



About Stamps

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A PRIMER OF
STAMP INFORMATION

Contents may be summarized as follows:

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where to find them.

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collection.

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**C. H. MEKEEL STAMP
AND PUBLISHING CO.
ST. LOUIS, MO.**



HISTORY OF THE POSTAGE STAMP.



Originated by Sir Rowland Hill.

Adopted by Great Britain in 1840.

Not in general use in the United States by the Government until 1847.

The prepayment of postage by the means of adhesive postage stamps revolutionized the postal business of the world, making the present means of communication possible.

About 20,000 different postage stamps have been issued by all Countries and Colonies since 1840.



WHY ARE STAMPS COLLECTED?



Almost as soon as stamps came into existence, there were those who began to collect specimens from each Country that issued them.

The natural collecting instinct was instantly appealed to by these little bits of engraved labels, and as the number of stamps increased the number of collectors multiplied.

There is something about some people that makes them like the odd, the curious, the foreign, and Stamp Collectors sprang into existence in England, France and the United States almost simultaneously. Soon albums were published for their reception, and catalogues compiled recording the new issues as they appeared.

Stamp collecting commenced in 1850 and has never lost any of its force. Old collectors drop out and two new ones take their place, until today we could count them by the millions, and they are in every civilized Country on the globe. There are serious collectors and those who take it up only as a passing fancy.

The pursuit commends itself to the observing, systematic and intelligent, but does not appeal to the lazy, careless or thoughtless.

Parents who have given the matter careful consideration are usually inclined to encourage their children in this pursuit, as it trains the mind and develops the perceptive faculties.

A collector involuntarily learns much of geography, history, arms and flags of nations, the difference in money systems, the knowledge of shades and colors, and many useful facts that go to make up a well informed person.

The profitable side of stamp collecting in a pecuniary way, has been proved by the fact that a carefully and well selected collection will almost always reward the maker by bringing, when sold, more than the cost of its accumulation.

This is in a measure true, from the fact that every collector is able to add valuable stamps to his collection by discovery or other means than cash purchase.

These acquisitions are often very valuable, and no old file of correspondence can fail

to produce something of interest to a stamp collector.

As an example of the wide range the interest in stamp collecting has taken, we give the following examples from the clients of our publishers:

Members of the leading legislative bodies of United States, England, France and Germany.

Military and naval officers of various ranks from ensign to commander of the above four countries, as well as of Italy, Russia and Austria.

Members of diplomatic corps and consular officers in almost every country.

A number of members of the nobility of various European countries and younger members of the royal families of Great Britain, Russia and Germany.

The Duke of Cornwall and York heir to the British Throne, the late Duke of Edinburgh, Queen of Holland and King of Siam are stamp collectors.

Judges of all ranks, from the Queen's Bench down to Justice of the Peace, attorneys, solicitors, barristers and legal authors. The Church gives

us Bishops, Priests, Abbes and Professors—the Roman, Greek and various Protestant denominations being represented. Professional people of every class, scientific, medical, artistic, pedagogical and dramatic. Business men in almost every line, corporation officers, bankers, as well as the wealthy leisure class, among whom the ladies are represented, all have found stamp collecting a most fascinating “hobby” and are among our correspondents.

We must not forget His Majesty, The American Boy, who is, after all, the backbone of stamp collecting.





WHAT STAMPS ARE VALUABLE.



Age does not make a stamp valuable.

The first 1 penny red, the type issued by Great Britain in 1840, is still a very common stamp, because it continued in use for many years, and millions of them were printed.

Scarcity is the keynote of value.

Stamps whose issue has been limited as to number and time of service are naturally scarce, and therefore become valuable for the simple reason that there are not enough to go around among the stamp collectors who want them.

A stamp issued today, that for some reason is withdrawn soon after issue, is as likely to become rare and valuable as some of the old ones.



WE PAY CASH FOR RARE STAMPS.

How to Find Them.

We are in the stamp business and in touch with thousands of advanced collectors in all parts of the world, and it is our business to know pretty well where to place almost any rare stamp that may be found.

We are buying and supplying rarities constantly, and hold the record in the United States for two things:

We have paid the highest price ever paid by a stamp dealer for a single postage stamp, and this was to take into stock, and for which we had at the time no immediate customer.

We refer to the 10c Baltimore, for which we paid the party who found it in old correspondence \$2,300.00 in cash.

Some months later we sold this stamp for \$4,400.00 which is also the record price, being the highest price ever received by a dealer in the United States for a single postage stamp.

We have sold many stamps from \$1,000 to \$3,000 each, but, of course, these are stamps

that are seldom found. There are many stamps, however, for which we pay from \$1 00 to \$10.00 each that may be found by almost anyone who has access to files of correspondence from 1840 to 1865.

While the United States Government did not issue stamps until 1847, Local Express Companies and Postmasters issued many stamps from 1841 to 1865 that are very valuable.

