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The Smithsonian's Swedish Mail Box

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Fig. 1. Swedish portable mail box, c. 1893. The instruction prohibits the deposit of letters with valuable contents. (Smithsonian photo)

In addition to stamps and covers from all over the world, the holdings of the Division of Philately and Postal History at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C., also include a great number of objects related to the development of the mail service.

Originally, the Smithsonian's philatelic collection was confined to stamps, when in 1888 the first bequest was accepted. The collection was expanded in 1911 when the Post Office Department transferred its "museum room" collection of not only stamps and postal stationery, but also objects related to the postal service. Some of these objects included items which had been sent by various countries to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 and, on its closing, were donated to the United States Government. However, many of these objects were relegated to storage areas because of space limitations in the Arts & Industries Building, where the Division of Philately was located, and the main exhibits continued to be essentially limited to stamps.

The moving of the Division to the new Museum of History and Technology in 1964 made it possible to greatly expand the exhibits and reference areas. A review of the material in the Division's custody is now in progress and, as a result, some objects have been retrieved from storage for research purposes and possible exhibition.

Among these is a Swedish portable mail box (Fig. 1). Some rather interesting facts of a general nature have come to light in connection with research originally directed toward documenting the mail box.

The use of mail boxes in Sweden, stationary or portable, is not as old as one might think. The *Meddelanden från Postmuseum No. 16* (1936), pp. 83-84, contains the first reference to mail boxes found in a Royal Decree of March 7, 1835, which established the installment of a mail box on board every vessel which was engaged in passenger service. The boxes were to be constructed so that letters could easily be deposited and removed only by the use of a key. The first such boxes for vessels were made of sheet metal in 1835.

Mail boxes were first placed at post offices and in heavily populated areas in 1855 in connection with the introduction of postage stamps in Sweden. Prior to this, the public had to deliver letters to the post offices. The use of stamps simplified the posting of letters by allowing the deposit of prepaid letters in the mail boxes, thus saving the time and trouble of journeying to the nearest post office.

Mail boxes became very important to the mail service, and a Circular Letter of April 12, 1855 from the Swedish Postal Administration to the postmasters brings this out (here translated in the linguistic style of the time):

" . . . it might be more practical for the Postmaster if the box, or other convenient device, such as a hole in the wall, door, or window, with adequate notice as to the purpose, and with a drop area for letters on the inside, can be placed in the post office so that it will be accessible for deposit of letters at all times of the day from the outside, and can be opened from within the post office; the Royal Postal Administration deems it best that each Post Office, according to each its own local conditions, secures suitable box or other device, and herewith recommends that each postmaster submits to this Administration his suggestion and estimate of the least painful cost at the earliest opportunity, whereupon such box or device may be procured locally . . . "

In another similar circular letter (dated May 24, 1855), we find the following:

" . . . The mail boxes, or similar letter deposit devices, at the post offices are to be emptied at the expiry of the deadlines established for each mail,

and the deposited letters are to be dispatched on the next outgoing mail . . .” and also:

“ . . . The letters deposited in the mail boxes or letter deposit stations along the post roads are to be collected by those who have been charged with the service of these (meaning letter deposit boxes and stations), in order to turn them over to the proper letter carrier (“postillon”), or in his absence, post rider, as they travel through with the mail, and by these to be delivered to the nearest post office. To carry these letters, the letter carrier or the post rider should be equipped with a suitable bag . . . ”

This reference to “a suitable bag” (for the letter carrier) would appear to be the origin of the mail box shown in Fig. 1. At first, these “bags” were made of heavy cloth or leather, but the service to which they were put demanded containers of more rigid construction. The mail box shown here is made of sheet metal and is indeed sturdy. It measures 25.3 cm high (additional 2.2 cm for the lid) by 29.2 cm wide by 10 cm deep. As can be seen, it is somewhat curved, and is equipped with a leather carrying strap. It is painted black (enamel) with the handlettering in yellow (oil) paint.



Fig. 2. “Letter carrier” in a Berlin cafe 1899 (from *The Graphic*, 1899)

A recent letter from Mr. Gilbert Svenson of the Swedish Postal Museum discloses that this type of letter carrier's mail box ("Postiljonsbrevlåda") was introduced in 1868 and was in use along all postal routes not serviced by railroads or stage coaches. It was used by letter carriers on foot as well as those using different modes of transportation, such as horse, carriage, sled, or skis. The regulations required the postman to carry the mail box on the outside of his jacket or topcoat, or to be so placed on his vehicle that he could observe it at all times. It was to be made accessible to the public for deposit of letters and post cards while the letter carrier was en route, and in this way speed the mail. Those carriers who were to collect letters from stationary mail boxes along the route deposited such letters in their portable boxes.

The production of portable mail boxes of this type was discontinued in the 1930's, according to Mr. Svenson, who interestingly points out that a portable mail box with identical text as shown here is illustrated in the published inventory of the Swedish Postal Administration, *Postverkets Inventarieförteckning*, for the year 1893—the year of the Columbian Exposition.

The idea of having letter carriers equipped with portable mail boxes is not exclusively Swedish, however. Postal history accounts of the last century from Denmark, England, France, Germany, Holland, and Russia, for example, are often accompanied by contemporary illustrations showing mail carriers of that time at work. In many, one can see portable mail boxes of similar types, although it is difficult to detect a slot or opening through which one could deposit letters. But one shows it very clearly, as illustrated in Fig. 2. The "letter carrier" is a traveling salesman of picture post cards, displaying his wares in a Berlin café in 1899. The illustration is a detail of a larger drawing in *The Graphic* (London) of June 24, 1899, and shows a lady "mailing" her picture post card by dropping it into the portable box, the contents of which the hawker would later deliver to the nearest post office.

Man's greed seems to survive all times, and has been the plague of postal services in all countries. Sweden was no exception, as vividly told by an announcement of July 2, 1855—the day after postage stamps were introduced. It warned that anybody caught tampering with or damaging the mail boxes or their contents, or causing such tampering or damage, would be fined twenty-five Riksdaler Banko, a hefty sum of money in those days! This warning was prominently in view on posters at each mail box. Furthermore, it was required that ". . . this announcement is to be read, once a year, from the pulpits of every church in the city of Stockholm . . ."

