

CALGARY PHILATELIST

Issue 71

April 2005



In this issue: Steve Davis looks at WW2-era airmails of the USA.

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The CPS was founded in April 1922 by Dr. Edward George Mason. It is Chapter 66 of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, Chapter 1360 of the American Philatelic Society, and Chapter 91 of the American Topical Association.

A cumulative subject index from issue #1 to date for the CALGARY PHILATELIST exists but because of its length is too long to be published in this bulletin. A copy can be had for free from the editorial address at Box 6830.

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STAMP POSITION ON COVERS: PART 2
by Dale Speirs

Politics And Position Codes.

Separatists and irredentists early on used the idea of the upside-down stamp as a form of political protest. From a philatelist's point of view, this may be difficult to collect on cover as one cannot assume that every envelope with an upside-down monarch is an actual political cover, for many inverted usages were undoubtedly just sloppiness on the part of the sender.

Popular English folklore during the late 1800s had it that to put a Queen Victoria stamp upside-down on an envelope was to express a wish to have her beheaded [12]. Few philatelists realize that during much of her reign the British monarchy was unpopular because of her excessive mourning for dear Albert and withdrawal from public life. The veneration of her that we associate with the Victorian era did not develop until her later Jubilee years. It was commonly believed to be a serious offense to affix her stamps upside down and punishment would follow [10]. One commentator wrote in 1897 about: "*... the seriousness with which an old clerk warned me when, fresh from school thirty years back, I had, with a lad's indifference, stuck a stamp on a letter wrong side up, that I was liable to be fined L20 for the offense.*" [11].

In Haiti, after an 1888 coup deposed the president, stamps bearing his visage were used upside down [14]. In the late 1800s, Russia began to pressure the Duchy of Finland to quell incipient nationalism. From 1892 on, the use of Finnish stamps was severely restricted, and Russian stamps had to be used for mail going outside Finland. One method Finns used to object to the compulsory use of Russian stamps was to stick them on upside-down [1]. The Irish nationalists of the 1910s mailed letters with the King's head upside down [13].

The USA also has protest covers. In 1935, some Americans who didn't like the current administration suggested in a New York City newspaper that people put their stamps upside-down on letters to signify themselves against the President [4]. An Idaho small-press magazine published by a right-wing group, called FRONTIERSMAN, not only habitually mails its publication with upside down Flag stamps but calls attention to them by framing the stamp and labelling it "Nation in Distress".

In American prisons, some prisoners have been disciplined by the warden for mailing letters with upside down stamps [16 and 17]. In 2000, a federal prison warden in Colorado fined one of the inmates \$500 for mailing his tax return to the IRS with two upside down Flag stamps. Another prisoner who mailed personal

letters with upside down Flags was put on punishment detail, then sent to solitary confinement, and finally had his incoming mail blocked.

Secret Codes.

With the advent of postage stamps, writers had an additional method of communicating information via a secret code, either by positioning the stamps in a certain way or by using a combination of different stamps.

During World War Two, some philatelic military personnel must have been attracting the unwanted attentions of censors who questioned why peculiar combinations of stamps were used on cover. Some philatelists got around this by attaching a label explaining to the censor that it was philatelic mail. An example was a 1943 cover sent from USA to New Zealand by a philatelist writing to a U.S. Army officer [3]. A label was placed on the cover which read: *"Notice to Army Examiner: The stamps used on this letter are not for a code. These covers are returned to me for philatelic purposes."*

The World War Two records of the Office of Strategic Services (precursor to the CIA) show they were concerned that stamp dealers and collectors who plastered their covers with stamps might be transmitting information through stamp codes such as position, type of stamp used, or markings. Nothing was ever proven in any espionage case [15].

Miscellaneous Codes.

I don't know why, perhaps currency controls, but a stamp position code was published in Germany before World War One for postcard traders [23]. Examples of this code are: tilted left in upper left corner of cover = "I collect only foreign"; tilted right at bottom centre of cover = "No", and tilted right at middle right edge of cover = "Your cards delight me".

