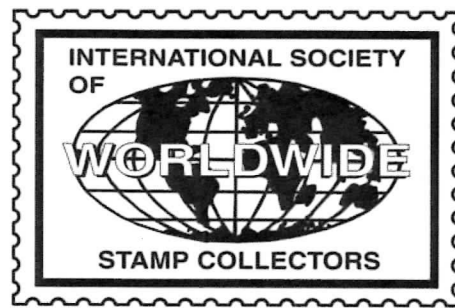


# The Circuit

July/August 2012 • Volume 30 No. 4



Affiliate of APS (#151) & Study Unit of ATA

[www.iswsc.org](http://www.iswsc.org)

The Official Journal of the International Society of Worldwide Stamp Collectors

## President's Column: Introduction, Goals

by John Seidl (#1646)



**ISWSC President  
John Seidl (#1646)**

**G**reetings from your new ISWSC President! As our former President **Mike Crump** (#2126) mentioned in this column in the March/April issue, he decided not to run for re-election and recruited me to take on this role. I would like to start by thanking Mike for all he's done (and continues to do) for the ISWSC. We are an organization of

volunteers and without the dedication and many contributions of Mike, **Joanne Berkowitz** (#98) and everyone you see on the masthead, we would cease to exist.

Let me start by introducing myself; I am 52, my wife Lauren and I live in Marietta, Georgia with our son, James, who is a junior in high school. I am a Partner with Kurt Salmon, which is a consulting firm with their US headquarters here in Atlanta. I travel every week to visit my clients, including most major retailers here in the USA and around the world. I have been a philatelist since before I knew what that word meant, getting my start courtesy of my grandfather at the age of 5. Like many kids, I started as a worldwide collector but unlike many, I have remained a truly worldwide collector. In addition to that interest, I have a deep collection of Cayman Island postal history, a topical collection around clocks and watches, and a growing fascination with worldwide revenues and cinderellas. I belong to 30+ philatelic clubs and societies, including my life membership in the American Philatelic Society. I am the Treasurer of the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group and the North American Representative for the British West Indies

Study Circle. Many of you know me from the years I spent managing one of the ISWSC Swap Circuits – a special thanks to Smokey Stover for taking that job over so I could take on this exciting new role.

I have several goals and objectives for the ISWSC and each of them requires your help. We are a far smaller group than we should be – my number one goal will be growing our membership. To that end I have recruited five new members in the last month and have set a personal goal to add 100 new members in my first year. I would like each of you to just add ONE new member – you do that and we double in size! I would like to see us get back on schedule with the publication of *The Circuit* and will do everything I can to help our Editor, **Randy Smith** (#1111), make that happen.

I teach the Boy Scout Stamp Collecting Merit Badge here in Atlanta four times each year. I know the importance of outreach to our hobby. To that end, I

Continued on page 5

## Call for Nominations

**N**ominations are sought for candidates to serve in an elected position as an At-Large member of the ISWSC Board of Directors. Elections will be held in November, with winning candidates serving two year terms (beginning in February 2013) on the ISWSC Board of Directors.

Nominations are also sought for an individual to serve in an appointed position as Director of Public Relations.

For information concerning the duties of each position or to express interest in being a nominee, please contact ISWSC Executive Director, **Joanne Berkowitz** (#98).

**ISWSC BOARD OF DIRECTORS****Executive Director:**

Dr. Joanne Berkowitz (#98)  
PO Box 19006  
Sacramento, CA 95819-0006—USA  
joannebe@pacbell.net

**President ('13):**

John Seidl (#1646)  
4324 Granby Way  
Marietta, GA 30062-8150—USA  
john.seidl@gmail.com

**Vice President ('13)**

Randy Smith (#1111) (*address below*)

**Secretary ('13):**

Dan Neubert (#2619)  
4413 Shoreview Rd  
Robbinsdale, MN 55422-5505—USA  
dnmn55422@aol.com

**Immediate Past President:**

Mike Crump (#2126) (*address below*)

**Director of Membership ('13):**

Jeff Schumer (#2101)  
6410 Cloister Gate Dr  
Baltimore, MD 21212-1057—USA  
jschumer@comcast.net

**Director of Public Relations ('13):**

*vacant*

**Director of Stamp Outreach ('13):**

Richard Rizzo (#2215)  
18300 Winter Park Ct  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879-4626—USA  
poly76ce@gmail.com

**Director At-Large ('12):**

Duncan Koller (#2154)  
11989 NW Coleman Dr  
Portland, OR 97229-4980—USA  
duncankoller@comcast.net

**Director At-Large ('12):**

Werner Zarnikow (#2454)  
110 W Prairie St  
Wilton, IA 52778-9531—USA  
wernerone@netwtc.net

**Director At-Large ('12):**

Paul Glass (#2438)  
320 Carlene Dr  
Sparks, NV 89436-8978—USA  
pglass@charter.net

**Director At-Large ('12):**

Bob Armstrong (#1392)  
2209 SW Oak Ridge Rd  
Palm City, FL 34990-2159—USA  
googiepox@comcast.net

**THE CIRCUIT EDITOR**

Randy Smith (#1111)  
PO Box 2085  
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0085—USA  
rasmary4@frontiernet.net

**REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES****Australasia:**

Noel Routley (#1610)  
Post Box 368  
Koondrook, VIC 3580—AUSTRALIA  
noelroutley@bigpond.com

**British Isles:**

Karen Rose (#584)  
71 Pearson St  
Cradley Heath  
West Midlands B64 6EE—  
GREAT BRITAIN

**Central/South America:**

*vacant*

**Canada:**

*vacant*

**Eastern Europe:**

*vacant*

**Scandinavia/Baltics:**

Martti Vihanto (#830)  
PO Box 34  
FIN-20521 Turku—FINLAND  
martti.vihanto@pp1.inet.fi

**Africa:**

*Vacant*

**Western Europe:**

*vacant*

**ISWSC PROGRAM CONTACTS****SALES CIRCUIT MANAGER**

Gene Stutzenstein (#2716)  
PO Box 8846  
Toledo, OH 43623-0846—USA  
genestutz@yahoo.com

**OMNI EXCHANGE****Manager:**

David Paul (#59)  
2 Heritage Dr  
Belchertown, MA 01007-9548—USA  
dpaul11@hotmail.com

**Co-Manager:**

Dale E. Harris (#2311)  
212 Schofield Dr  
Reedsport, OR 97467-1366—USA  
harrisda@ohsu.edu

**Co-Manager:**

Tom Wasniewski (#2596)  
2555 Woodfield Blvd  
Franklin, IN 46131-6918—USA  
t.wasniewski@comcast.net

**PREMIUM CIRCUIT MANAGER**

Ken Wills (#2150)  
5308 Shadow Glen Dr  
Grapevine, TX 76051-7350—USA  
wills@airmail.net

**STAMP ANSWER MAN**

Caleb Andresen (#2659Y)  
PO Box 19006  
Sacramento, CA 95819-0006—USA  
stamper852@aol.com

**WHATZIT? COORDINATOR**

Richard Barnes (#2425)  
11715 123rd St NW  
Edmonton AB T5M 0G8—CANADA  
rtbarnes@shaw.ca

**MAIL BID SALE MANAGER**

Mike Crump (#2126)  
PO Box 580  
Whittier, CA 90608-0580—USA  
desoto1947@yahoo.com

**SWAP CIRCUIT**

**Program Coordinator** (send inquiries here)  
Randy Smith (#1111) (*address below left*)

**Large I Circuit Manager:**

Igor Malcevski (#2597)  
22702 Saddle Rd  
Leavenworth, WA 98826-9763—USA  
igor@premier1.net

**Large II Circuit Manager:**

Smokey Stover (#2538)  
610 N 1st St PMB 421  
Hamilton, MT 59840-2149—USA  
smokey1789@gmail.com

**Small/Definitive I Circuit Manager:**

Duncan Koller (#2154)  
(*see address at left*)

**Small/Definitive II Circuit Manager:**

Craig Grothaus (#2344)  
39 Crestview Rd  
Mountain Home, AR 72653-7837—USA  
grot@centurytel.net

**Super Circuit Manager:**

Bob Armstrong (#1392)  
(*see address at left*)

**CTO Circuit Manager:**

William Silvester (#1058)  
378C Cotlow Road  
Victoria, BC V9C 2G1—CANADA  
wgsilvester@shaw.ca

**USA Circuit Manager:**

Larry Veverka (#2363)  
935 University St  
Walla Walla, WA 99362-2342—USA  
larry.veverka@wallawalla.edu

**WEBMASTER**

Rick Simpson (#1703)  
HC 79 Box 52E  
Romney, WV 26757-9509—USA  
stampalbumpages@gmail.com

To participate in an ISWSC program, contact the appropriate volunteer.