Bibliography

- (1) *Graphic, The*, June 24, 1899, page 805.
- (2) Harlow, Alvin F., *Old Post Bags* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1928). illustrations facing pages 70, 84, 116, 178, 212, 218.
- (3) *Meddelanden från Postmuseum*, Nos. 12 and 16, 1930 and 1936 resp. (Stockholm: Postverkets Tryckeri, 1930 and 1936), pages 17-28 (No. 12) and 83-84 (No. 16).
- (4) Smithsonian Institution, U. S. National Museum, Accessions Nos. 20129 and 52985.
- (5) Svenson, Gilbert, letter to R. Norby, February 17, 1967.
- (6) Sweden, Royal Decree of March 7, 1835 and later decrees through the Swedish Postal Administration.
- (7) U. S. Post Office Department, *Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the U. S. for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 1894* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894), page 46.

A Message From the President

By the time you read this, the Eastern Regional Meeting at SOJEX will have been held, but it is of course impossible to give a report on it at this writing. However, we hope to have initiated action on a few pressing items, and perhaps have gotten some ideas on others that may be needed, as well as getting a consensus of the wishes of the members regarding future direction of the society.

Next in order is COMPEX, in Chicago, May 26 to 28, where we will hold a Mid-West Regional Meeting. This will enable some of those who could not come to Atlantic City to take part in a similar meeting. We expect to report on the Eastern Meeting, and to get additional opinions on which to confirm or modify our plans.

The Chicago Chapter has always shown wonderful hospitality at the meetings held in connection with COMPEX, and I am sure this one will be no exception. One of the most delightful aspects of these meetings is the sociability, and the contacts with other collectors of similar interests enhance the pleasure in your own collecting. I hope everyone who can will attend this year's COMPEX, and help make it as successful and memorable as the previous ones have been.

Svend Yort

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New SCC Chapter in the Making

As many of our readers will know from the February issue of the "Scribe," many members in Northern Delaware have banded together and formed a SCC chapter. These are SCCers who can't make the meetings of the Philadelphia group (Chapter 2). The formalities are now being worked out by SCC officials, and the new chapter (probably No. 13) will soon be an official member of the family.

In the meantime, the new group doesn't waste time! They have already held regular meetings (4th Tuesday of the month on a rotating basis at members' homes) and enthusiasm is great. For example, the chapter business took only 20 minutes of the February 28 meeting, the rest of the time was devoted to study each other's stamps, and the meeting lasted until past midnight! Hal Brown showed his Iceland and Finland, Al Gruber (in whose home the meeting was held) showed Icelandic covers, blocks, and singles. Bob Lipscomb and John Siverts brought along only parts of their extensive collections; while the rest of the group sopped up the knowledge these members spread around, such as varieties, shades, cancels, watermarks, etc. Trading was very active, and "market prices" were reasonable, much to the delight of all present (and that included 3 non-SCCers who are interested in joining).

Most members are planning to attend the big SCC Meeting at SOJEX, and the group is looking forward to the day it will be recognized as a bona fide chapter.

The next meeting will be March 28 at the home of Bob Lang, who is the provisional President and Secretary (23 The Horseshoe, Newark, Delaware, 19711).

Fraudulent or Unreported Virgin Islands (U.S.A.) Overprint on U. S. Documentary Stamps?

By Roger B. Preston (1075)

What is the status of the 1c documentary U. S. internal revenue stamp picturing Alexander Hamilton, and bearing an overprint indicating that it is for Virgin Islands use? Back in April 1963 a collector wrote me about Danish West Indies revenue stamps and stated:

"The current Virgin Island (revenue) stamps are the U. S. Documentary overprinted in two lines, all caps 'VIRGIN / IS'. A friend of mine was down there recently and got a sheet of the 1c stamps."

For many years my work required that I visit the Virgin Islands frequently. The revenue stamps used there, both under Danish and American rule, form an interesting and little known series and I have always been interested in them. This report of overprinted revenue stamps was new to me, so I made it a point to investigate the reported new series of revenues next time I visited St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Under Virgin Islands law all revenue stamps belonging to the Department of Finance are stored in and distributed from the Virgin Islands National Bank, designated by law as the official government depository. I discussed this reported new overprinted revenue stamp with Mr. Eduardo Corneiro, the Assistant Manager, who is responsible for the safekeeping and the distribution of all revenue stamps.

Mr. Corneiro had never heard of United States stamps overprinted for use in the Virgin Islands (USA). He is too young to have known about the overprinting by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington of certain U. S. Playing Card stamps in 1920, 1926 and 1934 (listed by Scott as Nos. RFV1/RFV3) and now given rather high catalog valuations. Incidentally, certain of these were given local hand stamped surcharges after arrival in the Virgin Islands. They are uncataloged and almost unknown.

I learned from one of the bank directors that there is no need for a 1c revenue stamp under present Virgin Islands tax rates. A visit to the VI Department of Finance, where I was introduced to Mr. Hewitt (the official responsible for requisitioning all needed revenue stamps from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington), confirmed the fact that no 1c revenue stamps were required. I was further informed that no overprinted 1c revenue stamps had ever been requisitioned or authorized.

This would seem to leave us with the fact that someone seems to have been trying to produce a provisional overprinted stamp to sell to unsuspecting collectors!

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The Posthorn — Our "Bank of Knowledge"

We are all concerned with the contents of THE POSTHORN, and a memorandum was recently sent to all SCC chapter presidents and secretaries regarding deadlines and other specifics for future issues of THE POSTHORN. This memo is mostly of interest to the chapters, not the membership at large.

However, one of the subjects has to do with material of philatelic nature, which gives to the reader little-known details about the stamps of the Scandinavian countries—their design, printing method, varieties, background stories, postal history aspects, etc.

The chapters were urged to canvass their membership for writers of this type of articles. We recognize, however, that a wealth of information is stored in the minds of members who are not necessarily members of SCC chapters, and for their benefit and interest, we bring you here a condensed version of the memo as far as contributions to THE POSTHORN is concerned.

