

Scribblings

...from the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library



Sherri Soraci-Jennings, Librarian

Vol. 28 - No. 3/4
www.rmpldenver.org

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May/Aug 2020
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Please note:

Second Saturday Programs
No programs will be scheduled until November at the earliest.

Reports on Board meetings, new acquisitions, new members, donations, and the activities will be resumed as soon as RMPL regular operations are resumed.

The Four Freedoms – Inspiring Words, Beautiful Art, Commemorative Stamps, and a 75th Anniversary Traveling Exhibition

By Brian Kramer



Fig. 1. The Four Freedoms as depicted by Norman Rockwell

I love history, newspapers, collecting stamps and viewing art. Sometimes these four loves converge into one. In the spring of 2018, both the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* had full or near full-page pieces announcing an exhibition devoted to the 75th anniversary of “The Four Freedoms” as visualized by Norman Rockwell (Fig. 1).

The Newspapers

The Saturday/Sunday, May 12-13, 2018, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article entitled “Rockwell’s Vision of FDR’s ‘Freedoms’”. This article detailed an upcoming exhibition of FDR’s Four Freedoms address that will include Rockwell’s related iconic paintings. The article included photos of Rockwell’s depiction of the Four Freedoms: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want and Freedom from Fear.

The article notes, “...Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms were initially meant to

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Newsletter of the
Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library

2038 So. Pontiac Way
Denver, CO 80224
Phone: (303) 759-9921
email: rmpl@qwestoffice.net
Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily,
Thursday, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Closed Sundays & Holidays

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Scribblings is published bimonthly by the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library. The RMPL is a chartered Colorado nonprofit corporation and is an IRS-designated 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Membership subscriptions over that for the contributing membership, and donations of appropriate philatelic materials, may be deductible for US income tax purposes. The Library is a volunteer organization. Financial donations, philatelic books, stamps, supplies and donations of your time are welcome.

A basic membership with the RMPL is \$25 per year and includes checkout privileges and six issues of *Scribblings*. Call for more information.

Knowledge is better when shared. Consider writing an article for *Scribblings* about your favorite philatelic topic.

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President's Message

I hope that all our members and their families are in good health. It is a crazy, trying time for all of us. One of the challenges is how to get through the social distancing and lockdowns without becoming totally frustrated. For me, spending time on my collection has helped. I am sure that is true for many of you. The VISA bill is a price I am willing to pay for some escape to a more relaxing and rewarding activity as compared to obsessing with the negative stream of news that inundates us, if we let it, 24 hours a day.



Because the health and welfare of our members is of foremost importance, we have adjusted RMPL's plans several times in accordance with the concept of "safety first." Once again, just before this issue was scheduled to be printed, Tri-County Health pushed back our prospective opening date.

Since we would like to maintain communications with our members, the Board and our editor suggested that we print and mail this edition without an opening date.

However, we intend to open as soon as Tri-County Health and Arapahoe County permit us to do so. Regardless of what that date is, given the ever-changing COVID situation, it is recommended that you contact the RMPL by telephone prior to driving over. When the reopening is allowed, certain safety rules governing visits to the RMPL will be enforced. These rules, approved by the Board of Directors, will be posted on the entrance door and on the telephone recording.

Once we open, all the necessary items will be available—masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing wipes. The library will be cleaned just before opening.

Thank you for your patience. Hope to see you soon!

Tonny

(Continued from page 1)

counter the arguments of the American isolationist movement...after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Freedoms were transformed into a rationale for the battle against fascism.”¹

The Friday, June 1, 2018, *New York Times* ran an advertisement that the New York Historical Society Museum & Library would be hosting the anniversary exhibit. The advertisement included Rockwell’s “Golden Rule.” The exhibition tour schedule also includes The Henry Ford Museum, Museum of Fine Arts (Houston), The George Washington University Museum and Textile Museum, Norman Rockwell Museum (Stockbridge, Massachusetts) and the Caen Memorial Museum (Normandy, France).

