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An Answer to the Stamp Theft Problem

By Reidar Norby, Editor

For more than a century, our hobby has been plagued by thieves. Some of the reports in the philatelic press some 100 years ago could well be reprinted today, and from the contents we would hardly know the difference! It is also safe to say that in most cases, the thieves "got away with it"—yesteryear as well as today . . .

Collectors, working individually or together in clubs and societies, have tried to overcome the problem. Stolen stamps and collections have been described publicly in efforts to recover them; valuable specimens have been photographed, marked, cataloged, listed, locked in drawers and cabinets, in bank vaults, and guarded in every way the owner knew how. Yet, stamps are regularly stolen . . .

At many stamp exhibitions, the exhibitor may elect to participate anonymously, and show catalogs sometimes omit the home addresses of the exhibitors (last year's NOJEX, for example). Owners of valuable objects are reluctant to show them at stamp meetings. Many advanced collectors are "hidden" as they will not even join a stamp club, much less let it be known that they might own valuable philatelic material. Yet, stamps are regularly stolen . . .

So efficient and knowledgeable are the thieves—of last century and this—that articles with warnings and advice to the defenseless collector are regularly seen in philatelic publications. The problem is being recognized to the point where we are in effect told that we have to live with it, and try to make the best of a bad situation (SPA Journal, Jan. 1968: "The Thieves Have Told Us So" by Maryette B. Lane).

Many efforts have been made to try to eliminate the theft problem. Clubs and societies have sponsored studies, come up with suggestions, and some have put into use some methods of identification of valuable stamps. Last year, APS instituted its "Theft Program," and also appointed a number

of experienced members to a committee charged with finding a cure. But so far, these efforts have failed to prevent thefts because they offer no deterrent to the thieves and no method of recovery once the stamps have been stolen. Besides, some are too expensive and others are too complicated to execute. The following will bear this out:

(1) Lock doors, install burglar alarms, do everything to make your home and collection burglar-proof.

Over the centuries, common sense advice of this kind has not prevented thefts of valuable objects, including stamps, and many a victim of recent times had indeed taken all the precautions at his disposal—but he got robbed anyway. While it is of course desirable to take preventive measures, this is obviously not the complete answer.

(2) Insure your valuable stamps.

Fine, if you can afford the premium necessary to have an effective insurance program, and not just one which gives rather general coverage, and thus fails to satisfy the owner's actual monetary loss. Instead of being a deterrent to a thief, the presence of insurance coverage makes it all the more attractive because the thief is "guaranteed" a good haul!

(3) Place your valuable stamps in a bank vault.

Naturally, the risk of theft is now reduced to almost nil. But if you have to go to this extent, you might as well give up the hobby and instead place the worth of your collection in bonds or security papers. What enjoyment can you possibly get from your stamps when each time you want to work with them you have to go to your bank to get them out, and later run back to deposit them—even if banks were open 24 hours every day of the year!

(4) Make complete inventories of your philatelic holdings.

The idea behind this is that descriptive inventories might help to identify your stamps once they are stolen. The value of this is highly questionable, and the time it takes to complete a detailed inventory (and keep it current) of a sizable collection is not warranted. Detailed lists might be of some value in connection with insurance claims, but they certainly do nothing to prevent or recover.

(5) Do not talk to strangers about your stamps.

This advice has come up often, because "philatelic criminologists" have concluded that so-and-so's collection would not have been stolen if he had not shown part of it at this-and-that stamp meeting, or spoken about it to some "strangers." This is highly over-rated and would, if exercised strictly, deprive the collector of one of the more enjoyable aspects of our hobby, that of pride of ownership, sharing with others, and even accomplishment. Thieves have better and more accurate ways of pinpointing a target than hear-say and loose talk . . .

(6) Make photographic records of your valuable stamps.

This has been held out to be the most effective weapon so far. At the risk of inviting the wrath of those who subscribe to this idea, I say it is a waste of time, money, and effort! Such photographic records will not prevent the successful marketing of stolen stamps to any degree, and I challenge the justification of the expensive procedures and the impractical and time-consuming methods of execution. I doubt that recovery of stolen stamps has been accomplished effectively on the basis of photographic records to even

justify a fraction of the cost! Let us look at the obvious loopholes: A thief steals a large and varied collection of considerable worth. The collection has been photographed. The thief has several ways of turning the goods into cash: he sells individual items at different times and to different clients, who would include collectors, clubs, and dealers; he sells the entire collection abroad; he turns over the loot to his "syndicate"—the Mafia-type organization—against handsome payment, and the "boss" gets rid of it through his "legitimate" channels. If the thief is just a tool for such an organization, he might be happy with a "cut" (or being on the "pay-roll") and the "home office" has experts who are knowledgeable and cunning, and the existence of photographic records is a mere nuisance of no practical import. Has it ever struck you how often you read about small and large thefts, but how many times have you read about a collection which was recovered?

The value of photography in our hobby is of course immeasurable in research and studies, slide programs, education, "preservation" of philatelic rarities subject to natural deterioration. But its use in the prevention of thefts, and subsequent recovery of stolen items, is almost non-existent.

(7) Apply invisible markings to your stamps.

This method has not been talked about too much, and precious little is found in writing (truthfully, my limited time has failed to turn up anything in writing). At first glance, the method seems to be the best to positively identify a stolen object, and it costs next-to-nothing. It simply involves the application of a fluorescent mark (symbol, number, letters, names, or initials) directly on to the stamp (front or reverse). This can be done by pen, brush, or a stamp device, using a liquid containing fluorescent substances. When viewed under ultraviolet light, the mark shows up with amazing clarity, yet is perfectly invisible to normal viewing. This has been used a number of times, for example at a recent INTERPEX show in New York City, where visitors received a dab of the liquid on their hands and could leave and re-enter the exhibit area freely by holding their hands under ultraviolet light controlled by the door guards. If the dab showed up, you entered; if not, you paid. One can also use a more practical "dry" method in the form of a "pencil." This device looks like a crayon wax pencil, and the fluorescent material is applied to the stamp by simply writing with it, as one would with a normal lead pencil.

