

The Stuart Rossiter Memorial Postal History Lecture

6 November 2015

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WHY (SOME DO NOT) COLLECT (POSTAL HISTORY)

- What triggers or inspires a child to collect? (comfort/ownership/control)
- Development of the child; naturally instinctive or a conditioned mode?
- Is the nature of collecting (anything) a form of neurotic behaviour?
- Does collecting represent abnormal pathology e.g. obsession and fixation?
- Educational standards, social factors, adult guidance and encouragement?
- Lack (or dissipating volume) of contemporary mail (especially that franked with postage stamps) renders technical postal history less relevant due to simplification/advancement
- Lack of positive collecting models, age group significantly imbalanced and/or societies and/or exhibitions possibly perceived as unwelcoming and/or elitist.
- Too academic, competitive exhibiting too difficult, material too expensive

WHAT IS POSTAL HISTORY?

- Conventional interpretation: The study of postal rates, routes and marcophily
- Any physical object that demonstrates the workings of a postal administration or private carrier
- A sorting technique, mechanism or transmission process used in order to receive and/or deliver a postal article
- A system used to collect pre-payment of postage and obtain payment of unpaid and underpaid mail and potentially tax those articles
- Manuscript and hand-held or mechanised apparatus used to mark mail in some way that indicates a postal process, instruction or advice.
- Interpreting the means of conveyance: Mail coach, train, ship, aeroplane, motorised vehicle, donkey, horse, camel, pony; its timetables, journey and history
- The human element; the people behind its workings, origins and the working lives of reformers, mail carriers and postal innovators etc.

POSTAL HISTORY OR TRADITIONAL PHILATELY?

- “LOGIC TAKES YOU FROM A TO B.....IMAGINATION TAKES YOU EVERYWHERE”
- - Albert Einstein (1939)
- “TRADITIONAL PHILATELY TAKES YOU FROM A TO B.....POSTAL HISTORY TAKES YOU EVERYWHEWHERE”
- LOGIC – V – IMAGINATION
- A BROAD UNDERSTANDING IS USUALLY ACHIEVED WITH A BALANCED APPROACH
- Postal Historians are almost always conventional philatelists first.....and some remain both (though they may not care to admit to either!)

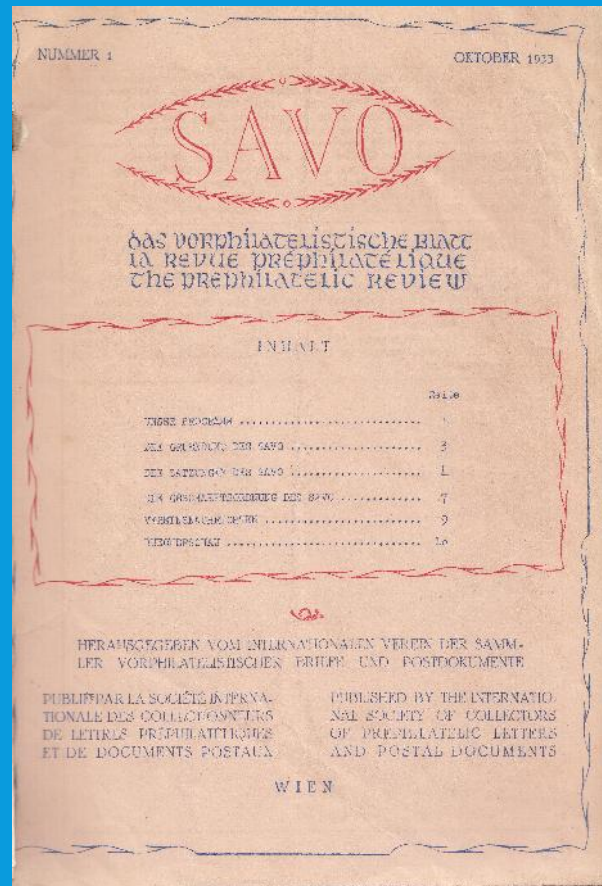
DEFINING 'THEORY'

- Post Office Guides
- Postmaster Directives i.e. Instructions and Circulars to Post Office Staff
- Government Legislation & Communication to Public e.g. Government Gazettes
- Postal (or Related) Service Contracts e.g. contract to engrave, construct or mould a postal device, apparatus or building
- A public Almanac with information about the postal service in it (amongst much else)
- Shipping, Train and other timetables or tariffs published for the use of business and the public alike
- Other Original Source material; official correspondence between relevant parties, accountancy records, official/contemporary statistics, contemporary journals/newspapers etc.
- Previously published works and information in your field including foreign language material

DEFINING 'PRACTICE'

- Owning relevant physical material
- Having records and/or images of physical material from books, journals or auction catalogues etc.
- Competitively Exhibiting your material
- Displaying your material non-competitively e.g. to a society
- Describing or explaining philatelic material

THE INVENTION OF THE STUDY OF “POSTAL HISTORY”



SAVO – THE PRE-
PHILATELIC REVIEW
[Journal of The
International Society of
Collectors of Prephilatelic
Letters & Postal
Documents]

PHILATELISTISCHE MITTEILUNGEN (AUGUST 1925)



Abb. 60. 1 Sch. halbiert als Vororts Frankatur.



