

PO 'OLEKA O HAWAII



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"PO'OLEKA O HAWAII"

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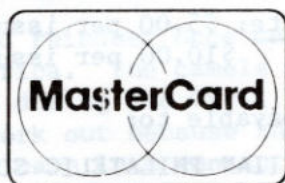
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The American Philatelic Society and the Philatelic Society of Sweden both celebrate their 100th Anniversaries in 1986.

The two Societies have both been honored by a special stamp issue in their respective countries on the theme "The Hobby of Stamp Collecting".

At the First Day of Issue Ceremony at the headquarters of the American Philatelic Society in State College, Pennsylvania, on January 23rd, representatives of the collectors of Sweden attended.

The President of the Philatelic Society of Sweden said:

"As a small souvenir of the First Issue Ceremony here today, we, the Stamp Collectors of Sweden, want to hand over a gift to the United States Postal Service. We have brought a letter from the first year of activity of the Swedish Post Office, 1636. This letter, sent to the Queen, is one of the oldest we know. We hand it over to you with many thanks from the Swedish collectors for the combined issue and as a good item for your future Postal Museum."

The caption on the photo reads:

"Letter sent to Queen Kristina in 1636, the first year of activity of the Swedish Post Office.

"A gift from Swedish collectors to the United States Postal Service at the ceremony on the 23 January, 1986.

"The text on the front side consists almost entirely of Honorific Titles of the Queen. The letter was, according to a note on the front side, delivered to Her Majesty on the 23 March, 1636. The day of posting is unfortunately not indicated."

* * * * *

About 1915, Mr. Charles Foster Richards heard of an unusual sale in 1887, by the Postmaster of Honolulu to a Mr. A. N. Ridgely of New York, of so-called "obsolete" Hawaiian stamps, cancelled-to-order by the Post Office.

A PECULIAR TRANSACTION IN HAWAIIAN STAMPS

By Charles Foster Richards

As I had never heard that any of the stamps of Hawaii had been sold at less than face value cancelled to order, my curiosity naturally was aroused, and I at once wrote to Mr. Ridgely and Mr. William von der Wettern, Jr.

The latter confirmed the fact that he had received the 2¢, 18¢, 25¢, 50¢ and \$1.00 values with ring cancellations from Mr. Ridgely. Mr. Ridgely stated that to his best recollection all the stamps bore the "target" four circle postmark applied in entire sheets and that the above were the only values so cancelled. There were none of the 12¢ in the lot he got. He says there were no 12¢ red lilac in stock when he was in Honolulu. This being the case, those surcharged in 1893 must all have been from the lot of 12,500 shipped from New York on June 10, 1888, and nearly all were so surcharged.

He denies absolutely that he ever bought a large lot of Hawaiian stamps uncanceled, or any 2¢ "specimen" stamps, and says the entry in the old Post Office book of November 29, 1887, must be unreliable which charges him on that date with

500	18¢ stamps
500	25¢ stamps
500	50¢ stamps
1,000	100¢ stamps
2,000	2¢ "specimen" stamps

at face value. He suggests that some other person

may have got the 2¢ "specimen", and thinks he really received about one thousand of the 2¢ unperforated.

In conclusion, he sends me a clipping from The Post Office of May 15, 1891, volume I, number 2, which reads as follows:

A Peculiar Transaction in Hawaiian Stamps

Through the courtesy of Mr. Philip Benjamin of this city we have received a copy of the "Report of the Finance Committee to the Hawaiian Legislature of 1890" from which we extract the following very interesting information.

The Mr. A. N. Ridgely mentioned therein was well known throughout Australia some time ago as the successful proprietor of several large skating rinks and was formerly in partnership with Mr. William von der Wettern, a well-known American wholesale stamp dealer. The report, after dealing with other matters connected with the Honolulu Post Office, states as follows:

"We have to call attention to a transaction involving gross irregularity in this bureau, viz:

"(1) On or about the 29th day of November, 1887, one A. N. Ridgely, a through passenger to Australia, called at the Post Office to see the Postmaster General, having previously written as to the object of his business from the city of Baltimore, U.S.A.

