both used or unused, which, while large enough to pick up by hand, are easily handled with the aid of tweezers.

2.3. How and where to find philatelic material

Since the early days the hobby, philatelists start their collections with stamps taken off envelopes from letters of their relatives, neighbors, or firms.



Stamped folded letter mailed internally in Italy from Ancona to Pesaro, Feb 27, 1871



By the way, what stamp collector does not appreciate the moment when a postman knocks at door?



2.3. How and where to find philatelic material

REMOVING STAMPS FROM PAPER



Then the stamps are picked out and dried face down on a sheet of absorbent paper.



The removal of used stamps from paper is made by immersing them in water until the gum is sufficiently dissolved; in a short time stamps and discarded paper are floating separately.



Stamps associated with interesting postmarks should not be soaked off their envelopes.



Stamped folded letter (Denmark) mailed from Ranivers to Copenhagen, Aug 26, 1858

One of the rules is not to take classic stamps off old letters.



Stamped folded letter mailed from Cuenca (Spain) to Valdecolm de Amba, Dec 21, 1862

2.3. How and where to find philatelic material

BUYING FROM STAMP DEALERS

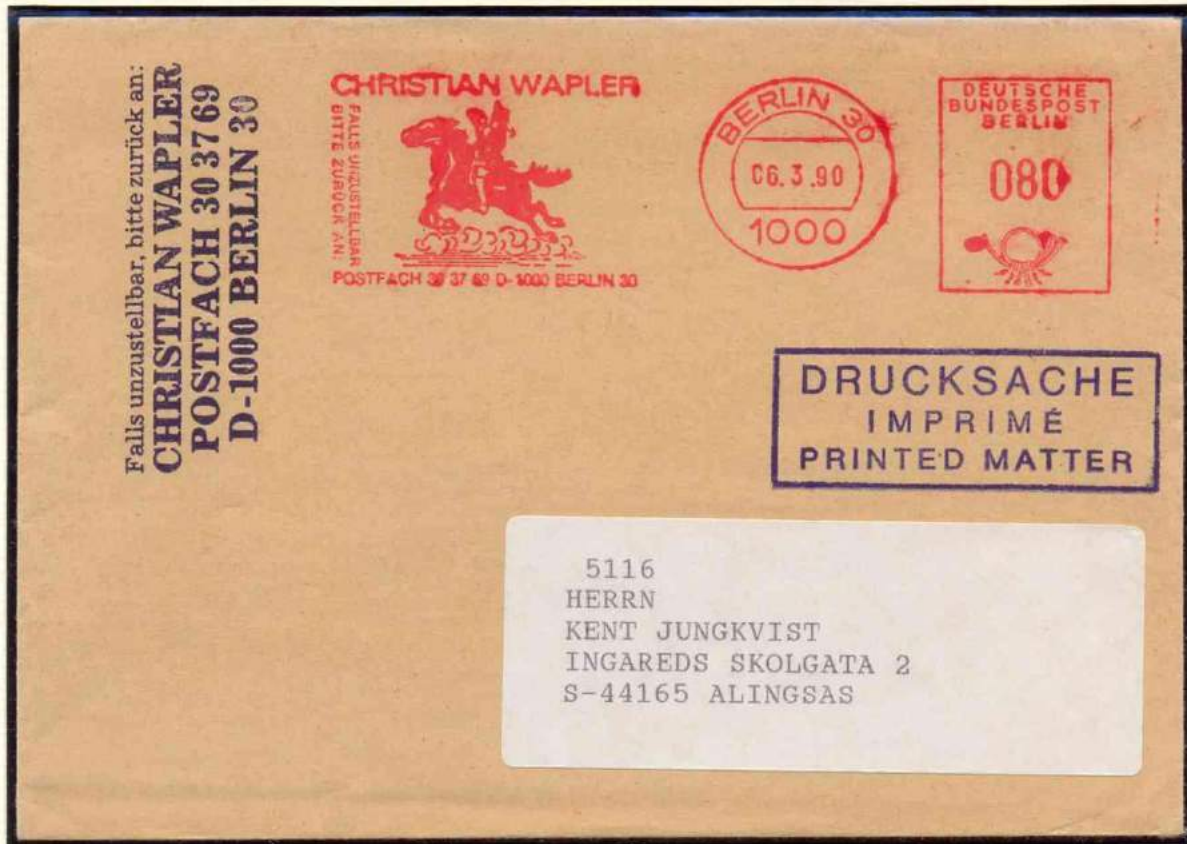
Collectors must know how and where to find and buy philatelic material.



Most of the items are acquired from *stamp dealers*, i.e. companies or individuals who deals in postage stamps and philatelic products in general, serving the collectors.



Going through the dealers' stocks is obviously a method that offers some advantages, because it gives the customers the chance to choose which stamps or other pieces to purchase, inspecting them before paying.



2.3. How and where to find philatelic material

MAIL SALES & AUCTIONS

Stamp dealers normally have a diversified stock of philatelic material for sale to collectors, having many of them a system of sending to customers, by mail, a price list, books with photocopies, etc.



But many collectors find the auctions and mail sales the best way of acquiring good material.



Actually, philatelic auctions have represented the most helpful means of improving a collection, giving the collector the chance of getting worthwhile items, including rarities.



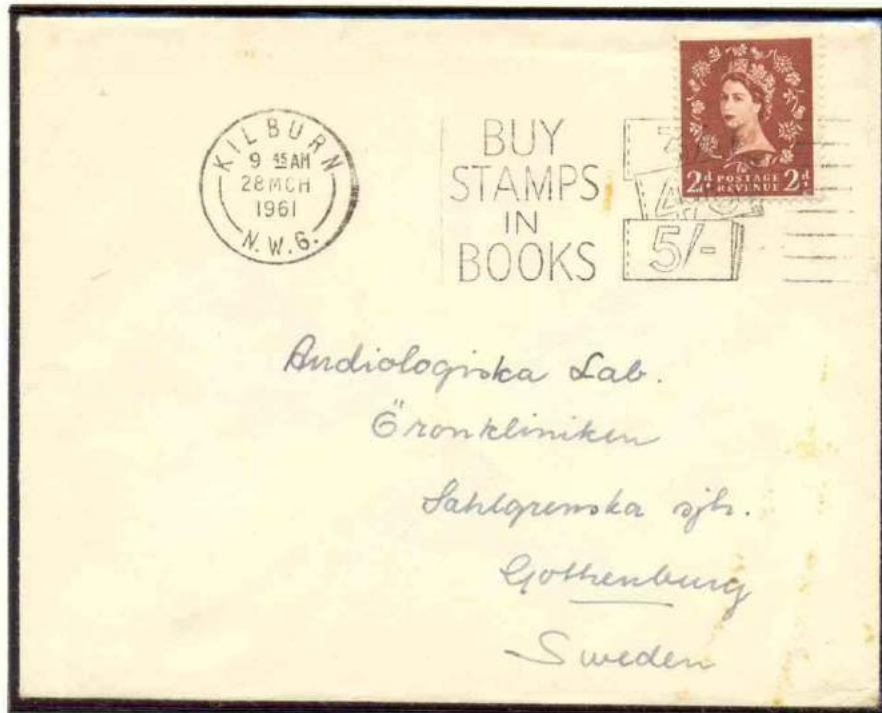
2.3. How and where to find philatelic material

PHILATELIC COUNTERS AND INTERNET



New issues can also be purchased directly from the post office, where philatelic counters exist especially for this purpose.

A variety of postal and philatelic issues can also be acquired from the philatelic departments of postal administrations, which devote their efforts to serving the philatelists, inclusive with a "new issue services" (stamps of the year in a book).



As most collectors normally do a certain amount of exchanging with colleagues, if they are plugged in the internet, certainly that the chances for this will be increased.

In reality, a wealth of philatelic material that deserves the philatelist exploration is available for purchase on the web in sites provided by postal administrations, stamp dealers and philatelic auction houses, which means that a simple click of a mouse can launch the collector into cyberspace for a worldwide tour looking at and picking out good items.

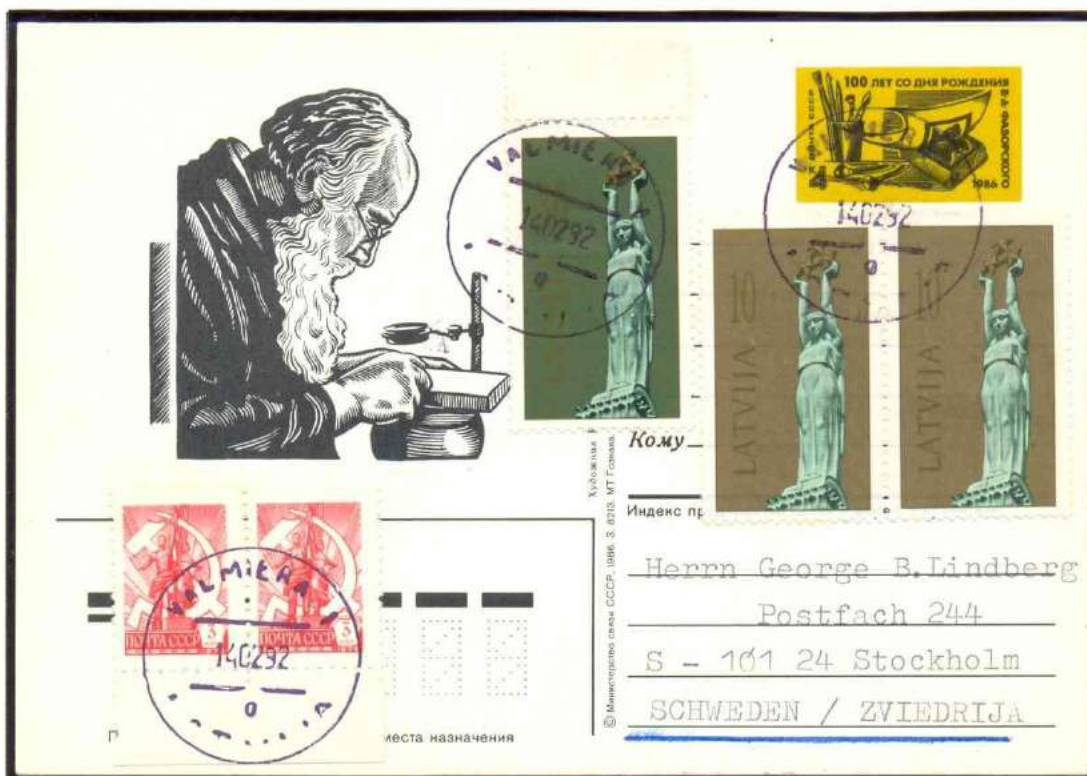


Collectors can also use the Internet to chat to other friends about their collections and experiences, or even to start a pen pal experience, thus being another "avenue" to use.

2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs

THE POSTAGE STAMP AS AN ART FORM

Every stamp is a piece of art in miniature and its design is the key to enjoyment of Thematic Philately, which means that there is much to be learnt with the making of a stamp.



Effectively, some general knowledge of how the issued postage stamps came about adds much to the development of a theme, for this it is important to study the background of the design it portrays.



2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs

Once a general subject has been chosen, the postal administration contracts an artist to produce a design.



"The Design", color trial

The production of a stamp begins with the preliminary artist's creations – which vary from sketches, models, and drafts – to the final artwork handed to the printer.

It pays to study the details of the birth of a postage stamp, and in this case the Brazilian plastic artist Biaggio Mazzeo was commissioned by the national Posts to design both the postage stamp and the special cancellation in allusion to the First Historical Submarine Research (1968), having started his work with these preliminary sketches shown below.

THE BIRTH OF A STAMP

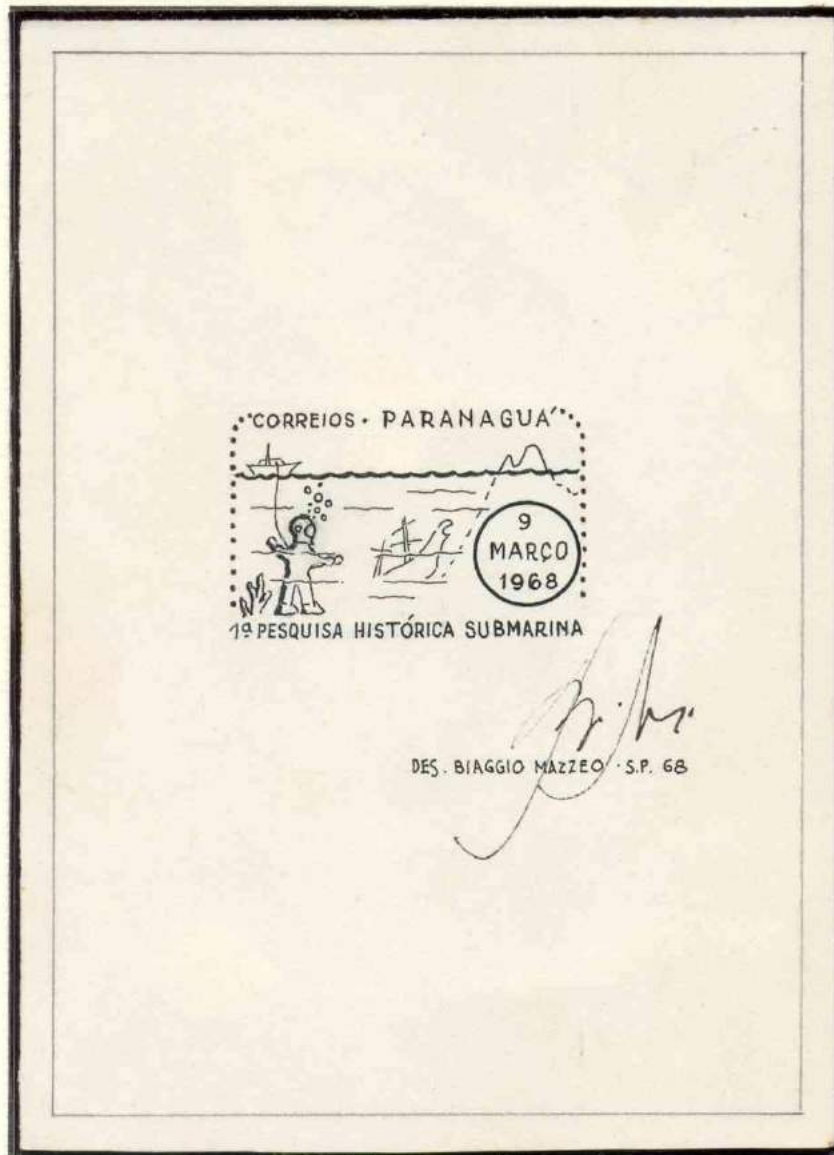


Image of the saint displaced to the left and right

Interestingly, the sequence that leads to the issuance of a stamp sometimes adds some printing errors or varieties.



2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs

ESSAYS & PROOFS

In philately, an *essay* is a proposed design for a stamp that was rejected by postal authorities, or not adopted, or that, if adopted, was modified in some particular before issue and release for sale.



Essay, Mexico

That means that if the design for a stamp submitted to a government for approval is different in any way from the final stamp, it is an essay.



Test print (specimen), Switzerland



Testing stamp, Brazil

Essays and training school stamps appear in the market originated from archives of printers.



Intermediate color proof for an unissued stamp from Peru, 1992



Intermediate color proof for an unissued stamp of Germany



2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs



Monochrome proof, Niuafo'ou, 1969



"The proof", color trial



"The letter", color trial



Proof on silk paper

In contrast with postage stamps essays, a *proof* is a trial printing from an officially approved design die or plate, no matter in what color nor material upon which it may be printed for progress or approval purposes.



Blue trial color artist sunken die proof (with governmental embossed seal), signed J. Combet

2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs

In other words, upon final approval of a design from which stamps are issued, all subsequent prints made at any stage prior to issuance of the intended stamp are *proofs* (*die proofs*, *plate proofs* and *color proofs*).



Although the proofs merely reproduce a basic stamp design, they can be more relevant in philatelic terms.



Color proof on card paper



Color trials



Color proof on card paper



Color proof in brownish

2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs



Black proof



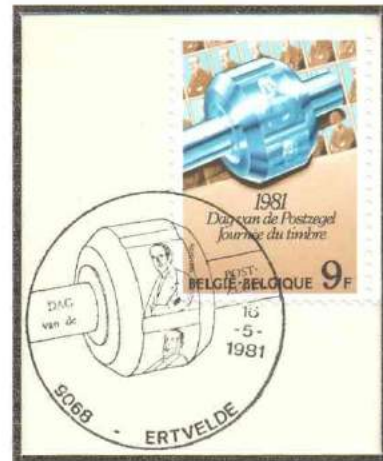
Die in black on proof paper, USA, 1861



Die proofs, also called atelier proofs, are trial impressions, often at an incomplete stage, pulled directly from the master die for a first checking of the engraver's work.



Die proof in black on glazed card (before hardening), England, 1895



They are printed, either black or in color, on glazed card, art paper, or other by the proofer on a handpress and can normally be distinguished by the "plate mark" and its margins; after finishing, the die is then transferred in multiples to form the plate.



Unfinished die proof in rose
Guatemala, 1878



Plate proof on India, USA, 1893



Plate proof on card paper, USA, 1893



2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs



Engraved progressive proofs (vignette) on thick paper



Proof of vignette with control punch
Uruguay, 1954

As a stamp is defined, some *progressive* or *contemporary* proofs are printed from the die, although not necessarily in the same color(s) as the issued stamp, because they are part of a whole stamp design and of the approval process.



