



THE *Postscript*

Tallahassee Stamp & Cover Club

American Philatelic Society
Member # C-161196

Volume 21, No. 4
October—December, 2011

Orange Free State by Dr. Hemanth KN. Vasanthaiah

Recently, one of my colleague gave a bunch of covers that his grand father had saved. Most of them were regular mails except one that caught my attention. That cover was from **Orange Free State**, dated 28th January 1938. The notice on the cover reads that the stamps used on this cover will be invalid after 1st January 1938. Therefore it is necessary that your relatives, friends and colleagues should know that you are a philatelist and you may end up with lots of surprises. This is also one of the ways to propagate philately.

The **Orange Free State** (Dutch: *Oranje-Vrijstaat*) was an independent Boer republic in southern Africa during the second half of the 19th century, and later a British colony and a province of the Union of South Africa (Source: Wikipedia). It is the historical precursor to the present-day Free State province. Extending between the Orange and Vaal rivers, its borders were determined by the United Kingdom in 1848 when the region was proclaimed as the Orange River Sovereignty, with a seat of a British Resident in Bloemfontein.

In the northern part of the territory a Voortrekker Republic was established at Winburg in 1837. This state merged with the Republic of Potchefstroom which later formed part of the South African Republic (Transvaal).

Following the granting of independence to the Transvaal Republic, the British recognized the independence of the Orange River Sovereignty on 17 February 1854 and the country officially became independent as the **Orange Free State** on 23 February 1854, with the signing of the Orange River Convention. The United States and the Orange Free State mutually recognized each other in 1871. The new republic incorporated both the Orange River Sovereignty and the traditions of the Winburg-Potchefstroom Republic.

Although the Orange Free State developed into a politically and economically successful republic, it experienced chronic conflict with the British until it was finally annexed as the Orange River Colony in 1900. It ceased to exist as an independent Boer republic on 31 May 1902 with the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging at the conclusion of the Second Anglo-Boer War. It joined the Union of South Africa in 1910 (which became the Republic of South Africa in 1961) as a province under its former name, along with the Cape Province, Natal and the Transvaal.

The republic's name derives partly from the Orange River (just as the Transvaal Republic was named after the Vaal River), which in turn was named in honor of the Dutch ruling royal family, the House of Orange, by the Dutch settlers under Robert Jacob Gordon. The official language in the Orange Free State was Dutch.

There is an exclusive study group (<http://www.orangefreestatephilately.org.uk/>) who study the whole range of the philatelic aspects of the country, from 1848 to 1910, including the postage

Meeting Dates & Presentations, 2012

Jan. 10, Mike Francis, Rotary & Flat plate measuring	July 10, Gerry York, South African Homelands
Feb. 14, Mike Francis, Franklin & Washington issues	Aug. 14, Show Your Collection
March 13, Gerry York, Cuba Revolution on stamps	Sept. 11, Hemanth Vasanthaiah
April 10, Mike Francis	Oct. 9, Single Page Exhibit
May 8, Annual Club Auction	Nov. 13, Gerry York, Ex-USSR states
June 12, Mike Francis	Dec. 11, Annual Christmas Party



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NOTICE:

- December 13th was the club's annual Christmas Party. Food and refreshments were provided and members brought dishes and desserts of their choosing. All had a wonderful time.
- The 2011 member survey will be mailed or emailed to each member that did not pick one up at the Christmas party.
- There is a need for more presenters and article writers for the *Postscript*. Email Mike Francis if you can provide an article or give a presentation at a club meeting.
- January 22, 2012, the first class postage rate goes to 45¢. The postcard rate goes to 32¢. There are also other rate changes.
- The 3rd TALPEX will be held on March 24-25, 2012 at the Senior Center. Contact Ed Walters for volunteer assignments.
- We have two new members: Bob and Gerry Mann who live in Tallahassee during the winter months. They are from Kalamazoo, MI. Welcome to the club!

Orange Free State *(con't. from page 1)*

stamps with their postmarks and the rates of postage, the stationery, the revenue and telegraph stamps and the story of the Anglo Boer War with its effect on the Orange Free State and later, the Orange River Colony.

There is a famous quote on Orange Free State Philately by late Robson Lowe: "The study of the stamps of the OFS is an excellent exercise for the brain and a complete panacea for the ills of this troubled world."* This is as true now as it ever was!

Below is a cover with a warning about pre-Union stamps becoming invalid after January 1, 1938.



Further Reading

<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/orange.htm>

<http://www.orangefreestatephilately.org.uk/>

TS&CC Goes Electronic *by Mike Francis*

For the last several issues of the *Postscript* selected members have received their copy as an attachment to their email. After receiving positive feedback about the quality of the issue and its readability, all future issues of the *Postscript* will be emailed to club members as a pdf file. Those members that still do not have email will naturally receive their copy through the USPS. Out of the 46 plus members, 39 members will receive the *Postscript* electronically thus saving the club postage, paper and ink as well as saving the editor from folding, sealing and mailing functions.