One of our members has used the "dry" method for some 8 years. He has explained (and shown me) how his initials are applied to a certain portion of the stamp, and some of his first markings show up as clearly today as they did when first applied. Thus, he is able to positively identify his stamps if there should ever be a question of ownership. When he sells or trades away a stamp, he simply applies a "reversed initial" on top of the original, and thereby releases his ownership.

I have had occasion to explain this process to members of the APS Theft Committee, and the obvious merits so intrigued them that further studies and discussions were justified. We concluded, however, that such a method is almost ideal as far as identification is concerned, but—as with photography—does little to prevent and/or recover. This may seem contradictory, but perhaps not when we bring out some of the unfortunate disadvantages.

Secret and invisible markings will not serve as a deterrent to thieves. They cannot see the marks, and are thus not "warned." Once stolen, the objects cannot readily be identified as "hot" by dealers and collectors, for the same reason. Few dealers and stamp stores maintain ultraviolet light devices which could be used for immediate checking of specimens at the time of buying and/or selling. Thus, the invisible markings do not help at the time and

place most needed. To institute a procedure of examining all objects under ultraviolet light in all cases when stamps change hands—here and abroad—would take altogether too much time and become a costly and cumbersome way of “closing the barn after the horse is gone.” At best, this seemingly fool-proof system of identifying an object would establish that the theft has taken place—which we must assume the owner knows already—and that the goods are being marketed. But it has done nothing to deter or prevent.

As with photography, the invisible marking method does have a place in philately, however. I am thinking of the “sneak thief”—the type who switches stamps from approval and circuit sales books, and whose theft is not discovered before the selection book is returned to the owner, usually after several months (sometimes years) of circulating among collectors and clubs. However, in this case, one does at least have a chance by retracing the activities of the book and catching the thief by a process of elimination, or at least narrow it down to a few suspects, who could then be watched until they were caught red-handed.

But as for the thefts that “count”—the multi-thousand-dollar spectacles—invisible markings will do little to prevent or recover.

Is there, then, an answer to the problem? Yes, but my answer will no doubt go against the grain of many who will claim that my plan will “ruin” the stamps (or covers, or whatever) and that the gum will be “disturbed” and thus reduce the value of the stamps.

But I feel that my plan will do both of the jobs needed to “lick the thieves” once and for all. First, deter them from even trying to steal, and second, offer a fair chance of recovery if stamps have been stolen and they are being offered for sale.

Frankly, it is so simple that I am surprised that it has not been proposed before: we should register our philatelic valuables by means of clearly visible identification on the back of the stamps (or other objects). The identification would consist of a series of numerals, with or without prefix (and/or suffix).

This number would be printed (black or some bright color) on the back of the stamp, cover, multiple, sheet, or whatever the object might be. The number would not occupy more space than a rectangle of say some 2x10 mm. In the case of a mint stamp (with gum), you would use a moist cotton swab, a Q-Tip for example, and carefully remove enough gum (horrors—what are the “gum collectors” going to say!) to allow the number to be imprinted directly on the paper.

The numbered stamps would have to be registered by a central agency, for example APS, and would only involve the filing of index cards. There would be three cards for each object (filled in by the owner), one of which the owner would keep together with the stamp, the other two to be filed by APS (one numerical and one alphabetical index). The manner in which the number would be applied to the object, and who would do it by what means and where, are details which would have to be arranged as inexpensively as possible, and would most likely not involve too much money. These technical details are not important at this time. The important thing is that we recognize that a number on the back of a stamp WILL NOT distract from its value! On the contrary, numbered and registered stamps should be regarded as “pedigrees,” and I can easily visualize that the owner would proudly display the number to point out that his stamp is indeed a good one—why else would it be registered!

Likewise, the dealers would find it a lot easier to sell registered items, since doubts about their value would be dispelled at the mere sight of a registered number (and the accompanying registration card—the "ownership certificate" if you will).

But the additional and theft-deterrent value of clearly visible numbers is that a thief would think twice about "acquiring" such objects. What good would they be to him? Where, and to whom, would he sell them? Dealers, auction houses, and collectors would know what the number means, and would certainly not buy such a stamp without having the "ownership certificate" properly endorsed by the former owner! In fact, anybody offering such a stamp for sale would run a good risk of being caught right there and then!

But let us assume that a thief did manage to sell some registered stamps to a buyer who might not yet be familiar with the plan, or to a foreign buyer equally unaware of the meaning of the number. Sooner or later, that number is going to be noticed, and the process of re-tracing the various sales transactions should bring the stamp back to its owner. Since this will involve financial recourse and possibly law suits and litigations, buyers (especially foreign ones) are forced to look more closely into the seller's right to sell his(?) stamps.

Having our valuable philatelic items (in excess of a certain minimum value, of course) thus numbered and registered will, to a great extent, if not completely:

- (1) deter a thief from stealing your stamps, perhaps even completely remove the risk of thefts;
- (2) provide a method of recovering your stamps if stolen, and offered on the market, and with at least a fair chance of recovery;
- (3) enhance the value of your stamps, since the registry would clearly establish their "pedigree";
- (4) give dealers (auction houses, clubs and societies running sales systems) a real sense of security about their transactions, since the fear of cancelled sales and possible losses is removed;
- (5) give the buying collector the satisfaction of knowing that he bought "the real thing," and a justifiable pride of ownership to boot.

But I can also foresee obstacles to be overcome before this plan would be accepted. I have already mentioned that some might feel that their stamps would be "ruined" by the application of an "ugly" number, and that the gum might be "disturbed" in the case of a mint stamp. I would myself have no reservation about registration of my stamps, but some might. I have discussed my plan with several fellow-collectors, and one reaction involved the objection that perhaps there would be a risk by the ink from the number "showing through" to the front of the stamp. To which I answered that my used stamps are cancelled on the front, and rarely are there any marring effects on the back. So why should the opposite be true, providing a proper ink is used, of course. If such slight penetration were to happen, I might even say "so what?", because I would be proud of the number . . .