Unconscious Codes.

Stamp positions are not always deliberate but often predictable. In the early 1950s, U.S.P.O. authorities captured a fugitive because he always placed stamps on letters crosswise, so as to leave a small triangle of the envelope at the upper right corner [18].

Many people instinctively place multiple-increment rate postage with the largest value stamp at right, then stamps declining in face value in order going left. An interesting study on a series of 1,100 USA commercial covers franked with multiple stamps showed that users tend to minimize the number of denominations

used and generally use higher values to fill in most of the postage rate [29]. This can be used for valuation purposes by postal historians, although multiple-stamp covers are not commonly collected as such by most North American philatelists but rather as part of an individual stamp study.

Stamp Codes In Fiction.

In my collection of philatelic fiction, I have a marginal item, a mystery short story by Michael Gilbert titled "The African Tree Beavers" [19]. Here is the opening paragraph of the story, the rest of which has nothing to do with philately or postal history: *"Like many practical and unimaginative men, Mr. Calder believed in certain private superstitions. He would never take a train which left at one minute to the hour; he distrusted the number 29; and he refused to open any parcel or letter on which the stamp had been fixed upside-down. This, incidently, once saved his life when he refused to open an innocent-looking parcel bearing the imprint of a bookseller from whom he had made many purchases in the past but which proved, on this occasion, to contain three ounces of tritoluene and a contact fuse."*

Postmark Positions.

Like stamp positions, the method of applying a postmark cannot usually be declared due to some secret code or just plain sloppiness. Also, it is rarer for the position of a postmark to be politically significant because postal clerks are more closely supervised and their actions more readily traced back to hold the responsible person accountable. However, some cases of postmark positional use are known.

In the 1800s, Sicily was ruled by an unpopular king. The stamps depicting him were required to be cancelled with a horseshoe-shaped postmark that obliterated the value tablets but left the King's image untouched. When Garibaldi overthrew the Sicilian monarchy en route to unifying Italy, postal clerks began defacing the King's head with off-centre postmarks. Some of the more militant clerks inverted the horseshoe to give the King the appearance of having horns [30].

References.

1] Leonard, Charles (2001 July/August) Finnish nationalism. CANADIAN PHILATELIST 52:164
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4] Sloane, George (1935-09-21) Upside down stamp protest. in SLOANE'S COLUMN. Published 1961 by Bureau Issues Association, USA. Edited by George Turner. Page 6.

10] Ratcliffe, T. (1897) The Queen's head upside down. NOTES AND QUERIES 8th series 11:424

11] Anonymous (as R.L.) (1897) The Queen's head upside down. NOTES AND QUERIES 8th series 11:476

12] Anonymous (as St. Swithin) (1897) Queen's head upside down. NOTES AND QUERIES 8th series 12:113

13] Mackay, James (2002 February) Celtic origins. STAMP MAGAZINE 68(2):88-91

14] Sellers, F.B. (1951 June) Haiti's upside-down stamp. AMERICAN PHILATELIST 64:683-686

15] Friedman, H.A. (1978 November) A spy hunter's view of wartime philately. SPA JOURNAL 41:153-160

16] Clapp, R.A. (2001) Theft. THE THOUGHT 123:5-8

17] Clapp, R.A. (2001-03-08) [personal communication from former federal prisoner in Colorado, USA]

18] Carlson, E.L. (1951 December) The Fourth Class Postmaster 50 years ago. SPA JOURNAL 14:219-221

19] Gilbert, Michael (1972 July) The African tree beavers. ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE 60(1):141-160

23] Lake, Ken (1984-01-12) Picture postcards for the philatelist. STAMP COLLECTING WEEKLY 148(16):548-549

29] Harris, Robert Dalton (1982 October) 20th Century postal history: Franking mechanics. P.S. 15:25-28

30] Lana, R.E. (2004-02-09) Placement of cancel showed respect, insult. LINN'S STAMP NEWS 77(3928):48

AS OTHERS SEE US

“Before this year, blogs were a curiosity, a cult phenomenon, a faintly embarrassing hobby on the order of ham radio and stamp collecting.”