Eye Catching Copy and Artwork

The newspaper materials whetted my appetite to refresh my knowledge of the Freedoms and learn more about the exhibition. I wrote to the New York

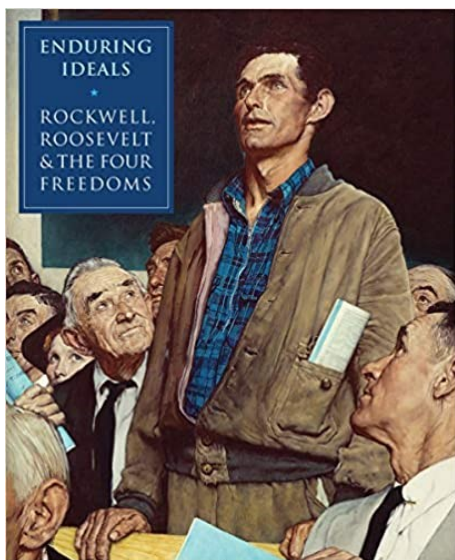


Fig. 2.

Historical Society Museum & Library about the exhibition. I received a response that included one of the handouts for the exhibition, Norman Rockwell Museum’s “Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms: a Family Guide.” The response also mentioned that a companion hardbound catalog is available (Fig. 2). It’s entitled *Enduring Ideals: Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms* (co-curated by Stephanie Haboush Plunkett and James J. Kimble). *Enduring Ideals* is a collection of very interesting essays, beautiful photographs and artwork. This catalog does a wonderful job of putting together the meaning of the Four Freedoms and Rockwell’s role.

Currently, the Denver Art Museum is featuring this exhibition which is now entitled “Norman Rockwell: Imagining Freedom.”

FDR’s Four Freedoms Address and its Expression in Stamps

The Four Freedoms were included in President Roosevelt’s January 6, 1941 State of the Union Address. Jon Meacham² explains, as Roosevelt dictated

the “Four Freedoms” draft he included the words “everywhere in the world.”² When challenged by his advisors, Roosevelt replied, “The world is getting so small that even the people in Java are getting to be our neighbors now.”²

The four freedoms were commemorated in postage. In 1943, a beautiful one-cent Four Freedoms



Fig. 3.

stamp was released (Fig. 3). Then, in 1945 (when FDR died) four stamps were released as a tribute. The five-cent stamp of this series featured FDR’s portrait, a map of the Western Hemisphere, and the Four Freedoms (Fig.4).

Norman Rockwell’s Four Freedoms Paintings and Related Stamps

The President expressed his Four Freedoms in words. In 1942, Norman Rockwell visualized these Freedoms in a collection of paintings. Photographs of these paintings, along with essays, were published in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1943.



Fig. 4.

Rockwell’s Four Freedoms paintings were also used by our government to help explain our war objectives and promote the War Bond campaigns.

The 100th anniversary of Rockwell’s birth was in 1994. The Norman Rockwell Four Freedoms souvenir sheet (Fig. 1) was released in the summer of 1994. The sheet features each of the Four Freedom paintings as 50-cent stamps along with Rockwell’s self-portrait and commentary.

Eleanor Roosevelt, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its Expression in Stamps

President Harry Truman appointed Eleanor Roosevelt as a delegate to the United Nations' General Assembly. She became the Chairperson of the United Nations' Commission on Human Rights. Through the Commission, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was drafted--a 30-article document of human rights. The United Nations' General Assembly proclaimed it on December 10, 1948 in Paris. Eleanor Roosevelt said it was an "international Magna Carta for all men everywhere."³ Will Swift⁴ notes that Eleanor Roosevelt "...could further her husband's legacy while fighting for individual rights and world peace, extending his famous "Four Freedoms"...into international criteria."

In 1988, the United Nations Postal Administration issued official first day covers commemorating the



Fig. 6.
(Right)

Fig. 5. (Left)



40th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. The \$2.00 and \$11.00 (Fig. 5) stamped covers are respectively in French and German and were postmarked by the United Nations in Geneva and Vienna respectively. The \$1.00 stamped

cover is in English and is shown postmarked by the United Nations in New York (Fig. 6).

The Four Freedoms' Legacy

The inspiring words of FDR's Four Freedoms left a very important legacy. These words led to Norman Rockwell's paintings that helped us further understand and refine the importance of these Freedoms. The *Saturday Evening Post* used photographs of Rockwell's paintings of the Four Freedoms and related essays by noted writers in their magazines. The words and paintings were also utilized in our country's War Bond campaigns. Later, Franklin Roosevelt's wife, Eleanor, carried the principles of the Four Freedoms into the framework for the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

Postage stamps were issued to commemorate FDR's Four Freedoms, Rockwell's painted interpretations of the Four Freedoms and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

Now a 75th anniversary exhibition of Rockwell's inspirational work is at the Denver Art Museum. I hope we'll have the opportunity to stop by and see this meaningful exhibition at the DAM.

