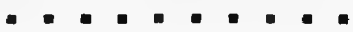


# How to Arrange a Stamp Collection.

By the late EDWARD J. NANKIVELL,

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and Stamp Editor of "The Captain," &c., &c.



THE care and taste with which a collection of postage stamps is arranged makes all the difference in the world in the display of even the commonest of philatelic accumulations. I have seen great rarities so jumbled together as to present an almost poverty-stricken appearance, and I have seen a modest collection of common stamps so neatly arranged that they evoked the admiration of the wealthy possessors of costly collections. As stamps lend themselves naturally to neat arrangement, there is no reason why they should ever be untidily displayed. Of course, when the printed album is used, the arrangement is settled beforehand for the collector. It is not my purpose, however, to deal at present with the printed album, except to recommend it strongly to all untidy collectors, and to those who are taking their first steps in philately.

What I have to say just now is intended for those collectors who adopt what are known as blank or movable leaf albums, and who arrange their treasures with the aid of a good catalogue. Every year the adoption of the movable leaf, or free arrangement, is gaining in popularity, for the simple reason that the printed album is necessarily overloaded with definitely settled spaces for numbers of issues that few collectors can ever hope to possess, and, therefore, the spaces provided for those unattainable series must remain unoccupied to the end of the chapter, and when, as in some countries like New Zealand, Victoria, and British Guiana, those empty spaces spread themselves over page after page, the printed album presents a very depressing appearance.

The movable leaf album gets over the difficulty, for in its free arrangement the collector may start

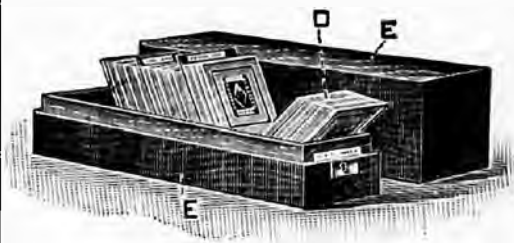
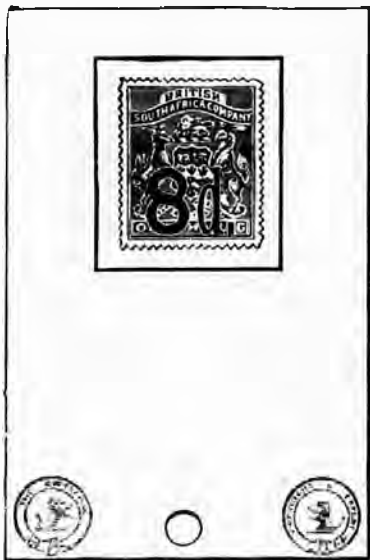
with any issue he pleases. His first batch of a big country may be its current issue, but as he progresses he may have opportunities for adding some earlier issues. All he has then to do is to shift a leaf and place it in front of his current set. And so he goes on building up his collection step by step.

Albums are an evergreen and unsettled question to the specialist. They have been tried in all sizes and shapes. I remember the late Earl of Kingston bringing his magnificent collection of English stamps to the London Philatelic Society one evening. There were several volumes, and each must have measured quite two feet across the page each way. My first question was how on earth he managed to turn the page without damaging his stamps. He shrugged his shoulders, and admitted the size was a great mistake. That was in the early days. Since then albums have been coming down in size to reasonable proportions, till now the most favoured size does not exceed 8½ inches by 11 inches. My own preference is for even a smaller size; in fact, for what is a popular book size for important works, viz., 6 inches by 9 inches.

In arranging my stamps, I follow a plan adopted by the late Mr. T. K. Tapling. I place on the first page the full series of the normal issue without any varieties of shade or type. These I arrange as neatly as possible on the page, each stamp at equal distance from its neighbour and in their gradation of values, so that I can see at a glance if I am lacking any stamp of the series. Then on the following pages I arrange varieties of perforation of paper, of shade showing varieties of printings, varieties of type or design, inverted surcharges, errors, &c. In this plan it will be noted that the first page of normal issues

For Prices of all Cistafiles and accessories, see separate catalogue.