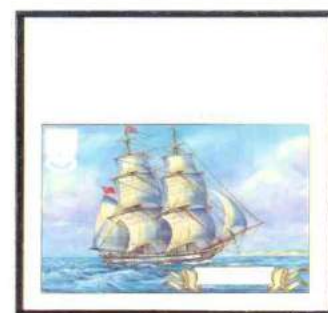
Trial color proofs



Certain "proofs" have been produced simply as a sample of the printer's work or to satisfy philatelic demand.



Trial color proof



Trial color proof

2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs

Original artworks are unique elements that represent the very best thematic items in this field, if we consider that they synthesize the entire story of the stamp design, so having great philatelic and thematic significance.



Final artwork for the Philippines' 60 s stamp of the set "1984 Olympics Los Angeles" (Windsurfing) – The issued stamp is on the left side

2.4. Genesis of a stamp: design, engraving, essays and proofs

SPECIMENS

When new stamps are produced, samples are circulated to all other postal institutions to be recognizable as legitimate issues.



In order to prevent some eventual postal use, such samples are usually marked with the word *specimen* (or its equivalent in other languages) either by overprinting or perforation.



In some circumstances, a bar across the lower right corner indicates that this is a specimen, as in the case of stamps (and postal stationeries too) distributed to government officials and press for publicity purposes.



Some of these samples are remainders and thus became available to collectors, integrating their exhibits.

2.5. The stamp is born: overprints and perfin

HOW STAMPS ARE PRINTED

Some general knowledge of the processes used to manufacture postage stamps adds much to the appreciation of their variations.



Color trial, offset printing method



"The engraving", color trial



As we know, there are various methods, differing in the manner in which the design appears on the surface of the printing plate.



Green color shift

The process of *line-engraving* (*intaglio*, *recess-printing*) is considered the most beautiful of all stamp-printing methods.

Pour le MUSÉE POSTAL



impression taille-douce report



Impression taille-douce



Impression définitive

Phases d'impression du Timbre-poste
"Le Nouveau Né" de Georges de La Tour

5 Francs

IMPRIMERIE DES TIMBRES-POSTE - PARIS

2.5. The stamp is born: overprints and perfins

Three main printing processes have been used in the production of postage stamps (and also postal stationeries): *letterpress*, *recess-printing* and *lithography*, but sometimes two or three of these methods have been combined to.



Lithography was the precursor of modern *offset printing*, a process in which thin plates of aluminum or zinc are specially prepared (lithographic) and built up by photographic means.



Inverted overprint

Overprints were largely set up from letterpress, the simplest of all them.



Nowadays, when stamps and postal stationeries are needed by the million, and frequently demanded in multi-colored designs, the machinery for printing them is extremely complex.



2.5. The stamp is born: overprints and perfins

OVERPRINTS

Overprints may be typeset or, occasionally, lithographed or engraved on postage stamps.



As the name suggests, overprints comprise any additional matter (value, portrait, device, etc.) applied to the face of a stamp after the original printing, in order to indicate changes of value or to convert it to any other purpose.



They have also been found in stamps on postal stationeries.



Thematically, if a stamp is overprinted with a theme different from that one of the stamp, this loses the original theme (of course, pictorial ones are more interesting in thematics).



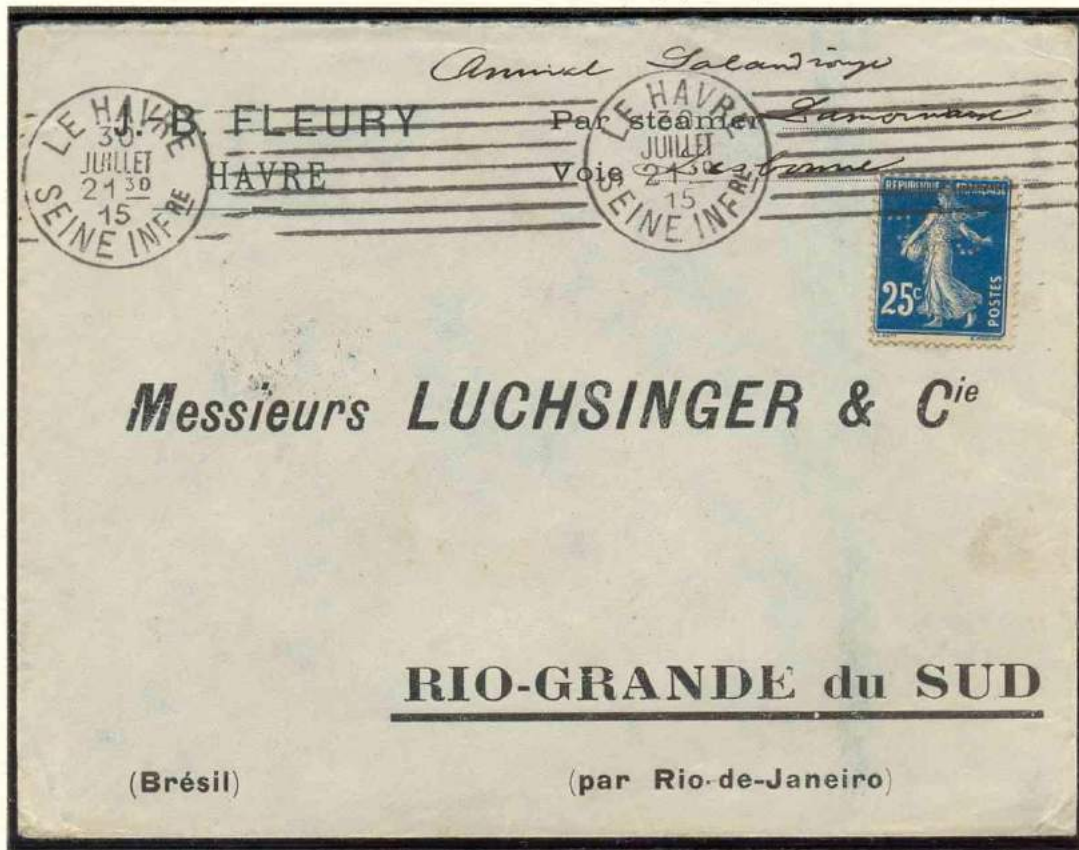
2.5. The stamp is born: overprints and perfins

PERFINS

Another kind of marking (added with the permission of postal authorities) consists of perforated letters or other devices, which are known as *perfins*, used as a security measure in the past, existing many where the holes are arranged in order to show some sort of illustration, thus of thematic interest.



Perfined stamp (SI & Co), Simon, Israel & Co., Ltd., Bradford



Cover with a perfined stamp (JBF) of the French firm J. B. Fleury, Le Havre, 1915



3. POSTAGE STAMPS IN THE BASIS OF ALL THEMATIC COLLECTIONS



Postage stamps are the basis of any thematic collection and especially when exhibiting, it is important to include as many different kinds of stamps related to the chosen theme as possible to demonstrate philatelic knowledge.



Postal stationeries allusive to postage stamps, mailed internally in Russia, 1981/1982: the one above showing color shift



3.1. Making use of stamps in their many forms

Naturally, the role of postage stamps in the story is clear from its design, inscriptions and alterations by overprints.



Almost everything the thematic philatelist can imagine is shown on postage stamps, from sports to zoology, and from angels to transports, among various other themes.



Color proof



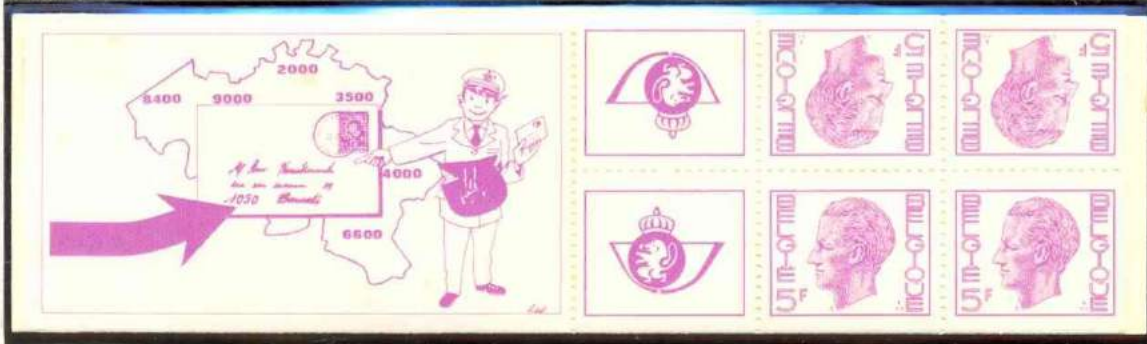
Modern printing methods, and the change in issuing policies by postal administrations over the years in order to include pictorial stamps, have led to an even greater emphasis on thematic class – the preferred option of the world of Philately.



3.1. Making use of stamps in their many forms

POSTAGE STAMPS: KINDS & USES

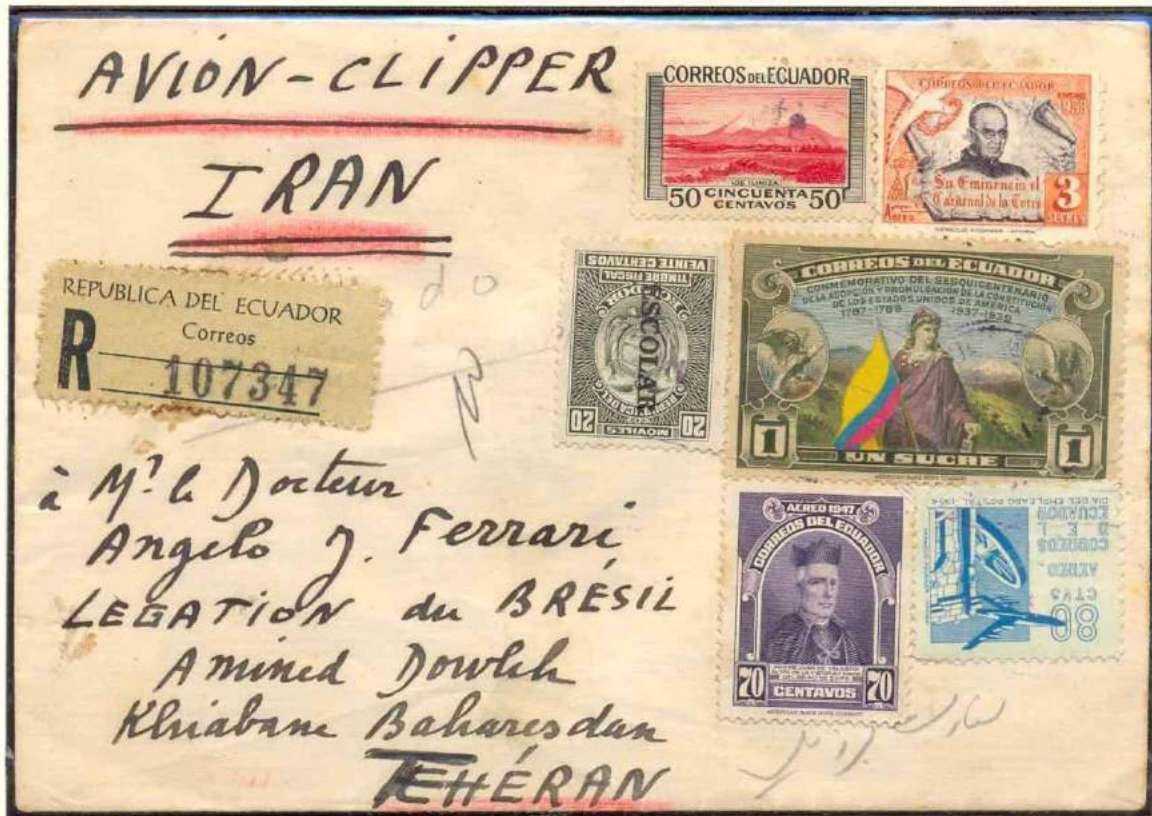
As it is known, postage stamps were originally introduced to prepay a form of postal service equivalent to its face value, a really original idea at that time that remains as its primary role until the present days.



But as time went on, this function became diverse and special-use categories were thought necessary.



So, postage stamps may be categorized by type, function, and the way they are issued, as for example: *definitives*, *commemoratives*, *airmail stamps*, *locals*, *tax*, *special delivery*, *postal-fiscals*, *semipostals*, *frank stamps*, and many other kinds.



Cover showing different types of postage stamps: *definitives*, *commemoratives*, *airmail* and *tax stamps*

3.1. Making use of stamps in their many forms

MATERIALS & SHAPES

As we know, the thematic information derives primarily from the design of the stamp, but also from the materials on which these were printed.



In fact, aside from the visual qualities, postage stamps have been issued in shapes of fruit, of a heart, etc., while others have been produced using "rare" materials, such as cork, plastic, etc.



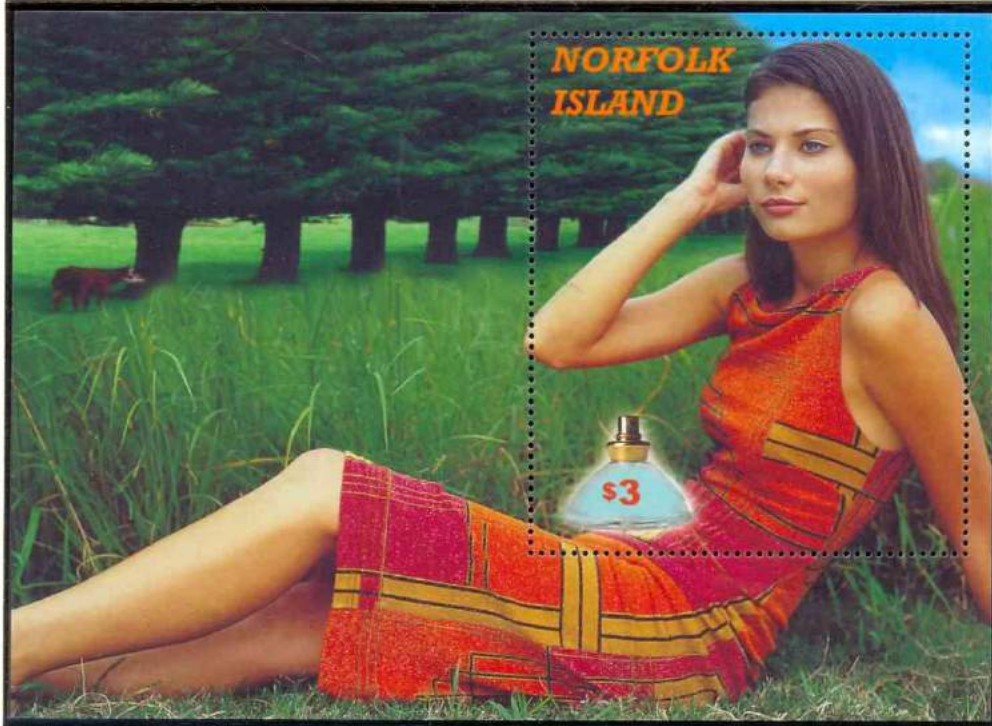
This means that there is more on postage stamps that may fit a thematic exhibit than just pretty figures.



3.1. Making use of stamps in their many forms

DESIGN STORIES BEHIND THEM

There are plenty of other things – in the thematic sense – to be found on postage stamps.

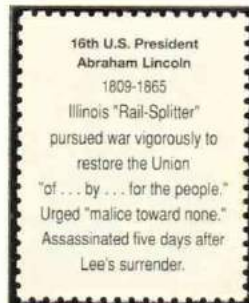


Besides having place, by its design, in various thematic exhibits (nature, fashion, women, or beauty), this miniature sheet also exhales the fragrance of the perfume it is promoting

Stamps were used in lieu of money in wartime or during shortages of small notes or coins.



Others that show people who passed away are overprinted with a mourning black border.



Inscriptions on the gummed side often present additional (so useful) thematic information.



The St. Anthony of Padua stamps issued by Portugal in 1895 have a kind of prayer printed on the back.

3.1. Making use of stamps in their many forms

SECRET MARKS & HIDDEN IMAGES



One of the greatest thrills in the study of postage stamps is finding the unexpected, the hidden, the unusual, and there is so much to be discovered on them, as secrets, puzzle pictures and various other things only seen under a magnifying glass.



Secret marks and hidden images are devices incorporated by some artists into a stamp's design, and which are not intended to be readily seen at first glance.



Laredo's name written in a musical notation (la-re-do)



Hitler's face among the tree's branches

Of course, there must be an uncountable variety of strange things yet to be detected, and certainly many collectors with a keen eye for these details.



A Star of David in B. Revel's beard



Here, Lincoln's pensive look seems to be the result of the cocker spaniel drawn into his eyes and hat brim.

If the dog's head appeared by chance or by intent, we cannot know, but the fact is that when the stamp is positioned on its side it is quite distinct.



3.1. Making use of stamps in their many forms

DESIGN ERRORS

Design errors (where the stamps are not designed correctly) are various, representing a particular and fertile field of interest to thematic collectors.



Stamp issued in 1877, but cancelled in 1886



Schubert's piece of music instead of Schumann's



"Bearded" & "shaved" George Washington



Below: stamp and cancellation exhort pedestrians to cross a street under green light, but both green and red are inverted



This kind of error results of the artist receiving wrong information or from inadequate care by the engraver.