Envelopes were not in common use then, so that many stamps will be found filed away on the backs of old letters and business papers.

In 1895 we bought out of one lot of waste paper over \$30,000 worth of rare stamps that were ready to go into the furnace as worthless; their value was discovered just in time to save.

This was the great find of St. Louis Postmasters' Stamps of 1845 discovered in the furnace room of the Louisville Court House. The excitement caused by this rare lot was recorded by newspapers from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

These things are mentioned to suggest what may be laying idle in some old garret or storeroom to which you may have access.

During the Civil War, 1861-1865, many of the Confederate postmasters ran out of stamps and issued special stamps, privately prepared, in their own localities — many of these are valuable.

We issue an illustrated pamphlet (price 10 cents) that has illustrations of many of the stamps that may be found in old letter files. It shows what to look for.



STAMP COLLECTING A PLEASANT PURSUIT.



The charms of stamp collecting are only known to the initiated.

The way to experience it is to give it a trial.

The first thing to do is to buy a stamp album, a complete illustrated catalogue of all stamps and a packet of different foreign stamps and then arrange your stamps in the album.

If you have any of the instincts of a collector you will enjoy the pursuit and it will while away many a winter's evening very profitably.

Stamp Albums are published from 25c to \$25.00 each, and special albums even higher.

We recommend a 75c book. Our Popular Stamp Album No. 3, 75c post free, is just the thing for a beginner, it has spaces for 6,000 stamps and is not so good but that you can discard it for a better album when you get further along.

The complete illustrated catalogue costs 58c post free.

Then as to the packet of different foreign stamps, start with as *big* a one as you can afford.

It is the cheapest way to buy stamps and the bigger the packet the more you will save in the long run.

The following are our principal variety packets, the 1,000 or 2,000 are the favorites on the start but of course the 3,000 or 4,000 would be better:

No. 111, 75c.—Contains 300 varieties of foreign postage stamps, including stamps from Argentine Republic, Cuba, Canada (maple leaf), Chile, Egypt, Japan, Luxemburg, Mexico, Norway, Persia, Porto Rico, etc.—300 Varieties—75 cents.

No. 102, 98c.—This is a special packet of 400 varieties made up as an inducement for beginners who are about starting a collection. It includes stamps from all parts of the world, among which may be mentioned Mexico, 1884, 1 and 2 pesos, used; Travancore (India), 3 varieties, used; Paraguay official; China, regular issue, 1894; British North Borneo, Uruguay, Newfoundland, etc.

1000 die-cut gummed hinges for mounting stamps is given free with each of these packets.—400 Varieties and 1000 Hinges—98 cents.

No. 130, \$1.50—Contains 546 varieties of foreign postage stamps mounted in a neat little album, just the thing to sell out of. This lot marked at catalogue prices would afford the seller a handsome profit even if fifty per cent discount were allowed. It contains stamps from all parts of the world and is the *biggest bargain* of the season.—546 varieties—\$1.50.

No. 113, \$2.50—Contains 800 different postage stamps. Big value for the money. Stamps from all parts of the world.—800 varieties—\$2.50.

No. 114, \$3.75—The best packet of 1000 varieties of *foreign postage stamps* ever offered. A cheaper packet could be made but no better value for the money is possible.—1000 varieties—\$3.75.

No. 151, \$9.85—1500 different foreign stamps arranged alphabetically and mounted on sheets. Very useful for agents or dealers to sell

from, as well as for collectors.—1500 varieties
—\$9.85.

No. 115, \$15.00—Contains 2000 different postage stamps from all parts of the world. A collection in itself and highly recommended. 2000 varieties \$15.00.

No. 152, \$50.00—A collection of 3000 different postage stamps. The best value obtainable.—3000 varieties—\$50.00.

No. 116, \$100.00—A big packet of 4000 varieties, a regular collection in itself, being stamps from almost every stamp issuing country or colony in the world. *A great bargain.* 4000 varieties—\$100.00.

Order the packet by number and remit the price.

Our motto: "*Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded.*"



The **STAMP DEALER.**



The regular dealer in postage stamps for collectors was the natural result of the development of stamp collecting, meeting the collector's demand by the employment of brains and capital in the accumulation of stamps from all parts of the world, which he is able to supply at a merely nominal cost, compared with the expense that would have been necessary without his assistance.

Our business was established by C. H. Mekeel in 1877, incorporated as a company in 1889, and extends into every part of the civilized world.

We buy to sell at a profit. Parties having valuable stamps to dispose of can employ our services to advantage.

We publish a weekly journal devoted to stamp collecting (\$1.00 per year). We have a system of equitable exchange, whereby collectors may increase their collections by exchange of their duplicates.

We have the best and most extensive system ever organized for submitting priced lots of stamps to collectors on approval for their selection.

We publish a price list from which orders may be mailed to us for single stamps, packets, sets, albums and collectors' supplies.

Correspondence solicited.

Business transacted only by mail.

Remittance with order.

Price lists and printed matter free.



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