

“Serving Lebanon and Berks Counties”

THE PATENT - OVERPRINT

The combined monthly newsletter of the Lebanon and Reading Stamp Collectors Clubs

March 2026

Number 78

The February meeting of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at the Lebanon Community Library at 125 M 7th Street in historic downtown Lebanon (17046). Dick Colberg will be sharing his collection of Mexican postal stationery.

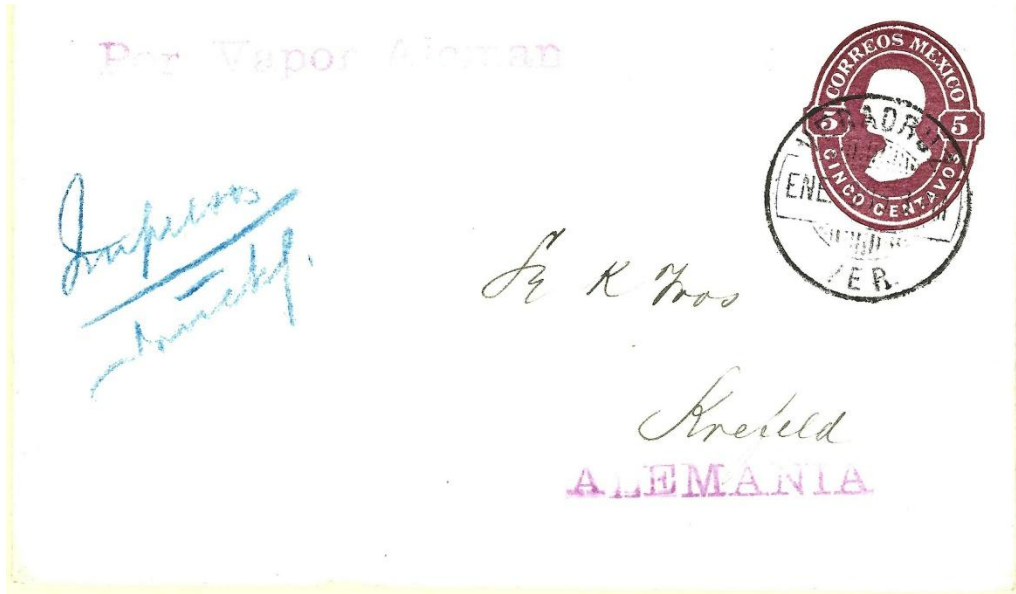
WHAT’S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

*By Richard Colberg
President – Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club*

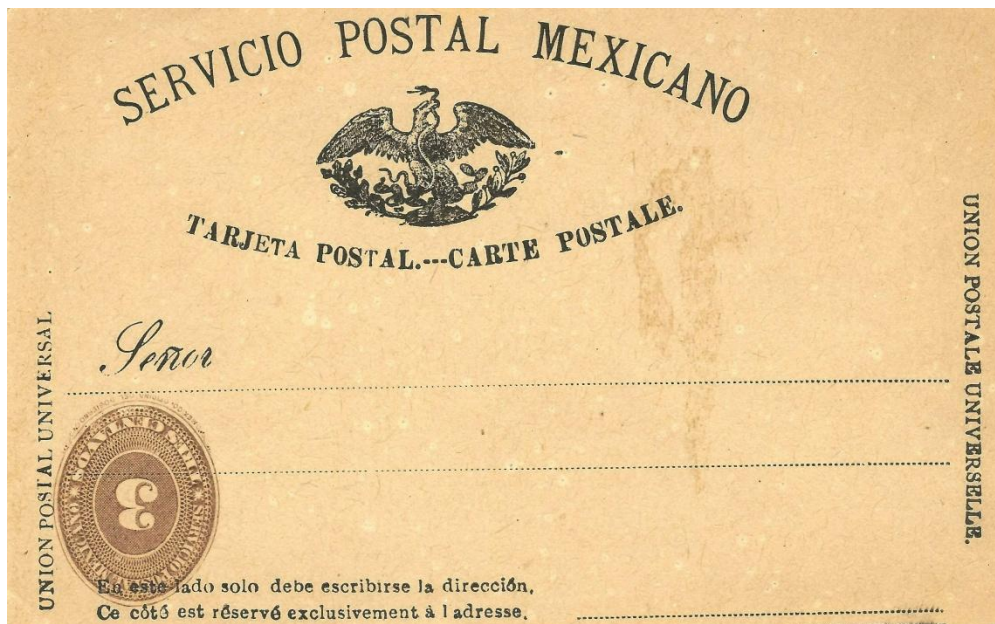
About 25 years ago I bought a small assortment of Mexico postal stationery; about two dozen covers. I had no interest in collecting the stamps of Mexico, but the stationery intrigued me. A fellow member of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club was a Mexico collector and I borrowed and copied his copy of the Mexico catalogue published by MEPSI (Mexico-Elmhurst Philatelic Society, International). This catalogue was printed in the 1960s, but I deemed it better than the Higgins & Gage catalogue.

