

EDMONTON STAMP CLUB

BULLETIN

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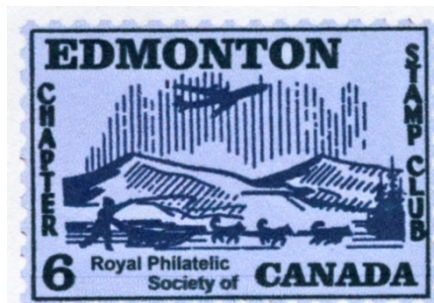
Website: <http://www.edmontonstampclub.ca>



Regular meetings

St. Joseph High School Cafeteria, 10830 - 109 Street, 6:00 pm

Check Page 20 for meeting dates



The Edmonton Stamp Club dates back to 1912. The Club is Life Chapter #6 of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and Chapter #680 of the American Philatelic Society. **The editor welcomes communications of all kinds – letters, comments, and articles.**

These may be forwarded to John-

Paul Himka, Edmonton Stamp Club, Box 399, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2J6, or click “contact” on our website (edmontonstampclub.ca) or email to jhimka@ualberta.ca.

The Edmonton Stamp Club respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territory of the First Nations, the Inuit, and the Métis peoples. We recognize the land as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The Edmonton Stamp Club held its Annual General Meeting on 14 September. Forty philatelists attended including three new members.

As president I am pleased to report that my article on 30 new members under 30 years of age by the year 2030 has been published in the latest issue of Canadian Philatelist. I'll confess I've pinched myself more than a few times sharing and rereading the article.

As a club we need to get younger members while retaining those we have. I was away in British Columbia on a golfing and family vacation for the past three weeks. When I returned, I found many e-mails from philatelists wanting to work with ESC to champion a Canada-wide youth engagement strategy.

As one person wrote, we need to reach youth in areas where they are active. In that regard ESC has launched an Instagram site championed by one of our youth members.

If you attended the AGM you will have heard me talk about an ESC membership directory. We have over three hundred entries and a next step will be to create a group email list to send out notifications. A directory is planned. Stay tuned.

Happy trails collecting.

David V. Pattison, President

Your happiness is postage paid. Anonymous.

The Ricardos: Arms, Art, Autos, and Engines (Number 12 in the Series "The Unexpected and Intriguing")

John Woollard

John.woollard(at)concordia.ab.ca

I had been collecting stamps from Botswana and its precursor, Bechuanaland, for some years, but had never touched postal stationery; indeed, I don't think I was even aware that such a thing existed. Then one summer my wife and I were in London, and I ventured into a bustling stamp market housed in the gloomy bowels of the railway viaduct close to Charing Cross station. I browsed through the material at several of the stalls, without unearthing anything to add to my collection, but then at one table, in a box, I found what would re-direct my interests thenceforth. It was a postcard with what looked like an official imprint of a Queen Victoria Bechuanaland stamp. Goodness gracious! I had never seen anything like this in a Stanley Gibbons' catalogue. "Is this genuine?" I asked the stall-holder. "Oh yes, sir, there were quite a few items like this produced at the time. In fact most countries printed stationery like that." "Oh! Really? In that case, interesting....And this is the price?" "Yes, sir, very fair, don't you think?" So it became mine...and the start of my pursuit of postal stationery from southern Africa.

You see, I soon discovered that postal stationery from southern Africa is a nice compact field, for two reasons. First, four of the issuing territories ceased to exist after 1912, when they were combined into the Union of South Africa, so that makes for a nice, tight time period to focus on. Then, based on an out-of-print but priceless catalogue by Higgins and Gage, I learned that the number of different items of each type such as postal cards, letter cards, or wrappers for each territory was very limited (or so it seemed to me at the time), never exceeding forty, and often less than ten, so the goal of getting a complete set of all items, used and unused, seemed very achievable, and probably with modest outlay. As they say, I was hooked.

