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BIMONTHLY

SOUTH INDIA PHILATELISTS' ASSOCIATION

(FOUNDED 1956)

(AFFILIATED TO THE PHILATELIC CONGRESS OF INDIA)

HAIL - MAGIC SHOW Stamps on Water Birds and Begum Akhtar

The Indian Magic has world wide reputation. Now a philatelist gets a unique chance to be a magician.

For one's Phil-Magic show one requires only two postage stamps, printed by the Madras Security Printers and issued by the Department of Posts, India, one on Water Birds released on 23rd November, 1994 and the other one on Begum Akhtar released on 2nd December, 1994, and of course, a drop of water.

The trick is just to put a drop of water on the printed side of either stamp and wave one's hands over it, as magicians do, then gently rub the surface of the stamps with fingers only to find the images of Water Birds and Begum Akhtar are vanished; only the pieces of blank papers remain.

The magical story of the two stamps stated in the above lines has costed a big amount of public money through The Department of Posts and ultimately the stamps, after several complaints, are withdrawn resulting in consequent loss to the State.

We sincerely share the lamentation of unfortunate stamp collectors who could not collect these impugned stamps prior to their withdrawal.

Editor Mr. DIPOK DEY

Stamps World

No.16 - 100 / 94 - Phil.

Government of India
Ministry of Communications,
(Department of Posts)

Dak Bhawan,
Sansad Marg,
New Delhi - 110 001
Dated : 11.7.94.

To,
Sh. Dipak Dey,
Stamps World
107/2, Raja Rammohan Ray Sarani,
Calcutta - 700 009.

Sub : Proposal for a stamp on Miss Universe.

Sir,

With reference to your letter at 24.5.94 on the above noted subject, it is inform you that as per guidelines this Deptt. does not issue stamps on living personalities. More over no stamps have been issued on the other living personalities who have brought fame to the country by similar comparable achievement in other fields.

Under the circumstances, I hope you will appreciate the limitations of the Deptt. in the matter.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) MERVIN ALEXANDER
ASSTT. DIRECTOR GENERAL
(PHIL - II)

SIPA MEETINGS

Second sunday of every month - Regular meeting at the Philatelic Bureau, Anna Road Post office, Madras - 600 002 (10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.) first and third sunday of every month - Auction meeting at our Library Hallat 6 Nannian Street, Madras - 3 (Timing 10.45 am. to 1 p.m.)
SIPA Library Open Tuesday & Sunday, 6 Nannian Street, Madras - 3. (7 p.m. to 8 p.m.)

PERFORATION

Valmick K. Sesai

How Perforation came into being: There was a story which goes like that: Charlie Fowler a journalist had to post a lot of mails to his clients and used to buy stamps in sheets. One day Fowler had no means to separate the stamps as they were imperforated, neither did he possess a knife nor any scissors, then he just applied his wit. What did Charlie do? He picked up an ordinary pin and with great patience started pricking a sheet of stamps between each row. In that way he could easily separate each stamp individually. Fortunately there was Mr. Henry Archer, an Irishman who observed it and took the idea. By 1847 he developed a machine and carried out many experiments. Later he applied to the Postmaster General of British Post offices for approval. The Postmaster General appreciated the idea and encouraged him to develop the device and quality of its performance. After a series of experiments Archer was successful and in 1854 World's first perforated stamp was issued by Great Britain.

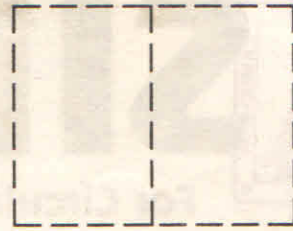
Perforation: Rows of holes are punched in the margin between stamps and the paper is cut right out of the holes. In order to punch holes in a sheet of stamps, a perforation machine contains a large number of very small pins. They are arranged in rows and when the pins come down on the paper they cut out right through it. In different machine pins are fitted in different ways. The number of holes are determined by the size of the holes they make to the centimetre. The basis of measuring the perforation of stamps is 2 centimetres. When a stamp is described as perf. 13 or 14 etc. it does not mean that there are 13 or 14 holes at any side of the stamp, but there are 13 or 14 holes in length of 2 cm. The collectors do not have to count the holes, a perforation gauge does it for them.