"(2) While here an agreement was made with Mr. Ridgely to the effect that the Postmaster General would furnish said Ridgely with cancelled Hawaiian postage stamps of various denominations to the number of two hundred thousand for the sum of two thousand dollars or one cent each.

"(3) We find that in earnest of this agreement and in partial performance of the contract the Postmaster

General delivered to Mr. Ridgely the following stamps:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Denominations</u>	<u>Face Value Dollars</u>	<u>Amount Rec'd Dollars</u>
500	\$.18	\$ 90.00	\$ 5.00
500	.25	125.00	5.00
500	.50	250.00	5.00
1000	1.00	1000.00	10.00
<u>2000</u>	<u>1.00</u>	<u>2000.00</u>	<u>20.00</u>
4500		\$5,465.00	\$45.00

"(4) We find that the stamp sales book, at page 138, records these stamps as cancelled in the office and charges for their face value of \$5,465.00. To meet the exigency of the transaction, this sum was charged to Mr. Ridgely, and the difference between the face value of the stamps and the price that they were sold for was credited to said Ridgely and charged to his 'discount'. This disposal of the matter left a sum of \$55.00 standing to Mr. Ridgely's credit, he having previously paid the Post Office \$100.00 on this account.

"(5) We find that the arrangement made about the balance due of the \$2,000 -- in exact figures, \$1,900 -- was that Mr. Ridgely was to pay to the American Bank Note Company said \$1,900, and they were to send the balance of the stamps here to be cancelled by the Postmaster General before delivery.

"(6) We find that in pursuance of this agreement, Mr. Ridgely sent the American Bank Note Company, through the Third National Bank of Baltimore, U.S.A., a cheque for said \$1,900.

"(7) We find that owing to the long delay caused by the Bank Note Company in filling the order, Mr. Ridgely became anxious about the money he had advanced, and in consequence a large amount of correspondence ensued, and that finally said Ridgely invoked the assistance of the American Consul here with the result that the agreement was cancelled and the money advanced by him was refunded.

"(It is necessary to state at this point that the Postmaster General informed your Committee that the entire Ridgely business had been carried on with the approval of the Minister of Interior. The Postmaster General further claims that there was a large number of kinds of stamps contracted for, and those actually disposed of, lying in the Post Office, which had become unfitted by age for public use and upon which the Government wished to realize upon whatever amount could be secured therefore. Further, that it would take, according to approximate estimates, nearly one hundred years to dispose of some of the stamps sold, if sold in the ratios of legitimate sales.)

"(8) We find that about the same time, and presumably upon this precedent set by the Postmaster General and Minister of Interior, there were several similar, though less ambitious stamp transactions being carried on in the Post Office bureau, viz: On December 22nd, 1887, stamps to the face value of \$1,465 were purchased by one of the postal clerks for the sum of \$25, and by another of the postal clerks stamps of a face value of \$543 were purchased for the sum of \$10.

"The aspect which such transactions bear to the outside world may be shown from the following extract written by a Mr. Hanes to one of Ridgely's agents:

'We cannot use the Hawaiian stamps you mentioned. We have had them offered from Hawaii direct, and think it would be policy to discourage this practice of petty governments. It is very small business.'

"It certainly is very small business and we wish to draw the attention of this legislature to the fact that it is a 'small business' which goes further than an illegitimate interference with the business of stamp collection as intimated by the extract from the letter of Mr. Hanes. It is a business that has been indulged in by the Postmaster General with the

approval and consent of the Minister of Interior, which amounts to a gross irregularity under the law, if it is not a virtual violation of constitutional law itself. We know of no authority under which the Postmaster General, abetted by the Minister of Interior, can without a legislative enactment dispose of otherwise than for face value, or destroy, the postal currency of this Kingdom with more legality than could said officials provide and circulate a postal currency for the Kingdom without authority of the Legislature."

The writer has seen the printed "Report of the Finance Committee of the Legislature of 1890", a booklet of seventy pages and cover, of which above is a correct copy of all that pertains to this transaction. It will be observed that something is wrong with the list of stamps sold Mr. Ridgely. Certainly the footing of the "face value" column is in error, and it hardly seems likely that there would be two items of the one dollar value.