Accordingly, I submit that we have but two choices: either continue as we have been doing—and continue to have our stamps stolen; or adopt a plan involving visible marking and registration as I have outlined—and get rid of the thieves!

The choice seems easy, and to offer the disbelievers some food for thought, I might conclude by mentioning that such knowledgeable philatelists as SCC President Svend Yort and Carl H. Scheele, Associate Curator in Charge, Di-

vision of Philately, Smithsonian Institution, are fully in accord with the plan. Visible marks on philatelic items are nothing new in practice. Printed initials and/or symbols by expertisers are found on many objects, and have been in use for many decades. Also, the Smithsonian Institution uses visible (printed) markings on the reverse of many of its valuable philatelic objects! The new thing about such marks is that they consist of numbers and are registered.

As to the details of putting this plan to practical use, I have several ideas and suggestions. But first, let's see if we can accept the principle of the plan?

* S * C * C *

The idea explained above by Ray Norby seems to be the most practical yet proposed for the protection of our more valuable items. It needs further refinement, of course, and the value of it will depend on the degree of acceptance by collectors, societies and dealers generally. But a start must be made somewhere, and one advantage of this plan is that it could be put in effect by any club anywhere, for its members, and then if a national records repository were set up later, the individual society records could be duplicated for inclusion in it.

We would like to have an expression of interest from our members; if the SCC could set up such a system, and you think you might want to participate, drop me (or Ray) a line indicating your interest, and the approximate number of items (of say \$50 catalog value or over) you would want to register.

Svend Yort, SCC President

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Norway—Coat of Arms Issue 1863-66: One Original Drawing for all Denominations

By Reidar Norby (1985)

This article first appeared in the Thirtieth American Philatelic Congress Book of 1964, and is re-printed here by kind permission of The American Philatelic Congress, Robert B. Brandeberry, Secretary

The title of this report will undoubtedly startle collectors and students of this issue. After all, these stamps have been the subject of intense study and research, and the results have been published to such an extent that every serious collector of early Norwegian stamps knows that there are four different types of each denomination, except the 4 Skill, of which there are eight. In fact, this information appears in all detailed reference sources, such as periodicals, catalogs, as well as handbooks.

This report is not intended to challenge the existence of these "types," but rather to trace how they came into being and to correct an impression which has survived for about a century—that numerous drawings were involved.

These stamps were produced by lithography. It is a curious fact that the mistaken idea of engraving has been referred to so frequently in the literature as an element of lithography—as for example in "Norges Frimerker" (Ref. 1 and 2), Goodfellow's Study (Ref. 3), and the recent Norwegian Handbook (Ref. 6). It should be pointed out here that no engraving is involved in lithography. The following quotes, however, are representative of existing literature:

"The originals were engraved upon stone, but instead of engraving one single stamp design, they were furnished in a block of 4 for each value." (Goodfellow—Ref. 3—page 6).

"It is quite natural that the four images, of which the original blocks consisted, are not exactly alike. On the contrary, they are so divergent that it is comparatively easy to tell them apart." (Norges Frimerker 1855-1924—Ref. 2—page 39, translation.)

Accordingly, it has been alleged that there were four different original images for each denomination, referred to as Types 1-4 (A-D in older literature). For the 4 Skill, there is supposed to have been a second original stone, the images of which are referred to as Types 5-8 (E-H in older literature). The individual characteristics of each type have been amply illustrated and described, making it unnecessary to repeat them here in full. The existence of these types has been explained by the fact that no human being, no matter how excellent an artist, could possibly make these images absolutely identical. As a result, it has been claimed that there are no less than 24 different images, each individually done—four for each of the 2 Skill, 3 Skill, 8 Skill, 24 Skill, and eight for the 4 Skill.

This rather intriguing conception of four different drawings on each original stone, and the fact that this issue does offer a multitude of varieties, no doubt account for the popularity of these stamps among detail-minded collectors. I have studied this issue in great detail for many years, and it was while I was attempting to determine the number of printing stones used for the 4 Skill stamp, that I found myself questioning the time-honored "4-block-original-stone" conception. As a result of my studies, I have come to the conclusion that only one drawing was used originally in the preparation of the lithographic stones for these stamps.

The identical details on all types—of all denominations—are so many and so striking that they should be considered conclusive proof of my claim that only one original drawing was employed.

For these details, I refer to the photographic illustrations, Fig. 1-6. Note in particular one of the pearls (or what appears to be a pearl) in the crown (lower middle of Square 2-D). The other pearls are symmetrically placed, but this one seems out-of-place, as it were. But what is more important—it appears in exactly the same position on every type of the 4 Skill stamp, and also on every type of each of the other denominations. A further detailed study showed that most parts of the design are identical on all of the stamps, regardless of type. The major exceptions are the figures of value, which are different. That is to say—I found four different 2's, 3's, 8's, but strangely enough only one 4. On the 24 Skill stamp, the entire "24 SKILL" is different. It will clearly be seen that the details in the following cases are identical on all types:

- (1) The lion—see particularly the shaded area of the fur, as well as the position of the eye (lower left corner of Square 3-D),—
- (2) the word NORGE,—also the size and shape of each letter,—
- (3) the upper left corner ornament,—also upper right corner ornament,—
- (4) the fields (with the word FRIMAERKE)—same size and shape,—
- (5) the shields, all having 29 lines. Actually, there are 30 vertical lines, but on most types, the 30th line (on the right) is completely "swallowed" by the heavy shading to the right of the shield,—or just barely visible (and on some types, only in part),—
- (6) the crown,—
- (7) the background lines,—
- (8) the word SKILL (except the 24 Skill),—
- (9) on the 4 Skill stamp: the figures 4,—
- (10) on the 24 Skill stamp: the entire "24 SKILL".