Lev Grossman, in an article on Weblogs in the 2004-12-27 issue of TIME (Canadian edition, page 65).

UNITED STATES PHILATELY:
THE TRANSPORT AIRMAIL ISSUE OF 1941-44
by Steve Davis

Introduction.

These airmail stamps were in use from 1941 until they were replaced in 1946 and 1947 because of rate changes. What makes this issue interesting to collect, especially on cover, is that most of their usage occurred during World War Two. Military mail and censored mail played a large role in the history of these stamps.

Transport Stamp Facts.

These stamps were designed to replace a hodgepodge of airmail stamps in various sizes, shapes, and designs. The 1941 issues illustrated a twin-engine transport that was a composite of planes built by different companies, and whose likelihood of actually flying was highly questionable. A booklet stamp was issued in 1943, and in 1944 a rate change stamp was the last Transport issue.

Table 1: Transport stamp issues.					
Date issued	Denomination (cents)	Scott #	Perf.	Number issued	Comments
1941-06-25	6	C25	11 x 10.5	4,746,527,700	
1941-08-15	10	C27	11 x 10.5	67,117,200	
1941-08-19	15	C28	11 x 10.5	78,434,800	
1941-08-27	20	C29	11 x 10.5	42,359,850	
1941-09-25	30	C30	11 x 10.5	59,880,850	
1941-10-29	50	C31	11 x 10.5	11,160,600	
1943-03-18	6	C25a		not available	booklet pane of 3
1944-03-21	8	C26	11 x 10.5	1,744,878	rate change issue

Airmail Rates Related To The Transport Issue.

The domestic First-Class lettermail rate for the period from July 6, 1932, to August 1, 1958, was 3 cents. The domestic airmail rates were:
6 cents per ounce from July 1, 1934, to March 26, 1944
6 cents per half-ounce for Army Post Offices (APOs) or Fleet Post Offices (FPOs)
8 cents per ounce from March 26, 1944, to October 1, 1946 (temporary war rate)

International airmail rates during the Transport era (1941-1944) were as below. It should be noted that uniform foreign airmail rates were implemented in November 1946. The rates listed below are for the period prior to the uniform rates. All these rates are per half ounce.

10 cents to Canada, Bermuda, Haiti, Puerto Rico, or Mexico
15 cents to some countries of the Caribbean and Central America
20 cents to Hawaii
30 cents for trans-Atlantic rate to Europe
35 cents to Columbia. Only in effect April 1 to December 17, 1945. Higher than other South American countries but did include airmail within Columbia.
50 cents to the far Pacific, Asia, or Africa
50 cents to Philippines (usage October 29 to December 7, 1941 only)
60 cents to Belgian Congo
70 cents to many countries of Asia and vicinity

New Uniform Foreign Airmail Rates Effective November 1, 1946.

10 cents per ounce for Western Hemisphere, excluding Canada, Mexico, Cuba, and St. Pierre & Miquelon.
15 cents per ounce for Europe, USSR, Turkey, and North Africa.
25 cents per ounce for the rest of the world.

Military Mail.

The Transport issue saw extensive use during the war, so for this reason their use on military mail must be discussed. Servicemen were allowed "Free" postage wherever they were serving but only for First Class letter mail, which was surface mail. If they wanted letters to go by the speedier airmail they had to affix proper postage. Otherwise, they just wrote "FREE" in the upper right of the envelope where the stamp normally was affixed. Obviously if a serviceman fighting in the Pacific or Europe wanted his letter to get home quickly, airmail was the only alternative. They therefore paid for the premium service of airmail, and did not take advantage of the free but slow delivery. However, they were allowed to use the 6 cents per half ounce rate for mailings from APOs.

