

The Circuit

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The Official Journal of the International Society of Worldwide Stamp Collectors

A Good Idea at the Time! The Stamp Adverts of Early New Zealand

By K. M. Crowe (# 459)

On November 12, 1891 the New Zealand Post Office called for tenders for the right to advertise on the back of stamps!

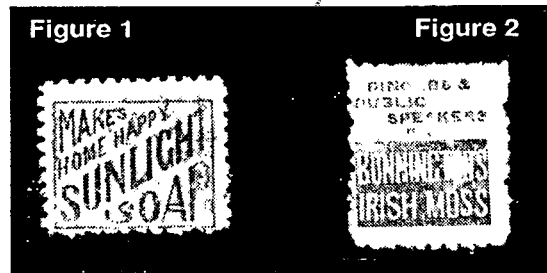
A Wellington advertising agency won the contract in July 1892 and rushed about selling the advertising and organizing the layout, printers, etc. The stamps went on sale, on time, in February 1893. Although the adverts were printed on top of the gum at first, this was later corrected. Around 2-1/2 million were printed (Scott # 61-67 and 68-69) but by September that same year, the agency begged to be released from the contract.

There were complaints that the ink made the stamps hard to stick on envelopes and that it tasted foul, but the main reason was the difficulty in finding advertisers. Even in the late 1800's common sense would have said there were better places to spend your advertising dollar (or pound notes as it was then) than on the back of a stamp. It would be hardly glanced at before being licked and gone forever, or at least until a collector soaked the stamp from the envelope maybe years later.

There were at least seven colors used in the printing of the adverts, so it is a major job trying to make up a full set now in the same color showing all the adverts. If ever you

see a full set at a stamp show, the adverts make interesting reading: Cadbury's Chocolate, Sunlight Soap, Beeham's Pills, Bonnington's Irish Moss Cough Syrup, as well as for coal, sewing machines, Ceylon tea, a dentist using "painless Nitrous Oxide," and even a cure for asthma.

Figure 1 shows the advert for Sunlight Soap on Scott # 66 and is valued in New Zealand at \$120. An advert for Bonnington's cough Syrup on Scott # 67 is shown in Figure 2. Both stamps are in mint condition; the ragged perforations are normal for these stamps. The low values aren't too difficult to come by, but remember these advert stamps were only sold for one year, 1893, so the higher values are hard to find and expensive.



Scott International Part 1 Needs Revisions

By Arnold J. Palmer, Jr. (# 839)

As a general collector since boyhood in the 1920's, it came to my attention in the late 1950's that Scott had done something drastic to the basic 1840 - 1940 Part 1 Scott International Postage Stamp Album. Before Scott left New York City I had the opportunity to consult with them and found that a 1955 revision had taken place with a primary objective of allowing pages for one country to be assembled from the various albums since 1940 with 1940 pages, so that other country pages would not prevent integration. However, this objective was never met, the situation made worse, several countries were left out and a complete lack of uniformity in space for issues crept into the revision. A casual comparison with a pre-1955 edition brings this to light.

In the late 1970's, I set about to make a very objective review of what had happened and produced a research document in detail for Scott. While still located in New York City they came very close to proceeding with a revision and phoned me in Nevada to so advise. Shortly thereafter the company was sold and the project dropped. The new ownership and location in Sidney, Ohio has once again taken up such a consideration to revise. However they tell me they sell only about 100 sets of Part 1A and 1B every year and timid about it being financially feasible.

My collection at the moment is dedicated to mounting stamps in fine-very fine condition on certain Scott 1840 - 1940 pages to provide tangible evidence of what went off

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Album (Continued from Page 1)

track. The collection employs a strict adherence to stamp value and what the average collector is apt to acquire with no attention to my personal likes and dislikes for country or stamp issues, which is what Scott should always do in any such abridgement. My recently joining ISWSC was in recognition that collectors in the general field would likely be interested in assisting with convincing Scott to revise the 1840 - 1940 volumes.

In realization of the economics of such a revision, I suspect if Scott was aware of ISWSC interest, Scott could probably be persuaded to at least provide supplement pages to add to or replace certain pages. Possibly we could conduct a poll of the membership and find if there is such an interest. ••

Best of '93 Contest

Several philatelic societies and various publications hold yearly "best" contests within their speciality. It's time we had one, too! Here is your chance to nominate the best stamp design of 1993.