Abb. 61. Brief mit hoher Frankatur nach Uebersee.



Abb. 62. Älteste Maschinenstempel. Wellen.

Sehr interessant ist auch, daß Hamburg schon frühzeitig einen Maschinenstempel in zweifacher Form herausgegeben hat und zwar einen, der sieben einen kleinen Kastenstempel zwei wellenartige Striche zeigt (Abb. 62), während ein anderer Maschinenstempel neben diesem Kasten drei Reihen schräger Striche aufweist (Abb. 63). Fast alle Hamburger Entwertungs-Stempel

kommen meistens in schwarzer und blauer Farbe vor und nur sehr selten sind rote Stempel. Auch der bekannte Doppelring-Stempel der Hamburgischen Stadtpost, sowie der Stempel Stadtpostamt Hamburg kommt glücklicherweise in einer der Fälscherwelt nicht bekannten Zahl von Typen vor, so daß es durch die Kenntnis dieser genauen Form immer noch möglich ist, die mit dieser Fälscherwelt versehenen 3 Sch. geübt zu erkennen.



Abb. 63. Maschinenstempelstriche.



Abb. 64. Maschinenstr.-St.

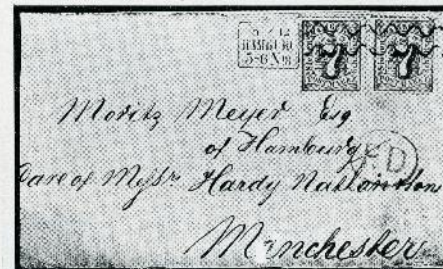


Abb. 65. Älteste Maschinenstempel. Wellen.



Abb. 66. Brief mit seltenem Maschinen-Strichstempel und blauem Rundstempel.

EXHIBITING

- **Condition**: Avoid Tears, Creases, Repairs, Toning, Dusting, Ageing, Incomplete or Weak markings
- **Rarity**: Failure to present rarity in an appropriate way: wording of statements that demonstrates research whilst remaining balanced.
- **Philatelic Knowledge**:
 - 1. Common failings include but are not limited to; inappropriate items in an exhibit; e.g. including mint stationery in a postal history exhibit, failure to demonstrate personal research, failure to quote to sources.
 - 2. Successful Demonstrations include but are not limited to; analysis and synthesis of data; i.e. material – v – archival records, subsequent recognition of what is important and why i.e. not just stating what can be seen from the cover or marking – the text should add detail not just copy or repeat it
- **Presentation**: Avoid inappropriate colours, backgrounds or fronts. Offset your material, be neat, balanced, and consistent and use quality pages and products etc. It often impacts in determining a judges attitude to the exhibit

EXHIBITING CONTINUED

- **Title Pages**; Accurately delineate the scope of the exhibit i.e. a plan (and ensure your content is therefore consistent), avoid a detailed (non-postal) history of the subject and list your references
- **Treatment**: As above, does the flow and layout of the material demonstrate what is in the plan on the title page? Are the boundaries set complied with? Is it like a book i.e. has continuity, a logical start and appropriate finish? Does the treatment actively show development of the subject, completeness and accuracy?
- **Importance**: Is the choice of subject wide enough to be important; consider the scale of the postal history of a village/town/city/country etc. and does the subject offer enough variety or is it very repetitious. How important is it in comparison to other exhibits of the same subject (if any)

JUDGING

- An ideal judge is;
- 1. Broadly knowledgeable
- 2. Diplomatic yet honest
- 3. Confident
- 4. Independent
- 5. Responsible
- 6. Meets Deadlines
- 7. Seeks consensus with their peers to deliver a unified result
- 8. Unbiased
- 9. Respects Confidentiality
- 10. Avoids any form of nepotism, favouritism or corruption
- 11. Educates themselves prior to judging (an) exhibit(s)
- 12. Is an active exhibitor, ideally in more than one discipline

WHY IS 'PRACTICAL' RESEARCH IMPORTANT?

- Many authors undertake considerable archival research.....but some fail to research what exists 'in practice' i.e. the physical evidence.
- For example Hugh Campbell in *Queensland Postal History and Australian Numeral Cancellations Supplements* (1997) at page 13 says "...no letters are known from Queensland to the United States in the period 1876-1882"
- Known to whom?
- His approach was somewhat limiting as his findings appear to be based on material in his own collection (and perhaps his close friends) and did not undertake a wide enough survey of material extent.
- Not only is his statement untrue but at least one in the period he refers (i.e. as at 1997) appeared in an Australian auction and highlights the very importance of fully understanding all that is both in the marketplace and the collections of others.