Combination Mail.

Many of the Transport stamps were used in combination with the popular Presidential definitives of 1938 (Prexies). This combination usage to make up various rates is another interesting area for collectors.

The Demise Of The Transport Issue.

In 1946 the US Post Office slashed domestic airmail rates, and on November 1, 1946, set new uniform foreign airmail rates. New stamps were issued to replace the Transport issue beginning on September 25, 1946, with the 5-cent Skymaster stamp. A series of three airmail stamps (10, 15, and 25 cents) were issued in 1946 to replace the Transport issues to foreign destinations.

Approaches To Collecting The Transport Issue.

- APO cancellations
- Foreign destinations
- Combination covers with Prexies
- Denomination and usage. Ex. 6-cent issue and its use
- Censored covers
- Rates and usage. Because international rates varied widely, this can be extremely challenging.

Example Cover From My Transport Airmail Collection.

This is an airmail registered cover paying the proper rates to Buenos Aires, Argentina (see Figures 1 and 2). A combination of Transport and Prexie stamps was used to pay the airmail rate of 30 cents plus the registration fee of 15 cents. The cover was mailed October 8, 1944, from San Francisco. An interesting censor marking "written in German Language" is marked on the cover, apparently to flag the mail so that translation of the contents could be arranged. As can be seen from the many markings on the front and back of the cover, this type of postal history can be very interesting to collect. One of the challenges of this type of material is interpreting the story behind the cover through the postal markings.

Selected Bibliography.

- 1] Davis, G.H. THE TRANSPORTS. Published by U.S. Stamp Society.
- 2] Ekstrom, Stephen W. (2002 October) Transport airmail usages. U.S. SPECIALIST 73(10):459
- 3] Lawrence, Ken (1996 July) Transport air mail series. AMERICAN PHILATELIST 110:601-602
- 4] Lawrence, Ken (1997 April) Presidential and Transport air mail series postal rates. AMERICAN PHILATELIST 111:312



Figure 1: Front of cover.



Figure 2: Back of cover.

FOUNDERS' AWARD

The Founders' Award is given annually to a CPS member for service to the club during the preceding season. For the 2003/04 season, the award was presented to Jim Senecal. He received a suitably engraved silver tray at the February meeting. Jim has been involved with both the silent and regular auctions, and is active in the youth club of the CPS. Congratulations, Jim!

EDMONTON SPRING NATIONAL STAMP SHOW

The annual spring show in Edmonton will be held April 1 to April 3, at the Fantasyland Hotel Conference Centre, West Edmonton Mall, on the 3rd Level, Europa Boulevard. Hours are 1 pm to 6 pm Friday, 10 am to 5 pm Saturday, and 10 am to 4 pm Sunday. Admission is free. There will be competitive exhibits, dealer bourse, juniors' room, sales books, banquet, and seminars. For details, visit: www.edmontonstampclub.com

THE CPS ON-LINE DISCUSSION GROUP

The CPS has an on-line discussion group where members can chat about philatelic matters, club business, or post news announcements. To join, see Dale Speirs at the general meetings or send an e-mail to opuntia57@yahoo.ca with the subject heading "Subscribe CPS group". In the main body of the message, list your real name (no Internet alias, please) so your membership in the CPS can be verified, and the e-mail address you want to subscribe under. If you are not a member of Yahoo Groups, you will have to register a name and password at their Website after being signed up, but this is free and only has to be done once. Thereafter, you can go directly to the www.yahoogleroups.com and read archived messages or post new ones. Or, alternatively, you can send an e-mail directly to: CalgaryPhilatelicSociety@yahoogroups.com and it will be automatically posted if you are a member of the group.