Any stamp from any country issued in 1993 is eligible, as are blocks and souvenir sheets. To submit your nominee, send either the actual stamp or a clear photocopy on a black background. From the entrants, four designs will be selected by a panel of ISWSC members in the Rochester area. These will be presented to the entire membership for a vote.

Entries are to be sent to: Best of '93 Contest, 42 Maynard Street, Rochester, NY 14615-2022, USA. They must be received by February 1, 1994. ••

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THE PRESIDENTS COLUMN by Dave Nelson (#25)

Well, my term as president of ISWSC has just about run its course. When I ran two years ago I promised you I would only serve one term and I have kept that promise. I only mention it because the majority of you weren't even members at that time, our membership having more than doubled in these two years. We have come a long, long way in a short time and I take personal credit for practically none of it. The reason I retired, and the reason I discount my own role in the progress of ISWSC, has nothing to do with desire, I simply cannot give what the club needs most, which is time. I love collecting and I love what ISWSC has become, but I have these little distractions like a house, family and job. I am hardly unique in that condition, but in my case the job has evolved to the point that I spend almost more time out of the country than in it, and then have to play "catch up" when I do get back. In theory the travel should provide me opportunities to meet and get to know our active non-USA membership, the reality is that I spend the days working and almost every night entertaining business people or flying to the next destination. Fortunately for the club we have been blessed with other volunteers with boundless energy and a great devotion to the success of ISWSC who are giving us tens of hours a week, in some cases exceeding the hours of a full time job. These capable and dedicated people will lead us on to even bigger and better things in the next two years. Since the officer's ballot offered no competition we can know pretty certainly who those persons are to be, but protocol requires us to pretend that the outcome is still unknown until the deadline for ballots has passed. Due to the lead times needed to do the layout, printing, collating, stuffing and mailing of The Circuit, this is being written long before the election is final and it will even be marginal as to who should write the next Presidents Column. So, I have volunteered to contribute a short "Past President's" will leave the new officers my last will and testament.

Recently, I wrote to Linn's Stamp News to congratulate them on their new Linn's Stamp Identifier as well as to volunteer ISWSC to co-operate with them on future editions of same. I felt that, as a group, worldwidars are more likely to use reference books like this than specialists, and the amount of correspondence I received from members after my previous mention of stamp finders seems to confirm this interest. Donna J. O'Keefe, Book

Editor, wrote me and accepted our offer of assistance. Although no specific date has been set for a new edition or additions to Linn's Stamp Identifier, Donna will contact us when they are gathering material for this new edition. Joe Palko (#491) has volunteered to work with me on this project so he and I will form an ad hoc liaison committee to Linn's; we would be happy to have another volunteer altho at this point it is impossible to predict just what activities such a role might entail. What I would like to ask you all to do is to keep track of those phrases and symbols on stamps that are otherwise not easy to identify and pass those suggestions along to Joe or me once in awhile. The Linn's identifier is the best one around I think, but still has many gaps which we can help fill in. In return, we plan to endorse the new edition and to get billing for ISWSC in the book. If you think this sounds like something you can help on, please don't forget to do so. Drop one of us a note to say you will help out, and start your list today so you can add to it as you discover new mystery stamps. Let us know about ones you cannot identify as well and we will do some research to find out where they were issued. Donna has also asked if ISWSC has any other ideas for books they may want to publish. My suggestion would be for a series of books on the subject of reprints and forgeries, perhaps by continent or other logical grouping. I just bought Linn's Focus on Forgeries and haven't even had time to use it, but it looks great on first inspection. But this only covers 150 of the most commonly forged stamps and I need a lot more help than that. The APS series reprint of the Serrane Guide is great, except that I forgot to clip them out so would love to see an affordable reprint of the whole series. This is another of those areas where a specialist might have a small library to help out on a narrow range of problem areas, but the unwashed worldwider has one heck of a time figuring out which of those high-catalog Persian stamps are real and which of our Central American holdings are really Seebeck's. Please send me a note letting me know what general books on stamps you would find useful and I will pass the ideas on to Donna.