Reduced fac-simile of No. 1 size  
Cistafile card for holding one stamp  
on each card. Actual dimension  
of card, 2½ inches by 3½ inches.



Cistafile No. 1 size.

Reduced fac-simile of No. 2 size Cistafille card with stamps arranged and ornamentation added. Actual dimensions of card, 4 inches by 6 inches. This card will hold 16 specimens of the usual size stamp.

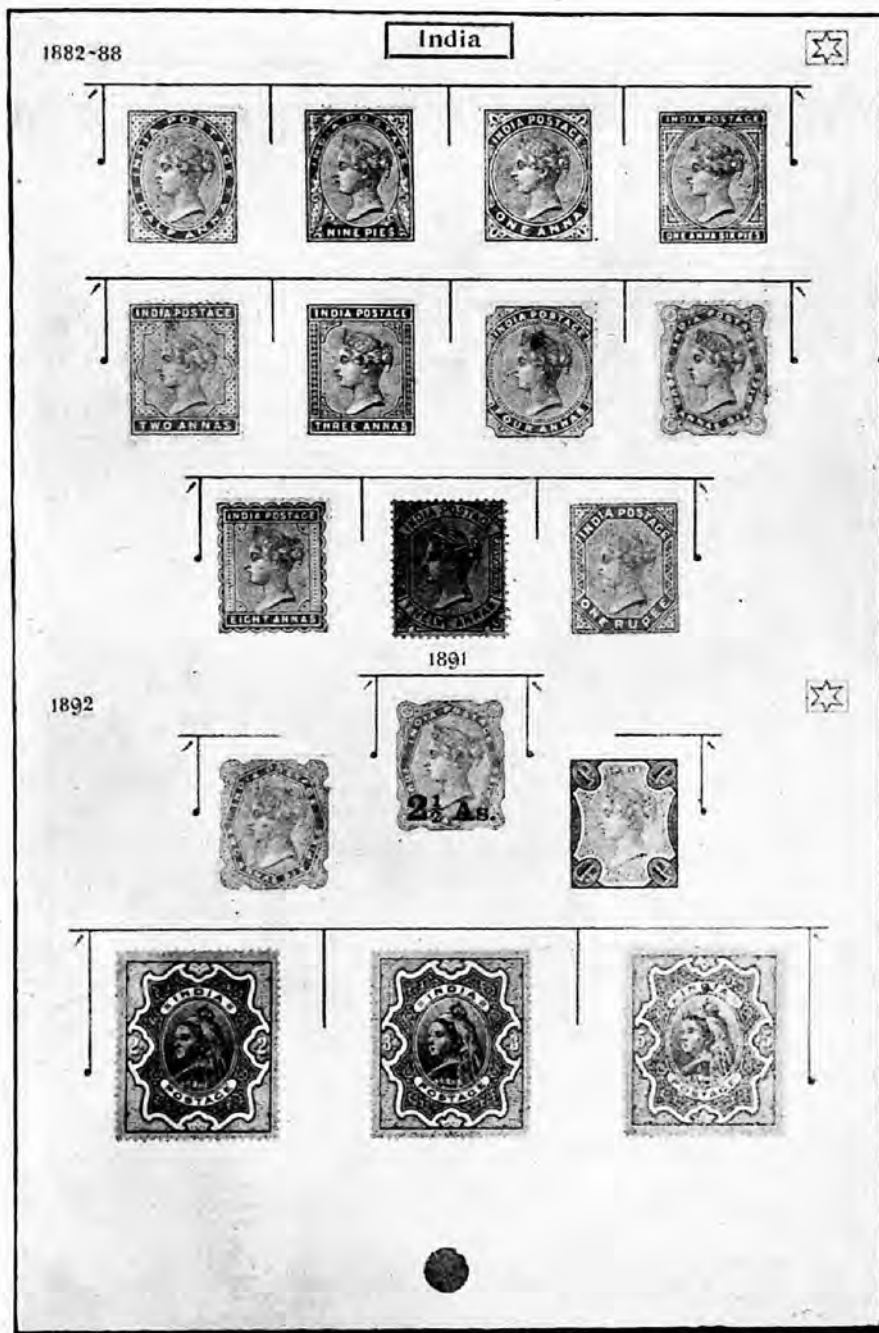


Cistafille No. 2 size.