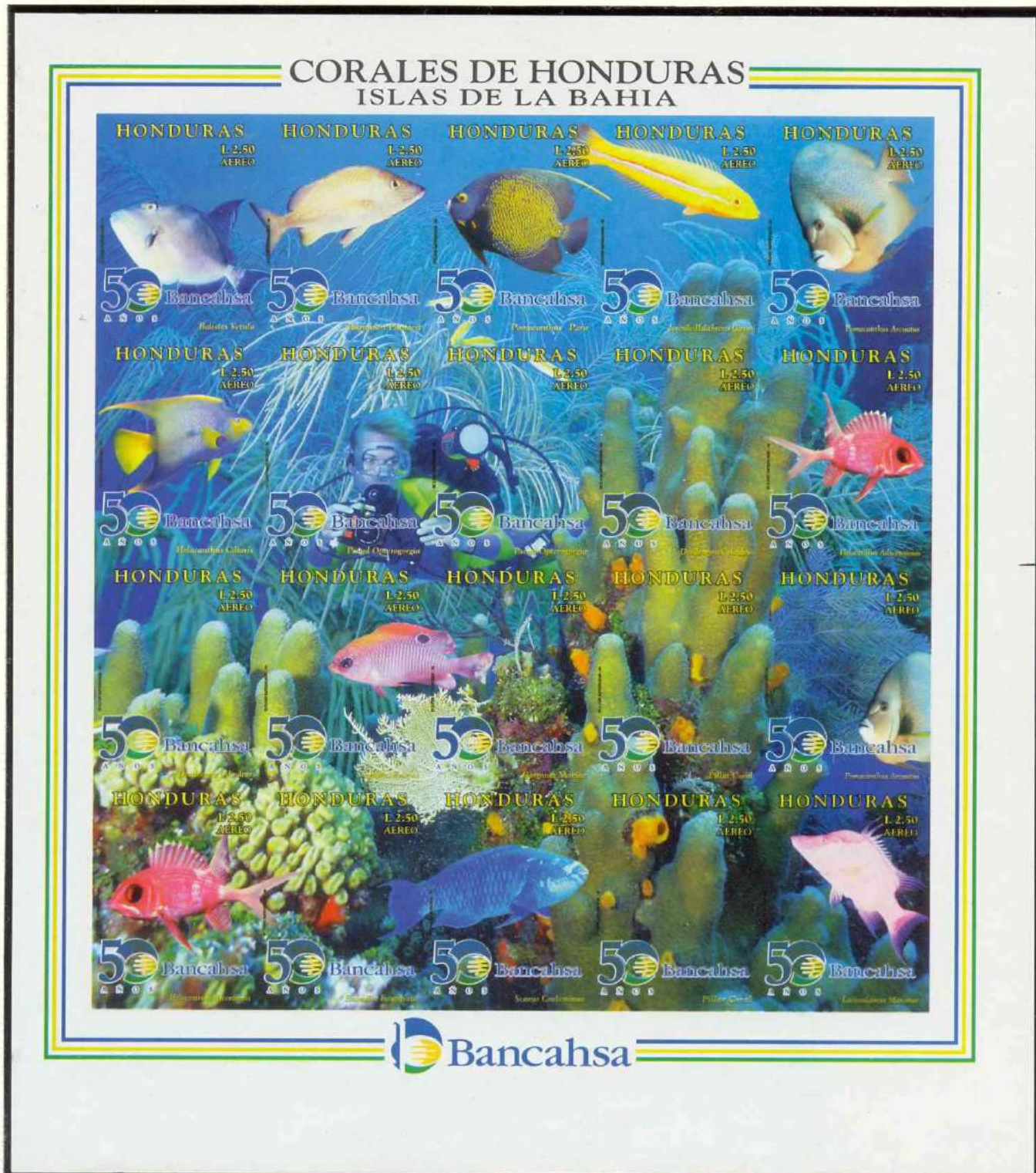
Stamps, commemorative cancellation, and official cover with an error of time (later corrected with new issues): 1598 instead of 1498

3.2. Philatelic errors, varieties, and the like



PRODUCTION ERRORS

Postage stamps afford a wide illustration of man's infinite capacity for committing mistakes, and as collectors love abnormalities of all sorts, *errors* (both human and mechanical) are greatly sought after.



Anomalous sheet of stamps showing two kinds of errors: mechanical (imperforate) and conceptual (names of the species graphed in an incorrect form)

3.2. Philatelic errors, varieties, and the like



Color shift

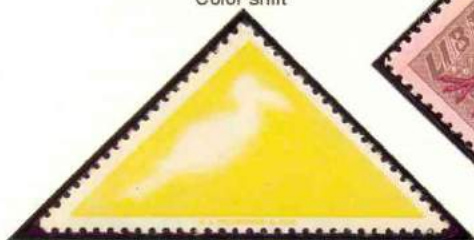
In the strict sense, a philatelic *error* on a stamp is any major variation from the normal caused by human carelessness or mechanical breakdown, and which escaped the vigilance of the issuing authorities; they are of very diversified character, being generally known as EFOs (errors, freaks and oddities).



Color shift



Color shift



Missing colors



Color shift



Missing colors



Air cover mailed from Córdoba, Argentina, to Porto Alegre (RS), Brazil, Aug 26, 1967 - Postage stamp showing a pliê (fold)

3.2. Philatelic errors, varieties, and the like



Inverted center

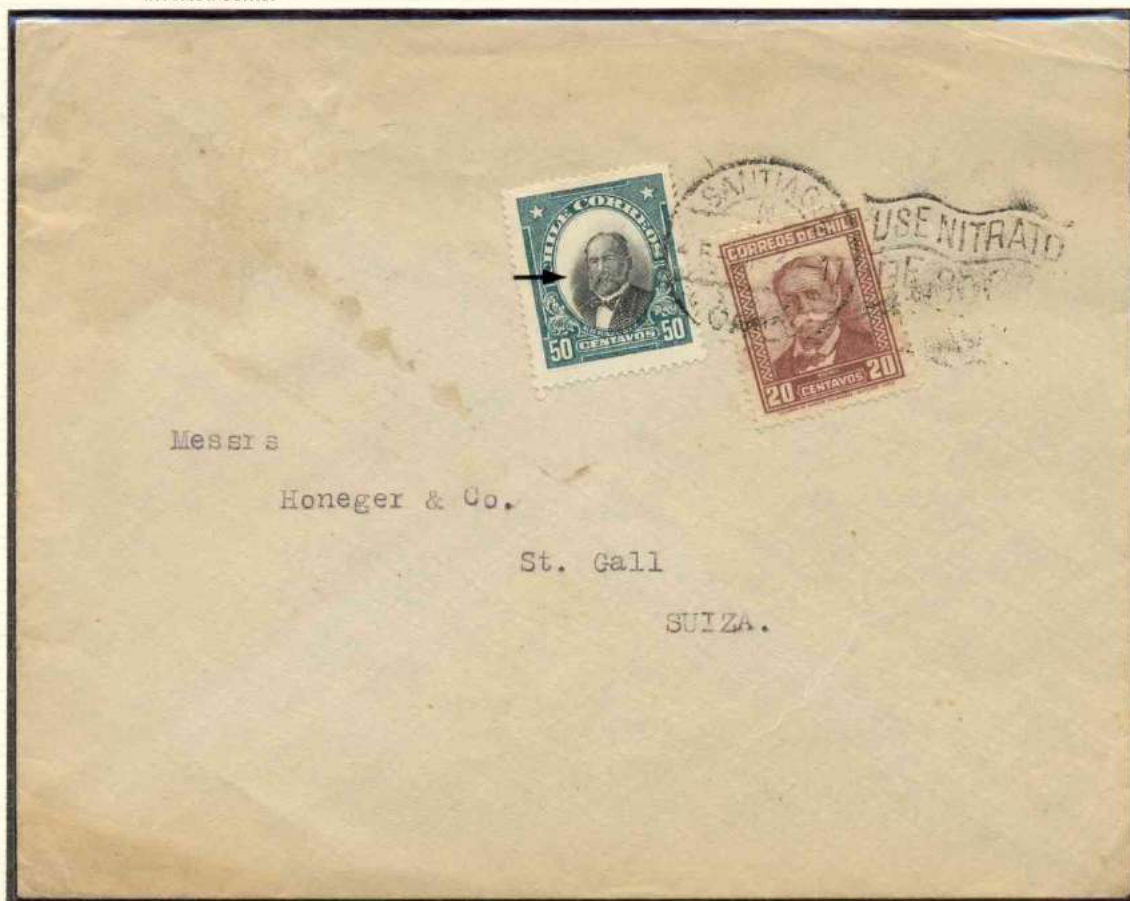


Inverted center



Inverted center

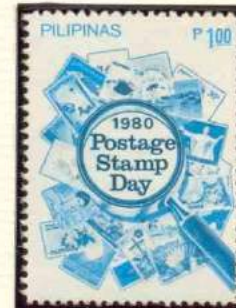
Real printing errors (such as inverted centers, missing or wrong colors, and printed on both sides) are the result of human error, and if this one results in the original thematic illustration looking different, then this should be shown alongside the normal stamp.



Cover mailed from Santiago, Chile, to St. Gall, Switzerland, Dec 5, 1939 - One of the stamps (50 c) with the vignette misplaced



Green color omitted



Missing colors

3.2. Philatelic errors, varieties, and the like

If most *production errors* are human errors, *freaks* and *oddities* (such as color shifts, misplaced perforations and the like) are abnormalities that derive from machinery malfunction.



Vignette omitted



Legends omitted

Eventually, freaks and oddities also appear on stamps applied to postal stationeries.



Misplaced stamp (printed onto postal card)



Pliê (fold)



Printing failure

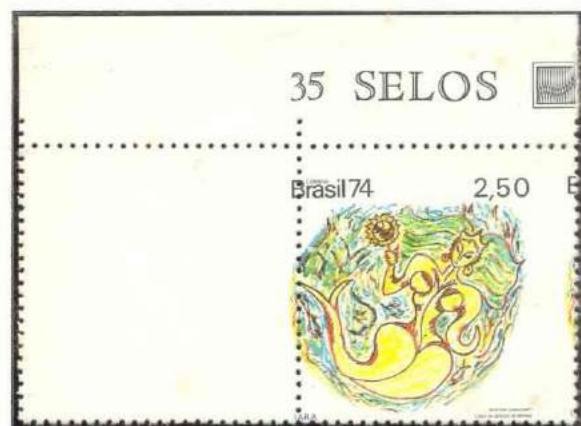


Perforation shift



Perforation shift

In reality, these defective stamps should have been detected during inspection, taken out and destroyed.



Perforation shift

3.2. Philatelic errors, varieties, and the like

Sometimes production errors inadvertently released to the public have been reprinted in large quantities so as to prevent from attaining an enhanced value.



An example is the USA "Hammarskjöld" (1962) of which a sheet with inverted centers was inadvertently sold, so, the U.S. Postal Service purposely printed thousands of them to prevent the error from becoming a rarity.



Cover from Boston (USA) to Porto Alegre (Brazil), bearing "Hammarskjölds" with the ochre color inverted (pair above) and a normal one



Obviously, the overprinting of postage stamps yields the largest crop of printer's errors, and since the most common process of doing this has been letterpress printing, the variations that can be found are numerous.

3.2. Philatelic errors, varieties, and the like

PHILATELIC VARIETIES



Variety is any kind of distinctive feature in some detail of the stamp composition, most of them resulting from *technical flaws* (i.e. abnormalities usually produced by malfunctioning presses), so giving, as a natural result, a constant blemish on the same stamp in every sheet.



Color nuances



Cover mailed from Paris, France, to Zurich, Switzerland, Feb 18, 1925, bearing three "semeuses" 50 c. in distinct colors

Common varieties do not add to the exhibit and the abuse in using them tend to adversely affect the thematic development.



Imperforate varieties of normally perforated stamps should be shown in pairs or then in larger pieces as indisputable evidence of their imperforate character.

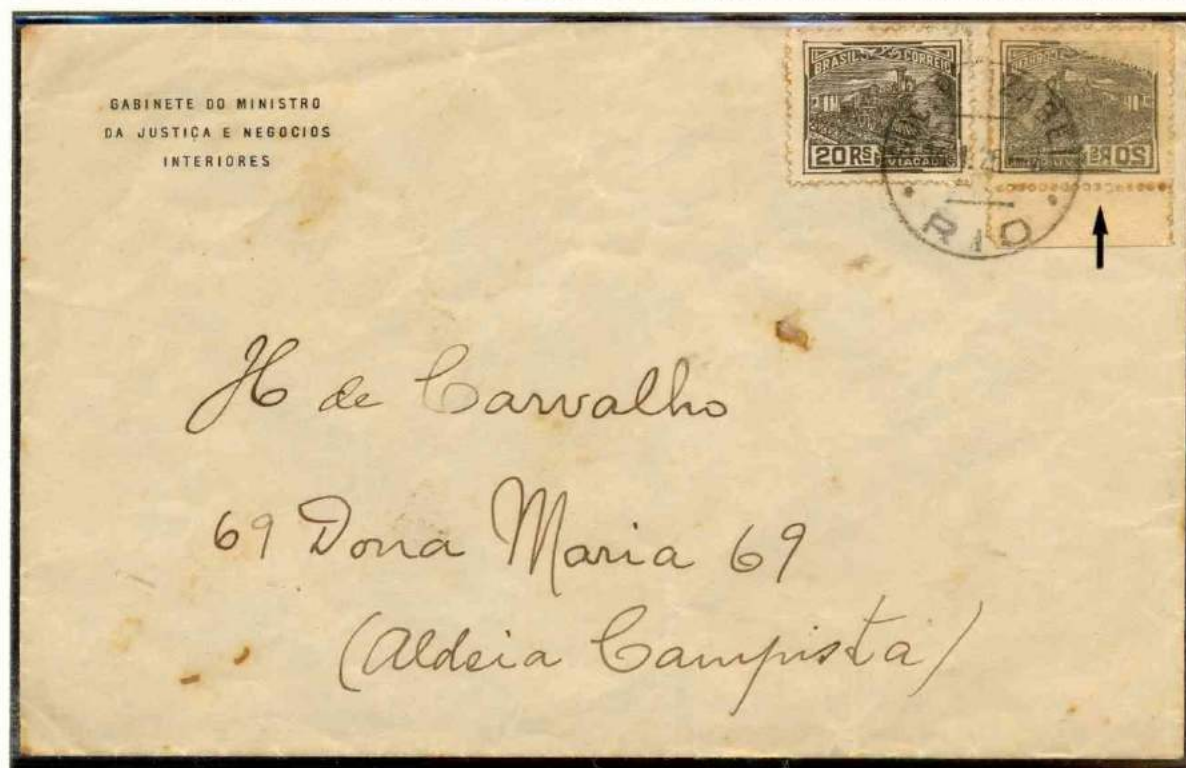
3.2. Philatelic errors, varieties, and the like



If a sheet enters into the press upside down stamps will appear printed on the gummed side, of course.



Offset (not to be confused with the printing process) is simply the transfer of undried ink from one surface to another, so giving a reversed image of the stamp design on the back of other sheet, as in a mirror print.



Cover mailed internally in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, franked with two postage stamps of 20 réis, the right one exhibiting an offset image

SOUVENIR SHEETS

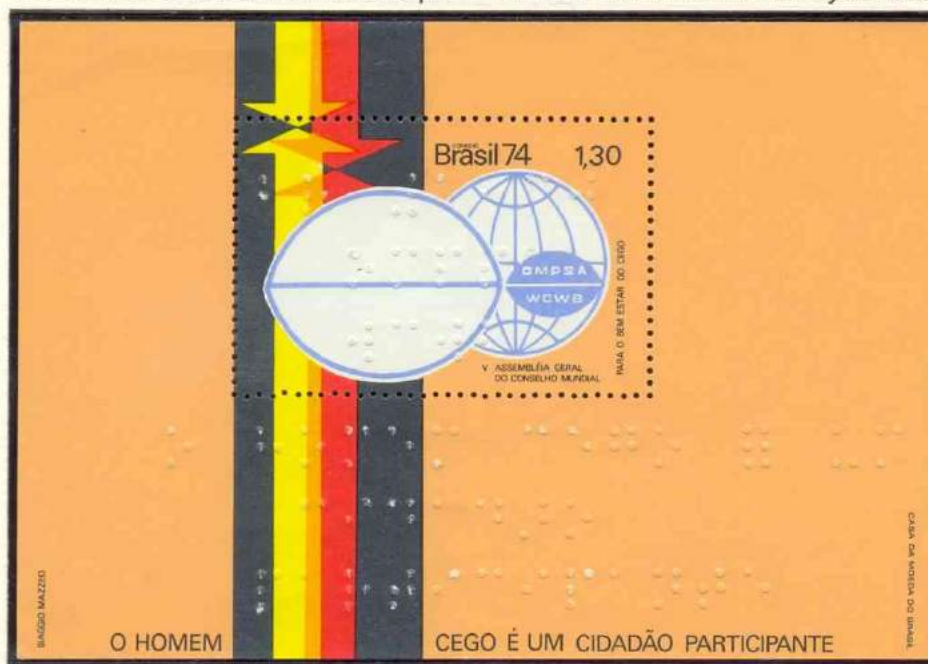
A *souvenir sheet* is a small sheet of postally-valid stamps, containing a single one or a small group of them, either perforated or imperforate, usually very colorful, and often with relevant information or decorations printed in the margins of the sheet.



In this example shown at right, the design on the postage stamp runs over onto the sheet margins.



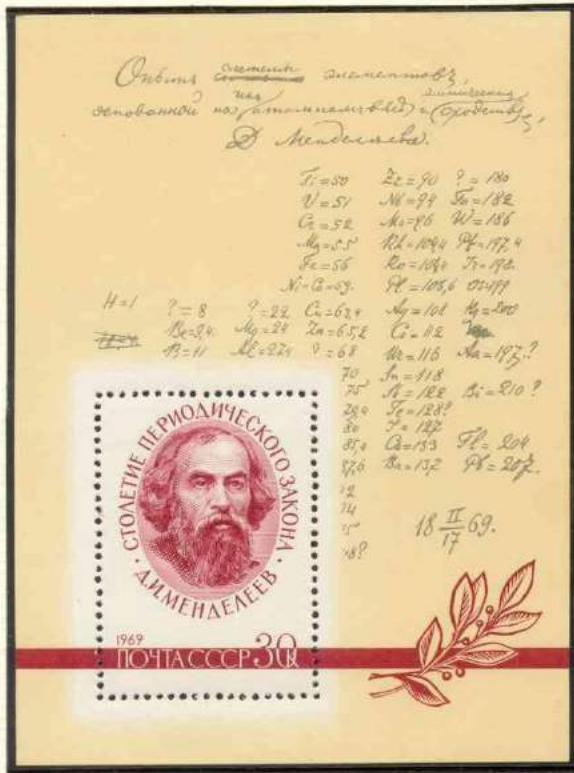
The souvenir sheet below has inscriptions in Braille which can be read by the blind.



