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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 WHAT IS STAMP COLLECTING?



Stamp collecting is the act of gathering old and new stamps for fun or future investment. It can be a nice hobby for any person.

How to begin collecting: A great beginner strategy is to write down your favorite topics. Perhaps you like people, buildings, history, art and sports among other common themes. Then you should begin to save stamps from your letters, postcards

and packages. If you do not receive many mails you could begin collecting stamps from friends and relatives. It is also imperative to familiarize yourself with different kinds of stamps. Definitive stamps are square-shaped and less than an inch big. They are printed in big number and so they are easy to find.

If you want to first collect large and colorful kinds, try commemorative. Because of being printed in smaller amounts and just once they are difficult to find. These stamps are iconic in some way because they pay tribute to great people, culture and heritage and unique events and so on. Special stamps are available for a limited time only, such as Christmas. Still on kinds of stamps, you should look for conventional adhesive and self-adhesive varieties. With the former you have to lick and then stick on the envelope. The latter do not require licking—you peel and stick.

How to extract used stamps from envelopes:



Many collectors use the soaking method. First you should carefully rip the envelope around the stamp but leave a tiny margin. Put warm water in a tray or pan and place the upper side of your stamp facing down. Leave it for a few minute to soak up water and sink to base. When all glue is removed, use tongs to pick up your stamp from the water and rest it between two paper towels. Then add some weight with a book to ensure that your stamp will dry without wrinkling.

**Stamp storage:** Collectors use a stamp album to store all the stamps they have collected. Clear plastic sleeves will also safeguard new stamps appropriately. Stamp hinges, stamp mounts and glassine strips with adhesive on one side are used for stamp attachment.

## 1.2 ORIGINS OF THE POSTAL SERVICE

The postal mailing service is obviously slower and more complicated than modern electronic forms of communication are. It entails the actual conveyance of a written message from a sender to

the recipient. Postal mailing is also a sophisticated system that entails a range of carriers like people, planes, trains and vehicles. A postal service system did not exist on earth until about 2400 BC in Egypt during the reign of Pharaohs. One could therefore conclude that the writing art and mailing were discovered almost simultaneously. Development of a very well recognized postal mailing service is however claimed to have happened in Rome under the rule of August Caesar around the time Jesus Christ was born.

Each country got its mailing system in unique times. In the United States of America, the postal service development started in the ends of seventeenth century. Back then mail was ferried by merchants, natives and friends. In 1693 a monthly post was built between Boston and New York by Francis Lovelace (a governor). Ten years afterward William Penn built the first post office in Pennsylvania. Both structures lacked a good foundation though. In 1775, during a continental congress meeting, Ben Franklin was made the Postmaster General. The mailing service in the US then continued to grow as advanced vehicles were produced. Even so the west coast regions such as California did not have adequate mailing service yet. Mails were transported to the west via steam ships and trains. Pony Express was begun in 1860 by William H Russell and delivery of mails was done by young pony riders who would endure a 2000 mile journey for fifty dollars a month per twenty-five lbs of delivered mail.

Mail was ferried between horses placed seventy-five to one hundred apart. Between 1800 and 1900s, mail was basically transported via horse



riders, stage coaches, steam ships, trains and hot air balloons. Airplanes postal delivery came later. Today the internet e-mailing system has replaced the difficult and slow conventional postal mailing service. Modern people can almost not understand or bother to understand the far the mailing system has originated. Because it is easy to email a message electronically in seconds, there has been a notable decline in the use of the conventional postal service since 2001.

Rowland Hill created one of the oldest postage stamps, Penny Black. He created this stamp design in efforts to change the British postal service which earned him the title “Father of Postage Stamp”. This Great Britain's stamp was issued in May 1, 1840 and became officially released for use in May 6, 1840.

Prior to Rowland's discovery, the people of the UK would wait in queues to pay for the delivery of their mails. The delivery fee was determined based on the distance of a letter and the number of letter papers. After Rowland's discovery, people would only use paper, envelope and his adhesive stamp.

Popularity and uniqueness that Penny Black has enjoyed so far is for the fact that Penny Black was the first adhesive postage stamp in the world to be applied in a public postal service. Needless to mention, this rare stamp has the portrait of Queen Victoria. It is claimed to have been printed via line-engraved method and replicated on a big sheet that produced up to two hundred and forty stamps.