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RMPL Auction Info

The silent auction that was to be held in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Stamp Show in May has been rescheduled for October 24th. There are 770 lots of U.S. and worldwide stamps and covers. The catalog and scanned images of each lot are already available online at www.rmplauctions.org. A print version of the catalog will be mailed out at the end of August with the September/October issue of *Scribblings*. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, this will be an entirely virtual auction (physical viewing and handling of the lots cannot take place). Bids may be submitted anytime but must be received by the close of business on October 24th.

The large lots auction which usually takes place in October has been rescheduled for the 4th Saturday in January.

A COVER WITH A STORY

By Tony Walker



Fig. 2. How the collision would have appeared

One of the perks (for want of a better word) of collecting military postal history is the potential for finding a relatively innocuous cover which has a story attached, often tragic in the case of the cover below.



Fig. 1. The H.M.S. Curacao

HMS Curacao was launched back in 1917 as C class cruiser for convoy escort duties. She survived WWI and subsequently became a training ship in 1933. In 1939, just before WWII she was converted to an anti-aircraft cruiser and transferred to the Atlantic Fleet.

On the morning of 2 October 1942 the Cunard liner *Queen Mary* with 10,000 American troops on board was nearing the end of her voyage from America. Some 200 miles off the Irish coast, she was met by escort cruisers including *HMS Curacao*. The liner, because of her speed, was able to outrun any U-boat attack in the open seas of the Atlantic, but was escorted over the final leg.

Both ships were zig-zagging, to make it difficult for enemy submarines to direct torpedoes, when the ships found themselves on a collision course. The Captains of both ships acknowledged this, but tragically they misinterpreted the 'Rules of the Road' etiquette and each assumed the other ship would give

way. They didn't, and the large liner travelling at 28.5 knots (32.8mph) sliced the small cruiser in half. The liner was ordered not to stop to pick up survivors. The two halves of *Curacao* sank almost immediately and 337 officers and men were killed, although a number were saved by other escort vessels (Fig. 2).

A week after the tragedy on 9 October 1942, the cover (no letter) was posted to Leading Stoker James William Crouch on *HMS Curacao* who lost his life. Due to the nature of the loss the Admiralty imposed a blanket censorship on reporting the event, and the Admiralty label attached to the cover (Fig. 3) gives no details of how L/Sto. Crouch was killed. Under the Protection of Military Remains Act of 1985, the wreck is a "Protected Space."

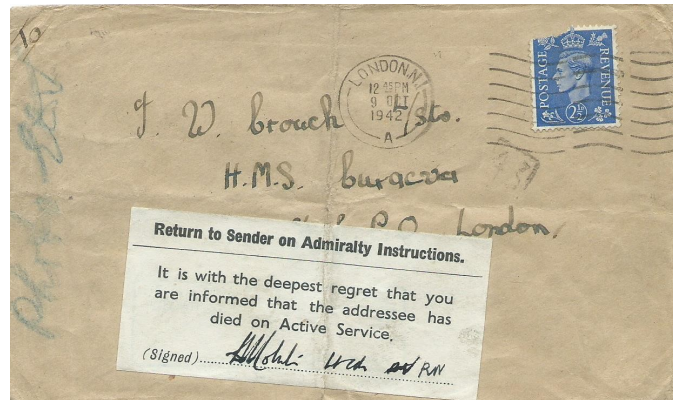


Fig. 3. Envelope with 2½d George V adhesive and London machine cancel dated 9 October 1942 together with the Return to Sender label. Mail to ships was addressed to c/o GPO, London for distribution to the various squadrons as notified by the Admiralty.

An Admiralty Court of Enquiry placed the total blame on Captain Boutwood of *HMS Curacao*, but a subsequent Appeal by the Admiralty concluded Cunard White Star Line and Commodore Sir Cyril Illingworth of the *Queen Mary* were each one third responsible.

POST HUGS FROM AFAR

By Jack Van Ens



“Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.” Although the Postal Service has never officially adopted this motto, citizens attribute it to mail carriers.

During the pandemic, front-line workers deliver mail, putting their lives in jeopardy. Some letter and package senders carry the COVID-19 virus. They may have sneezed on these mailings, contaminating them with droplets containing virus. Taking risks, carriers deliver mail under adverse conditions.