Before the method of perforation came into general use, the method of rouletting was used to separate stamps. Rouletting was of many kinds, such as,

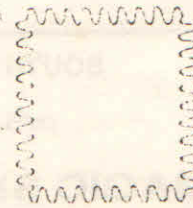


Arc Rouletting: In this process cuts are made in curved lines.

Lozenge Rouletting: In this process cuts are made in the shape of little crosses which form lozenges at the stamp edges when separated.



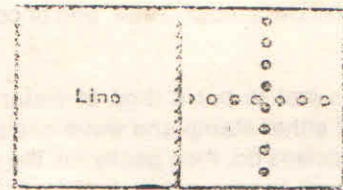
Line Rouletting: Here cuts are made with straight interrupted cuts.



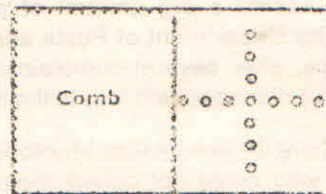
Serpentine Rouletting: Wavy lines cut between the stamps.

Rouletting went out with the advent of Perforation machine, although it has been used, as late as 1919 by Yugoslavia and 1922 by Greece.

Perforation is distinguished from Rouletting by holes, that means Rouletting does only cut the paper without removing any paper while perforation does cut the paper into holes by removing paper of the holes. At present there are three types of perforation generally used to separate stamps from each other.



Line Perforation: In this process holes are punched in a single row at a time, and two lines of holes do not match perfectly at each corner of the stamps.



Comb Perforation: In this process the lines of holes are made in both directions at a time and the result is that the holes at the corners coincide perfectly.

Elliptical perforation: In this process an elliptical shaped hole is made three times larger than normal round shaped holes. On 24th March, 1992, Great Britain introduced this style of Perforation.

The Role of the Postmaster General in the days of East India Company in India

M.L. Majumdar

The P.M.G. wrote to H.T. Prinsep, Secretary to the Government of Bengal vide his letter No.183 of 1836/37 dated 4 March 1837 on a subject of such information: "I sanction the retransfer of duties of the Cooch Behar Post Office to the Government Vakeel placing him under the Gowalpara (Assam) P.M. The officier under the order of the Governor General's Agent performs the duties of the Post Office gratuitously. This arrangement took effect on the 15 Septemebr 1836..." The Department of Posts then endeavoured to extend its sphere of activities by extension of territory covered under regular mails.

G.A. Siddons P.M.G. informed the Government of Bengal that several high officers on public duties moved on tour or other duties to places covered by stages of dawk runners of another mail lines of road and desired to know whether temporary arrangement would be made involving additional expenses. In reply to his letter No.202 dated 21 March 1837, Prinsep stated on 29 March 1837 that "as the expense of Political Dawk is borne amongst the changres of your Department on the principle that a main benefit resulting from the establishment of the Post Offices consists of free transmission of all public letters to all places. I do not see any reason for making the temporary arrangement". Similarly the Military dawks were borne by the Post Office for free transmission.

The Committee for revising the Post Office Regulations addressed the P.M.G. on 15th Februyary 1837. "The Post Office at the Danish Settlement of Serampore and of the British Military Cantonments at Barrackpore and Dum Dum are at present mere Chokees of the Presidency G.P.O. at Calcutta, of two former stations are at least to be removed from the immediate control of an European Supervisor. Adverting to the distance of Barrackpore from the G.P.O. 16 miles, to the responsibility incurred the amount of collections which appeared to little less than Rs.400/- a month and to the heavy amount of duty to be performed by 7th Regiments of Infantry being quartered there besides the Headquarters of the Division Staff, the Committee is of opinion on

that it would be expedient to make Barrackpore anindependant Post Office with a salaried Postmaster and to place the office of the adjoining staiton of Serampore immediately under his control...

In regard to Dum Dum it might be convenient at once to vest that Officer (Assistant Adjutant General) with the entire control of the Post Office with the title 'Postmaster', but as the duties very moderate, it would not seem necessary to annexe a salary to such officer."

The Committee further raised similar questions on the Military stations of the Mount Road and Palaveram. It may be stated here that the P.M.G. G.A. Siddons, was an Hony. Member of the Committee, Barrackpore P.O. established in 1776; Dum Dum and Serampore both established in 1820 still they remained in the status of mere Chokees stations up to 1837.

