THE COLLECTORS CLUB

# PHILATELIST

Volume 40, No. 3

May, 1961

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# *Editorials*

## Preliminary Action Taken On Stamp Thefts

The COLLECTORS CLUB PHILATELIST of May, 1960, brought to the attention of our readers the situation concerning thefts of postage stamps. We are greatly heartened by the nationwide response to our efforts. Appended to these remarks are two letters selected from the many received, referring to this editorial. The following letter throws some light upon a service which philatelists can perform in aiding local enforcement authorities.

Mrs. Arthur G. Lane
490 - 23rd Ave. North
St. Petersburg 4, Florida

Dear Mrs. Lane:

Your letter of Sept. 1st has been forwarded to me at my summer home in the state of Maine. It was a pleasure to hear that you had finally succeeded in securing a settlement on your loss. As you say, it certainly was a great moral victory.

Many thanks for the copy of the Collectors Club Philatelist. I read with interest its editorial on the FBI policy regarding stamp thefts. As a former Lieutenant of Detectives I was already familiar with most of the information and the fact that they offer very little encouragement for the average collector when he has a loss.

Most crimes committed are still local problems and often can be best handled on this level. Most stamp thefts from collectors' homes and in a good many cases from dealers' premises do not exceed the five thousand dollar limitation, therefore the FBI is not interested. If the loss is over this amount unless it can be proved that five thousand dollars in value was actually transported interstate they have no case.

When a loss occurs it is first reported to the local police and it is their duty to investigate the loss regardless of the value involved. If any interstate angles develop during the investigation they can be handled thru the co-operation of other authorities. This can and as a rule will be done where the loss only consists of a few hundred dollars or more.

In view of the fact that most investigating officers have no philatelic knowledge of any kind as a rule they show little interest in these types of loss. However in many cases where they are offered co-operation by persons with this knowledge they take a keen interest.

In the Greater New York area where I have co-operated with local police departments our record of success is as good if not better than in the loss of other types of property. Being privately employed we have not given any publicity to these cases nor do I care to

enter any controversy on the matter. I do believe that if the local police were actually assisted by some philatelic organization, that it would result in some improvement in the investigations. The local police are responsible for any crime committed in their community and it's to them we should look for results by giving them our best co-operation in what is usually a matter that they have little or no knowledge of.

There is no need for any new laws. All that is needed is the enforcement of those laws which we already have plus the co-operation of both the collector and dealers, especially the latter.

When I started this letter I had no intention of writing a speech, but it sure looks as if I am guilty of having done so.

Many thanks for your letter with the good news. I trust this letter will find you enjoying the best of health.

Sincerely,
s/ Marcel E. Chagnon

The second letter from William C. Cramer, M. C., of Florida is indicative of a very important step in the right direction.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mr. L. Walter Moon
Secretary
St. Petersburg Stamp Club
P. O. Box 546
St. Petersburg, Florida

Dear Mr. Moon:

This will acknowledge your letter of June 17th, requesting that the $5,000.00 jurisdictional limit concerning the transportation of stolen property, which is established under Section 2314 of Title 18, of the U. S. Code, be reduced.

Of course, theft of any property is a crime under the state law and the assistance of the F. B. I. for certain limited purposes is available upon request if the thief escapes across state lines.

For your information, this present loophole which exists and is taken advantage of largely because the thief can cross state lines and thus avoid local or state prosecution is fully recognized by me, not only in this instance but many other criminal cases, including the instances of unsolved murders, many of which have occurred in my own district and about which I have been deeply concerned.

In order to plug this loophole, the McCullough-Cramer bill was introduced, H. R. 11889, to make additional state crimes, which would include theft, subject to Federal jurisdiction under the Fugitive Felon Act, also a part of Title 18, when the perpetrator escapes across a state border. I think this Act would be effective in fighting the problem which is suggested in your letter and the enclosed Philatelist magazine.

I would suggest that your organization get behind this legislation which was reported favorably out of the Judiciary Committee subcommittee previously, and which is legislation I have been advocating as a member of the full committee. This approach, in my opinion, is much more easily accomplished than to try to reduce the jurisdictional amount in interstate transportation of stolen properties, which would be objected to by many of the state law enforcement groups, but the proposed bill which I have introduced would accomplish a similar objective.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the bill, H. R. 11889, and a copy of my remarks in the record concerning it.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,
WILLIAM C. CRAMER
First District, Florida

But we feel that H. R. 11889 is not broad enough to adequately protect philatelists against stamp thefts. We quote it here verbatim:

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Cramer introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend section 1073 of title 18, United States Code, the Fugitive Felon Act.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the first paragraph of section 1073 of title 18 of the United States Code is amended to read as follows:

"Whoever moves or travels in interstate or foreign commerce with intent either (1) to aviod prosecution, or custody or confinement after conviction, under the laws of the place from which he flees, for a crime, or an attempt to commit a crime, punishable by the laws of the place from which the fugitive flees by death or imprisonment for a term exceeding one year, or (2) to avoid giving testimony in any criminal proceedings in such place in which the commission of an offense punishable by imprisonment in a penitentiary is charged, shall be fined not more than $5,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both."

This bill refers only to movement of a person or persons across state lines or in interstate commerce to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement. It does not mention the transportation of stolen property across state lines. It is our considered opinion that the way to close the existing loophole in the law is to make the transportation of stolen property, *regardless of its value*, in interstate commerce or across state lines a federal offense. This would not only satisfy philatelists' desire to have their stamps better protected, but that it would also simplify the existing statutes regarding interstate transportation of stolen property for all citizens. Therefore, all philatelists are again urged to write to their U. S. Congressmen and Senators requesting that needed protective legislation be acted upon in the new congress.

Although the staff of this magazine is pleased that our efforts are the first that we know of to stimulate some concrete action, this is not a matter for the Collectors Club members alone. Every national philatelic society, every regional and local stamp club, the ASDA and other stamp dealers not members, every stamp paper should form a united front to secure the needed action. Writing editorials criticizing others but praising oneself or forming a committee in a philatelic group, that results in little or no action will not accomplish what is needed. But if our legislators are deluged with requests from stamp collectors and dealers all over the country to close up a loophole in our existing laws, then the needed remedies have a good opportunity of materializing.

*(H. D. S. H.)* and *(H. M. G.)*

## How To Arrange For A New U. S. Stamp

Mail regularly comes here from some state or local stamp group stating that it is working for a new commemorative stamp, and hopes to elicit the Collectors Club's support. Often this mail also has an inquiry such as this; "Can you offer any advice as to how to go about getting a new U.S. stamp?"

Two news items spotted this year shed some light on this matter. The first said:

> "Leading the fight to have the flight commemorated with an airmail stamp is Rep. Clement Miller, (D., Calif.), according to the Oakland newspaper."

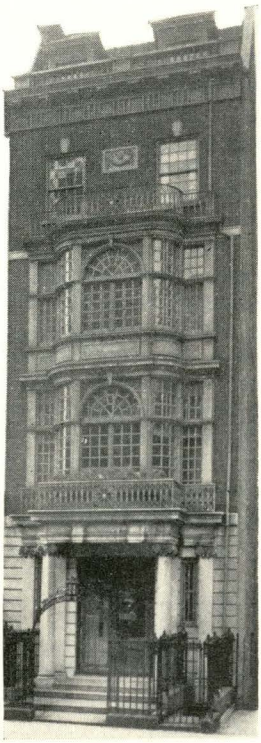
Therefore, those wanting a U.S. commemorative must fight. We closed our eyes and imagined being in New York's Madison Square Garden, as the announcer yelled:

"In dis corner, ladies and genelmen, is de challenger from Califournea wearing poiple trunks with four cents on them. On me right is the champeen, de Postmaster Generol of Washington, D. C. wearing red, white and blue. Eleven more commemorative stamps to follow."

But philately is a peaceful hobby, and fighting is abhorrent in philatelic circles. Thus, a much more persuasive and gentle method is advisable. "Time" magazine reporting on the Congressional move last January to change the House of Representative's Rules Committee said the following:

> "Time Correspondent Neil MacNeil listened as two Rayburn lieutenants were running down the list of doubtful members. On one: "The General Services Administration ought to be able to get him." On another: "The Air Force can take care of him." A third? "If you can get the Post Office to issue that special stamp for him, you've got him."

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# THE BLACK HONDURAS

## The Rarest Air Mail Stamp

By IRVING I. GREEN

### Foreword

**$24,500** is the highest price ever paid for one stamp in a public sale in America. This has been exceeded only once by the famous classic "British Guiana," that was sold at auction in Europe years ago. The publicity that followed has made the "British Guiana" world-famous.

This record American price for a stamp was made by a 1925 air mail stamp of Honduras, known as "the Black Honduras." Its size is small — smaller than the "British Guiana" — crudely printed by local lithography in 1915, and ten years later surcharged with a new value on a small handpress in a very primitive manner by an American, who was a resident in Tegucigalpa, Honduras at the time.

It is remarkable that the two most valuable stamps in the world — "the British Guiana" and "the Black Honduras" — are ugly. What, then, is their attraction? Why would stamp collectors want to spend fortunes to possess two such unattractive pieces?

The answers to these questions actually can be understood only by a philatelist. Many ask — "What makes this Honduras air mail stamp so rare and expensive?" Outside of a relatively small circle of collectors who specialize in air mail stamps, probably few other stamp collectors or dealers know the answer to this latter question.

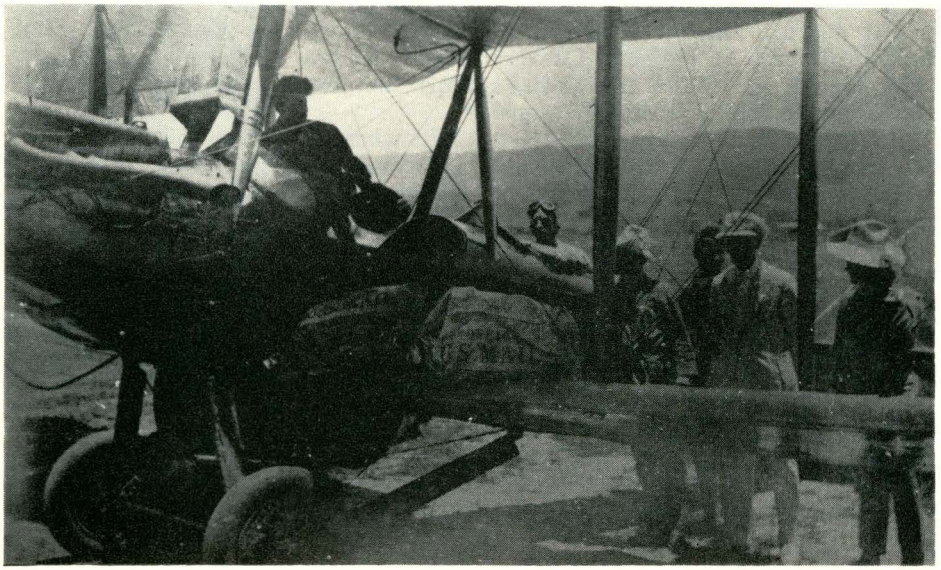


Fig. 1. Preparing to fly the mail. Pilot Sumner B. Morgan is in the cockpit of the airplane, while the mechanics stand by the plane just before the take-off and loading the mailbags at the Toncontin Airfield, Tegucigalpa.

We aero-philatelists knew that "the Black Honduras" was rare, but surprisingly little about its history had been published. In 1954, as editor of "the Aero Philatelist Annals," I had the pleasure of giving an assignment to Mr. Irving I. Green of Boston, Mass., a longtime specialist in the stamps of Honduras, that he present his intimate knowledge of "the Black Honduras" in our specialized quarterly magazine on air mail stamps. Because of its limited circulation, but more because of its increasingly sensational history since 1954, I again had the pleasure of requesting from Mr. Green a revised, up-to-date story on the rarest and most valuable air mail stamp in the world. Just as he obliged in 1954, he again willingly undertook this new assignment. Thank you, Irving Green.

After one has read the study that follows, he should realize that the stories behind most all of the very valuable stamps are only partially known. Therefore, in this important respect, "the Black Honduras" is different. Its history is known and recorded from the cradle to the day when it was sold in a New York City auction on February 27, 1961 for the record price of $24,500.

*Henry M. Goodkind*

---

## Honduras' 1925 Air Mail Service And The Stamps

In 1922 Dr. T. C. Pounds, an American residing in Honduras, contracted with that government to operate an air mail service between the lofty capital Tegucigalpa and Puerto Cortes, a sultry city on the north Caribbean coast. Then Tegucigalpa had, and still has, the dubious distinction of being the only capital in the Americas without a railroad connection. By plane, the intervening 150 miles of mountainous terrain could be flown in two hours time, compared with the overland trek that required three days to a week by muleback depending upon the weather.

The Government of Honduras agreed to produce special stamps for the new air post service, and these were to be used in addition to the regular postage stamps. Pounds, in payment for the air mail service, was to receive the entire proceeds from the sale of the special stamps, the government retaining the revenue from the sale of postage stamps.

Progress was interrupted during 1923, when a serious revolution forced the United States to restrict shipment of planes. With a return to normalcy in 1924, Pounds secured some financial backing from Juan Trippe*, then operating the Long Island Airways, a commuter line out of Brooklyn, N. Y. Trippe had agreed to send down to Honduras a pilot and a plane, and if the venture was successful, more were to follow.

On February 22, 1925, Pilot Sumner B. Morgan and a new Aeromarine airplane (Fig. 1) equipped with LWF landing gear**, arrived at Puerto Cortes on the S.S. Cuyamapa of the Cuyamel Line. Pounds greeted Morgan, the aviator, at the dock where they met Julio Ustariz, a local resident, who offered them free use of his Tulian airport nearby. This gracious offer was accepted, and during March and April they lived at the Ustariz hacienda, "Los Angeles," as his guests, while engaged in preliminary preparations for the air service.

---

*Pounds later claimed that Trippe, founder and now head of the great Pan-American Airways, received his original idea from the Honduras 1925 project.

**The Aeromarine was a seaplane, so required a special landing gear for land flights. LWF signifies Lowe, Willard and Fowler Engineering Company, makers of the Laminated Wood Fusilage.

The official inaugural flight was set for May 1, 1925. At the 11th hour, the government advised Pounds the special stamps had not been made†, and, as an alternative, gave him a small quantity of remainders from the obsolete 1915 postage issue, which he was authorized to overprint. Accordingly, Pounds and his associate, Karl Snow, who did job-printing on the side, prepared the provisional air mail issue on a very small hand-operated printing press in a dimly-lit basement room of Snow's Tegucigalpa home (See Fig. 2).

There were two sessions required for the overprinting. The first, a hurried job to meet the deadline of May first, was done near the end of April, at which time red or black ink was used, whereas the second overprinting a few months later was done entirely with blue ink.

The first flight took place as scheduled. (See Fig. 3) Morgan found flying over the mountains of Honduras a much more difficult assignment than he anticipated. Frequent mishaps delayed deliveries or entirely postponed scheduled flight, so that the public quickly lost faith in the value of the air post service as a time-saver. Finally, after eight months of sporadic operation, Aeromarine 39L, on December 21, 1925, while en route from San Pedro Sula to Tegucigalpa, sputtered to a forced landing at Santa Cruz on what was to be the final flight†† of the Empresa Pounds-Central American Air Line.

Despite the demise of the Central American Air Line, its stamps remain as a heritage to philatelists, and being in short supply have sky-rocketed in value since 1915. Although both reprints and counterfeits abound, *the crudeness of the original printing has never been successfully imitated — a blessing for the philatelic experts.*

## The Cast Of The Important Characters



*SUMNER B. MORGAN.* Born January 1, 1899 in Elmira, New York and still makes his home there. In the early 1920's, he patrolled New York City harbor in a Curtiss M.F. seaplane as a Lieutenant in the New York City Police Reserves. At that time, he also did charter service around the New York harbor with his co-pilot Lisandro Garay who, in 1931, attempted but failed in a non-stop flight from New York to Honduras, his homeland. Morgan was friendly with Juan Trippe, President of Pan-American Airways, who selected him to be the pilot for the 1925 air mail venture. Morgan was a very capable flyer. It was mainly because of his ability and ingenuity that the 1925 service lasted as long as it did. After this failed, Morgan with many others applied for the position of Chief Pilot for the United Fruit Company with headquarters at Tela, Honduras. He got the job and filled it with distinction for seven or eight years. He likes to relate that one of the unsuccessful applicants for the United Fruit job was Charles A. Lindbergh, who was turned down for lack of experience. Throughout the years Morgan has held a First-Class Pilot license and performed meritorious service flying in many parts of the world. For a while he was personal

†It is reported that the government made a die for the special stamp, but no further work was done.