A carrier in the Denver suburb of Arvada traveled what Jesus in The Sermon on the Mount spoke of as “the second mile” of service. She spotted lawn signs congratulating graduates of Arvada West High School. Their enthusiasm waned because graduation season lacked pomp, caused by the circumstance of canceled commencement ceremonies.

This carrier received the Government’s stimulus check. She cashed it, requesting a stack of \$20 bills. Then she composed handwritten letters to graduates, encouraging them to make the best of bad messes during this pandemic by learning skills to cope with unfair jolts. Taking her cue from the Apostle Paul who sent missives to the Christian church in the Asia Minor city of Corinth and wrote a “greeting with [his] own hand,” (I Corinthians 16:21) the Arvada carrier tucked a \$20 bill with a note in envelopes. She placed them in mailboxes wherever she spied a yard sign celebrating an Arvada West High School graduate’s accomplishments.

This act of writing notes by hand, placing a First-Class stamp on the envelope and addressing letters in cursive has enjoyed an up-

swing in popularity during the pandemic. People want to connect with elderly friends, relatives with whom they previously lost touch and school chums who have drifted out of contact.

Besides toilet paper and Clorox wipes hoarded because of the COVID-19 scourge, buyers obeying stay-at-home orders purchased greeting cards to meet their pent-up desire to get “up-close and personal” with acquaintances.

“Consumers” orders of greeting cards from Minted LLC tripled in the week [which] ended April [2020] from the same period last year. And demand has risen for designs that reflect sentiments during the health crisis, such as “Sending hugs from far away,” says Mariam Naficy, founder and chief executive of the San Francisco-based company.

People desire to go deeper in touching another’s heart than by dashing off an e-mail, tuning in to ZOOM for a video contact, or using a messaging app to convey feelings. They wish to do more than sound nice with a bland e-mail. Our Web devices tend to deliver information that comes across rather flatly to recipients. It lacks depth of meaning when tough times turn our lives upside-down.

When I’m not expanding knowledge of geography, history and different cultural trends through stamp collecting, I take walks in a Federal Wildlife Refuge with a friend. Before most businesses closed because of COVID-19, my walking buddy’s wife suffered multiple foot fractures and had to be socially distanced from him for eight weeks, convalescing in a rehab facility. Because he wasn’t allowed in-person visits with her, my friend wrote daily notes to his wife in long-hand.

This technically trained meteorologist took time to compose sentences which formed thoughtful paragraphs, draw a doodle alongside the handwritten text and send these personal touches the old-fashioned way—by mail.

If we write by hand at all, its usually pointed towards meeting our needs—a hastily written Post-it, a

(Continued on page 9)

Cover from an Endangered Land

By Jim Kilbane and Dell Lekus

Jim is a member of the Latin America and Aero Philatelic groups, among several other clubs. He and his partner, Dell, both belong to the Great Britain (GBCCC) group. Dell as a non-philatelist is interested in English history.

This past December, they went to the Second Saturday Holiday Pot Luck, where they participated in the gift exchange. Jim went home with a large collection of covers. That evening, leafing through his "new" covers, Jim plucked out this interesting piece from a place that was unfamiliar to both.

This cover (Fig. 1) has uncommon characteristics, both geographic and philatelic, which are discussed later in this article. But first, a little information about Kiribati—a tiny cluster of islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean (Fig. 2). Its pronunciation is strange, too: "kir-a-bahs / kiri'bæs." The area has been inhabited since sometime around 3000 BC-1300 AD. Before the 1400s, it received settlers from Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji who established a seafaring culture.



Fig. 1.

The northern islands were ruled by chiefs and the central and southern Islands were much more egalitarian. As a result, sometime during the 15th century, a civil war began. It lasted well into the 17th and 18th centuries, by which time, visits from European ships supplied modern weapons like guns and cannons.

British captain Thomas Gilbert sighted some of the islands in 1788 while sailing in the Outer Passage route from Port Jackson to Canton. In 1820, the area was named "îles Gilbert" ("The Gilbert Islands" in English) to commemorate the man and the event. Visits by foreign ships also brought European, Chinese, Samoan and other newcomers starting around the 1830s, broadening the area's cultural influences.