### 1.3 THE COLLECTING TOOLS

As an ardent stamp collector you will require some tools. Prior to picking any tool you should determine the kind of a stamp collector you are. If being extremely thorough and accurate when identifying a stamp is important, you are a professional stamp collector. You are a semi-professional stamp collector if you give little to moderate attention to stamp identification. Still you could be a fun collector. The thing that stimulates a hobbyist like you is viewing stamps of different formats, sizes and colors in your album.

As a professional stamp collector you want to measure various specifications with high precision and that's why you need the following tools:



- ☑ *Watermark fluid* - It will help you unmask a hidden watermark at the underside of a stamp.
- ☑ *A magnifying lens* – Ensure its magnification power is at least 100X.
- ☑ *Stamp catalogs* – To help you know stamp information like errors, watermarks, value and other specifications.
- ☑ *Special reference books* - For identifying very

fine detail stamps and so on.

- ☑ *Ultraviolet light* – To view luminescence tagging on stamps.
- ☑ *Color gauge* – To determine the original stamp colors
- ☑ *Rules* - Ensure that they can measure stamp size and features in millimeters, centimeters and inches.
- ☑ *Perforation gauge* – Used to measure the size of perforations on the outer ends of a stamp.
- ☑ *Tongs* – A tweezer-like tool for gripping stamps instead of using oily or dirty fingers.

A semi-professional stamp collector doesn't require all the above-mentioned tools. They will only require tools can help them identify flaws on stamps but not with precision. Their tools will include stamp catalogs, rules, color gauges, a perforation gauge, a foreign stamp identifier, water fluid and a 100x magnifier. A hobbyist collector does not care about the stamp flaws or inadequacy. They just want to add stamps to their album for ornamental purposes only. So they are good to go with: a stamp mount, to put stamps in the album and a stamp album for storage of stamps.

## 1.4 WHERE TO BUY STAMPS

Have you just begun your stamp collecting hobby? There are many sources of stamps other than used ones from the mails. To get unlimited stamps, try the following stamp buying suppliers.

**Philatelists Clubs:** Do you know that birds of a feather flock together? That's why you should find your fellow philatelists (stamp collectors) and build a good relationship with them. There are in stamp clubs and stamp communities. After joining them you will partake in philatelic discussions and get discounted stamp copies from fellow collectors. What's more you will participate in stamp trade fairs that will let you find classic and newer postage stamps.

**Philatelist Vendors:** There are people who specialize in sale of stamps. They are likely to have rare stamps, mint and unused, that can fetch you lots of dollars at an auction. Look for related classified ads in your local papers or on the internet. Professional stamp dealers organize their postage stamps with accordance to themes or topics.

**Post Office:** The source of all stamps, old and new, is the post office. There is no way to avoid the long queues in the post office though. All the same you will buy commemorative stamps and newest stamps.