You will receive a daily digest of messages from the CPS group. We are not a high-traffic group, so you may not get messages every day. I will pick out messages from time to time for the CALGARY PHILATELIST. The list can also be used to buy, sell, or trade philatelic material. If you are bringing auction lots, you can post a list of your lots a few days ahead of time; this will help buyers. You can also publicize what you have in your circuit books or private treaty books. No 18-page attachments please; text only and keep it about one page.

by Leanteri Polvikoski

Canadian Aerophilatelist #61 (\$20 per year from Canadian Aerophilatelic Society, 203A Woodfield Drive, Nepean, Ontario K2G 4P2). Society news and notes, and articles on aviation-related postcards, polar aircraft, bush flying, and various flight covers.

Mekeel's (2005 Feb 11) (Sample copy US\$4 from Philatelic Communications Corp., 42 Sentry Way, Merrimack, New Hampshire 03054-4407) Weekly philatelic newsmagazine with news and notes, lots of ads, and articles. This issue has an editorial on the trouble some collectors have in finding a place to sort their stamps and covers, surprising news that the average age of collectors is starting to decline slightly as the Baby Boomers displace the Greatest Generation, and an account of Abraham Lincoln when he was an Illinois postmaster.

Postal History Journal (2005 Feb) (US\$35 per year from Postal History Society, 8207 Daren Court, Pikesville, Maryland 21208-2211) This issue has articles on kinderposts (play post offices used to teach children how to mail letters), a Danish spy who later became PMG of his country and kept spying on the side, French involvement in Greek independence wars, bankruptcy notices, and Honolulu late-letter fees. Also book reviews, current bibliography, and society news and notes.

Topical Time (2005 Jan/Feb) (Available from the CPS Librarian at the general meetings.) This issue has articles on the stamp topicals of Charles Darwin, marine mammals, tombs, ballet, and castles. The best article was on the world's worst aircraft, including the infamous Brewster aircraft of WW2 which were so bad that the U.S. Navy deliberately forced the manufacturer out of business. Also in this issue are regular features such as checklists and reviews.

BNA Topics (2004 4th Quarter) (\$25 per year from British North America Philatelic Society, #6-2168-150A Street, Surrey, B.C. V4A 9W4) Devoted to Canada and pre-Confederation stamps and postal history. This issue has articles on Newfoundland-Portugal mails, postal rates to USA 1937-42, unauthorized overprints on Elizabethian stamps, Toronto stamp shows, and local postal history.

La Catastrophe #40 (Sample copy L3.25 from Wreck and Crash Mail Society, c/o Norman Hoggarth, 10 Lady Jane Park, Bradgate Road, Newtown Linford, Leicester LE6 0HD, England) This quarterly is devoted to interrupted mail. The issue at hand has articles on a 1923 Wyoming train wreck where the trestle collapsed, a six-year delay of a letter from Papua New Guinea because it was held as evidence in a court trial, and mail delayed in a 1947 collision between a freighter and an oil tanker in Galveston, Texas.

by Jan Brookes

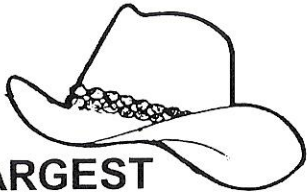
The Spring Bourse will be on Saturday, April 23, and Sunday, April 24. Set-up will be Friday night. Let's all cross our fingers that we don't have snow like last year. All our regular dealers will be in attendance. We will be having an auction Saturday afternoon from 1 pm to 3 pm, with great lots and good competition as in the past.

This year, CAPE (our exhibitors' group) is organizing a one-frame non-competitive exhibit. If you would like a frame, please contact Jon Johnson and let him know. With Marg Hunt ill, please let Penny Borrowman know if you can help with the Spring Bourse set-up, the youth table, and the reception area. Our shows do not run themselves without our great volunteers.

Plans are continuing with the Royal 2006 Royale, a Royal like no other. Dwayne and I will be attending the Royal 2005 in London, Ontario, at the end of May, where we will be giving a presentation about our show at the banquet. I will be operating a booth at that show handing out registration packages. We are still in need of several volunteers to run committees for Royal 2006. If you can help, please call me or Penny Borrowman.