In 1892, local Kiribati authorities, along with in-

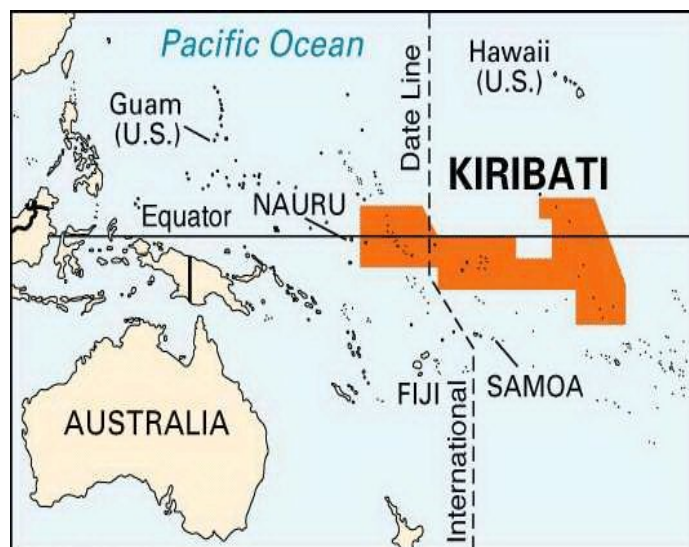


Fig. 2.

habitants of the nearby Ellice Islands, agreed to become part of a British protectorate. Banaba (called Ocean Island in Europe) was added to the protectorate in 1900.

In 1902, the first trans-Pacific telegraph cable was laid from British Columbia to Fanning Island and from Fiji to Fanning Island, completing the All Red Line, a network of telegraph lines circumnavigating the globe within the British Empire. A few years later, in 1916, the protectorate became the crown colony of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, and the Line Islands (including Christmas and Fanning Islands) and Phoenix Islands were added several years following that.

The United States eventually incorporated some of the northern Line and Phoenix Islands, including Howland, Jarvis, and Baker islands, into its territories. This caused a territorial dispute which was eventually resolved. By 1983, the United States relinquished all claims to the sparsely-inhabited Phoenix Islands as well as those Line Islands that are part of Kiribati territory.

Note that Howland Island, an uninhabited coral island just north of the equator, is the island Amelia Earhart was searching for when her airplane disappeared on July 2, 1937 while she was attempting an around the world flight.

Parts of the area were occupied by Japan from 1941 to 1943 while World War II was underway. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, Christmas Island was used by the United States and United Kingdom for nuclear weapons testing. (If Christmas Island

is familiar to you, that's probably why.)

Internal self-rule mechanisms were established on Tarawa, the group's capital and largest city, from around 1967. The Ellice Islands were separated from the rest of the colony and became the independent nation of Tuvalu in 1978. The remaining Gilbert Islands gained independence as the Republic of Kiribati on July 12, 1979.

"Kiribati" is the Gilbertese interpretation of "Gilberts," the English pronunciation of the name of the main archipelago of the nation, which had been "îles Gilbert".

The 1979 Kiribati Constitution specifies free and open elections, with an executive branch consisting of a president (limited to three four-year terms and directly elected by the people), a vice-president and cabinet. Administration of justice is similar to other former British possessions. Local government is administered through island councils with elected members, and local affairs are handled much like town meetings in colonial America. Since independence, a united Kiribati is no longer divided into districts.

Around the time of its independence, British aid organizations considered overcrowding to be a problem in the Kiribati area. In 1988, several thousand residents of the main island group were resettled onto less-populated islands.

In 1995, Kiribati moved the International Date Line to the east in order to ease trade; (that's why the date line shown in Figure 2 isn't straight). This small



Fig. 3. A family wades through their flooded village, floating an old fridge, collecting sea-bed stones to build a flood wall in Eita, Tarawa, Kiribati. (Jonas Gratzner/LightRocket / Getty Images)



Fig. 4. The ocean encroaches making it likely that these islands will ultimately disappear below the waves.

new country (population of just over 110,000 in 2015) became the first to see the dawn of the third millennium, vastly enhancing local tourism. Kiribati maintains close diplomatic relations with Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Fiji.

An Endangered Country

Unfortunately, this new country will be short-lived. Kiribati is expected to be the first country to sink completely underwater due to global warming (Figs. 3 & 4). Several small, uninhabited islands in the group have already disappeared under the Pacific ocean. Consequently, Kiribati has been very active in international climate change resolution efforts. In November 2010, Kiribati hosted the Tarawa Climate Change Conference (TCCC) to enable and ease diplomatic efforts associated with climate change.