The following is an attempt to reconstruct what most logically must have taken place:

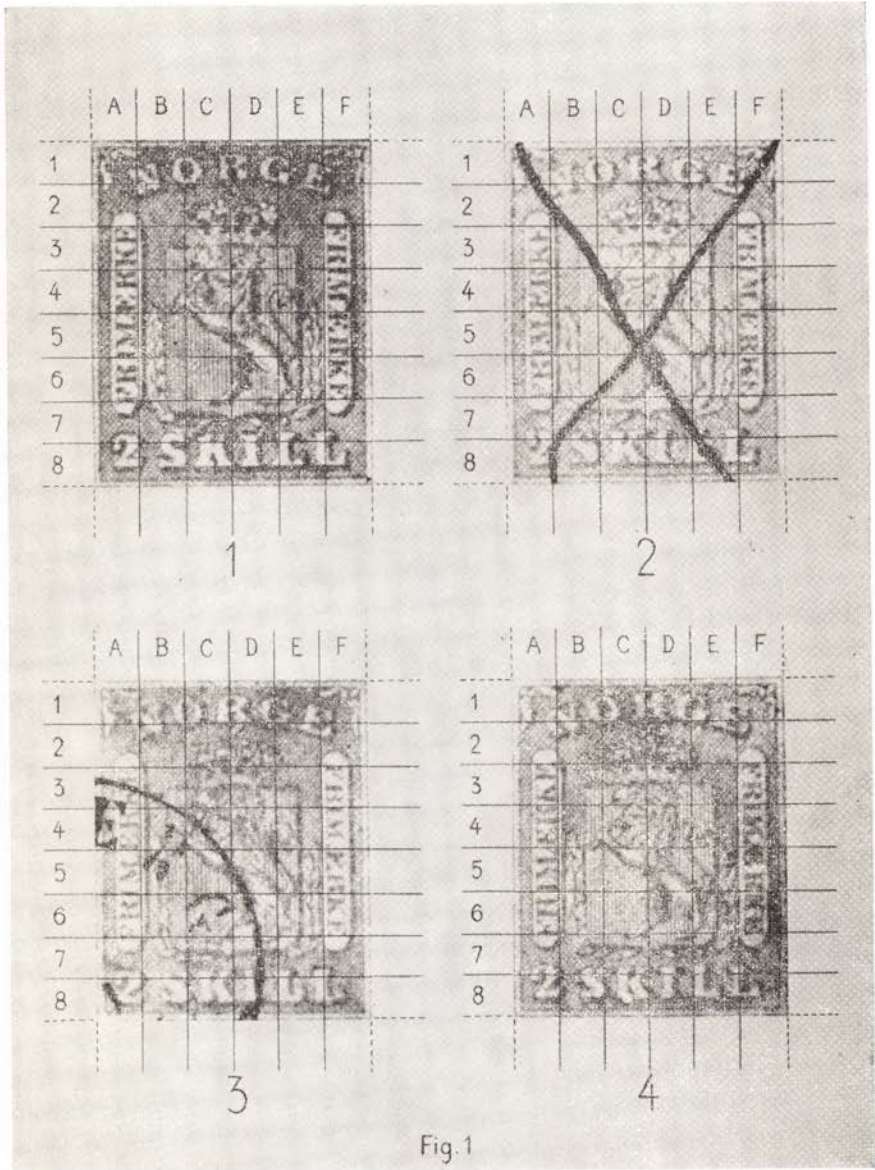


Fig. 1





Fig. 3

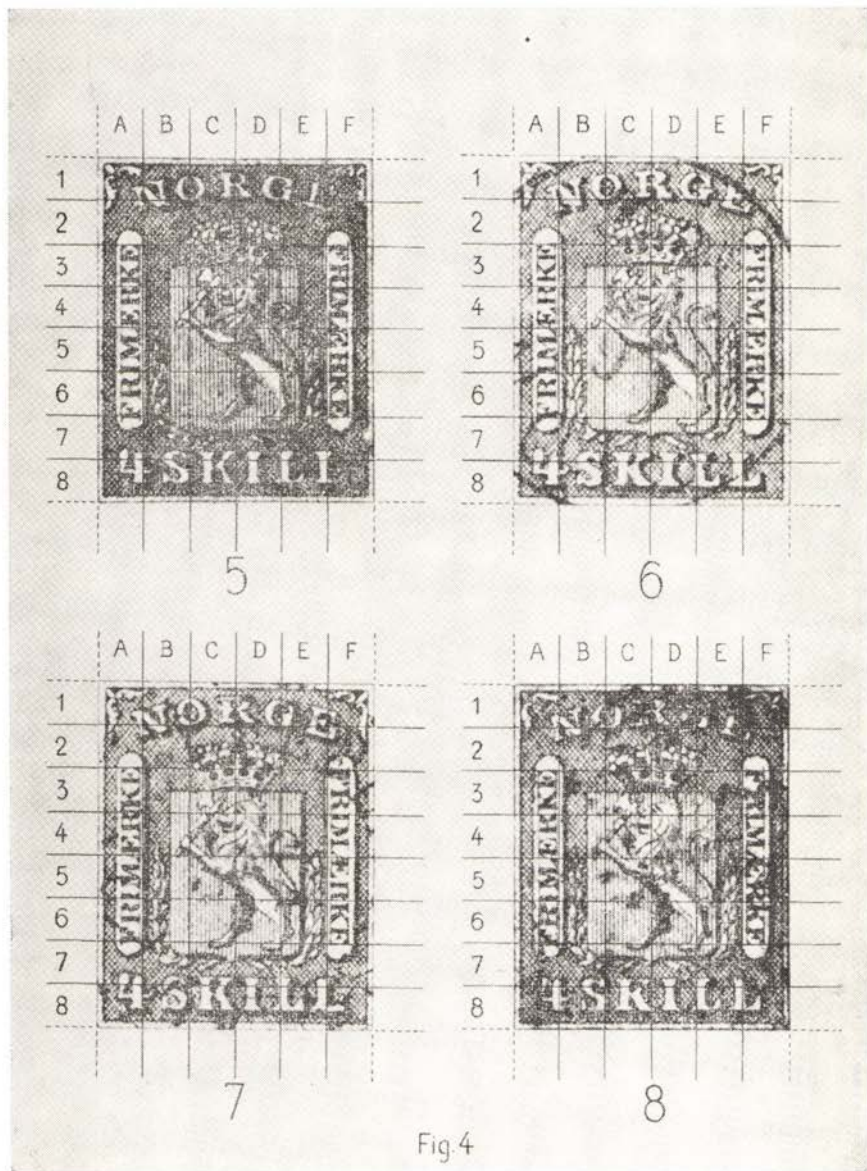


Fig.4

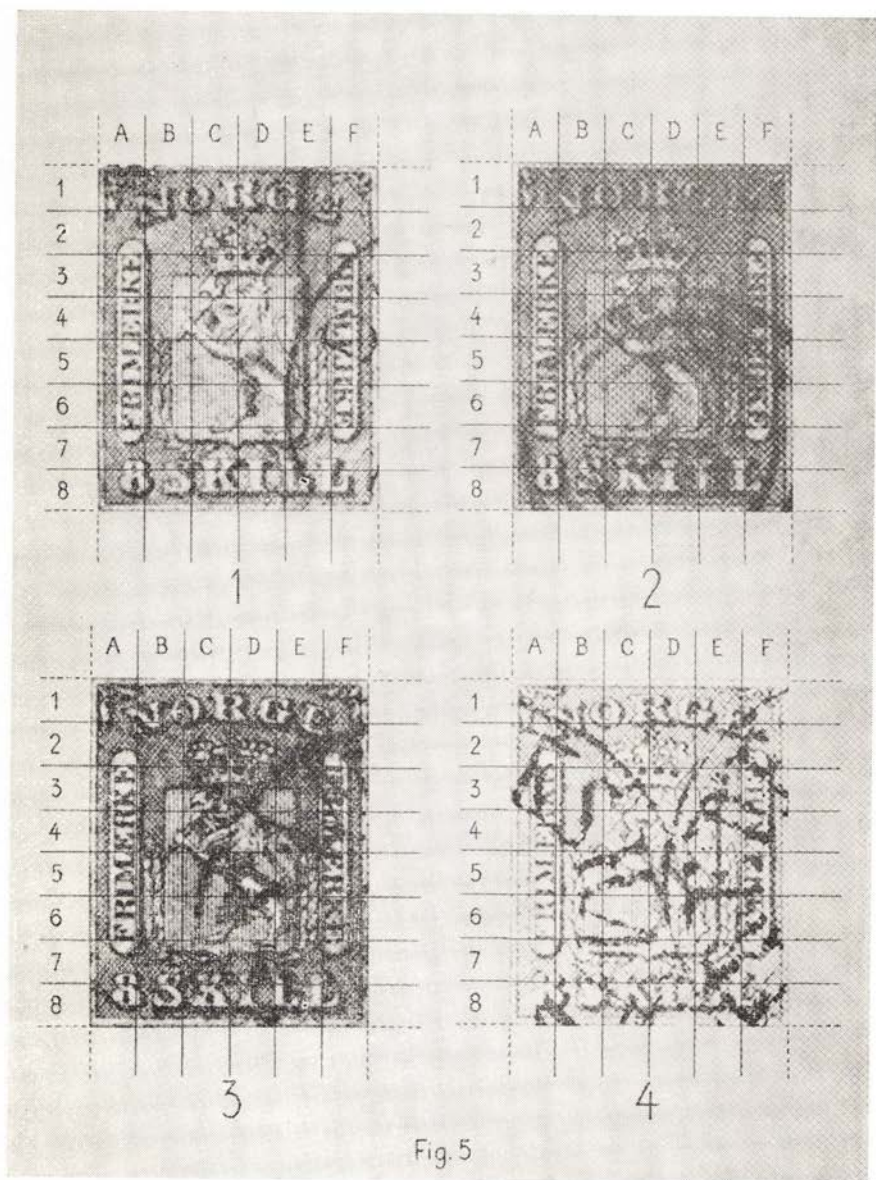


Fig. 5



Fig.6

THE 4 SKILL DENOMINATION (See Fig. 3 and 4)

The first contract between the Government and C. F. Schwenzen (the printer) called for the production of only one stamp—the 4 Skill. It is reasonable to assume that he made (or had an artist make) a drawing of this stamp in its entirety, including the text “4 SKILL”. This one and only original drawing was executed on the so-called transfer paper. This assumption is based on the fact that the figure 4 is identical on all types. The drawing showed the design as it would appear on the stamp—not in reverse, as would have been the case if it were drawn directly on the original stone. This assumption rests on common sense, because the artist would most likely want to avoid drawing in reverse, which would have been unnecessary as well as more difficult.

This original drawing was then transferred to a stone, which I shall here call the “first original” stone, showing just one image of the 4 Skill stamp in reverse. It is almost certain that the artist had to retouch this stone to make any corrections and improvements which he felt were necessary.

Four impressions from this first original stone were then transferred to an intermediate stone, on which they formed a block of four. This stone I shall call the “second original” stone. However, during the transfer process, slight flaws and imperfections appeared, making it desirable for the artist to go over each of the four images to improve them, such as by shortening lines, adding to others, and removing other obvious blemishes. Some of these imperfections were successfully treated, others less so. These corrections have become the characteristics of the so-called Types 1-4.

After this, 25 impressions of the “4-block” from the second original stone were transferred to a larger stone, which thus showed a pattern of 10x10 images. This stone I shall here call the “third original” stone.

In cases where a large issue was contemplated, as was the case with this 4 Skill stamp, it would have been practical to transfer these 100 images, by means of transfer paper, to another stone which would then have been used for the actual printing. On the other hand, for a small issue, the stone referred to above as the “third original” could have been used for the printing.

It is very likely that further imperfections occurred during these transfers, and it is logical to assume that the artist went over the stones again, making any required corrections. This would explain why several stamps of one and the same basic type can appear with so many minor differences (varieties).

Summarizing the above, and referring to Fig. 7, the sequence would have been:

- (1) One original drawing (on transfer paper).
- (2) One “first original” stone, with one image transferred from original drawing.
- (3) One “second original” stone, with four transfer images from the first original stone.
- (4) One larger “third original” stone, with 25 transfer images of the “4-block” from the second original stone.