††The flight from Santa Rosa to Tegucigalpa was completed the next day.

pilot for President Somoza of Nicaragua and instructor of his air force. During World War II, he ferried planes across the Atlantic for the Allied Forces. Later he was a test pilot for some of the more important American plane manufacturers. When this writer spent a most pleasant and rewarding day with Morgan in New York on June 25, 1956, he related many of his interesting experiences. Naturally those concerning the 1925 air mail service and the printing of its stamps, which incidentally he watched for a while, were the most intriguing. "Sonny," his nick-name, is tall, handsome and serious-looking, every bit the capable flyer that he is.

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*DOCTOR THOMAS CANFIELD POUNDS.* Born August 9, 1878 in Blackfoot, Montana. Attended Cornell University Medical College, New York City with the Class of 1902. Received his M.D. from the University of California College of Medicine in 1903. Became a respected ear-eye-and-nose specialist, practicing in Redlands and San Diego, California until World War I. He enlisted in the United States Navy Medical Corps with the rank of Lieutenant. While on duty with the Atlantic Fleet, his ship was ordered to Honduras to suppress a revolution threatening the U.S. Embassy. He was so overwhelmed by the lure of the tropics that after his honorable discharge from the Navy and a brief residence in Brooklyn, he settled in Tegucigalpa to practice medicine. On April 19, 1921 he witnessed the first air mail flight in Central America, when his friend, Colonel Ivan Lamb, flew his Bristol fighter into Tegucigalpa from San Pedro Sula. It was then Pounds was bitten by the aviation bug, that shaped his destiny for the next fifteen years. 1925 found the jovial "Doc" engaged in the ill-fated Honduran air mail gamble, a word used advisedly for he was related to Kid Canfield of legendary fame. Then followed other Pound ventures in air transportation of passengers and freight throughout Central America. Some were successful at first, but all eventually failed due to that common cause — Insufficient Funds. By 1935 Pounds realized he was finished as far as aviation was concerned, and so he returned to his first calling, medicine, which he continued to practice until his passing on July 28, 1949. This author corresponded with Dr. Pounds for several years prior to his death. Plied with innumerable queries, "Doc" never failed to reply graciously and at length, and copiously sprinkled his letters with priceless humor. Certainly his candor and integrity are very evident in his letters to the author. Unfortunately, when reprints of the 1925 Honduras air mails later appeared on the philatelic market, they were called the "Pounds Reprints." In the author's opinion, Pounds never had any connection with this fraudulent scheme, which has been unjustly attributed to him by philatelists ignorant of the actual events.

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*JULIO USTARIZ.* A Honduras cattleman and agriculturalist. Owner of the Tulian airfield across the bay from Puerto Cortes, where Pounds established his North Coast terminus and which Morgan termed "a cow pasture

without the trees cut down.'' Ustariz, a native of Spain, came to Honduras from France via the ''jump-ship'' route. In his younger days he was reputed to be one of the fastest gun-handlers in Central America. He married a niece of the former President Luis Bogran of Honduras, and numbered among his friends President Baraona of Honduras and Dictator Ubico of Guatemala. He was not a man of extreme wealth, but had sufficient means to be a great sport and a genial host. Whenever an important person had occasion to visit Puerto Cortes, he was entertained at the Ustariz hacienda, ''Los Angeles.'' When I met Ustariz in New York during a 1953 visit, he impressed me as being intelligent, worldly, quite talkative and, at times, quick-tempered. He was then about seventy years of age, slight in stature and well-tanned. He presented a natty apearance in his well-tailored clothes topped off with a blue beret. He traveled often and widely, and in 1953 was on his way to Spain to trace his lineage, which he claimed included royalty. While visiting his daughter in Guatemala, he died during January of 1956.

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*KARL SNOW*. Born in Michigan January 1, 1888. A jack-of-all trades and master of many. Successively but not too successfully a printer, teacher, preacher, manufacturer's agent, airline promoter, automobile dealer, guide, interpreter, plumber, motel owner, and more. His first job was printing corn-flake boxes for the Kellogg Company when they started in business. In 1914, he and his wife migrated to Honduras where he taught shopcraft in an English school. Later he worked as a manufacturer's commission agent, and did job-printing on the side, mostly for The Seventh Day Adventists, his faith. Associated with Dr. Pounds in the 1925 Honduras air mail venture he was the printer of its classic air mail stamps.* When the air mail service failed, he became interested in a sawmill and later on operated a Ford automobile agency. Hard hit by the depression of the early 1930's, he returned broke to the United States. He settled in North Carolina where he worked as a plumber, while building with his own hands a motor court with the fetching name ''The Friendly Pines,'' which up to the present time he has been successfully operating. This writer met Karl Snow about five years ago, and since then visits him at his motel each year while en route to Florida. He is of medium height and weight, pleasant-faced, possessing a pair of the most twinkling eyes imagineable, and speaks with a twang reminiscent of a Yankee from downeast Maine. An initial brusqueness gives way to ingratiating friendliness when he gets to know you. A very competent and unusual individual is Karl Snow, although not too informative about the details of the 1925 airmail episode, blaming this on a poor memory which he certainly has not. (See Fig. 4) This

*The illustration shown here was taken in 1925 in front of Snow's home, where he overprinted the 1925 Honduras Air Mail stamps. (Courtesy of The Philatelic Foundation, New York, N. Y.)

is shown when the writer, as an enthusiastic philatelist, presses him for information.



*JOHN N. LUFF* was associated with the Scott Stamp and Coin Company of New York, N. Y. for many years until his death on August 23, 1938. Under his guidance the Scott catalogue attained international renown and recognition. He is considered by many as the greatest American philatelic student and writer that ever lived. In the course of his work, he assembled a valuable reference collection incorporating surcharges, types and varieties that are essential to a stamp specialist. He sold this collection to the Scott Company, who made it available for study to serious-minded philatelists.

Mr. Luff frequently remarked that Honduras was one of his philatelic favorites as it truly encompassed a virgin field for research that posed many challenging problems. It was Luff, who first established a correct listing of the 1925 air mail stamps of Honduras and developed a means to determine their genuineness. His pioneer plating work on this issue still stands today as well-nigh perfect.

Upon Mr. Luff's decease, control of the Scott Company eventually passed to Mr. Hugh M. Clark, long his business associate and assistant, who continued as editor of the Scott catalogue. Aware of this writer's great interest in Honduras, Mr. Clark graciously presented to him some of Mr. Luff's personal correspondence file of that country. From this authentic source comes much of the material contained in this article.

In 1946 Mr. Clark sold his interest in Scott Publications Inc., and at the same time donated the Luff reference collection to the Philatelic Foundation of New York, of which he was one of the organizers. He died in 1956.

*DR. RAUL DURON MEMBRENO.* A native of Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and is a dentist by profession. He is a member of a highly respected family in Honduras. In 1933 he was Secretary General of the Postal Department. In addition to practising dentistry, Dr. Duron* is an avid philatelist and stamp dealer. For a number of years, he acted for John N. Luff of the Scott Stamp & Coin Company, and other important European stamp dealers as their Honduran correspondent and source of supply for its postal issues. Because of his intimate governmental connec-

*The Spanish style for a name is to have one's mother's maiden name at the end, different from English. Throughout this article, however, we shall refer to Dr. Duron incorrectly in the English manner, because commencing with Mr. John Luff, all American philatelists call him Membreno. So Membreno he will be.

tions, he was accorded the privilege of "first look and pick" of the various stamp issues before they were placed on sale to the public. He was very active during the 1925-1935 period and supplied Mr. Luff with firsthand information about the many issues of that period. In 1933 he suffered some unfortunate reverses, not the least being the theft of his stamp collection that was never recovered. He is considered an outstanding specialist in Honduran philately.

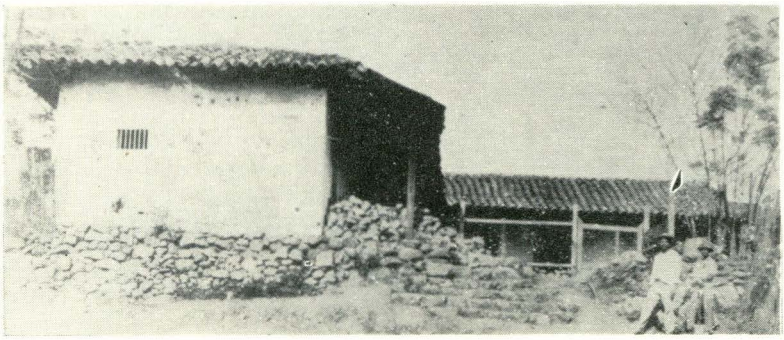


Fig. 2. Snow's home, the Mission House, in Tegulcigalpa. He moved into it in 1920. It was in the unfinished basement room of this house where he printed the Air Mail stamps in 1925.

## The Finding Of The Rare Black

Nearly two years had elapsed since the printing and issuance of the 1925 air mail stamps of Honduras. Mr. Luff, its foremost inquirer, felt certain he had correctly catalogued all the known existing varieties. Imagine his surprise when he found something new, a 25c on 10c stamp was enclosed in the following letter dated March 5, 1927, from Mr. Julio Ustariz, Puerto Cortes, Honduras, with these comments:

"By request of my friend, Mr. F. W. Budde of San Pedro Sula, I take pleasure in enclosing you a complete series of the "Aero" stamps of Honduras as follows:

| *1st Issue* | | *2nd Issue* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 cts blue | .....1 block 6 stamps | 10 cts dk. bl. surch. 25 | single copy |
| 10 cts dark br. | ...1 block 6 stamps | 5 cts blue surch. 25 | single copy |
| 20 cts brown | .....1 block 6 stamps (tete-beche) | | (torn) |
| | | 20 cts brown surch. 25 | single copy |
| 25 cts on 1c choc. | 1 block 4 stamps | | |
| 50 cts orange | ....1 block 6 stamps | 1st Issue—20 cts brown—single copy | |
| 1 peso green | ....1 block 2 stamps | | |

"These last 4 stamps were given to me by Dr. Pounds in a trip that I made to Tecucigalpa in March of last year. He informed me that he had no more in stock."

Mr. Luff proceeded to check the overprint on this new variety, a 25c on 10c dark blue, black surcharge, against the setting of the 25c on 1c, chocolate. He found that it matched exactly with position No. 2. He recorded this finding in his reference collection by an attached note in manuscript:

"Julio Ustariz, Tulian, Puerto Cortez, Honduras, C. A. In March 1927 sends various Honduras Air Mail stamps including 10c dark blue, surcharge in black, like No. 2 of my 25/1c chocolate. Says he got it from Pounds about March 1927."

There is an error in Luff's above handwritten notation, because Ustariz stated Pounds gave him the 25c on 10c stamp in "March of *last* year", signifying 1926, not 1927. Probably never again referring to Ustariz's letter, but instead, always checking with his collection, Luff, consequently used the incorrect 1927 date in his subsequent correspondence. He does classify the surcharge as genuine, "like No. 2 of my 25c/1c Chocolate," although there was a question in his mind whether the stamp was placed on sale at the post office or if it merely constituted a trial printing. He indicated his quandary by later entering the following remark in his collection:

"C12 — Trial Print? 25 on 10 c."

On March 19, 1927 Luff replied to Ustariz as follows:

"I am in receipt of your kind favor of the fifth and appreciate your sending me a fine lot of Honduras Air Mail stamps to see. Mr. Budde gave you a wrong idea of what I wanted and has caused you unnecessary trouble.

"I have been studying these stamps because of the dangerous counterfeits that have come from Honduras in recent months. I was trying to make up the various settings of the surcharges. I happen to have a fair lot of material so that I can make up the Aero Correo in black and in blue. Also the blue with '25', but I have not been able to get enough stamps to make up the 25c on 1c, which is not the same as the 25c on 5c, and 25c on 20c.

"I had a nice block of four of the 25c on 1c which Mr. Budde sent me two years ago. I regret to say that the block you sent me comes from the same position in the setting so that it does not give me any help to make up the setting.

"There is one stamp in your book that is new to me. That is the 25c on 10c dark blue. I have not before seen this stamp nor has it been listed in any catalogue. I think from your letter that you received it from Mr. Pounds. Did he say anything about it that it was a trial stamp or that it was actually put in use? I shall appreciate any information that you can give me about this stamp.

"I notice in your book that you make notes on many pages of the stamps that you have 'in stock'. I do not know if 'in stock' means that you have these stamps for sale or merely that you have them and you do not say anything in your letter about selling them or put any prices in your book. If any of these stamps are for sale, I would be interested to buy the block of 25c on 1c and the single copy of the 25c on 10c blue.

"As I said before, I have a similar block of the 25c on 1c, but if I could buy yours, it might help me to get copies that I need from collectors who would not sell but would be willing to exchange. I am returning your block enclosed and shall be very pleased to hear from you on the subject of possible sales at your convenience. I note that you say certain of the stamps in your book were given to you by Dr. Pounds in a trip that you made to Tegucigalpa in March of 1926 and that he informed you that he had no more stamps in stock. Within the last two months, I have had letters from a collector in Tegucigalpa enclosing first a certificate from Dr. Pounds that he was selling to that man 100 Air Mail stamps, giving a list of them. Secondly, another certificate from Dr. Pounds that during the past year he sold about 300 Air Mail stamps. I think both of these certificates were dated in or about December 1926 or January 1927. I have copies of them but they are at home, but it is quite evident that when Dr. Pounds told you he had no more in stock, he was mistaken, or else some more have been printed.

"There is something very queer going on down there in regard to the Air Mail stamps, but I have not yet gotten to the thing."

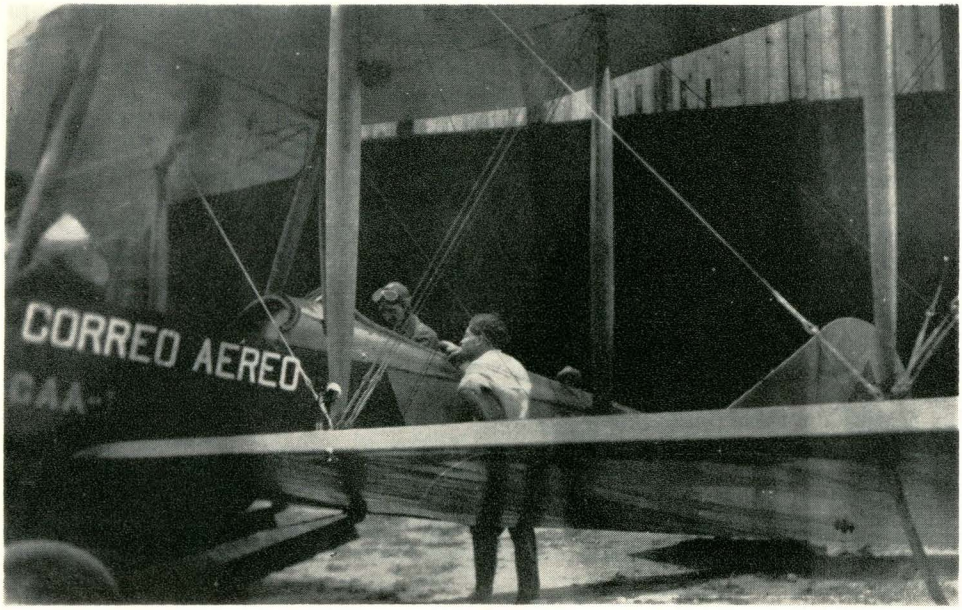



Fig. 3. The airplane in 1925 leaving the hangar at the Toncontin airport in Tegucigalpa.

In the above letter, Mr. Luff carefully avoided conveying the impression that the 25c on 10c blue might be a rarity. Instead, he emphasized the counterfeit situation that had beclouded this entire issue. Actually, he desired to acquire the 25c on 10c stamp but shrewdly did not wish to reveal his intense interest.

Following up his letter of March 5, 1927 to Mr. Luff, even before he received a reply to it, Mr. Ustariz wrote Luff as follows:

> "I beg to confirm to you my letter of the 5th inst., enclosing a collection of 'aero' stamps of Honduras.
>
> "As I have had no time to write to our friend Mr. Budde of San Pedro Sula, to whom I had promised to send whatever news I should receive from the aviator, Mr. S. B. Morgan, and as the N. Y. boat is leaving to-morrow, I take pleasure in forwarding you the letter that I just received from the aviator with regards to the 'aero' stamps (1st issue).
>
> "You will be able to judge by the contents of same that Mr. Pounds has some pretty good notions, for making money."

Pilot Morgan's letter, dated March 12, referred to above as being addressed to Mr. Ustariz read:

> "I think I carried mail to the coast on the trips of June 26 and November 5, 1925, although I am uncertain about the latter date. I don't think Pounds used any new stamps on that trip but old ones that he had had for some time, for if I remember right, the Postmaster would not give him any more to cancel. And another thing, when Pounds said that he had no more in stock to you, he wasn't so close to the truth for he showed a bunch to a friend of his not so long ago and this man wanted to get some but Pounds wouldn't give him any. Just how valuable are these stamps and who is there that wants to buy them in the States, for Mr. Snow in Tegucigalpa has some and will sell them, so will I, the few I have.