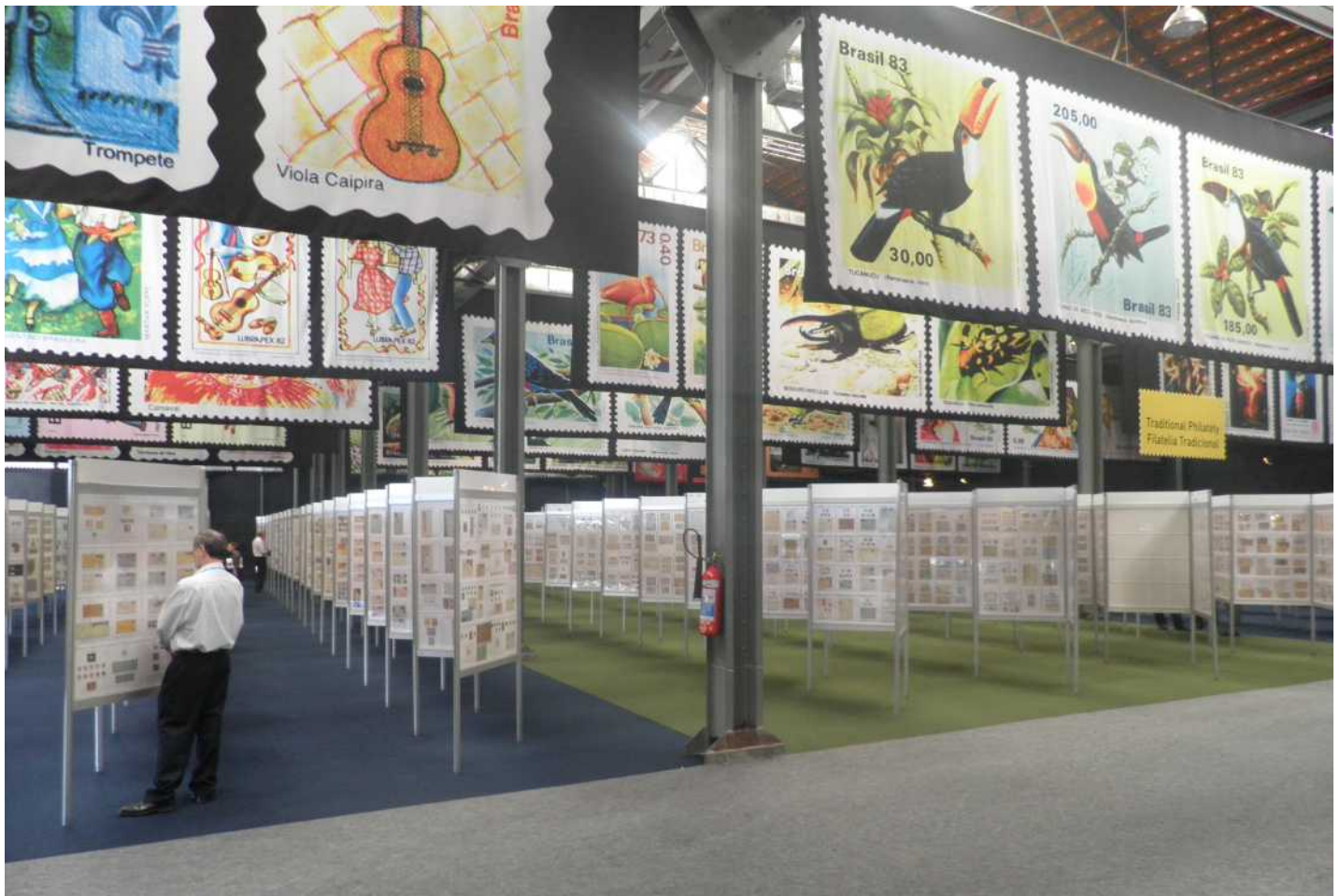
**Visit Stamp Auctions:** There are real and virtual (internet-based) stamp auctions. You can choose the easiest plan for you. During any type of auction, the item is taken by the highest bidder.

**Stamp Catalogues:** There are special stamp catalogues belonging to auctioneers. They contain all the items they are willing to auction and allow interested bidders to participate via mail or telephone calls.

**Internet:** This is obviously the best source for used and new stamps. You should simply visit high traffic philatelic distributors' websites. Note that you will mostly pay for merchandise with your credit card. Be very careful with it.

**Philatelic Bureaus And Retail Shops:** These are best sources for commemorative, definite and cover stamps

**Vending Machines and ATMs:** These can be located near major shopping malls and centers. They are quick and convenient.





**RAREST**  
**TOP 20**  
**STAMPS**



## **2.1 SWEDEN: TRE-SKILLING YELLOW**



It was seen in 1886 by a Swedish school boy called Wilhelm Baeckman. The little boy was going through things in his grandparents' attic when he saw the famous postage stamp. Customarily the three-skilling postage stamp printed in Sweden is supposed to be green. The eight-skilling postage stamp should be yellow. In 1855 there was an anonymous printing error that created the famous Tre-skilling Yellow stamp. It is assumed that the printing staff unintentionally replaced the three-skilling plate with the eight-skilling plate and printed the stamp in yellow color rather than green.

A precious stamp that has fetched millions in Swedish auctions was born, thanks to that printing

accident. The first time Tre-Skilling Yellow became famous was in 1984 when it sold 1.07 million US dollars. At another sale auction held in 1990 the stamp sold for a slightly lower amount: 1 million US dollars. Six years later it was auctioned for over two million US dollars.

It has so far kept an unbreakable record in value for a postage stamp as tiny as itself. It was named the most expensive postage stamp in the world in Geneva, Switzerland, in the May of 2010 by David Feldman. Tre-skilling Yellow stamp is very genuine and unique. It has previously been in the possession of famous collectors. In 2013, the Scott World Stamp Catalogue gave it a value of three million US dollars.