# OMNI Audit

by Dave Paul (#59)

The annual audit of member accounts in the OMNI Exchange was recently completed. There are currently 57 members with a total catalog value of \$97,000 in 1280 books/sales sheets entered. In the 12 months covered by the audit, members added \$14,400 in catalog value to their collections from the exchange. Current members have added the cumulative total of \$189,000 in value over the term of their membership in OMNI.

There are currently three sections of the exchange in order to spread the work of preparing selections and keeping member records. New books are constantly coming in from members to replace retired books or build up balances of new members. Many of the current exchangers have been members for many years, indicating their satisfaction with the exchange.

We do not accept USA stamps in OMNI as a majority of members are not interested in them. Stamp values range from inexpensive to triple digits per stamp. There are no cash fees for membership except for mailing costs and a nominal charge for blank books and sheets used to enter stamps. Members look forward to the regular mailings as you never know what you will find when you open the latest selection.

If anyone out there has been thinking about joining OMNI, I urge you to give it a try and put those duplicates in the closet to productive use. For more information contact:

David Paul (#59)  
2 Heritage Dr  
Belchertown, MA 01007-9548—USA  
dpaul11@hotmail.com

**GOT THE KILOWARE BLUES?** I have dozens of used duplicates of the same stamp, and so do you. Let's do a wholesale trade in lots of ten. My web page lists by Scott number what I can offer: [web2.airmail.net/wills/whol.html](http://web2.airmail.net/wills/whol.html) or contact Ken Wills (#2150) at [wills@airmail.net](mailto:wills@airmail.net). [07-08/12]

**MEMBER LIQUIDATING SURPLUS FOREIGN DUPLICATES.** Catalog value ignored. Many large/older. 1,000 mostly different selected at random \$12.00 postpaid in USA only. Charles Kistner (#2157); PO Box 288; Kings Park, NY 11754-0288 [07-08/12]

**CANADA MINT #620, 620i, 620ii, 621, 621i only \$5.00/set. Pink Panther #1107i mint \$5.00 single. Harold Towlson (#2609D); 60 Ivanhoe Rd; Buffalo, NY 14215—USA.** [07-08/12]

## Where to Send What

### Membership Renewals, Applications, Address Changes, Roster Updates, General ISWSC Questions:

Dr. Joanne Berkowitz (#98)  
PO Box 19006  
Sacramento, CA 95819-0006—USA  
[joannebe@pacbell.net](mailto:joannebe@pacbell.net)  
PayPal: [ExecutiveDirector@iswsc.org](mailto:ExecutiveDirector@iswsc.org)

### Annual 250 Stamp Donation, Stamp Outreach Donations:

Richard Rizzo (#2215)  
18300 Winter Park Court  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879-4626—USA  
[poly76ce@gmail.com](mailto:poly76ce@gmail.com)

### Articles for *The Circuit*, Ads and Payment, Letters to the Editor, Replacement Newsletter Requests & Swap Circuit Fees, Applications, Questions:

Randy Smith (#1111)  
PO Box 2085  
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0085—USA  
[rasmary4@frontiernet.net](mailto:rasmary4@frontiernet.net)

### Mail Bid Sale Bids, Lots and Payments:

Mike Crump (#2126)  
PO Box 580  
Whittier, CA 90608-0580—USA  
[desoto1947@yahoo.com](mailto:desoto1947@yahoo.com)

### Sales Circuit Supplies, Payments, Questions:

Gene Stutzenstein (#2716)  
PO Box 8846  
Toledo, OH 43623-0846—USA  
[genestutz@yahoo.com](mailto:genestutz@yahoo.com)

### OMNI Exchange Supplies, Questions:

David Paul (#59)  
2 Heritage Drive  
Belchertown, MA 01007-9548—USA  
[dpaul11@hotmail.com](mailto:dpaul11@hotmail.com)

### Premium Circuit Questions:

Ken Wills (#2150)  
5308 Shadow Glen Drive  
Grapevine, TX 76051-7350—USA  
[wills@airmail.net](mailto:wills@airmail.net)

### Unidentified Stamp Questions (Whatzits):

Richard Barnes (#2425)  
11715 123rd Street NW  
Edmonton AB T5M 0G8—CANADA  
[rtbarnes@shaw.ca](mailto:rtbarnes@shaw.ca)

### General Collecting and Stamp Questions:

Caleb Andresen (#2659Y)  
PO Box 19006  
Sacramento, CA 95819-0006—USA  
[stamper852@aol.com](mailto:stamper852@aol.com)

### Dues Information:

Single/Dealer/Club 1 year membership: \$15.00\*  
Single/Dealer/Club 2 year membership: \$27.00\*  
Single/Dealer/Club 3 year membership: \$39.00\*  
Youth (under 18) 1 year membership: \$12.00

\*Plus 250 large commemoratives for the Stamp Outreach program or equivalent donation in U.S. funds.

# Whatzit—Local Summer Fun

by Richard Barnes (#2425)  
Whatzit? Coordinator

One of my many pleasures of being a member of a local stamp club is the sharing of information between members and the members of fellow clubs. As part of our club's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we hosted a Royal show this summer. The theme of the show was Sam Steele. This greater than life personality is probably known around the world as the Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman who brought law and order to the Yukon during the Klondike gold rush. This is just one aspect of his work as a Peace Officer in Western Canada. In addition, he was a decorated soldier and a political figure.

A set of 4 local stamps commemorating Sam Steele were produced. With the support of many different organizations, there was an Alberta province-wide contest for school students to create stamp designs with the Sam Steele theme. The four best designs were selected and used for the stamps. In addition, a souvenir sheet depicting all four stamps was printed (Figure 1).

We had dealers and visitors from around the world come to this show. Our fellow stamp club from Calgary, Alberta, is hosting a show and British North American Philatelic Society meeting at the end of this summer. They



Figure 2

brought some advertising for this show, including overprinted Canadian postage due stamps. There are two black overprints (Figure 2). The first overprint is a bronco rider and the second is four lines: BNAPEX 2012, Calgary, 31 Aug, -2 Sep. The postage due stamps that I have overprinted are Scott #J21.

In early August, I received a phone call from a fellow member of our local stamp club. He asked me if I had seen the Air Canada 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary stamps. I was not even aware of this set of five stamps. They come in

sheets of 25 self adhesive stamps. The stamps are not a chronological list of the use of the aircraft in the service of Air Canada, but a combination of historical highlights and present day advertising of the progressiveness of today's Air Canada. Figure 3 is the ubiquitous DC3. This long lived aircraft (it went into



Figure 1

service in 1936) is still used in small charter carriers. The Vickers-Armstrong "Vanguard" (Figure 4) is another long service aircraft. This turboprop aircraft enjoyed a short life of only ten years as an AC passenger airliner. However, this fine design is still being used as a freighter and water bomber. The final three stamps of the set depict aircraft presently in

AC service, the Boeing 747-100, the Airbus A-340-541 and the Boeing 777-300 ER. All these stamps are not postage stamps, but have been added to my 2012 Canada pages. I feel that local stamps such as these add colorful discussion points and add to the understanding of the current events and local philatelic activity.

