



West of  
England  
Thematic  
Society

## Newsletter No.38 March 2010

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**IN THIS ISSUE** – “What to Collect in a Thematic Display – Pt 3”, Is your Philately Social, An Indian Messiah, Belgian Railways

## WHAT TO COLLECT IN A THEMATIC DISPLAY – Part 3 by Richard Wheeler



In the previous two articles we have looked at Stamp Booklets and Flammes. now we turn to larger items, the first of which is the **MAXIMUM CARD**.

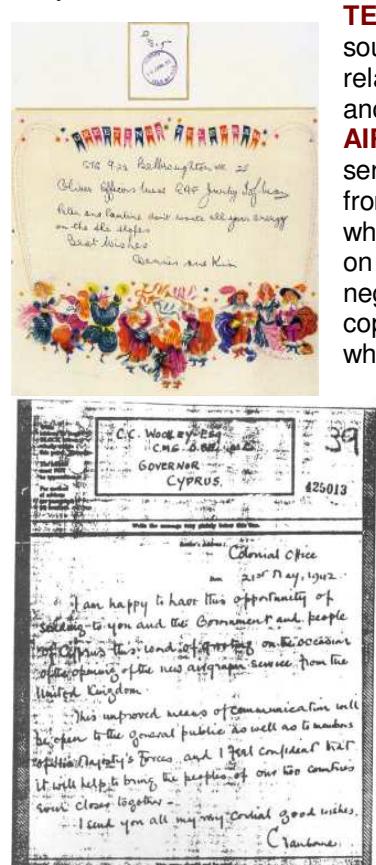
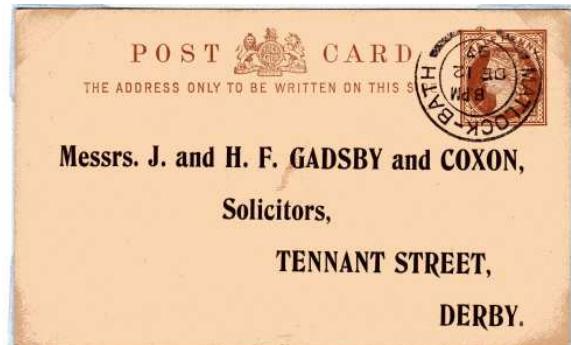
The term Maximum Card is so called because it is a picture postcard with a stamp on the picture that relates to the subject but not identical. In addition the stamp has to be cancelled by a postmark which also has a connection between the stamp and the card. The term Maximum Card indicates the connection between the card, stamp and postmark. In the USA however, they look to the stamp being identical to the picture on the card.

Although the cancellation is not clear it does relate. The detail that is being shown are the heavy rods that pass through the head into the body to control the figures. The arms are strung and the legs hang free. Maxiimaphily is a class on its own in Stamp Exhibitions, but where used in a thematic exhibit, it can be used to illustrate a fine point in the story which cannot be seen properly on a stamp but should not be used excessively.

**PICTURE POSTCARDS** with nothing more than a reproduction of the stamp are not permitted. Very often in European exhibits, I have noted a number of items which are shown as having been printed to private order and used to show a vital point of the story where no philatelic material exists. It is of course correct to use post cards such as shown right which are produced for the purpose and where the subject matter relates to the story being told

**TELEGRAMS** provide another source of material where items related to your story line are another source of interest.

**AIRGRAPHS**. During World War 2 the large numbers of service personnel wishing to send and receive messages from home, caused a problem and forms were issued on which the message could be written. These would be put on film and the negatives sent by air, upon receipt the negatives were developed by the Kodak Company and copies made that were then delivered. Most messages were not as ornate as that shown right. For service personnel this service started around 1941 and was gradually offered to civilians worldwide, the message shown left was the first civilian message to be sent to Cyprus by Lord Cranborne to the Governor of Cyprus on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 1942. The messages were delivered to recipients in envelopes as shown right, these can be found in various colours. Note the envelope is of the window type and the message was folded so the recipient name appeared in the window. Note also the cancel applied just as for any other mail received.



## IS YOUR PHILATELICALLY SOCIAL? By

Mary Clayton

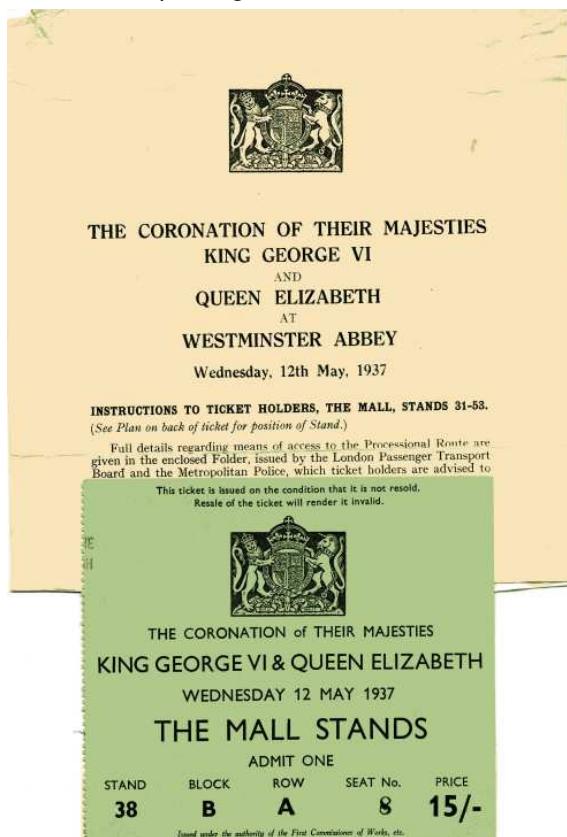
Our speaker this year for our WETS Day is John Hayward - President of the B.T.A. - and he will be talking about Social Philately. This is going to be of special interest to me because I am writing up my Royalty collection as Social Philately not Thematics.