Thus, quite some years later, I bought this Cape of Good Hope postal stationery card [Illustration 1]. It appears to be an example of the type catalogued as H&G15.¹ I might add that the listing for COGH postal cards stops at only H&G20, seeming to confirm my claim that the extant range is attractively small. It is addressed to “Ralph Ricardo Esq \ c/o Revd. Mr Fourman \ Repton School \ Burton on Trent, England.” It bears a single circle cancel “Field P. O. \ British Army S. Africa | AP 9 \ 00,” plus a split double-circle “GPO Cape Town / Cape Colony | 12 APR 00 3:30 pm”, and a single circle receiver “Burton • On • Trent | 3 AM \ MY 6 \ 00.” The dates place it firmly during the Boer War period, whilst the Field PO cancel indicates it started its journey at a military camp. The postal office using this cancel moved around during the conflict, but in April 1900 the office was located in Bloemfontein.² In peace time the mail moved very fast, so a three-day journey to getting to Cape Town seems unusual, but no doubt the card had to go through a censor’s office, which would account for the delay.

The message on the rear [Illustration 2] is brief to the point of curtness : “From your loving father, Percy Ricardo.” What makes



the card especially interesting is that this rear side also has three little monochrome pictures in black ink, plus, in red, titles and a cheerful generic greeting. The style and quality indicates this

¹ Higgins & Gage *World Postal Stationery Catalogue*, Section 3, ed. E. G. Fladung (Pasadena: Higgins & Gage Inc., ~1980).

² Stephen H. Rich, *Philately of the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902* (Kalamazoo: Chambers publ. co., 1943), 127-29.

was no casual addition, but done professionally, evidenced by the wording “printed in Germany” in tiny print at bottom left.

So how does this fit my naive analysis of postal stationery? The basic card, H&G15 was printed by De La Rue and issued in 1898. Soon after, the Cape Post Office also arranged for the production of the same card with six different, small illustrations, placed at the bottom left-hand corner of the address side. These are catalogued together as H&G15a. There were three printings of these, to a total of over 92,000, meaning ~15,300 of each.¹ Both used and unused copies are not uncommon. But you note, of course, this card doesn’t fit either the basic card nor that group of six.

I then discovered that, further to Higgins and Gage’s comprehensive catalogue, a quantity of these basic 1d cards had additional illustrations privately printed onto the rear, as many as thirty-nine different designs altogether, along with variations in font, quite apart from similar illustrations being added to cards of other denominations. Details are given in a separate publication, where this card is listed as PP42.10.² There were a variety of printers, some local and at least one in Germany. Some cards have single images, others a trio like this one, yet others have fancy, full color pictures, miniature works of art: an example from my collection is Illustration 3, the reverse of a postal card H&G10, One Penny overprinted on

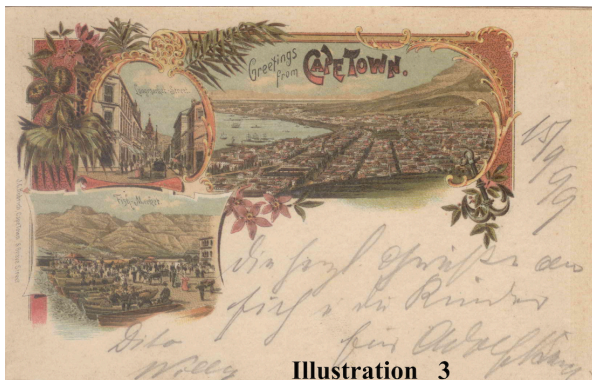


Illustration 3

¹ W.J. Quik and G.H. Jonkers, *The Postal Stationery of South Africa*, part 1 (Rotterdam: Filatelistenvereniging Zuidelijk Afrika, 1998, 15-17.

² Ibid., 27.

on Three Halfpence. None of these are very common, indeed, the colored ones are scarce. Included in the range of monochrome images is an interesting set of six purportedly showing various Castle liners, but the pictures were all the same, only the titles being different. These appear to be rare indeed. Full details of numbers, dates of issue, etc. do not seem to be available, but in some cases it appears as few as 230 of one design were made, and in other instances, 8600.¹ So much for my initial belief that postal stationery was going to have a nice limited scope!

I couldn't help wondering about this rather aloof father and stumbled onto a family with achievements both fascinating and fundamental, plus even a modest connection to Canada!