The main task of THE POSTHORN is to record information about the stamps and philately of Scandinavia in research papers, reports on studies and discoveries, unusual issues. In short—the type of philatelic information that will not only be of help and enjoyment to current readers of THE POSTHORN, but also serve as reference, today and in the future. In looking over past issues of THE POSTHORN, we must agree that it has done a good job in this respect. And this has been made possible by the contributions from SCC members and others, from here and abroad. THE POSTHORN has served as a ready means of publication for writings on Scandinavian philately, and is often referred to as the source of information in writings elsewhere.

THE POSTHORN, therefore, is a depository of information about Scandinavian stamps. It is our “bank of knowledge” in which as many as possible should make deposits, and from which anybody may make withdrawals at any time. We want this elevated position of THE POSTHORN maintained, and philatelic students and scholars can help ensure the continuation of this respected position of THE POSTHORN—both in and beyond the fraternity of collectors of Scandinavian stamps.

YOU can all help. Those of you who possess interesting and unusual information can contribute to the increasing balance of knowledge in our “bank.” By submitting your information to THE POSTHORN, you are making it possible for other collectors to share your knowledge—knowledge and experiences which otherwise few would enjoy. Recently, a SCC member from Florida (where at the moment we don't have a local SCC chapter) sent us three Norwegian stamps. They had spectacular errors not recorded anywhere. His discovery will soon appear in THE POSTHORN. Another member from New York has found some strange overprint varieties of Iceland. We could mention many cases. Common to all of them is the fact that they come from members who don't belong to chapters, where otherwise their knowledge would perhaps be known through lectures and talks.

You are invited to “come forward” by letting us publish your knowledge and discoveries. Nobody should worry about the type of manuscript they submit, because in many cases, the material will have to be edited to fit into the space available and the general format and standards of THE POSTHORN. Of course, when it comes to scientific writings, we would like to have your manuscript typewritten (double-spaced) for easier editing and benefit of the typesetter. After editing, proofs will be sent to authors for their approval, if requested. If your article needs illustrations, submit photos (or drawings) in such numbers that the editor can have a choice, since sometimes the space available for illustrations is quite limited.

We hope that you will take advantage of the opportunities of publishing your knowledge in THE POSTHORN, now being sent to hundreds of Scandinavian-interested collectors across the whole continent and several countries abroad. Do your share of “work” to further Scandinavian philately—share your knowledge and experience with all of us!

Norway: The Replica (Matrix) Types of 10 Øre, Norw. Cat. #53, Plate VI

By Carl H. Werenskiold (H-10)

It is common knowledge¹ that the sixth "plate" for this stamp (Scott #40a) was set up in the so-called fourth epoch of the issues printed by Centraltrykkeriet. The typical procedure for the preparation of the printing plates for stamps in that period comprised the following general steps:

First reproduction step: From the original die by electrotypy to one second original die, upon which the small numeral 10 and the period after POST-FRIM were engraved by hand to provide a die of one engraving type.

Second reproduction step: Eight replicas of the second original were made by electrotypy, and these were assembled into two replica blocks of third originals in two small iron frames. These reproductions could easily acquire slight differences in appearance, so that one might speak of eight replica types in all (commonly referred to, somewhat illogically, as matrix types).

Third reproduction step: The replica blocks were reproduced a sufficient number of times to produce 25 blocks of 4 clichés for each of the two panes in the printing plate.

When one considers the large issue of 25,040,000 stamps from this "plate," it is reasonable to assume that several, possibly about four, settings of the plate have been employed. Since the original steel die appears to have been in poor condition at that time (probably rusty), the depressions in the various clichés reproduced from it were insufficiently deep, particularly in the letters in NORGE², and it became therefore necessary in many cases to reengrave these letters in order to provide for acceptable printing. These retouches are so numerous, and the form of the letters in NORGE so varied, that we must assume that the retouches have been made from time to time both on the replica blocks and on the individual clichés in the printing plates. The present investigation for the purpose of identifying, if possible, the original replica types was therefore rendered very difficult and demanding.

Blocks, both unused and used, are rare, and the material that I have had the opportunity to examine was accordingly quite limited. It consisted of two 6-blocks, three 4-blocks, a few strips and pairs, a reasonable supply of single stamps, and a photograph of the lower half of a sheet of stamps. When one considers that there may have been about 4 settings of the plate with about 800 clichés in all, it is obvious that the material on hand was entirely insufficient for any comprehensive investigation. It was found, however, that intense work with the photograph, including a large number of accurate measurements³ with subsequent reduction to stamp size, made it possible to identify 6 of the postulated 8 replica types with reasonable certainty. It was also possible to identify these types in the blocks and individual stamps.

The half-sheet comprised the lower half of blocks 11-15 and blocks 16-25, i.e. 5 half and 10 complete blocks. The height and width of the stamps between inner framelines, and the distances between them within each block, were first measured accurately on the photograph, on the assumption that each replica block would exhibit a characteristic shape. The factors for reduction to stamp size were then determined by measurements of the stamps

¹Håndbok over Norges Frimerker, Part II, p. 27, 32, 83-84.

²Pronounced Norr'-geh in two syllables.

³Method described in Posthorn 1954, p. 1-8, 20-26, 38-41.

in positions 52 and 90 on the photograph and on corresponding actual stamps having the same plate flaws (see below). The calculated factors (horizontal and vertical) for these two positions in the half-sheet did not agree any too well, which means of course that the half-sheet, when photographed, was not placed accurately at right angles to the optical axis of the camera. The agreement was, however, sufficiently good for the production of useful results.

