

The SRSC Newsletter

The Santa Rosa Stamp Club

Promoting the study, knowledge, and enjoyment of stamp collecting.

APS Chapter #1584



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Editor's Note

Dennis Buss

I always find it interesting to learn about members' specialized collecting interests through their meeting presentations and the articles they submit for our newsletter. Our first contribution is from Dan Pagter who specializes in parcel post stamps, covers, and related postal documents. In his article he describes an unusual document that depicts the rare demurrage usage for a Collect on Delivery (COD) card. Steve Brett reappears with a pair of articles that both inform and amuse us with respect to his varied collecting interests. Regarding his extensive worldwide collection, he reminds us of the importance of acquiring philatelic knowledge and skills as we build our own collections.

Using the Demurrage Fee on a U.S. COD Item

Daniel S. Pagter

In the United States *demurrage* is not a penalty or postage charge, rather it is a storage fee for Collect on Delivery, COD, items. COD once received at the post office of the addressee was allowed 15 days, excluding Sundays. The demurrage fee began on July 1, 1930 and ended with the last day being July 24, 1968. The rate of this fee was 5 cents per day beyond day 15 during the entire period except from March 26, 1944 through October 31, 1944, when it was 10 cents per day.

Finding examples of proper demurrage has been difficult as there are few surviving examples. While the rate was known and discussed in all three editions of the Beecher and Wawrukiewicz, *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates* books, it was not until the third edition (1872-2011) that Tony Wawrukiewicz had access to an illustration to include as Figure 41-7 on page 351. Shown is my example which is dated four days later and uses a money order (COD Payment) with a serial number ten higher than that shown in the book. It, along with the one in the book, are two of the three to have come from one small holding. The book copy collected for ten days demurrage, 50 cents while the example shown here collected 10 cents for two days demurrage.

This COD package was mailed in Chicago on August 4, 1950, arrived at the office of delivery Monday, August 7, 1950 with date of first attempt at delivery August 8, 1950. The fifteenth day being Thursday, August 22, 1950. It was picked up by the addressee Monday August 26, 1950, with the 10 cents demurrage fee collected at the rate of 5 cents per day for

Friday August 23 and Saturday August 24 as well as no fee for Sunday August 25 or the day of delivery, August 26, 1950. Demurrage examples exist from other countries as well.



Amazing Stamp Stories No. 19: At Least Something Costs Less Today!
 Stephen Brett

Most Americans think that mail service began around 1847 when the United States issued its first stamps and there is an accompanying notion that Ben Franklin was alive and kicking as the first Postmaster around then and should be given all the credit for this achievement. But, why should such beliefs surprise us about our citizenry? The last time I vacationed in Hawaii I overheard at least half a dozen vacationers say they were going back to the U.S.A. while chatting in the hotel lobby as they waited for their airport shuttles. During my first vacation in Maui in 1977 I asked a seemingly experienced gray-haired sun-basking native whether the correct pronunciation is Hawaii or Havaii? After all Arthur Godfrey, who often broadcasted his shows from Honolulu in the 50's while strumming his trademark ukulele, pronounced it Havaii (on the advice of his singing native discovery Holli Loki). The well-tanned native replied: "It's Havaii, sir." I thanked him for clearing up this matter; and he answered: "You're velkomm."

But, back to the story. Our national postal history goes back, in fact way back. Significantly, President George Washington signed the Post Office Act of 1792 admitting newspapers to the mail at extremely low rates, "facilitating the spread of information essential to the creation of an informed public." It also forbade the opening of letters as a tool of surveillance." As Jimmy Durante used to say: "Folks, we were robbed!!! "Imagine using the Postal Act of 1792 to take legal action against what goes on today, especially electronically.

The hero behind the scenes leading up to the early Postal Act was one William Goddard, a patriot and printer frustrated that the Royal Postal System was unable to reliably deliver the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* to its readers. He laid out a plan for a "Constitutional Post" to the Continental Congress. The Continental Congress waited to act on the plan until the Battles of Lexington & Concord (April 10, 1775). Benjamin Franklin promoted Goddard's Plan and was appointed first Postmaster General under the

Continental Congress on July 26, 1775. Just one year before our independence was declared. You could make a case for Goddard appearing on the first U.S. stamp.



