

Bulletin
of the Rossica Society
of Russian Philately



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Summer Greetings

This issue of the Bulletin is late but we try to fit it in between issues of the journal and so far we have not coordinated that very well. But with summer upon us, perhaps not all thoughts are on vacations. As we watch the grass turn brown from the drought in many parts of the USA, perhaps we can also reflect about our collecting interests. We hope there may be something here for you.

More On Indicia Used As Pasted-On-Stamps

In the last issue of the Bulletin it was mentioned that according to an article in Filateliya SSSR No. 3, 1987 cut-outs of printed indicia could be used for postage on domestic mail in the USSR but prohibited on foreign mail. As might be expected, contradictions were quickly found and reported by Rossica members.

Dr. Dale Cruikshank has a large envelope addressed to the USA where all but 1 kopek of the total postage was made up of indicia cut-outs. At first it was guessed that perhaps the presence of the 1 kopek stamp was enough to allow the letter to pass Soviet postal services and continue to the USA where the letter could have been accepted and marked postage due. But no postage due was accessed.

Mr. Marcel Lamoureux quickly sent three examples of covers with pasted-on indicia, one domestic letter and two sent to the USA. One of the covers to the USA was a combination cover with 6 paste-ons and one commemorative postage stamp to make the proper rate. The other cover was franked only with multiple copies of cut-outs. Both were registered. No postage due was indicated on either.

Apparently both the Soviet postal department and the US Postal Service ignored the cut-outs on the foreign mail and accepted them as valid postage. So much for rules.

A New Variety

It is always refreshing to read of someone observing a new variety, especially on an issue that has been around more than a hundred years. In Filateliya SSSR, No. 12, 1985 Yu. Rudnikov described a new paper variety of the black and rose 2 kopek issue of 1879 (Scott #26). Ordinarily this stamp is printed on watermarked laid paper, the laid lines being horizontal or, less frequently, vertical. The paper on Mr. Rudnikov's stamp is partially unwatermarked and the upper portion of the stamp shows a watermark pattern of small 1 mm wide elongated hexagons with the letters "TΦ" below. The stamp is canceled with the date "18 OCT 1897" but no city is indicated.

The hexagon pattern is similar to the pattern found on the papers used for the Russian revenue stamps of the period except that the hexagons are 5 mm wide on the revenue paper. Such paper was found on several grey and rose 7 kopek stamps of the 1879 issue (Scott #27), all canceled in Perm. Although these rare 7 kopek stamps are described in literature and catalogs, there is no mention of a 2 kopek value on any other type of watermarked paper.

In the two years since Mr. Rudnikov's announcement in the Soviet magazine, there has been no confirmation by other Soviet philatelists. Collectors should check their holdings of this issue. Wouldn't it be grand to find another example?

Awards to Rossica Exhibitors

Congratulations to the following members for winning awards for their exhibits.

Victor Kent	"Wenden District Stamps of Livonia" Gold SEPAD '87 King of Prussia, Pennsylvania
John M. Hotchner	"Stamp Separation Development 1840 to Modern Times" Reserve Grand, Gold and Virginia Philatelic Federation Award Gold VAPEX '87 Virginia Beach, Virginia Gold SEPAD '87 King of Prussia, Pennsylvania Gold ROPEX '88 Rochester, New York Gold OKPEX '88 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Gordon Torrey	"Eastern Rumelia - South Bulgaria" Vermeil SCOPEX '88 State College, Pennsylvania "Hejaz, Nejd, and Saudi Arabia" Vermeil SANDICAL '88 San Diego, California
Russell Ott	"Soviet North Pole Drifting Stations" Silver Filatelic Fiesta '88 San Jose, California
G. Adolf Ackerman	"Soviet Air Fleet Semi-Official Stamps" Silver March Party '88 Cleveland, Ohio "Soviet International Air Mail Service" Second in the One Frame Exhibit March Party Cleveland, Ohio "The Russian Arctic" Vermeil, Columbus Philatelic Club Gold, Amer. Assn. of Philatelic Exhibitors First Place of Honor and Amer. Topical Assn. Award COLOPEX '88 Columbus, Ohio "Soviet Airmail, The Early Years" Gold and American Airmail Society Gold NAPEX '88 Arlington, Virginia
George B. Loan	"St. George and the Dragon" Vermeil and American Topical Association First Prize Plymouth Show '88 Plymouth, Michigan Vermeil March Party Cleveland, Ohio
George Shaw	"Grozny Overprints, 1950-1951" Vermeil SPRINGPEX '88 Springfield, Virginia
Michael J. Carson	Title Unknown First Place ROCKFORD '88
Dr. James Mazepa	"Poland's Airmails" Gold LUPO WEIN 88 Vienna, Austria
David M. Skipton	"Postal Censorship in Imperial Russia" Reserve Grand and Gold, American Philatelic Soc. Research Award NAPEX '88 Arlington, Virginia
Joe Taylor	"Allied Intervention in Russia 1918-1920" Reserve Grand and Gold SONEX '88 New Haven, Connecticut Large Silver FINLANDIA Helsinki, Finland

