

[*Private and Confidential*]

# *PROPOSALS*

*for the publication of a*

*JOURNAL FOR SPECIALISTS*

*IN THE*

*STAMPS OF JAPAN*

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## Proposals for the Publication of a Journal for Specialists in the Stamps of Japan

THE stamps of the Japanese Empire have not received from specialists the attention which has been devoted to countries of far less interest, and it will probably be no more than a statement of fact to say that no country of similar philatelic resource has found fewer philatelists for its study. There are certain inherent difficulties of quite unusual order to overcome in undertaking the advanced collecting of these stamps, chiefly due to the inaccessibility of postal records, and to the method of manufacture of the stamps which produced varieties the full extent of which is still unknown.

No exhaustive work has appeared on the subject, and the series of articles by Mr. Bacon, which appeared in the early volumes of the *Philatelic Record*, with those contributed by Dr. Bishop to *Morley's Journal*, still remain the standard sources of information. It is known, however, to the collectors who give attention to this country that the study of the stamps of Japan has undergone considerable change during recent years, and that important discoveries have been made with regard to the issues of 1871-6.

It is with the object of bringing together, for mutual benefit, the results so far attained, and to provide a means of communication for specialists in further research that it has been proposed to publish a journal for specialists in the stamps of Japan, which should circulate privately among collectors who are working on these stamps.

The specific objects of such a journal would be as follows :

1. To publish official records and documents relating to the postal service of the Japanese Empire, including a complete translation of the official book *Dai Nihon Teikoku Yubin Kitte Enkakusbi*.
2. To examine the methods of production of the stamps, their paper, printing, perforation, etc.

3. To prepare a catalogue, by the co-operation of subscribers, giving all known varieties of engraving, shade, perforation, etc., and particularly to circulate information as to sheets, varieties of all kinds, postmarks, forgeries, etc., in the possession of subscribers.
4. To republish or translate articles which have appeared in philatelic literature relating to the stamps of Japan.
5. To issue photographic reproductions of all known sheets, or of rare varieties.
6. To serve as a medium for the exchange or sale of duplicates, and in this capacity to serve the purpose of a Society for Specialists in the Stamps of Japan.

NOTE. It is intended to include under the definition 'stamps' postal stationery and fiscals.

If published the Journal would be issued privately and confidentially to collectors directly interested in the subject, and to no others; each would be numbered and issued specially to the recipient, and only about 20 to 25 copies would be printed. Subscription to the Journal would be taken as an agreement on the part of the subscriber not to reproduce or communicate its contents without permission of the Editor. The ultimate object being to accumulate material for an exhaustive treatise on the stamps of Japan, premature publication of discoveries would be undesirable.

The reproduction of entire sheets would be of the greatest value for plating and for identification, and the aim would be to get together as complete as possible a set of plates of the engraved issues. The owners of several of the finest collections have already promised to allow their sheets to be reproduced.

The Journal would be published as often as occasion required, probably quarterly, and would consist of from 4 to 8 pages, and with each number one or more plates would be issued. As it would be a co-operative effort every subscriber would be expected to contribute information. The number of subscribers being necessarily small the cost would be high. The work of photographing the plates would be placed in the hands of the firm which does all the work for the Royal Philatelic Society, London, with a view to obtaining the highest

class of reproduction, so as to ensure exact facsimile and correct colour value, and to render the results as nearly equal to the originals for philatelic purposes as photography allows. There would furthermore be illustrations in the text, also reproduced photographically.

With regard to the price, I consider the Journal would cost each subscriber 5s. a number, the whole of which would be spent on actual production. To cover this each subscriber would pay £1, and receive four numbers. If it should be found that more could be done with the money than is at present anticipated, value would be given in an increased number of plates. Unless at least 12 philatelists are found willing to assist in the scheme it will be dropped; I have every reason to feel sure of a number in excess of this.

The following have already promised conditional support: Messrs. E. D. Bacon, W. Moser, L. W. Fulcher, G. T. Bishop, J. N. Luff, W. Gardner.

The Journal would be edited and published by myself, and I should make every effort to obtain the highest excellence in form and style. My reason for sending out this notice is that the venture would be costly, and the return small except to those to whom it would appeal. Furthermore I am assured that it would not be successful unless undertaken collectively.

If you are prepared to give your support I should be glad to hear from you as soon as convenient, and I should welcome any suggestions or alterations you may be able to make. I shall also be glad to have the name and address of any collector likely to be interested.

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