I set about identifying what I’d bought and started buying more. In a few years I had a 10-frame exhibit of Mexico Postal Stationery and was exhibiting it. Amongst my acquisitions were some errors that were not in the catalogue. We all love to find errors, don’t we?

Fast forward to 2014 when I was introduced to Peter Bamert, another Mexico postal stationery collector. Peter lives in Switzerland. We became fast friends and soon I would be editing the postal cards and wrappers sections of a Mexico Postal Stationery Catalogue he was writing. That’s the good news. The bad news is that all but one of my “errors” were in the new catalogue!



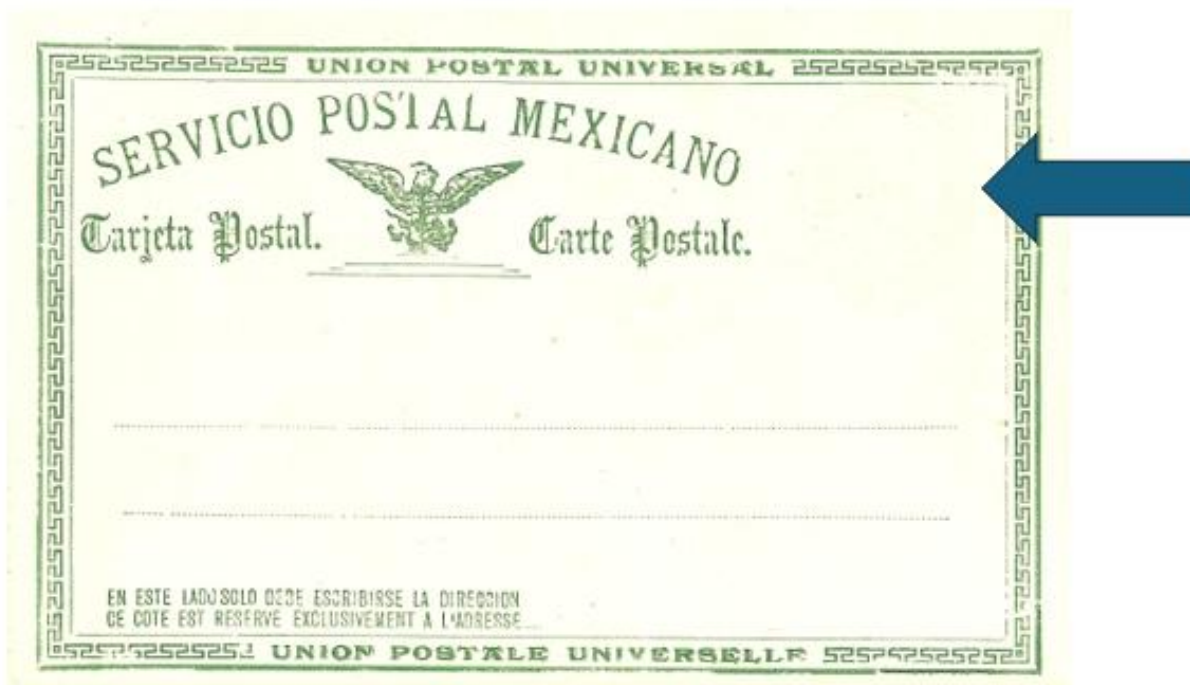
Mexico's first envelope (above), printed in 1874. Printed, but not issued. It was used later in 1882 for other issues. According to the catalogue, "Some cancelled-to-order 5c envelopes exist subsequently with added address to create a false appearance of usage". So, this "used" envelope is totally bogus. But you must admit, it's a really good looking fake!