We might add that Joe Taylor's exhibit was accepted for competition at the international shows at FINLANDIA and PRAGA this year, qualifying under the first time exhibitor rules of the FIP (International Federation of Philately). This is only his second year of exhibiting. His zeal for his topic "Allied Intervention" and its history is exceeded only by his passion for making regular long distance telephone calls while watching TV, delighting both the war cover dealers and the telephone company.

Apologies to those omitted, especially our foreign members who are not usually mentioned in our press. May the success of these exhibitors encourage others to exhibit.

Literature Auction

Classical philatelic literature fetch prices comparable to classical stamps and covers. The March 1988 Stamp-Ade sale of literature belonging to William Lawrence Green realized over \$88,000, with prices ranging from \$27.50 to \$3520 per lot. Among those of interest to Rossica collectors would be "Les Timbres-poste Ruraux de Russie, Samual Kopuski, 1875 which realized \$192 and Apik Yaremdji's 1904 Catalog of Turkey, Foreign Offices in the Levant and Far East which sold for \$176.

Rossica Journal

The editor reports that for the first time in a long time we have a backlog of articles. Member's contributions have been most gratifying and he asks that you continue to submit articles and notes. In due time, all will be published. Also please forward your comments about the journal as well.

There was some criticism of the very lengthy Soviet space topical article in the last issue. However, the editor felt it was best to publish this as a single article rather than serially. Incidentally, this issue of the journal with the space article was featured in Linn's Stamp News which prompted an unprecedented 61 requests for more information about the journal and society. This should serve as a reminder to all that there are many readers who may be interested in what you collect too. So write an article for the journal and join the fun. Share your knowledge and interests with others.

More Fake Perfs

Most are aware of the so-called private perforations on the Soviet airmail issue of 1931-32 (Scott # C20-25). These perforations were allegedly made years ago by a German stamp dealer who had an excess of imperforate stamps and no perforated sets to fill orders. These perforations with gauge 11 1/2 do not match those on the officially issued stamps and are easy to identify. Why these perforations are mentioned in catalogs as private perforations rather than fake perfs is unknown. Using the same logic, one ought to be able to trim the perfs from any stamp and have it mentioned in the catalog as a private imperf.

In a recent American Philatelic Society sales circuit, a fine set of the Malygin Polar Bear airmail set (Scott # C30-33) was found with the same gauge fake perforations 11 1/2. The perfs were not identified and the price asked was that expected for a genuine set. Whether they were made by the same German dealer or someone else is immaterial, the result is the same. They are fake perforations, ruining a fine set of imperforate stamps. Beware.

Philately And TV

Chicago area members can now enjoy a TV show produced by a stamp collector, about stamp collectors and stamp collecting. Cable Station 52 has a weekly one hour program called "Chicago: Passport to the World." The show is hosted by Thomas Gobby, philatelist and successful exhibitor, and is dedicated to showcase Chicago's ethnic areas and people. Gobby plans to devote one show a month on stamp collecting with prominent local philatelists as guests.

The inaugural show featured Rossica member Dr. James Mazepa discussing early Polish postal history. This certainly was a superb choice since Jim is articulate, knowledgeable, expert and very personable.