## 2.2 MAURITIUS: THE BLUE MAURITIUS



This is one of the rarest stamps in the world. Produced in September 21 1847, Penny blue was released in two styles—deep blue Two PENCE and orange-red ONE PENNY. These stamps are popular even now because they were the first stamps to be released by a British colony outside Great Britain. Both had the lettering “post office” in the left panel.

### BRIEF HISTORY

Post office blue penny has an engraved head of Joseph Osmond Barnard. He was born in 1816 in England and rode in a ship to Mauritius in 1838. The stamp, which was produced via a method called recessed printing, features the initials (JB) of the engraver. When it was first released blue

penny and its close sibling, orange-red 1 penny, were used on a ball game invitations that were sent out by the Mauritius Governor's wife. A few of the surviving stamps are with private investors. To see them personally you can visit the British Library based in London. As well you can find some in Mauritius, Africa, in two Port Louise museums: the Blue Penny Museum and Postal Museum.

### VALUE

Post office Penny blue recently became the top-selling rarest stamp in the UK when it fetched up to £1 million at Spink Auctioneers in London. The Scott World Catalogue shows that the current value for the Mauritius 2 penny blue stamp is one-seven million US dollars.



## **2.3 USA: HAWAIIAN MISSIONARIES**



There are many vintage stamps in the world. Even so a few of them have earned greater reputation mainly because of their flaws. Just like many countries, Hawaii boasts one rare stamp that was produced in 1851. It is the Missionary rare stamp. So far this stamp is ranked among the top-selling rarest stamps in the world.

This is an example of a stamp that was used by the American missionaries that toured Hawaii Islands in 1800s. They were the first issued stamps. They were printed on a very poor quality paper explaining why most of them got destroyed. It is no wonder they are very rare. These missionary

stamps exist in both unused and mint statuses. An unused stamp block of 8 Hawaiian Missionary stamps has an estimated sale price of one hundred thousand US dollars.

Even the mint rare stamp is estimated to have the same monetary worth. There were 2 cent, 5 cent and 13 cent stamps that were printed later in Honolulu to replace the poor quality first issue. The 2-cent stamp is the rarest, explaining why it sells for 760,000 US dollars in its unused status. A 2-cent used stamp goes for 225,000 US dollars. Only sixteen 2-cent stamps have stood the test of time.

## **2.4 MAURITIUS: ONE PENNY ORANGE-RED**



Just like the Mauritius 2 penny blue stamp, the orange-red penny stamp is among the most uncommon stamps. Both are close siblings produced the same era: September 21 1847 by a British colony in Mauritius.

### **NON-EXISTENT ERROR**

The very first stamps had a wording on the left panel: Post office. Similar stamps that were generated one year later, in 1848, had a different wording: Post Paid. This slight difference brought about an argument that had some people think that both Mauritius 2 and 1 had a printing error. This controversial claim was later refuted when it was proven that both stamps with the wording “Post Office” were indeed printed in 1847.

### **BRIEF HISTORY TIPS**

The Mauritius 1 penny orange-red and its penny blue sibling were unknown to the philatelics until 1864 when the wife of a Bordeaux trader, MmeBorchard, located copies of both stamps in her husband's mail. Then she sold them to a collector, who also sold them, and through a sequence of sales they got in the hands of a famous collector, Ferrary. He sold them at an auction in 1921.

### **MONETARY WORTH**

Because of its rarity, and antique nature, the Mauritius 1 Orange-red stamp is highly valued by collectors. On David Feldman's website, this stamp is said to have fetched 1.7 million dollars in 1993 when it was sold last. On Scotts World Catalogue, it is worth 1.25 million dollars in minted statues.

## **2.5 BERMUDA: PEROT PROVISIONAL STAMP**



Have you heard of the Perot Provisional stamp? This stamp is round-shaped and it is written the wordings Hamilton Bermuda in Capital, separated by two plus-like signs on each end of half circle. It qualifies as one of the world's rarest stamps. This was the first stamp ever printed in Bermuda in 1848. The underlying reason for creation of this stamp was the Inauguration ceremony to make Hamilton Bermuda's capital.