The Brazilian Post was the first one to issue a souvenir sheet embossed in Braille - var. perforation shift

3.3. Stamps in larger units

Although they keep its postal validity, its inclusion in a competitive exhibit should be carefully considered.



If the illustrations and/or wording supplement the postage stamps thematically, this can be a reason for including the souvenir sheet in an exhibit instead of the simple stamps that make up the sheet.



Cover mailed internally in Germany (DDR), Dec 1, 1957, bearing a souvenir sheet used together with two stamps for the total franking

SE-TENANTS & TABS

Se-tenant refers to postage stamps joined together as pairs or larger sets, but differing in design, denomination, overprint, etc.



The design runs across several stamps, each one representing a part of the whole.



Cover mailed from Brno, Czech Republic, to Graz, Germany, Aug 9, 1938 - Postage including a pair of stamps having appendages



It is called *tab* a selvage label that, for whatever reason, is intended to remain attached to some adjoining stamp.



It usually has some special information about the subject being honored and is attached, by perforations or not, either to the bottom row or even at the sides of the corresponding stamp.

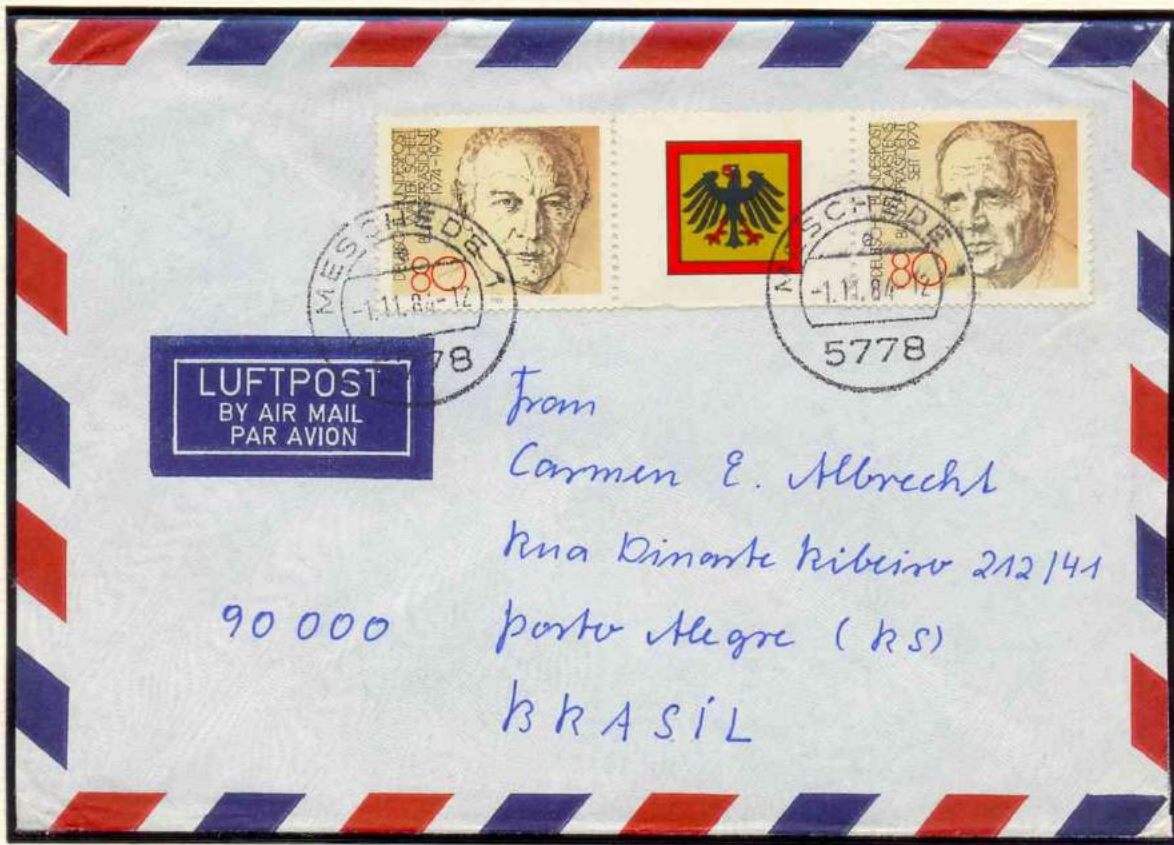


It is important to keep in mind that these appendages only have a thematic relevance when they are joined to the stamps, condition in which they can make a valuable supplement for the exhibit.



Postal stationery mailed from Prague, Czech Republic, to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Nov 15, 1940 – With additional franking

THE SHEET MARGINS



Together with the tabs, the margins of stamp sheets can also be of much interest to collectors, for these often bear inscriptions and/or decorative devices that eventually convey information of thematic relevance.



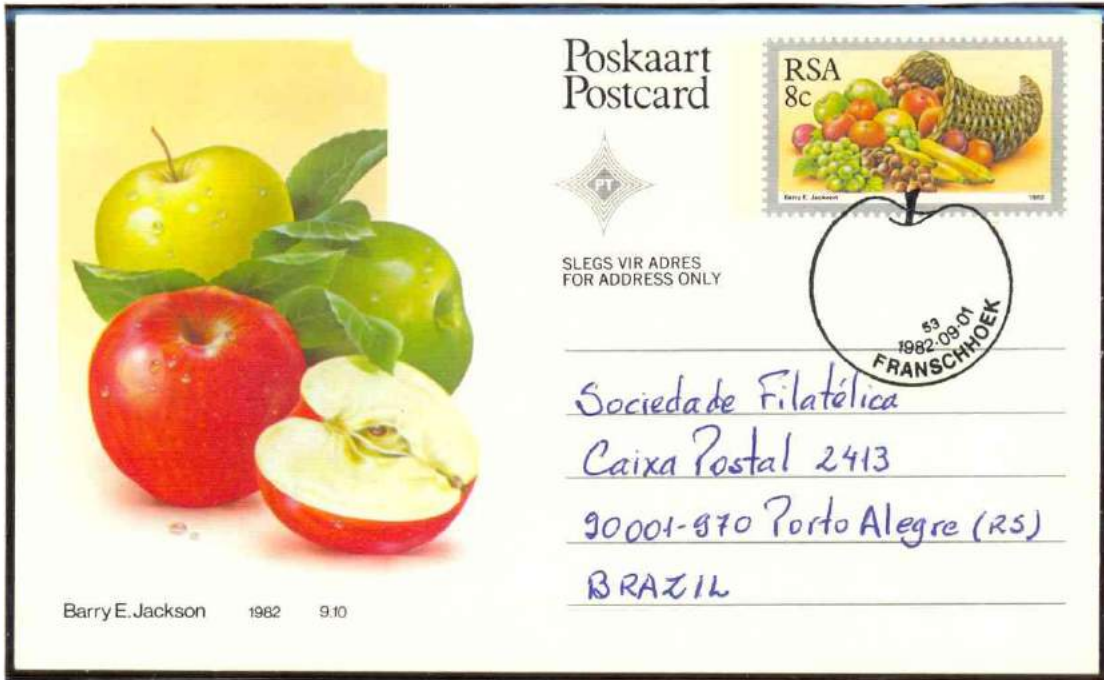
With some issues, a description of the picture on the stamp is given in the sheet margin, so giving an additional value to the stamp design.



If the sheet margins have something to offer thematically, then the collector should not let that chance pass him by.

3.4. Stamps as vehicles for advertising and propaganda

Postage stamps have been considered as useful items to carry both advertising and propaganda.



Actually, many postage stamps, either printed as so or on postal stationery, have been issued by various postal administrations to develop their country's commerce and also to promote products and services, being interesting to note that, although advertising on the face of stamps is not common, some examples are known.



3.4. Stamps as vehicles for advertising and propaganda



The first commercial advertisements were on the back of postage stamps, more specifically in New Zealand in the 1890s, but later many countries started selling advertising spaces on spare paper associated with stamps, as it is the case of the selvedge of stamps and especially the interleaving and covers of stamp booklets.



Stamp booklet containing 20 stamps ("semeuse" of 30 c.) with advertising on the cover and selvedge

Because postage stamps have such a general worldwide use and end up in nearly household in the world, advertising was also sometimes used in its "surroundings", i.e. in printed stamp collars.



Printed advertising envelope with printed stamp collar for "Henri Bloch-Semences Epurées-Graines Fourragères-Paris" bearing a 10 c. "semeuse" and mailed internally in France from Paris to Niort, cancelled by Paris Depart, May 18, 1908

3.4. Stamps as vehicles for advertising and propaganda



By the way, the selling of such spaces for advertising has been used for long by postal administrations for reducing costs and also to attend the customers.



Evidently, the selvedge of stamps (especially those ones issued in booklet form) is a prime site for this when advertising is applied by a postal service.



Cover mailed from Brussels to Zurich, Oct 10, 1936, bearing postage stamps (from booklets) with advertising in the interleaving

3.4. Stamps as vehicles for advertising and propaganda

Postage stamps and propaganda have a long and close relationship.



Actually, propaganda of one kind or another is often found on stamps, which, in such cases, deliberately exhibit written or pictorial information (or allegations) intended to promote or to damage any given cause.



Proofs (pair) identified as n° 101 and 102 on reverse

The cause itself may be political, religious, economic, or military, being this largely used in wartime.

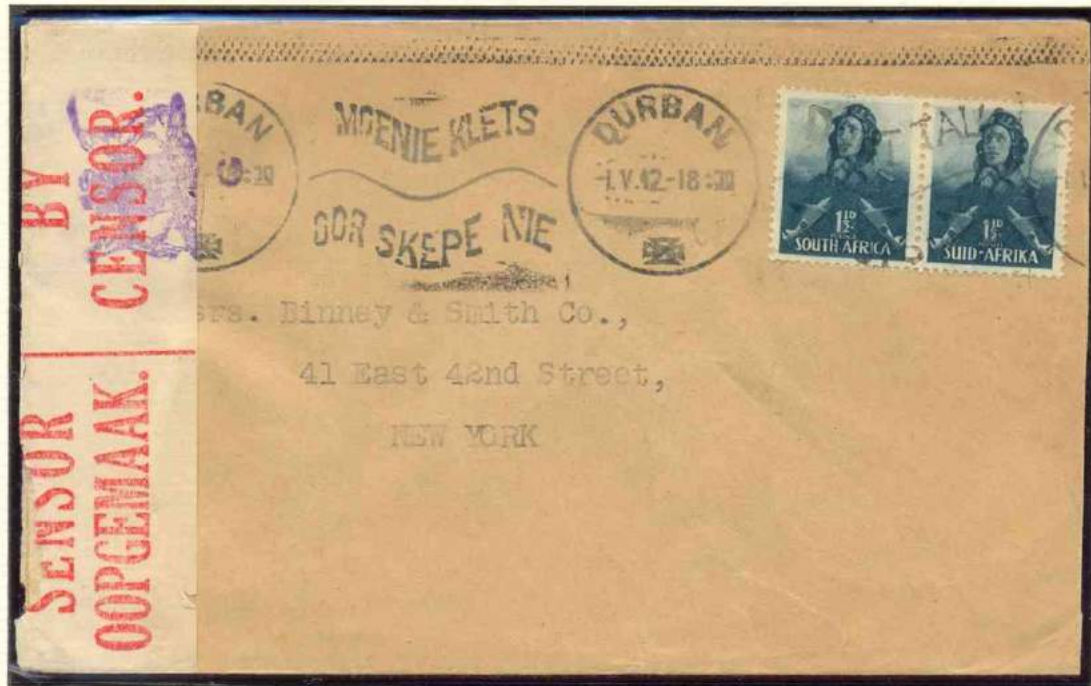


Propaganda labels, for example, were incorporated into the design of Italian stamps from 1942-44.



Postal stationery mailed from Wien, Austria, to Geneva (Switzerland), Nov 27, 1946, bearing additional stamps for franking

3.4. Stamps as vehicles for advertising and propaganda



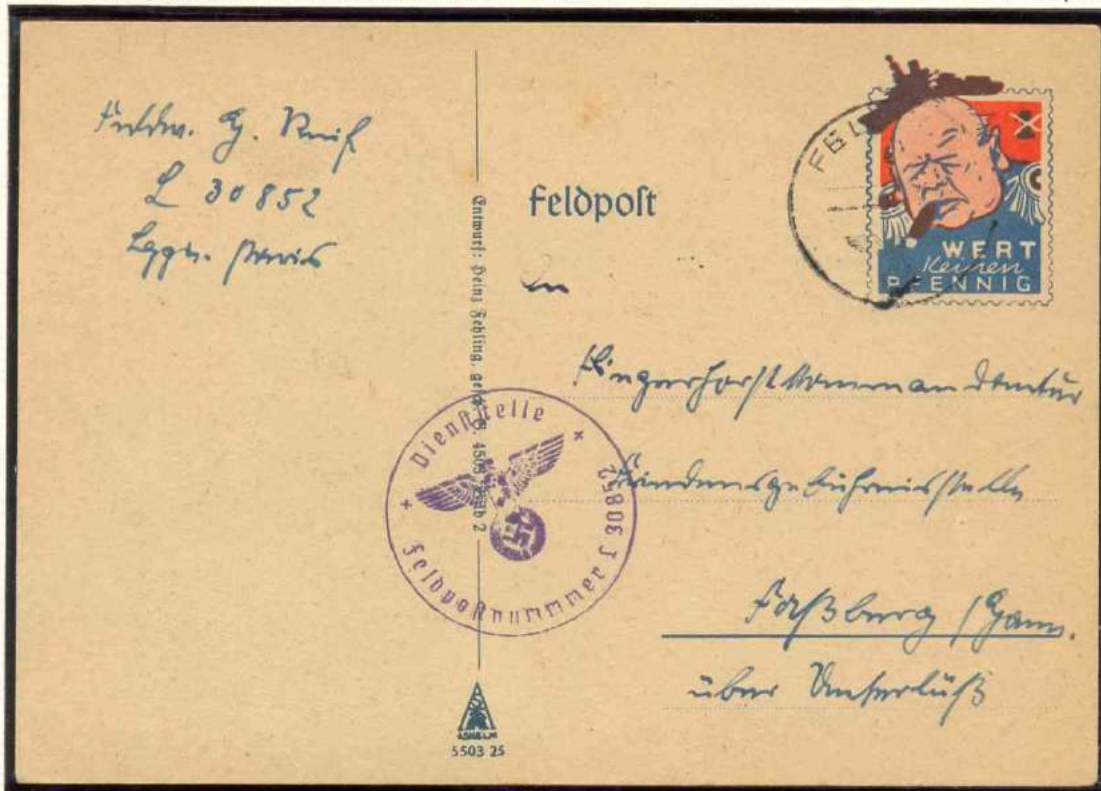
Cover mailed from Durban, South Africa, to New York, USA, May 1, 1942 - Cancelled "Don't talk about ships" (Afrikaner)



By the way, war propaganda was present not only in stamps, but even in slogan cancellations, while postal counterfeits were also made to government orders during wartime for use in enemy territories, and were largely distributed by resistance groups.



A demeaning cartoon of Sir Winston Churchill was used as the indicia on a 1941 German feldpost.



4. COMPLEMENTARY ELEMENTS FOR A THEMATIC COLLECTION

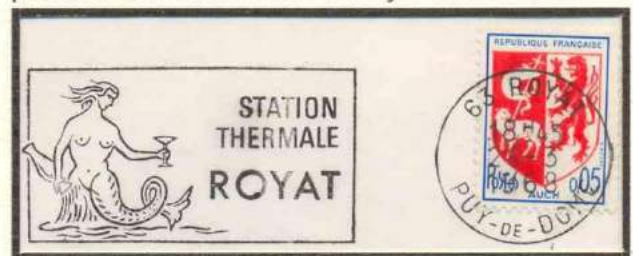


Postal stationery printed to private order (Dresden Bazar, Germany) mailed internally to Regensburg, Feb 10, 1900 (Germania 5 Pf. on the reverse side)

If stamps are the backbone of any thematic exhibit, it is a fact that around them there are various other suitable philatelic elements that have postal connotation and are thematically appropriate for the development of a theme.



Actually, when jurors evaluate the philatelic knowledge of the exhibitor, within the possibilities of a given theme, importance is given to the presence of all the different philatelic elements that add variety to a thematic exhibit.



These include all those items that a postal organization has issued for the purpose of conveyance of mail or for other purpose in the field of the postal communications.