1863-66: Method of Production - 4 Skilling Development of the stones for Types A-D (so-called Die I)

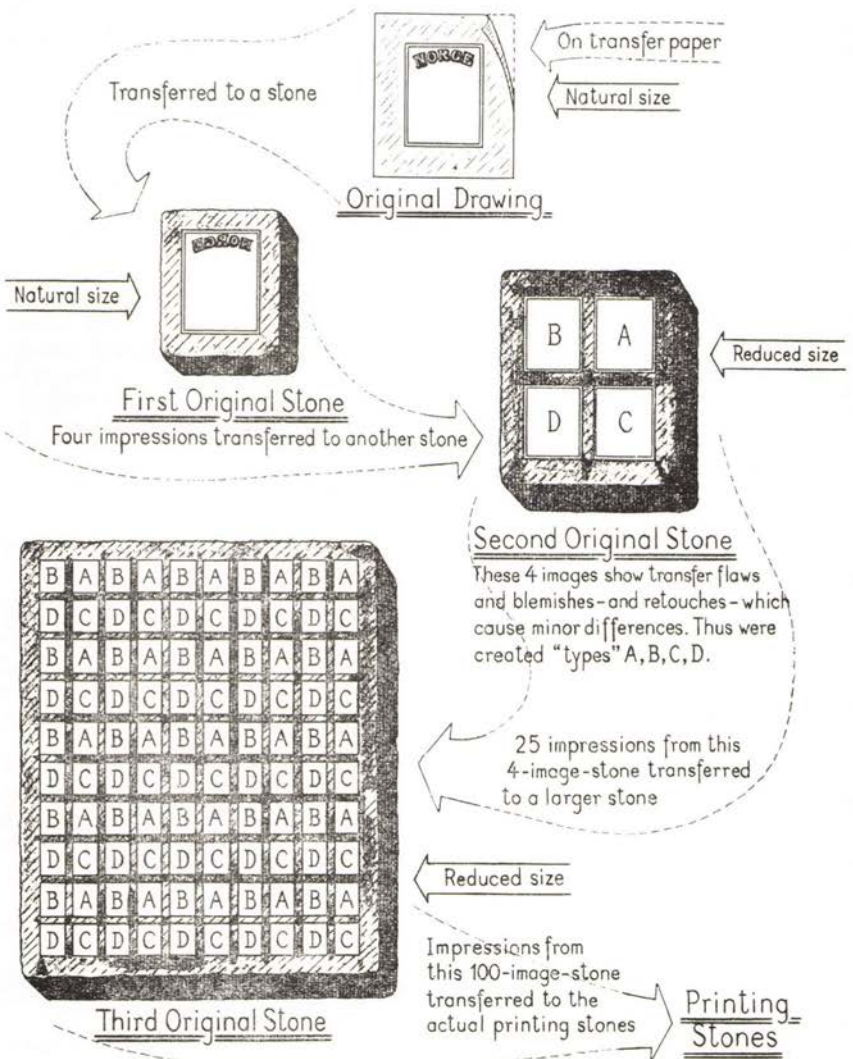


Fig. 7

- (5) While this stone (the third original) could have been used as the actual printing stone, it is more likely that it was retained to be used as required to provide transfers to other stones, which then could be used in the actual printing.

It is not clear from the literature just how many impressions could be obtained from one lithographic stone. The numbers mentioned vary between two and ten thousand, with the lower number probably the more reliable. It is, therefore, obvious that the more than eight million 4 Skill stamps would require many stones, without our being able to determine the exact number.

It was customary to treat the stones with a gum solution prior to storage, so that they could be re-used whenever required. As for the 4 Skill stamp, this was undoubtedly also done with both the second and third original stones. But for some reason or other, these stones must have become useless, making it necessary to prepare new "second" and "third" original stones—which now showed the new Types 5-8, having characteristics entirely different from those of Types 1-4.

Before going through the various types in detail, I should mention that both "Norges Frimerker 1855-1924" (hereafter called NF) and the Norwegian Handbook, Volume I (hereafter called H) describe many characteristics serving to distinguish a number of types and subtypes. It is quite understandable that the explanation of these differences between types was believed to be a multitude of original drawings. However, my investigations have shown that these differences, both as to types and subtypes, are much more likely due to these circumstances:

- (1) During a transfer, certain spots or elements not present in the transfer image may accidentally become part of the image on the stone.
- (2) Certain parts of the image may not transfer well, causing imperfect lines or white spots, and other blemishes.
- (3) Certain details in the design on the second original stone must have been retouched to improve the images, whereby the different "types" were created.
- (4) Similarly, retouches were made on the third original stone, as well as on the actual printing stones, whenever required, thereby creating the various "subtypes."

With reference to the photographic illustrations, Figs. 3 and 4, I should point out that the minute differences observed in certain places must be due to the fact that the transfer papers had to be used in a wet condition, which would permit small deformations.

I should also mention that in the following "claims" (by NF and H) and my "comments," I have deliberately left out all characteristics having to do with lines (shade lines, shield lines, background lines) being too short or too long. If too short, they will appear as broken. If too long, they obviously cut into (or across) letters or parts of the design. These conditions apparently have to do with the transfer difficulties mentioned above.

When studying Figures 7, 8, and 9, the reader should realize that the original illustrations (Congress Book 1964) have been replaced by the author's exhibition pages, and that the "natural size" and "reduced size" references should be ignored, and that the old type designations A-D are the same as Types 1-4 as used in the text.

4 Skill, Type 1 (NF: A)

Claim: The letters of the left FRIMAERKE are connected by extensions of the top and bottom serifs, and there is a color dot between the 8th and 9th lines of the shield (from left) about 1 mm below lion's left front leg.

Comment: These conditions obviously are due to transfer flaws.

4 Skill, Type 2 (NF: B)

All characteristics have to do with lines.

4 Skill, Type 3 (NF: C)

All characteristics have to do with lines.

4 Skill, Type 4 (NF: D)

Claim: The K in SKILL is closed at the bottom (legs are connected).