It has the signature of William Bennet Perot, the Postmaster of the Hamilton Town at the time. A friend of Perot named James Bell Heyl asked to give his stamp. So he erased the dates from the

postmark and pressed it on a paper. Then Perot jotted down the words 1 penny on top of the year shown on the stamp. Then he wrote his name below to serve as signature.

There are only eleven copies of Perot provisional stamp today. The majority of them are owned by royal families in Europe. Queen Elizabeth II is a recognized owner of this popular stamp. In 1981 one specimen of the Perot Provisional stamp sold for one hundred and fifteen thousand US dollars. Because of the few copies, this stamp is likely to be very precious now.



## **2.6 CANADA: 12 PENCE BLACK**



As a professional stamp collector you should aim high. There are some rare stamps that could make you a big fortune at an auction if you have them in your hand. One of these is the 12 Pence Black. Qualified as one of the earliest issued stamps, the Pence Black stamp hails from Canada. It was first released in 1851, making it older than the Two-cent Large Queen on Laid Paper—the rarest stamp in Canada. Only three of its copies are known so far, the latest discovery having been made in 2013. Resuming our 12 Pence Black discussion, the lovely stamp features a portrait of the young Queen Victoria. Perhaps having the face of a famous queen is among the reasons why this stamp is known world-wide.

Records show that fifty-one thousand copies of 12 Pence Black were printed. But since the value was high, only one thousand four hundred and fifty copies slipped out to the public. The remainder, Forty-nine thousand, five hundred and fifty stamps were destroyed in 1857. Based on speculated data, roughly one hundred to one hundred and fifty stamp copies are available until now. According to the most recent New York auction results, the 12 Pence Black stamp made four hundred and eighty-eight thousand and nine hundred US dollars in 2011.

## **2.7 SOUTH AFRICA: CAPE OF GOOD HOPE WOODBLOCK STAMP**



This is a triangular woodblock one penny stamp printed in blue and with a lone female seated on an anchor. Four penny stamps were also erroneous and printed in orange-red (vermillion) color. Cape of Good Hope was the first triangular-shaped stamps in the world. They were given the triangle shape for easier recognition by the post office workers.

### **HISTORY AND VALUE**

Charles Bell, a Surveyor General, was the founder of the Cape of Good Hope stamp through the help of Perkins, Bacon & Co., a renowned publisher of postage stamps, books and bank

notes. There was another batch that was printed in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1863 and 1864 by De La Rue printing company and the same Perkin & Bacon plates used in the first printing issue were used in the second one too.

This urgent batch had to be printed because the supply of stamps from London had diminished from 1861. The Cape of Good Hope stamp copies that exist today are few. They are actually very rare to find. The value of a single Cape of Good Hope Stamp that was printed in 1953 is estimated to be 40,000 US dollars. This figure is quoted in the Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue.

## **2.8 AUSTRALIA: INVERTED SWAN**



If you live in Australia, and have an interest in collecting stamps, you should be eyeing the Inverted Black Swan Stamp. It is among the oldest stamps you can find within your country and world. It is also a perfect choice for those who love to collect foreign stamps. Produced in 1855, this stamp came to be recognized as the first frame stamp with an inverted error.

The Black Swan is the insignia of the continent of Australia. For this stamp's production to be stopped, an error was identified on the Black Swan itself. It was printed looking upside down. About three hundred and eighty-eight copies had an

error. This error, which was obviously a loss to the printing company in that era, is now a huge profit to anybody who owns the Inverted Black Swan stamp.

It is estimated that this rare stamp would fetch up to sixty thousand US dollars today. Now there are only fifteen mint Black Swan stamps in the whole world. There is no adequate content about this stamp though, especially about past sales and fetched amounts. But the fact that its estimated sale price at an auction is up to sixty thousand dollars makes it a great asset to have.



## **2.9 GUYANA: BRITISH GUIANA ONE-CENT MAGENTA**



It is claimed that British Guiana One-cent Black on Magenta stamp is among the rarest and most costly stamps. This rectangular stamp was printed in black ink on a magenta paper. It has cut off corners, giving it an octagonal shape, which is an extremely rare stamp shape.