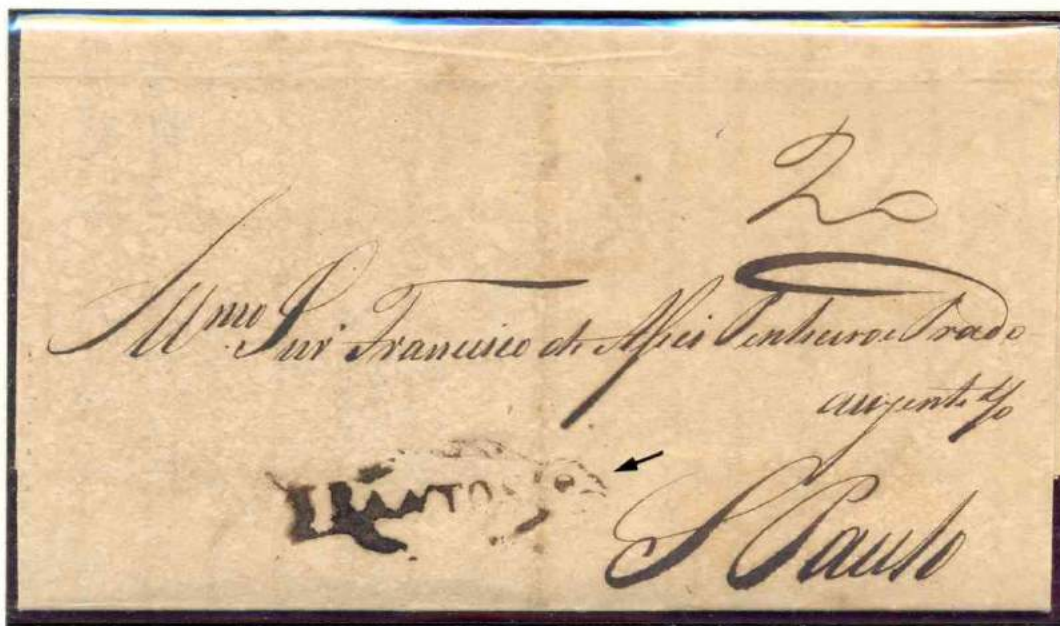
Stampless (free-franking) folded letter mailed from Comune di Ospitaletto to Brescia, Italy, Jul 15, 1864

There is a vast field for thematic research in markings of the times before postage stamps came into use, thus it pays to include elusive pre-stamp folded letter-sheets in a thematic exhibit, considering that they add diversity for its illustrations.



Pre-philatelic folded letter (Bolivia) mailed from Santa Cruz to Cochabamba, May 10, 1871 - ("Santa Cruz - Franca")

Illustrations of animals, for example, were extensively used in such markings applied to various pre-philatelic letter-sheets, which surely will interest thematic collectors in the zoological branch.



Pre-philatelic folded letter (Brazil) mailed from Santos to São Paulo, Apr 9, 1838, showing the cost (20 rs.) for postage



Philatelically, a cover is an envelope or other type of covering of correspondence from any matter, with or without adhesive stamps, which was sent through the mail, and bears postal markings of philatelic interest.



Cover posted from the sea floor off Nassau, Bahamas - Oval date cancel "Sea Floor/ Aug 16, 1939/ Bahamas"

A *First Flight Cover* is that one carried on a first or inaugural flight on an aircraft on a new airmail route.



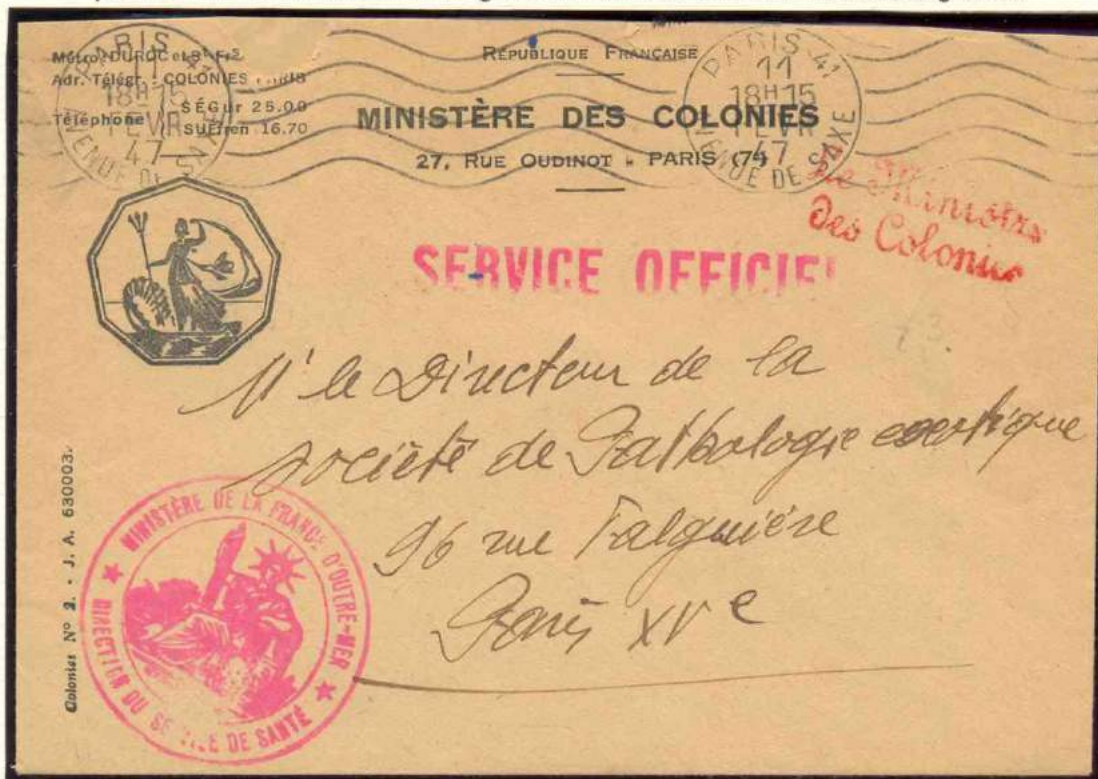
First Flight Cover mailed from Rio de Janeiro to Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil, "Navegação Aérea Brasileira - NAB", Mar 29, 1942

Stampless cover is a special kind of a cover that was mailed after the introduction of postage stamps, but which does not carry these ones as a payment of postage.



Stampless military concession cover sent to Chantenay-sur-Loire, France, with blue ANCHOR cachet MARINE ET COLONIES and octagonal CORRESP D'ARMEES/HAI-PHONG datestamp, Jan 6, 1894

Added features that increase the attractiveness of an envelope and its importance in a thematic exhibit include various kinds of handling markings applied by postal postal administrations and other agents on the outside of such free-franking items.



Stampless military cover (Ministère des Colonies, France) with pink cachet MINISTÈRE DE LA FRANCE D'OUTRE-MER, DIRECTION DU SERVICE DE SANTÉ) and another cachet SERVICE OFFICIEL, mailed internally in Paris, Feb 11, 1947

Obviously, the most appreciated documents are those actually sent through the mail, with proper postage, and bearing stamps/postmarks thematically relevant.



Wreck cover from Oran, Algeria, to Giron, France, Jan 5, 1901, franked by France 15 c blue used to that country, bearing a red cachet NAUFRAGE DE LA RUSSIE (which occurred off Marseille, Jan 7)

Crash covers, for example, can be used in a thematic exhibit because they often bear indications of the cause of the disaster and the means of transport involved.

A cover bearing postmarks that state why it was sent back usually offer splendid pieces of information.



Letter transported by the U-boat Bremen (torpedoed in his first voyage) from Tübingen to Rio de Janeiro during World War I, with cancels "Bremen 1 T.B. 15.01.17 D.O. R." and "Zurück. Wegen Einstellung des Tauchboot - briefverkehrs zurück an Absender"

Propaganda envelopes (such as those ones of the Penny Postage Campaign), can be included in exhibits as much as they are supported by a thorough philatelic justification.



Ocean Penny Postage propaganda envelope – Rawtenstall arrival mark (Feb 25, 1850) on the reverse side

In fact, envelopes with advertising have been issued by various postal administrations, thus providing a good and varied source of subjects that can fill many empty spaces in just about any thematic exhibit.

VAN SCHELLE

SPORTS

13, rue de Lozum, Bruxelles
Téléphone 12.11.88

30^e, avenue de Keyser, ANVERS
Téléphone 244.55

□ □

Nagez en Mail'ot
VAN SCHELLE
Maillots de Course
Maillots de Plage
Maillots Américains

Nagez aux Bains
VAN SCHELLE
Rue de la Glacière
(Ma Campagne)
Eau chauffée et filtrée
d'Avril à Septembre

Etabl^t
VAN SCHELLE

RESSEMELAGES

48, rue de la Montagne
231, chaussée de Wavre
167, chaussée de Gand, 167

CUIR — CRÊPE — USKIDE

PUBLICITY OFFICE, 85, av. Rogier, Brnx. Tél. 15.69.09. Toutes publi. cités.

Belgian cover in franchise (Service des Postes - Office des Cheques - Extrait de Compte) mailed to Ledeborg, Gand, May 2, 1932

There is no doubt that *postmarks*, in their various forms, are a valuable adjunct to any thematic collection.

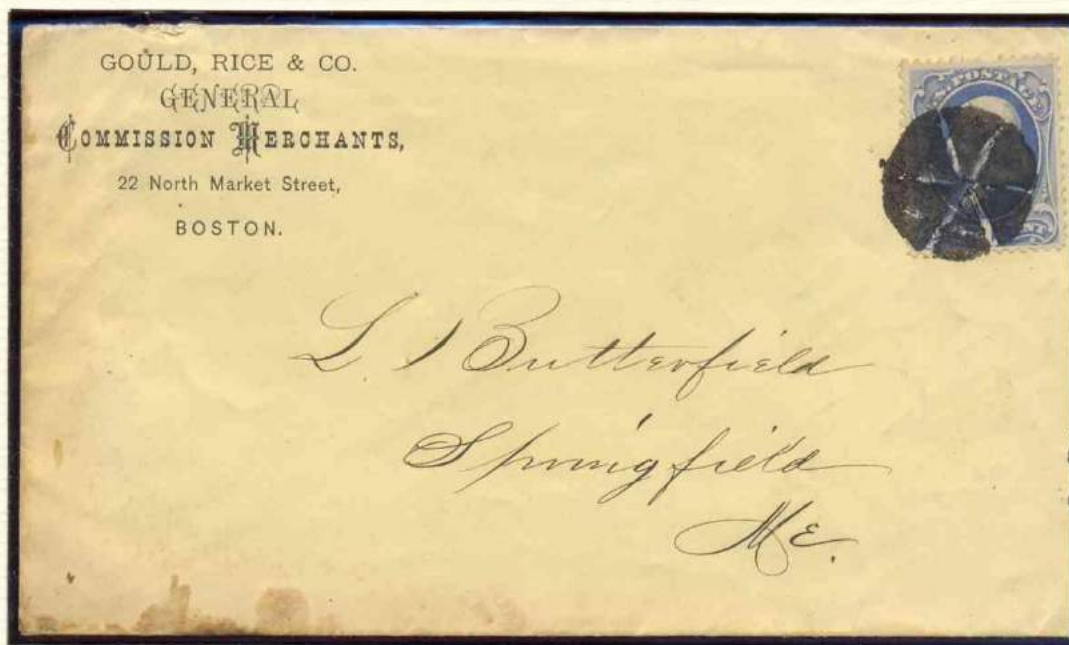


They include any markings made by postal officials or agents on mail, either by machine, handstamp or pen, especially the cancellation on a postage stamp with the purpose of making it unsuitable for further use.



Of course, it is better to retain complete all postal items bearing so fine cancellations.

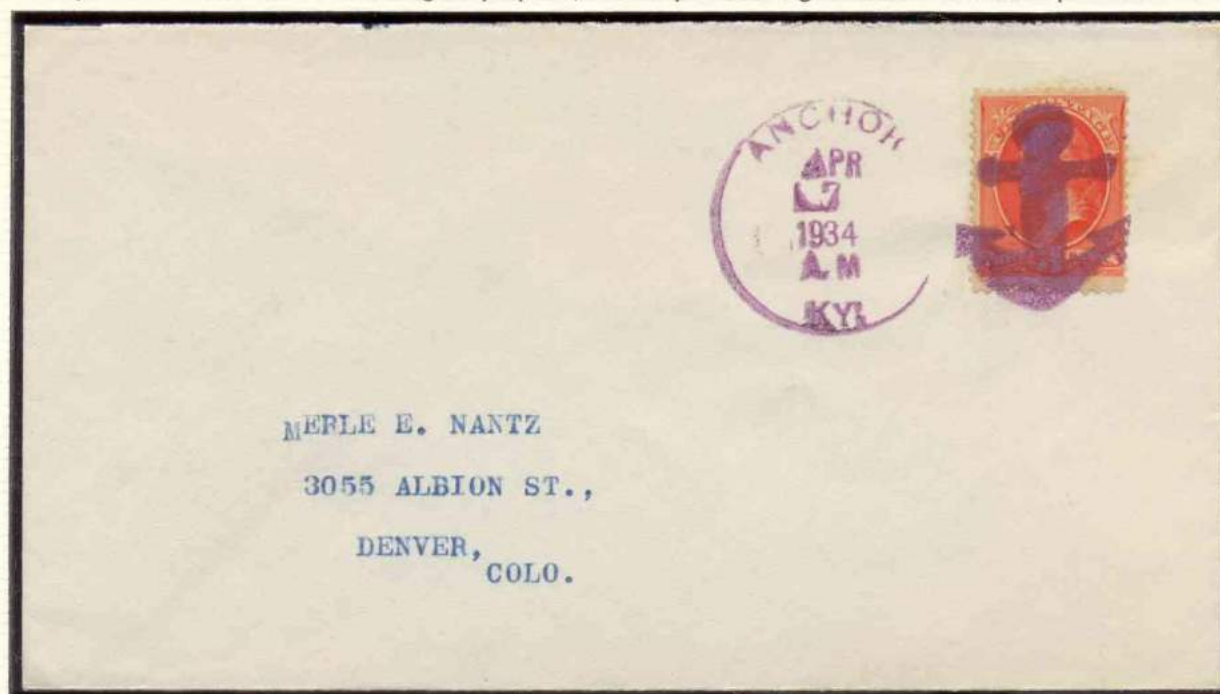


FANCY CANCELS & OTHER PICTORIAL 19th CENTURY POSTMARKS

In the second half of the 19th century, postmasters at various post offices hit on the idea that postage stamps could be canceled with imagination, thus they started using cancellations that consisted of little designs made from whatever useful materials that were close at hand: leather, a cork, a rubber eraser or the heel of a shoe; curiously, stars were always present.



"Fancy cancels" were used for the original purpose, but this practice degenerated into a mass-produced craze.



Fancy cancel from Anchor, Kentucky, USA, (designed by W.C. Paige, one example of late usage) sent to Denver, Colorado, Apr 7, 1934

Since its introduction, *cork cancels* (as the early fancy ones became known) were widely used in many parts, but at the end of the 1920s, a new wave of pictorial handmade cancels swept across the USA, where small post offices started canceling their mail with curious cancels inspired by the town's name.



Fancy cancel from Bass, Indiana, USA, mailed as a registered letter to Highland, Mar 27, 1930 (Bass datestamp on the reverse side)

Naturally, fancy cancels are always a nice addition to an exhibit if there is a relationship to the chosen theme.



Fancy cancel from Henton, Illinois, USA, mailed as a registered letter to Indianapolis, Ind., Feb 15, 1931 (Henton datestamp on reverse)

MODERN PICTORIAL CANCELS

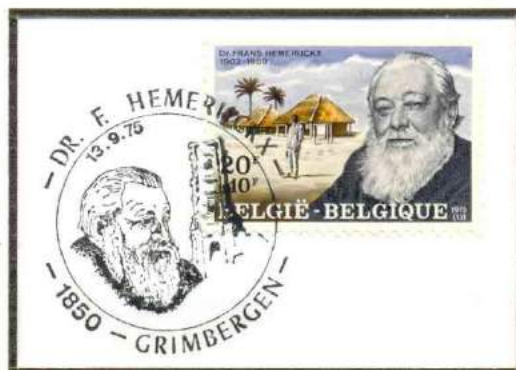
As we know, postal administrations have made available an ever-increasing number of *pictorial cancels* specially designed to complement every issued stamp and FDCs.



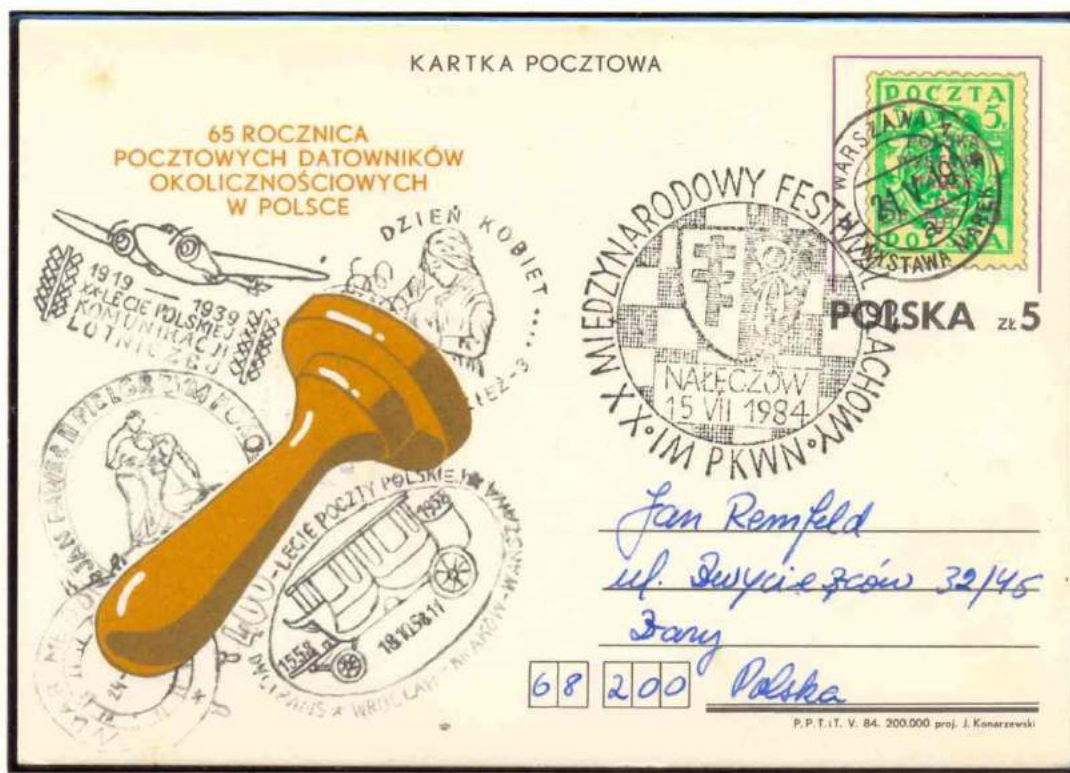
Additionally, various kinds of *special event* cancellations have been used at exhibitions, fairs and ceremonies, and even to celebrate relevant, historic facts of the countries.