I find this more interesting because you can use different material. I have quite a lot of letters and covers written by members of the Royal Family and under thematic rules I could not include them should I wish to enter a competition, but under Social Philately rules I am, and I think this makes for a much more interesting display or exhibit.

I have a cover and letter written by Queen Victoria obviously sent in the Diplomatic Bag to the Embassy in St. Petersburg. With my love of history I get a kick just handling this envelope and letter and imagining Queen Victoria sitting at her desk writing this all those years ago. Others are a cover written by Queen Alexandra to her friend Sidney Holland and Queen Mary's letter to the Director of the V. & A. all about items she had obviously lent to the Museum.



I could go on about these but another item which illustrates how interesting you can make a Social Philately collection is the booklet and ticket to a seat in the Mall Stands for the Coronation of George VI together with instructions to ticket holders. Then there is the Scroll sent by Queen Elizabeth (later Queen Mother) to all those who had taken in evacuees. In nearly every case the scroll was kept by the recipients but the cover was thrown away. These covers bore a cancellation from Buckingham Palace which was only used for this posting and the canceller was never used again so it is a rare item.



The Booking Form for the WETS Day on 24<sup>th</sup> April is enclosed with this newsletter – PLEASE BOOK EARLY



## AN INDIAN MESSIAH – by David Herrity

The American Sioux Indian stamp trilogy is concluded with Sitting Bull (Tatanka I Yo Tanka) born on Grand River, South Dakota, in 1831, a member of the Hunkpapa division of the Teton Dakota Sioux. His Biographer Stanley Vestal wrote his book from fanciful Indian sources, an account much questioned by Historians.

Following the 1862 Santee Sioux uprising in Minnesota, a large camp of circa. 7 to 8,000 Sioux including Sitting Bull's Village gathered at Killdeer Mountain, North Dakota. This is the point at which army reports first mention Sitting Bull. General Sully attacked and destroyed this village scattering its inhabitants. By 1876 all Sioux were confined to reservations except for a small group of 3,000 recalcitrants camped on Powder River. Army reports name Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull as their leaders. As religious leader Sitting Bull called for a Sun Dance, the Sioux's most important religious ceremony to be held on the Little Big Horn, 9,000 reservation Indians answered his call. The military responded with a disastrous two pronged pincer movement. On June 17 1876 General Crook's 1,200 strong southern column was surprised and driven back. Eight days later Custer's command, part of the northern column, was massacred.

Sitting Bull wisely fled to Canada. Here in November 1876 a New York Herald reporter interviewed him. Historians have accepted the report as genuine and accurately interpreted, giving with little doubt his true position in Sioux hierarchy. While openly admitting to being present at the battle of the Little Big Horn, he was neither a Shirt Wearer (Head Soldier) nor Old Man Chief. He was, he stated, the leader in Sioux religious and nationalist political matters. The Canadian authorities lacked the military might to oust their unwanted guests and an uneasy co-existence ensued.

In 1881 Sitting Bull surrendered at the Standing Rock Agency in the Dakota's. His personal following numbered just 187 souls. His power had clearly waned but not his commercial value. In 1884 he began a 15 city tour of the United States. A year later trading on his Custer fame he was the Buffalo Bill Wild West Shows star attraction. After this he became a constant thorn in the side of Agent McLaughlin who reacted by exaggerating reports about Sitting Bull, making him appear far more of a threat than he actually was.

1890 was a momentous year. Frederick Jackson Turner expounded his famous thesis that "1890 marked the passing of the frontier". Although he did not then know it, it would also herald the last great Indian uprising. A new Indian religion swept across the west, The Ghost Dance in which adherents believed themselves impervious to bullets reached Red Cloud's Pine Ridge Agency. Although Red Cloud hastily distanced himself, it took a strong hold in Big Foot's Minneconjou Sioux Village. Soon after it spread to Standing Rock Agency, where despite Sitting Bull's encouragement it met only token acceptance. Agent McLaughlin however not only recognised how dangerous the Ghost Dance could prove but also saw an opportunity to rid himself once and for all of a meddlesome old man. He wrote an alarmist report recommending as a first priority in forestalling this looming crisis the removal and confinement in a military prison of Sitting Bull. The American authorities awoke with a jolt. The chilling prospect of a 35,000 strong Sioux powder keg, which might erupt at any moment forced a knee jerk reaction. Although Standing Rock was 170 miles away from the real seat of trouble, Red Cloud Agency, the spectre of Custer's massacre stuck to Sitting Bull like glue, with his removal seen as of paramount importance he was shot dead while resisting arrest. Big Foot's Ghost Dancers, 350 men, women and children camped on Wounded Knee Creek were now to be disarmed. Realistically there could only be one outcome, a slaughter, spawning a best selling book and an award winning film. Although Sitting Bull has had his detractors, only he alone had the power to assemble 12,000 Sioux for a Sun Dance on the Little Big Horn in 1876. Had he not done so there would never have been a Custer massacre, nor would he have been the star attraction in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