The functionality of the electronic issue is immediately noticeable when the reader can click on a web links and have additional information available relating to the article through internet access. Future article writers for the *Postscript* can now use expanded information access to enhance their articles.

Identity Uncovered? by Dr. Mike Francis



To the collector of worldwide issues, identifying this stamp is not that hard. The Latin inscriptions are in Spanish. This means the stamp is either from Spain or one of its colonies, Central America or South America.

The quick and easy way to identify the stamps is to look in *Linn's Stamp Identifier* for the word "Instruccion" and viola. Linn's states that the stamp is a revenue stamp from Venezuela and might have been authorized for postage.

Being "authorized for postage" means that the stamp, although a revenue issue, was used at some point in time for everyday postage delivery.

The next step is to check Scott's catalog pages of Venezuela. As many collectors know, Scott's does not list back-of-the-book information for most countries except for semi-postal, air post, special delivery, postage due and officials. Scott's policy is to only list items that were issued for postal purposes or a combination of postal and some form of revenue collection. Outside the US listings, you generally won't find "R" or revenue listings for any other country. A collector has to search specialty

catalogs.

Next step is to check the Scott Catalog for Venezuela and, using the color images in the SC 2011, find a similar stamp. In 1893, a series of "Instruccion" stamps were issued for the combined purpose of postage and revenue collection for education. Scott image design is A25 but the 5 centimos stamp is gray. Scott does note that, after 1895, A25 design stamps were issued in different colors for revenue purposes only. For all practical purposes, this stamp falls into "after 1895" category.

It can only be assumed that this stamp is a late 1890s revenue issue. Most online sources refer to these stamps as fiscal stamps meant to collect money only for education. Using Google and the internet, it was uncovered that this 5 centimos orange stamp was issued in 1901 and is considered very common in mint condition according to several different websites. The catalog price, mint or used, for this stamp can be estimated to be \$.20 US.

This stamp is classified as R2 in the Stanley Gibbons catalog.

I have evaluated several large collections for two major auction houses this past year which has resulted in a very disturbing finding: many of the so-called valuable stamps were misidentified. I should not be surprised but I was disappointed that collectors do not take the time to correctly identify their stamps. The time-honored collector rule is: if you cannot identify the stamp either have it expertized or assume it is the common, less valuable version.

The most common mistake is the improper identification of the perforations especially between 10½ and 11 perf issues. This article is not being written to pass judgment on any collector, but to raise awareness that mistakes do occur. The best way to get around the incorrect perf identification is to use at least a 3 power magnifying glass when viewing the perforations.

The other major problem is improper color identification. This is a more subtle area of collecting but I have found stamps identified as the "lake" color when it was obvious that the stamp was "carmine." As we all say in the hobby "no big deal" for everyday stamps but it becomes a major issue for stamps being passed off as investment grade when they are actually common issues. Bottom line: be careful when either selling or buying a collection when valuable stamps are involved in the transaction.

Identify This Stamp



See if you can identify this stamp. Its identity will be uncovered in the next issue.

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The Postscript is the quarterly journal of the Tallahassee Stamp and Cover Club. Articles may be reproduced provided credit is given to this publication.

John F. Goble

John's request was that memorial donations on his behalf be made to either the James E. West Endowment Fund, in care of the Boy Scouts of America,, 2032 Thomasville Rd, Tallahassee, FL, 32308-0734; or to the Monsignor William Kerr Memorial Fund @ the Co-Cathedral of St. Thomas More, 900 W Tennessee ST, Tallahassee, FL 32304

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President's Message *from Mike Francis*

Even though we are entering a wonderful time of year, the Christmas holiday season, it is with sadness that we pause and remember the passing of a past president of TS&CC, John Goble, Ph.D., on October 29, 2011. I have had many occasions to discuss the collecting of stamps with John in relation to his work with the Boy Scouts. Scouting was John's passion and our community is better because of this passion. Remember John, his wife Mary and their four children in your prayers and thoughts this holiday season.

For those members who attended the annual Christmas Party, it was a festive event and fun for all. The raffle table contained several valuable stamps and other interesting philatelic

items. The silent auction table also has a nice variety of items and bidding was active through the evening. The club could use more donated items for the raffle because someday my closets will get emptied out (I hope.)

In March, 2012, we will have our third annual TALPEX. This year we will go overboard to advertize the show so the dealers have enough buyers-sellers to keep them coming back to Tallahassee in future years. As always, club members make the show's logistics as smooth as possible and everyone involved in putting on TALPEX should know we are all grateful.

Mike