Is it not reasonable to suppose that the last item should read 2,000 2¢ imperforate?

It will be observed that there was an unaccounted for balance of \$55.00 due Mr. Ridgely. As an offset to this he says:

"I am sure I got more than 4,500 stamps, perhaps 7,000 to 9,000 in all, of which not more than about 5,000 were of the \$1.00 stamp; a smaller quantity of the others; very few 18¢."

I am informed that not all stamps bearing the "target" four ring postmark were cancelled to order. Also, that about 1893 the clerks in the Post Office cancelled to order with name cancellation -- not "target" -- on a large scale, stamps handed them for that purpose. A correspondent has the 18¢ and 25¢ so cancelled by his request.

The Finance Committee of 1890 consisted of E. C. MacFarlane, E. Muller, C. J. McCarthy, William White and E. A. Burchardt, and the report in regard to this matter was unanimous.

While the Hawaiian monarchy was in existence the Legislature was composed of "nobles" named by the monarch, and "representatives" who were elected by the taxpayers. These two classes of legislators sat, debated and voted as one body. The members of the Cabinet, appointed by the monarch, also sat in the Legislature and took part in the debates and votes.

Up to the time Hawaii was annexed to the United States the journal kept by the clerk of the Legislature was not printed. The journal of the 1890 Legislature consists of 405 pages of written matter, not indexed, so that the only means of arriving at the contents is to read it through. The clerk, however, noted on the margin of the journal such items as "petition number", "report number", "resolution number", but he made no mention there of this report of the Finance Committee.

Mr. McCarthy says that to the best of his recollection this report was kept back in the hands of Mr. Lorrin A. Thurston, then Minister of the Interior, as he was in 1887 when these sales of cancelled-to-order stamps took place.

In 1887 Mr. Fred Wundenburg was Postmaster General, that office then being considered a bureau under the Minister of the Interior. When the report was finally presented to the Legislature, it is said to have been moved by a native representative named Kalua, who had joined the other side than that to which the members of the Finance Committee belonged, that the report be rejected. This motion failed. It was then moved that the report be adopted. This also failed, and soon after the Legislature adjourned without action.

* * * * *

TIN CAN MAIL'S CHRONOLOGY

By Clyde Carriker

The chronology of Tin Can Mail to and from Niuafu'ou, Tonga, is interesting:

1902 - Arthur Tyndall arrived as a trader on the island. He reported that on high surf days the mail was sent ashore by rockets. Some of the mail was lost, other parts were burned.

1903 - A crewman from the SS HAUROTO remembered firing rockets with mail. This was abandoned as Tyndall started using native Tongans to swim with mail to passing ships.

1919 - On October 15, Walter George Quensell arrived at Niuafu'ou. Later, he would use the decorative cachets which made the little island famous among the world's collectors.

1921 - Charles Stuart Ramsay arrived on May 31 as an employee of Morris, Hedstrom Co. In his book, Ramsay claims he started the Tin Can Mail and made 112 monthly swims during the next 12 years to deliver mail to passing ships.

1928-29 - First report of mail addressed to Quensell and adorned with simple markings.

1930 - U.S. Navy Eclipse Expedition landed on Niuafu'ou to observe the 92-second total solar eclipse which, strangely, in all of the Pacific could be seen solely from the Tin Can Island on October 27. Several covers are known with the Suva, Fiji, datestamp of October 27 at 10 A.M. (See Figure 1)

1931-46 - During these 15 years, Quensell had the Tin Can Mail pretty much to himself, especially

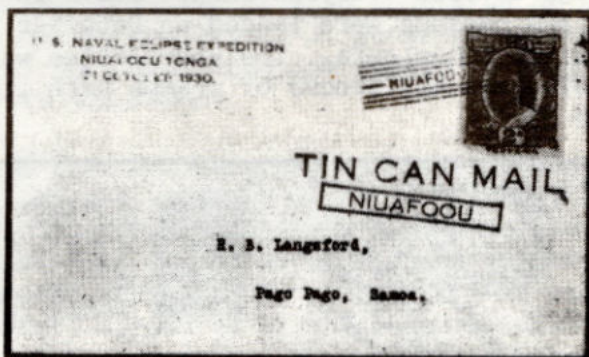


Figure 1. Tin Can Mail cover bears an eclipse cachet at the upper left. The Suva circular date stamp on the reverse is of Oct. 27, 1930, the day of the solar eclipse.