The 1886 3-centavos postal card above has the 3-centavos indicium printed inverted in the lower left corner instead of the upper right corner.



The 1887 5-centavos postal card above has Postal misspelled as POTAL at the top center of the card.



This is an albino 2-centavos postal card issued in 1891. There is an impression, but no ink.



The 1889 3-centavos postal card above has a serious break in the frame at the top right.



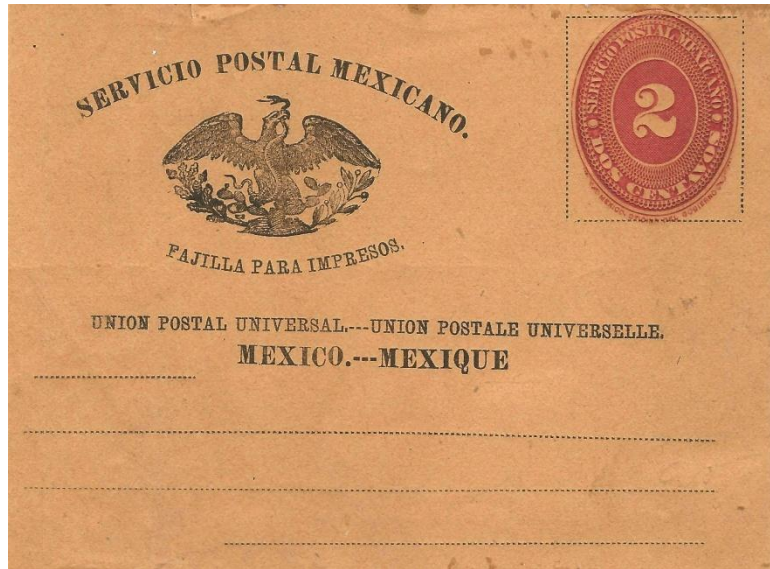
The 1894 3-centavos postal card shown above has two printing errors. The accent over the first "O" in SÓLO is missing. And the accent over the "E" in CÔTÉ is missing. These errors appear in the two-line instruction at the lower left of the card.