Australia-China joint stamp issue with special cancellation



Thematically, pictorial cancels have great relevance for the pictures and/or wording they contain, being certainly a bonus if both the stamp and the cancellation have a connection with the theme.



The majority of postmarks for all purposes are still applied by a hand-held instrument, thus the most appreciated are those ones showing the cancel in their entirety and finely stamped.



Only cancels especially significant to the development of the theme should be used, which means that if it does not illustrate the subject using appropriate wording or figures, it should not be shown.



A stamp and respective cancellation retained on the whole envelope is said "on original cover" and the entire piece can be used as so, but if only a cut-out remains, they are described as "on piece".



MACHINE-APPLIED POSTMARKS



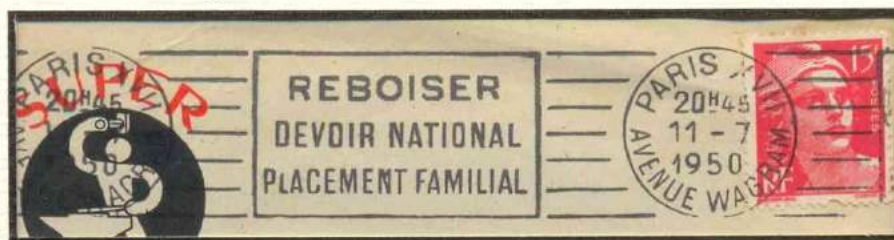
Postmarks have also been applied by machines to all mail passing through them.



In machine canceling devices, the "killer" often shows many bits of information or decoration.



Slogan cancellations, applied together with the regular town circular datestamp, have been used for special occasions and generally they contain advertising or announcements that call attention to some aspect of the sponsor's activities.



Flag cancellations, characterized by a killer that resembles the flag of the respective nation, were quite popular in the first half of the twentieth century, especially in Europe and America.



METERMARKS

Metered mail includes all correspondences that have been franked by postage meter machines.



In a positive sense, metermarks could be regarded as a kind of intermediary between postage stamps and postmarks, consisting of an *indicium* (country name and value), a dater die, and – as it is characteristic – some slogan advertising.



Postage meter machines are authorized by the postal authority and are generally used by government offices or private concerns under license.



Metermarks use to be printed directly onto the envelope, but some machines have been adapted for rolls of paper to produce what are called *meter tapes*.



People, when thinking of metermarks, think of the slogan applied to the left of the date stamp, advertising some kind of product, service, or whatever.



In fact, most manufacturers of meter postage machines, each one with a distinctive meter imprint design, have used meter slogans for self-promotion on their own mail.



Actually, since the 1930s, metermarks have been widely used to advertise just about everything, and during WW II patriotic slogans were associated.



The available universe of meters is unknown and good items are constantly surfacing, thus most thematic collectors have realized that these "ugly duckling" elements can be beautiful swans in any thematic exhibit.



Another important group that is usable in the development of many stories is that one of stationeries of postal origin (postal cards, aerogrammes, etc.), which represent a way to expand thematic exhibits.



Obviously, its use is always a nice addition to an exhibit if there is clear relationship to the chosen theme.





Postal stationery consists of postal items that have either an officially approved stamp-imprint or an equivalent – emblem or inscription – from which it is evident to postal agents that a certain nominal postage or related service is paid in advance.



All texts and illustrations applied before or at the same time as the imprinted franking value is usable in the development of the theme, no matter where they appear on this philatelic item, and affixed additional franking does not affect the postal stationery item as such in an exhibit.



4.4. Postal stationery

In the literal sense, the imprinted franking value and the rest of the postal stationery item form a single indivisible whole that may be shown mint or used, according to its philatelic relevance.



When the illustration from the back of the item is being used, it must be clearly demonstrated that postal stationery is involved, either by a philatelic text or exhibiting a reduced copy (photocopy or a scan) of the less important side.



As mentioned before, advertising on postal stationery is not new and in fact a number of these postal products (especially postal cards and lettercards) have been issued – by official postal organizations, or local or private post establishments legally authorized – to satisfy the demand of private customers.

Nur in die rothen Briefkasten
der Packetfahrt zu werfen.



Syphon-
Bierverlag
Fernsprecher-
Amt IV. N. 2448. **Berolina**

Berlin SW.
Alexandrinenstr. 110.

Syphon Perfect



FER BRAVAIS **FER BRAVAIS**

NOMBREUSES
IMITATIONS

Exiger sur chaque flacon la signature
R. BRAVAIS, imprimée en rouge.

Dépôt dans la plupart des Pharmacies

LESSIVE PHÉNIX
Breveté S. G. D. G.

JUGEMENT COUR D'APPEL DE PARIS
POLICE CORRECTIONNELLE 8 JUILLET 1885

MÉNAGÈRES & BLANCHISSEUSES
avec ce produit vous évitez l'emploi des
cristaux, savons, chlore, eau de javelle
et conservez le linge. Inappréciable
pour laver vaisselle, planchers, etc.

EN VENTE PARTOUT
SEULS PROPRIÉTAIRES S. J. & J. P. 41, r. de l'Ecluseur, PARIS.



CRIRAGE
Son Superbe brillant,
qui s'obtient
Sans Brosser
se conserve
une semaine
par tous les temps.

NUBIAN
En Vente Partout
Gros: 42, r. Chabrol.

E. CARRÉ & C^{IE}

102
BOUL. SEBASTOPOL.
Chemiserie Spéciale
(Arts & Métiers)
PARIS

100
plus
2

N° 102

CHEMISES

Toutes faites et sur Mesure

Gilets de Flanelle, Caleçons
Faux - Cols
Cravates, Gants, etc.

CHEMISE DEVANT TOILE
sans Col ni Poignets :

3^f 75

Blanchie, 50 c. en plus

Envoi franco du Catalogue illustré

In the 1930s, "L'Agence de Publicités Officielles des Postes Belges" started in the job of offering advertising space on the lower left front of the Belgian postal cards and, from a thematic point of view, "publibels" are a rich treasure for countless themes, being of great help when the philatelist cannot find other more significant material to cover a particular area of the story that is being told.



Publibel n° 1991, Projector PRADIX, showing only the advertising cachet and the words SPECIMEN/ANNULÉ

In this same way, the Japanese *echo cards* also provide a varied source of subjects for the thematic collector, inclusive because of the particular types of cancellations used on them: scenic cancellations, which are used at anytime, and small commemorative dated stamps – both being good for thematic use.



Certainly, the beauty and diversity of postal stationery add much to a thematic collection, helping the exhibitor in developing the story.



Actually, the enormous variety of postal stationery in existence represents a real "gold-mine" for each thematic collection.



Besides the various examples that have been seen throughout the sheets of this exhibit, another category that uses to be included are international reply coupons.



These have been sold at the Post Office of one country, being valid for the exchange of postage at the Post Office of any other UPU member.

A generally unexplored philatelic element that can be put to good use by thematic collectors is the Italian "Busta Lettera Postale" (BLP), which was issued in support of those organizations that were helping the war-wounded; a great philatelic difference is that the BLP is not a postal stationery but a postal item sold with an affixed stamp.



4.5. Special philatelic items used in postal communications

STAMP BOOKLETS

Other items issued for the purpose of postal communication can find place into thematic exhibits, as it is the case of stamp booklets and similar pieces.



Although most philatelists are interested in stamp booklets because of the stamps contained therein, other components can be of thematic importance, namely the tabs, interleaves, and the cover, which often contain all kinds of texts and many beautiful color illustrations that can enhance a collection or exhibit as much or more than other philatelic items.



Not to be missed that the cover, the stamps and the interleaving must be shown as part of the booklet as a whole.



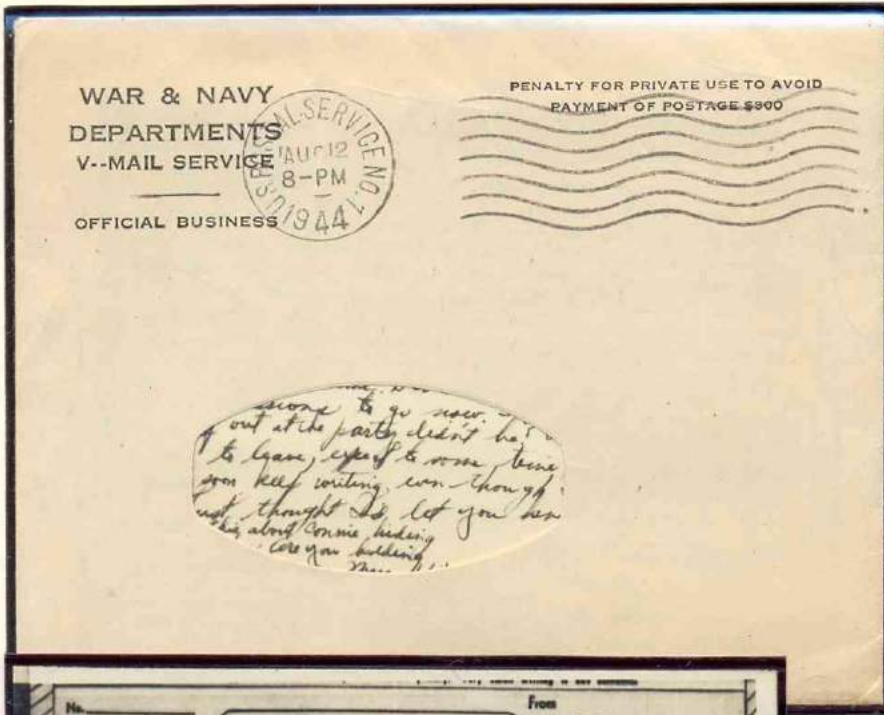
4.5. Special philatelic items used in postal communications

V-MAILS AND AIRGRAPHS

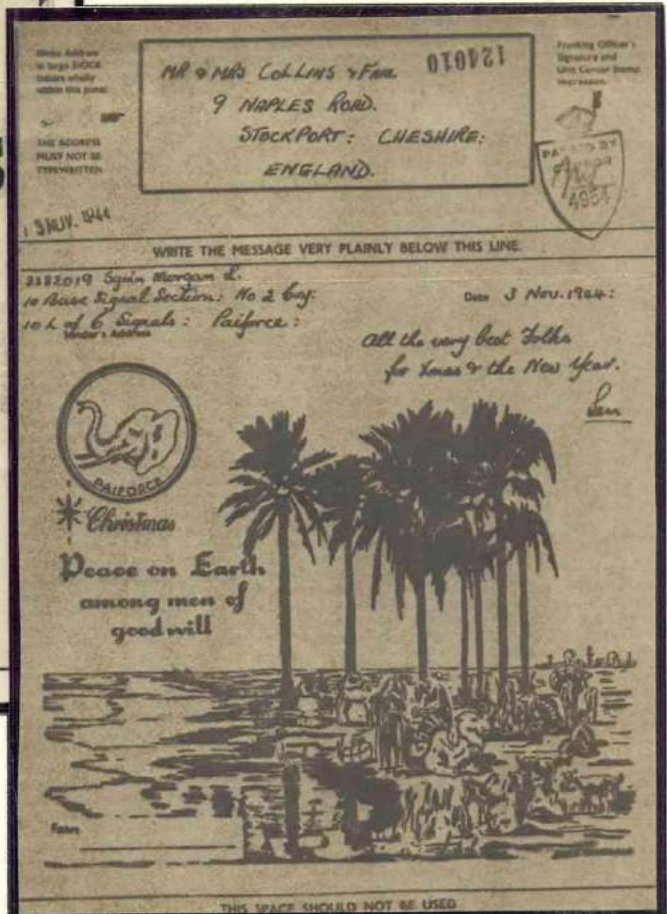
During World War II, special forms were distributed to servicemen on which they could write messages and/or make any design to be recorded on microfilm, and then all negatives were sent back home.



After developing and enlarging, this kind of mail was dispatched to the addressee.



These V-mail (USA) and airgraph (Great Britain) are remarkable elements not just by its nature but also because they really represent a nice bit of the postal history.



V-mails are also interesting for thematic exhibits because they represent a good source for thematic information, as many have interesting designs on them, and usually have a variety of added features (e.g. censor markings, hidden images, etc) that increase the attractiveness of such items.

4.5. Special philatelic items used in postal communications

TELEGRAMS



Various other items not found so often give the philatelist opportunities for a gratifying research in the search of data to enrich thematic exhibits.

In addition to the normal transmission of mail, may also be included into a thematic exhibit *postal telegrams* and *greeting telegrams*, but it is important to observe that they should be incorporated in a balanced and appropriate manner – a rule to be followed in other cases.



4.5. Special philatelic items used in postal communications



As a matter of fact, in a thematic exhibit, such items are not only acceptable, but their appropriate use – especially when these documents were actually sent through the mail – is a manner of adding interest and diversity to the development of the story, considering its philatelic relevance and, additionally, the thematic information they often have incorporated.

340) (Creed Post).

No. 70992

"VIA WESTERN MADEIRA."
THE WESTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY, LIMITED.
(CABO SUBMARINO)

A via telegraphica directa para todos os paizes da Europa, da Asia, das Americas do Norte, Central e do Sul, da Africa, e da Oceania, e para os principaes Estados do littoral do Brasil.

HORA DE APRESENTAÇÃO NAS LETRAS DO RELOJO.

Circulo exterior: A.M. (MARCHA)
Circulo interior: P.M. (TARDE)

por exemplo: PW significa 3.45 da tarde; HL 8.55 da manhã.

CIRCUITO. EMPREGADO. HORA REC. :

RIO DE JANEIRO
23 JUL 34
Rua Alliança 100
Av. da Consolação 12

GARANTIA CABO

4.5. Special philatelic items used in postal communications

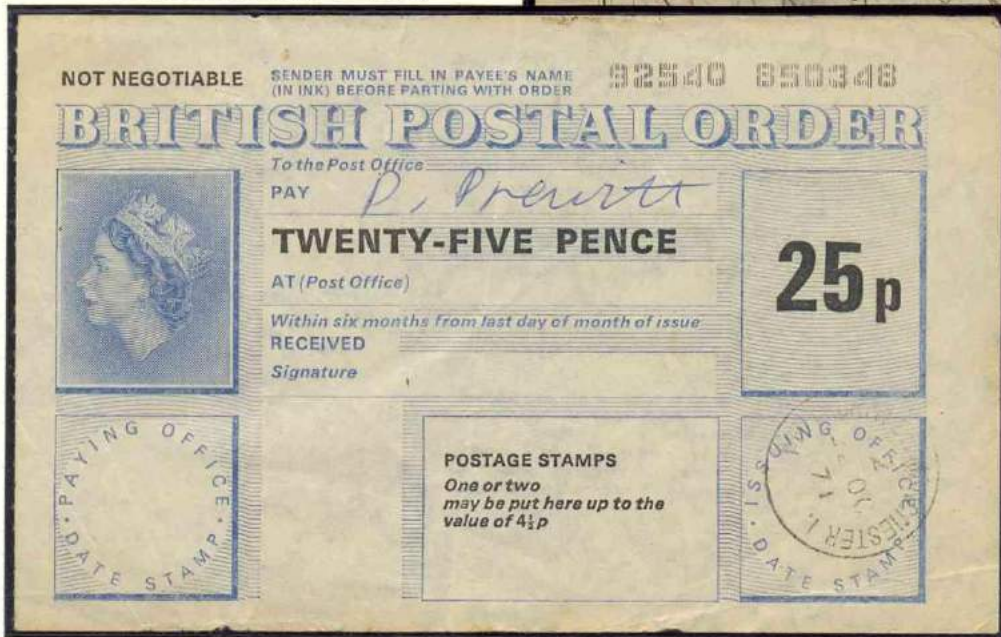
Other items of use in postal operations, such as *postal payment orders* used to facilitate the sending of money through a post office have also a good place in thematic exhibits of a variety of themes.