Whatzit 30.1.2 reads "Fiscal Stamp" on the top of the stamp and on the bottom the word for "five" in Russian. The circular inscription on Whatzit 30.1.4 translates as "Royal Prussian and Grand-Ducal Hessian State Railways Headquarters Mainz". This stamp is not illustrated at <http://Alphabetilately.com/TOC/parcels-4.html>, which is where one might think it would be found. Whatzit 30.2.1 is a bisect of Fischer I or Michel I. It was issued September 20, 1915, has a face value of 5 groszy, and depicts "Syrena" (the coat of arms of Warsaw). There



Figure 3



Figure 4



were 2800 stamps issued. The bisect paid the 2 groszy rate for printed matter. The K.O.m.W is the Citizens'



**Whatzit 30.4.2**

Committee of the capital of Warsaw. Poczta Miejska translates as "town post". For a picture of the bisect (as well as the entire stamp and some overprints), go to [www.ekpv.nl/verzamelingswarsawtownpost.pdf](http://www.ekpv.nl/verzamelingswarsawtownpost.pdf). Whatzit 30.2.2 is part of a 9 stamp postal tax set, Scott RA1 to RA9, issued in 1925-1939. Whatzit 30.2.3 appears to be an imprint cut

from a Kais Kon Stempel Parcel Card. It is Austrian and was issued 1917 or thereabouts. The Kais Kon is the short form for Kaiserlich und Koniglich, which means "imperial and royal". There was no success looking on the internet for Whatzit 30.2.4. The only reference to the National Protection Bureau refers to a group currently operating in the PRC, whose goal is to keep dissidents safe from authorities.



**Whatzit 30.4.3**

The first Whatzit for this issue (Whatzit 30.4.1) is not illustrated because it concerns a known stamp, Sweden Scott #77. The Whatzit stamp has an unlisted watermark—the letters "OST" are clearly seen in double line characters. Does anyone have data on this watermark?

When I was first sent Whatzit 30.4.2, I thought it was a 1960's Bulgarian stamp, but I must be wrong. It has an face value of 80g and depicts a rose. What country is it from, what is the date of use and what is the catalogue number?

Whatzit 30.4.3 is, perhaps, a Spanish local. This light red stamp reads "DIPUTACION de ALAVA". Below this, on the left, is a box that reads "Clase". On the right side is another box, this one reading "14a". This is over a crest. The value is 1 Pta. All information is needed: use, date of issue, etc.

Finally, Whatzit 30.4.4 is a blue German language stamp with a black "10" value. The top of the stamp reads "?hweiz. Bundesbahnen". (I have difficulty reading the fancy script.) The left side is blacked out with what appears to be an overprint because I cannot see through it with my scope. The left side reads "Strade ferr Federalll". We need to know pertinent information on this stamp.



**Whatzit 30.4.4**

\*\*\*\*\*

Richard T. Barnes

11715 123rd St NW

Edmonton, AB T5M 0G8 CANADA

[rtbarnes@shaw.ca](mailto:rtbarnes@shaw.ca)

For ease of future reference, Whatzits are numbered sequentially, using the volume and issue number of the newsletter (in which the illustration first appears) as a prefix (e.g. 30.4.1, 30.4.2, 30.4.3).

US USED COLLECTIONS, Superior Quality, All Different. 500 \$11.90; 800 \$19.75; 1000 \$24.40; 1200 \$31.95; 1600 \$66.50. Airmails only: 75 \$7.75; 100 \$27.50; 110 \$54.00; 120 \$84.00. Commemoratives, Se-Tenents and Christmas only collections available. Postpaid. VISA, Mastercard ok. Free price list. Bick (#502D); Box 854iswsc; Van Nuys, CA 91408—USA. 818-997-6496. [iibick@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iibick@sbcglobal.net) [07-08/12]

## President's Column

Continued from page 1

would also like to see us do more to support **Richard Rizzo** (#2215) and his tireless efforts to support youth activities and enrichment around stamp collecting. I also would like to encourage each of you to consider the many opportunities you have with your membership in the ISWSC (some vary based on where you live). The Sale Circuits have great items, the OMNI Exchange and Swap Circuits are easy and inexpensive

ways to grow your collection. The ISWSC Mail Bid Sale has treasures to be found and the knowledge I gain in every issue of *The Circuit* never ceases to impress me.

I speak for everyone involved in the ISWSC when I say we appreciate your membership in the group. Please feel free to send me an email at [john.seidl@gmail.com](mailto:john.seidl@gmail.com)—or even a note via the USPS—with any suggestions. I promise every bit of input will be addressed and replied to. I look forward to working with you to grow the ISWSC to our full potential!

Submit an article for publication! Contact the Editor.

## Ventures in Printing—Part 21

### Multicolored Iranian Stamps of the Late Qajar Period – Part 3

by Sandy Stover (#2325)

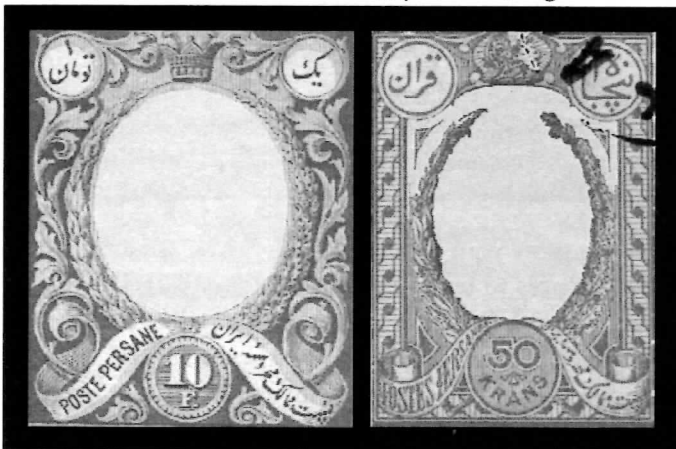
*Editor's Note: This is a continuation of the series of articles adapted from a book on classic multicolored postage stamps currently being written by the author.*

*Author's Note: I am breaking my current pattern of writing only about entirely-relief printed CMP stamps in order to discuss all of the CMP stamps of Iran in a three-part article.*

Parts 1 and 2 explored the historical setting and the symbolism of 39 Qajar CMP (classic multicolored postage) stamps, 20 that were issued and 19 (“Kings and Buildings” set) that were not issued. This third installment: (1) surveys the printing technology of the 39 Iranian CMP stamps; (2) compares surveys of early Iranian and United States stamp-printing methods and color designs, and raises questions (mostly unanswered) about the factors that have influenced nations in their choices of stamp-printing methods; and (3) reviews various aesthetic opinions that have been aroused by the Iranian CMP stamps. (NOTE: With a few exceptions, traditional printing terminology is used in this article, *i.e.* *typography* rather than *relief*, and *engraved* or *intaglio* rather than *recess*.)

#### Very Varied Printing Methods

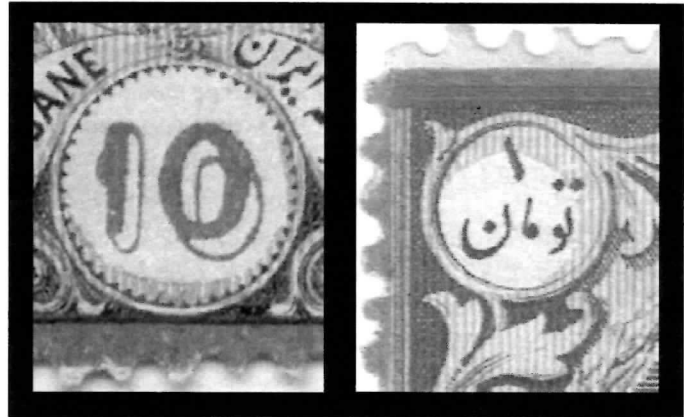
The three earliest of the Qajar CMP stamps (Scott #54, 55, 59; *Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar*; 1882; Figures 1a &



**Figure 1—Vignette frames (left to right): (a) Iran, Scott #59, printed by Austria Printing Office, 1882; and (b) Iran, Scott #445, printed by Enchedé, Haarlem, Netherlands**

2) were printed by the Austrian Government Printing Office, Vienna. The remaining 36 were printed by Enchedé & Sons, Haarlem, Netherlands, who held the

contract for production of Iranian stamps for more than 40 years, from 1894 to 1935. Following the pattern already used by the Vienna printers, all of the Enchedé multicolored stamps (except for the four “Ruins of



**Figure 2—Detail (left to right): (a) Iran, Scott #54, denomination tablet and marginal frame; (b): Iran, Scott #59, marginal frame—both printed by Austrian Printing Office, 1882**

Persepolis” stamps) feature a bicolored stamp with a marginal frame in a third color. In the case of the Enchedé stamps, the marginal frame color is either silver or gold.