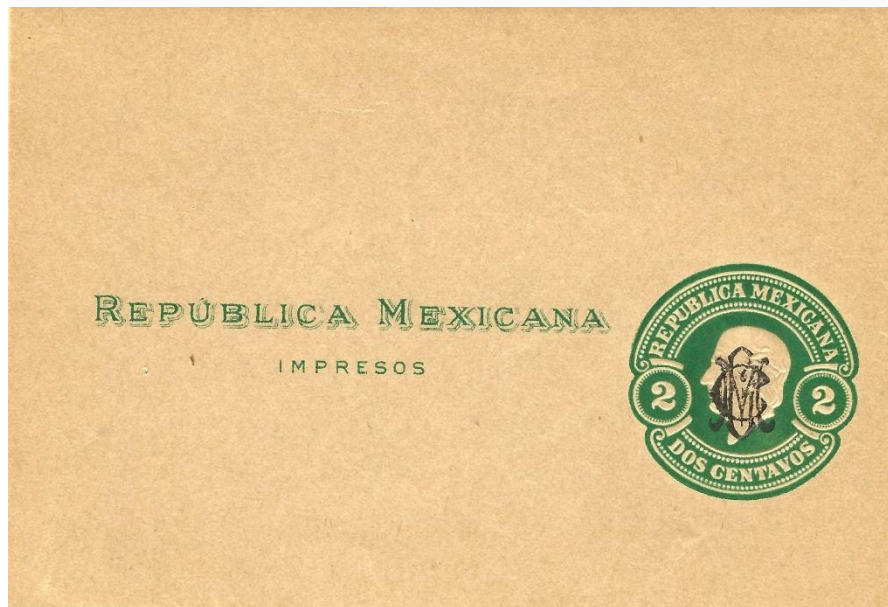
This is probably not an uncommon mistake early each new year. The date stamp reads ENE 4 95. January (Enero) 4, 1895. This card was not issued until April 1895. And the message on the back of the card is dated January 3, 1896.



The 1896 3-centavos postal card above has "dirección" misspelled as "dirección" at the lower left.



This 1887 2-centavos wrapper is missing the period after **MEXIQUE** in the center of the card.



The 1905 2-centavos wrapper above has the REPÚBLICA MEXICANA line printed $\frac{1}{4}$ inch too low. It is supposed to be in line with the top of the indicium. This one is not listed in the catalogue. This card was overprinted for use in the Mexican Revolution period, 1914-1916.



And finally, another Mexican Revolution issue. This 1905 1-centavo wrapper was overprinted for use during the Mexican Revolution period, 1914-1916. The problem here is that the overprint is upside down. The overprint reads: GOBIERNO CONSTITUCIONALISTA.

Scenes from the February meeting of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

In February, Doug Lotz brought in several totes filled with stamps he inherited. His grandfather started the collection, and his dad continued it by meticulously organizing it, mounting some stamps in commercial albums, and other items in splendidly created homemade albums. Doug has been able to learn more about his big collection through the knowledge of the “experts” in our club, and is excited to learn more about it. He’ll be bringing some items back to the April meeting.

Do you have items at home that you’d like to bring to the club to share or learn more about? Or a box full of treasures that you haven’t the time to organize? Bring it to the meeting for a fun activity that we can help you go through while we’re enjoying each other’s company. We’ve got plenty of room on the calendar this year!





Don, Dick, Tom, and Joe D. deep in conversation at the February LSCC meeting.



Here's Doug with some of his albums. He has stamps, covers, postcards, and other items in his - collection. There are revenues, airmails, and other back-of-the-book categories, all neatly housed in albums. It was fun to look at what he has and help him to learn more about it!

Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club Calendar

Please contact the editor if you are interested in presenting at one of our monthly meetings.

Date	Presenter and Subject
March 17, 2026	Mexican Postal Stationery – Dick Colberg
April 21, 2026	A hands-on opportunity to help Doug further organize his inherited collection
May 19, 2026	
June 16, 2026	Meeting at Cornwall Manor, program to be determined
July 21, 2026	
August 18, 2026	
September 15, 2026	
October 20, 2026	
November 17, 2026	
December 15, 2026	LSCC Holiday Dinner

The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club thanks the Philatelic Society of Lancaster County for hosting our affiliate page, which is accessible by clicking the following link:

[The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club – Philatelic Society of Lancaster County \(lcps-stamps.org\)](http://lcps-stamps.org)

The PSLC Events Calendar is located at the following link:

[Philatelic Society of Lancaster County – Award-winning, non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting stamp and postal history collecting as a hobby for education and fun. \(lcps-stamps.org\)](http://lcps-stamps.org)



The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club Lebanon, PA 17042 – 17046

Scott Ney, newsletter editor



The
Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

Meetings held at Calvary Lutheran Church,
1009 Elizabeth Avenue in Laureldale.