Receipt of declared value, Colombia



Postal money order, USA, 1858



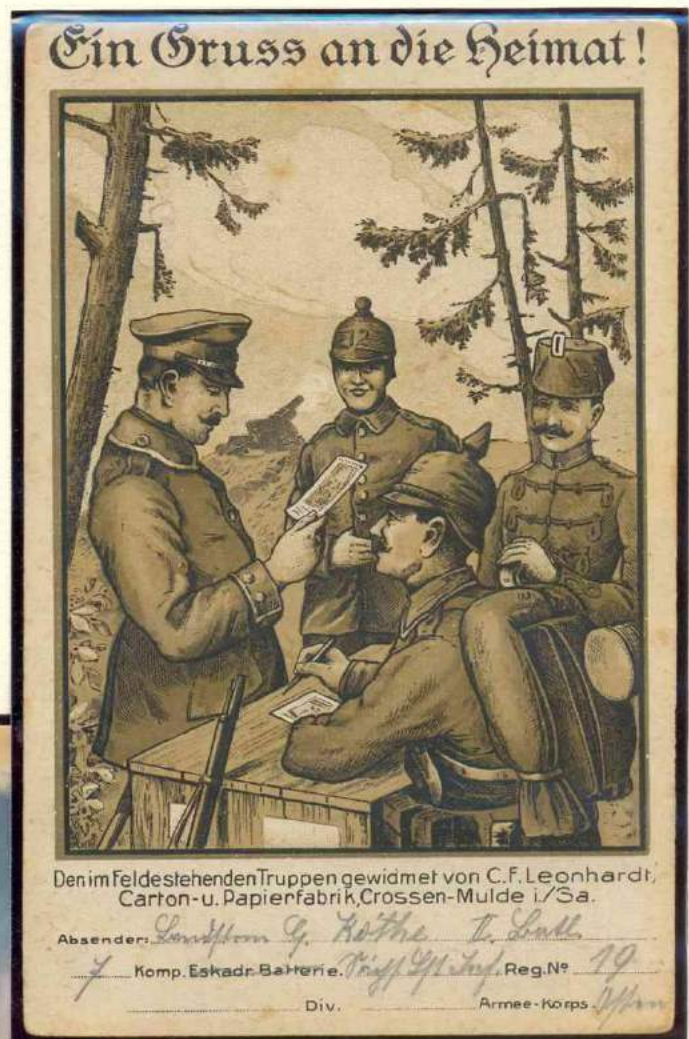
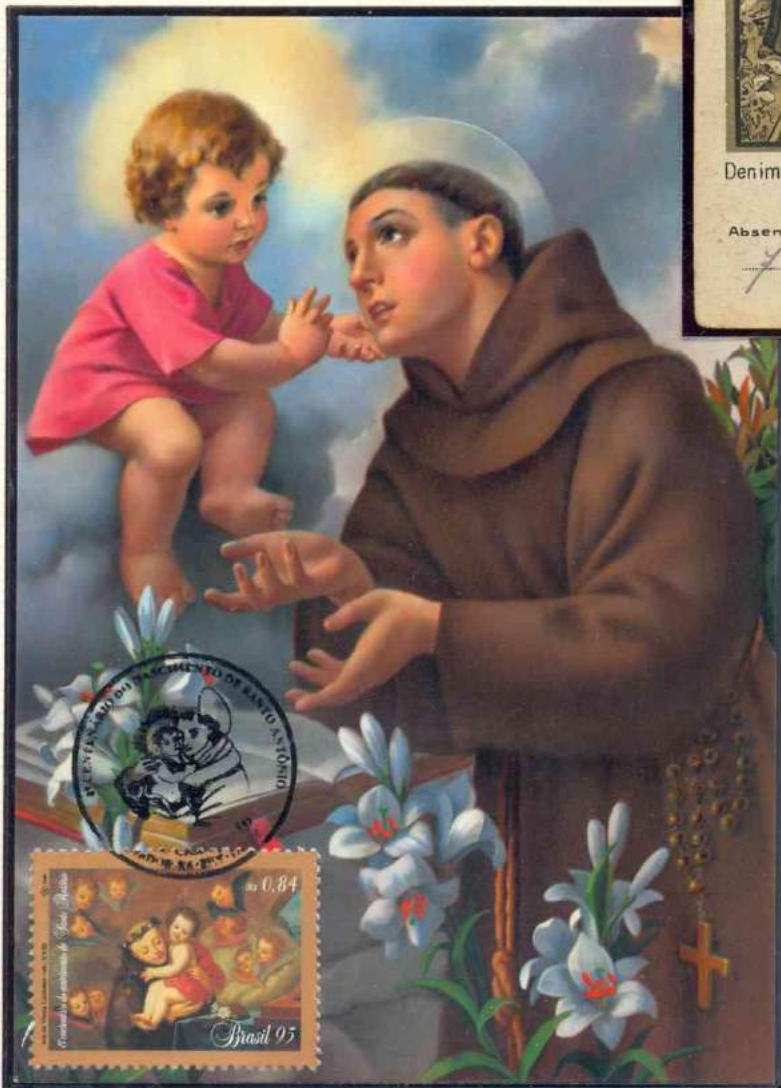
4.5. Special philatelic items used in postal communications

FIELDPOST, MAXIMUM CARDS & ETIQUETTES

Certain types of postal stationery (mostly postal cards and letter-sheets) were officially supplied to, or permitted to be used by, members of military corps on active service, and this kind of mail (called *fieldpost*) is normally provided with an official stamp or postmark indicating "free postage"; as such items often contain curious indications (military units, for example), very fine thematic use can be made of them.



On the other hand, *maximum cards* have only a minor role to play in thematic philately, and its use ought to be limited to a few significant pieces; that is to say, only if they clearly add something that is in fact unavailable in another manner.



Fieldpost card sent to Limbach-Oberfrohna, Germany, with datestamp "K.D. Feldpostexp. Der 6. Res. Div., Apr 5, 1916



Etiquettes of post office origin that are normally applied onto postal articles (registration labels, official seals, etc) may carry messages or even special symbols that can fit some special theme.



5. THEMATIC PHILATELY AS A SOURCE OF PLEASURE FOR ALL



Postal stationery printed to private order (Monopol Hotel, Berlin), Germany, 1900



As it has been demonstrated, since the first Penny Black, the power of the images portrayed on each postage stamp, postal stationery or any other item of postal origin has been the basis and also the joy of the most popular branch of philately in our days.



Meter cancellation stating that "One picture is worth 10,000 words"

In fact, the appeal of the image is a decisive factor in the whole process of mounting thematic exhibits.



5.1. Enjoying the freedom of thematic collecting



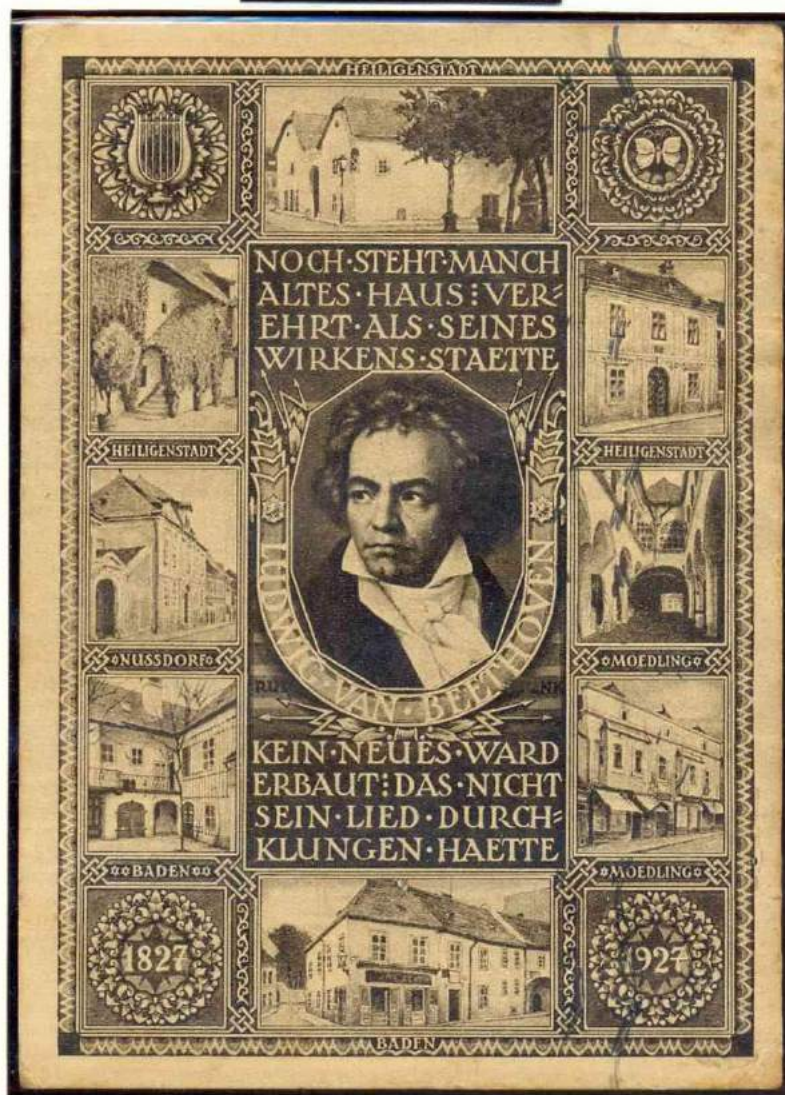
One of the joys of thematic philately is that this form of collecting does not refrain from to merely "fill spaces" on customized album pages, i.e. there is more in this hobby than just putting together a collection of stamps.



That means that there are more happy and well-satisfied people in thematic collecting than in any other known branch of philately.



This occurs because a thematic collection offers much more freedom, the story being based on the exhibitors' perceptions of the subject; they can collect what they want and are free to set up and arrange their exhibits in the way that please them the most, which is valid for architecture, music, orchids, etc.



Postal stationery (Austria) sent to Rio de Janeiro, Apr 9, 1927, postal *indicia* on reverse

5.2. Choosing, planning, and developing the theme

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE SUBJECT

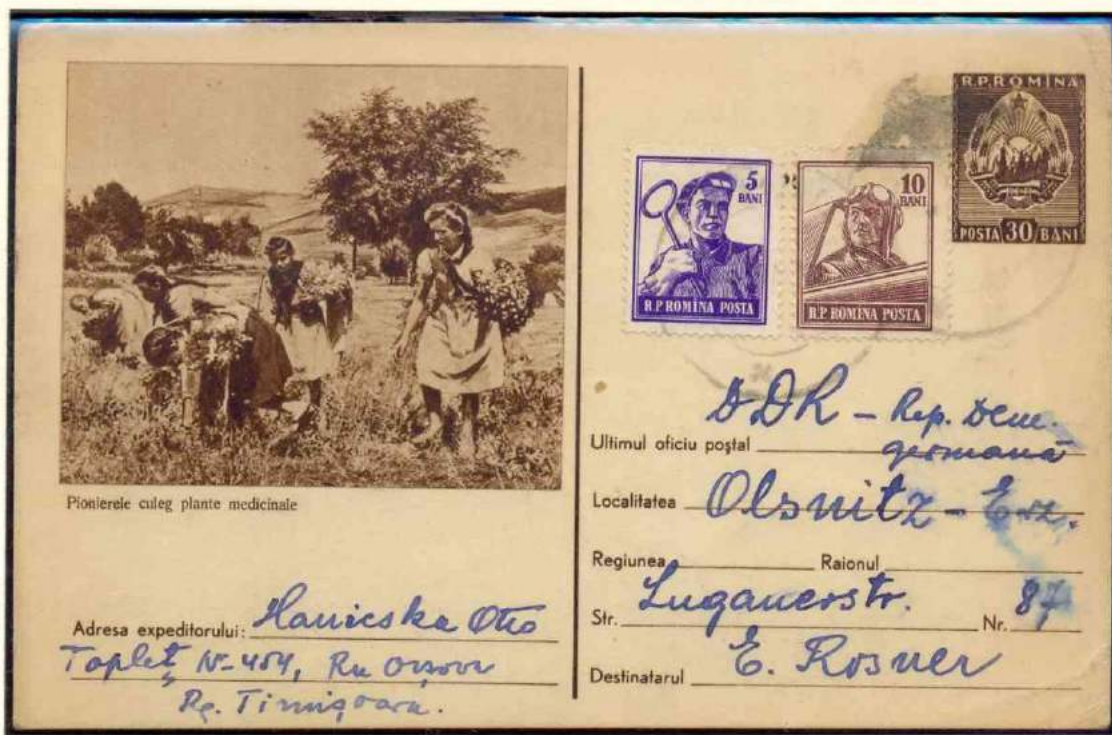
In order to set up a collection successfully, the most obvious and natural course is to select a theme in which the collector is already well interested or has a clear involvement with the subject, be it work-connected, or hobby-related, for example.



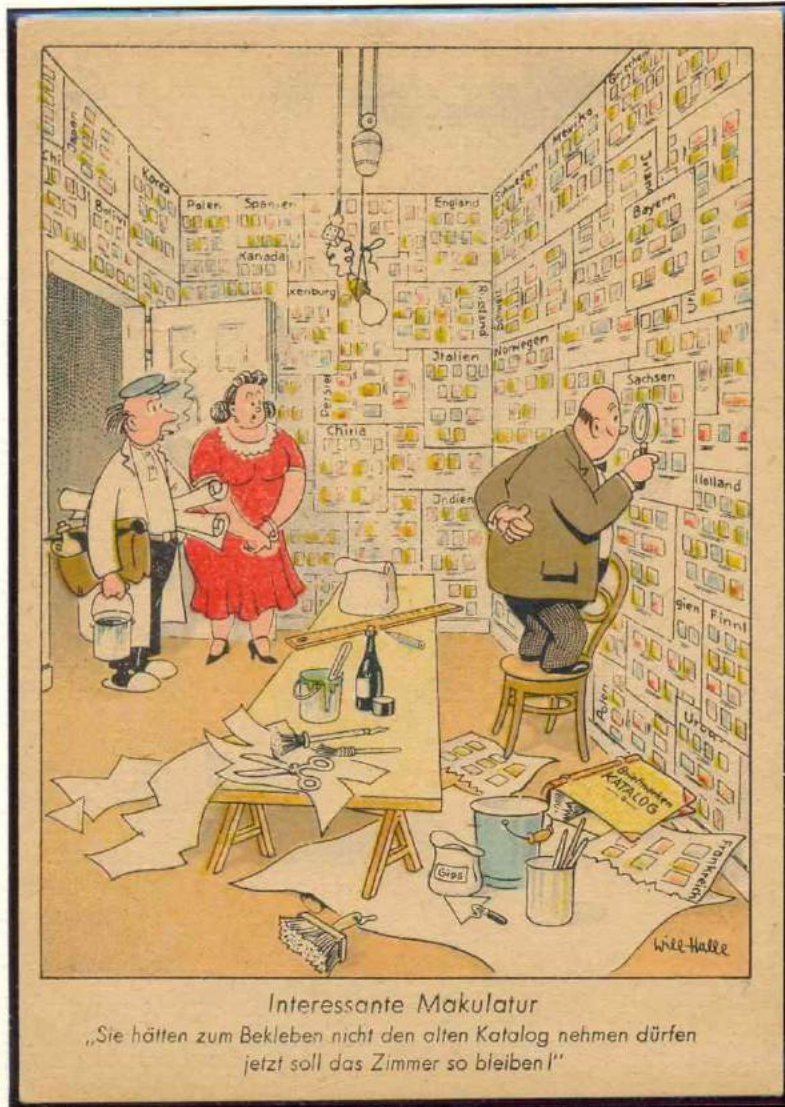
In this way, it seems logical for a botanist to choose a theme concerned with flowers or plants.



Pre-philatelic free-franking folded letter mailed to Vergola, Dec 23, 1831, with illustrated seal on front depicting a tree. But flowers or plants could also be something that the philatelist would like to learn and explore.



5.2. Choosing, planning, and developing the theme



Postal stationery (card, printed on private order), Germany, postal indicium on reverse

THE SIZE: NOT TOO BIG, NOR TOO SHORT
As the range of subjects from which the choice can be made is endless, the philatelists should avoid those ones not too broad, nor too narrow.



In the case of certain broadband subjects, such as ships, for example, it is necessary to restrict the story to any particular aspect to be covered.



Below: Postal stationery printed on private order, Germany (Dresden Bazar), mailed internally in Dresden, Feb 20, 1900



Small sections can be shown which deal with some particular aspect, such as wreckages, etc.



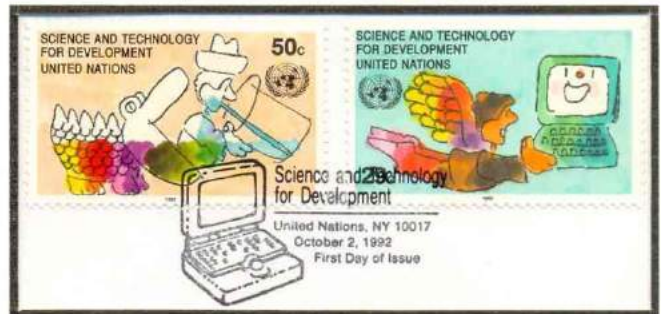
5.2. Choosing, planning, and developing the theme

KNOWLEDGE OF THE THEME AND AVAILABLE ELEMENTS

Whatever the subject selected for a thematic collection, a further challenge is finding the necessary information about it, and such *thematic knowledge* requires the study of a diversity of aspects.



Searches may be conducted by examining textbooks, encyclopedias and other specialized literature, or even by accessing the rich information available in the web.



Once the outline of the story has been drafted, the following step is to determine the various postal and philatelic elements (*philatelic knowledge*) that will tell the story, which should include materials of different periods and from the largest number of countries, within the possibilities of each theme.



Envelope mailed internally in São Paulo, Aug 1, 1942, with a cancellation that refers the "Demonstration of Philatelic Culture"

5.2. Choosing, planning, and developing the theme

MAKING THE PLAN FOR DEVELOPING THE CHOSEN THEME

The following step is the choice of a *title* that best defines the theme, and the elaboration of the *plan* to be pursued in the development.



Presented in a page at the beginning of the exhibit, the plan defines the structure of the exhibit and its subdivision into parts in order to provide an easier understanding of what will be seen; it has to be correct, logical and balanced, covering all aspects of the theme.



Development of an illustrated story ("Inbad, the Sailor") shown on a V-mail (USA) of 1944

The *development* means the elaboration of the theme in depth, with a beginning, a central and clear content, and also a logical end for the best understanding of the idea of the exhibit, either by the jurors examining the exhibit, or by visitors.



5.3. Putting it all together

AS MANY DIFFERENT PHILATELIC ELEMENTS AS POSSIBLE

But before going on searching for the philatelic items to fulfill the story, it is important to give wings to the imagination in order to select as many different items as it is possible.