While there is relatively little change in printers or in the basic bicolor-and-frame pattern, printing methods vary considerably for these 39 stamps:

(1) All sources known to this writer (Scott, Stanley Gibbons, Sadri, Farahbakhsh, Lewis, Oldfield, *et al.*) agree that the three Austrian-printed stamps are engraved. (See more about this below.)

(2) There is some disagreement, however, about the one multicolored stamp featuring Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar (Scott #445; 1909; Figure 1b). Scott says that the stamp is engraved, but with a lithographed “frame” (Scott, v. 3, p. 1022). Sadri says that the vignette is engraved, but with a typographed “frame” (Sadri, p. 118). Lewis says that the black portrait is engraved, while the vermillion “surround and gold border” are *both* lithographed (Lewis, p. 35). This writer assumes that Lewis has given the best description.

(3) There is general agreement that the eight Coat of Arms stamps (Scott #455, 457-463; “Sun and Lion”; 1909; Figure 3) are entirely typographed.

(4) Klemann and Sadri have provided many details about the 19 unissued “Kings and Buildings” set (1914; Figure 6, Part 1; Figure 1, Part 2), including the history of their production and eventual non-issuance, as well as elaborations on the shahs and buildings portrayed,

but unfortunately *not* including the method of printing (Klemann, *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News*, 10/8/23; Sadri, pp. 189; 192-4). One can only guess, based on online images, that the vignettes are engraved, the marginal frames typographed or lithographed, while the background border-design could be any of the three.



**Figure 3—Vignette and vignette frame detail: Iran, Scott #455, printed by Enchedé, 1909**

(5) Strangely, neither Sadri nor Farahbakhsh identify a printing method for the “Darius and Faravahar” or the “Ruins of Persepolis” stamps (Scott #569, 571-3, 574-7; 1915; Figures 4, 5 & 9b). The Scott catalogue notes that the former “are engraved except for silver margins”, but does not identify the printing method for the silver margins; while the latter set, the catalogue states, “have centers engraved, frames typographed” (Scott, v. 3, p. 1023). It is assumed, then, that the marginal frame of the Darius set is typographed, while both vignette and vignette frame are engraved. But the four Persepolis stamps break sharply with the prior pattern. The colored marginal frame is eliminated. Instead, the four typographed vignette frames include gold as a background to a second color that is different on each stamp, and the vignette is then rendered in a third *engraved* color that is also different on each stamp. The Persepolis stamps will be a fitting finale to the aesthetics discussion below.

There is a further puzzlement about the above-reported printing methods. In spite of total agreement, among six sources, that the Austrian-printed multicolored stamps are *entirely* engraved—i.e. no exception is noted for the marginal frame—they do not *appear* to be so (at least to this writer). Figure 2



**Figure 4—Vignette and vignette frame detail: Iran, Scott #572, printed by Enchedé, 1915**

shows detail from Scott #54 and 59. The red-orange marginal frame and “10” (shahis) of 54, as well as the red marginal boarder of 59, are of such width of ink (and certainly the marginal frame of 59 is of such shallowness of ink) that intaglio seems open to doubt.

With respect to 54, Oldfield reported that the “10” “was printed in afterwards in a different shade or colour by means of a “duty plate”, which also printed the border surrounding the stamps in the same colour” (Oldfield, *et al.*, p. 99). But there is no mention by Oldfield of a change in printing method with respect to the “duty plate”. It should also be noted that the *intaglio* “Sun” stamps (Scott #50-52) —part of the same 1882 Vienna-printed “series” that includes the Nasser al-Din stamps—are reported by Scott as engraved, *but with border lithographed* (Scott, v. 3, p. 1019). Did Vienna change course, then, by *engraving* the marginal frame on the Nasser al-Din stamps? Would the



**Figure 5—Vignette and vignette frame detail: Iran, Scott #576, printed by Enchedé, 1915**

Vienna printers incur extra effort and expense in this way? On the other hand, do the marginal borders *appear* lithographed (or typographed) because the stamps illustrated here are forgeries? Or again, is the writer simply wrong about the expected appearance of engraved printing in this case? Reader opinions are welcomed.

Given this ample variation in the methods used to print Qajar multicolored stamps, it might be interesting to examine Iran’s pattern of printing methods and color designs for *all* of its early stamps, say from the first stamps (as listed by Scott) to the “Ruins of Persepolis” stamps, i.e. from 1870 to 1915. During this time period, Iran issued 477 stamps (Scott “major listings”), but 172 of these are either over-prints of stamps already issued or typeset stamps with hand-stamped overprints. The remaining 205 stamps are enumerated in the chart (see page 8) according to printing method and color design. The gist of this complicated analysis is simple: Iran’s early stamps are, indeed, “very varied” in printing method and color design. Roughly half of the stamps (not overprinted) are typographed monochromes, while the other half span almost the entire spectrum of possible combinations of printing method and color design. From another perspective: Of the approximate 30 “design types” (Scott “illustration numbers”), well over half are combinations *other than* monochrome typography. (Even the almost 40 hand-stamped typeset stamps, not counted here, represent another interesting,

# Ventures in Printing

Continued from page 7

if crude, variation in design. Most are listed by Scott as bicolor.)

## Iran and Beyond

This review of “very varied” Iranian printing methods and color designs—is it only a recounting of somewhat boring technical minutia? Perhaps. But consider: During this same 1870-1915 period in which Iran (or its contractors) used a wide variety of printing methods to produce 205 monochrome, bicolor and multicolored stamps, all of this for a total of only approximately 30 distinct stamp designs, *during this same period* the United States (or its contractors) printed *all* of its approximate 355 stamps (major varieties incorporating 118 distinct designs) by *one* method: *intaglio*. And only 10 of the USA stamps/designs are bicolored: the 1875 re-issues, Scott #129-132, and the 1901 Pan-American Exposition set, Scott #294-99. All remaining 345 stamps (and 108 designs) are monochrome. One doesn’t need a list to record this near uniformity.

*Author’s Note:* In the following discussion, including the Finlay references, the term “forgery” is used as synonymous to the term “counterfeit”. This is consistent with general usage, but not with current philatelic usage. In philatelic usage, “counterfeit” is an attempt to defraud the government (the meaning of “forgery” below), while “forgery” is an attempt to defraud stamp collectors.

Why were the early stamp-printing practices of the United States and Iran so different? Any explanation will undoubtedly focus, at least in part, on the susceptibility to forgery that accompanied the Iranian printing methodologies—a susceptibility which, in Iran’s case, was often fulfilled. But beyond forgery prevention, what other factors were at play in the United States devotion to—and Iran’s lack of devotion to—the *line-engraved* stamp? This writer is not the first to ponder such national differences. Discussing the earliest decades of stamp production, William Finlay makes the following observations:

While Britain, Brazil, Belgium and the United States chose intaglio, the other countries issuing stamps in the first decade chose typography. Although Prussia began with a recess-printed series (1850), it quickly changed to typography and eventually the Prussian

**Iranian Stamps, 1870-1915, by Printing Method and Color Design**  
(not including overprints of already issued designs or hand-stamped typeset issues)

| PRINTING METHOD      | COLOR DESIGN            | TOTAL DESIGN       |              |
|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
|                      |                         | TYPES <sup>1</sup> | TOTAL STAMPS |
| Typography           | Monochrome              | 15                 | 104          |
| Typography           | Bicolor                 | 2                  | 13           |
| Typography           | Multicolor              | 1                  | 8            |
| Engraved             | Monochrome              | 4                  | 22           |
| Engraved             | Bicolor                 | 2                  | 9            |
| Engraved             | Multicolor <sup>2</sup> | 3                  | 3            |
| Lithography          | Monochrome              | 2                  | 4            |
| Lithography          | Bicolor                 | 2                  | 10           |
| Engraved/Lithography | Bicolor                 | 1                  | 3            |
| Engraved/Lithography | Multicolor              | 1                  | 1            |
| Engraved/Typography  | Bicolor                 | 1                  | 20           |
| Engraved/Typography  | Multicolor              | 2                  | 8            |
| Total:               |                         |                    | 205          |

<sup>1</sup> Several design types are counted in two different categories of printing/color combination.