In 2008, Kiribati officials asked close allies Australia and New Zealand to accept Kiribati citizens as permanent refugees. Since 2012, Kiribati has been purchasing large tracts of land on Vanua Levu, the second largest island of Fiji, with immediate plans to move its citizens to a safer homeland. This past year, Kiribati terminated diplomatic relations with Taiwan, causing China to offer a 737 airplane and ferries to Kiribati.

Before Kiribati disappears entirely, let's take a look at the philatelic aspects of this unusual cover. Seen in Figure 1. Even though Kiribati is a tiny, little-known country, the front of the cover has a shield printed in three colors. The motto on the ribbon under the shield is the Gilbertese motto "Te Mauri Te Raoi Ao Te Tabomoa," which translates to "Health, Peace, and Prosperity."

The cover is not a first day cover, even though the lower left portion of the cover's front reads "OFFICIAL FIRST DAY COVER." This misdirection happened because the Kiribati Post Office used old envelopes to send their stamps to a collector (as indicated by the handwritten note on the reverse). But

coincidentally, on the date this envelope was canceled (February 18th 1982 at Betio, Kiribati), there was a new issue of fifteen stamps of birds.

This envelope was sent by air mail (rectangular overprint on the cover's left front). It has a customs declaration rubber stamp in green ink on the reverse. The amount declared was \$1.27 Australian dollars. (In 1982, The Australian dollar was worth about 40 U.S. cents; today, it is worth about 70 cents.)

The "A" in the small oblong box sticker would have probably been applied to a bundle of covers at the Seattle Post Office to signify that the bundle was going to the same area. It just happened that this piece was on top.

The stamps on this cover are from the first definitive series of Kiribati issued on July 12, 1979. These multicolored definitives were created by an offset lithography print process and they have 14 x 14 perforations. Their indigenous motifs depict Kiribati flora, fauna, buildings and scenery.

The overprint "O.K.G.S." (On Kiribati Government Service) was first used on May 1, 1981. O.K.G.S. was used by the Post Office and other government agencies. These attractive stamps were part of a 15-stamp issue ranging from 1-cent to \$5 Australian several enlargement of which—with and without the overprint—can be seen in Figure 5.



Fig. 5.

(Continued from page 6)



messily scribbled shopping list or a punchy reminder lacking whole sentences. In contrast, my friend spent quality time constructing handwritten notes to lift his dear wife's spirits.

Sadly, not everyone has a knack for bolstering feelings through handwritten notes. Instead, some leaders verbally jab, take cheap shots, and rile rather than soothe. Although postal employees are performing heroic feats of mail delivery, our government drags its feet in covering financial shortfalls caused by businesses canceling mailed shopping circulars. Because COVID-19 has stalled the economy, businesses have drastically cut back mailing advertise-

ments, curtailing mail volume by an estimated 30 percent.

"The Postal Service is a joke," snapped President Trump to reporters this past April. "They're handing out packages for Amazon and other internet companies and every time they bring a package, they lose money."

The president considers Amazon's founder Jeff Bezos very offensive because he also owns The Washington Post newspaper, which exposes Trump's habit of what The Washington Post has cited as more than 18,000 questionable statements he's made that are not true, honest, or scientifically informed.

Megan Brennan, recently retired as Postmaster General and CEO of the Postal Service, made an April 10, 2020 plea. "As Congress and the Administration takes steps to support businesses and industries around the country, it is imperative that they also take action to shore up the finances of the Postal Service."

"Neither gloom of night" nor gloom from COVID-19 dents energetic letter carriers from carrying our mail, showing selfless devotion to this risky task. They deliver notes we write to console and encourage, which offer literary handshakes because health guidelines forbid extending physical ones. These USPS carriers deserve our recognition for their service.

THE FIRST AMERICAN ADHESIVE STAMPS

By William Gum

The world is loaded with “firsts” and “philatelic firsts” are no exception. We celebrate the first day of the issue of postage stamps on First Day Covers and many of our stamps themselves celebrate first time events - the first air flight, the first moon landing, the first president, the first person of European descent to land in the new world, etc. The list goes on and on.

Open up many United States stamp albums and the first space to place a stamp is for the 1847 five-cent red-brown stamp sporting the image of Ben Franklin, the first postmaster general of the United States. But the first stamp does not start there.

