



Postmark Atlanta
Atlanta Stamp Collector's Club



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November 2020 Newsletter

As we emailed earlier, physical meetings are not being held until the public health danger is past. I've included many ways to connect with other stamp collectors online in this newsletter.

We are holding "virtual" Atlanta Stamp Collectors Club meeting the first and third Tuesday hosted by member Lloyd Nutter. Lloyd sends out a Zoom invitation a couple days before the meeting. If you do not get an invitation for the meetings, please contact Lloyd to make sure he adds you to his list. Emailing him: trains56@charter.net. Also, if you need to test how Zoom works, Lloyd will be glad to give you a test.

This newsletter includes other ways to enjoy our hobby with programs on the internet.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 3, 2020 7:00 pm Regular Atlanta Stamp Collectors meeting on Zoom. Ken Andreason will present on the Faroe Islands (we've been waiting for this since last March.)

November 17, 2020 7:00 pm Atlanta Stamp Collectors meeting on Zoom. Vincent Rehder will present : "Everything you never wanted to know about the German 'Building series' of 1948-51 (Scott 634-61), or: a surprisingly rich set to build a specialized collection".

December 1, 2020 7:00 pm Atlanta Stamp Collectors meeting on Zoom. We will do a member show and tell, and discuss whether to have a second December meeting on 15th.

Literature Competition Awards - Club Member Steve Swain

Congratulations are extended to club member Steve Swain for his October 3, 2020 literature competition awards at the Stamp Exhibition of Southern California (SESCAL) 2020. To read his two articles check our club web-page which Steve also keeps updated for us. Our club's page is at www.sefsc.org/atlanta-stamp-collectors-club.html.

Collecting Semipostal Stamps

By Steve Swain

A semipostal stamp, also called a charity stamp, is a postage stamp issued to raise money for a particular purpose, such as a charitable cause, health care or research. The stamps are sold at a premium - a surcharge - over the standard postal value. Semipostal stamps have been issued worldwide beginning in 1897 when the Australian State of New South Wales issued a pair of semipostals, shown below, in celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (Scott #B1-2).



Designed with an attractive Art Nouveau style, the stamps cost one shilling and two shilling six pence and had a postal value of one pence and two and one-half pence. The difference between the cost and postal value was donated to a fund for a home for consumptives, i.e., a sanatorium for persons infected with tuberculosis.

Shown below on the left is an 1897 mailing to Sydney, Australia franked with the two semipostals. Note the manuscript note to the left of Sydney: "First Health Stamp in the World."



The first semipostal was not a stamp but a postal card, shown above right, issued in 1890 by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The issue commemorated the Uniform Penny Post. The card had a face value of one penny, but sold it for sixpence, with the difference given to a fund for postal workers.

There are several collecting themes showcasing semipostal stamps. Many stamps have been issued for the benefit of children, with one of the most significant series begun in 1931 by the

New Zealand Post. The stamps included the inscription "Health" above the postage and charity denominations. Shown below on the left are the first two New Zealand Health stamps called the Red Boy and Blue Boy. The design received widespread criticism, with the Australian Stamp Monthly describing the design as the "world's worst" stamp." Be that as it may, I think it is fair to say that over the years the Health stamps had attractive designs, such as the more contemporary examples below.



Several of New Zealand's health stamps have notable varieties recognized by collectors. The 1957 set was issued with a watermark either sideways or upright, and the 1960 set is found with two different gauges of perforation, one of which came from the miniature sheets. The last New Zealand health stamps were issued in 2016 due to declining sales and mail volumes.

Another semipostal collecting theme are stamps with overprints. Instead of a postal authority issuing separate semipostal stamps, they used current definitive and commemorative stamps with overprints designating the amount of the extra charge. Below are two 1918 Belgium Congo issues showing the additional 25-cent and 10-cent costs.



A very colorful set of overprints are the 1925 Tunisia issues, below. The complete set are 10 stamps and are somewhat scarce in mint, no-hinge condition.