<sup>2</sup> The three multicolored *Nasser al-Din* stamps are counted here as *entirely* engraved.



State Printing Works in Berlin became one of the world's leading printers using this method, combined in many cases with embossing. Spain's first stamps (1850) were lithographed, but the following year typography was adopted and remained the sole method employed until the 1920s. It was the method used by the majority of the Italian and German states, by France, Austria, Russia, Portugal and the Scandinavian countries. In areas where recess printing was initially favoured it [relief printing] gradually extended its sway. Belgium succumbed in 1865, Holland in 1869 and Britain partially in 1855 and totally by 1880. By the end of the century recess printing survived in the United States, Switzerland, Germany (high values only) and a handful of British colonies (Finlay, pp. 55-56).

Earlier, Finlay had suggested several factors related to the choice of printing methods:

Printing by these [relief] methods has several advantages over printing by the *intaglio*, recess or *taille douce* method; typography is relatively simple, cheaper and faster. The disadvantages are that it is more easy to forge and also gives *less satisfactory results*. The advantages far outweighed the disadvantages in the nineteenth century and consequently the majority of postage stamps in the second half of the century were manufactured by this process (Finlay, p. 55; italics added).

"Simple, cheaper and faster" can be collapsed to mean *less cost*. (Forgery is also a *cost* factor; but Finlay gives it a special emphasis here.) Thus, Finlay seems to say that *cost* and *forgery-prevention*—plus "results", i.e. *appearance*—were the factors that dominated nineteenth century decisions about printing methods; and while the *cost* factor (minus *forgery-prevention*) favored typography, the *forgery-prevention* and *appearance* factors favored *intaglio*. Would this not imply, then, that in London, Berlin, Paris, Vienna and Madrid (not to mention Tehran and numerous other capitals), it was simply the cost of *intaglio* that led to its relative demise in stamp-printing? And does it not also follow that Washington, going against the tide, accepted the higher cost of *intaglio* in return for satisfactory appearance and forgery-prevention?

There is something very simplistic about this analysis, isn't there? Consider several complications:

- (1) *Intaglio* was, indeed, the printing method least vulnerable to forgery. But

complicating the picture are *additional* tactics for forgery prevention, e.g. watermarks, secret marks and special papers, all available no matter what the printing method. How did the availability of these tactics affect national decisions with respect to printing method?

- (2) On the other hand, if reduction of forgery (by the strategy of *intaglio* alone) meant *increased* revenue from government stamp sales (as certainly it was intended), then the higher costs of *intaglio* would have been at least partially off-set by those revenue increases. It is even possible, depending on *how much* forgery was prevented (compared with how much would have been prevented by other printing methods combined with other forgery-prevention methods), that *intaglio* was favored by *both* appearance (if we accept Finlay's view) *and* over-all cost analysis. Then why would *any* country have preferred other than *intaglio*? Backing away from this perhaps facetious turn of thought, one can simply admit that cost analysis, in this matter, is far from simple.
- (3) But the most important complication is Finlay's insertion of a *subjective* judgment regarding *appearance*. His assumption about the "less satisfactory results" of typography (and presumably also lithography) should not go unchallenged. For the truth is, at least in this writer's own subjective judgment, that typography and lithography often achieved appearances that were, while *different* from *intaglio* in some respects, just as "satisfactory". Hopefully this is demonstrated below and in this writer's numerous other articles about classic multicolored stamps.

There are undoubtedly more complications than just these three. The question of why countries used one printing method or another is, then, far more complicated than might first be thought.

Finally, when Finlay refers to the "less satisfactory results" of relief printing, is he speaking about appearance in an aesthetic, technical, or other sense? If he is speaking aesthetically, is he perhaps simply echoing a *pervasive preference* among American stamp

# Ventures in Printing

Continued from page 9

collectors of both the nineteenth *and* the twentieth centuries? Why, after all, *has* the American philatelic community so firmly preferred the distinctive “look” of engraved lines on stamps? And was this preference a factor in the lengthening of United States devotion to the line engraving of its stamps? These questions, however, are the germ of an article that goes far beyond the scope of this present one.

## Very Varied Aesthetic Opinions

Fred J. Melville (1882-1940) and Robson Lowe (1905-1997) are icons among British philatelists, indeed among philatelists world-wide. Both are memorialized in the APS Hall of Fame, Melville having been elected

remove the name of a signatory who Lowe believed was a stamp forger (“Fred Melville”, “Robson Lowe”, <http://en.wikipedia.org>; “The APS Hall of Fame”, <http://stamps.org>). Both of these philatelic luminaries have offered interesting opinions about the aesthetic qualities of the above Iranian stamps.

In both cases, the primary focus of their comments is the use of *metallic* ink. Melville’s glowingly positive remarks are part of a 1927 article in *Mekeel’s Weekly Stamp News* (originally published in the Melville founded and edited British journal, *Stamp Lover*):

One of the values in the newest set of Christmas stamps issued by Holland this year is a dainty confection in red and silver. It raises the novel suggestion of a stamp collection resplendent in flashing colours, comprising stamps alive with the sparkle of gold, silver and bronze....

## Nightmares from the Netherlands



Figure 6—“Nightmares from the Netherlands”: Iran, Scott #99, C37 & 577, illustration from Robson Lowe, *Masterpieces of Engraving on Postage Stamps* (page 90)

in the Hall’s first year (1941) and Lowe in 1998. Melville, perhaps the most prolific philatelic writer of all time, authored over a hundred books and uncountable articles, founded what is now the National Philatelic Society of Great Britain, and in 1921 was one of the first 40 signatories (along with King George V) of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists (a British honor, worldwide in scope). Lowe was a stamp dealer and author of numerous philatelic works, including the six-volume *Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps*. He is considered the “father” of *postal history* as a specialized field of study; but he was *not* a signatory of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, supposedly having refused to sign when the sponsors would not

...the first stamps in shining armour were the famous “bears” of Madrid, the 1 cuarto bronze and 3 cuartos bronze, Spain, 1854, both now scarce, as also are the bronze sixpennies of Western Australia of 1857 onwards....

Persia provides quite an array of stamps in bronze, silver or gold from the 1894 issue [Nasser al-Din, bicolor] onwards, and among the most gorgeous examples are the 50 kran vermilion and gold (1909) [Mohammad-Ali, multicolor] and the silvered kran [Darius, multicolor] and golden toman [Persepolis, multicolor] values of 1915. They bring us *glints*

*of mosques with shimmering domes lit by the Eastern sun....*

Most of the stamps so pretentiously arrayed are not expensive, but perhaps the wisecracks will say also that they are not gilt-edged securities (Melville, *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News*, 1/31/27, p. 72; italics added).

Lowe's less-than-glowing remarks are found in the "Chamber of Horrors" section of his *Masterpieces of Engraving on Postage Stamps, 1840-1940*:

In Western Europe one of the most reputable firms is Enchedé & Sons of Haarlem, whose best work has already been illustrated in this volume. In 1894 they obtained the contract to make stamps for Persia and did so until 1935. Believing that they held "the gorgeous East in fee" they indulged not only in gaudy polychromy but also in metallic printing, achieving thereby a *vulgarity which it is not easy to parallel* (Lowe, p. 90; italics added).

Accompanying these remarks is an illustration (Figure 6) that includes three Iranian stamps: Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar, red and gold, 10 kran (Scott #99, 1894); "Ruins of Persepolis", gold, blue and indigo, 5 toman (Scott #577, 1915); and Reza Shah Pahlavi, dark violet and peacock blue, 4 chahis (Scott #C37, 1930). Above the illustration is the caption: "Nightmares from the Netherlands". (Curiously, the simple non-metallic violet and blue of the air post stamp has somehow earned it the privilege of appearing alongside the two metallic monstrosities.)