The Committee further observed that the replies of letters despatched for G.P.O. to Barrackpore and Dum Dum reached Calcutta on the 3rd or 4th day, and the private post carried such letter on the same or the following day by courier service. The Committee, therefore, suggested "... to the increase of correspondences, which may reasonably be expected from abolishing the private post now existing and introducing the reduced rate of postage from two annasto one by the Govenment, if the recommendation of the Committee is approved by the Government, it might be desireable to adopt some similar arrangement in Bengal."

In reply the P.M.G.wrote to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on 25th Februyary 1837 that the Committee's suggestions although were within their province of consideration, was a matter of intrnal affair of Post office establishment within the jurisdiction of his office. He further detailed in his six page letter the actual position, difficulty, establishment and financial management for consideration of the proposal by the Government.

The Secretary to the Bengal Government H.T. Prinsep vide his letter No.418 dated 8 March 1837

communicated the decision of the Governor General to the P.M.G. The Committee for revision of the Post Office duties of India is understood to have under consideration the establishment of the Department and as their reports on the subject may shortly be expected, the recommendation in respect to Barrackpore and Dum Dum will be taken into consideration at the same time"

J.M. Waghorn, whose name is famous for bringing overland mails from England to India by steam vessel, suggested from Cairo on 9 April to the P.M.G. of Bengal that the Commanders who brought overland mails by sailing ships by the Red Sea should be rewarded Rs.500/- for their excellent job. The Government informed the P.M.G. vide letter No.21 on 26 April 1837 "that the Commanders of sailing ships shall be rewarded for bringing mails to India from the Red Sea - this point has been considered by the Committee for revising the Customs and Post Office Regulations, has sufficiently pursued for in the Draft of the Act, now under consideration of the Government.

The P.M.G. informed the Government of Bengal on 21st June 1837: "It is in contemplation for revising Post Office affairs yet to recommend on altered line of road between Calcutta and Bombay for communication from Nagpur onward...by this alteration of route about 50 miles would be saved as well as the necessity for crossing over to Bombay by the Panvell ferry and the station of Aurangabad would be left far out of the proposed line. "The P.M.G. suggested that in such circumstances, Aurangabad Post Office would be placed under the exclusive control of the Bombay G.P.O. for the future. The Polymetrical Tables published by the Committee on 22nd July 1837 indicate that Aurangabad P.O. was placed under the control of Bombay and Madras G.P.O.s.

The correspondences of the Committee for revising the Customs and Post Office Regulations and the replies from the Government which are of great public interests, have been recorded here. The ground for abolishing the public post and introducing a monopoly postal service by the Government of India could be established from this correspondences. But it is a matter of regret that the original or copy of the Committee's report is not available in the West Bengal State Archives. Calcutta, or in the other libraries.

NEWS / VIEWS / TITBITS

AGRI - HORTIPHILEX - 95

The Agri - Horticultural Society of India, Calcutta celebrates its 175th year in a very novel way. Apart from its regular flower and horticultural show, this year it included a philatelic exhibition on Agriculture and Horticulture theme. It was a competitive exhibition and organised with the help of Philatelic Congress of India. There were total 39 participants covering 70 frames from all over the country and maximum number (13) came from Bangalore while the host city Calcutta had only 7. Though it was organised by the Agri Horticultural Society, but none of the society members were in the jury for this the presentation of exhibits were neither thematic or scientific. Had some of the horticulturists been in the jury it would have helped the participants to understand the subject well, while the philatelist jury could have looked after the philatelic part of it. However, Horticultural Society deserves praise and PCI thanks.

Unfortunately, we could not publish the name of the prize winners as the organisers did not provide us the list. But we sincerely congratulate all the prize winners.

SINGAPORE - 95

Singapore is hosting World Stamp Exhibition SINGAPORE - 95 at Singapore International convention & Exhibition Centre from 1 - 10 September 1995.