Comment: This is not quite correct. I have several copies with a distinct separation of the legs, and even in varying degree. This, then, is a flaw caused during transfers, and obviously the artist has even retouched it in some cases.

4 Skill, Type 5 (NF: E)

Claim: The lower opening of the K in SKILL is "onion-shaped".

Comment: Obviously due to a large imperfection caused during the transfers. The balance of the letter is identical with those of the other types. Later stages of retouching find the right lower leg of the K made thicker, so that the "onion" impression is considerably reduced.

Claim: The 2nd R in the right FRIMAERKE appears to have a double crossbar (as listed by NF).

Comment: This is not constant, as I have copies with and without, both from early printings and later retouched copies. On some, the impression of a double cross-bar is definitely due to lack of ink. This characteristic, therefore, has no bearing on the basic design.

Claim: A color spot on the upper edge of the shield, a little to the right of the crown (as listed by H).

Comment: This is not constant, and should not have been listed without so stating. I have several copies without a trace of a spot, both from early printings as well as later retouched copies.

Claim: The upper cross-bar of the stem of the K in the right FRIMAERKE has an extension which points downward toward (and sometimes runs into) the upper right arm of the same K. (The Handbook states that this extension originates at the stem of the K. This is not so).

Comment: This is obviously due to a transfer flaw, and has nothing to do with a changed or different design.

Claim: There is a color spot at the lower end of the axe handle, appearing to be a continuation of same (as listed by H).

Comment: This is obviously a color spot which the artist overlooked, or felt was not worth the time and effort to remove, and has nothing to do with a different design.

(to be continued)

Report On Annual Meeting

The 1968 annual meeting of the S. C. C. was held in Chicago on January 25th—the last to be held under the old by-laws. The big decisions, of course, were determined mainly by the mail ballots—the election of officers, and the acceptance of the new by-laws. There were a few write-ins on the ballots, but all the former officers were overwhelmingly re-elected, as the nominating committee had proposed. The new by-laws were approved unanimously. There were a few suggestions as to changes in wording, but the meeting decided that it was impracticable to make any changes at this time. If experience should prove that any changes are desirable, they can be submitted as amendments as they become evident.

The meeting was well attended, and there was much discussion of future plans. Among these are the proposals that the national society take over the operation of the Scandinavian Stamp Mart (sales circuit) and the Philatelic Literature Service from Chapter 9, which originated them, and has offered them to the National. Work is already under way on balancing and auditing the books of the Mart, but the Literature Service, being a more complicated operation, will take a little longer.

Under the new by-laws, our annual meetings will be held at varying times and places, preferably in conjunction with a national exhibition. Very fittingly, it has been decided to hold the first one, our 1968 meeting, at Compex in Chicago. We will be the headline attraction at that time, and plans have already been made to get us about twice our usual exhibition space. We expect to get official cooperation and participation by all the Scandinavian countries, and would like to see exhibits from some of our overseas members also. The Directory will be devoted principally to Scandinavia, and we will be responsible for furnishing the articles. So start now to plan your exhibit, and if you can, to write something about your favorite topic.

In the meantime, we will have three regional meetings this year—Sojex at Atlantic City, May 3, 4 and 5; Compex May 31, June 1 and 2; and Rochester September 19 to 22. Regarding the first two, see the announcements elsewhere in this issue. Rochester, our newest chapter, is working on their plans, and details will be announced in due time. In each case, the S. C. C. will put up an award for the best exhibit of Scandinavia, so let's get out some good material!

The Treasurer's report—reproduced in condensed form following—shows a nice surplus for 1967, which will be put to good use in providing more and expanded services to our members. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the officers and committees who have worked with me this past year, and the members for giving us the chance to complete the projects we have begun. We want to make the S. C. C. bigger and better for the benefit of all!

Svend Yort

President

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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 SCC members only, for \$1 per ad per insertion. These "boxes" have a text area of about 2x7/8" and are limited to 6 lines (fewer lines with heavier type).

Treasurer's Report

RECEIPTS

Membership Dues and Fees—Received	\$ 1,653.80	
Single Copy POSTHORNS & Publications	37.50	
POSTHORN—Advertisements Paid	177.00	
Total RECEIPTS—1967	\$ 1,868.30	
1967 Interest on Savings Acct.	66.56	
Total INCOME—1967	\$ 1,934.86	\$1,934.86

EXPENSES

Publications: 5 issues The POSTHORN, Ptg. \$680.50, Mail \$212.99	893.49	
General Office Expenses; Ballots, Stationery, etc.	172.72	172.72
General Membership Expense; Dues Postage, Awards & Grants 332.97	332.97	332.97
Total EXPENSES—1967		\$1,399.18
NET INCOME for 1967		\$ 535.68

NET WORTH: December 31, 1967

Balance, Commercial Acct., BEVERLY BANK, Chicago	\$ 1,754.98	
Balance, Savings Acct. EMIGRANT IND. SAVINGS BANK N.Y.C.	1,373.85	
		\$ 3,128.83

January 23, 1968

ROBERT P. STEVENS, Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Active Members (64 New in 1967)	568	
Life Members	14	
Honorary Members	7	
Total Membership	589	

* S * C * C *

All Members — Please Help!

Most publications have problems with address changes, and THE POSTHORN is no exception. During the past year, many copies have been returned to the Editor by the P. O. because of wrong addresses. And it never fails: **IF** we are notified of your address change just as soon as possible, such returns can be kept to a minimum. Each time we get a needless return, it costs SCC money. Last year, the postage of the POSTHORN was 4c per copy. And the charge for the return: 8c! Plus another 10c to send the same copy to the right address!

But this year it's different. With the new postage rates, the charge for a return is 15c **plus** another one-way postage! And another 12c to send the returned copy out **again** via first class mail. Therefore, each time you **don't** notify us of your new address, you are costing SCC a considerable amount of money. Needlessly.

PLEASE cooperate in keeping our expenses down to reasonable minimums, simply by giving us your new address with zip code (with your old address with zip code) as soon as you move, preferably before, so that we can change our records in time to avoid good money going down the drain—the P. O. drain . . .