Tom Alison reports that a number of international members have wanted very much to join the Exchanges. We had to discontinue this practice last year for a number of reasons. One has to do with the delays and possibility of having to pay

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President *(Continued from Page 2)*

duties that result from differing importation rules. It is not at all impossible that the customs gang will ask you to pay duty on the full value of an exchange, even though you will probably only keep a small fraction of it, and this is not a symptom of the so called third world ... Canada for example has some of the most draconian rules around. Another pragmatic consideration is the sheer cost of international mail. The average total face amount traded on a pink Omni is only a couple of dollars and it costs more than that to mail the books out and back. A third consideration is the fact that an exchange relies upon the use of consistent evaluation guide and in the USA that means recent issues of Scott's Catalogue. Our non-US members may not have access to Scott, or may only have a 1988 or earlier edition which, as all you Scott users know, will not work. Tom had some recent angry mail from a European member who insisted that prices had gone UP, not down, since his 1988 edition of Scott. He came to this conclusion due to

the fact that the minimum stamp price is now 15c. (For those other members who are not familiar with Scott's pricing policy, prices generally tended down in the late 80's as the result of a lessening of demand, and then went down dramatically when they decided to reprice to "retail" prices". Prior to that, even the highest priced dealers sold for 65% or so of catalogue so the catalogue was in fact not a true reflection of prices at all. Scott also raised the minimum price on a stamp to 15c to cover the "handling charge" for a dealer to sell something. Most stamps that catalogue 15c are in fact worth about 15c a hundred and the Omni Exchange doesn't even accept such common material, so our member was mis-interpreting the true direction of pricing because of this). Maybe it is time to establish a new exchange the European EC countries only. Would anyone like to volunteer to see if we can overcome some of the above concerns and set up such a new service? Let me know. ••

The Secretary/Treasurer's Report

by Carol Cervenka (# 498)

Once in a while we find a non-member has slipped in to take advantage of ISWSC's services without ever enrolling and paying dues. This doesn't happen often, nor is the interloper able to "ride free" for very long. Usually one of ISWSC's alert managers or members will spot the intruder and ask us to check. Because membership services are EXACTLY that - for members ONLY - please give your membership number when signing up for all services. This helps the person who manages the service to know who is a member and who is not. We want to encourage all new members to get involved as quickly as possible after enrolling, but have to ask that you understand our insistence upon having your member number verified before we place you in a swap circuit, sales circuit, Omni Exchange, etc. The only ISWSC services that are available to non-members are some of the Youth Program benefits.

It also is a big help to me if you will use your membership number when paying renewal dues or corresponding with this office.

Time for some "housekeeping"! Beginning with this issue, the names of members who have been dropped from the roster will appear on the Roster up-date page(s). The names of those who are on the endangered list if dues are not received

soon will continue to appear here. The following members have not paid dues and will be dropped October 31, 1993 if dues are not received prior to that date:

772 Sack, 775 Edwards, 776 Lucas, 777 Karlson, 779 Renard, 780 Marcus, 784 Strekfus, 788 Scott, 789 Hazzard, 790 Thadden, 791 Penrod, 797 Adrian, 801 Garland, 805 Pinyagin, 810 Bridgers, 811 Hamburg.

With the majority of dues expiring the end of October, the work load and Society income formerly was concentrated in the Fall. After almost two years of letting memberships expire a year from the date of enrollment, the things are beginning to even out. However, about 300 memberships come up for renewal in October, and with the many inquiries that come in daily, it has been a busy time! The hard work of Tom Fortunato and other members who continually keep ISWSC in the philatelic press has brought an influx of inquiries leading to new members, as has the fine recruiting of members and our Regional Secretaries. For those of you who like to keep track, ISWSC now has members in 44 countries.

As dues begin to roll in, so does information about members who have passed away. I sadly note the death of Al Rattray who died in September 13th after a battle with bone cancer, and regret to

Public Relations Officer Report

by Tom Fortunato (# 379)

In this my final column as Public Relations Officer, let me take this opportunity to thank just a few of the many people who have made these past two years such a success.

First off, a heartfelt thank you to my fellow officers and board members. Their help and guidance has been invaluable. I must also echo President Nelson's column from Sept.-Oct., thanking such members as Joe Foley, John Hotchner, Steven Rod, and others who have written about the ISWSC in numerous philatelic publications. You have greatly helped to spread the word about us!

Thanks, too, to all of our program managers and overseas secretaries with whom I've worked so closely. Keep up the good work. We also have a group of people who for the past year have been our Welcoming Committee, writing a brief "hello" to all new ISWSC members and introducing them to the benefits of membership. They are Mildred Dorries, Harold Humm, Bill Reynolds, Helen Strickland, Phebe Meek, Emil Ciangetti, Ramona Finley, Joanne Berkowitz, Joe Palko, Bob Eddy and Ruth Roach.