Elizabeth Avenue crosses Kutztown Road in the Muhlenberg Township
area.

(About a mile north of Rt 222)

Meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
(doors open around 6:30 for pre meeting social time)

Issue: 2026 - 03

NEXT MEETING:

TUESDAY APRIL 7th 2026

TOPIC: JUBILEE OF THE PENNY POST

Presented by Michael Bach

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Current Account as of 02/28/2026: \$ 765.80

Savings Account as of 03/14/2025: \$ 3,414.63

CLUB DUES ARE OVER DUE:

If you haven't yet paid for 2026 please send a \$ 10.00 check made payable to RSCC and send to Attn: Mike Bach 12 Colorado Avenue, Sinking Spring PA 19608. If I do not receive them by March 31st, I will be hounding you!!!

I recently came across the following article, and it brought back memories of the presentation that I did on a similar cover back in 2020. At the end of this article I am adding pictures and other covers from the same expedition that were included in my presentation.

Mike Bach

Wilkins–Ellsworth Trans-Arctic Submarine Expedition

A 2025 Article of Distinction by Keith Lichtman

The following article presents an examination of a twice-mailed cover addressed both to and from Sir George Hubert Wilkins, polar explorer. The article was submitted by APS Chapter **Palm Beach Stamp Club** as an Article of Distinction for 2025 and originally appeared in volume 12, no. 10 (October 2025) of the club's newsletter.



As I have said before - I love covers where I can trace its history. This month's cover was a lucky find. I had been searching for more covers for my Macon Airship collection and came across a cachet that I had not seen. Thinking I had found an older airship cover, I opened it to discover the cachet was a submarine. The title caught my eye, "Wilkins – Ellsworth Trans-Arctic Submarine Expedition." From what I can tell the cover was created and mailed from London with a three half pence King George V stamp (Scott #161) to Sir Hubert Wilkins, the explorer in the title. The date on the London postmark is unreadable. It was addressed to c/o (care of) General Delivery, New York, NY, New York to North Pole. Sir Wilkins was delayed on his departure, so the envelope would have reached him prior to his departure for the North Pole. Sir Wilkins re-used the envelope to send, most likely a letter, to Sam Langston, Waco Texas on May 8th, 1931, just before his departure to England. A 2¢ carmine, George Washington imperforate postage stamp (Scott #409), was used to pay postage from New York to Texas.

Sir George Hubert Wilkins (1888-1958) was an Australian explorer, pilot, geographer, and photographer. He was awarded the Military Cross for his efforts to rescue wounded soldiers in WWI, the only photographer from any war to ever receive a combat medal.

In March 1927, Wilkins and pilot Carl Eielson explored the ice drifts north of Alaska. Their landing on the ice was the first land-plane descent onto drift ice. In December 1927, Wilkins and Eielson made the first successful airplane flight over the Antarctic continent. In April 1928, they began a trans-Arctic crossing from Point Barrows, Alaska to Green Harbour, Spitsbergen

(Even I needed to look up where that is. Spitsbergen is the largest and the only permanently populated island of the Svalbard archipelago in northern Norway in the Arctic Ocean. Constituting the westernmost bulk of the archipelago, it borders the Arctic Ocean, the Norwegian Sea and the Greenland Sea. – Google). For this feat and his other works, Wilkins was knighted by King George V in 1928.



Sir Wilkins first thought about a submarine expedition to the North Pole in 1913, during his first polar expedition. It was not until 1930 that the expedition came to fruition. While on vacation with his wife he stayed at his friend Lincoln Ellsworth's Swiss castle. Both men thought the submarine could be a way to reach the Arctic to conduct scientific experiments. Wilkins believed a submarine could take a fully equipped laboratory to the Arctic.