after Ramsay left the island in 1932. Many cachets and decorative markings were developed during this period by the innovative trader, Quensell. (See Figure 2)



Figure 2. Addressed to Quensell, this cover bears the two concentric circles enclosing "TIN/CAN/MAIL" and a block "NIUAFOOU" across both Tongan stamps.

September 1-9, 1946 - Long, vicious earthquakes rocked the tiny island and most of the township of Angaha was destroyed on September 9. The Queen

of Tonga decreed everyone should leave the island, and 1,350 persons were landed on December 22 at the capitol of Nukualoafa. The post office was completely destroyed and all stocks of stamps with it. (See Figure 3)

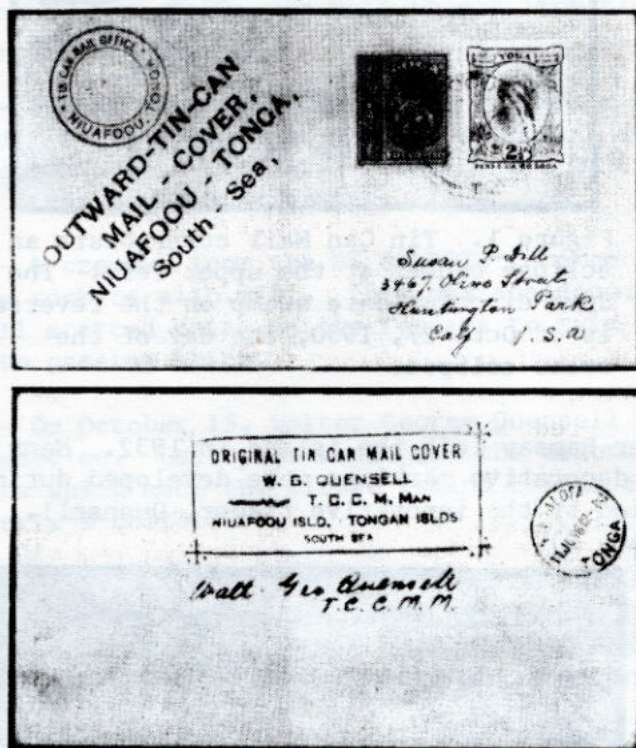


Figure 3. An "OUTWARD" cover (front and back) with July 11, 1946, Nukualofo CDS - perhaps one of the last covers that one of the various ships picked up.

1947 - Last evacuation by the Tongan government yacht HIFOFUA took place on October 9, 1947. Later, sometime in the 1950's, people who wanted to return were permitted to settle again on Niuafu'ou. Mail during this latter period is scarce - if it exists at all.

1962-81 - Agreements between the Matson Lines and the Tongan government saw the reinstatement of the Tin Can Mail Service. First stop for the new service was made by the SS MONTEREY on January 17, 1962, the first canload of mail off Niuafu'ou in 16 years.

* * * * *

SAMANTHA ON SOVIET STAMP

The Soviets have issued a stamp commemorating Samantha Smith, the Maine schoolgirl who died in a plane crash last August at the age of 13.

Samantha had written to former Soviet leader, Yuri V. Andropov in 1983 to express her concern about the danger of a nuclear war. The Soviet leader responded with an invitation for her to visit the Soviet Union. Her trip to Russia made her an international symbol of concern about world tension.

In addition to the Samantha stamp, a new variety of a violet in Lithuania was named in her honor, and a special 32.7 carat diamond cut for the State Kremlin collection was given her name.

In 1933, Stanley Gibbons, Inc. published their Volume IV of "The Postage Stamps of the United States", and the section on "Hawaiian Issue" is interesting enough to pass along to our readers.