A series of taxes and fees levied on the American colonists ultimately led to the American Revolution and the founding of the United States of America. Included in that list of taxes was a levy on documents - a stamp tax decreed by the Stamp Act of 1765 (Fig. 1). 10 years earlier the Stamp Act of January 8th, 1755 required that various documents like leases, mortgages, stock certificates and many other types of documents carry a stamp. Most of these “stamps” were colorless impressions much like our notary seals that left a raised impression on the document to signify that the tax had been paid. Scott's catalogue as-



Fig. 2. Examples of embossed revenue stamps issued by Massachusetts and New Jersey.

signs these revenue stamps (Fig. 2) with the prefixes “RM” and “RN”.

It is with great risk, therefore, to embark on a treatise discussing first US stamps without leaving oneself open to correction or criticism over nomenclature, classification and other facets of our first adhesive stamps but the effort is certainly worthwhile as it sheds light on an interesting period of our country's early history and an often overlooked area of stamp collecting.

Hop into my “Time Tesla” and travel with me to New York City back to the early 1800s in order to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of our country's early postal operations. You will notice that desktop computers and email programs quickly disappeared. There are no mail slots on the doors of the homes or businesses. There are no postal boxes on the street corners to drop a letter with the expectation that a postal employee will pick it up and start it on its way to its final destination.

To mail a letter in 1840 you had to take it to the post office and hand it to the postmaster. If somebody mailed you a letter then you were expected to go to the post office to retrieve it. There was no prepaid postage and the cost of delivery was usually borne by the recipient and not the sender. Before the postmaster tendered you the mail you had to pay him the appropriate fee.

This process, though inconvenient, was not all bad for if you were the recipient of junk mail you could always refuse to pay the fee and avoid the junk mail altogether.

History notes that our 12th President, Zachary Taylor, was in the habit of refusing to pay for unsolicited mail and almost missed out on the opportunity to run for president. “Old Rough and Ready”



Fig. 1. Proof sheet of one-penny stamps submitted for approval to Commissioners of Stamps by engraver, May 10, 1765 (British Library)

wasn't particularly interested in politics to begin with and when the Whig Party decided in 1848 that they wanted him to be their candidate they sent him a letter to his field headquarters. Because he didn't normally pay for unsolicited mail he initially refused to accept the letter, but providence intervened and the rest is, well, history.

Taylor was greatly admired for his victorious leadership as a general during the Mexican War from 1846 through 1848 and in 1849 he became the first US President who didn't hold a prior political office. He was popular enough to have his likeness depicted on Bouton's City Despatch Post in 1848 (Scott's local post stamp 18L1) - before his death in 1850 and long before he appeared on a US postage stamp in 1875 (Scott's #179).

The Federal Government, like most governments, has never been lauded as an innovative institution. Time management became more important as New York City grew and just as the first adhesive stamp was created in Great Britain (the Queen Victoria One Penny black issued on May 6th, 1840) the New York Penny Post was created by a local entrepreneur (name unknown) to transfer mail to and from addresses within the city but not to and from the post office. They charged three cents per letter to the recipient for the service and used a double circle frame (both circles close together) hand stamp with "New York" at the top and "Penny Post" around the bottom of the circle and the delivery date and time in the middle (Fig. 3).

The service was short lived, lasting only from January 1840 into September 1841. They had 75 locations where mail was deposited and picked up twice a day but speculation is the post failed because



Fig. 3. New York Penny Post Folded Letter Cover. "Penny Post" is clear along the bottom of the double circle cancellation. "New York" and the "2" of "May 24th" show very faintly but the cancellation was impressed unevenly and heaviest on the bottom so that the upper text is almost impossible to make out on this rare item - a letter carried by the first "Penny Post" or "Local Carrier". Interestingly, the early post office charged on a "per sheet" basis and an envelope counted as a separate sheet of paper so most people merely folded up their letter to save a little money.

they charged the recipient, not the sender. However, the idea of individual entrepreneurs serving as middlemen for postal customers was born.

The next year an English entrepreneur named Henry T. Windsor traveled to New York looking for somebody to team up with to start a local post delivery operation. The US had won its independence from England just 60 years earlier and English merchants were not necessarily looked upon with fondness. He teamed up with a stockbroker named Alexander Greig. Windsor purchased the remnants of the New York Penny Post, formed the City Despatch Post on February 1st, 1842 and issued the first adhesive postage stamps in the United States (Scott's 40L1). They bore the likeness of George Washington (Fig.4).