Remembering always that aesthetic opinion is ultimately subjective—that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder"—one cannot help but ask: Have these two distinguished philatelists gone *aesthetically* "way off base", if only in opposite directions?

Melville seems to say that the glitter of metal on an Iranian stamp will, *alone*, conjure up an "Eastern" aura. Three of the four designs he mentions are simply metallically framed on the margin. Is he implying that such frames are vitally integral to the aesthetic appeal of a print—even a print so tiny as a postage stamp?



**Figure 7—Rococo/  
arabesque pattern on tomb  
of Sultan Abdul Hamid II,  
Turkey**

(Granted, he also references the "Ruins of Persepolis" designs, which are, indeed, an *integration* of gold and another color within the *vignette frame*.) And while one can sympathize with the *poetic* tone of his appreciation, *i.e.* "glints of mosques with shimmering domes lit by the Eastern sun", it would need pointing out that the Darius and Persepolis stamps honor an empire that long preceded the birth of Islam. Are silver and gold somehow reminiscent of *that* ancient time? Perhaps because his short article is focused only on metallic printing, he should be excused for giving no opinion about the *total design* of these stamps.

Lowe is equally silent about total design. Also, he says nothing about *why* metallic color is "vulgar", just as he says nothing about *why* "polychromy" is not only vulgar, but "gaudy". His writing elsewhere suggests that this extreme negativity stems somehow from his over-riding belief that postage stamps are a "form of coinage" and therefore should display "only the dignity of the State" (Lowe, p. 8).

Perhaps such strongly opposing aesthetic views are possible, at least partly, because these two venerable philatelists were not focusing on the *total* designs of *particular* stamps, but rather on isolated aspects of groups of stamps. The following discussion tries to remedy that, if only fleetingly. And remembering again that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder", the writer agrees that the reader may well *disagree* with much of the following.

If the discussion is limited to multicolored stamps that were *issued*, then the three Austrian-printed portraits (Scott #54, 55, 59 [Figures 1a, 2 & 9a]) come first. (They have marginal frames, but in red rather than metallic.) About these three designs (as well as the three bicolored in the same set) Mehrdad Sadri proclaimed, "Undoubtedly, these are the most beautiful stamps ever printed for Iran or any other country. The artwork is magnificent with eye catching color combinations..." (Sadri, p. 49). H. R. Oldfield, writing much earlier than Sadri, had already declared that the stamps were an expression of *both* "Western influence" and a "brilliant and thoroughly Oriental" design:



**Figure 8—Detail: Qajar  
panel with female  
musicians, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>  
Century**

# Ventures in Printing

Continued from page 11

...With this [1881-82] issue a distinct era is marked in the history of the stamps of Persia, as it clearly indicates the advance of Western influence in this somewhat remote country.

The stamp values were now changed from Persian currency into the French standard of centimes and francs, probably brought about by the desire of the Shah, on his return from Europe, to bring the Persian postal arrangements in closer harmony with the Western Post Offices...

The character of design is well-known to collectors, and may perhaps be classed as one of the most brilliant and thoroughly Oriental that can be found in the collector's album....

Early in January, 1882, the complete set of engraved stamps arrived from Vienna and proved to be perhaps the most excellent specimens of copper-engraved stamps then in existence (Oldfield, *et. al.*, pp. 70-1; these comments are evidently focused on the 1881 "Sun" engraved issues, as well as the 1882 Nasser al-Din issues, both bicolor and multicolor).

This writer can agree that the buff and black engraving is elegantly done and that the portrait's frame is an extravagantly graceful design. But while the red marginal frame may be appropriate—even *catchy*—in terms of color design considered alone, it is simply unnecessary and even distracting to the elegance of the rest of the stamp. This objection is not the same as Lowe's complaint about gaudiness or vulgarity. The marginal frame looks "tacked on", like a superfluous afterthought.

Furthermore, if stamps become even more beautiful to the extent that they use decorative designs *indigenous* to the issuing country, then Finlay has *perhaps* identified an additional aesthetic weakness of these Austrian-printed Qajar stamps:

...The Austrian connection [for the printing of Iranian stamps] lasted intermittently from 1876 until 1891 and alternated between full-face portrait of the much-moustached Shah Nasr-ed-Din, the sun emblem or the lion.... In design the Austrians tried to outdo the Persians, with extravagant Arabesques and

Saracenic leaf patterns in the framework, the like of which was never seen in any Persian mediaeval miniature or manuscript (Finlay, p. 69).

Finlay's discussion refers to *all* of the Austrian-printed stamps, and one might at first question his use of "Arabesque" and "Saracenic" with respect specifically to the three multicolored Nasser al-Din stamps (all very similar in design and represented by Scott #59 in Figures 1 a & 9a). In *their* case, the decoration looks more purely European *rococo* than anything else. But, in fact, there *was* in Europe and parts of the Islamic world, even as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a rococo-like decorative style often identified as *arabesque*. Figure 7 illustrates that style as found on the Istanbul tomb of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the last (effective) ruler of the Ottoman Empire, and there is a clear stylistic resemblance between the leaf patterns on the tomb and on the Nasser al-Din stamps ("Islimi/Rococo Pattern on Gravestone", <http://www.flickr.com>). This corroborates Finlay's identification of "Arabesque and Saracenic leaf patterns" on the three stamps in question.

But what does Finlay mean by the obvious claim that such leaf patterns were never seen "in any Persian mediaeval miniature or manuscript"? Does he prefer an *asynchronous* design in which obviously Persian *medieval* decorations, rather than less-than-obviously Persian *contemporary* decorations, would surround the portrait of an obviously *contemporary* ruler? Or, is he implying that the Austrian-printed stamps' rococo/arabesque decoration is not Persian *at all*? In this respect, it is worth noting that the symbolism of a *double-species wreath* (olive and oak [?] branches immediately surrounding the stamps' portrait), while certainly common *beyond* Persia, nevertheless dates back as far as the coat of arms of the Persian Safavid dynasty (1501-1722) ("Emblem of Iran", <http://en.wikipedia.org>). Of course, that the wreath is Persian in *symbolism* does not mean that its decorative style is Persian. But then again, as Figure 8 illustrates, it is possible to find Qajar art that at least hints at the leaf design found on the stamps ("File: Panel musicians Qajar India MBA . Lyon 1969-328.jpg", <http://commons.wikimedia.org>). If he is implying that the three stamps lack Persian design, Finlay is probably *technically* wrong. But that the stamps do not have the *traditional* appearance of Persian design—that is probably a forgivable conclusion.

Enough! In response to all of this uncertainty, one might well declare: *So who cares whether or not they are Persian in decorative style! The stamps are lovely examples of Viennese intaglio.* And so they are. The Vienna



printers have set a very high aesthetic bar for the Haarlem (Enchedé) printers who follow. Who will prevail?

The first Haarlem multicolor is the Muhammad Ali design (Scott #445), the only multicolored stamp in the 1907-09 Muhammad Ali set. Figure 1 compares its lithographed (or typographed?) vignette frame with the *intaglio* vignette frame of the Vienna-printed Scott #59. (The two black *intaglio* portraits are relatively equal in aesthetic value; while the solid-color marginal frames are of little help in a comparison of grey-scale images as illustrated here.) There is the same wreath pattern in



**Figure 9—Vignette frames (left to right): (a) Iran, Scott #59, printed by Austrian Printing Office, 1882; (b) Iran, Scot #576, printed by Enchedé, Haarlem, Netherlands, 1915**

both stamps and in this comparison of presumably rococo or rococo/arabesque style there is no question that the *intaglio* method provides more definition, more elegance, more grace. This becomes even more evident when the comparison is made in color, since the *intaglio* is done in black and buff, while the lithography is simply vermillion. Note, however, that in the Enchedé design the pattern *outside* the wreath seems to turn away from *rococo* toward a geometric theme. (The *meaning* of the geometric pattern is unknown to this writer.)