We quote:

HAWAIIAN ISSUE

During the early part of 1928, there was considerable discussion about an issue to commemorate the discovery of the Hawaiian Islands by Captain Cook in 1778. The Post Office, however, did nothing in the way of providing a regular issue, but at the last minute contented themselves with surcharging the current 2¢ and 5¢ stamps "Hawaii" and the dates "1778-1928".

This work was done on the Rotary Press in the same manner as the Bureau makes pre-cancels. The printing was a poor job and the subject of much criticism. The stamps were placed on sale in the Hawaiian Islands and at the Philatelic Agency at Washington, D. C. They were good for postage throughout the United States and this issue was not limited to the Hawaiian Islands.

Although the overprinting was badly done, we only noticed one really constant variety. On the 2¢ value, we find a short figure "1" in "1778". This occurred on the third stamp from the left of the bottom row on one of the four overprint plates. There are many blotches of ink which appear like stops and commas, these are, however, not constant, and of no special interest.

There is one variety, which due to its unusual appearance is rather interesting. For want of a better name we will call it "a stretched overprint"; for some reason we do not understand, something like one row on every other sheet appears to have the overprint very much longer than in all the others. This is not due to any variation in the type but is apparently caused by some "slip" in the printing press.

There is another variety of a different kind that has been found on the 2¢ value. There was evidently some error between the printing of the stamp and the overprinting, and as a result, the wide space which should have come in between the two sheets was shifted so as to fall in the middle of the sheet, enabling us to obtain a vertical pair with the spacing between 10mm wider than normal. This variety, however, is extremely scarce.

Counterfeits of this overprint are known. They appear to have been applied in blocks of four, and are quite dangerous.

We understand that around 200,000 copies of the 5¢ value were destroyed on account of poor centering.

Rotary Press Printing, Perforated 11x10-1/2,
Overprinted "Hawaii 1778-1928"

		<u>Unused</u>	<u>Block</u>	<u>Used</u>
#647	2¢ carmine	.12	.50	.10
#647b	2¢ variety, short "1" in "1778"	3.50	--	--
	Side imprint; number only		.65	
#648	5¢ blue	.30	1.50	.30
	Side imprint; number only		1.75	

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Editor's Note: It's interesting to compare these
1933 prices with current catalogue prices!

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NOTES ON EARLY ENGLISH HANDSTAMPS

By Alec Weavers

Thomas Witherings was a person commissioned during 1635 by King Charles I of England, to organize a postal service for all his subjects within Great Britain.

For the past three years, Witherings had been successfully running a post road from London through Dover to the European continent for merchants, and with this knowledge and experience behind him, he started a service on five other roads leading out of London: the roads to Edinburgh, Holyhead, Bristol, Plymouth and Norwich.

In 1642, the civil war disrupted everything, including the post, although there are differences of opinion regarding this by leading postal historians. Some say that Edmund Prideaux, who was then the Postmaster General, made a fortune from the service during the war years.

Others are of the opinion that with the country torn in two, a post would have been impossible to run and Prideaux only dealt with the private letters of Parliament. They also say that from hundreds of letters examined for this period, none show any sign of postal markings. My own conclusion is that when the civil war quietened down in 1646, there must have been a limited service because I have a letter dated 1646 which shows a manuscript charge "POST PAYED 6d".

After the war, in 1657, the post was farmed by Capt. John Manley. He paid the government £10,000 a year to run the postal service, keeping the profits from the letters. In those days post boys travelled as and when it suited them, and it often took many weeks for letters to be delivered.

For this reason people were reluctant to use the postal service, but in 1661 the new Postmaster General, Henry Bishop, pronounced the following:

"A stamp is invented that is putt upon every letter showing the day of the moneth that every letter comes to the office so that no letter carryer may dare to detain from post to post, which before was usual."

Immediately, the system improved, and there are quite a few letters of this period still in existence, showing the first handstamp used, which is now known as the BISHOP MARK.

In London during the 1660's, there were Receiving Houses, such as stationers' shops and taverns, which people used for posting letters, and these Receiving Houses forwarded the mail to the General Post Office.