With money contributed by Wilkins, Ellsworth, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, and William Randolph Hearst (who purchased the exclusive rights to the story), the expedition was funded. Wilkins leased a 1918 decommissioned military submarine for five years, at one dollar per year. The sub was stripped of its military armaments and scientific equipment installed. Modifications were made to the superstructure to allow it to operate under the ice.

On March 23, 1931, the sub arrived at the Brooklyn Naval Yard in New York and the next day it was renamed *Nautilus*, after Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Wilkins' wife, Suzanne Bennett Wilkins (1893-1974) christened the submarine using a bottle of ice water. Jules Verne's grandson was a guest at the christening. After thorough test runs that put them two months behind schedule, the *Nautilus* set off on the first leg of the voyage to England. Crossing the Atlantic, the *Nautilus* ran into severe storms that resulted in mechanical failures. By April 15th *Nautilus* radioed an SOS and was rescued and towed to Queenstown, Ireland. From Ireland she was towed to Davenport England to await spare parts only available from the United States. After repairs, Sir Wilkins (you remember him from the beginning of this story) and the *Nautilus* set off for Norway where they picked up science officers and additional equipment. They departed Norway on August 5th and encountered their first ice floe on August 19th. They spent the next few days exploring the edge of the ice pack for a location to make their first dive attempt. On August 22nd, the decision was made to dive under the ice. While preparing to submerge it was found that the *Nautilus's* diving rudders were missing. The loss of rudders made standard dives impossible. Evidence was found that the damage was probably

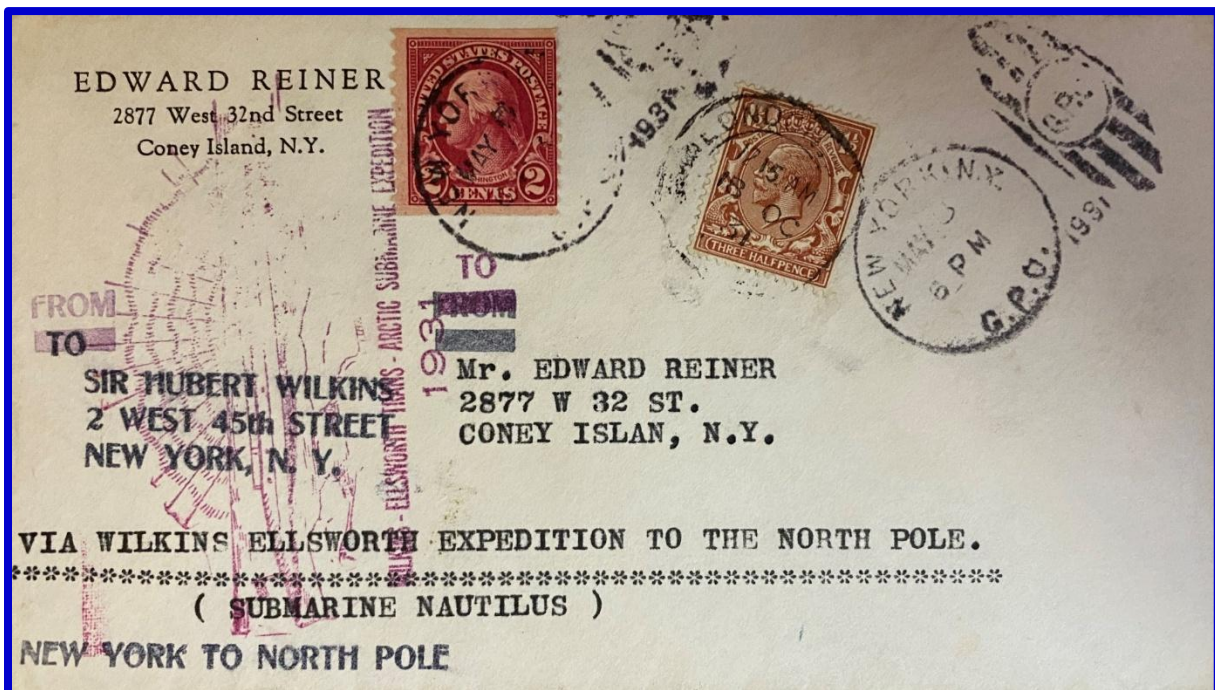
sabotage and may have been linked to some crew members' lack of confidence in Wilkins. They were concerned that the expedition was a suicide mission.