Percy Ralph Ricardo² was born on 28 August 1855 at Weston, a suburb of Bath, Somerset, England, the third child of a wealthy family with military traditions and of Jewish-Portuguese ancestry. His father was a banker, but died when Percy was just five, leaving his mother to raise a girl and four boys, the youngest of whom was less than a year old! Fortunately her husband had left her financially secure, but one imagines that life was nevertheless not easy. Moreover, she in turn passed away 16 January 1868, after which the five orphaned children were taken in by their mother's sister, Aunt Mary (née Halsey) Wedgewood. She was the second wife of the rector of Dumbleton, Robert Wedgewood, by whom she had five daughters. At least for the adoptees, the household seemed loveless³ and austere, an environment that did not commend religion to any of the quintet.⁴ Nevertheless, the orphaned children did receive good schooling, so Percy got his secondary education at Cheltenham College, a public school (in the English sense) with, unusually, a

¹ Ibid., 22 - 29.

² Most details taken from: <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ricardo-percy-ralph-8190>.

³ Percy's brother wrote later in life of having had a "crippled childhood" and having lacked love. Mark Bertram, *Halsey Ricardo: A Life in Arts and Crafts* (London: Lund Humphreys Ltd, 2025), 14.

⁴ Ibid., 10.

military stream as well as a classics one. He studied in the former stream, and upon graduation left what counted for home, to serve with the "A" Battery of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery¹ in Kingston 1873-74. [Illustration 4; tentatively third from the left].² Evidently this environment was not to his liking, and seemingly having nothing to keep him in England, in late 1874 he emigrated to New South Wales, exchanging numbing cold for the possibility of bitter drought.



Apparently he was adaptable, hard-working, and genial, so flourished as a colonial pioneer. Within a year he moved to Queensland, where he leased a large sheep station, "Waterview," then from 1879 managed and co-owned the property "Franklyn Vale"³ in Hughenden, until lack of rain forced his exit from ranching a few years later. That same year, 1879, he was sworn in as a

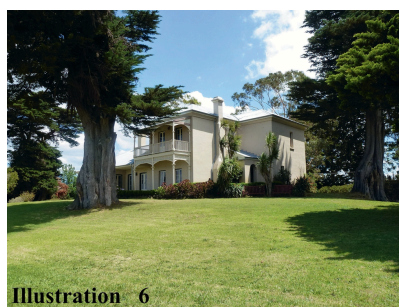
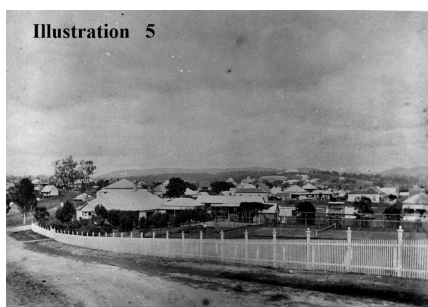
1

https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Category:Royal_Canadian_Horse_Artillery.

² I am grateful to his descendant, Jane Darling, for this identification.

³ <https://ipswichinsider.com.au/icons/franklyn-vale-homestead/>.

justice of the peace. To serve as a family home, he bought a property called “Wyandra” [Illustration 5], in Bowen Hills, a suburb of Brisbane. On 29 April 1879 he married Annabella Eugenia Lyall in the small town of Koo-Wee-Rup, Victoria. She was the daughter of a friend and successful businessman, with the ceremony taking place in her family’s fine, newly built mansion, which is now treated as a Heritage Home¹ [Illustration 6]. She bore him a daughter in 1880, and in 1884 a son, Ralph Lyall, but passed away 12 December 1895 at their home in Brisbane.



Four years later, on 4 January 1899 Percy married another Australian, Ina Mary, daughter of Brigade Surgeon, Lieutenant-Colonel John Thomson. They had two daughters.