In the evaluation of the measurement figures, it was found that the blocks of the half-sheet, after reduction to stamp size, fell into two groups, here called blocks A and B, with reasonable agreement in the measurements within each group, as in the following partial summary:

	Block A as in blocks 17, 18, 21, 25 and probably 14 and 16, of the photograph	Block B as in blocks 11, 12, 13, 15, 19, 22, 24 and probably 20 and 23 of the photograph
Between stamp 1 and 2	Avg. 4.09+or— .05mm	Avg. 4.14+or— .07mm
Between stamp 3 and 4	Avg. 4.25+or— .03mm	Avg. 4.11+or— .05mm
Between stamp 1 and 3	Avg. 4.16+or— .04mm	Avg. 4.24+or— .04mm
Between stamp 2 and 4	Avg. 4.24+or— .02mm	Avg. 4.24+or— .05mm
Stamp corners (outer frame) in center of block	Stamp 1 protrudes slightly into the central square	Stamp 4 is slightly too high in the central square



Block A

Block B

The Replica Types, Tertiary⁴

Block A:

A1 (Upper left in block): Lower part of the stem in R in NORGE is cut diagonally upward from left to right.

⁴Tertiary, because the replica blocks in this issue are third originals. In other issues, where the replica blocks are second originals, the replica types are secondary.

- A2 (Upper right): Lower bar in E in NORGE is curved and the corner frequently rounded (except in blocks 14 and 16). Lower part of the stem of R in NORGE is usually a little too short. Upper left part of the large zero is slightly thickened (except in block 16).
- A3 (Lower left): Lower right part of G in NORGE is round instead of at a sharp angle (not distinct in block 14).
- A4 (Lower right): An inward swelling in the loop of the horn to the left of the upstroke of the large numeral 1 (except in blocks 14, 16 and 25). Lower part of the upstroke is usually thick with a downward point. This is the only previously known replica type. It should be noted, however, that it is actually a matter of two replica types, A4 and B3 (see below).

Block B:

B1 and B2: Without special characteristics.

B3 Like A4, only less pronounced as a rule (except in blocks 19, 23 and 24).

B4 Upper part of left outer frame is thick, frequently with a little upward bend (except in blocks 19 and 20).

The comparatively many exceptions in the above list are probably ascribable to the unusually frequent use of the engraving tool in this plate, with the result that the characteristics of the replica types are disturbed. One must be aware, on the other hand, that the numerous retouches sometimes may introduce small changes that may easily be mistaken for the characteristics proper of the replica types. It is just this extensive retouching that makes it so difficult to distinguish between the tertiary flaws of the replica types in the original replica blocks and the many irregular quaternary retouches in the plate, in addition to damages in printing.

Plate Flaws, Quaternary

Various plate flaws, including those of positions 58, 59, 68, 69, 90 and 100 in half-sheet, have been described in the Handbook¹.

The following of the described plate flaws can also be placed in the half-sheet:

No. 92. A color spot between the oval band and the oval line below the small 10, replica type A4.

No. 93. A break in the right outer frame in the lower corner.

I have also found the following constant plate flaw:

No. 52. A white spot on the left side of the neck of the bell, replica type B4.

Of no. 52, I have seen 3 stamps with the described flaw and also a small white spot or outside dent in the middle of the left outer frame (as in the photograph), and in addition 1 right marginal stamp with the described flaw, but without the flaw in the left frame. The flaw in the bell can thus be found in two places, one in and one outside the half-sheet. Of no. 90, I have seen 2 right marginal stamps with a white spot after ØRE and a somewhat indistinct white spot over the bell (as in the photograph), and in addition 3 stamps without marginal characteristics, with the spot after ØRE, but without the spot over the bell. We have thus, in Nos. 52 and 90, two concordant proofs that at least two plate settings were employed, and that the half-sheet originated in a late stage of the printing.

My sincere thanks to Dr. Earl G. Jacobsen and Mr. Lars A. Torkildsen for the loan of blocks, and to Mr. A. Berntsen for the loan of the half-sheet photograph.

Complex '67

One of the largest annual philatelic exhibitions in the United States is actually 14 shows held under one roof. COMPEX will celebrate its 10th anniversary show on May 26-28, 1967, at the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago with more than 900 frames, a U. N. postal substation, 40 table bourse, SCC regional Western Regional Meeting, and the famous Chapter 4 Coffee Klotch. Of the 68-frame exhibition of the Chicago Chapter (also containing frames from members of SCC in other cities) the feature will be a special showing of No. 1 stamps of Scandinavia, gleaned from the collections of chapter members.

Come to Chicago in May — come to COMPEX!!!

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Honors to SCC Members

We are indeed proud to let the whole membership know that two of our long-time "steadies" have recently been elected **Fellows of the Royal Philatelic Society of London**. They are **William Stericker** (108) of Upper Darby, Pa., and **A. J. Wennermark** (543) of Rochester, N. Y.

Congratulations—you both stand out in any gathering of stamp collectors! We are proud of you!

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We Are Getting There . . .

Slowly, perhaps. But we feel as if we are making headway toward making THE POSTHORN the true VOICE OF SCC, as we outlined in the January issue. The chapters have been cooperating wonderfully, and the ad-getting is under way, and will hopefully get the POSTHORN "out of the treasury" of SCC in a reasonable period of time. Several members have written especially to applaud the elimination of the "new issue service," and many more have expressed their satisfaction with the first issue on the whole. We accept these comments with gratitude, and hope that any member who has ideas about this and future issues will write us—good or bad—since that's just about the only way to get a publication liked by the majority.

Because new procedures for transacting the business of the Club is being experimented with (heavily leaning on the mail), listings of new members may be quite varying from issue to issue. If you have recently joined SCC, and don't find your name in the following POSTHORN, please understand that the application procedure has not been completed in time for publication—we haven't forgotten you!

Ed.

YOU!

SCC is an organization devoted to the study and exchange of useful information about all phases of Scandinavian philately. Obviously, the more members we have, the more information will be available, and the better SCC can serve its vast membership. Vast membership? Did you know that there are many times more Scandinavian-interested collectors around than we have on our rolls? Our total membership doesn't even scratch the surface!

And why shouldn't all these collectors belong to SCC? Why shouldn't they benefit from the information in THE POSTHORN? Why should they be denied the enjoyment of attending SCC chapter meetings? Shouldn't they, too, get the benefit from our Scandinavian Philatelic Literature Service and the Scandinavian Stamp Mart?