Shri Pradip Jain one of the leading philatelic dealers of India has been appointed as the commissioner for India. On 4th of March Shri Jain issued press communique to confirm the following entries : Ms Sita Bhatija (Pre - stamp Classic of Pre-independent of India) M.C. Sukhani (Bhopal)

COINS COLLECTION

INDIA MAGADH,
MAURYA PERIOD SILVER COINS,
HINDU RAJA, MUGHAL PERIOD SILVER,
COPPER COINS

SHER SHAH SURI, DELHI SULTAN,
BENGAL SULTAN SILVER COINS

INDIAN STATES SILVER COINS

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STAMPS

INDIA PRE & POST
INDEPENDENCE USED & MINT
EARLY INDIA CANCELLATIONS

WRITE TO
SUBHASH CHANDRA

K - 57/47, NAWAPURA, VARANASI - 221 001.

Dr. S.P. Gupta (India Post - Independence) E.P. James (The History of Cochin Anchal 1866 - 1951) A. Shirolkar (Indian Postal cancellations and other marks - 1854 - 1884) A.R. Singhee (Patiala Postal Stationery), Pradip Jain (Indian Air mails - its development and operation 1911 - 1942), Amal Bose (Early Maps in Cartophilately), R.K. Bagri (Maps), R.K. Binani (Flags), Srikanth Echerlu Sathyanarayana (Antarctic), A.M. Mollah (Fiscal stamps of Indian Princely States) Anil Suri (Fiscal of Cochin States), S.K. Rungta (Fiscal Stamps of India), M.R. Prabhakara (Philately for Rural People in Regional language Kannada). Shri Dilip Shah has been invited to exhibit his collection on Early Indian Classic in the Court of Honour section.

Mr Jain further added that a request had been made to the organisers of Singapore - 95 to consider the entries of S. Veerachandra Menon, K. Chandak and Dr. R.S. Gandhi.

For further information contact : Mr. Pradip Jain, Post Box - 128, Patna - 800 001.

Of Philatelic Promotion

Sri Pradip Jain Dr. R.S. Gandhi, Sri N.K. Jain and Sri Lalan Prasad Singh, the eminent philatelists of Patna have been organising philatelic activities in various schools and encouraging junior philatelists to open philatelic societies.

Sri Pradip Jain brought out a souvenir plaque in commemoration of Gandhi 125th Birth Anniversary.

For further details, contact : Pradip Jain, Post Box - 128, Patna - 800 001.

Swedish Postal Department Threatened

Canadian Goalkeeper, Corey Hirsch, has threatened to go to court to prevent the Swedish postal department issuing a stamp from showing him being beaten by Peter Forsberg for the goal that gave Sweden the gold medal at 1994 Olympics in Lillehammer, reports AFP. "I don't want to

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be remembered that way", Hirsch said. Sweden beat Canada -3-2 in a sudden - death penalty shootout, to one of the most exciting Olympic hockey finishes.

But the post office says it will go ahead and release the stamp on March 17, although it has agreed to airbrush Hirsch's name from his jersey.

Based on the Statesman, 9 Feb '95

West Bengal Govt. Notice on Stamp Duty

The West Bengal government published a Notice stating that no Stamp Duty (Revenue Stamp) was payable before 13.5.94 for receipt of money or any property valued upto twenty rupees. Due to amendment of Indian Stamp Act with effect from 13.5.94 Stamp Duty (Revenue Stamp) on "Receipt" has been revised and fixed at one rupee for any money or property exceeding five hundred rupees in value. At present, no stamp duty (Revenue Stamp) is payable on receipt of any money or property valued up to five hundred rupees. Giving any receipt bearing Stamp of less than the proper amount is punishable under the Act.

Philatelic Exhibition VINDHYAPEX-94 held at Satna

Central India Philatelic Society, a leading Association of Stamp Collectors and Rotary Club of Satna an international service organization jointly organized a two day Regional Philatelic Exhibition "VINDHYAPEX - 94" on 26th & 27th November, 1994 at Satna (M.P.)

Learned Philatelist Mr. R.S. Rao, President, Chhattisgarh Philatelic Association & Vice President, Philatelic Society of Bilai inaugurated the exhibition on 26.11.1994. To commemorate Rotary Foundation Month, a fine collection of Rotary was specially exhibited in this exhibition in the Invitee Group. The collection was exhibited by famous philatelist Mr. Sudhir Jain which included stamps Programme, Polio Plus, Rotary Foundation, 50th & 75th Anniversary of Rotary etc.