"Pounds now has with him another aviator who is going to Siguatepeque (How do you spell that place — it's the town half way to the coast from the capital) to-morrow or next day with a bunch of letters that he has written to himself so as to get them surcharged or cancelled by the postmaster of that town so that he can sell the stamped envelopes to collectors in the States. The aviator will fly down on the Aeromarine. He has more nerve than I have for they have cracked it up twice and have had a real hard time of it, harder than I had, and that was bad enough for me. If he can do this, why can't I take some of the stamps I have and address them to myself in Tela, have them surcharged here in Tegucigalpa, and then fly down and have them surcharged or cancelled or whatever the postmaster does to them when he gets them."

Morgan's letter obviously evidences no philatelic knowledge. It does indicate to the philatelist, however, that the pilot had air mail stamps and wanted to realize on them. By "new stamps" mentioned near the beginning of his letter, Morgan is referring to those of the second issue or printing these with blue ink. It is a fact that Morgan and Pounds disliked each other heartily. Pounds claimed that Morgan, without authority from him, had signed a receipt and obtained the "aero" stamps held by the Postmasters at Puerto Cortes and San Pedro Sula but was unable to get those at La Ceiba as Pounds had warned the postmaster there not to deliver the stamps to anyone but himself, personally. It appears, borrowing a phrase for Sr. Ustariz, that Morgan, too, "had some pretty good notions for making money." Pilot Morgan and Sr. Ustariz appeared to be close friends. These different relationships must be considered as one reads the various correspondence.

Upon receipt of Luff's letter of March 19th, Sr. Ustariz, inherently impatient and suspicious, wrote his friend, Morgan, then employed as a pilot by the United Fruit Company at Tela, requesting that he contact Snow, the actual printer of the air mail stamps, for firsthand information concerning the 25c on 10c, black surcharge variety. While awaiting a reply from Morgan, Sr. Ustariz wrote Mr. Luff:

"I have been expecting to hear from Mr. Morgan about the Aero stamps for over a fortnight but have not had any news from him. I suppose that he has been very busy lately, so that I shall not wait any longer to answer . . . .

"With regards the counterfeits on the market, it must undoubtedly have been some private dealings between Mr. Pounds and the Postmaster in Tegucigalpa.

"I gave Mr. Budde, in March of last year, a list of the (emiss) aero stamps that had been issued. It was as follows, if I remember:

| *First printing* | *Second printing* |
|---|---|
| 500..... 5 cents blue | 250.....20 cents brown |
| 500.....10 cents | 250.....25 cents on 20 cents |
| 1000.....20 cents | 250.....25 cents on 5 cents |
| 500.....25 cents on 1 cent | 250.....25 cents on 10 cents |
| 200.....50 cents | |
| 100..... 1 peso | |

"Mr. Morgan, I am sure, will get me the right information . . .Hoping to be able to give you soon some reliable information with regards the "aero" stamps . . ."

KARL J. SNOW
COMMISSION AGENT
EXPORT AND IMPORT
CABLE ADDRESS
"KSNOW, TEGUCIGALPA"
STANDARD CODES

Tegucigalpa, Honduras, C. A.
April 18, 1930.

Mr. Julio Ustaris.
Puerto Cortez

My dear Mr. Ustaris:-

When we started to reprint the airmail stamps there were several changes made in colors of inks and register. The issue was small so all went in; consequently you will find some of the 10 cent stamps reprinted in red, some in black and some in blue.

When I did this job it never entered my mind that they would be of value to collectors. I merely changed them around till they suited my taste.

Yours truly
Karl Snow.

Fig. 4. A letter from Snow to Sr. Julio Ustariz written in 1930 about the surcharging of the Air Mail stamps. Not being too familiar with philatelic terms, Snow used the word "reprint" in place of "surcharge." (Courtesy of the Philatelic Foundation)

Sr. Ustariz's listing above disclosed that he did not consider the 25c on 10c variety of any more value than the other three that he had placed in the second printing, and besides, it was done in the first printing. Luff was aware of these two inaccuracies, but made no comment because this suited his purpose.

On April 23, 1927, Ustariz wrote to Luff:

> "I have just received the enclosed letter from the aviator, Mr. Morgan, which will interest you without any doubt.
>
> "I am writing to him this same day telling him to call on you when he is up in the States.
>
> "As soon as I hear from the party that he refers to, Mr. Karl Snow, I will write to you . . . ."

The letter which Ustariz received from Morgan is dated April 18, 1927, and reads:

> "Here is what Snow wrote for me to write you about the 25 cents on 10 cent dark blue. 'There was no 10 cent dark blue 1915 issue surcharged 25 cents that I remember. There might have been a few on the 1919 issue but these were never used. I think they must be fakes, so that should answer that question! Don't be a bit backward about writing Karl Snow, for he will help you all he can. You won't find a more willing man to help any other person." (See Fig. 4)

This information convinced Sr. Ustariz that his 25c on 10c was a counterfeit and, as such, it appears that he did not seem to care what Luff did with it.

Mr. Luff wrote Sr. Ustariz on May 2, 1927:

> "I am to-day in receipt of your letters of April 21 and 23 and am pleased to hear from you. . . .
>
> "Thank you for sending me the list of the quantities printed of the Air Mail stamps. I had such a list at various times from various people. They are probably in my letter files at home. I think the total is about the same on all the lists but I believe no two agree on the quantities for the different stamps.
>
> "I have never had any correspondence with Mr. Snow and I am wondering if he cannot supply a correct list. I would very much like to have his opinion of the stamps that have been coming on the market in the last year and also would like to know if he has any information about the maker. So far as I can tell, they all trace back to Mr. Pounds and I very much suspect that he has had reprints made to sell to stamp collectors and the trade.
>
> "I have been interested in reading Mr. Morgan's letter. If he comes to the States, I shall hope to make his acquaintance and have a chance to talk with him."

After mailing the above, Mr. Luff sent Sr. Ustariz the following under the same date, May 2, 1927:

> "P. S.: When I was at the office to-day, I dictated a letter to you. Now that I am at home, I recall something that I had intended to say, so I will try and typewrite it myself.
>
> "I suggest that you advise Mr. Morgan not to try having his air mail stamps cancelled. The Postmaster General stopped the delivery of the lot Mr. Pounds tried to put through, I was informed of this the day after the attempt. Mr. Morgan can get quite as good prices for his stamps uncancelled as cancelled, especially if they are in blocks. Collectors and dealers here know the dates the stamps were used and the towns which they were mailed. Cancellations with other town names and dates will be rejected.
>
> "Mr. M. may have to wait a little while before he can sell. Everyone has beeen scared by the dangerous counterfeits that have been on the market for about six months. Neither dealers nor collectors are willing to buy. When that trouble has been cleared up and the counterfeits removed, the market will probably be allright again. . . ."

Of importance is Mr. Luff's statement that "dangerous counterfeits have been on the market for about six months." Writing this on May 2, 1927, would fix the appearance of the counterfeits near the end of 1926. As Sr. Ustariz stated that Pounds had given him the 25c on 10c stamp during March 1926, Luff unwittingly authenticated its genuineness. Morgan heeded Mr. Luff's advice, as his stamps, when sold to the Scott Company, were mostly in mint

blocks, though somewhat stuck together. I have no record of what, if anything, Mr. Luff bought from Sr. Ustariz this time.

## Further Discoveries




Fig. 5. The photo of "Membreno" pair which Mr. Luff had taken. Courtesy of The Philatelic Foundation.

There was to be more activity in the matter of the 25c on 10c air mail variety, but this time from another direction. Mr. Luff received a letter dated March 25, 1927, from his most active correspondent in Honduras, Sr. Raul Duron Membreño. The letter contained sixteen Honduras air mail stamps of the 1925 issue and a memorandum from Dr. Pounds to Membreño, dated March 18, 1927, reading:

> "Enclosed find 16 stamps which I found in a little book of addresses a couple of days ago."

Membreño's accompanying letter to Mr. Luff read:

> " . . . Among the 16 stamps sent me by Dr. Pounds, you will note one pair of 25/10c surcharged in black. I'd never heard or seen such a variety and am writing Dr. Pounds in order to get some information. I don't doubt for a moment of the genuineness of the 16 stamps as I have learned a lot, comparing the several counterfeits. . . . "

Mr. Luff, upon careful examination, found the enclosed horizontal pair of 25c on 10c to be genuine and had it photographed. (Fig. 5) He placed one photo in his collection, noting over it in manuscript the surcharge positions: "No. 3 and No. 4." The photo shows the pair somewhat separated near the top, but the alignment of the surcharges proves that the pair was intact at the time it had been overprinted.

Luff on May 2, 1927 acknowledged receipt of Membreño's note of the 25th expressing his growing disinterest in all air mail stamps of Honduras because of the plethora of counterfeits. Tucked away near the end of this letter is found:

> " . . . Yes, I noticed the pair of 25c on 10c with black surcharge. About a month ago I saw a third copy of this unknown variety, which the owner stated he bought from Mr. Pounds, about January of this year. At least, I believe this was the date though I have left the letter at home."

Again Mr. Luff wanted to own the pair of C12 stamps but he cleverly did not wish to convey too much eagerness. This seems to account for the "discouraging act" for Membreño's benefit. Heretofore, Mr. Luff had been able to buy most anything that Membreño sent him for examination. So probably he believed this instance would be no exception. Therefore, he deliberately devoted little space to the discussion of the 25c on 10c variety. Again Mr. Luff wrote "January of this year", implying January 1927, as the time the owner of the other 25c on 10c stamp (Ustariz) bought it from Pounds. This 1927 date co-

incidentally is the time given for the influx of many dangerous counterfeits.

On May 10, 1927, Membreño wrote to Mr. Luff, enclosing a letter dated April 28, 1927 he had received from Pounds in reply to his inquiry of March 25th for information about the different varieties af airpost stamps, including the error, 25c on 10c. Pounds' letter delineates the trials and tribulations of the printings. *It becomes a valuable pronouncement for philatelists.* However, it runs to great length and for this reason, only the portion relating to the subject under discussion, the 25c on 10c stamp, is quoted:

> "When we got ready to print the stamps, we had to separate the original sheets into smaller ones. The original ones came in hundreds,* that is, ten stamps on each side. The press we had would only accommodate 12 so we tore the big sheets into smaller ones of twelve stamps each. This left a strip of two wide on one side and one wide on the other. After printing the sheets of 12, we printed the strips as best we could, usually in twos and threes and even single ones. So you see that in trying to apply the usual system of 'plating' the stamps afterwards, one would meet difficulties if he tried to make some of these odd stamps fit into one of the sheets of twelve, for in all probability, it wouldn't fit.** And if it didn't, it couldn't be called a counterfeit. You mentioned having got a ten cent stamp that had been surcharged in black to 25 cents. I believe you said it was in the lot of some 16 that you got from me recently. I can't explain that, if it really came from me, unless it was one of those odd stamps, just mentioned, that got in with the one cent ones which were raised to 25c in the first printing. I never saw one of them, there might have been more than one, but it is certain that there couldn't have been very many of them."

Mr. Luff wrote on May 31, 1927 to Membreño:

> "In your letter of March 25, you send me, for my opinion, 16 stamps. I find 14 of them to be genuine and am returning them with this letter. Two other stamps were the mysterious 25c/10c dark blue, black surcharge . . . I don't know what to make of this newly discovered variety . . . . I think I have already written you, I have seen one copy of this which came from Mr. Pounds about last January or February. It may possibly be a trial or one of those things called 'Pounds stamps' that we have not been able to explain. I am taking the liberty of holding the pair because I wish to study it a little more, especially in connection with the letter of Mr. Pounds that he sent you with yours of May 10. It will take quite a little time to study his letter and prepare a careful answer, and in order to do it well, I would like to hold the pair just mentioned . . . . Would you care to sell one or both of the 25c/10c blue, black surcharge? If so, please tell me the value you place on them . . . . At the moment, I do not feel they are right, but at any rate Mr. Pounds has not explained them and why they differ from his other stamps. Even though I do not believe they are genuine, they would be of use to me in studying Air Mail stamps, so I would buy them at a small price but not at the price of genuine stamps . . . . "

The writer believes that there was sound logic in Luff's remark, " . . . I do not believe they are right." This time Membreño is given the wrong date

*The 1c, 5c, and 10c values of the basic stamps were made in sheets of 100 (10x10); whereas the 20c, 50c and 1 peso values were in sheets of 50 (10x5).

**A pencilled marginal notation by Mr. Luff reads: "This is stupid. If part of a setting of 12 was printed on two or three stamps, they could be plated. To 'plate' a surcharged stamp is to determine its position in the setting."

that the other copy was acquired by Ustariz from Pounds. As Membreño was aware that counterfeits flooded the market early in 1927, the mere mention of this date to him connoted illegitimacy. Despite this suggestion, coupled with Mr. Luff's opinion that the pair might not be genuine, Membreño's conviction that it was good remained unshaken.

On June 6, 1927, Membreño wrote to Mr. Luff:

> "I think you have forgotten to return the copy of the air mail error, 25c/10c (black), as I didn't intend selling those copies . . . . "

From Membreño to Mr. Luff, June 16, 1927, the following appears:

> "I received yours dated May 31 . . . . I understand you are holding the pair of 25c/10c airpost stamp. I've discovered another copy, new, in a collection album and I've done my best to find any difference between it and the genuine 25c/1c and I can't see it, having examined it with a strong lens and measured it (the surcharge) to the best of my ability. Besides, it doesn't have the questionable 'clear' surcharge, being apparently a genuine surcharge come from the first blurred printing of the Air Post stamps. If I can talk to its owner, I'll gladly send it to you for inspection."

In the writer's opinion, "another copy in a collection album" that Membreño mentions sounds like a ruse to pry the 25c/10c stamps away from Luff.

On June 30, 1927, Membreño wrote to Mr. Luff:

> "You are holding the 25c/10c dark blue about which you haven't said the last word: that pair of stamps came in a bunch of 16 stamps which I sent you from Pespire and which, happily, didn't have any guarantee (?) mark. (I understand that Mr. Pounds' guarantees must be taken *cum granum saltis)*... You returned 14 of them, declaring they were genuine: anyway, should the 25c/10c be genuine or not, I do not want to sell them as I need the pair for my collection, but I will get you one copy that I spotted in a friend's collection."

Mr. Luff replied to Membreño on July 25, 1927 as follows:

> "In your letter of June 30, you insist that I return that pair of 25c/10c blue, and I am doing so. I note that you will get me a copy that you have seen in a friend's collection. I would like to have it though I do not care to pay an extravagant price for it. I have not been able to make up my mind what the stamps are. I cannot plate these with any original or counterfeits that I have, but there are so many counterfeits that it is difficult to tell anything. I have four settings of the 25c/1c and I don't know how many other things."

At last, Mr. Luff returned the 25c/10c pair, hoping that Membreño might yet be influenced to sell it to him. It is difficult to believe Mr. Luff lent much credence to Membreno's tale of the "other copy."

Knowing that the surcharges on the Ustariz single copy and the Membreño pair were genuine, Mr. Luff was desirous to learn if this variety was a "trial printing" or something that had been distributed to and sold by the post offices. As a "trial printing," in the true sense of the expression, it would not constitute anything more than an essay. *But if regularly sold for air mail use, the variety was entitled to a catalogue listing.* No one could solve the problem better than the printer, himself, Mr. Luff logically concluded. Whereupon, he wrote to Karl Snow on August 6, 1927, requesting some general information. Also, in his letter was enclosed a separate sheet listing fifteen questions.

On August 24, 1927, Snow replied to Mr. Luff. He returned the question sheet with his answers. Those relating to the 25c/10c variety were:

*Luff's question No. 12.* I have seen three copies of the 10c dark blue surcharged '25c' in black, like setting B. They seem to be genuine. Do you know them?

*Snow's answer.* *Yes.*

*Luff's question No. 13.* Were they printed in error?

*Snow's answer.* Was trying the ink.

*Luff's question No. 14.* Were they a trial printing?

*Snow's answer.* Was trying the ink.

*Luff's question No. 15.* Can you say if any were ever used in the air mail service?

*Snow's answer.* I suppose they were. They went in with the rest.

According to the record, Snow now reverses his opinion that the 25c/10c variety is not genuine, as expressed in his letter of April 18, 1927, wherein Morgan informed Ustariz that Snow could not remember any such stamp. Now what changed Snow's memory? At any rate, we now have Snow's latest version as compared with Pounds' contention that the 25c/10c "was one of those odd stamps that got in with the one cent ones which were raised to 25 cents in the first printing."