There is one note in defense of the Enchedé stamp: Here is at least one occasion when a marginal frame is not superfluous, as it is for the Vienna-printed stamps. Here is a solid gold frame that achieves both integration and beauty, the combined gold and vermillion providing a surprising *autumnal* richness. But this defense having been made, still, in Vienna vs. Haarlem: Vienna *intaglio* prevails!

Figure 3 displays detail from the next Haarlem multicolored design, the 1909 Qajar coat of arms stamps ("Sun and Lion", Scott #455, 457-63; full design shown in Figure 4, Part 1). Medium values are marginally framed in silver, higher values in gold; and as was the case with the red frames on the Viennese

*intaglios*, these frames appear aesthetically superfluous. (The *lowest* values in the set are bicolored, *i.e.* without *any* metallic marginal frame, and may therefore be the better designs aesthetically.) The coat of arms is a constant bister brown in color (on the multicolored values). While economical, such constancy makes the most pleasing color designs improbable. The leaf (vine?) and flower theme in the vignette frame is a good example of typography's capacity for linear patterns combined with small areas of solid-colored flowers or petals, in this case accompanied by an outer curving edge, again in solid color. Still, only one part of the design makes use of typography's capacity for *large* solid patches of color, and that is the inscription tablet at the bottom of the stamp. And like the Viennese stamps, the vignette frames here have a leaf pattern that seems (Persian?) rococo/arabesque in style; although the *double-species wreath* is now part of the coat of arms itself and appears lacking in any identifiable style. Finally and generally, the *total* effect is not as elegant as that of the earlier Viennese *intaglio*. Vienna is sustained!

If only because they take the viewer to a fabled ancient land of the Achaemenids (550-330 BC), the Enchedé-designed "King Darius and Faravahar" and "Ruins of Persepolis" stamps (Figures 7 & 8, Part 1; Figures 4, 5 & 9b) have an aura of mystery that adds at least marginally to their beauty. The two finely engraved *intaglio* vignettes, representing scenes at the Persepolis archeological site (and, in the case of the Darius stamp, possibly also at the Bihistun archeological site?), are equally graceful and antiquarian in effect ("Persepolis", "Bihistun Inscription", <http://en.wikipedia.org>). Moreover, in at least two aspects, the Darius design outshines the Persepolis design: (1) The Darius vignette "fits" more proportionately into its *intaglio* vignette frame, forming a triangle that points to the Faravahar and a spacious sky, while the palace walls of the Persepolis vignette seem somewhat horizontally "cramped" into their bicolored typographed frame; and (2) The Darius vignette and vignette frame are stylistically *synchronous*, while that is certainly *not* true with respect to the Persepolis design, although this seems aesthetically insignificant—at least to this writer (as discussed below).

Color design of the Darius stamps (disregarding silver) is skillful, with exception of the 3 kran (Scott #572), in which the violet of the vignette frame and the brown of the vignette (or is it the other way around?) seem almost the same color. What is needed is a two-color combination that provides contrast with the

# Ventures in Printing

Continued from page 13

flashy silver margin and, at the same time, renders the vignette frame as distinct from the vignette. The yellow-brown and gray combination of the 1 kran design (Scott #569) is the most successful in this regard, while the brown and blue-green combination of the 5 kran design (Scott #573) is almost as good. True, there is a very strong contrast between the rose and blue of the 2 kran design (Scott #571), but not between the blue and silver. Furthermore, the combined rose and blue are fast approaching “gaudy”, not to sound too much like Robson Lowe.

There is even more aesthetic complication than the preceding. At times—and perhaps depending on the light by which the stamp is seen (as well as whether the stamp is a genuine copy, reprint or forgery)—the solid marginal frame seems superfluous and distracting, as is the case for almost all of the multicolored stamps discussed above. Moreover, the glittering silver of the frame competes for attention, *not* alongside a wide and imposing rococo/arabesque decoration surrounding a shah's portrait or a Qajar coat of arms (as in the earlier multicolored stamps), but now, instead, alongside a narrow and rather delicate *intaglio* vignette frame. Thus, the marginal frame may seem to *overshadow* the vignette frame. But at other times—especially as described here for the 5 kran (Scott #573)—the silver frame seems to *highlight* the vignette frame, while also joining with the central vignette in a beautiful silver and blue-green accompaniment to the vignette frame's rather drab brown. The only firm conclusion, following all of this convolution, is that the 1 and 5 kran designs are aesthetically superior to the 2 and 3 kran designs.

The Darius vignette frame is featured in Figure 4. Its horses, columns and other decorations refer to the archeological site(s) alone, thus producing a *synchronous* design, *i.e.* the entire design (apart from the silver frame) is inspired by one (Achaemenid) period in

history. This is not to say that the stamp's design is actually Achaemenid in *decorative style*, but rather that the stamp's designers used only the archeological site (s) for inspiration. It is a noteworthy unity of design. Apart from the few color problems as mentioned above, the vignette frame is beautifully matched to the vignette. Finally, the Haarlem printers have at least launched a threat!

And now for the final contest: Figure 5 presents details of the *typographed* Persepolis vignette frame. Figure 9 compares the entire Persepolis frame with the entire *intaglio* vignette frame on the Vienna-printed Nasser al-Din 10 franc stamp.

If the beauty of a stamp depends on synchronous design, then the Persepolis design is an aesthetic failure. Its vignette represents a time roughly 2500 years ago. Its vignette frame is a decoration whose style

dates back approximately 500 years (see details below). Yet no one seriously believes—well at least not this writer—that the Persepolis stamps are any less beautiful because they are asynchronous.

At last, for the first time among Iranian classic multicolored postage stamps, the colored marginal frame is gone! The Persepolis vignette frame is a band of solid gold, throughout which are embedded, in a second color: (1)



Figure 10—Fragment from a Safavid silk coat, circa 1550, *Harold Keshishian's Textile Rug Morning...*, [www.persiancarpetguide.com](http://www.persiancarpetguide.com)

Kayani crowns in the upper corners (a further asynchrony, since the Kayani crown is Qajar, thus contemporaneous with the stamps' issuance); (2) tablets with inscriptions in Persian; (3) decorative flower-tablets along the interior of the frame; and (4) symmetrically scattered flowers, sometimes with attached leaf-like features. Figure 10 is the fragment of a silk coat that has been dated *circa* 1550, *i.e.* early Safavid dynasty, possibly from Tabriz (“Harold Keshishian's...”, <http://www.persiancarpetguide.com>). The scattered flowers and leaves on both the coat and the stamp, while different in some details, seem similar in others, particularly with leaves sometimes jutting out from flowers in a similar fashion. It is therefore reasonable to label the Persepolis frame as Safavid in style. If one thinks (rather simplistically) of their *religious dimensions*—and thereby underscores the

design's asynchrony even more—then the Persepolis stamps are a celebration of both a Zoroastrian dynasty (Achaemenid) and an Islamic dynasty (Safavid).

It is, in a sense, silly to argue that the Persepolis frame is "more beautiful" than the Nasser al-Din frame. "Tastes" for decorative styles are personal and unchallengeable. Also, the total Persepolis design is not without aesthetic weaknesses, at least for this viewer: (1) the vignette is slightly out of proportion to its frame; (2) the Kayani crowns are superfluous and interruptive; and (3) the color designs are unequal aesthetically, with the gold/green/brown of the 2 toman scoring highest. But in spite of all of that, this writer will gladly declare his own preference: In the final analysis, the Persepolis stamps feature a massive monumental ruin surrounded by the colorful fragility and lightness of flowers dappled in gold; and *that* design—with its sharp contrasts—seems more engaging, and certainly lovelier, than a portrait encircled by the sculpted-and-weighty look of rococo/arabesque curves, no matter how elegant the *intaglio* of those curves. The Persepolis stamps are therefore among a very small group of classic beauties—a group that does *not* include the Vienna *intaglios*. In the end, Haarlem has prevailed!