COMMITTEES

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NOTE TO INTERNET VIEWERS: Unless stated otherwise, telephone numbers are area code 403. Alberta is on Mountain Time. Any advertiser can be reached through the CPS e-mail at calphilso@shaw.ca, but please allow time for forwarding to offline members.

NOTICE OF SALE: Postal cancels to be offered at auction at CPS Spring Show. Alberta (4 lbs) and Saskatchewan (3.5 lbs). Mostly 2x4, some covers. mainly modern: POCON, Klussendorf, steel hammer, machine, pictorial. Much duplication. Call Julius at 282-7982.

WANTED: Collector of stamps, books, and history. Special interest in submarine material. Contact Wayne at 295-3275 or kingwi@shaw.ca

WANTED: Canadian military covers and postcards with hospital ships (white with red crosses). Contact Jon Johnson at 253-8411 or jcjperfins@hotmail.com

WANTED: Tanna Tuva, especially covers. I used to have a few and now starting over. Phone Keith at (780)437-1787 (Edmonton)

COLLECT Christmas or owls? I have just completed updated checklists for both topics. Willing to share for just the cost of photocopying and postage. Contact Pat at 238-3435.

WANTED: Owl stamps worldwide. Cash or trade. Call Pat at 238-3435.

WANTED: Stamp show catalogues, Canadian and international shows. The older the better. Please contact Ed at 274-0021 or harrise@shaw.ca

WANTED: Advanced collector of World Wildlife Fund (anything with the panda logo) stamps, postally-used covers, FDCs, postcards, maximum cards, even cookie cans. Top dollar paid! Phone Jan at 251-1769.

WANTED: Private collector pays cash for larger stamp collections. Phone Willi at 239-2273.

TRADE: Need automotive work done on your car? Let's trade my labour for your stamps that I need. I am a licenced mechanic with 20+ years experience. Phone Doug Kollar at 547-3838.

FOR SALE: Ukrainian and Russian stamps new and used. Also Ukrainian FDCs and special cancels from 1991 to date. Call Andy at 236-2037.

WANTED: Stamps and covers from China to 1949, People's Republic of China, and Taiwan. Special interest in overprints and bulk lots. Prefer postally used. Call Penny at 686-2662 or pkborrowman@yahoo.ca.

TRADE: Asia: Japan, Singapore ... British: GB, Ascension to New Zealand, and South Africa ... Europe: Scandinavia, Germany, France, Switzerland ... to trade based on Scott catalogue. Call Joe at 277-7006

MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS 2005

April	3	Sunday bourse
	6	General meeting
	20	Auction
	23 and 24	Spring Stamp Show
May	1	Sunday bourse
	4	General meeting
		Speaker is Teresa Williams (Canada Post)
	4	Deadline for June bulletin
	18	Auction
June	1	Election meeting
	5	Sunday bourse
	15	Auction
August	5	Deadline for September bulletin
September	7	General meeting
	7	Deadline for October bulletin
	21	Auction
October	5	General meeting
	19	Auction

MEETINGS and AUCTIONS are at the Kerby Centre, 2nd floor, 1133 - 7 Avenue SW, at 19h30. Auction lots should be in before 19h30 to allow bidder viewing

SPRING STAMP SHOW and CALTAPEX are held at the Kerby Centre, main floor, 1133 - 7 Avenue SW. Details from Janice Brookes at 251-1769.

SUNDAY BOURSE is at Palliser Community Centre, 2323 Palliser Drive SW, from 10h00 to 16h00. Details and table rentals from Bill Szaroz at 337-3260.

CALGARY REGIONAL GROUP OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA PHILATELIC SOCIETY meets second Wednesdays. For details about meeting places and times, contact Ed Harris at 274-0021.

CALGARY ASSOCIATION OF PHILATELIC EXHIBITORS meets fourth Wednesdays. For details, contact Jim Taylor at 238-3698.