Mr. Luff now awaited a reply from Membreño in answer to his letter of July 25, when he had returned the pair of 25c/10c stamps. However, as no word arrived, Mr. Luff wrote him on November 7, 1927:

"I think there were one or two things in my recent letters that you have not answered. And how about the 10c dark blue, surcharged 25? You wrote me that you knew a collector who had a copy and that you thought you could purchase it for me. I shall be glad to hear something further about it."

On November 24, 1927, Membreño acknowledged Mr. Luff's letter of November 7 but made no reference to the specific questions relating to the 25c/10c. On November 30, 1927, Membreño wrote again to Mr. Luff, the following part being the most important:

"Due to an accident, I practically lost all of my stamps, some days ago. I'll have to start again or quit."

On December 2, 1927, Membreño, in a postscript to his letter to Mr. Luff wrote:

"My two 25c/10c blue airmails were lost."

So finally, after a lapse of five months, Membreño acknowledges receipt of the air mail pair by breaking the disheartening news that it is lost. No mention whatever, is made of the other single copy that was, supposedly, in a friend's collection, and which Membreño had promised to try to secure. Mr. Luff replied to Membreño on December 19, 1927.

"I am in receipt of your letter of Nov. 30, in which I find one very unpleasant paragraph, 'Due to an accident, I practically lost all my stamps, some days ago. I will have to start again or quit.'

"I regret very much to hear this bad news. You do not say if the stamps were stolen, burned or whatever happened and whether there's a possibility of your recovering them. I certainly hope you have not lost them all without any chance of recovery."

Mr. Luff wrote to Membreño on December 30, 1927, acknowledging his letter of December 2:

> "I regret that you have lost so many fine things from your collection and hope that you can get many choice items to help make a new collection."

By "fine things" Luff probably had in mind that pair of 25c/10c, black surcharge, that he had returned to Membreño a few months after failing to effect its purchase.

The next reference to a 25c/10c variety that this writer encountered is in a letter dated April 30, 1930, from Mr. Luff to Sr. Ustariz, expressing thanks to the latter for his note of the 16th. Unfortunately I have no copy of this letter of the 16th. But that of April 30, reads:

> " . . . Returning to stamps of the first air mail issue, you wrote me several months ago that you wanted to dispose of your holdings of these stamps. I gave your letter to our manager, Mr. H. M. Clark, who tells me he wrote you saying he would be interested in the lot and asking you to let him see or know what you had for sale and your prices for it. He has not, however, had any answer from you. Did you receive his letter and did you reply to it? There seems to be a good deal of interest in air mail stamps just at present and it is probable that if you care to sell your lot, we would like to buy it.
>
> "Referring to the pair of 25c in black on the 10c dark blue, I remember having seen them but don't recall the name of the owner. In fact, had anyone else asked me the question, I would have said they belonged to yourself. I have a great many memoranda from various places about the first issue of the air mails, made at various times when I was studying them, and these 25c on 10c may be noted somewhere. It is difficult to know where to look for it. I will try to do so when I get a little time. Just at present, I am badly rushed with work on the Journal and the next edition of my Catalogue. I am certain that I could be quite sure about those two stamps if I had them again. There were so many settings of the surcharge 'Aero Correo' and still more of the addition of the figures '25' and two square blocks that were supposed to fall over the original value, that it requires a lot of work to locate them. I think I have in my reference collection either nine or ten settings of the '25', most of them completely restored but a few only in part. All of these things were made by Mr. Snow. One setting on the original order and others on subsequent orders from Dr. Pounds, were made after the air mail service had been discontinued. Our feeling is that the latter lot may only be termed 'official imitations', as they were never used for postage and there was no air mail service by which they could be used.
>
> "I had the pleasure of meeting your friend, Mr. Morgan, the air pilot, here in New York and would like to have seen more of him because he gave me some very useful information. I persuaded the Scott Stamp & Coin Co. to buy a nice lot of the air mail stamps from him, on which they made a reasonable but satisfactory profit. Since we have sold out, collectors have been very much interested in those stamps and have kept pushing up the prices. I wish Mr. Morgan had them back for, to-day, we could pay him more than we did and also make more for ourselves, so both parties would be benefited . . . . "

Commenting on the above, I would imagine that Mr. Luff was surprised that Sr. Ustariz should mention the pair of 25c/10c. How did he come to know of it? Perhaps this could be a clue to Membreño's missing pair. Caution was neces-

sary lest Ustariz's suspicion be aroused. Mr. Luff was anxious to see this lot of stamps because possibly it contained the valuable pair of 25c/10c or perhaps some of the other rare varieties purchased by Scott in the Morgan parcel. Mr. Luff presses Ustariz for a sale, hoping to duplicate, to a degree, the "reasonable but satisfactory profit" realized from the purchase of Morgan's stamps. *Luff's appraisal of this profit is, to my mind, one of the philatelic understatements of this century.*

## Another Copy Discovered

A new development came with a letter dated June 3, 1930, addressed to Mr. Luff from H. A. Robinette, at that time a well-known stamp dealer in Washington, D. C., reading:

> ". . . . I am enclosing herewith a Honduras air mail surcharged '25 on 10' blue. This came to me with a small collection of these stamps which are undoubtedly genuine and the original owner claims to have bought them all, right at the postoffice in Honduras. I have compared the surcharges with No. 409 (C10) which is the only one identical thereto and it measures exactly. I would appreciate it very much if you could give me any information as to this particular stamp, as I am of the opinion that it is absolutely genuine."

Now another "Black" Honduras (C12) has appeared and this one reputedly purchased at a post office!

On June 9, 1930 Mr. Luff replied to Mr. Robinette:

> "Your letter of the 3rd reached me on Thursday last, the 5th. I didn't have time at the office to go carefully into the matter of the Honduras air mail stamp, 25c on 10c dark blue, so I took it home, together with my reference material, to give it careful examination.
>
> "Some years ago I paid a lot of attention to these first issue air mail stamps of Honduras and I used up a lot of time, eyesight, and money, in looking them up. I was trying to build up settings by means of pairs and blocks and found it difficult. I finally completed it and then, of course, had the opportunity to buy most of the things in unbroken sheets of twelve, which I promptly did. In all my searching, I only saw one pair of the 25c on 10c dark blue and that was shown me as being a trial printing and not as an issued stamp. I may add that when these stamps made their appearance, a correspondent in Honduras sent me a set of single copies together with an official statement as to the various stamps issued and the quantities of them. Another correspondent sent me a set of blocks of four which he stated was complete. Neither man showed me or made mention of the 25c on 10c. I have had an active correspondence with both of them ever since that time and with the first man did a great deal of studying of the issue and the settings. So far as I can recall, neither of them ever mentioned the 25c on 10c, so I infer it was not known to them.
>
> "There were two original settings of the 25c and no less than five settings among the official imitations. In explanation, I would say that after the airplane crashed, and the service had come to an end, collectors were asking for these stamps, and a year or more later, the manager of the post, wishing to have something to sell, ordered new printings of the various surcharges, but all these were from quite new settings of nine instead of twelve. Most people call them reprints or even counterfeits, but they certainly were never placed in issue. I have compared your stamp with the various set-




Fig. 6 (Left) The famous copy from the Matthews collection that was bought on February 27, 1961 by Raymond Weill at the F. W. Kessler auction in New York City for $24,5000.00. (Right) Photo of this copy with the color of the basic stamp filtered in order to better show the surcharge. (Photographs by courtesy of The Philatelic Foundation, New York, N.Y.)

tings in my reference collection and I cannot locate it in any of them, so I can conclude that it belongs to the so-called trial printing and was never placed in issue.

"Now, having condemned your stamp to this extent, I will say that if at any time you decide to sell it as a trial printing or essay, I shall be pleased to have you quote me your price for it, as I would be interested in it for my reference collection. You may think this action is not entirely ethical and, of course, you are not compelled to accept my conclusion or sell it based on that idea. Please find your stamp enclosed."

The above letter indicates to me that Mr. Luff agreed that the Robinette single had a genuine surcharge. Therefore, it is the writer's belief that it belongs in the same exclusive category as the Ustariz single and the Membreño pair. It appears that Robinette did not contact Mr. Luff again on the matter, at least I have no records.

Although I do not possess nor have seen correspondence to prove it, I am certain that upon reading Mr. Luff's letter, Mr. Robinette logically contacted another leading air mail stamp dealer, the late Mr. Nicolas Sanabria, and eventually sold him the stamp. Mr. Sanabria held the stamp for a while because he believed that Mr. Luff owned a similar copy and might decide to give the variety catalogue recognition. As Mr. Luff made no move in that direction, despite some likely prodding by Mr. Sanabria, the latter finally, in the early 30's, sold the stamp to Mr. F. W. Kessler, another well-known New York air mail dealer, who, at that time was scouring the air mail stamp market for rarities in behalf of his client, Dr. Philip G. Cole. This Robinette single was sold to Dr. Cole. It was shown in his grand award exhibit at the 1936 TIPEX in New York.

Returning to Sr. Ustariz, he had received Luff's communication of April 30, 1930, evidencing a strong interest to purchase his stamps. Ustariz had learned that his friend, Dr. Paz Baraona, ex-President of Honduras, contemplated a trip to Europe via New York, and arranged for him to deliver the stamps in person to the Scott Company to possibly effect a sale. Accordingly, on August 4, 1930, Dr. Paz Baraona called upon the Scott Company, accompanied by Messrs. Altschuler, and Zepati, and negotiated a deal for the Ustariz stamps, selling them for $1,900.00 The lot comprised:

1-25c/20c blue surcharge
1-25c/1c black surcharge
1—20c aero correo black overprint
61—5 and 10 centavos values
1—block of 6 of 20c tete-beche
5—25c/1c chocolate
1—block of 12 of 20c aero correo black. One of this block of 12 the AFRO variety.
1—AFRO variety of 20c aero correo black overprint.
30—10c aero correo

Also included was a cover (Fig. 7), which will be discussed in detail later on.

## "The Great Discovery"

Out of the clear, on September 24, 1938, the discovery of a cover (Fig. 7) bearing a 25c on 10c, black surcharge, was announced on a radio broadcast from New York, Station WEAF and the NBC—Red Network, under the auspices of the National Federation of Stamp Clubs. In the October 8, 1938 issue of "Stamps" newspaper an article written by Prescott Holden Thorp was titled, "The World's Rarest Air Mail Stamp", illustrating a cover captioned "Recently Discovered Cover Bearing Neatly Tied-on 'Black' Honduras Stamp (Scott No. 410C)." This article is quoted:

"Ask any well informed collector to name the world's rarest and most valuable air mail stamp and the chances are he would answer "the 'red' Honduras"—meaning the five centavo light blue of 1925 surcharged in red "Aero Correo" (Cat. No. 402d).

"But he would be wrong.

"The rarest air mail stamp, indeed, one of the top ranking stamps of all time, is not the 'red' but the 'black' Honduras, the 25c on 10c dark blue stamp of the first issue surcharged in black (Cat. Scott No. 410C), Air-mail Cat. No. 15.

"There are eight copies known to exist of the red surcharged stamp, all unused. Because they were known to have been purchased at the Post Office the STANDARD CATALOGUE OF AIR POST STAMPS, when published by the Scott Stamp & Coin Co., carried a statement by the late John N. Luff which read:

"In the first group of surcharges, there were two trial printings; the 5c light blue surcharge in red, and the 10c dull blue surcharged '25' in black. Of the former at least one sheet was sent to a post office and sold there. The latter is not known to have been put in use."

"In accordance with this thought the Air Post catalog while published by the Scott Company listed the red surcharge (No. 402d) but did not list the black "25" surcharge on the 10c dark blue stamp.

"Now there comes to light a cover, flown from Tegucigalpa to Puerto Cortez in May, 1925, and among the several stamps to pay the necessary postage, neatly tied on, is of the black "25" on 10c blue stamps!

"When shown to the Scott Company the last doubt which existed was removed and the so-called "trial printing" was given its rightful place in the catalog being assigned number 410c in the current edition of the Standard Postage Stamp Catalog. (This is a major listing, the prefixed letter was used so as not to disturb the existing numbers previously assigned to Honduras air post stamps).

"And how many of these "black" (the stamp is destined to be known

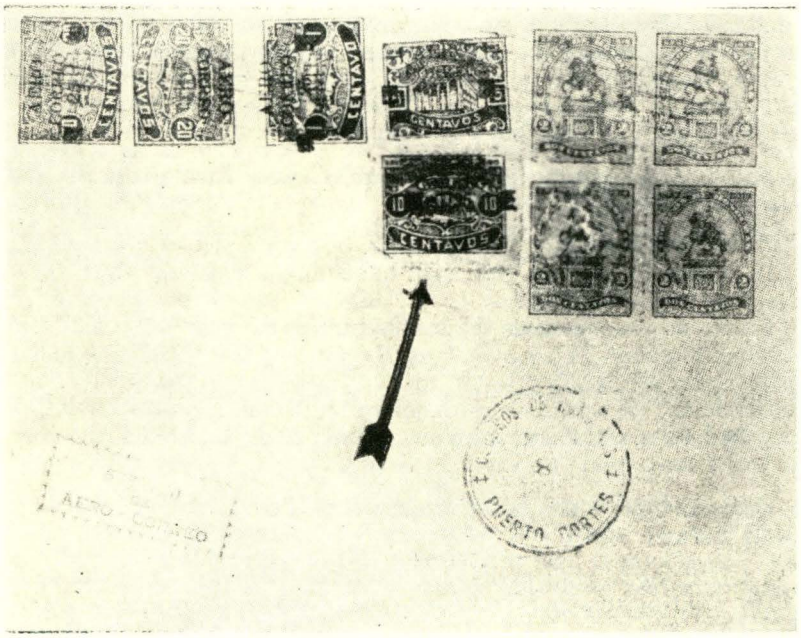



Fig. 7. The cover illustrated in the "Stamps" article of October 8, 1938 by Prescott Holden Thorp.

by this sobrique), Honduras air post stamps are known to exist?

"Exactly two!

"One, an unused copy which reposes in the collection that won a Grand Award at the TIPEX in 1936.

"The other, a used copy tied on cover which has recently been discovered. In the writer's opinion the copy on cover is the most important and desirable philatelic piece ever discovered. Until its existence became known experts would always have held divided opinions on the subject of "trial printings" of this issue. The cover is indisputable evidence that this stamp was issued, and, what is more, was actually used in the service for which it was issued.

"Ponder what would happen if a 1c British Guiana were to be discovered tied on cover and you will begin to appreciate the reason why the announcement of the "black" Honduras cover has electrified the air mail collector's world.

"A new and brilliant star has been added to the diadem so proudly displayed by Air Mail Philately."

"(Editor's Note: The announcement of the discovery of this copy of the "Black" Honduras was first made on the broadcast of the National Federation of Stamp Clubs over Station WEAF and the NBC-Red Network, on Saturday, September 24, 1938.)"

The Scott Stamp & Coin Company, shortly after the publication of the above article in "Stamps", received a letter dated November 5, 1938, from Sr. Ustariz, then in Hammond, Louisiana:

"On my return from Paris, having arrived in your city on the 'Normandie', September 26, I reached New Orleans on the 30th of the same month. During my stay here I met a friend of mine living there and who is a collector and he handed me the magazine of philately, "Stamps" is-

sued on October 8, 1938, that has interested me very much. Please take note of the contents of the enclosed copy of your original letter dated April 30, 1930, signed by the late John N. Luff and let me know, if you please, what you have to say about the 'World's Rarest Air Mail Stamp' mailed from Tegucigalpa, to whom . . . . in Puerto Cortes?''

Mr. Hugh M. Clark, for the Scott Publications, Inc., wrote Sr. Ustariz on November 14, 1938:

''Your letter of Nov. 5th has been received. I had not read the article by Mr. Thorp in the Oct. 8th issue of 'Stamps Magazine' but have done so since your letter arrived.

I take it you question the status of this 25 cent on 10c Honduras air mail that has been listed by me as No. 410c in the Catalogue and it would appear from Mr. Luff's letter to you dated April 30, 1930, that he also questioned it. When these were submitted to me recently I felt their regularity had been satisfactorily proven, but would be glad to be corrected if you feel I have made an error in listing . . . ''

On November 20, 1938, Sr. Ustariz wrote Thorp, care of ''Stamps Magazine,'' New York:

''Referring to your article published in ''Stamps'' magazine of October 8, 1938, relating to airmail stamp — the rarest in the world — I am sorry to inform you but it is all a 'fake', as I have the necessary proofs to confirm what I say.''

Thorp replied to Sr. Ustariz on November 23, 1938, but I have no copy of this letter. However, Ustariz answered Thorp on November 29, 1938, from New Orleans:

''Your letter of Nov. 23rd just reached me here this morning.