Although most semipostal stamps carry an additional charge of only a few cents, another collecting theme to consider is high value stamps. For example, the Falkland Islands' "rebuilding fund" stamps seen below, issued in 1982 after the Anglo-Argentinian war over the islands, carry a surcharge of £1, the same amount as the standard postage.



On June 30, 1974, the last two U.S. Postal Service Highway Post Offices in a fleet that once numbered more than 200 made their final runs between Cleveland and Cincinnati. The Highway Post Office (HIPO) whose cancellation appears on this envelope was one of these two vehicles making the last run. The vehicle is now used as an exhibit to call attention to that era of U.S. Postal Service history. The Highway Post Offices were started in 1941 as successors to the mail cars on passenger trains, and have gradually given away to air taxis and other mail transportation and processing techniques necessary to meet present-day service standards. The first Highway Post Office run was established on February 10, 1941, between Washington, DC and Harrisonburg, VA.

Postal history provided by Barbara Brown

Allen Johnson with the Button Gwinnett Stamp Club has created a Facebook Group for their club. Contact him to get invited to the group to see their process of buying and selling stamps. Ajrj1957@yahoo.com is his email.

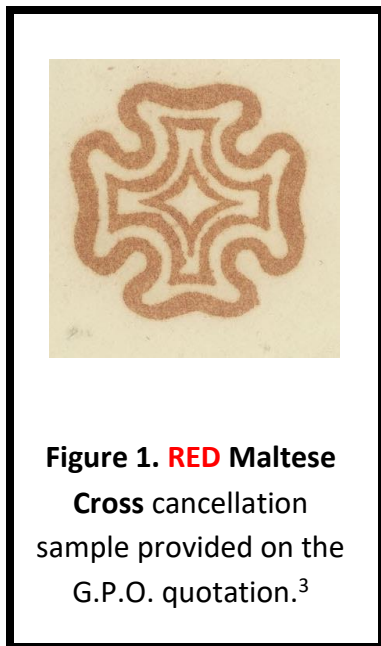
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First Saturday of every month there is in person Stamp Trading at home of Don Laberteaux, 5008 Brandlwood Ct., Lilburn, GA from 9 – 11 a.m. Coffee, talking and stamps. Call Don at 770-381-7114 for details.

Maltese Cross - An Evolution

By Colin Clark

Maltese Cross cancellations, so called because of their shape, were officially used to obliterate the revolutionary Great Britain adhesive postage stamps and Mulready stationery from May 1840 until 1844, in order to prevent their fraudulent re-use.¹ Each obliterator was made individually by hand so that no two were exactly alike.



They varied in detail and some distinctive types can be allotted to particular towns or offices.² The Maltese Cross was used in conjunction with a separate date stamp, usually applied to the back of the letter, which showed the date of posting.

The story actually evolved before May 6th 1840, on March 31st 1840 with the quotation for the Maltese Cross hand-stamps to the General Post Office (G.P.O.). **Figure 1** is taken from that archived quotation document.³

A **red** ink was first used, but was replaced by **black** ink after some experiments in February 1841. Maltese Cross obliterations in other colors are rare, e.g. **blue**.¹

The reason was that it had become quickly apparent, starting in 1840, that the **red** ink cancellation could be easily and cheaply removed from stamps by the use of chemicals, for the fraudulent re-use of those stamps.

The experiments with various colors of ink by chemists and others, (Perkins and Co., helped by the distinguished Victorian chemist **Professor R. Phillips, F.R.S.**), resulted in a **black** ink which could not be removed without serious injury to the postage stamp.



Figure 2. Sketch of Prof. Richard Phillips (1778 – 1851).