Pre-stamp folded letter sent from Comune di Delebio (Sondrio) to Comune di Morbegno. Italy, Jan 17, 1852



Stamp private post

It is a fact that one of the great principles and, at the same time, one of the great attractions of thematic philately is that the collector can make use of all available postal-philatelic elements.



Postal stationery printed to private order (Germania stamp, 2 Pf., on reverse) mailed internally to Hier, Jun 30, 1906



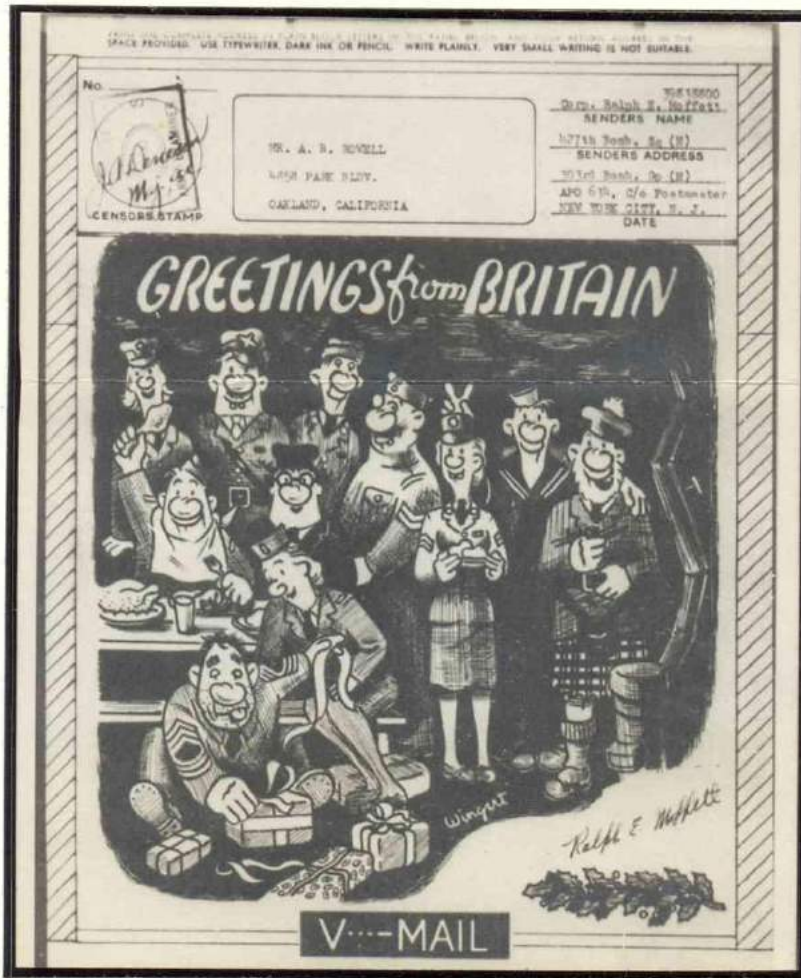
Vignette's imperf proof

With a good understanding of the theme, various kinds of elements will begin to fit.



Watermark depicting stars

5.3. Putting it all together



V-mail with illustration about Christmas, thus an "eloquent" item for this theme, or Parties

THE PHILATELIC ELEMENTS "SPEAKING" BY THEMSELVES



Everything that a collector says in a thematic collection must be able to be illustrated by philatelic items.



Stamp and cancellation good for Fairies

Consequently, these elements, with postal connotation, should be the visibly predominant portion of any page of the exhibit; i.e., as the tale is told based on the different philatelic items, these should speak for themselves.



Philatelic item that could have a good place in exhibits about Romance, Costumes, Boats, Water Sports, and so on
Postal stationery (private post, Baviera, stamp 5 Pf.) sent from Wuerzburg to Hildesheim, Germany, July 31, 1899

PRESENCE OF PHILATELIC STUDIES

In order to demonstrate philatelic knowledge, personal study and research, the exhibitor should include some philatelic studies involving important philatelic material.

As we know, postal items present a number of variants, and if they are of thematic and philatelic importance, a concise and balanced philatelic study is to be shown.



Stamp legends omitted



Crown in color pink, perforation shift

Misplaced colors

In a mythological context, these stamp variations could be fine. Stamp pairs showing crown yellow and pink, and body reddish and orange-red



But if we are talking of Geography, maps and related themes, postage stamps that show color variations in South American countries could represent a nice addition.



Air cover mailed from Rio to New York (USA), Nov 18, 1955, bearing a stamp that shows a variety of color in the map of Brazil

5.3. Putting it all together



Variations in color (blue and green) seen on the metered stamp Pitney Bowes n° 160538



A philatelic study uses to follow in a systematic way the same criteria for any philatelic discipline (postal history, traditional philately, postal stationery, etc), demonstrating the personal research of the exhibitor.

Philatelic studies, whenever included, blend with the thematic development without affecting the fluidity of elaboration of the exhibit, i.e. the thematic text has to continue in parallel with the study without interruption; the aim of these studies is not completeness, but the presence of the most significant philatelic peculiarities.



Varieties of color (color separations) observed in an international postal stationery (prepaid cover) issued by the Posts of Cuba, 2000

5.3. Putting it all together



SETTING DOWN THE PIECES AND TEXT

The whole process of mounting any thematic collection for exhibiting is a large part of the philatelist's pleasure, and will be a mirror of his own tastes, studies, imagination and skill.



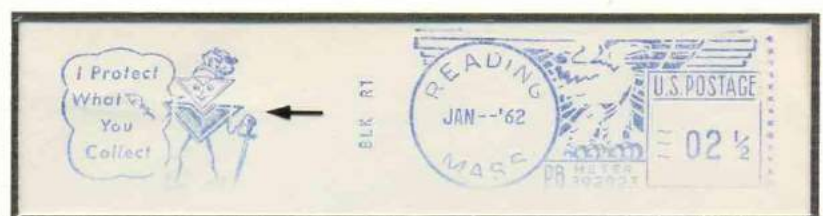
So, thematic collectors enjoy the aesthetic beauty of their materials and have fun collecting and displaying such items.



Even in the hands of a designer, it is too much to hope that an entire layout can be created without ruining a few pages.



Most exhibitors prefer to enclose the stamps and other items in *mounts* that can be cut to the ideal size and fixed properly to the pages, while for the mounting of postal stationeries, whole envelopes, and other larger philatelic items, self-adhesive *corner mounts* made of plastic or any other clear material are useful.



A thematic exhibit would be incomplete without a clear write-up, which must be correct, concise, and relevant in order to ensure the necessary thematic link; in other words, a good write-up in fact should be "as long as necessary, but as short as possible".



Actually, the efforts of the exhibitor is evidenced by the arrangement of both the items and the text on appropriate exhibition pages; while the *thematic text* that will link the rest of the material in the desired development of the plan, the *philatelic text* serves to emphasize the reasons by which a piece is used.



Typewriting was in fact a very popular means of preparing write-ups on exhibition pages in the past years, but with the onward popularity of the personal computer, various philatelists have the facility to make layouts for beautiful pages really with print shop quality precision.



But the exhibitor is free to choose the way of setting down the text (by hand, typewriting, PC, etc).



WINDOWING AND OVERLAPPING

When the importance of a document is not so significant and it is being used because of its cancellation, exhibitors use to mount it on the back of the page, displaying only the essential thematic and philatelic part through a "window" created by cutting out a square or a rectangle, thus they can display more items on the page.

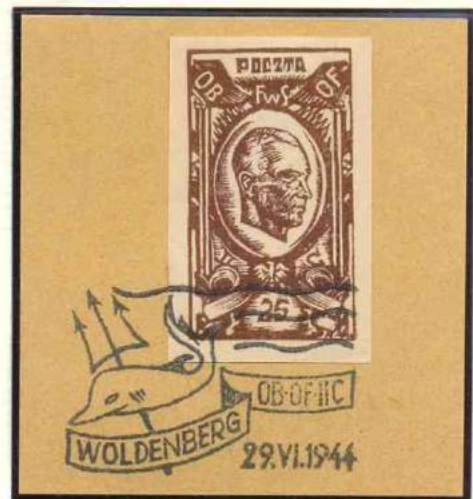


Sometimes, philatelists need to overlap larger items to emphasize only the desired portions, while obscuring unwanted areas – a technique that has been commonly used whenever the part of the envelope or card to be recovered is of no thematic interest or then it exhibits ample empty spaces.



Postal stationery, Russia (unused, postal *indicium* on the reverse side)

Many jury members think that a cutout is inferior in value, so the exhibitors should avoid to mutilate philatelic items as a rule.



5.4. Exhibiting a thematic collection

Once the thematic exhibit has been formed, the owners are anxious to display their work, in competitions or not; many simply because there is a natural thrill in receiving awards or medals, and others because they feel that by doing so they are giving something back to this nice hobby.



Whatever the reason, there will be always the pleasure and satisfaction in attracting other people to know more on this hobby.



This exhibit, for example, was designed to give a practical coverage of various matters in connection with building and improving a thematic collection with the aim of exhibiting it, thus continuing in the hobby with incentive and enthusiasm.



Orchid SC Int
25 Turriell Point Rd
Lilli Pilli
New South Wales 2229

SYDPEX 88
Bicentennial National Stamp Exhibition
Sydney, Australia
30 July to 7 August, 1988

COMPETITIVE EXHIBITING

Competitive exhibiting is an aspect of philately that requires a very different approach than simply collecting for personal enjoyment, existing a wide range of competitive events that vary from those ones locals (promoted by philatelic entities) to the relatively larger national and international exhibitions.



Generally, it is suggested that the beginning exhibitor start competing at local and regional shows before participating in a highest level exhibition.



Judging thematic exhibits require the services of a qualified panel of jurors who evaluate them based on a set of criteria agreed by the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie – FIP.



In general the jurors are looking at the amount of effort the exhibitor has put into an entry, including plan, development, philatelic knowledge, condition and rarity, and presentation.

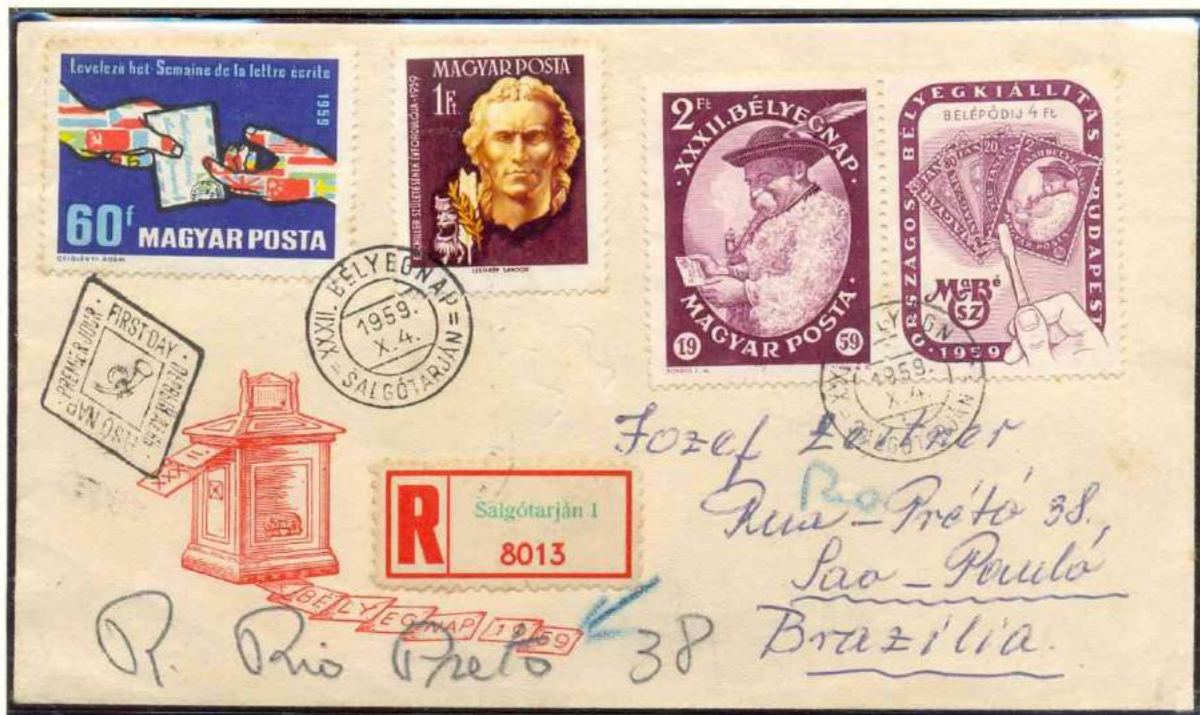
5.4. Exhibiting a thematic collection

IMPORTANT RECOMENDATIONS

The FIP Regulations and Guidelines for the Evaluation of Thematic Exhibits contain all fundamental information the exhibitor needs in order to avoid mistakes in the preparation and mounting an exhibit.



It is important to keep in mind that an exhibit is judged by what is shown in the frames, so, when the exhibitor is selecting qualified material for it, preference and greater importance has to be given, for example, to genuinely canceled mail, with correct postage frankings and relevant cancellations, as opposed to mere souvenir documents and any similar items which were created to please collectors.



5.4. Exhibiting a thematic collection

Tempted to include fairly "interesting" items in an exhibit, some collectors tend to apply flexible standards, which normally results in some sort of penalization.



"Print it yourself with the GEM post card duplicator" - teaching how to add private printing on mail



A piece that fits this exhibit, but which actually is a post card of private origin

The exhibitor should be aware that every item with no-postal connotation must be simply discarded from exhibition pages.

He must be selective in what he puts on a page, considering that is far wiser and safer to avoid using controversial pieces.



Mercier's forgery



Genuine, repaired stamp



At right: a variety or a fake?

Thematic collectors are particularly vulnerable to forgeries and various other spurious, undesirable pieces.



Genuine



Forgery

It is permissible to include a forgery in an exhibit, but properly identified.



Jean de Sperati created "imitations" of many nineteenth century stamps



Reprint-forgery with missing head

5.5. Becoming part of Thematic Philately history

SPLASHING INTO AN OCEAN OF FUN

With no doubt, the biggest attraction that sets thematic philately above all other branches in the hobby is the ample freedom, wider range and unlimited possibilities the philatelist has in the way he approaches his chosen theme.

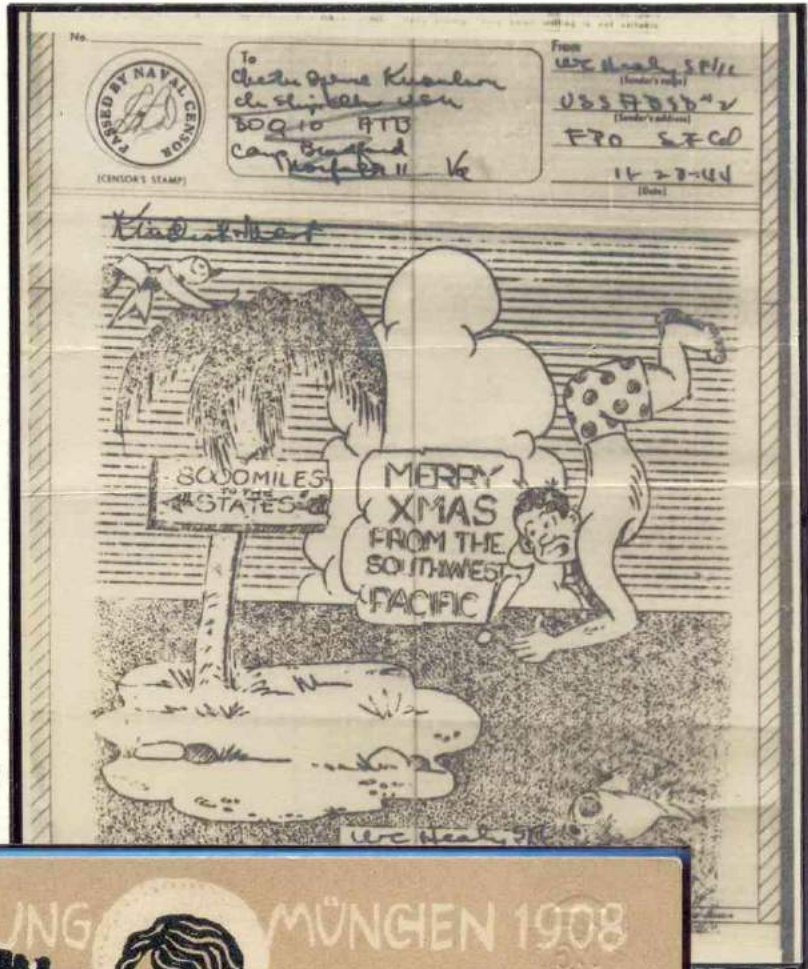


Thus, comes the invitation to splash into this ocean of fun and pleasure that only thematic philately gives to collectors all over the world.



Immerse yourself in this world of fantasy and become partner in thematic philately journey!

V-mail sent to Norfolk, USA, Nov 1944



Postal stationery (card) printed to private order, Bayern – "Ausstellung München 1908", postal indicium on reverse

5.5. Becoming part of Thematic Philately history

COME AND JOIN US!

"Collectors are happy people". - Johann Wolfgang Goethe



Yes, Goethe was right! And there is no doubt that thematic collecting gives the philatelists an immense pleasure more easily and earlier than other form of collecting in the world.



In fact, it has undoubtedly an advantage over any kind of conventional collection, as it can be easily read and understood even by a layman, so having an appeal to people outside philately.



So, if you are falling in love with thematic collecting and exhibiting, let your heart to lead you to this wonderful, happiest, and bigger fraternity of philatelists in the world.



Join us and become you too a real representative of the *Homo philatelicus thematicus* family!