''I expect to be in your city about the 10th of next month and will give you all the information about that famous cover. In the meantime please take note of the copy of original letter that I received from Mr. Hugh M. Clark of the Scott Publications Inc. The original cover belonged to me as well as the 25cts. on 10 cts. blue, but it is not in the way I sold it, as far as all the stamps on it, some were added to it later and they made a 'mess' of it.''

On December 3, 1938, Thorp wrote to Sr. Ustariz making an appointment to meet him in New York. Sr. Ustariz describes the meeting in an article he wrote for the November 1941-January 1942 ''Revista Filatelica Centroamericana'' published in Guatemala, as follows:

''We met in New York early in the month of December, some three weeks later. An appointment was arranged and a meeting held between Mr. Thorp, Mr. Emil Breuchig and myself at Breuchig's office, Room 610, 522 Fifth Avenue. I explained to these gentlemen the erroneous remarks in the 'Stamps' article with respect to the stamp, and that it lacked value philatelically according to Mr. Luff's letter of April 30, 1930. Mr. Thorp then arranged an appointment with Mr. Clark at his office, 1 West 47th Street, and here I repeated what I had stated in Breuchig's presence, pleading with Mr. Clark in the hope that my remarks would induce him to correct the mistake.''

Despite Ustariz's pleading, it appears that neither Clark nor Breuchig took any action, and so the matter rested.

On October 27, 1939, the collection of Dr. P. G. Cole was sold at auction by Fred W. Kessler. Quoting from a resumé of the sale, as reported in the stamp papers, it read:

> "One of the two known mint copies of the Honduras 25 centavos on 10 cent dark blue air mail stamp of 1925 was sold for $5,300 to the Economist Stamp Company at the concluding sale of the famous airmail collection of Dr. Philip G. Cole of Tarrytown, N. Y. . . . at the Collectors Club of New York . . . The air stamps of Honduras proved the stellar attractions in the competitive bidding by collectors and dealers . . ."

"The American Magazine" of July, 1941, contained a story by Emil Breuchog, "A FORTUNE IN THE MAIL" which stated:

> "One of the most precious stamps in the world to-day is the 'Black Honduras', an airmail printed in 1925 and currently quoted at $15,000.00."

Sr. Ustariz, now at Puerto Cortes, on June 26, 1941, wrote Mr. Clark of Scott Publications, Inc.:

> "I have just read in 'the American Magazine' for the month of July, the very interesting article, 'A Fortune In The Mails' by Mr. Emil Breuchig. You know the proverb, 'He who laughs last, laughs best.' From the time of my return here, I have been busy gathering material, proofs, etc. . . . ' for the booklet that I am going to have printed in Guatemala City, telling the whole truth about the famous AIRMAIL issue of Honduras 1925. Those 9,000,000 collectors will surely get the surprise of their lives, as well as the other millions of Latin Americans, when they know how they have been duped. I am enclosing you 2 photos of Mr. Luff's letter that he wrote me April 30, 1930 . . . . You shall very likely take your vacations sometime this coming month. I think it would be very convenient for you to take a little trip to Guatemala City, if you have not done so before. I intend to take residence over there next month and will send you my address."

On July 10, 1941, Sr. Ustariz wrote to Mr. Clark in Spanish, which the writer translates as:

> "I confirm my letter from Puerto Cortes of June 26th last. I do not care to go into details on the subject of the stamp to which I made reference. As I stated in my previous letter, I have all the proof necessary on the subject to show the entire transactions and that those connected therewith did not act in good faith. For this reason, I kept Mr. Luff's letter. Based on the quotation in your catalogue, I expect that to be, for the time being, the value to place on the stamp, namely $15,000.00 This stamp is, moreover, my property, and is valueless, as you well know, without my opinion as to its genuineness, and with that not withheld to increase its value from day to day, I, for this reason would be agreeable to make a settlement as follows: That the one now in possession of this stamp pay me $7,500.00 by the 31st of this month to terminate this matter to my satisfaction, otherwise I shall be obliged to resort to the means indicated in my letter of June 26, 1941."

With no reply forthcoming from Clark to the above letter, Sr. Ustariz authored an article for the "Revista Filatelica Centroamericana", the official magazine of the Guatemala Philatelic Society, in the issues of August-October 1941 and November 1941-Jaunary 1942. This story, titled, *THE TRUTH CONCERNING THE 1925 AIR MAILS OF HONDURAS"* is written in Spanish and is so lengthy that only his important comments relevant to the 25c on 10c,

(C12) will be given here. Ustariz concluded that inasmuch as Mr. Luff never catalogued the 25c on 10c variety during his lifetime, it is not a genuinely issued stamp, that the cover illustrated in "Stamps" magazine of October 8, 1938 is a fraud and should not be the basis of proof for Clark's acceptance of C12 as an issued variety. To confirm his opinion regarding the illegitimacy of the cover he stated:

1. It shows no address of sender or addressee.
2. There is no cancellation indicating from whence it was sent.
3. The regular postage stamps are of an issue that was invalidated in 1924, the year prior to that of the air service.

The entire article is a scathing denunciation of the Scott Company and Mr. Clark, demanding that the listing of the 25c on 10c variety be withdrawn from the catalogue.

### The Afteract

Despite the accusations and denouements of Sr. Ustariz, the 25c on 10c dark blue, black surcharge variety continues to be listed by both the Scott and Sanabria catalogues. Here is its history in both catalogues. My thanks to Henry M. Goodkind who compiled this data from The Collectors Club Library.

| *Edition* | *Scott* | *Value* | *Sanabria* | *Value* | *No. Issued* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1961 | C12 | $17,500.00 | | | |
| 1960 | C12 | $17,500.00 | 14 | $30.000.00 | 2 |
| 1959 | C12 | $17,500.00 | 14 | $30,000.00 | 2 |
| 1958 | C12 | $17,500.00 | | | |
| 1957 | C12 | $10,000.00 | 14 | $25,000.00 | 2 |
| 1956 | C12 | $10,000.00 | | | |
| 1955 | C12 | $10.000.00 | 14 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1954 | C12 | none given | 14 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1953 | C12 | none given | 14 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1952 | C12 | none given | | | |
| 1951 | C12 | none given | | | |
| 1950 | C12 | none given | 14 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1949 | C12 | none given | | | |
| 1948 | C12 | none given | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1947 | C12 | none given | | | |
| 1946 | C12 | none given | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1945 | C12 | none given | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1944 | C12 | $10,000.00 | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1943 | C12 | *$10,000.00* | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1942 | C12 | *$10,000.00* | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1941 | C12 | *$10,000.00* | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1940 | C12 | none given | 15 | $15,000.00 | 2 |
| 1939 | 410c | none given | 14(410c) | none given | 12 |
| 1938 | 410c | none given | 15 | $ 6,500.00* | 12 |
| 1937 | Not listed | | 15 | $ 4,000.00* | 12 |
| 1936 | Not listed | | 14 | $ 4,000.00 | 12 |

Scott's first listing in their regular 1938 edition is proof that Mr. Clark decided to recognize the variety in the spring of 1937, when that edition was being made up, Mr. Luff, though inactive, was yet living and doubtless aware of

*Prices are for both unused and used.

Clark's decision. Mr. Nicolas Sanabria had acquired the rights to "the Scott Air Mail Catalogue" sometime around 1935 and promptly listed the variety in his first (1936) edition. Foreign catalogues such as Gibbons, Yvert, Champion, Silombra, and Michel have never listed this stamp for some unknown reason.

### The Mystery Of The Second Copy

Now this chronicle reaches January 1953, when Mr. Goodkind and this writer, by coincidence, began to inquire into the status of this mysterious "Black" Honduras. During mid-January 1953, the writer wrote Mr. Hugh M. Clark for information about C12 and received his reply by a letter of January 30:

> "Now as to that Honduras C12 . . . . I well remember that Luff could not satisfy himself that the thing was kosher but I do not remember the details as to why. After Luff's death Sanabria and Breuchig yammered at me so much and so long and with so many letters and statements that I must have felt convinced that it was worthy of listing, but for the life of me I cannot recall the details. I know that I never liked the thing nor did I feel at all happy about it . . . . I was under the impression that there was only one copy known, but evidently I am wrong."

Searching for further information, I wrote Mr. F. W. Kessler on January 27 and received this reply, dated February 3, 1953:

> " . . . Regarding the Honduras C12. I understand that there are two copies in existence. One of them was owned by Dr. Cole and when I sold his collection it was purchased by Economist Stamp Company for Mr. Oscar Lichtenstein, who is still the owner of this stamp. Regarding the other copy, I am now quoting from very vague recollections. The late Emil Breuchig had this stamp at one time, and if my memory serves me correctly, it was a used copy on a postcard or envelope. He showed it at that time to the late Mr. Sanabria as well as myself. I understood that Mr. Breuchig had sold this stamp. . . . I remember that Mr. Breuchig talked to Mr. Clark, then president of the Scott Stamp Company, about this stamp and it was included in the catalog."

On March 19, 1953, Mr. Kessler wrote me further:

> " . . . Regarding the copies of Honduras C3 and C12, both of these were purchased from Nicolas Sanabria and sold to Dr. Cole."

From the above two letters from Mr. Kessler, we have proof that Mr. Sanabria had acquired a copy of the "Black" Honduras air mail, that he in turn had sold to F. W. Kessler, who sold it to Dr. Philip G. Cole. This undoubtedly was the Robinette copy. At that time, there seems to have been another copy, that was used, which was in the possession of the late Emil Bruechig, a New York City stamp dealer. Despite persistent inquiries over the years on the part of the writer and also Henry M. Goodkind, the whereabouts of this copy has never been disclosed. There will be further comments on this later on.

In response to several letters, Mr. Prescott Holden Thorp replied to me on February 9, 1953:

> " . . . I would advise that both the 'red' and 'black' Honduras came originally from the Scott Company. The "black" came from the Luff collection . . . Some years later, after I had left the Scott Co., Mr. Breuchig acquired the "black" Honduras from the Luff collection and at that time I wrote the article in *Stamps* which you have reference to. I do not know who purchased the stamp (it was on the cover shown in the article), so cannot help you on this score."

Still searching, I wrote to Mr. John W. Nicklin, formerly with the Scott Company, who in 1926 purchased Morgan's lot under Mr. Luff's orders, and a past editor of the Sanabria catalogue. He replied on February 7, 1953:

> "The variety referred to C12 was not included in the original lot I purchased from Morgan. That in itself should not be taken as a reflection on its status.
>
> "In the post-Luff era there was a copy of the stamp, on cover, in the Scott reference collection for a time. I do not believe that this was the 'Ex-Cole' copy. It would be interesting to determine what state the copy now is in."

So the C12 was "on cover" in the Luff reference collection! This indicated that someone may have bought it in that condition. Nicklin's remarks aroused my curiosity. When I wrote him again, he replied on February 26, 1953:

> "The story is just this: The stamp on the cover, was sold; it was later cleaned and regummed and sold as mint."

To my mind, this would indicate that someone had removed the C12 from the cover, removed the cancel and regummed it, so that it could be sold to one who collected only mint stamps.

Now back to Sr. Ustariz. Early in January 1953 I wrote him, hoping, with my fingers crossed, that he was still alive. It was a pleasant surprise to receive his letter from Puerto Cortes, dated Fabruary 8, 1953 written in Spanish:

> "I cannot go into detail at this time in reply to the questions in your letter as I am, at the moment, sick with a cold.
>
> "I send you, however, two photostats referring to the C12 stamp. Indeed I have in my possession all proof necessary to judge the integrity of the Scott Stamp Company.
>
> P. S. Look at "Stamps" magazine, issue of Oct. 8, 1938."

The photostats were of the Luff letter of April 30, 1930. Promptly I replied to Sr. Ustariz, plied him with many questions and in answer received a letter dated March 3, 1953:

> " . . . The paragraph refers to the *one copy* of C-12 *I sent* to Mr. Luff in my letter of March 5, 1927 he did *not return it,* and he did not *pay for it.* He said the stamp was a 'tentative issue' and that it had no value. At the time I took his word for what he said about the stamp. I am sure the attached copy of article refers to the sale of the above mentioned stamp which was mine, which Mr. Luff never returned and kept without any right. How is it that in Scott's Stamp catalog for 1951 the above referred stamp is catalogued, but not *priced?* This in spite of the fact that the stamp had been sold for $5,300 in October 28, 1939.
>
> "I am grateful for your information . . . I would like to extend myself on the subject, but I am quite busy and getting ready for a trip to Europe."

Sr. Ustariz enclosed a copy of the report on the Kessler auction of Dr. Cole's collection. His assumption that the C12 sold at that auction was originally his, is incorrect, it being the Robinette copy. The Ustariz single had gone from Luff to the late Mr. Breuchig, who is alleged to have sold it, but its present owner is unknown.

Under date of April 20, 1953, I received this word from Ustariz:

> "I wish to inform you that I expect to be in New York at the end of this month. And soon as I shall land, I will advise you."

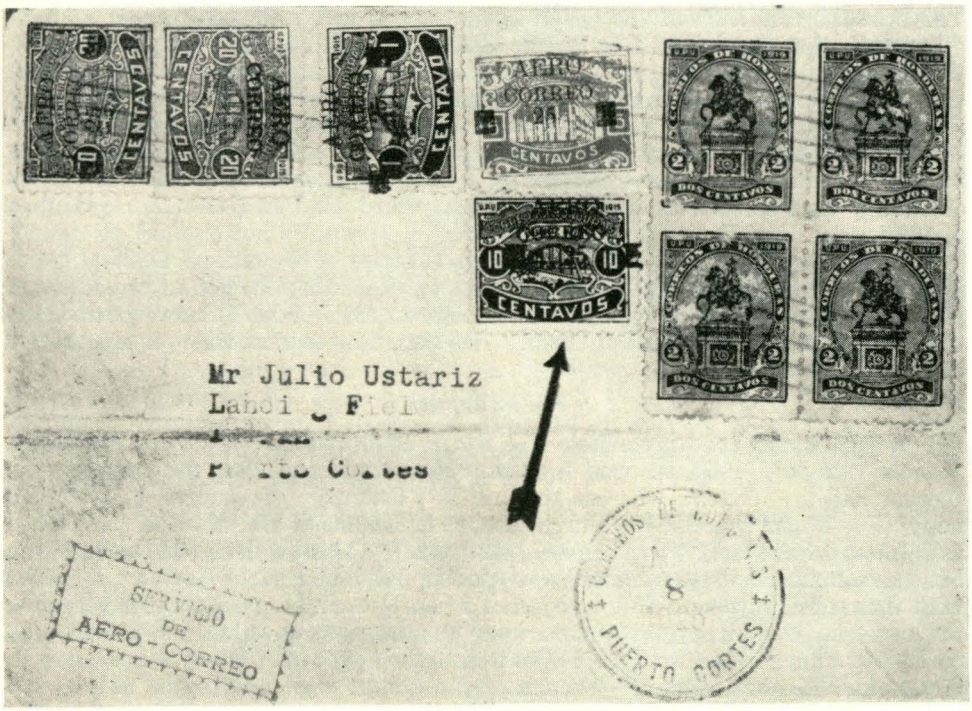



Fig. 8. The cover illustrated by mistake in the article by Irving I. Green in "Aero Philatelists Annals" of July 1954. The arrow points to the rare Black Honduras (Sanabria No. 14, Scott C12). Courtesy of the Philatelic Foundation.

Then came a lettter dated April 29, 1953, written to me by Mr. Pedro Parades, a nephew of Ustariz, studying in New York, advising that Mr. Ustariz had just arrived in that city, was registered at the Hotel Croyden and that he would be pleased to have a personal interview with me in regard to the matters about which we had corresponded. Without delay, I contacted Ustariz by phone, making an appointment for the morning of May 5th. We met as arranged, and for the entire day pleasantly discussed Honduras C12 and many other matters of mutual interest.

### The Ustariz Explanation

The sum and substance of my conference with Ustariz are important. He confirmed that he had met Pounds in Tegucigalpa during March 1926 while on a visit there as a guest of President Paz Baraona. Pounds had a parcel addressed to his wife residing in Brooklyn, New York, which he entrusted to Ustariz to mail when he returned to Puerto Cortes. In appreciation of this, and for his hospitality during the air service, Pounds gave Ustariz a souvenir gift of four airmail stamps and one cover. The four stamps are those enumerated in Ustariz's letter of March 5, 1927 to Mr. Luff, and included the 25c on 10c variety. The envelope was of white paper, greenish inside and upon its face, in the top left-hand corner, were affixed two air mail stamps. The one to the left was a 25c on 20c variety (C13), attached so that its surcharge reads upward. Next to, and to the right of this C13 stamp was a 20c black "aero correo" (C6), so placed that its surcharge read downward. A genuine Pounds cachet was impressed at the left bottom of the face. *All the stamps were uncancelled, and the cover bore no sender's name nor address and was unaddressed.*

This was the condition of the cover when Ustariz had received it from Pounds.