Sojex and Complex

This heading is intended to "wake up" those of the membership who have fine exhibit material—and don't show their fellow-members! For years, both SOJEX (Atlantic City, N. J.) and COMPLEX (Chicago, Ill.) sported good and educational exhibits from members in many parts of the country; but lately, these great shows have shown a tendency of becoming "local" shows as far as Scandinavian entries are concerned. In both areas, visitors have become tired of looking at the same exhibits, from the same exhibitors! Visitors in the Mid-West would certainly like to see entries from the East—material which they don't get to see too often. And vice-versa. This year, the two shows are timed perfectly and give the exhibitors ample opportunity to display their stamps in **both** shows, and thus help the promotion of our cause in **both** areas! With this thought in mind—and with the hope that both SOJEX and COMPLEX will be **great** shows as far as Scandinavia is concerned, we give the following details:

SOJEX 1968

May 3, 4, 5 at the Traymore Hotel, Atlantic City, New Jersey. The show is sponsored by the South Jersey Association of Stamp Clubs, of which our Chapter 8 is a member, and also host to the SCC Regional Meeting on Sunday, May 5, at 2 p.m. The Traymore Hotel is at the Boardwalk and Illinois Avenue.

SOJEX frames are of standard size—36" wide by 48" high—and will hold 16 pages 8½x11, or 12 pages 9x12. Entries should be sent to John Ludwick, 61 Pressey Street, Hammonton, N. J. 08037, to arrive no later than **March 30**.

In connection with SCC's participation at SOJEX, SCC has put up a nice award for the best entry of Scandinavian material. Six other national specialty societies will meet at SOJEX, which means that Atlantic City will be the philatelic meeting place of the month in the East! Entries—and visitors—from **other** parts of the land are invited . . .

COMPLEX 1968

May 31, June 1, 2 at the LaSalle Hotel, Chicago, Illinois. The show is sponsored by twelve stamp clubs in the Chicago area, each having their separate shows at the same time and place, and so arranged that the huge 1000-frame event becomes "one show." One of the participating clubs is our Chapter 4, which will also host the SCC Regional Meeting on Sunday, June 2, at 2 p.m.

COMPLEX frames (the type used by SCC) are 24" wide by 36" high, and hold 6 pages 8½x11, or 4 pages of larger size. Entries should be sent to Ben Cohen, 8029 West Lyons Street, Niles, Ill. 60648, to arrive no later than **April 15**. (A COMPLEX entry form is enclosed with this POSTHORN).

To add interest to the SCC activities at COMPLEX, SCC has put up a beautiful award to be presented to the best Scandinavian entry. With all the national interest centered around COMPLEX, the Windy City will certainly be the philatelic arena in the Mid-West in May/June! Entries—and visitors—from **other** parts of the country are invited . . .

Three good reasons are evident for your active participation in these two events: We need to promote SCC in the Mid-West, and should therefore concentrate on COMPLEX. We also need to promote SCC in the East, and should therefore zero in on SOJEX. And thirdly—we need to promote SCC **everywhere**, and our active and enthusiastic support of **both** SOJEX and COMPLEX will benefit us not only in these two areas, but all over the continent. That's how important these two shows are! We can do as we have unfortunately done lately—just worry about our own backyard as far as exhibitions are con-

cerned, and the result will be less than impressive. But we can also change our thinking and worry about SCC as a whole and thus achieve results which will be spectacular. The choice isn't really difficult, is it?

 SCC

CHAPTER REPORTS

SCC

Because of space shortage, and also lack of reports from many chapters, we dispense with the usual listing of the chapters and their activities in this issue.

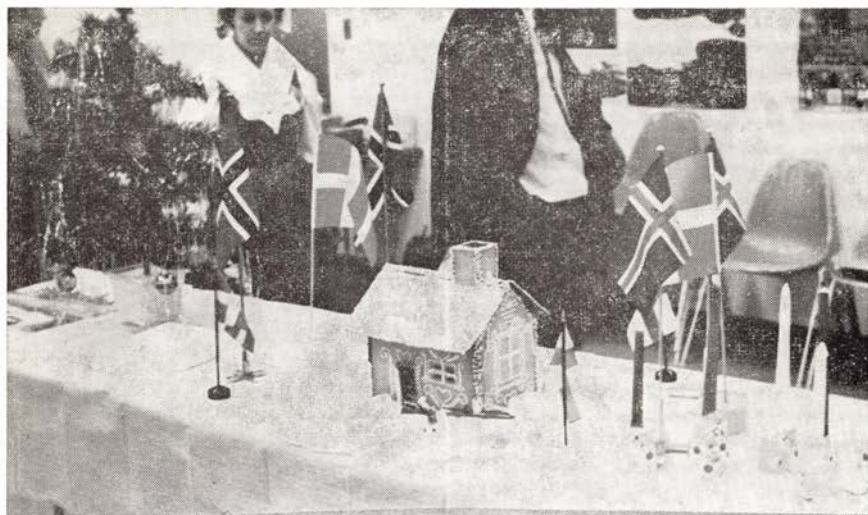
Instead, we bring you a picture report from three of them. If your chapter has recent photos of your meetings and/or activities, please send them in, and as often as space permits we will include them.



The 1968 Chapter 9 Administration. Front row from left: Harold Raimert, Treasurer; Vic Engstrom, President; Tom Cullen, Vice-President. Back row from left: Angus Todd, Secretary; Art Lind, MART Mgr.; Bob Helm, Programs.



From a Chapter 10 meeting last year. From left: Jan Untveil, Al Hewitt, Lillian Daubert, Jack Banks, standing (President), Bill Daubert, Al Daubert (Secretary-Treasurer), Norman Belford, and Bob Pogson.



From Chapter 12's recent Christmas Party. The meeting room is being decorated, the "pepparkakshus" and flags already in place.



Among the 37 present, four wore genuine Norwegian and Swedish national costumes. From left: Mrs. Sites, Miss and Mrs. Norby, and Mrs. Turner.

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(Sorry, NORGESKATALOGEN 1967 sold out!)

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