Despite the fact that Percy rarely returned to Britain,² he was fiercely patriotic, eagerly supporting Britain’s role in various foreign spheres, and embarked on a military career in Queensland in the 1880s. Thus he joined the Queensland Volunteer Force in 1884 and urged their participation in the Sudan War of 1885, although that did not happen. From acting captain, he rose through the ranks, then becoming a permanent member of the Queensland Defence Force. Being a fine horseman, it was logical that he be put in charge of the Queensland Mounted Infantry, which he helped mold into a skilled

1

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Harewood_House_1893.jpg

² <https://ancestors.familysearch.org/en/LK66-JCS/col.-percy-ralph-ricardo-1855-1907>.

and highly disciplined unit. Based on that work, he authored a manual *Mounted Infantry Drill* to improve the performance of other mounted regiments.

Unsurprisingly, when the Boer War broke out, he was among the first to insist that Queensland send troops, so at the start of November 1899, as commander of the 262 soldiers comprising the 1st Queensland Contingent, he accompanied his regiment to South Africa.¹ From as soon as they arrived, the contingent was involved in a number of campaigns, very successfully, and in February were part of the relief of Kimberley, followed by the advance into the Orange Free State. The combined British forces had captured Bloemfontein by mid-March, but then halted there for about six weeks, to allow for sufficient supplies to be brought in and to secure lines of communication.²

It was thus during this pause that Percy sent the card to his son. It is ironic that he used a postal card with illustrations showcasing the very people he was fighting: Boers Outspanning, Transvaal; Paul Kruger, President S.A.R.; and government buildings and the Dutch Reformed Church, Pretoria. Was that deliberate, a subtle nod of respect to the brave enemy; or to illustrate to Ralph what “the enemy” looked like; or an optimistic taunt, implying that all Boer endeavors would fall to the British; or sheer happenstance, the only stock available with the British forces? I guess we shall never know.

In July of 1900 Percy was moved to a staff position within the forces, a transition not entirely to his liking. He left Africa in December 1900, then in 1902 was honored by being appointed as military commandant of Western Australia, followed by a similar appointment for Victoria [Illustration 7 depicts him in this capacity]. In June 1907 his skull was fractured when he was thrown from his horse while hunting near Melbourne; tall and heavy, he did not survive the impact.

¹ <https://www.angloboerwar.com/unit-information/australian-units/170-queensland/363-1st-queensland-contingent>.

² <https://samilitaryhistory.org/vol033eg.html>.



Despite his undoubted enthusiasm, geniality, and other positive qualities, it seems he was not perfect – but who is? As early as 1885 he resigned as secretary to the Queensland Turf Club upon being accused of tactlessness; some felt he was snobbish; and an Australian satirical magazine of the time described him as “bursting with heroism, and patriotism, and egotism.” Prior to his departure for Africa, a number of officials were blunt in their assessment, the premier of Queensland saying that he was “injudicious and censurable,”¹ whilst upon his return there was a very public criticism of his performance there. The government of the time overlooked these grumbles, but the response of one newspaper to his appointment as commandant in Western Australia was to treat the designation of such a “military popinjay” as a dubious honor they hardly deserved.² Oh dear!

¹ <http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A110380b.htm>.

² https://members.pcug.org.au/~croe/ozb/oz_boer_more.cgi?record=17730.

His son, Ralph,¹ was born at their family home in Brisbane on 19 December 1884. He was sent to boarding schools in England for his education, first at age thirteen to a prep school in Woking, Surrey, then to prestigious Repton School from September 1898 to April 1902, where he was housed at “The Cross,” whose house master² was the Reverend Arthur Forman, hence the address on the postcard.

The Reverend Arthur Francis Emilius Forman became a master at Repton School in 1874, shortly after graduating from Oxford, took holy orders two years later, and was appointed house master in 1880. Along with being an energetic, enthusiastic, and popular teacher, he was a keen sportsman, appreciated in the local community “for the sunshine of his presence and the readiness of his service.”³ Readers from England will appreciate his stature in that he coached famed cricketer, C.B. Fry! His role as house master meant he was in loco parentis for all the boys boarding at “The Cross.” In light of his popularity, one wonders if he was almost a better father figure for Ralph than his own parent.

During school holidays, rather than returning to Australia, Ralph stayed with his uncle Halsey at 13 Bedford Square, London and became a great friend of Harry, his cousin who was almost the same age. More of his uncle and cousin anon.