When Ustariz returned to Puerto Cortes he added to the cover a 25c on 1c (C10) stamp, placing it next to and to the right of the already-attached C6, so that its surcharge read upward. He then persuaded the Postmaster at Puerto Cortes to apply a circular cancellation, dated May 8, 1925.* This envelope, with the three uncancelled stamps, the Pounds cachet, and the Puerto Cortes, May 8, 1925, circular cancel was retained by Ustariz until it was included in the lot of stamps that he sold to the Scott Company through Paz Baraona, on August 4, 1930. (See Fig. 7)

Upon reading the article in "Stamps", issue of October 8, 1938, Ustariz immediately recognized his original envelope, although it had been considerably altered. He assumed, and correctly so, that the C12 which it now sported was the copy he had sent to Luff in 1927. His action from that time on is a matter of record.

### The Aftermath

When Ustariz read my article *The Black Honduras* in "the Aero Philatelist Annals" of July 1954, he was furious. He maintained that the cover shown therein had an address, whereas the one in "Stamps" of October 8, 1938 had none (See Figs. 7 and 8). Furthermore, he asserted, the address was faked as it should have read "Sr." instead of "Mr." Also he declared that a seven bar cancellation, not one of five, was used in 1925 in Puerto Cortes. I agreed with these observations. But I objected when Ustariz accused me of addressing the cover in conspiracy with the owner to increase its value, an untrue and ridiculous charge because I never had seen the cover nor knew who owned it. I explained to the "Senor," when my manuscript was sent to the editor, Mr. Henry M. Goodkind, included was the "Stamps" photo Ustariz had given to me in New York on May 5, 1953. The editor, desiring a clearer photo for illustration substituted one that had belonged to Mr. Hugh Clark of the Scott Company and borrowed it from The Philatelic Foundation; he did not notice it was addressed. In fact, it seemed to him to be identical with the one I had sent him. Mr. Goodkind's mistake, I assured Ustariz, was unintentional as both photographs actually pictured the same cover, except for some reason only known to the author of the 1938 "Stamps" article, the illustration shown therein had the address blocked out.

That the last time I heard for Ustariz. Some time later a friend living in Guatemala wrote me that Ustariz was there on vacation and still suspected my implication in the address addition scheme. Some months later I heard Ustariz had died.

### Scientific Analysis

Having presented and commented upon the documentary and historical phase of this stamp, now its technical philatelic aspects will be discussed. The four known copies of C12 will be called "the Robinette single," "the Ustariz single" and "the Membreño pair." The Black Honduras air mail stamp will be referred to as C12, the Scott classification.

### Plating The Overprint And The Basic Stamp

There are two methods of plating for each C12 copy, i.e. both the surcharge and the basic stamp position in the sheet. The former was determined by matching the photographs with a genuine C10 setting, which is the same one

*Ustariz claimed this to be the first day that mail was flown from Puerto Cortes whereas the correct date was May 2, 1925.

used to make the C12. The latter, more difficult, involved knowledge that a sheet is composed of four litho-transfers, (5x5); that each subject in a transfer is related to those similarly located in the other ones; and that all related subjects bear similar primary flaws but dissimilar secondary ones.

The plating results showed "the Robinette single" to be surcharge position 1, basic stamp position 40; "the Ustariz single" surcharge position 2, basic position 60; and "the Membreño pair" surcharge positions 3 and 4, the basic positions undetermined due to the faded condition of the photograph in the Philatelic Foundation's Reference Collection. (Fig. 5)

Repeated because of its bearing on what follows is a written statement by Pounds. (The parenthetical comments are those added by the author.) "The press we had would only accommodate 12, so we tore the big sheets (10x10) into smaller ones of 12 stamps each (4x3). This left a strip two wide on one side (the left or right side) and one wide on the other (top or bottom)." Applying this explanation we find the Robinette and Ustariz singles, that plated in the sheet of unoverprinted stamps as positions 40 and 60 respectively, located in a right side left-over strip of their sheets. The Membreño pair shows a margin similarity to the Robinette single and may be from the same area.

### Method Of Overprinting And The Quantity Made

There are two theoretical possibilities, one that the C12's were made accidentally, the other intentionally. The former asumes that Snow, the printer, while making the 25c on 1c brown, inadvertently overprinted some 10c dark blue ones left over from the previous 10c printing that became mixed with the 1c stamps. Knowing the surcharge positions on the four C12's, this would indicate that Snow had made the same mistake at least three times, which can be ruled out as rather unlikely.

Therefore, the theory of intention seems more logical. The air mail rate had been established at 25c for each gram or fraction thereof. The 1915 postage issue, that had been given to Snow for surcharging, had no 25c denomination. Consequently, he had to add a "25" to the previous "Aero Correo" overprint and also insert two printing slugs to obliterate the 10c value on the basic stamps. As the 10c dark blue postage stamps were of the same design and size as the 1c brown stamps, he searched through the stock for a small strip, probably a horizontal strip of four, to experiment with this new type of surcharge that was needed to make a 25c denomination. Failing to find a suitable strip, he reconstructed one with two single copies and a pair. He probably joined them together with some type of adhesive paper. The experimental overprinted impression proved satisfactory, although it printed slanted rather than straight. This was due to the press guide pins having been set for overprinting a block of twelve stamps at one time. Having been satisfied with the trial impression, Snow separated the makeshift strip of four, and then proceeded to surcharge the 1c stamps.

It is the writer's theory that the experimental strip of four on the 10c dark blue stamps with this slanting overprint was composed of: 1) the "Robinette single," 2) the "Ustariz single" and 3) the "Membreño pair," because they plate in the established setting of twelve as positions Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. That the pair shows separation (see Fig. 5) at the top indicates to me that this could have occurred after the adhesive paper was being removed by Snow or through much handling during the experimental printing. Furthermore, the writer believes that Snow threw these four trial printed copies in with the supply of the other (1c) stamps as he was overprinting and never paid any further attention to this. Two points support the logic of this theory. First, a printer's primary concern is to complete his order as quickly and efficiently as possible to satisfy his customer, so that he can be paid. Second, Snow in his

letter to Ustariz (Fig. 4) shows that he had not the slightest inkling that the job he was doing on his small press would turn out to be of such great value later on to stamp collectors.

As for the possibility that more than four stamps were used in this trial printing, it seems reasonable to suppose that if more than four copies of C12 existed, they would have appeared on the philatelic market by now, especially because of their extremely high prices since 1957.

## Conclusion

Where are the four copies of C12 at present? The pair that belonged to Membreño vanished after Mr. Luff had returned them to this Honduras specialist. He wrote Mr. Luff that his stamps had been stolen, and nothing further has been heard about them since this 1927 robbery.

The "Ustariz" copy is the real mysterious one. First of all, one recalls how Ustariz explained to the writer its original appearance on a cover. Then comes the "Stamps" article of 1938 when it appeared on an illustrated cover now with Ustariz's name and address (Fig. 8). The writer with the assistance of editor, Henry M. Goodkind, has made many attempts to locate this copy without success. It was reported from reliable sources that the late Emil Bruechig had sold it to his best customer, Dr. Lieb of New York City. The writer directed several letters of inquiry to Dr. Lieb, but none were acknowledged. After his death, his wonderful collection of air mail stamps were sold at auction by John A. Fox of New York, N. Y. Most all the great air mail rarities were in the Lieb collection, including an outstanding section of the 1925 Honduras air mails. *But no C12!* Mr. Goodkind had personally inquired of the late George Sloane, who had appraised the Dr. Lieb collection for the Estate, and he assured our editor that this valuable stamp was not there. Sloane emphatically stated that as, an expert philatelic appraiser, he never would have overlooked such an outstanding stamp.

A report reached me that this "Ustariz" copy may have been sold to a wealthy Mid-Westerner, who collected air mails for a while years ago. But several written inquiries from me to him have remained unanswered.

As for the fourth copy of C12, this is the only one known today (Fig. 6). This article has traced its history. It began, as the writer sees it, when "Doc" Pounds was sorting his own stock of the 1925 air mails. He presented one copy to Ustariz for his favors to him and sold a pair to that great Honduran specialist, Dr. Raul Duron Membreño. The fourth copy probably went with the other stock that Pounds sent to the post offices for sale to the public. Later it came into the possession of the Washington, D.C. dealer, Robinette. He offered to sell it to Mr. Luff, but failed. It was bought by the leading air mail stamp dealer in the United States at that time, Nicolas Sanabria, who, just as Mr. Luff, had seen the great future potentialities in the 1925 Honduras air mails. Sanabria sold it to F. W. Kessler for the Dr. Philip G. Cole collection. In the Kessler 1939 auction of the latter's collection, Mr. Sidney F. Barrett of the Economist Stamp Co., New York bought it for his client, the late Oscar R. Lichtenstein, a famous collector and for many years a Governor of the Collectors Club, New York. Lichtenstein passed away in 1955, and in 1957, Harmer, Rooke & Co., sold his extensive air mail collection at auction. Thomas A. Matthews of Springfield, Ohio made philatelic history when he paid $11,500 for this copy. In 1961 F. W. Kessler began selling the Matthews collection of foreign air mail stamps. The 1957 record price was shattered when Raymond H. Weill Co. of New Orleans, La. paid more than double — $24,500.00. Since Weill is a stamp dealer, one may presume that this copy will eventually go into some famous stamp collection, if this has not already transpired.

**(Continued on Page 151)**

# UNITED STATES

## Wells, Fargo & Co.'s Pony Express Stamps 1861-64

By WINTHROP S. BOGGS

(Continued from Vol. 40, No. 1, Page 32)

### CHAPTER 2

#### The Ten Report Types of the Dollar Denominations

The original engraving or matrix had two characteristics, the first of which was the extension of the bottom frameline beyond the left frame (Fig. 2). This was modified slightly during the transfer to the stone, but evidence of it shows on every subject of the originals, and on three out of the four subjects of each of the reprints. This characteristic is not evident on any of the counterfeits we have seen.

The second characteristic shows that the outside edge of the right frame projects below the bottom frame (Fig. 2). Traces of this can be seen on nearly all of the subjects on the originals and reprints of these denominations. None of the counterfeits seen by us displayed this characteristic.

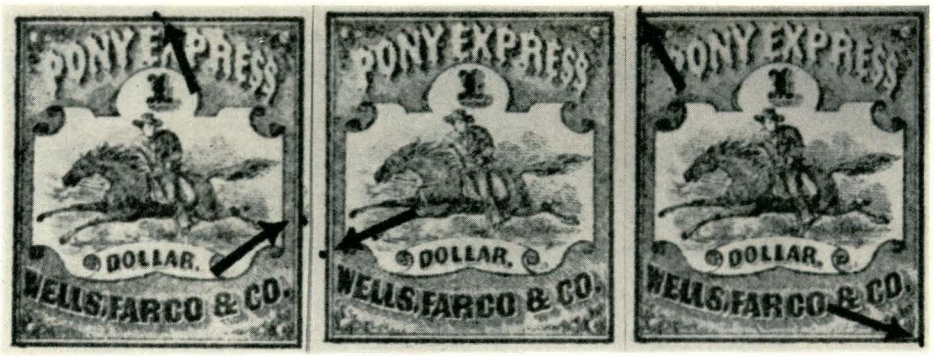
The subjects were laid down on the stone rather close together, the maximum distance between any subject being 1½ mm. Therefore, any specimen having a margin greater than 1½ mm on any side, must necessarily be from the top, bottom, left or right vertical row of the report. Thus in such instances it is only necessary to check two or five types.

As we have seen, the report consists of ten subjects arranged in two vertical rows of five (2x5), and therefore each type occurs four times on the sheet of forty as follows:

| *Type* | *Sheet position* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 1, | 3, | 5, | 7 |
| 2. | 2, | 4, | 6, | 8 |
| 3. | 9, | 11, | 13, | 15 |
| 4. | 10, | 12, | 14, | 16 |
| 5. | 17, | 19, | 21, | 23 |
| 6. | 18, | 20, | 22, | 24 |
| 7. | 25, | 27, | 29, | 31 |
| 8. | 26, | 28, | 30, | 32 |
| 9. | 33, | 35, | 37, | 39 |
| 10. | 34, | 36, | 38, | 40 |

As noted before the "S" of "Dollars" on the $1 was erased on each subject separately, so that there are thus 40 subtypes, depending on how much or little of the removed "S" shows as a stop after "Dollar."

## The Ten $1.00 Types




Type 1. Spot on the right frame opposite the rear hoof of the horse. Spot on the top frame above the "Ex" of "Express."

Type 2. Spot on the left frame just above the "W" of "Wells."

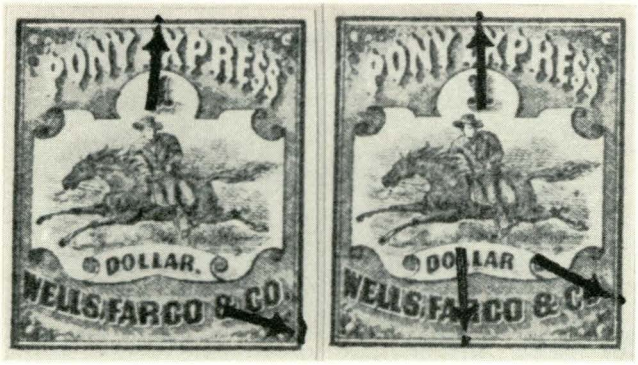
Type 3. Left frame extends slightly beyond the top frame. Right frame extends slightly beyond the bottom frame.




Type 4. Spot on the lower right of "N" of "Pony." Small diagonal spur near left end of bottom frameline. Slight nick in right frame near rear hoof of horse.

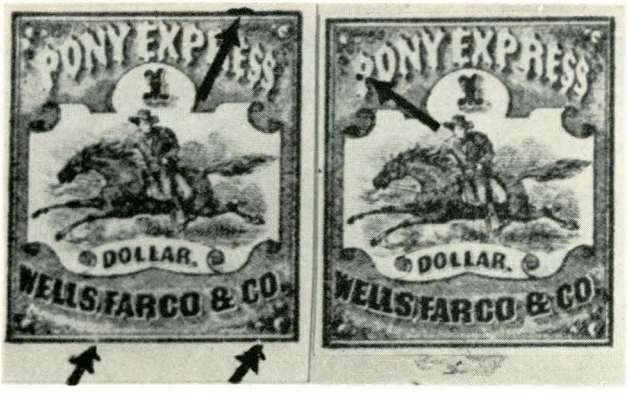
Type 5. Bottom frameline extends beyond left frame. Spot on top frame above "P" of "Pony." Slight blur on top frame above "XPR" of "Express."

Type 6. Large spot on lower right of "N" of "Pony." Spot on lower inner frame below "O" of "Fargo."




Type 7. Right frame shows a bulge at bottom. Spot on top frame above "E" of "Express."

Type 8. Spot on right frame opposite "O" of "Co." Spot on top frame above "E" of "Express." Blur on inner frame below "R" of "Fargo."




Type 9. Slight blur on top frame over "RE" of "Express." Bottom frameline broken below "S" of "Wells," and "Co."

Type 10. Spot on vertical stroke of "P" of "Pony."

## PHILATELIC LITERATURE

**Over the years, the Collectors Club has published numerous Handbooks relating to almost every field of philately. Some have been sold out long ago, now only being obtainable at an auction sale at prices far above their original selling price.**

**See Inside Back Cover for the recently published books.**

## The Ten Types of the $2.00 stamp




Type 1. Two faint parallel lines from the bottom of the "P" of "Express" to the "2."

Type 2. Faint scratch at the upper left corner barely touching the floreate ornament. Tiny spur on the inside of the bottom frameline below the "&," which is continued in Type 4.

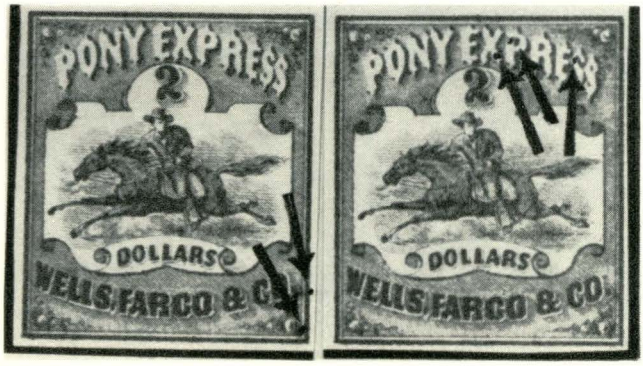
Type 3. A spur on the white bottom frameline below the "A" of "Fargo." A short line just outside the right frame opposite the "S" of "Express," and a tiny dot similarly located on a level with the "S" of "Dollars."




Type 4. Two spurs on the top frameline over the "P" of "Express." A tiny dot on the "P" of "Pony," and another just outside the left frame opposite this letter.