The enterprising Greig and his City Despatch Post led to several new postal innovations. Not only were they the first local post to issue an adhesive stamp in the United States they also placed letter boxes throughout the city and letters were collected and delivered THREE TIMES A DAY! The adhesive stamp was called a FREE stamp - with FREE being understood as meaning pre-paid. A cancellation hand stamp with the word "FREE" inside an octagonal box was used to signify this new process. If no stamp was affixed then the customary practice of the recipient paying for the letter was still in place.



Fig.4. The first adhesive U.S. stamp, printed by Rawdon, Wright and Hatch (which became the American Banknote Company).

As we'll see with most of the local posts the life of Mr. Greig's City Despatch Post

was short lived. Before long the City Despatch Post was carrying 450 letters a day versus the defunct New York Penny Post's average of around 300. While the New York Post Office had a dozen or so men delivering letters to addressees who were slow in retrieving their mail they had no facility for picking up incoming mail throughout the city.

The United States Post Office, not particularly liking the idea of competition, purchased the City Despatch Post and renamed it the United States City Despatch Post on August 16th, 1842 - thus starting a new type of government operation of local delivery and issuing stamps called CARRIER STAMPS - (Scott's designated LB prefix) making just slight changes to the City Despatch Post's adhesive stamp



Fig. 5. The first US Adhesive Stamps: From Left: 40L1 Greig's City Despatch Post. 6LB1 - the first "Carrier" Stamp. This stamp only exists "used." The government bought the operations of the City Despatch Post and renamed it the United States Despatch Post as can be seen at the top of the ovals of the various stamps. Before they reprinted stamps with "United States" in the oval, the government used existing supplies of Greig's post and changed the cancellation from "FREE" inside the octagon to "U.S." All mint 6LB1 stamps are classified as 40L1 local post stamps as there is no difference between the two.

The next 4 stamps - 6LB3, 6LB5, 6LB5b and 6LB5d were issued from 1842-1845, bear the name "United States Despatch Post" and all carry the "U.S." cancellation inside the octagon.

The post office discontinued the post in 1846 and it was again run as a local post by Abraham Mead who issued his "City Despatch Post" local stamps SC# 40L2 on the far right. Notice the cancellation again reverted to the "FREE" inside of the octagon instead of "U.S."

and changing to cancellation from FREE inside an octagon to U.S inside the octagon.

New York Post Master John Graham (under instructions of the Post Master General) purchased the City Despatch Post and all of its equipment (and stamps). To keep things simple, Graham merely adding the name "United States" to the front of the Penny Post's name for ease of conversion. Before long they were carrying 761 letters per day.

After a few years, on November 28th, 1846, the Postmaster General issued a short announcement in the newspaper as follows: By the authority of the Postmaster General the United States City Despatch Post is discontinued. Two days later a former U.S. letter carrier named Abraham Mead took over the operation of the City Despatch Post and in late 1847 or early 1848 he sold his operation to Charles Coles.

Figure 5 shows the stamps sold by the various proprietors of the City Despatch Post - Greig's operation (Scott Catalog numbers 40L1; U.S. Government Carrier Stamps 6LB1, 6LB3, 6LB5, 6LB5b, 6LB5d) and the first stamp issued by Abraham Mead after he took over operations from the U.S. Post Office in 1846 (40L2).

More on carrier stamps later, but now it is time to hop back in our Time Tesla and return to the 21st Century to recharge our batteries.

A Special Note: In the coin collecting world a wise old saying often quoted but seldom followed is "Read the book before you buy the coin." The same holds true with local post stamps, but even more so. The genre is fraught with fakes and forgeries from all different eras and many are deceptively close to the originals. If you are ready to dive into the deep end on your own then the good news is that the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library carries the three volume set called; THE IDENTIFIER FOR CARRIERS, LOCALS, FAKES, FORGERIES AND BOGUS POSTS OF THE UNITED STATES by LARRY LYONS.

You will find these volumes quite useful in separating the wheat from the chaff.

Over time I hope to cover all the wonders, joys, trials and pitfalls of this often overlooked area of American philately.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As you will note, this *Scribblings* does not contain the usual business notices and regular columns. Due to the uncertainty created by the COVID-19 health concerns, a separate insert has been printed with as much update information as possible regarding the RMPL and its operations. Please read this material carefully. If you have a question about whether the library is open due to changing circumstances or about visitation requirements, please call before venturing out to the library.