Given that his own mother was dead, and that he rarely saw his father, it is hardly surprising that Ralph never returned to Australia. Upon leaving school he joined the North Eastern Railway as a premium apprentice. However, the new-fangled automobiles fascinated him, so four years later he joined Arrol-Johnston, one of the earliest manufacturers of cars in Britain. He started as a test-

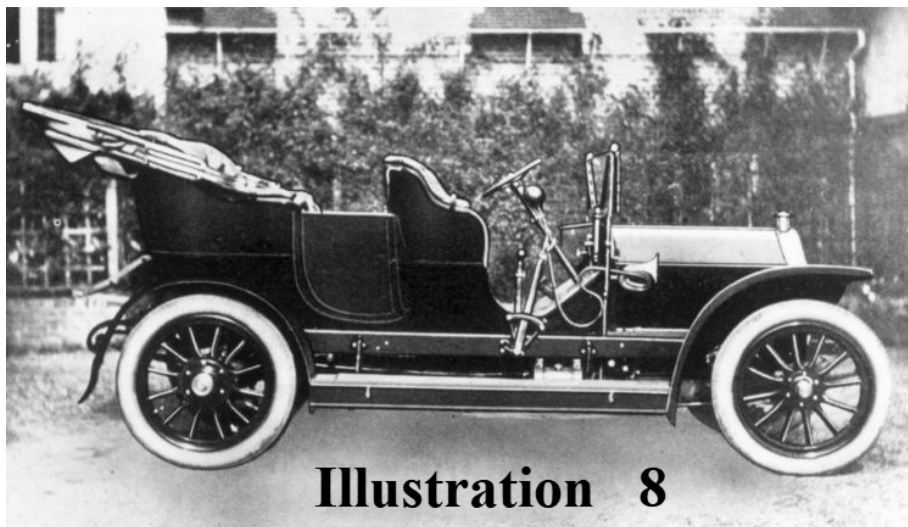
¹ *Brisbane Courier*, 3 December 1884: 2; curiously, some family/genealogical internet sites give other locations!

² *Repton School Register, Supplement to the 1910 Edition* (Stoke Newington: Edson Printers, 1922), xiv.

³

driver, and quickly became assistant works manager, then manager of the Glasgow salesroom.

In 1905 he renewed contact with his cousin, Harry, who was doing research at Cambridge on internal combustion engines, and saw one of Harry's two-stroke prototypes. Ralph foresaw boundless commercial opportunities, and decided to establish a factory making cars. He located a site at Shoreham-by-Sea and, together with his cousin and two other technical experts, founded the Two Stroke Engine Company, which built a vehicle called the Dolphin [Illustration 8] using the engine his cousin had devised. Sadly, although the cars were well built and ran well, they cost more to make than the target selling price. The company pivoted to using the same engine for fishing vessels, but again making a profit proved difficult, and the venture closed in 1911.



In June 1909 Ralph had married Doris Colbourne Baber,¹ daughter of a Brighton merchant (naturally, a Dolphin car was used for the wedding and the honeymoon), but with the company losing money, Ralph needed a better job, so he joined a firm of consulting engineers in Westminster. The couple's first-born arrived a year later, then the family emigrated to India in 1911 where Ralph took

¹ Born 6 February 1883, Kent; died 11 March 1950, Ely.

up an appointment as workshop superintendent of the railways in the princely State of Morvi, in India. Given his earlier passions, it is no surprise to find that he used the railway workshops to build cars...called The Morvi; although that company did not last long either. Later he became managing director of the Automobile Company of Bombay, and hence a founder member of the Western India Automobile Association and chairman of the Motor Traders' Association of Western India. The family returned to England in 1932 and settled first in Hailsham before moving to East Hoathly, Sussex, living at Greywood House until he passed away on 21 June 1945 at St Thomas Hospital, London, after a long illness.¹