I look forward to the challenge ahead as I assume the presidency in January and will continue to work on your behalf to further the society. ••

report A.J. Ehlich's renewal reminder was returned marked "deceased" with date and cause unknown.

Renewal time also brings some wonderful words of encouragement and thanks which mean so much to those of us who serve you. To all of the members who took the time to remember your volunteer Society officers and volunteers with words of praise and appreciation, I know I speak for all of ISWSC's volunteers when I say a special and very hearty "THANK YOU!" •

Please don't forget to give ISWSC memberships to philatelic friends this Holiday Season. Even if your friends don't collect worldwide, we have many satisfied members who collect topicals and regions of the world. We'll send a nice notice of the gift to your friends for you. If you've already enrolled someone, a membership pin is a nice "stocking stuffer". You can give your junior stamp friends (age 17 and under) a youth membership for only \$6.00.

Letters to the Editor:

My joy at seeing my article "Rick's Ramblings" in the Sept.-Oct. 1993 issue of *The Circuit* quickly paled and mutated to fury when I saw the excessive proofing errors that lace the text. Please take a look at it. I had trouble finding a sentence that did not have a typo of some sort. How about the last paragraph, which reads:

"I have stopped yearning and mourning for stamps which I do not have, an am enjoyint that I DO hae more as a result."

It is very embarrassing, even humiliating, to see one's contribution so abysmally botched as this one was. If it means delaying publication of further contributions, I would rather suffer the delay than the possible opinion of our readership that I am illiterate! •• Richard St. Clair (# 884)

I apologize to Mr. St. Clair; I am very sorry his article went to press with all My typographical errors. I'm not sure how it happened except uncorrected copy was placed in the page layout program instead of the corrected version. It was not intentional and I wish Mr. St. Clair hadn't taken it so personally. I do the best I can but sometimes I mess up. I am human. As for anyone thinking Mr. St. Clair is illiterate, I find that unlikely as the stamp collectors I've known over the past 20+ years have been some of the brightest and best informed people around. •• The Editor

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Beginner's Column

by Al and Mildred Feinberg (#361)

Today we will talk about "hard to identify stamps" and some of the methods I use for identification.

The first thing I do is watermark the stamp, which can be very revealing. A lot of times you can recognize the country by its watermarks. Most of us are familiar with the British Crown and CC, Crown and CA, etc.; most of us are also familiar with the lozenges and network watermarks on German stamps. Many Italian stamps just use a crown. A lot of these same watermarks are used on the former colonies of the mentioned countries. So you can see that recognizing the watermark gives you some place to start as you search your catalog for a specific stamp. The watermarks of many countries were often changed, thus a watermark can also tell you an approximate time period within which to start your search.

On used stamps I look for a good cancellation, sometimes it shows city and/or country names that are also helpful. I also check for the type of currency. It may be marks, pounds, shillings, kronas, francs and so on. Sometimes something as simple as a coat of arms pictured on the stamp helps you identify it.

If you can make out any of the words on a stamp, check the index in the back of the *Scott Catalogue*. The index is very good for identifying stamps, especially those that have an overprint. Learning to recognize the basic languages of the world (German, French, Spanish, English, Cyrillic, Arabic, etc.) will help you identify the region, country, colony, etc.

But I guess if you're like most of us, you buy *Linn's Stamp Identifier* and just hunt through it until you find your stamp. ••

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Bylen (#695)

Advertising Policy: All ads dealing with philatelic concerns are acceptable. We reserve the right to edit out objectionable language. Advertisers are expected to respond to all inquiries, so be sure you can handle the responses before you offer to trade, buy or sell. If you have a bad result from answering an ad, contact the editor. We will try to resolve the conflict.

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Secretary-Treasurer: Carol Cervenka (# 498), Rt 1 Box 69-A, Caddo Mills, TX 75135 USA

Editor/Publisher: Rita Kallal (#26), PO Box 1513, West Monroe, LA 71294-1513 USA

Youth Stamp Program: Ken Costilow (#142)

Public Relations Chairman: Tom Fortunato (#379), 42 Maynard St., Rochester, NY 14615-2022 USA

Austral-Asian Secretary: Peter Scannell (#453), 4 Mankinna St., Jindalee, Queensland 4074, AUSTRALIA

Canadian Secretary: Irving C. Whynot (# 490), P.O. Box 371, Don Mills, ONT, M3C 2S7 CANADA

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