Chairman, M.P. Red-Cross Society, Ex-State Minister and Charter President at Rotary Club of Satna, Dr. L.P. Khare was the Chief Guest of Prize Distribution - cum - concluding function.

FISPHILEX - 95

The president of Fiscal Philatelic Society of India, has announced that a National Philatelic Exhibition on Fiscal will be held sometime in November, 1995. Place and date will be announced later. The aim of this exhibition is to create an environment for the study of Fiscal documents and to make it popular among the collectors and historians of the country. "It will be a competitive exhibition" - he added.

Besides exhibition, he further added that there will be audio visual seminar, talk, workshop etc. Eminent historians of the country will be invited to attend the seminar where they can read papers on Fiscal documents.

Preparation is going on. For further information, contact or write to The Secretary, Fiscal Philatelic Society of India/ 1A, Biplabi Anukul Chandra Street, Calcutta 700 072.

CANADA WAS FIRST COUNTRY TO ISSUE CHRISTMAS STAMP

If Queen Victoria had not been in a royal huff. Canada might not have issued the world's first Christmas stamp.

It began with a young Englishman named JOHN Henniker Heaton, who sailed to Australia to seek his fortune.

In those days, parents rarely saw their sons or daughters after they left for the colonies. There were no telephones to keep in touch. Telegrams were costly and so were letters. People had pressed for a universal penny postage system for years, but it was never put into effect.

One day, Henniker Heaton visited an Australian courthouse where a young Irishman was on trial for cheating the post - master general.

It had been a year of very bad drought and few jobs. The man finally found work and wanted to let his mother know. However, he did not have six pence for postage. It cost just one penny to mail a newspaper home, though, so he hit upon a scheme. He bought a paper and wrote his message inside. It ended. "Please God I will send you two pounds at the end of the month.

The postmaster knew about such tricks. The Irishman was charged with fraud, sentenced to three weeks in jail, and lost his job.

Many years later, Henniker Heaton returned to England and became a Member of Parliament. He never forgot the young Irishman who could not afford to send his mother a letter. He made it a personal caught for universal penny post.

The battle went on for many years, and spread from England to South Africa, from the United States to Australia.

Finally, the Hon. William Mulock, postmaster general of Canada, got tired of the squabbling. He announced that his country would begin postal service to any part of the Empire for 3 cents each ounce, or 11/2 English pennies.

"But", said the Duke of Norfolk, postmaster general of Great Britain, "one country is not allowed to reduce its postage to another, unless the other agrees!"

To settle the argument, a conference was held in London in June, 1898. It was decided that Imperial Penny Postage would begin before the year was out.

Mulock was praised for breaking the political logjam. He returned to Canada and designed a special stamp for the event. It is famous among collectors as "the map stamp" because it showed a map of the world, with Britain and her colonies coloured red. To honour Queen Victoria's Jubilee for 60 years on the throne, he used the text, "We

hold a vaster Empire than has been".

The Duke of Norfolk paid court to the queen to let her know about the new postal service. She asked when it was to come into force.

"We thought of the Prince's birthday", the Duke said, meaning Edward, Prince of Wales, whose birthday was on November 9.

"And what Prince" Queen Victoria asked in a voice as cold as a polar icecap. She, after all, was Empress Queen. Such a choice should be hers.

Without missing a beat, the Duke answered, "The Prince of Peace, ma'am. On Christmas Day"

When Mullock learned what the Duke of Norfolk had done, he added "Xmas 1898" to his design, thus making it the world's first Christmas stamp.

By popular demand, Mulock issued the stamp early. It went on sale December 7, 1898.

The very first stamp used was on a letter written by William Mulock to the Duke of Norfolk. In it he said. "This letter to Her Majesty's post-master - general will be the first communication at the new rate to be stamped by the Post Office of Ottawa, the Dominion capital".

Courtesy : Canada Post Corporation

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Mails to and from India

DHAMMOND GILES

The story of the India - U.K. mails from the 17th century until the mid - 19th century, when the P & O Line became responsible for the carriage of all sea mails between the two countries is a fascinating one.