All three Indians deserved their place in history and depiction on postage stamps, just three little stamps, but they tell a story not only of native American ethnology but of greed, corruption, political skulduggery, murder and mayhem. A powerful and emotive theme for anyone willing to try.

## THE SIOUX, 1798-1922 A Dakota Winter Count

1889

1890

1891



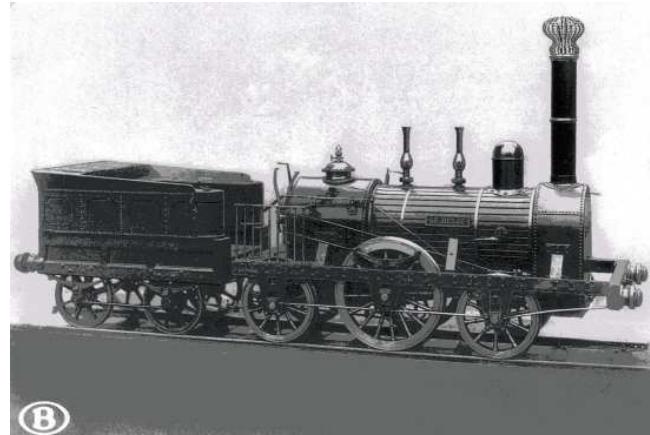
1890—Sitting Bull Killed.



## BELGIAN RAILWAYS - The long career of Type 10 and the short career of type 5 Locomotives. - by Norman Claydon

Railways have always been a popular subject with thematic collectors and one country that has provided many collectable stamps is Belgium. From 1879 the parcel service in that country has been provided by the railways, and special stamps for the purpose were available at railway stations or depots. From 1928 there were two sets - a long set for parcels available at railway premises only, and a shorter set inscribed 'Colis Post' for packets, the latter being

available also at post offices. Sadly the use of railway stamps ceased after 1987, with parcel documents subsequently bearing machine cancellations.



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However after the early years with uninspiring stamp designs, from the end of World War 1 a number of

stamps have been produced illustrating many aspects of the railway including locomotives and rolling stock, stations and personnel.

Belgium was among the earlier countries to develop a network of railways, the earliest being the line from Brussels to Malines opened in 1835 and later extended to Antwerp. On the 5th May 1835 three trains made the inaugural journey each hauled by a locomotive manufactured by Robert Stephenson in Newcastle-on-Tyne. The first Belgian built locomotive came from John Cockerill & Co. in Serang near Liege in December of that year. Named 'Le Belge' it is shown on the higher values of the 1935 parcel set (SG P698 - 712) and the bottom value of the 1948 set (SG .P1277) and one of the Robert Stevenson locomotives 'Elephant' appears on the 12fr. Stamp of the 1985 postage set (SG 2827).

The most difficult of the main lines in Belgium from the operational aspect was that between Brussels and Luxembourg - a combination of fearsome gradients in the Ardennes and heavy loads needed powerful locomotives and for express passenger traffic the engineer -Jean Flamme - produced 'Pacific' type 10 (SG P1286) in the years 1910 - 14. Even these engines were sometimes used in pairs on the international expresses and in 1928 Flamme's successor Fernand Legein designed a more powerful 8 coupled locomotive and four of these were built as Type 5 and were a success in the years before the German occupation in 1940. They were not among the engines taken into Germany during the war but remained in the Ardennes and did little work after the liberation. In their earlier years they operated from the depot at Jamelle, from 1942 at Stockem (the two main passenger depots in the Ardennes) where they remained until scrapped in 1953. Meantime type 10 soldiered on drawing the Luxembourg expresses until 29th September 1956 when 10.018 the last survivor left Luxembourg with the final steam hauled express to Brussels - since when it has been preserved as part of the national collection.



**SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE** – The invoice is included with this newsletter.

**WETS NEWS by email** – to date we have had very little response from our members on this issue.

We appreciate not all members are in a position to accept emails. For those that can, this offers a really good solution, you can read and save each issue and print copies if you really wish to do so.

Initial trials conducted between a few members have been very successful. DO NOT as one member did send his email address without saying who he was. Taking WETS News this way could significantly reduce our postage bill, SO PLEASE HELP.

**HAVE YOU LOOKED AT THE BTA WEBSITE RECENTLY** – there is now an excellent Library search facility that allows you to find articles on your subject of interest. There are also some excellent displays that could well give you some good ideas about laying out your subject