### **BRIEF HISTORY**

Printed in 1856, by Waterlow & Sons, a British printing company, this stamp is very aged. In early 1856 the collection of stamps in stock had already sold out before a new shipment would arrive from England. Coincidentally, E.T.E Dalton, the British Guiana postmaster, had an urgent need for stamps. Hence he requested the publisher of the official Gazette in Georgetown, Joseph Baum and William Dallas to print a quick batch. He requested One-cent and four-cent stamps to be printed. The former were meant for newspapers

and the latter for letters. In practice the firm printed stamps of different values but similar design in varied colors. When printing Dalton's order, however, the publisher did both values in black ink on a colored (magenta) paper. Because Dalton considered the printed work poor, he further requested the publisher to add initials on each stamp to reduce chances of forgery. Recognized initials on British Guiana one-cent black on magenta stamps are: E.T.E.D, symbolizing Dalton; E.D.W, symbolizing Wight; W.H.L, symbolizing Lortimer and C.A.W, symbolizing Watson.

### **VALUE**

Its current value on Scott World Catalogue is not stated. But it belongs to John du Pont Estate who bought it for 935000 dollars in 1980.

## **2.10 AUSTRIA: RED MERCURY**



Do you collect antique things? If you are not yet a stamp collector you should begin it already. With a valuable stamp like the Red Mercury, produced in 1856 Austria, you will realize what a profitable venture stamp collecting really is. This antique stamp was first released on newspapers. It is one of the most expensive newspaper postage stamps in Austria. It is indeed very rare today considering that it was created more than one hundred and fifty years ago.

It had the image of a famous Roman deity or god. If you watch closely you will see that besides a deity portrait there are other wordings such as

POST, STAMPEL and ZETTUNGS. There is also the K.K initial. The Mercury stamps were being issued in three different colors— red, yellow and blue. The red mercury were printed in 1856 and stopped in 1858.

They ended too soon. But fortunately some copies were recovered among passionate collectors. Today the value of the Red Mercury Austrian stamp is forty thousand US dollars. It is really a great asset to have as the selling price, in future, will just become better. This stamp is rare because its production stopped too soon and a few pieces are available till now. It has no printing error.



## **2.11 HONG KONG: OLIVE-COLORED QUEEN VICTORIA'S HEAD**



Among the world famous and rarest stamps is the Olive-colored Queen Victoria's Head. It is an old stamp that was printed in 1864. This rare stamp is owned by Hong Kong. It is their most expensive and precious stamp. This postage stamp had a value of ninety-six Hong Kong cents when it was issued for the first time. This is equivalent to twelve US cents. Because a printing occurred, the now famous stamp was produced in an olive color instead of a tan-grey color.

No wonder it is called the Olive-colored Queen Victoria Head stamp. There was another printing error that has caused the popularity of this

postage stamp— its watermark was styled incorrectly. Also the double capital c (CC) was pressed into the wrong part of the paper. The olive-colored Queen Victoria head stamp is thus among the antique stamps that had multiple errors.

Although forty pieces are thought to be in circulation around the world, the location of 1 block of 4 stamps only is known. This stamp sold for an incredibly hefty amount, 824,648 US dollars, at a Hong Kong auction. It is therefore the priciest stamp in the record of stamp auctions in Hong Kong.



## **2.12 USA: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN Z-GRILL**



This is an American rare stamp with a z-grill. Benjamin Franklin Z-Grill was printed in 1868. Two copies, which are known today, were printed but only one copy of the two is traded among private stamp collectors. The Z grill was used by the printing company to prevent forgery. It is a unique embossing of small squares pressed into a paper using a high-pressure pressing machine.

Because of the special paper the cancellation ink was permanently absorbed and it cannot be erased. The Z-grill makes the stamp very exceptional as it was the first grill ever added to USA stamps.

### **COLLECTION HISTORY AND WORTH**

Robert Zoellner was the first collector to have the whole collection. His collection was traded at a 1998 auction where Mr. Donald Sundman, the Mystic Stamp Company president, bought it for 935,000 US dollars. Again in October of 2005 the popular Benjamin Franklin Z-Grill stamp collection that can only be owned by one person at a time was obtained by Bill Gross. He exchanged his 4 blocks of inverted Jennies that he had bought for close three million dollars for the 1868 Benjamin Franklin Z-Grill. According to Scott World Catalogue, this stamp is worth 3,000,000 US dollars.