Imagine the thoughts of the fairy writers who had gone to India to serve the East India Company, knowing when they despatched a letter 'home' that it would take nine months to a year, perhaps, to reach Britain, and some two years before a reply could be received! Perhaps even it might never reach its destination, but be lost with the carrying ship on the long and hazardous sea journey. Such were the frequency of these disasters that the writers would invariably send a duplicate letter by another ship in the hope that one at least would arrive. In those days all correspondence had to be hand written and then laboriously copied out, for there were no typewriters or carbon paper at that period.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, letters were conveyed between the two countries, by private arrangements, usually through the ship's master or a travelling friend. By the Post Office Act of 1660 letters brought into Britain by merchant ships were made 'subject to Inland Postage' but as the ships' masters received no payment on such letters, nor did they incur any penalty for not handing them over, few letters were handed to the Post Office, and naturally, no Post Office markings are found on such letters.

In order to capture more of the incoming mail the Post Office, at the beginning of the 18th century, began to offer voluntarily to pay a gratuity of one penny for every letter handed over at the port of arrival. This gratuity became legal under the Act of 1711, when the letters became subject to two rates, the ship's captain's fee and the inland postage, and the combined rate was usually shown in manuscript, sometimes preceded by the words 'In all'.

British Ship Letter Receipt Stamps

It was not until 1766 that ship letter hand stamps were first used on the incoming mail, when following the Act of 1765, there was a general issue of port (named) stamps, such as the 'London/Ship Letter' stamp.

This mark was used on letters emanating from all parts of the world during 1766 - 91, but the majority were on letters from India, with which the greatest maritime commerce was then carried on and London was the home port of most of the ships of the Hon. East India Company. Similar stamps were used at other ports and from 1798 the design of this handstamp was changed from time to time for all ports in Britain.

British Ship Letter Despatch Stamps

Before the 18th century outgoing letters to India were also privately arranged, with the masters of the ships sailing from British ports. The Act of 1711 then made the despatch of letters by private ship illegal if they could be sent by the Post office regular packets but there was

then no packet service to India. By the Act of 1799 the Post Office was authorised to despatch letters by vessels that were not regular packets but the Hon. E.I.C. refused to co-operate with the Post Office or order their captains to carry such mail. The only means, therefore, of sending letters to India was in the 'care of the captain of one of the E.I.C.'s ships or by favour of a passenger or member of the ship's crew. Thus, no British ship letter handstamps are found on letters despatched to India before 1815.

At last, in 1815, the British Post Office arrived at a compromise with the Hon. E.I.C. and took over the India U.K. mails, subject to certain concessions to the Company, and under the Act of 1815 monthly packets were established albeit at a high rate of postage, though letters sent by Private ship incurred a lower rate. For the first time as a result of this Act letters despatched to India were stamped with London handstruck marks, to distinguish packet letters from ship letters.

No effort was made to improve the service by providing a new fleet of fast packet ships and the service proved to be no quicker than the former private ships. This, together with the heavy 'packet' postage rates, became subject to several complaints from the public. The Act of 1815 was therefore repealed in 1819 by an Act which allowed the despatch of letters to the East Indies by means other than the Post Office. Letters sent through the Post Office were stamped to indicate that the postage had been prepaid but letters sent through other channels i.e. by private ship, were not stamped at all in Britain.

Early Indian Handstruck Stamps

Most letters between Britain and India arrived at, or were despatched through, the main Presidency ports of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay and the earliest reference to ship letter postage being liable to levy in India appears in the Warren Hastings Post Office Reforms of 1774 under which letters coming from seaward were liable to half postage which was paid on delivery. No India ship letter receipt stamps, however, have been seen before 1807.

The earliest reference to postage on letters sent to Europe is in the Bombay courier of 1793 and also in the contents of a private letter written from Madras in 1794 where the rates were quoted and very heavy they were too. No trace of any postage rates on letters sent seaward from Calcutta have been found before 1879 but three covers from Calcutta, all dated 1794, have been recorded with the earliest Indian ship letter despatch stamp.

A great variety of Indian ship letter stamps were used from 1799 and those of particular interest are the stamps used during the short life of the English ship Letter Act of 1815, more commonly known as Kings post marks some of the stamps incorporating the words Kings postage in their make up.