But there is more to our *Amazing Story*. It might be that among the few costs that have actually gone down over the past few years is the cost of mailing a letter. Just how much would our first stamps, the 5 cents depicting Ben and the 10 cents depicting George actually be in 2023 dollars and cents? One dollar in 1847 is \$36.80 today. The U.S inflation rate in 1847 was 6.49 % (sound familiar?)

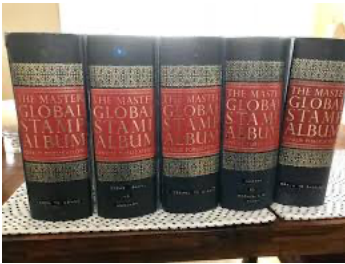


Five cents trended by economists is now \$ 1.80. A 10 cent Washington of 1847 would be \$ 3.60 today at the postal window.

Hidden Treasures or Stamp Mining Can Be Fun!

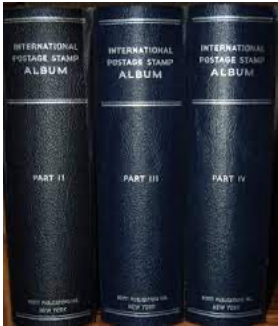
Stephen Brett

If you've been collecting stamps for decades and have accumulated stock books, boxes of loose stamps or in envelopes and you have been wondering for some time, what the heck is in there, perhaps something valuable? This article is aimed at you! It's always exciting and fun to be surprised by hidden treasures. Among the many pleasures of stamp collecting, can any beat the excitement of finding a gem in an old, yellowing glassine envelope or in a neglected stock book?



If you're like me and have been working faithfully and habitually with the old "space filler" type albums so popular and ubiquitous in the 1950's and 1960's including keeping up with annual supplements, you may have experienced the frustration that comes with the format of these albums that leave little or no space for specialized varieties and other interesting items that you have acquired. As a result, some of your hidden treasures remain

undiscovered in your boxes and stock books. Lurking among these stamps may be the uncommon material that needs further examination and research. Especially when these stamps are part of the larger definitive sets of seemingly similar design. Obtained eons ago, before the idea of cataloguing and researching such stamps never entered your mind, these stamps sit tightly cramped, shoulder to shoulder discouraging technical annotations. Moreover, they were acquired when you were not aware of how values can fluctuate enormously based on watermarks, perforation differences, minor design and color differences often almost imperceptible but highly significant in earning the distinction of being scarce and valuable! At this stage of your collecting, isn't it time to move beyond filling the spaces in your album and start applying the some of the advanced philatelic practices for fun and profit and intellectual growth as a collector?



My journey into doing some deep diving into old materials began with my questioning what to do with some nice surplus ring binder style albums with spiffy philatelically ruled blank pages which I've also accumulated over the years. My reluctance

in not tossing or selling or plain giving away these "blank albums" has to derive from the same moral obligation instilled in childhood; "The Clean Plate Club." You know, the parental guidance of "children are starving in China; Waste Not Want Not." So, if these albums must be used and not wasted. But for what? One day the dots were connected. Of course, this is a refreshing opportunity to start something new and say "ta-ta" to the 25 or so heavy old albums (A -B; C- F); France only etc. and unshackle myself for a while from their restrictive formats which hemmed me in as a seasoned collector.

Now, to those readers who suggest: Why not just add some blank pages to your existing albums to accomplish what you are proposing? My reply: Have you ever tried to open a 47-year-old can of enamel paint? Except in this case, it is 35 screw posts albums! Besides, for what I had in mind, a nice light ring-bound style album where all pages lay flat is so very refreshing. This became my chance to create a true collection one that is more reflective of my interests and focus. Not what the album publisher says I should put in a particular space.

My initial attention, curiosity and energy centered on long sets of classic European regular definitive issues. For years I've noticed but didn't have the time to distinguish seemingly identically designed stamps where catalogue values leaped from minimums to more expensive items because of perforation, color, watermark, and tiny design variations. I knew I had lots of these classics scattered throughout my "doubles," cigar box stuff, and stock books, etc.