## **2.13 CANADA: TWO-CENT LARGE QUEEN ON LAID PAPER**



This is one of the rarest stamps in Canada. The postage stamp was created and issued in 1868. Even so, the 2 cent Large Queen on Laid Paper was found in 1925 and until now there are only three copies of the original. All of them are in a used status. There are speculations that more copies or at least one sheet must have been printed and now they are lying in an unknown place. Perhaps there are some in antique stamp collections or another area.

The large Queen stamps, released in 1 cent, 2 cent and 3 cent values, were printed on wove paper. There were also 1, 2 and 3-cent options that were printed on the laid paper that was less attractive.

Daniel Eaton, a stamp seller from Vancouver, obtained the first 2-cent large queen on laid paper in 1986 from Stanley Gibbons based in London. Daniel sold it to another stamp seller in Los Angeles called George Holschauer for ninety thousand dollars.

The second copy was purchased by Kasimir Bileski in October 1950 for three thousand, eight hundred dollars. In 1998, the same copy ended up in the Ron Brigham collection. The third copy was reported in July 16th 2013. It was located in an American Philatelic Society salesbook in a tattered condition. It featured the 1870 Hamilton Canada West Cancel.



## **2.14 USA: UPSIDE DOWN JENNY**



Have you ever visited the US National Postal Museum? It is where a gallery of twenty-three Inverted Jenny stamps is preserved. Alternatively called the Upside Down Jenny or Jenny Invert, Inverted Jenny postage stamps were issued for the first time in May 10th 1918. The error that made Jenny inverted stamp really famous is the overturned picture of the Curtiss JN-4 aircraft in the middle of the design.

It is quoted as the most famed error in the history of the US philately. One hundred stamps went beyond the printing inspection team and were obtained by the public at the end of First World War. All of them were collected and according to

philatelists, each specimen has an estimated worth of one hundred thousand US dollars. But the value of any inverted Jenny would depend on its physical condition.

Back in 1918, each stamp was only twenty-four cents. An ardent collector named William T. Robey is mentioned in the Inverted Jenny story about how he bought a sheet of stamps from a post office on NY Avenue close to 13th street in 1938. Then he recognized that all of them had an upside-down image and instantly got lucky. A block of four inverted Jennys were sold for 2.7 million dollars at a Robert A. Siegel auction in October 2005.

## **2.15 CHINA: BLUE MILITARY STAMP**



Chinese military stamps are considered rare assets. They were initially issued in 1953 in a set of three kinds: Yellow Military post, Purple Military post and Blue Military post. They contain the People's Liberation Army Logo. When all the three types were first issued, each military officer and soldier was allotted only two stamps for personal use. Then all of sudden it came to the knowledge of the Chinese intelligence staff that since their military stamps were lacking a code-named post box, they could be used to communicate the secrets of its military troops and bases.

So the three set of stamps that were not yet in circulation were ruined. So far the Blue Military post is the rarest of the three perhaps because it was the last batch to be released. Because of this fact they are the most expensive rare Chinese stamps. One Blue Military stamp fetched four hundred and twenty-eight thousand, six hundred and fifty-four US dollars at a Chinese auction in 2011. This is equivalent to 2.7 million Yuan. The purple and yellow stamps are ridiculously cheap in comparison. Their documented sales at special Chinese auctions start from \$1000. Therefore you want to go after the Blue Military Post if you are a professional stamp collector.



## **2.16 CHINA: THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS RED**



This is a very popular Chinese stamp. It is among the valuable stamps that China has produced after 1949. The Whole Country is Red postage stamp is beautiful. It was designed and issued in the Cultural Revolution era and it has a red map of China. As well, the stamp has The Whole Country is Red text printed in a golden color.

There is also another graphical content featuring a worker, farmer and soldier holding this: Selected Works of Chairman Mao. This stamp had an error after printing was completed. The editor at Sino Maps Press discovered the error in the map. He found out that the imprinted map picture was

inaccurate. So he reported the matter to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications.

Luckily the stamps had only been issued for twelve hours and so it was easy to stop the circulation. All the post offices across the country had to stop selling The Whole Country is Red with immediate effect and send back all unsold copies. The unrecovered amount was collected by private investors. There was a big type of the original stamp that went for 474,197 US dollars in 2009 at a Hong Kong auction. This was a record-setting sale at that time. During the same event, six normal-size stamps were sold for 377,482 US dollars.