Good Questions

A couple of notes in Filateliya SSSR No. 4, 1988 offered explanations for several Soviet varieties. One reader wrote that he had copies of the 1932 Special Delivery stamps (Scott # E1, E3) on plain paper, rather than the watermarked paper (Greek Border and Rosettes) indicated in catalogs. He asked if this was an unlisted variety or a separate issue? The editor replied that unlisted varieties require expertization. However, the editor stated such unwatermarked examples of these Special Delivery stamps were known. The reason was that occasionally the watermark on the paper did not extend all the way to the edge of a sheet. It was possible for part of the printed portion of a sheet to be

made on the unwatermarked portion of the paper. Stamps from this portion then become varieties of the original printing, not a separate issue. The editor added that this was possible on other Soviet issues of that period that were printed on the "Greek Border and Rosettes" watermarked paper. [Might be worthwhile to check these issues in your collections.]

Another reader has a 1961 stamp commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Russian National Choir (Scott # 2459) that was line perfed 12 1/2 instead of comb perfed 12 1/2 x 12 as indicated in their catalog. Was this a variety, he asked?

The editor replied that this stamp as well as others in the period 1960-1961 are found line perfed 12 1/2 as well as comb perfed 12 1/2 x 12 with the line perf being much rarer. It seems that in this period when the stamps were ordered, the perforation manner and size were not specified. The stamps were not simultaneously printed and perfed as on today's high speed printing machines but instead perforated sometime after the printing inks were completely dry. Sample control sheets were taken from the beginning of the press run and were used to check the quality of the printing so that the run could proceed. These small batches of sample sheets were set aside and later (line) perforated separately from the bulk of the printing run which was comb perforated.

Such "first run" impressions and perforations are given a special name in Russian which doesn't translate meaningfully. It means an "indicator" sample or perhaps a type of "test", "trial" or even "proof" sample. It was not indicated in the reference whether these stamps that received this special treatment were handled separately or differently later after perforation. Perhaps they are simply included with the bulk of the issue. Not all these varieties are cataloged, even in the 1983 Catalog of Soviet Postage Stamps 1918-1980. Some were indicated in the 1960-1961 USSR catalog. [Get out the old perf gauge and start measuring. There are varieties to be yet discovered.]

Rossica Chapters

There are several active Rossica chapters. In the Chicago area, meetings are held at COMPEX, INDYPEX, and CHICAGOPEX. Contact Dr. James Mazepa, Box 1217, Oak Park, IL 60304. In the Washington D.C. area, meetings are held at NAPEX and BALPEX. Contact Dr. Gordon Torrey, 5118 Duvall Dr., Bethesda, MD 20816. In the San Francisco Bay Area, meetings are held at FILATELIC FIESTA and WESTPEX plus a fall meeting. Contact Mrs. "Mike" Gutter, P.O. Box 2328, Santa Clara, CA 95055. Meet other collectors, share information, hear informative talks or view useful slide shows. We note the Chicago group even planned a picnic with maybe some shaslik and Stolichnaya as well as stamps and covers. No group in your area? It only takes two to start. Slide programs are available.

Varro E. Tyler's Focus on Forgeries

Varro E. Tyler has a column on fakes and forgeries in Linn's Stamp News. He recently covered forgeries of the Lenin Mourning Issue (Scott #265-268) and the 1 and 2 R values of the first RSFSR issue (Scott #177-178). Whereas most are aware of the Lenin issue forgeries and the fact that they are rather commonly found, Dr. Tyler indicated the forgeries of the RSFSR issue were also widely distributed. This is contrary to the experience of specialists who find the RSFSR forgeries to be quite rare and if identified, they are quite expensive compared to the genuine issue.

Incidentally, Dr. Tyler is a Distinguished Professor of Mathematics at Purdue University, former Dean of the Schools of Pharmacy, Nursing and Health Sciences and former Dean of the School of Science at Purdue and now executive vice president for academic affairs. Philately must be a great relaxation for this very busy person. Yet he even finds time to write a column about forgeries of the world to share with others.

The Filler

As you see, there is little here in this issue about covers and postal history. Readers are invited to submit interesting notes or tidbits about covers of your interest. A paragraph of two on the order of what you see here in this issue is all that is needed.

Comments and contributions to the Rossica Bulletin should be sent to George V. Shalimoff at 20 Westgate Drive, San Francisco, California 94127.