WHAT EXISTS IN 'PRACTICE' – PART 1

1. Brisbane (28.6.1876) to Cincinnati 1/- [1/- C] [PAID/ALL]
 - Lugdunum Philatelie (Lyon) Sale 66 (29.9.2008) Lot 610
 - The Chronicle* Volume 61 No. 3 (August 2009) page 241
 - The Informer* Volume 76 No.3 (July 2012) page 62

2. Brisbane (5.1.1878) to Alameda County, California via San Francisco 6d [pair 2d C + 2d C]
 - Charles Leski Auctions (Melbourne) Sale 286 (24.5.2006) Lot 275

3. Warwick (27.3.1879) to San Francisco via Brisbane 1/- [strip of six 2d C] [PAID/ALL]
 - Schuyler Rumsey (San Francisco) Sale 19 (3-5.12.2004) Lot 2218
 - The Informer* Volume 76 No.3 (July 2012) page 63

4. Brisbane (14.1.1881) to Orange County, New York via San Francisco 1/- [2 x 6d B] [PAID ALL]
 - Nutmeg (Danbury) Sale 144 (15.5.2007) Lot 5764
 - Nutmeg (Danbury) Sale 150 (17.7.2007) Lot 6720

WHAT EXISTS IN 'PRACTICE' – PART 2

5. Brisbane (9.6.1881) to New York 6d [6d B] [PAID/ALL]

-West Brisbane Stamp Sales (Brisbane) Sale 44 (6.8.1982) Lot 2134

6. Brisbane (30.9.1881) to New York 8d [2d B + 6d B] [PAID/ALL]

-*The Informer* Volume 76 No.3 (July 2012) page 63

7. Gowrie Junction (18.11.1881) to Alameda County, California via London and New York 6d [6d B]
[INSUFFICIENTLY/PRE-PAID]

-Macray Watson (Melbourne) Sale 57 (24.3.1992) Lot 569

-Macray Watson (Melbourne) Sale 60 (30.3.1993) Lot 772

-*Capital Philately* [Journal of The Philatelic Society of Canberra] Volume 11 No. 4 (August 1993) page 80

-Charles Leski Auctions (Melbourne) Sale 286 (24.5.2006) Lot 284

WHAT EXISTS IN PRACTICE – PART 3

8. Brisbane (24.11.1881) to New York 1/4d [1/- B + 4d B] [PAID ALL]
-Nutmeg (Danbury) Sale 144 (15.5.2007) Lot 5763

9. Warwick (25.9.1882) to Columbia, South Carolina via Brisbane, New York and Plymouth 6d [6d B]
[INSUFFICIENTLY PRE-PAID]

-Robson Lowe (London) Sales 4196-97 (13.9.1977) Ex Lot 50

-R.A.Perry (Melbourne) Sale 46 (17.11.1977) Ex Lot 692

-P.J.Downie (Melbourne) Sale 173 (31.1.1978) Ex Lot 421

-R.A.Perry (Melbourne) Sale 50 (30.3.1978) Lot 453

-Macray Watson (Melbourne) Sale 20 (13-14.12.1983) Ex Lot 1659

-*Sydney Views* No. 10 (February 1986) page 22

10. Jimbooba (25.10.1882) to New York 8d [2 x pair 2d BW] [PAID/ALL]

-*The Informer* Volume 76 No.3 (July 2012) page 63

WHY IS PEDIGREE IMPORTANT?



INFORMED OBSERVATIONS

Post Office of Sweden

...rates and postal arrangements between Great Britain and Scandinavia have proved to unravel, and it cannot be pretended that all questions relevant to mail sent to and from Sweden have been answered with complete satisfaction. A multiplicity of instructions were given, both to the Public and to clerks working in the Circulation Department, and the various offices consulted have not always agreed and it has been difficult to establish a uniform pattern of treatment.

The material existed in the early years. This is borne out by statistics published in the Postmaster General's report for 1856 which states that the estimated number of letters sent to Sweden during the twelve month period was 26,015 as against 385,445 sent to Hamburg, 1,957 to the rest of the German Postal Union. By 1878 the estimated number to Sweden and Norway combined had risen to 591,216 for the year and certainly material accumulated during the 'sixties and 'seventies becomes easier to find.

YEARS	RECORDED
1850-59	14
1860-69	52
1870-75	44

SUMMARY

- 1. Truly know your subject, read all literature on the subject that you can find!
- 2. Obtain advice from the relevant subject matter specialists
- 3. Research/record archival sources and material extent to improve knowledge
- 4. When reading or writing a statement, consider whether they are;
 - A. Personal Perceptions
 - B. Informed Observations
 - C. Substantiated Facts
- 5. Consider the impact that publishing can have on judges, others in your field and the recognition it could bring

NEVER GIVE UP.....

STUART ROSSITER TRUST FUND

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Please reply to **R Pizer**

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4 March 2003

Ben Palmer
GPO Box 1751
Sydney 2001
Australia

Dear Mr Palmer,

The Pre UPU Postal Rates of Victoria: Explored and Explained

Thank you for your letter of the 11 March 2003 with the additional information which was greatly appreciated and helped to clarify matters.

The Trustees have reviewed your revised submission and I regret to say they feel unable to help you with this project. They wish you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Robin Pizer
Corresponding Trustee