Sir Wilkins still attempted to accomplish some of the planned experiments that did not require being submerged. On August 31st, an opportunity presented itself that allowed the *Nautilus* to dive under an ice floe three feet thick. Wilkins was able to make additional dives before it was decided that it was no longer safe to remain at sea.

Wilkins headed the *Nautilus* back to England but encountered severe storms, suffering massive hull damage and engine failure, which forced them to dock in Norway. Wilkins received permission from the United States Navy to sink the submarine and on November 20, 1931, the *Nautilus* was scuttled in a Norwegian fjord.

Sir Wilkins did not meet all of his objectives but was able to prove that submarines were capable of operating under the polar ice cap. He died on November 30th, 1958 and in accordance with his wishes, the U.S. Navy took his ashes aboard the submarine USS *Skate* and then scattered them at the North Pole.

VARIOUS COVERS:





The next three covers were submitted by Tony Shields from Melbourne Australia who attended the presentation and participated in the post presentation discussion.



PICTURES FROM THE EXPEDITION:



The O-12 (SS 73), built in 1916 by the Lake Torpedo Boat Co. of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The submarine was then moved to Mathis Shipyard in Camden NJ where it was stripped of its military armaments.

Arrived at Brooklyn Naval Yard on March 23rd. On March 24 Lady Suzanne Bennett Wilkins christened submarine Nautilus. She used a bottle of ice water since prohibition made champagne unavailable



The team did manage to conduct scientific experiments on the ice surface and took various samples of ice water.

On March 17th 1959 the USS Skate surfaced at the North Pole and scattered Sir Hubert Wilkins' ashes over the Arctic ice per his wishes.



“The Black Empress”

From Failure to Philatelic Legend

From commercial miscalculation to crown jewel of Canadian philately, the Province of Canada’s 12-pence black — known reverently as the “Black Empress” — has travelled an extraordinary path over the past 175 years. Issued on June 14, 1851, it began as an ambitious expression of postal independence and ended as one of the rarest and most coveted stamps in the nation’s history.



The Province of Canada issued a 12-pence black stamp on June 14, 1851, marking the pre-Confederation Colony’s third postage stamp issue

As collectors prepare to mark its 175th anniversary, the story of the 12-pence black reads like a philatelic drama. Only 1,450 of the 51,000 printed were ever sold, with the remainder destroyed — a commercial failure that ultimately created a legendary rarity. Today, an estimated 150 examples survive, including just five unused copies.

Its mystique was reaffirmed in 2024 when a mint pair from the Ron Brigham Collection realized \$625,000 plus buyer’s premium at Eastern Auctions, setting a new Canadian record for a philatelic item sold at auction. The fierce bidding battle underscored what collectors have long known: the Black Empress occupies rarefied air.

Beyond its market value, the stamp carries artistic and historical weight. Featuring the elegant “Chalon Head” portrait of Queen Victoria — derived from Alfred Edward Chalon’s 1837 painting — it reflects a young colony asserting control over its postal system and identity.

In the full feature, we revisit the birth, failure and ultimate triumph of Canada’s most iconic classic — a fragile survivor that, 175 years later, still defines the pinnacle of Canadian philately.

Credit:

This fascinating feature is part of the latest issue of Canadian Stamp News (Vol. 50 #24, March 10-23, 2026), released Feb. 24, and also includes stories on a national philatelic survey, a new “Freestyle Philately” display and Canadians shining at Dubai in February.



The Reading Stamp Collectors Club

Mike Bach, newsletter editor