Type 5. Dots and blurs on the "X" — "R" — "SS" of "Express." Nick on the right stroke of "N" of "Pony." Do not confuse with Type 8.

Type 6. "2" is well clear of curved line above it. Minute faint dot ouside of left frame almost at top corner.




Type 7. Faint spot just outside the right frame opposite "O" of "Co." Spur on same frameline opposite lower right floreate ornament.

Type 8. There are spots on the "XP" and first "S" of "Express." Do not confuse with Type 5.



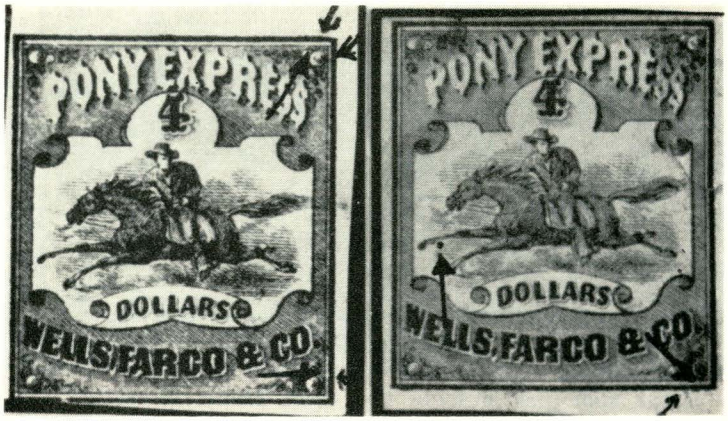

Type 9. "2" is tipped slightly forward. Blur on top frame at upper right corner. Dot on "R" of "Express."

Type 10. A number of blurs on "PONY." Tiny dot on right frame almost at upper right corner.

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**In case of change of address, please notify Secretary, The Collectors Club, 22 East 35 Street, New York 16, N. Y.**

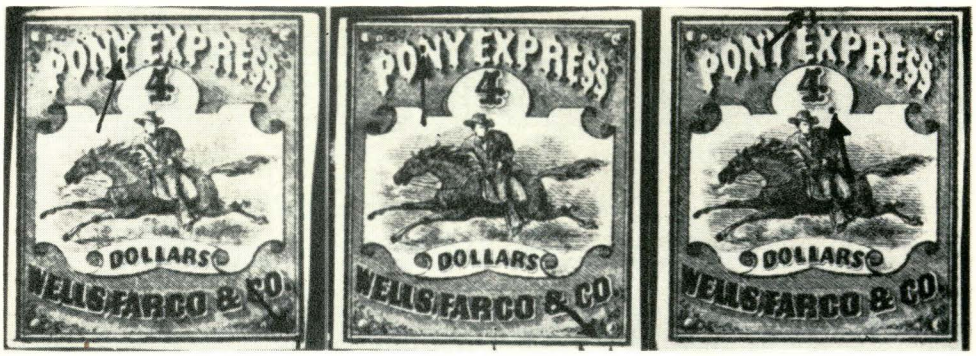
The Ten Types of the $4.00




Owing to the scarcity of this stamp, and the fact that we have not seen any multiple pieces, the arrangement of the types is arbitrary, except in the case of two corner positions, namely, #2, and #10.

Type 2. Top frame becomes thin at upper right giving impression of round corner.
Along the right frame line there are a number of dots, which are apparently traces of a previous transfer.

Type 10. The bottom frameline shows irregularities at the right end. There is a spot below the right foreleg of the horse.




The following seven types are arbitrarily designated, and hence are lettered rather than numbered.

Type A. Dot on "Y" of "Pony." Small spur projects from the bottom of the inside of the right frame.

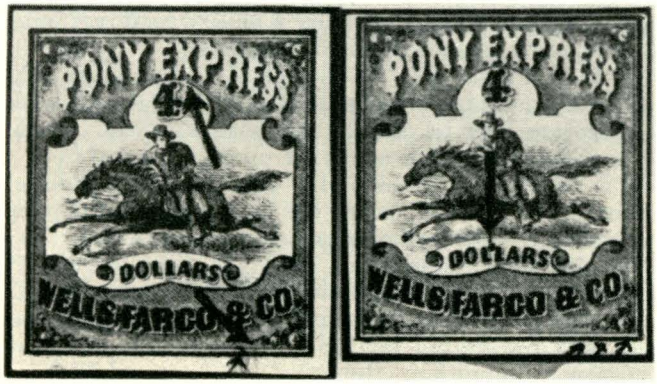
Type B. Dot on "N" of "Pony." Flecks of color below bottom frameline.

Type C. Small spur from top frameline above "EX" of "Express." Spot on outside of top frameline at this point. Spot to right and below "4."




Type D. Small fleck of color on white frame over "X" of "Express." White spot at inside of lower angle of framelines.

Type E. Spot on tail of "R" of "Express." Nick on inner side of right frame at junction with bottom frame.

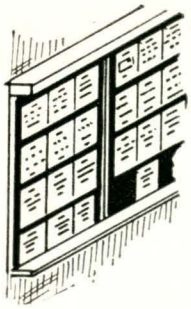



Type F. Blur on bottom frame below "&" of "& Co." Curved line between "X" and "4" broken below "X."

Type G. Lower frame rough at right end and there are minute spots below the frame at this point. Tiny dot between the "LL" of "Dollars" at the top of the left "L."

There remains one more type to identify, and of course, the exact position of the other seven types has to be determined.

**(To Be Continued)**



# THE CLUBHOUSE

Meeting of January 4, 1961

*One Hundred Years of Philatelic Literature*

One hundred years ago, in September 1861, the world's first philatelic book was published. It was entitled, a "List of Stamps" by F. Oskar. It was fitting, then, that our vice president, Mr. Malcolm G. O'Reilly should present a program on philatelic literature marking the centenary of this first publication. Mr. O'Reilly is, perhaps, in a better position to present such a program than most other members of the Collectors Club. In his capacity as Chairman of the Library Committee, he comes in frequent contact with many of the dusty tomes which repose on the library shelves. To his credit, one must say he has apparently done his homework well. The meeting of January 4, 1961 was certainly a very unusual showing of the development of philatelic literature in the past century and a tribute to Mr. O'Reilly's ability to ferret out examples for illustration of the points made in his presentation.

In The Gallic Wars, Caesar tells us that Gaul is divided into three parts or regions. Mr. O'Reilly probably borrowed a leaf from Caesar's book in telling us that philatelic literature may be divided into several parts. Each part or subdivision was then displayed and commented upon.

The *catalog* is perhaps the basis of the entire field of philatelic literature. When first published, the catalog served one extremely useful purpose; it did a great service to philately because it aroused collector interest. In this country, the first Scott catalog was published in 1872. It consisted of but one page, a rather surprising note. The 16th edition comprised 20 pages. This, incidentally, was the first edition to exceed the one page limitation of the first fifteen editions. Stamp catalogs are not the only items which come under the general classification of this sub-division. Included also are exhibition catalogs and auction catalogs. Exhibition catalogs have contributed greatly to the growth of philately. Much valuable information printed in such catalogs, such as the Dollard plates, which are not available in any other publication, make it possible to ascertain the pedigree of many stamps.

*Handbooks or monographs* were next displayed and discussed. These are extremely valuable for philately, and usually represent the work of scholars in specific fields. While this form of philatelic literature has, perhaps, the most lasting quality, many later students have enlarged upon or made discoveries which changed or modified the basic theses of earlier authors. Nevertheless, the handbook forms a point of departure for succeeding students and the basis of most of what has become permanent in philatelic annals.

In Mr. O'Reilly's opinion, *periodicals* are the most fascinating form of philatelic literature in the hobby. It is interesting to note that most of the early periodicals were edited by juveniles, were in very limited issue and were used

mainly as vehicles for facilitating exchanges among individuals. Since the publication of the first periodical in the United States in 1862, this form of philatelic literature has undergone a great change. Mr. O'Reilly sub-divided the general classification—*periodicals*—into four sub-categories which he illustrated the outstanding examples as follows:

*Club organs*

London Philatelist, Collectors Club Philatelist

*House organs*

Mercury Stamp Journal

*Specialist media*

Aero Philatelist Annals, Topical Time, etc.

*Commercial publications*

"Stamps", Linn's, Mekeels, Western Stamp Collector, Weekly Philatelic Gossip

Mr. O'Reilly next discussed another classification of philatelic literature, *memorabilia*... In this category he included broadsides, Post Office reports, Crown Agents' releases, etc. Much useful technical data is found in this type of publication, supplementing, thus, information required for proper understanding in the over-all picture.

In his presentation, Mr. O'Reilly also displayed examples of the Spud papers. These marked a new departure in the literature field in that when a philatelic forgery or fantasy was discussed by the author he placed an actual example on the page itself to facilitate the reader's comprehension. Reference was also made to the Fournier and Sperati imitations and the book published by the British Philatelic Association on the Sperati forgeries after that organization had purchased his material.

Mr. O'Reilly's talk marked a new program departure for the Collectors Club and it is hoped that we shall have an opportunity to have more such programs in the future. *(Philip Silver)*

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## Meeting of January 18, 1961

### *United States Carrier Stamps*

The postman may not always ring twice, but he always carries the mail from the post office to the addressee. 'T'was not always thus; certainly not in the days of the United States Carrier stamps from 1836 to 1863. On the night of January 18, 1961, *Mr. J. William Middendorf II* with a display of twenty frames of carriers' stamps and covers proceeded to explain why.

It all started in 1836, when the Carrier Service of the United States Post Office was operated under the authority conferred upon the Postmaster General by Section 41 of the Act approved July 2, 1836. The adhesive postage stamps issued by the Post Office whether of 1847, 1851 or 1861 merely paid for delivery of mail from a central post office in one city to a central post office in another city. The Carrier Service, authorized by Congress, provided for a fee to be charged for the pickup and delivery of mail within a given city to pay for the operation of the letter carrier department. Carrier rates in the different cities were not affected by any Act of Congress, but were fixed and changed by the Postmaster General under the authority conferred upon him by the Act of 1836. For a large part of the period subsequent to enactment of the law, the rate was 2c, although towards the end it was reduced to 1c. In large communities, where

there was stiff competition with the local posts, the U. S. Carrier rate was 1c. In the smaller places, where people were willing to pay a higher fee for such service, the rate was 2c. Care should be takn not to confuse the carrier service with the local posts. Actually, they were in competition for practically the same service. The real difference was that the usage of Carrier stamps was an entirely official function, inasmuch as they were issued by various postmasters and carriers with the full sanction or at the direction of the Postmaster General of the United States. These postmasters were bonded official government employees. As a matter of fact, after June 30, 1863, when carrier fees were discontinued, all carriers of the United States Post Office were government employees, paid a yearly salary.

In contradistinction, the local posts were a form of private enterprise, their stamps were private emissions, which, in many cases, bore a marked similarity to the Carrier stamps and, in point of fact, the government tried, without much success at first, but eventually did succeed in eliminating the local or private posts by an Act of 1861. Further confusion is added by the fact that many private posts later became bonded government carriers.

"Scott's Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps" indicates that there are both official and unofficial issues of Carrier stamps. In the first category are the "Franklin" and "Eagle" Carrier stamps supplied to the Post Office by the regular postage stamp contractors. In the latter group are the emissions of the individual postmasters in Baltimore, Boston, Charleston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Louisville, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Washington and the New York Carrier stamps, that followed several years after the United States City Despatch Post.

Mr. Middendorf showed the "Eagle" and "Franklin" Carrier stamps in considerable quantity. Very few "Franklin" Carriers are known to exist today, although the original issue is known to have been 310,000. They are found used only in New York, Philadelphia and New Orleans.

The first Carrier stamp was issued in August 1842 by the United States City Despatch Post of New York, which was a successor to the short-lived City Despatch Post, which began operating on February 1, 1842. *The 3c City Despatch Post was the first adhesive stamp known to be issued in the western hemisphere.* Mr. Middendorf showed a First Day Cover of that post. He also showed an extensive collection of U. S. City Despatch covers from their earliest date through their use late in 1846 and its successor post which had by this time returned again to private hands. In addition, he displayed and then passed around the original die of the City Despatch Post stamp which, although cracked, is an important historical item in philately.

Mr. Middendorf's display of Carrier stamps issued by the several postmasters or letter carriers of Baltimore, Boston and the other cities was indeed a rare treat. His extensive collection of covers and stamps included every variety, but the famous Beckmans stamp of Charleston, S.C. Of this latter stamp, only one is known, that on cover. Only twelve cities issued Carrier stamps, although seventy cities had carrier service. Several of the Philadelphia Carrier stamps were interesting in that they were printed on the margins of the 1c postage stamp of 1861.

Beginning in 1856, there began to be used the 1c regular postage stamp for city carrier use. No government record of authorization has been found, but early in that year stamps appeared on covers which were shown by Mr. Middendorf with such usage. A much more common use of the regular postage stamp for carrier service was with the 1c 1857 and the 1c 1861 stamps. Mr. Middendorf displayed covers from approximately twenty cities with carrier markings using the 1c postage stamp from 1856 through 1863.

It was Mr. Middendorf's thesis that the whole field of United States carrier service is one not fully understood by philatelists and yet, in his opinion, it is one of the most interesting in United States philately for several reasons. First, the Carrier stamps were the forerunners to our regular government issues and, second, so little has been written about the field that it is an area where future students of U.S. stamps might devote time with the full expectancy of developing much original information.

The names of the famous collectors of the past, who showed a particular affinity for Carrier stamps, such as Alfred H. Caspary, Arthur Hind, Sir Nicholas Waterhouse, Senator Ackerman and many others, reads as a Who's Who of philately.

Mr. Middendorf paid a well-deserved tribute to the past students, such as John N. Luff, George B. Sloane and Perry, who have done most all of the study that has uncovered the little known about carrier stamps today. Far more must be forthcoming before the story approaches completeness. Mr. Middendorf graciously offered his extensive collection and reference material for study to anyone interested in this field.

We are happy to see Mr. Sidney Hessel in our midst again after an absence of many years. Also Mrs. Middendorf, another wife who does not share her husband's enthusiasm for philately, seemed to follow the speaker's remarks with interest. It was a pleasure to have as our guest, Mr. John Gilbert of England, a member of the Council of the Royal Philatelic Society, London, who graciously brought us the well wishes of his fellow philatelists in Great Britain. At the conclusion of Mr. Middendorf's lecture, our president, Mr. Burghard, asked Elliott Perry if he cared to add any comments and he did. *(Philip Silver.)*

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*At the Board of Governors Meetings held in February and March, 1961 the following new members were elected:*

4773 Wilhelm Schweitzer, Mainz, West Germany. Collects United States, Tibet.
4774 W. J. Connelly, Brooklyn, N.Y. Collects French Colonial Africa, French Congo.
4775 Frederick M. Joseph, New York, N.Y. Collects France, Netherlands New Guinea, Papua, New Guinea.
4776 John A. Knapp, M.D., Garden City, N.Y. Collects U. S. Special Delivery.
4777 David T. Beals III, Kansas City, Mo. Collects 19th Century U. S.
4778 J. Ronald McMurrich, Gananoque, Canada. Collects British No. America.
4779 Peter Holcombe, Caterham, England. Collects Classics to Modern.
4780 F. R. Mayer, Dallas, Tex. Collects Costa Rica, Macao, Orange River Colony.
4781 Marvin I. Levinthal, Philadelphia, Pa. Colects Israel, Siam, Laos, 19th Century United States.
4782 J. C. M. Cryer, Port Lavaca, Tex. Collects, United States, United Nations, British North America, Switzerland.
4783 Harley F. Cope, Jr., Washington, D.C. Collects United States.
4784 Walter E. Goodwin, Dover, N.H. Collects United States, British North America, British Commonwealth.
4785 Lawrence Cake, Washington, D.C. Collects 19th Century United States.
4786 Edward P. Babcock, Wilmington, Del. Collects United States.
4787 Joel W. Scarborough, Lafayette, Calif. Collects United States to 1870, British Empire.
4788 George W. Karl, Rego Park, N.Y. Collects United States.
4789 Hubert Jon Thomas, Philadelphia, Pa. Collects United States, United Nations, Vatican.