Simultaneously, when the color of the **ONE PENNY** postage stamp was changed from **black** to **red** in 1841, the main fraud problem was solved by its combination with the **black** ink cancellation usage. All Postmasters were notified of the combined change in 1841 using a Postal Notice (with specimens), which stated that: *“It is intended, hereafter, to obliterate the Postage Stamps with Black Composition, a supply of which will be forwarded to you as soon as possible, but until you receive this supply you will continue to obliterate the Postage Stamp with the Red Composition, as heretofore.* By command. E. S. LEES.”⁴ Examples are shown below:



Figure 3. Penny Black with **RED** Maltese Cross



Figure 4. Imperforate 1d. red-brown with **BLACK** Maltese



Figure 5. Imperforate 1d. red-brown with **BLACK** Maltese

cancellation.

Cross cancellation.

Cross cancellation.

Unknown office origin

Possible non-verified office
origin: **Inverary** (Scotland)

Verified office origin:
TYNEMOUTH (England)

Rowland Hill referred to the Maltese Cross as the *croix patée* (a heraldic term). He did not consider the *croix patée* obliterator as perfect. From his point of view it was "too small, and, being light in the central parts, is not so effective in cancelling the label, which is also light in the center"; and suggested to the Postmaster-General the use of an oblong date-stamp.⁵ In 1844, the Maltese Cross method was replaced by numbered obliterations of varied types.

References:

1. *Great Britain CONCISE Stamp Catalogue*, 23rd Edition (April 2007, p.3,7), Stanley Gibbons.
2. *Collect British Postmarks: The Handbook to British Postmarks and their Values*, 9th Edition (December 2013, p.122 - 123), Stanley Gibbons.
3. *Maltese Cross Quotation* (31st March 1840), The British Postal Museum and Archive (Phillips volume VIII, page 25).
4. *Great Britain Postal Notice*, (1841), E. S. LEES. Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Specialized Catalogue Number SGPN3.
5. *The History of the Postmarks of the British Isles - From 1840 to 1876*, (1909, p.8-10), John G. Hendy.

The National Postal Museum continues to engage with the public during the COVID closure online at their YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/SmithsonianNPM>
The museum is interested in what needs to be collected to document life under COVID much like they have items from the 1918 Flu Pandemic era. If you have ideas or items contact the Chief Curator, Daniel Piazza at piazza@si.edu.

To encourage members and collectors to learn more about the APS, American Philatelic Society has lifted the members-only restrictions on accessing *The American Philatelist* online. Please feel free to share with your fellow collectors and encourage them to connect and learn more about all the great benefits. [Please access The American Philatelist here](#). If you are getting a print version of this newsletter, the full web address is: www.stamps.org/the-american-philatelist

Also there will be online Stamp Chat events using Zoom that you can access information on at this link: <https://stamps.org/news/c/news/cat/local/post/aps-to-host-live-stamp-chats-on-zoom-beginning-monday-march-23>

There are replays of these chats available on YouTube. The variety of subjects now available is amazing. <https://www.youtube.com/user/AmericasStampClub> is the link to check out all the stored Chats.

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Condolences to long-time member Jonathan Goldstein on the death of his mother. May her memory be for a blessing.

SARGON, Miriam B.

Miriam B. Sargon, at age 101, a resident of Boston, passed away peacefully on August 31, 2020 at Hebrew SeniorLife in Roslindale. She was born in New York City on June 6, 1919 and moved to Boston when she married David Goldstein in 1942. David died in 1958 and Miriam married the late Benjamin Sargon in 1970. She was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Hunter College. Miriam taught English at Newton North High School for twenty nine years.



Special thanks are due to her long-term care giver Susan Madow. Survivors include her son Jonathan Goldstein of Carrollton, Georgia, brother Sidney Bludman of Chevy Chase, Maryland, and many nieces and nephews.

Due to the current health concerns, services are private. In accordance with Miriam's last wishes, memorial donations may be made to the Sargon/ Goldstein Scholarship Fund, Attn: Rabbi Ron Gray, Boys Town Jerusalem, PMB 6250, 1 Penn Plaza, New York, NY 10117-3490.

If you are interested in writing for our newsletter or presenting to our club at one of our monthly meetings, please contact me at the email below or Scott Holmberg at sdholmberg1@gmail.com with your ideas.

LeA Coe, Secretary

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