So why aren't they members? In almost all cases, the answer is that they simply don't know about us! It is a question of "education," of repeated publicity, of doing philatelic things so spectacularly that "they" will take notice!

Your Club Administration can only do so much. But YOU can do a lot more! YOU can tell your friends—YOU can bring a friend to the next chapter meeting—YOU can write that friend of yours several states away and tell him—YOU can participate in many Scandinavian-heavy national stamp exhibitions (COMPEX, NOJEX, SOJEX, SEPAD and many more)—YOU can spread the word—YOU can do YOUR part to help SCC grow, for the benefit of all!

Let's all get a new SCC-member this month! If you have been a member of other organizations, you have heard that slogan before. But it works! "Every member get a new member." So we say again, and with hopes that it will produce the results we know can be achieved: **LET'S ALL GET A NEW SCC-MEMBER THIS MONTH!**

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Does Advertising in The Posthorn Pay?

We should say it does! And it pays for THE POSTHORN, too. And here's yet another area in which you—SCC members and POSTHORN readers—can help!

Sure, we can approach many of the dealers catering to Scandinavian-interested collectors, but we can't reach as many as the whole membership can. You are spread all over this continent, and a great many of you stop in to see your favorite stamp store from time to time. If that store has any Scandinavian material at all (and it should—otherwise what are you doing there?) why don't you make it a point to talk to the owner about advertising in the POSTHORN! Point out that his message will reach a "ready-made" Scandinavian market, unlike his ads in a "general" stamp publication, no matter how large the circulation. The rates are indeed reasonable for being able to reach hundreds upon hundreds of "pure" Scandinavians.

Since this help will speed our reaching the goal of having the POSTHORN pay its own way, and not be a burden to the SCC Treasury, we urge the sup-

port of all members. As announced in the last issue, our rates are:

Full-page (text area approx. $4\frac{1}{2} \times 7$ ") \$20.00 per insertion (\$25 for back page)

Half-page (text area approx. $4\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ ") \$12.50 per insertion.

Quarter-page (text area approx. $4\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ ") \$7.50 per insertion.

1/8 page (text area approx. $4\frac{1}{2} \times 7/8$ ") \$5 per insert. (same text 4 times \$15).

1/16 page (Members' Bulletin Board—for SCC-members only) $2\frac{1}{4} \times 7/8$ " boxes with text limited to 6 lines, \$1.00 per insertion.

And to make the ad-getting a little more interesting, we offer a 10% commission—payable to the chapter of your choice—and trust that this will encourage all members to help boost the treasury of your chapter. Members who don't belong to a chapter may use their commission as donations to SCC's general treasury—or designate a chapter as the beneficiary.

However, we reserve the right to limit or otherwise regulate the number of ads. We don't want The Posthorn to become an advertising periodical—we just want enough to have the magazine break even, cost-wise!

Please get us advertisers—or lead us to them!

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Members' Bulletin Board

Have something to sell your fellow-members? Something you would like to buy? Information you'd like to secure? Or anything else you'd like to tell the membership?

Then our MEMBERS' BULLETIN BOARD is the place! THE POSTHORN will accept ads of limited size, and for SC members only, for \$1 per ad per insertion. These "boxes" have a text area of about $2 \times 7/8$ " and are limited to 6 lines (fewer lines with heavier type).

The deadline for ads to be published in this (April) issue was March 10, and since the last (January) issue is always late (the results of the annual election hold up the issue), it is surprising that we got any ads at all—considering the announcement reached the membership just a few days prior to the deadline!

Please make note of the fact that if you want an ad in the next (July) POSTHORN, you must submit the text (and \$1) to the Editor no later than June 10.

FINLAND—2 Censored Covers 1911

Scott 205 (1932), 2 shades +
other stamps. 2 sets of covers,
\$2 each set.

A. J. Wennermark
249 Courtly Circle
Rochester, N. Y. 14615

DO YOU WANT TWO NICE
NORWAY #1's? JUST SEND
VIC ENGSTROM THE ONE
WITH HEEL OF THE FIRST
"L" IN SKILLING SHADED.
(C-26)

WANTED: Denmark #21
(1871 bi-col. 2 Sk. perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$)
Trade? Or buy.
W. J. Gaarsoe
1117 Owenwood
Irving, Texas 75060

Norwegian Post Office Letter Seals

By Frederick A. Brofos (H-11)



Fig. 1

In the old days, before envelopes were invented, letters were carefully folded, the page-sides tucked in, and the address written on the outer side. As there was no gummed envelope flap, the letter was held together by a wax seal which insured privacy as well as certifying the origin. Even after envelopes came into general use, seals continued to be popular. In fact, they are still used today in many European, South and Central American countries on registered letters. In Norway, for instance, one can either seal an insured or registered letter oneself or pay a fee and have the post office seal it. Most post offices in Scandinavia have metal seals which are impressed in red sealing wax.

Wax seals are attractive but rather fragile, and special precautions must be taken in preserving a collection (weight pressure or excessive heat should be avoided). However, there have been cases of gummed PAPER seals being used instead of wax seals. These are a lot easier to collect, being as durable as postage stamps, but are not so often encountered. The post office paper seals have been produced by both typography and lithography, but by far the prettiest are those produced by cameo embossing. This is a process whereby color is applied to the flat parts of a design by a printing roller, and the letters and design in relief are left uncolored. The die is often set in a small handscrew press, opposite a force or counter die made of leather or mill-board faced with a coating of gutta-percha.