The Cistafille series of designed and printed "Watermarks" and "Dates of all Postal Issues" are specially recommended for use with the Cistafille as a great aid to neatness in arrangement. The watermarks are exact hand drawn reproductions of the original, and, like the "Dates of Issues," are printed on fine gummed paper ready for cutting out and affixing to the cards as shown in the above illustration.

Prices { WATERMARKS.—Per Packet, of all British and British-Colonial Watermarks, 2s., post free, 2s. 1d.  
 " " Foreign Watermarks, 2s., post free, 2s. 1d.  
 DATES.—Per Packet of Dates of all Postal Issues, 2s. 8d., post free, 2s. 9d.

Reduced fac-simile of No. 3 size Cistafile Card, with stamps arranged and ornamentation added. Actual dimensions of card, 6 inches by 9 inches. This card will hold 36 specimens of the usual size Stamp.



The "CISTAFILE"

plays the part of a "contents" page to the following pages. You want to know first what is the normal issue, then you are ready to appreciate any variations from the normal. But if you jumble them all up, taking each value, as some do, and following that with its varieties, you have nowhere a reference page of the real series as issued. This plan is also most convenient for any subsequent specialising development. To open out any country in the specialist direction, it will only be necessary to add subsequent pages for varieties, blocks, &c. The first page is all that the general collector need bother about, and when he cares to dip into specialising he can easily add the necessary following pages as he takes up variety after variety.

I have tried almost every album arrangement under the sun, and, as none was small and neat enough to please me, I have always had my own size made for me. Facility for ready reference is a

sine qua non in a well-arranged collection, especially if it is to be fully extended into varieties. For some time I have been mounting my stamps in simple Stolzenberg covers for the convenience of classification and sectionising. But these otherwise convenient little booklets have the disadvantage of an unyielding back, standing in the way of laying the page flat for use. But I believe we have at last, in the larger card development of the Cistafile, a new method that meets the needs of both general collector and specialist more fully than any other plan. I have been testing it for some months, and the result is that I am now remounting the whole of my collection on Cistafile cards. I use the medium size, four inches by six inches, for countries with simple series and few varieties, and more especially for countries in which I do not specialise, and the large size, six inches by nine inches, for those countries in which I specialise. I have for years used the American card-filing system for business purposes, and it is a real pleasure to have one's stamps arranged on the same convenient plan for ready reference. It enables one to detach any series without disturbing any other portion of the collection, and the plan is so elastic in every part that cards may be arranged



or rearranged at will in the simplest manner. Then again, portions may be shifted into a carrier for meeting purposes, whereas in the set album it is almost a necessity to take the album.

All album pages and also the Cistafile cards are now provided with close cross ruling, termed quadrille, as guides to the regular spacing of the stamps. In the album, even in those provided with tissue paper to the backs of the leaves which close on the stamps, there is continual friction, and stamps of delicate and fugitive colours rub and set off on the opposite page. The Cistafile cards are protected from friction by thin transparent paper gummed on to the card itself. The cards are arranged in a box, and are kept in position by a rod which runs through a hole in the bottom of the card, as shown in the illustration. To remove a card the rod is unscrewed and withdrawn, when any card can be lifted out for use.

In arranging a collection it is well to adopt some fixed classification. If the collection is a small general one the countries are best arranged in alphabetical order, but if the collection is a large one it should be classified by groups or continents. Then

again, in the arrangement of the stamps it is well to have some fixed order for varieties in the portions which you specialise. The normal issue must always be placed first, then may follow varieties of watermark, perforation, paper, inverteds, errors, and so on. The important thing is to keep to some settled order throughout.

A well-arranged collection is a pleasure to its possessor and to inspecting friends. It tells you at a glance what it includes and what it lacks, and it enables you more easily to remember its scope and its needs. It also begets a fastidiousness in the selection of specimens that adds materially to its solid value. And should the time ever come for parting with it, its possible selling value will be all the more readily ascertained, for rare varieties will be found in their proper place, and consequently will not be overlooked, as they too often are in badly-arranged collections.