It is *not* silly, however, to recognize that whatever beauty the Haarlem printers achieved in the Persepolis vignette frame, they achieved it through *typography* rather than *intaglio*. Could *intaglio* repeat the printing effect that this typographed frame exhibits? This writer doubts it, although he is certainly no expert on such a matter.

### References

- American Philatelic Society. "The APS Hall of Fame", <http://stamps.org>.
- "Bihistun Inscription", "Emblem of Iran", "Fred Melville", "Persepolis", "Robson Lowe", <http://en.wikipedia.org>.
- Farahbakhsh, F. N. (1998). *The Stamps of Iran*. Tehran: F. N. Farahbakhsh.
- "File: Panel musicians Qajar India MBA Lyon 1969-328.jpg", <http://commons.wikimedia.org>.
- Finlay, William (1974). *An Illustrated History of Stamp Design*. Peter Lowe (Eurobook Limited).
- "Harold Keshishian's Textile Rug Morning The Persian Collection", <http://www.persiancarpetguide.com>.
- "Islimi/Rococo Pattern on Gravestone", [iznikessence's photostream, http://www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com).
- Klemann, J. J. (Oct. 8, 1923). "Coronation Stamps of Persia". *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News*, pp. 497-9, 507-8.
- Lewis, H. L. (1970). *The Stamps of Persia* (reprint edition). Waynesboro, VA: Iran Philatelic Study Circle.

Lowe, Robson (1943). *Masterpieces of Engraving on Postage Stamps 1840-1940*. London: Postal History Society.

Oldfield, H. R., et. al. (May & June, 1927). "A History of the Stamps of Persia", *Philatelic Journal of Great Britain*, pp. 70-72 (May); 99-100 (June).

Sadri, Mehrdad (2002). *Persiphila Standard Philatelic Catalogue: Iran—Qajar Dynasty, First Edition*. Mehrdad Sadri, Publisher.

Scott 2010 Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue, Volume 3. Sidney, OH: Scott Publishing Co.

Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue (1981), Part 16. London: Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd.

Stover, Sandy (2008). "An Inventory of Classic Multicolored Postage Stamps" (unpublished).

WORLDWIDE USED STAMPS in packet approvals, 12¢ per stamp. Malta high values included. Please enclose \$10 cash deposit. Joe Farrugia (#690D); Biancaville; Triq Filippu Farrugia; Zurrieq ZRQ 2263—MALTA. [07-08/12]

EXCHANGE YOUR DUPLICATES. Worldwide mint never hinged complete sets for same. Even exchange according to Scott Catalog. Al Collman (#1708); 7686 Caprio Dr; Boynton Beach, FL 33472-7370—USA. [03-04/13]

WANTED: Worldwide, mint or used, Error stamps. Will buy, or exchange with you, for what you collect. Tell me what you specialize in. Howard Frank (#2675); POB 340868; Brooklyn, NY 11234 [07-08/12]

200 WORLDWIDE OR US STAMPS \$2.00 or 100 Large Russia \$2.00 or 150 Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea mixed commemoratives \$3.00. 200 Canada \$4.00. Include 88¢ SASE for each order. Send to Harold Towlson (#2609D); 60 Ivanhoe Rd; Buffalo, NY 14215-3610—USA. [07-08/12]

BREAKING UP 64-YEAR ACCUMULATION. Let me send you a stuffed envelope of old, new, mint and used, etc. Pick what you want at 1/3 SCV and return the balance. Robert Gelfman (#1849); Box 315; Old Bethpage, NY 11804-0315—USA. [09-10/12]

## Articles Needed!

The Editor encourages members to submit articles of any length for publication. Ideas include sharing how you started collecting, your collecting interests, your stamp collecting knowledge, observations, questions, comments or even an opinion or two!



## Membership Update

### New Members

- 2744 **Charles Gadd** (exp. 08/31/13)  
PO Box 421  
Wrangell, AK 99929-0421—USA  
bccharlie@hotmail.com  
A, G, Beg (30), DD, 1 & 3 (Worldwide)
- 2745 **Gordon Brown** (exp. 08/31/13)  
11 Canyon Drive  
Shelton, CT 06484-4758—USA  
B (to 1940), G, Int (40), DD
- 2746 **Michael Makarewicz** (exp. 08/31/13)  
155 Windermere Avenue, Unit 1508  
Ellington, CT 06029-5824—USA  
mikeymakaz@yahoo.com  
B (1870's—1990), F, Int (59), EE, Top (Marine  
Org, Insects, Orchids), 7 (Great Britain,  
France, Mexico, Iceland, Norway, Peru,  
Chile, Canada)
- 2747 **Richard Kemp** (exp. 08/31/13)  
288 Flynn Avenue, Apt 20  
Burlington, VT 05401-5370—USA  
rtkemp@aol.com  
A, G, Int, EE
- 2748 **Paul Rump** (exp. 08/31/13)  
PO Box 174  
Thetford Center, VT 05075-0174—USA  
B (to 1950), G, Int (40+), EE, Top (engraved,  
Slania), 7 (Switzerland, Germany, Faroe  
Islands)
- 2749 **Theodore K. Tedesco** (exp. 08/31/14)  
219 Vaughan Street, Apt 3  
Portland, ME 04102-3237—USA  
mmtedesco31@yahoo.com  
B (1901-1933), D, Int (10), EE, 10 (forgeries)
- 2750 **William Scarpantoni** (exp. 09/30/13)  
1354 Hill Road  
Canaan, ME 04924-3548—USA  
stampwiz1@yahoo.com  
A, F, Int (26), DD, Top (Disney), 1, 3, 6  
(Worldwide, USA), 2, 4, 5 (USA), 8  
(Worldwide)
- 2751 **Leon Sabol** (exp. 09/30/13)  
5951 Sabol Road  
Milton, FL 32583-6922—USA  
farmerlee1@hughes.net  
A, E, Adv (50), EE

### New Members (continued)

- 2752 **Hal Zack** (exp. 09/30/13)  
4320 196<sup>th</sup> SW Suite B, PMB 244  
Lynwood, WA 98036-6754—USA  
A, F, Int (55), DD, Top (Airmails, Amelia  
Earhart), 1 & 8 (USA)
- 2753 **Daniel Solomon** (exp. 09/30/13)  
1312 Wildwood Drive  
Fallston, MD 21047-1730—USA  
dansolomon@msn.com  
B (1860-1950), C, Int (5), DD
- 2754 **Tom Lewis** (exp. 09/30/13)  
17502 Old Harmony Drive#102  
Fort Myers, FL 33908-4553—USA  
tuggerool@hotmail.com  
B (Dead African Countries and Middle East),  
G, Int (10), DD, 7 (Dead African Countries)
- 2755 **Donald Smith** (exp. 09/30/13)  
32 Linden Street, Unit D  
Wellesley, MA 02482-5809—USA  
smith32D@verizon.net  
A, F, Adv (50), EE
- 2756 **Bob Swick** (exp. 09/30/15)  
PO Box 133  
Wallingford, CT 06492-0133—USA  
bobswick@snet.net  
A, G, Int (32), DD, Top (Sports, Birds,  
Military), 1 & 6 (USA, Worldwide)
- 2757 **Annamary Kennell** (exp. 09/30/15)  
PO Box 51449  
Sarasota, FL 34232-0332—USA  
annamaryke@aol.com  
B (to 1945), G, Adv (43), DD, 4, 5 (USA,  
Worldwide), 8 (Worldwide)
- 2758 **Michael Jaffe** (exp. 09/30/13)  
215 Wyoming Avenue  
Maplewood, NJ 07040-2017—USA  
mikejaffe1942@gmail.com  
A, F, Int, EE, 6 (Worldwide)
- 2759 **R. Barry Feddema** (exp. 09/30/14)  
25 Georgia Street  
Wayne, NJ 07470-3818—USA  
bfeddema@optonline.net  
A, F, Int (35), DD, 3, 4, 5 (USA, Worldwide),  
7 (1 per letter of alphabet)

### Changes/Corrections/Reinstatements

- 1164 **Anthony J. Romandetti**  
1314 **Jim Millette**  
2681 **Rex Harness**

Get the most out of your ISWSC membership –  
participate in the many ISWSC programs available!