The earliest paper postal seal that I have from Norway is inscribed "FREDRIKSHALDS POSTKONTOR" In the center it has an un-crowned posthorn facing towards the right. Unfortunately it is not suitable for photographing, being entirely on shiny red paper. In Figure 1 we see an early embossed seal of the postmaster in Christiania, a seal of the Royal Post Office at Aalesund (lithographed by Thorvald Moestue) and one typographed in blue from Svolvaer post office. Figure 2 shows seals of the Norwegian Postal Administration when it, years ago, was attached to the Navy Department of all things, and later to the Department of Public Works. Figure 3 shows the seal used when postal affairs were moved to the Department of Trade. I also

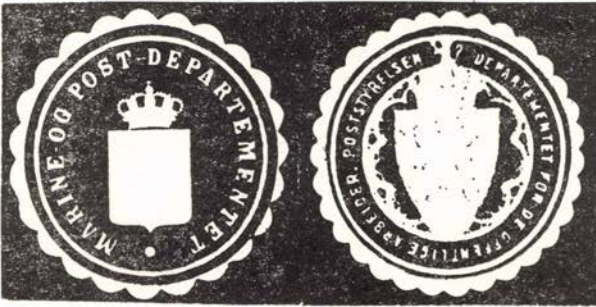


Fig. 2

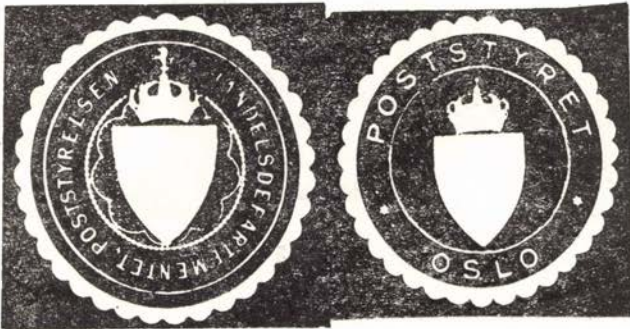


Fig. 3

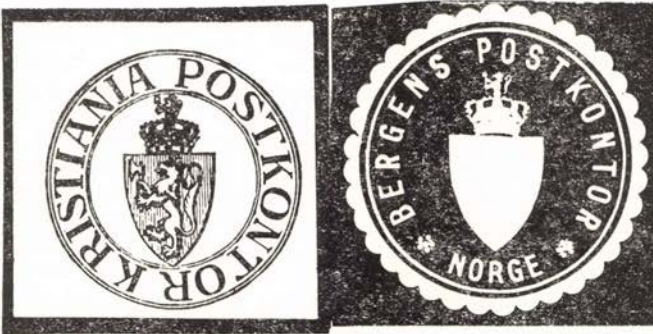


Fig. 4

have a similar seal but with the last part of the text reading "POSTSTYRET" instead of "POSTSTYRELSEN". This slight name change became effective from September 1, 1924. The other seal is the latest one I have seen. Nowadays, I believe, the Post Office is under the Ministry of Communications, which seems the logical place. Figure 4 shows a seal of the Kristiania post office, typographed in black, and an embossed seal from the Bergen post office. All the aforementioned seals are red, except where otherwise noted.

For more general usage, perhaps in sealing letters and parcels that came open, the Norwegian Post Office has used several types of seals typographed in coil form. The printed design on the three I have seen is circular, with a crowned posthorn in the center. The text on the first two is in French: "Administration des Postes de Norvège" and on the third the same text in Norwegian: "Postverket i Norge". The first two seals are imperforate, the third rouletted horizontally. The first seal is on white, the other two on brown paper.

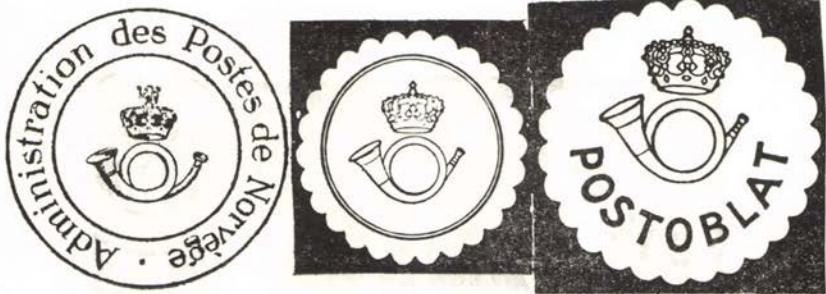


Fig. 5

During World War II, when everything was in short supply in Norway, the glue on available envelopes was very poor and lots of mail would come open in transit. Indeed, some of the envelopes on sale were simply small-size paper bags, without any gummed flap at all. The use of metal staples in closing this kind of envelope was damaging to the stamp cancelling machines. To remedy the situation the Post Office issued special gummed seals in packets for sale to the public at all post offices. The seals were circular with a rosette edge. In the center of a double circle was the crowned posthorn emblem of the Post Office. However, as the glue on these seals was hardly any better than on the wartime envelopes, a new supply was issued a little later with glue of much better quality. The design showed the crowned posthorn without the double circle border, but with added text: "POSTOBLAT". Both types of seals (Figure 5) came in two colors, blue for the general public, and red for the post offices. Such official use included the sealing of insured or registered letters, sealing wax being unobtainable. The paper seals were "tied" by circular numeral markers as a rule. Those I have seen had four figures within a circle and were not changeable. They were not meant for cancelling stamps, but a couple of isolated cases are known. The use of paper seals ceased at the end of hostilities in 1945, when proper envelopes soon became available. As things returned to normal, the Norwegian Post Office was able to use sealing wax again as it had before the war.

Detroit's Annual Show

The Scandinavian Collectors Club and the Northwest Stamp Society, both of Detroit, combined to present their annual exhibit and bourse at the K of C Hall, Lesure and Grand River Avenues on March 4-5. The show was as always well attended, with stamp dealers not only from Michigan, but also from parts of Ohio and Illinois and Canada.

Scandinavian collections are always strong contenders in stamp exhibits and this show was no exception. In competition among the Scandinavian collectors themselves, **Ken Brown** took the Gold Medal with the complete semi-postal issues of all the Nordic countries. The Silver Medal was won by **Oscar Mittelstaedt, Jr.**, with issues of the Republic of Iceland. The Bronze Medal went to **Verner Andersen** for issues portraying Nordic unity.

In the Detroit invitational section (which is an invitation extended to other Detroit Club show winners) **Verner Andersen** took a Gold Medal for his exhibit of Denmark.

The co-sponsoring Northwest Stamp Society with its show of exhibits, presented a Gold Medal to **Ken Brown** for his showing of the complete world wide issues honoring Dag Hammarskjold and also ANOTHER Gold Award for an exhibit of selected issues of Japan. The latter exhibit ALSO won the show's popular award; which was done by the balloting of the show's visitors.