I began my treasure hunt with the French classic series "The Sower," a bountiful postal series issued between 1903 and 1937 that had all the earmarks and qualifications for some lucrative finds. While this issue was spoken for in my "page filler" album, no differences were drawn between types, colors and other distinctions that made the differences between minimum catalogue value and much more than that. What created some exciting anticipation once I studied the relevant Scott Catalogue notes regarding this issue, was the knowledge that I had plenty of Sowers in many stockpiles. Here are my best finds to date: Scott 103, O.M.F. Overprint (1920) \$ 4.00; Scott 102 O.M.F. \$2.00 (both Cilicie, French Occupation stamps). While hunting these two down, I stumbled into Scott 115, the 1917 Cilicie O.M.F. grey & red 5 piastres over 40 Francs listed at \$ 50.00 and the 1903 Sowers, Scott 140 Violet Brown (2 copies) @ \$1.40 each, and the 1903 violet Scott 142 Sower @ \$ 5.25 showed up. All told, 55 Sowers re-established their place in my collection, nicely mounted with ample notes, color differences including Scott values, many ranging from \$.75 to \$1.90. I'm sad to report that one Sower issue eludes me: 1906 "With Ground Under Feet of Figure." Scott 155, Red. \$1.75 cancelled, \$2.50 mint. The hunt continues!



While searching for more Sowers I began to use my tongs on another classic French series of the era; the "Peace and Commerce " 1876-1900 issues. I surprised myself in having a number of these. Amongst these was Scott 73, 1876 Brown, yellowish valued at \$ 8.25. And, Scott 84 Type II "N" is under "U" @ \$ 7.50. Now they sit with 6 newly displayed examples ranging from 60-cents to Scott 101 (1890 rose, rose) @ \$ 2.65. While I also catalogued and mounted examples within several classic French long sets, I wish to highlight one more rare discovery. These are stamps of the 1900-1929 "The Rights of Man" series. The highlight is Scott 29, Perf 14, Blue 1907, \$ 60.00. I've saved the best for

last. France issued postage honoring President Louis Napoleon from 1852 -1870. I found five examples sprinkled amongst the aforementioned series, entombed in an old, worn stockbook . Any treasure here? You tell me: Scott 29 Blue, Perf 14 (1907) \$60.00; Scott 22, 1862- 71 Die II, 1 cent \$30.00; Scott 40cent orange yellowish (1853-60) \$10.00; and Scott 14 imperf Type II, \$19.00.

I surveyed my classic Egyptians of 1884-1925 for more loot - reminiscing at the sight of pyramids and Karnak about my favorite Boris Karloff role (Alef Bey)I found in that batch: Scott 40 (1879- 02) \$11.50, a 10 Brown (1874) \$4.50 and Scott 113 (1925) Burnt Violet \$ 17.50. I went through all my "extra" classic Irish maps (circa 1922) and Scott 69 Chocolate @ \$8.50, Scott 71 Slate @ \$6.25 (2 copies) and "The Sword of Life" Scott 73 red violet @ \$5.75. And, a number of others at \$3.00 each.



I'm tackling the peculiar and enigmatic world of classic Saudi Arabian and Turkish stamps, taking my time to "get it right" this time. Already \$ 3.00 to \$ 4.50 items are now identified and mounted and noted.

The pleasure for me, dear Member, is more than in the accumulating value of these resident neglected items, it is more in the realm of personal growth as a collector and the sense of being a curator for future collectors who will appreciate what they're inheriting. I suppose it's the difference between the content of a dumpster or storage rental locker and an antique shop. If you're already following this path or beginning to, and are encouraged by my story, please tell us about your discoveries.



The Santa Rosa Stamp Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:45 pm to 9:00 pm at the Finley Community Center, Cypress Room, 2060 W. College Ave. in Santa Rosa.

Membership dues are \$20 per year.

For information about the club visit our website at

<http://www.santarosastampclub.org/home.html>

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