If people wished to send letters abroad they would have to go to a completely separate place, known as the Foreign Branch Post Office, which not only used its own BISHOP MARK but also, between 1663 and 1667, a handstamp which was called a CHARGE MARK.

The CHARGE MARK was the amount owing on a letter as it came into London from Europe, because in those days the person who received the letter normally paid the postage.

* * * * *

Years ago, when a message was extremely urgent, a feather attached to the envelope told postal officials to deliver the message with all due haste.

* * * * *

LETTERS FROM THE PAST:

- (1) On March 11, 1891, a letter from the postmaster at Pahala, Hawaii, to the Minister of Finance, Honolulu, posed a serious cash problem.

"I have a number of 2¢ and 3¢ postal cards on hand. These I never have any call for whatever, and therefore wish to exchange them for stamps, but the postmaster general says the rules of the Postal Dept. will not allow him to do this or to take them off my hands other than at his own expense, which of course, is out of the question.

"Under these circumstances may I ask you how I am to recoup myself for this loss, for loss it is so long as they are lying in my hands.

"I cannot think that it is intended by the law that a Postmaster should be a loser in such a case. The cards were sent here for sale to the public and I paid for them; but, surely there should be some way of making an exchange."

- (2) On December 28, 1889, a letter from Paia to the Honorable F. Wundenberg, Postmaster General, Honolulu, aired a complaint anonymously.

"You will do me, and no doubt a great many others, a great favor by sending a large printed circular, to be posted up to the following effect:

"Stamps will be sold for Cash Only and it is strictly forbidden to cut stamps in two, or in any way mutilate them.

"I am constantly receiving letters from a certain P.O. on Maui with the two cent stamp cut in halves, thus making one stamp do for two letters. I do not want my name mentioned, but Wailuku P.O. is the culprit.

"Begging you to keep my name back, I remain."

* * * * *

THEMATIC STAMP COLLECTING

By G. S. Anand

In this era of specialization, the hobby of stamp collecting has also gone in for individualization.

People, unable to keep pace with a growing number of stamps issued every year, have started to limit their scope of collection. Thus, many collectors collect stamps of one country, a region or a group of nations.

There are some, and their number is on the increase every year, who collect stamps by the designs on them.

A collection of stamps by theme and its development so as to make a story is thematic stamp collecting.

The origin of thematic stamp collecting can be traced back to about 100 years ago when the first pictorial stamps were issued. And, in the last 50 years or so, postal administrations the world over have vied with one another in bringing out attractive, colorful thematic stamps.

Thematic stamp collecting is one of the most absorbing of all stamp collecting possibilities. It encompasses all possible postal items pertaining to a particular theme, apart from the postage stamps. It thus includes postmarks, postal history items, special covers, first-day-covers, telegraphs, special stamps (registration, postage dues, express, etc.) and maximum cards, etc.

Most beginners ask the question - what theme to collect? The answer is - collect anything you are fascinated by - ships, aviation, flowers, animals, or famous people. The theme may even be your favorite subject, like physics, sports, or your own profession.

The scope is endless, but the choice should necessarily be yours, because thematic stamp collecting requires

constant involvement, and the more you go into it, the greater the joy of stamp collecting by topics. The scope is endless.

A great benefit from thematic stamp collecting is that it links your collection, so that you do not end up collecting and buying what you may feel is not what you want.

A thematic stamp collection comprises stamps from all countries connected with the theme and of a period of 50 to 70 years and not just a couple of years.

Once a decision to collect a theme is made, it is most advisable to start with the largest packet of stamps of the theme that a collector can afford to buy. A larger packet buy is a surer way to avoid duplication.

Arranging a thematic stamp collection is a matter of personal choice. No two stamp collections can be alike. For example, you can arrange your collection of "Space Exploration" by country of issue, by space missions, by U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. missions, or make a story beginning with stamps on ancient scriptures that throw light on man's effort to fly into space.

The fun from thematic stamp collecting is limitless!

* * * * *

Camels and reindeer once carried mail in North America. The camels were tried in the South during the Civil War. They did not work out because they stampeded when they came into contact with horses or mules and often bit their drivers. The reindeer were too hard to train when they were tested in Alaska.

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