## **2.17 ITALY: GRONCHI ROSA**



This is among the relatively old stamps that have a precious error. Gronchi Rosa is a rare Italian stamp that was issued in 1961. Unfortunately it had an error which is today appreciated and celebrated by world-famous philatelists. The flawed stamp was being made for the excursion of Mr Giovanni Gronchi, the president of Italy, to 3 nations in South America. It contains four visible maps in pink: Europe, Africa, South America, and North America.

There is also an aircraft that is coming from an area shown by an arrow in the Europe map to another one marked by an arrow in South America. This

205 Liras (marked L.205 in the stamp) rosa stamp means that the president was meant to stop in Peru first. The error was not with the printing expert but the artist who drew the Peru-Ecuador boundaries incorrectly.

The error was discovered fast and the wrong stamps were substituted for the correct copies. Even so some incorrect copies made their way to the hands of private collectors. One such Giovanni Gronchi stamp is valued at eight hundred and ninety Euros. It is a great copy to invest in if you are a small to medium stamp collector, as it is affordable.



## **2.18 CHINA: RED REVENUE SMALL 1 DOLLAR SURCHARGE**



This is probably the most ancient of all preserved stamps on earth. It is also one of the oldest stamps found in china. Red Revenue Small one dollar surcharge stamp was printed during the Qing Dynasty. That was between 1631 and 1911. When the wording—1 dollar— was featured on the Red Revenue stamp, it became smaller. The need to replace it for a bigger design emerged.

This was after only two sheets containing fifty pieces of red revenue stamps each were adorned with one dollar words. Today about thirty stamps are estimated to have survived after further production was stopped. This includes one block of 4 and one horizontal pair of stamps.

Most of the existing small Red Revenue one dollar stamps are in their new status. There is only one used stamp that also features something unique: the PaKua Cancellation. It can be viewed at China National Post and Postage Stamp Museum. This piece is a valued asset that appears in Asian sale actions each year. In the year 2009, a Red Revenue Small One Dollar Surcharge stamp, issued in 1897, was auctioned in Hong Kong for three hundred and thirty-three thousand, three hundred and eighty two US dollars. This is so far the latest estimated value for this stamp.

## **2.19 CHINA: RED MAIDEN IN THE GREEN ROBE**



This rare stamp was produced during the Qing Dynasty. This was between 1644 and 1911. The Red Maiden in the Green Robe first issue came about thirteen years after the first issue of another world's rarest Qing Dynasty stamp. Its name is Red Revenue Small One Dollar Surcharge that was released from 1631 to 1911. Red Maiden is a nickname. The common name for this stamp is the 2-cent Small Figure Surcharged on Red Revenue Stamps in Green.

This postage stamp became a temporary solution during the currency reforms in the era of Qing. Prior stamps that had silver face were phased out and during this transition time the Red Maiden in

Green Robe was created. The change was done on the Red Revenue postage stamp, which was stamped in green ink. Today we have only nine stamps that survived after the Qing Dynasty.

Seven of those appear individually while two appear in a vertical pair. This vertical pair is preserved at the China National Post and Postage Stamp Museum. In December 2004, in Hong Kong, one specimen was sold for four hundred and forty-four thousand, four hundred and seventy-seven US dollars. This can thus be said to be one of the most precious stamp to add to a collection.



## **2.20 SWITZERLAND: BASAL DOVE**



Jahannes Bernouli was the Postmaster General of Basel City in 1843. One day he approached the State Council with a proposal that 6 letter boxes be added to make 16. He also suggested creation of a special stamp for Basel. Although the State Council accepted his proposal, in January 1844, one year passed before a new stamp was released. In July 1st 1845 the famous Basal Dove rare stamp was issued.

Styled by Melchior Berri, an influential Swiss architect, Basal Dove has an embossed white dove lying on a red field with a letter in its beak. Also the stamp has the Basel Coat of Arms in the top middle depicting that the city of Basel was once

ruled by a Bishopric. Basal Dove stamps were printed in three colors: crimson, black and blue. They were the first multi-colored stamps to be issued across the world. They were lovely stamps.

Because they received poor public reception, those stamps were withdrawn from use around the December of 1848. According to most recent data released by professional collectors investigating the Basal Postal Administration records, 41,480 stamps had been printed by the closure date. There were still traces of Basal Doves on covers in March 1851 even though the remainder was consumed between December 1848 and April 1850.