Well done, Chapter 3!

* S * C * C *

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From Chapter 12's Christmas Party 1966. Ray Norby (hidden behind Jay Carpenter) pours glögg for Mrs. John Turner, while SCC President Svend Yort awaits his turn. Home-made Swedish pepparkakshus (by Mrs. Norby) disappeared quickly!

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CHAPTER REPORTS

SCC

Chapter 1—Seattle Washington

Meets every first Wednesday. Collectors Club, 908 East Madison St., Seattle, Wash.
 Secretary: Miss Harriet Hintze, 1312 University Street, Seattle, Wash. 98101

Chapter 2—Philadelphia/Delaware

Meets every third Monday, Liberty Federal S. & L. Bldg., 202 N. Broad St., Phila.
 Secretary: Mrs. Christine Blinn, 132 Progress Ave., Woodbury, N. J. 08096

The guest speaker at our February 20 meeting was Mr. **Herbert Ert**, who gave a very interesting talk on UN Peace Force covers, with special emphasis on the Scandinavian countries.

We have our next months' programs arranged so that Swedish Military Post will be the subject of a study at our March meeting, and on April 17, Mr. **Werner Ruthenberg** will speak on stamps and covers of the League of Nations supervision of the Saar plebiscite, in which of course the Scandinavian countries were prominent. One guest (Dr. **Raymond Sidel**) attended, and special note was made of Chapter 2's **William Stericker** who has just been elected a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of London!

Chapter 3—Detroit, Michigan

Meets every third or fourth Saturday, at homes of members on a rotation basis.
 Secretary: Vacant since death of William Sarenius—duties handled by Chapter President **Verner Andersen**, 12120 Payton, Detroit, Michigan 48224

The Detroit Chapter held its March meeting at the home of **Verner Andersen**, whose wife more than surpassed herself with a bountiful smörgåsbord which preceded the club meeting. The attendance was swelled by the addition of three guests; two of which are prospective members. The third guest was one of Detroit's leading stamp dealers and auctioneer, who gave us a first hand knowledge of the workings of an auction house. Talk then centered around the show of the previous week-end (see elsewhere in this issue) and a thank-you was expressed to officers of the Northwest Club for a very successful show. Being a much larger club, the Northwest carries the brunt of the show,

yet the Scandinavian Club lends its name and prestige which is also much needed. The final two hours was spent in watching some of **Albert E. Anderson's** fine collection of films he has amassed in his periodic tours of the Nordic countries.

The Club is saddened by the fact that we are soon to be without **Andy's** presence, for in July he and his wife are moving to Spokane, Washington, to live—he says maybe he'll start a Scandinavian Collector's Club there. We all wish him the best of luck.

Chapter 4—Chicago, Illinois

Meets every fourth Thursday, Hotel LaSalle, Chicago, Illinois

Secretary: **Alanson C. Schwarz**, 744 S. Washington St., Hinsdale, Illinois 60521

A dozen members showed up for the February 23 meeting, in spite of a sudden snow storm which dropped about six inches of snow on Chicago. A lively discussion was held over the proposed revisions of the chapter constitution. The committee consisted of **R. E. Danielson**, **Paul Mead**, and **Ben Cohen**. COMPEX plans were discussed, with a report on activities from **Harvey Gudmundson**. **Dr. Earl G. Jacobson** led a discussion of recent auction activities following the meeting.

"Doc" will give us a COMPEX preview at our March meeting with a showing of material from Denmark which he will exhibit at the show. New member **Bob Sievers** will show slides of his better material at the April meeting. In May, of course, we will be setting up for COMPEX and the Western Regional SCC Meeting.

If you are in town on the 4th Thursday of the month, be sure to drop in at the LaSalle Hotel, where you will find the meeting room posted. 7:30 p.m. is the hour.

Chapter 7—New York

Meets every 2d Wednesday, Norwegian Seamens House, Hanson Pl., Brooklyn, N.Y.
Secretary: **George Koplowitz**, 25 Stratford Road, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11218

The attendance at our February 8 meeting was below par—but then we had one of those snow storms to contend with! But a very interesting item came up. It seems that we'll be able to arrange an all-Scandinavian show in the Collectors Club (of N. Y.) in November. This will be a 1-day, all-day affair, and not a competitive showing. Rather, it is aimed at showing Scandinavian material to all who visit the Collectors Club that day. Several frames of material from each of the Scandinavian countries will be on display, and will fall into four categories: classics, modern, specialized, and postal history.

We expect to get a lot of mileage out of this—and hopefully many new members. A venture like this could also develop into an annual affair (we hope).

Chapter 8—South Jersey

Meets every third Tuesday, 405 North 9th Street, Vineland, N. J.

Secretary: **Mrs. Helen Rocco**, 405 North 8th Street, Vineland, N. J. 08360

We are busy with plans and work in connection with the coming SOJEX,

so our meeting February 21 was of course almost entirely devoted to this.

Somehow, we did not announce our 1967 officers, but here it is:

President	-----	Lawrence Fralick
Vice-President	-----	Charles Panarello
Secretary/Treasurer	-----	Helen Rocco

At this meeting, in addition to one guest, we also had **Cliff Bieber** attending, and we are all happy to see that he has recovered so well from his illness, and that he'll be able to attend regularly.

Chapter 9—North Jersey

Meets every third Thursday, Commonwealth Club, 551 Valley Rd., Upper Montclair, N. J.

Secretary: **Angus Todd**, 850 Broad Avenue, Ridgefield, N. J. 07657

Our meeting February 16 was attended by 21 members and one guest. President **Vic Engstrom** urged support of the SCC showing at SOJEX to the fullest, both in exhibitions and attendance, reminding that South Jerseys interest in our exhibitions has always been substantial. Other announcements included the decision to secure the Norwegian and Swedish handbooks for the Club Library; that the net profit from last meeting's auction boosted the Treasury by \$155.40; and that NJSCC should encourage new members who can attend meetings—not just join to get the "Scribe" (which anybody can subscribe to, anyway), and as a result, the Club will no longer accept new members who live in areas making it almost impossible to attend our meetings.