# AUDITOR'S REPORT

## THE COLLECTORS CLUB, INC.

## BALANCE SHEET

## DECEMBER 31, 1960

### ASSETS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CURRENT FUNDS:** | | | |
| Cash in Banks | | | |
| Chemical Bank New York Trust Company | $ 1,768.60 | | |
| Seamen's Bank for Savings | 3,187.97 | | |
| Bowery Savings Bank | 727.85 | $ 5,684.42 | |
| Petty Cash Fund | | 50.00 | |
| Due from Advertisers | | 172.42 | |
| Prepaid Insurance | | 568.30 | |
| Deposit with Post Office | | 35.00 | |
| **TOTAL CURRENT FUNDS** | | | $ 6,510.14 |
| **PLANT INVESTMENT:** | | | |
| Real Estate | | $ 69,780.87 | |
| Furniture and Equipment | | 17,502.67 | |
| Library | | 30,293.35 | |
| **TOTAL PLANT INVESTMENT** | | | $117,576.89 |
| **OTHER FUNDS:** | | | |
| House Replacement Fund: | | | |
| Marketable Securities | | | |
| (Market Value $20,794.38) | $21,605.45 | | |
| Cash—Seamen's Bank for Savings | 209.04 | $ 21,814.49 | |
| Theodore E. Steinway Memorial Publications Fund: | | | |
| Cash—Manhattan Savings Bank | | 7,281.33 | |
| Insurance Fund: | | | |
| Cash—Bowery Savings Bank | | 1,000.00 | |
| Life Membership Fund: | | | |
| Cash—Bowery Savings Bank | | 550.00 | |
| **TOTAL OTHER FUNDS** | | | $ 38,656.69 |
| **TOTAL ASSETS** | | | $162,743.72 |

### LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CURRENT FUNDS:** | | | |
| Membership Dues Received in Advance | | $ 519.20 | |
| Federal and State Income Taxes Withheld from Employees | | 155.00 | |
| Social Security Taxes Payable | | 92.74 | |
| Reserves: | | | |
| For Contingencies | $ 1,500.00 | | |
| For Anticipated Street Assessments | 2,500.00 | 4,000.00 | |
| Surplus—Current Funds | | 1,743.20 | |
| **TOTAL CURRENT FUNDS** | | | $ 6,510.14 |
| **PLANT INVESTMENT:** | | | |
| Investment in Plant | | $117,576.89 | |
| **TOTAL PLANT INVESTMENT** | | | $117,576.89 |
| **OTHER FUNDS:** | | | |
| House Replacement | | $ 21,814.49 | |
| J. Brace Chittenden Memorial Fund Marketable Securities | | | |
| (Market Value $9,221.13) | $ 7,701.17 | | |
| Cash—Seamen's Bank for Savings | 309.70 | 8,010.87 | |
| Theodore E. Steinway Memorial Publications Fund | | 7,281.33 | |
| Insurance Fund | | 1,000.00 | |
| Life Membership Fund | | 550.00 | |
| **TOTAL OTHER FUNDS** | | | $ 38,656.69 |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL** | | | $162,743.72 |

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND SURPLUS
## FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1960

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **INCOME:** | | | |
| Membership Dues | | $ 17,129.47 | |
| Interest—Savings Bank Accounts | | 300.64 | |
| Contributions | | 1,825.45 | $ 19,255.56 |
| **OPERATING EXPENSES** | | | |
| Office | | $ 3,679.88 | |
| Club Activities | | 1,698.78 | |
| House | | 6,943.83 | |
| Library | | 2,200.88 | 14,523.37 |
| | | | $ 4,732.19 |
| **COLLECTORS CLUB PHILATELIST** | | | |
| Cost of Publishing | | $ 8,053.73 | |
| LESS: | | | |
| Advertising | $ 3,324.92 | | |
| Subscriptions | 281.50 | | |
| Sales | 142.00 | 3,748.42 | 4,305.31 |
| **EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURES** | | | $ 426.88 |
| **SURPLUS** January 1, 1960 | | | 4,937.75 |
| | | | $ 5,364.63 |
| LESS: | | | |
| Transferred to House Replacement Fund | | | 3,621.43 |
| **SURPLUS** December 31, 1960 | | | $ 1,743.20 |

CHIRNSIDE ROBERTS AND LANGSTON
Accountants and Auditors
380 Madison Avenue
New York 17, N. Y.

March 15, 1961

The Collectors Club, Inc.
New York, New York

Dear Sir:

We have examined the Balance Sheet of The Collectors Club, Inc. as of December 31, 1960 and the Statement of Operations and Surplus for the year then ended and have examined or tested accounting records of the Club to the extent we considered necessary.

The Club does not charge depreciation on the property and equipment nor does the Club record in its accounts gifts other than cash and marketable securities. Except for these practices, the accompanying Balance Sheet and Statement of Operations and Surplus in our opinion present fairly the position of the Collectors Club, Inc. at December 31, 1960 and the results of operations for the year then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Very truly yours,

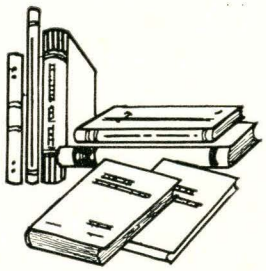
CHIRNSIDE, ROBERTS & LANGSTON

## HONDURAS (Continued from Page 138)

This fourth C12 copy, "the Robinette single," is the only known Black Honduras existing at the present time. Knowing its history, the fact that each successive owner has paid more for it than the previous one, and its $24,500.00 price, it can be called *"a classic,"* even though of the 20th century. This $24,500 auction price is the highest that a single stamp ever brought in America. It is exceeded only by the "British Guiana" price in the Ferrari auction in Paris, France in the 1920's.

The last paragraph in Snow's letter to Ustariz (see Fig. 4) is so significant. Neither he nor Dr. Pounds had the slightest notion in April 1925 that they were producing stamps of such great value. It seems ironic they were primarily interested in establishing and maintaining a successful aviation service; this failed. But as for the air mail stamps made for this unsuccessful venture, that is an entirely different story. The writer closes this story by mopping his brow as he thinks of the unbelievable increment in value of the Black Honduras.

One last word. My thanks to *Henry M. Goodkind* for his encouragement and assistance in preparing this article for publication, as well as his contribution of the Foreword.



# BOOK REVIEWS

*The Philatelic and Postal History of Hong Kong and the Treaty Ports of China and Japan, (plus a Separate 37-page Section, Scarcity and Valuation Guide)* by Colonel F. W. Webb. 400 pages, (11x8½") plus 93 plates of illustrations. Cloth bound. Published by the Royal Philatelic Society, 41 Devonshire Place, London W.1, England. Price £12-12-0 ($35.30)

This Hong Kong book appears to be one of the most attractive philatelic tomes seen in a long time. Weighing close to 4 lbs., at the first glance, anyone seeing it, will be greatly impressed. But mindful of the well-known saying, "You can't tell a book by its cover," what was one's later impression after reading?

This reviewer has had over fifteen years of experience with philatelic writing, editing and publishing. This has caused him to create a mental image of the ideal philatelic handbook. These standards involve the following.

A book must be as complete as possible. First of all, the stamps—their production, preparation, surcharging, printing varieties, paper and postal use—must be described. A section on essays, proofs, trial printings and artist's work is desirable. Postal history must not be omitted, nor sketchily treated. Sufficient historical background on the subject should be included.

Illustrations are a prime requisite in all literature on stamps. Writers should forego those boring, lengthy design descriptions and instead use an illustration. The latter must be a clear reproduction, adequately explained by a caption, while the photo plates should be placed as closely to the relevant text as possible. As for literary style, it need not be as that in a best-seller, but simply clear and concise. The book itself should be printed with a type that is easy on the eyes, and if its production will cause a high price, then the interested buyer's first impression must justify his willingness to make such an expenditure.

Finally, there is one aspect of a book on philately, which arouses strong differences of opinion. One school of thought says that it is imperative to include prices or an indication of value for stamps and covers. Collectors and dealers want to know an item's worth. Since the stamp catalogues do not evaluate much of the material in a specialized philatelic handbook, prices are needed. Others believe that a lavish, philatelic handbook should be free of all commercialism. A good philatelic scholar often is not conversant with up-to-date prices. Furthermore, pricings become outdated within a few years. Thus, a book that is expected to be standard for a long time, should omit prices for this reason. Finally, pricing philatelic material is exceedingly difficult. If one price is far out-of-line, too many tend to become captious in the belief that a book is not good, because one or two prices are wrong.

As this reviewer sees this controversial question of price inclusion or exclusion in a philatelic work, certainly the ideal would demand that a book be as comprehensive as possible. On this score, the inclusion of prices or value guides would be advisable.

Since this Hong Kong book's first impression was so striking, it now seems proper to see how its contents have met the aforementioned standards.

Seventy-six of the four-hundred pages, about 19%, are devoted to the stamps, which make up the first part of this book. This reviewer read this part in the following manner. He remembered that Hong Kong has some scarce stamps, such as the 1882 perforated 12 rose lake, the 96c bistre of 1865, and the 1866 18c lilac, especially unused copies. The errors on the surcharges of the 1880 provisional issue not only are rare, but they have engaged the philatelic expert's attention for some years. All of these are adequately described in this book. As for the surcharges, both the illustrations at the end and the appendices supply useful information. Each issue of Hong Kong, including the more recent ones after 1935, are written up, setting forth many details of interest for the specialist. There is a two-page section on stamp forgeries, well presented in a common sense manner. The 25-page appendix ending Part I on stamps, listing varieties and such other details, show that they were compiled, only after intense study and consultation.

What about the illustrations? They are mostly all clear and in a generous amount. Each important stamp, surcharge setting and many exceptional covers are shown. The illustrations all are grouped at the end of the book on 93 pages. This reviewer's first attempts at their use encountered some difficulties. The illustrations are not chronologically presented nor laid out in any understandable order. The captions are all grouped at the bottom of each page. After a while, however, becoming accustomed to the illustrations' references by the use of the footnotes in the text of the part on stamps, less difficulty was met.

As for the postal history part of this book—well over three-quarters of the entire contents—one has seldom read such a complete presentation. Most all of the illustrations, including maps, are placed near the descriptive text, so that reference to a postal marking is much easier than with the stamps.

This postal history section first treats Hong Kong, next the Treaty Ports, and finally the Ship, Paquebots and Arrival Markings. Each of these three is followed by an appendix replete with vital statistics and a comprehensive checklist. Nothing appears to have been omitted—dates of use, rates, types of markings and all else.

The literary style of this book seems clear and concise, meeting the previously stated standards. The printed type of the book, once again, shows the professional experience of one of the great and oldest publishing houses, Robert MacLehose & Co., Ltd. at the University Press, Glasgow, Scotland.

The separate smaller paperbound booklet with the "Scarcity and Valuation Guide" treats this question with intelligence. First, each listed item is indicated by a scarcity code. For example, "B" listing means from 6 to 10 known. The valuation guide is handled by a clear numerical system, whereby "10 units equal £1." The time and labor consumed on this separate part certainly must have been considerable.

Now, one arrives at the point for rendition of his final overall opinion. This reviewer gives this book a superlative rating. The author and all consultants of this work on Hong Kong and the Treaty Ports have produced a reference work of which they can be proud. All other philatelists, too, should take pride in this book. It can be shown around as a stering example of philatelic achievement. This Hong Kong book can gain respect for philately, even from those "doubting Thomases," who cannot understand why some people waste time collecting stamps. Anyone, conversant with the the arts or sciences, will respect philately when he sees that it can produce a piece of literature such as this. *(H. M. G.)*

*Mexico Postal Issue of 1874-1883 (Hidalgo Heads)* by R. R. Billings, Scarsdale, N. Y. Published privately. 81 pages; 3 illustrations; 54 pages of tables. Cloth binding. Price $6.00.

The title page of this monograph indicates that this is "Official Data as to stamps Supplied to each District during each year, Sales and Returns, plus Information Compiled at to What Exists in a Number of Leading Specialized Collections." The author states that the prime purpose of his book is to present to collectors of Mexico the official data of the Mexican Post Office Department as to the quantities of stamps of each value supplied to the various district offices during each of the fiscal years ending June 30, beginning with 1874 and ending with 1883.

This, Mr. Billings has done admirably and with devotion, completing the basic original knowledge of this issue found in the book (1937) published by Lic. Jose L. Cossio Jr., of Mexico. Further, Mr. Billings sought deeply into other sources for his data, studying existing famous collections, obtaining data from Ruiz Perez, Garcia Larranaga, Col. Hamilton, Calvert Stier, Hugh Birrell and John K. Bash. The balance of his data was finally located in the New York Public Library. In actual practice, the specialist of Mexico, collecting this issue cannot do so without having Mr. Billings' book handy. Due to the system of overprints characteristic of early Mexican postage, the value of the same stamp, but bearing different overprints, can range from possibly one cent to a probable hundred dollars or more. It is thus apparent that knowledge of the number of each stamp issued, with different overprints, is well worth the six-dollar cost of this small monograph.

Here, the expert will find data, carefully collated and highly organized, of each of the many postal districts of Mexico. The specialist will be able to better organize his collection based on the data compiled for each postal zone. The Mexican collector, who collects this issue only incidentally, will find to his surprise that he may discover a scarce stamp in his casual collection due to the break-down of data offered by Mr. Billings. The book should stimulate more collectors to concentrate on this much-neglected issue, since now data is available in one book of this 1874-1883 issue. Mr. Billings is to be congratulated on going to the expense of putting this together and making it available to collectors. It fills a definite need.

On the other hand, knowing of Mr. Billings' vast knowledge and collection of the Juarez issue of Mexico, and also realizing that anything that Mr. Billings does is done with a deep sense of thoroughness, it was a little disappointing not to find very much in this book on paper, color, cancellations of the period, and the postal history of the issue. However, he does offer the reader adequate references on these aspects of the issue, and in fact, very ably has completed just what he set out to do, i.e., to make available the numerical data on the issue compiled from the Mexican official records and the collections of which he studied. *(Abner I. Weisman, M.D.)*

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*Stanley Gibbons' "Two Reigns" Catalogue. Stamps of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II. Eighth Edition (1961).* Price $1.25 postpaid.

This new edition published in December 1960 lists nearly 300 more stamps than the last one, has over 100 new illustrations and about 20 more pages, bringing the total number of pages up to 341. The popular features such as plate numbers, dates of printings, quantities issued, composition of the sheets have been continued. There are also new listings for Ceylon, Kenya, Malta, New Zealand and Papua-New Guinea.

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U. S. A. — 1851 — 1c type III, position 99RII, unused, close at left, slight crease, all characteristics clear, Philatelic Foundation certificate ..... 2,150.00

U. S. A. — 2c Black Jack, F grill, with beautiful strike of black BEE, stamp centered to lower right ..... 135.00

U. S. A. — 2nd issue $200.00 revenue, nicely centered, MSS cancel, vertical crease, with WILL from which removed ..... 300.00

U. S. A. — 1940 Stock Transfer, 1c mint block of 52, one of which is the error, "SERIES 1940" inverted. This is the block from which came the catalogue listing. Included is pertinent letter from the Bureau ..... 1,200.00

## RICHARD N. CONE

Route 8, Box 269 Tucson, Arizona, U. S. A.



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●

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## ROMANIAN POST OFFICE
**in the Turkish Empire — 1919**

(There was only one Romanian Post Office in Constantinople. It remained open a short time only.)

During a visit in Constantinople (today's ISTAMBUL) in March 1920, I secured the cancellation of a few scarce errors, in the Romanian P. O., and am offering same after 40 years, together with some mint errors never offered before:

| | Mint | ⊞'s of 4 | Used |
|---|---|---|---|
| #7 5b green | 2.00 | 10.00 | 3.00 |
| 8 10b rose | 2.00 | 10.00 | 3.00 |
| 9 15b brown | 2.00 | 10.00 | 3.00 |
| 11 40b gray br. | 10.00 | —— | 8.00 |
| RA1 5b green | 2.00 | 10.00 | 3.00 |
| 7(a) 5b green (few known) | 5.00 | —— | 7.00 |
| 8(a) 10b carmine (few known) | 6.00 | —— | 10.00 |

#7(a) and #8(a) are on the initial print of Romania #219 and 220. (The used stamps are on pieces.)

**Penny Black Stamp Co.**
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# COVERS

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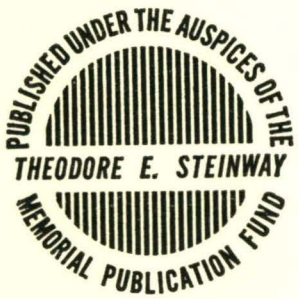
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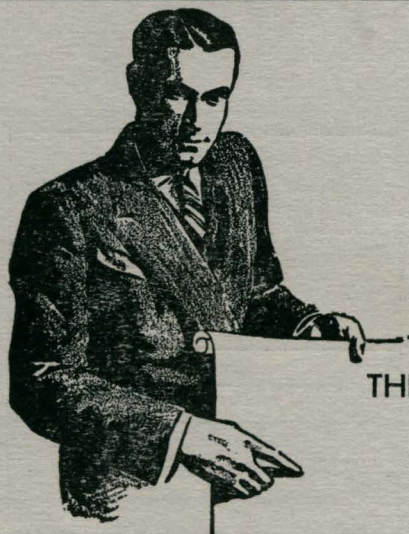
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