But what about Ralph's uncle and cousin with whom he spent school holidays? They were both important individuals in their own right. His uncle, Halsey Ralph Ricardo,² was a distinguished architect,³ committed to combining artistry with functionality, a key principle of the arts-and-crafts movement of the late nineteenth century, reacting to the mass production of so many household items. For his buildings, Halsey championed the use of cheerful colors and glazed materials that would last long and be impervious to grime and dirt – a major issue in Britain at the time, when coal was used widely for heating and energy production. One assessment says his works were “sensitive, imaginative, and original.” A number of his colorful buildings survive, displaying indeed the effectiveness of his choice of materials [Illustration 9 shows Debenham House, London], with perhaps the most notable being the Howrah Railway Station, at the edge of Calcutta (now Kolkata) [Illustration 10]. His influence was spread further through his being Head of Architecture at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London. To top matters off, Ralph's cousin, Harry William Ralph Ricardo⁴ [Illustration 11], Halsey's son, was unquestionably the most influential of the whole family, contributing extensively to the development and improvement of the internal combustion engine, the workhorse of almost all current

¹ *The Telegraph* (Brisbane), 11 September 1945: 4.

² Born 6 August 1854; died 15 February 1928.

³ https://grokipedia.com/page/halsey_ricardo.

⁴ Many details from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Ricardo.



Illustration 9



Illustration 10



Illustration 11

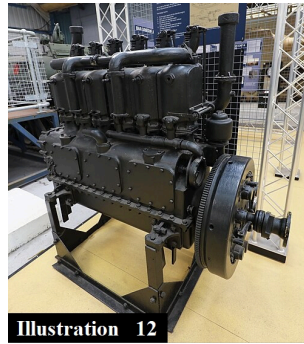


Illustration 12

current forms of transport. He was born 26 January 1885, in London, hardly a month after Ralph. He showed early inventive promise while studying at Cambridge, and having designed an engine that won a university prize in 1904, he was invited to undertake research with the professor of applied mechanics Bertram Hopkinson. Based upon his research at that time, he designed the improved two-stroke engine that was used in the Dolphin car. The first military tanks produced in WWI had engines that emitted a lot of smoke, making it easy for enemy gunners to locate them. Ricardo was asked to explore a possible solution, without increasing engine size. He designed a new six-cylinder diesel engine [Illustration 12] with about the same dimensions as the previous engine, that not only generated much less smoke, but was almost 50 percent more powerful. Two years later, his improved engine was powering all the tanks used by the British army.

In 1917, Professor Hopkinson had become technical director of the Air Ministry, and invited Harry to work with him. Harry became head of the department soon after, when Professor Hopkinson perished in a flying accident. His research from then on led to enormous improvement in fuel efficiency and the development of additives to improve combustion, in other words to the manufacture of high-octane fuels. Indeed, by the mid-1930s, Britain led the world in designing and building highly efficient diesel engines: an advantage that was lost when no one wanted diesel engines because the government of the time decided to impose high taxes on diesel fuel!

Further research by Harry into mixing of fuel with air and flame speed, along with investigations into different valve types led to the improvements in a range of engines, including the famed Rolls-Royce Merlin engine that powered the WWII Mosquito fighter aircraft. He then was involved in the design of the early jet engines with Frank Whittle.

One commentator¹ writes: “Ricardo, an utter genius, can rightly be called the discoverer of swirled or ‘vortex’ combustion, one of the bedrocks of thermal efficiency among internal-combustion engines. Every producer of fossil-fueled powerplants has exploited the technical knowledge that Ricardo painstakingly gained....Virtually all modern engine theory is grounded in the Ricardo axiom that swirling, high-turbulence fuel mixtures produce markedly more power when they’re ignited.”

He was knighted in 1948, in recognition of the fundamental and groundbreaking discoveries he had made in the design of the engine which we now all take for granted. He passed away 18 May 1974. They say that history rarely repeats itself exactly, but often rhymes: one can see this here, for, like his uncle Percy, his death was the result of a fall, but one in which he fractured his pelvis.

I confess that until I started chasing details for this card, I had never heard of the Ricardo family, yet we are all beholden to Sir Harry for his discoveries – without them, what would our vehicles be like? Smoky, costly, dirty, and noisy? Who knows? I wonder what he

¹ <https://www.hemmings.com/stories/sir-harry-ricardo/>.

would do now, given that we need to wean ourselves from dependence on fossil fuels. I suspect that he would still be at the forefront in developing better and more efficient motors, but perhaps ones not using hydrocarbons. What a pity he is not still alive!