Brief reports from Treas. **Jerry Engstrom** and Mart-Mgr. **Art Lind** pointed out the good state of these departments of NJSCC.

This year's assignments for the many and diversified activities of NJSCC were announced, thus:

SCRIBE and **SPLS**: Ray Norby; **Auction Committee**: Mogens Jacobsen, James Jackson, Bob Helm, Brad Arch; **NJFSC-Liaison**: Joe Geraci; **MART-Mgr.**: Arthur Lind; **MART-Rep**: Eric Soderlind; **Membership**: Angus Todd; **Library**: Bob Helm; **Hospitality**: Helen Helm; **Exhibition Coordinator**: Hans Windfeld-Hansen; **Auditors**: Harold Raimert and Ray Leth.

The "meat" of the meeting was **Bob Helm's** informative slide presentation on the famous Hans Hals collection of Icelandic stamps, in the custody of the Icelandic Postal Museum.

Carl Emil Buyer, whose knowledge of Danish stamps is well-known thru talks and articles in THE POSTHORN of yesteryear, explained his work with constant varieties on Danish steel engraved stamps, based on the QVIST VARIETY PLATES, and recommended members to join this fascinating aspect of our hobby.

As usual at Chapter 9—a good and active meeting!!

Chapter 10—Toronto, Canada

Meets every fourth Wednesday, 1224 Broadview Avenue, Toronto, Canada

Secretary: **William A. Daubert**, 8 Park Vista 206, Toronto 16, Ont., Canada

We met Dec. 28 and seven members were present. A film from SAS on

Scandinavian countries was shown, followed by the type of browsing typical of SCCers.

To our meeting January 25, ten members came, and **Bob Pogson** and **Ken Haig** were visitors. **Dr. Schunk** gave a very enlightening talk on fakes and forgeries, running the full range from complete stamps and postmarks, reperfs, added borders, forged covers, repairs and of course illustrated by actual material. A cover and two lots of stamps were passed around and a discussion on what was wrong with them ended the evening.

Meeting February 22: nine members present, **Bob Pogson** having joined after the last meeting. **Hans Elm-Gren** presented Iceland material that was auctioned off after the meeting.

The next meeting will be March 22, and **Jack Banks** will give a talk on the Denmark Typographed Wavy Lines Issue.

Chapter 11—Iceland

Meets every first Saturday afternoon, Cafe Holl, Reykjavik, Iceland
Secretarial duties temp. handled by **Sigurdur H. Thorsteinsson**, Box 26, Hafnarfirdi

Chapter 12—Washington, D. C.

Meets every fourth Tuesday, Museum of History & Technology, Smithsonian Institution, Constitution Avenue, Washington, D. C.
Secretary: **Wade H. Beery**, 115 Amelia Drive, Manassas, Virginia 22110

Our February 21 meeting was attended by 15 and we enjoyed one of the better meetings, SCC-wise.

Pres. Norby, after some announcements of general, future policies of the Chapter, invited newly elected SCC President **Svend Yort** to give some ideas about the national organization's future—which he did very interestingly, concluding with an appeal for as many as possible to attend the first SCC function of the year at SOJEX April 14-16 in Atlantic City, N. J.

Chapter Vice-Pres. **William Bullard** then delivered his talk of the evening: "Collecting Finland Beyond the General Catalogs." After explaining why and how he became interested in Finland, he went through the many issues (from 1917 on) which offer the detail-minded collector so many interesting and enjoyable moments. He also dwelled on locals and Finnish occupation areas and then discussed the type of catalogs (literature) he has found most helpful. Needless to say, certain U. S. catalogs did not fall in this category!

This subject (catalogs) as well as the many Finnish stamps provided an excellent question-and-answer period—almost a seminar. It was encouraging to see how many took part in this round-table talk and how many different matters were brought up—the type of thing which can only be had at gatherings such as offered by stamp clubs, SCC especially. Without a doubt, this was one of the best meetings in the opinion of those who have years of experience, meeting-wise. By his presentation, and the way it was given—**Bill Bullard** set the pace—and a pattern!

Thanks were also given to **Jay Carpenter** for having provided the Chapter with beautifully printed By-Laws and Scandinavian-colored membership cards.

The MART-books were heavily in use during the browsing session, which pleased MART-agent **Wade Beery**!

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- 1193 Todd, Angus W. — Finland - Iceland
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- 804 Hinrichsen, Lorentz W., P. O. Box 33, Somerset, N. J. 08873
- 865 Brown, Harold J., 7446 N. California Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60645
- 897 Bieher, Clifford F., c/o Fletcher, 9529 Bustleton Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19115
- 987 Gallagher, Philip F., c/o USAID/Rio de Janeiro/CUNA, APO 09676, New York, N. Y.
- 1049 Gruber, Alfred A., 27 Old Oak Road, Newark, Del. 19711
- 1063 Levenson, Dave, 24 Ferncliff Road, Morris Plains, N. J. 07801
- 1066 Crumpton, Bruce D., 7009 Kinsbury Circle, Tampa, Fla. 33610
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- 1112 Palič, Dr. Boris, Resperin Inhalation Hospital, 429 Walmer Road, Toronto 7, Ont., CANADA
- 1125 Byrd, Lewis D., 4803 E. Ave. R-12, Palmdale, Calif. 93550
- 1130 Ardif, Vernon L., P. O. Bcx 12342, Oakland, Calif. 94604

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- 376 Christensen, Emil, 8110 E. Houston Road, Houston, Texas 77028—
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- 624 Nelson, Roy R., 1125 Lorane Hwy., Eugene, Ore. 97401
- 896 Boston, Royal, 290 Baxter Blvd., Portland, Maine 04101
- 909 Wowern, Eric, Floradalen 31, Virum, Copenhagen, DENMARK
- 1150 Simon, Mrs. Margaret M., 430 Indianola Road, Youngstown, Ohio 44512
- 1156 Norgard, Chris, 3364 W. 9th Street, Los Angeles, Calif. 90006

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