Chirophilately: An Introduction

John-Paul Himka
jhimka(at)ualberta.ca

I asked AI to define the term “chirophilately,” and here’s what it told me: “a highly specific, niche field of stamp collecting (philately) that focuses exclusively on postage stamps and postal history related to the hands, fingers, or palmistry (from the Greek root *chiro-*, meaning hand).” I suspect that AI just made this up because I couldn’t find the term in a regular Google search or in Duckduckgo. But it is a concept coming into its own, right here in our Edmonton Stamp Club *Bulletin*.

We can thank our lucky stars that we live in Canada, because here we are well poised to take up chirophilately in a big way. As I was preparing this issue of the *Bulletin*, I received photos from two of our members, both related to this “niche field.” And I also had a related photo in my file for a future issue. I refrain from repeating some of the language in the emails accompanying these photos. Let’s keep things appropriate and stick to chirophilately.

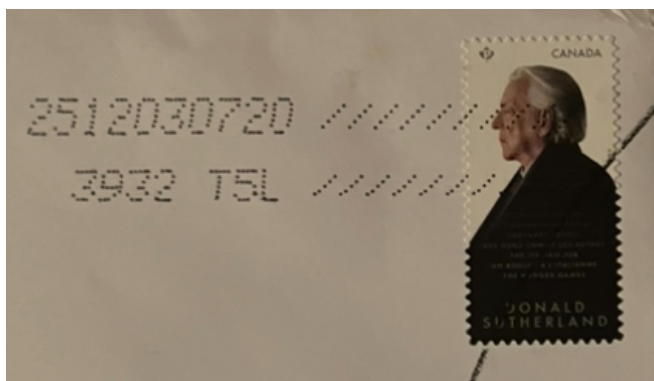


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Some observations. The hand cancellations in figures 1 and 2 start at the top right and go down to the left, but the one in figure 3 does the opposite. Figure 1 adds its hand cancellation to to a Canadian machine cancellation. In figure 2, the hand cancellation is applied to a Norwegian circular date stamp.

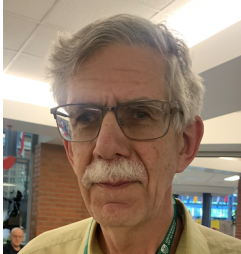
How should we develop the field further? If we had the original covers before us, I would ask our member Dr. James Watt to analyze them and determine whether or not the black strokes are all of exactly the same thickness. Determining the precise model of Sharpie being employed seems to be absolutely crucial. Inspired by the plating mania of early philately, I suggest philatelists work to match hand cancellations to particular individuals in the employ of Canada Post.

We should feature this burgeoning branch of philately at our next Spring Show.



Members listen to James Watt's presentation, 22 June

More Winners Than You Can Shake a Stick At!

			
<i>Bulletin</i> contributor Wayne Madden won one of the door prizes on 22 June	Stan Yee seems to have fallen asleep after winning the second door prize on 22 June	Judy Madden, also a <i>Bulletin</i> contributor, won a third door prize on 22 June	President David Pattison won \$42.50 in the 50/50 on 22 June

			
Gary Geddes won the first door prize on 14 September	Wayne Madden again, second door prize 14 September	He won \$33.50 from the 50/50 on 14 September. But his name was not recorded! Apologies, sir.	Tim Graff, another <i>Bulletin</i> contributor, won the door prize on 28 September

So many lucky winners that I have to continue to list them on the next page. (Please note how contributing to this *Bulletin* increases your chances to win.)

Meeting Dates

The Edmonton Stamp Club meets Mondays at 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of St. Joseph High School, 10830-109 Street. Park to the north of the school and use the main entrance at the southeast corner of the school. For information about the club call 780-467-4825 or 780-437-1787.

2026-27

- 5 and 26 October

7 December

8 and 22 February

12 and 26 April
- 9 and 23 November

11 and 25 January

8 and 22 March

3 and 17 May
- 7 and 21 June

Winners Continued

	
Jacques Martel strikes a pose after winning the second door prize on 28 September	Bret Dykstra won \$49 in the 50/50 on 28 September

