

white house. (Editors note: no political ads please.)

BUYERS the APS insurance plan manager has asked that we follow the procedure below in the event a mail damaged circuit is received.

Please keep this direction for future reference.

"If a package arrives in damaged condition, the package should be opened in the presence of a postal official and a brief written summary of damage made and signed by both the recipient and postal employee. If a postal employee does not want to accept the responsibility of witnessing

the opening of the package, the package should not be accepted. Instead the postal employee should be instructed to turn the damaged package over to his/her supervisor and recipient should go to the post office and open the package in front of that supervisor and make a written report on damage, signed by postal official and employee.

If the package is damaged and was sent by insured mail, a PS Insured Mail claim form #3812 should be filled out and filed with the post office. All documents on damaged mail should be sent to the circuit manager together with contents of the damaged circuit." ♦

WIN THE JACKPOT WITH STAMPS? (II)

by Pierre Guinand (translated by Ernest L. Bergman from Berner Briefmarken Zeitung 2 1992, page 23)

72 F is a magic catalog number which draws the attention of many philatelists. Since the discovery of this stamp, identified by archivist H. Ritter, the possession of it became the high point in a collection of the Standing Helvetia. The possession of it or even finding it by oneself became the documentation for great philatelic knowledge and nearly a must for receiving a good rating in a national exhibition.

In the year 1977, a large lot of 3 Fr. stamps was sold in Switzerland which was followed by specialists' thorough inspection. On this occasion, a few 72 F were found and various

collectors got a chance to buy this stamp in an auction sale.

Let's consult the catalog. We have a 3 Fr. stamp with yellow-brown color, perforation 11 3/4, (the same as Nr. 72 A of 1891-1900) and with the small control mark (the same as Nr. 72 D and 72 E of 1900-1905). The combination of these two characteristics is therefore the only guide to the identification of the 72 F and hence essential. It is sufficient, however, for the positive classification of this stamp.

These criteria were enlarged by the specialists through further personal research on this issue which added



experienced eye can quickly identify among the common 3 Fr. stamps, a 72 F with perforation $11 \frac{3}{4}$, hence a little bit larger than all the rest of these stamps, blurred print, small control mark and sooner or later with a little bit (or much) of luck one can find such an elusive item.



72Fa



72Fb

that 72 F, which have been identified to date show blurred print and the horizontal lines in the oval are practically invisible and the oval is filled with color. These are the identification marks of the old hand-printing press. One can observe this kind of print having quite a yellowish tint on another frequently found stamp, namely the 72 Da of 1900-1902. The knowledgeable collectors realized quickly that this blurred print and tint could be used for the identification of the 72 F. Indeed the dates of use and the field characteristics indicate that this stamp belongs to the same issue and was printed with the same printing plate. It only differs in the perforation. An

So far so good, but there is more news to report! In the future the specialized collectors have to refine their observations because a 72 F was found which was printed on the new quick-printing press! Therefore, the blurred print can from now on no longer be used as a characteristic for all 72 F. In the future, one must pay attention to the main characteristics which are recorded in the catalog. The 72 F has an $11 \frac{3}{4}$ perforation with a small control mark (II) and that's it. The blurred print, which is still typical for many 72 F, is no longer a specific criterium. We are now forced to admit that 72 F also exists with a very clear and clean print.

The recently found specimen was identified as based on field characteristics to be from field 39 of plate II b. This plate has four times one hundred fields or a total of 400 stamps. Since the perforation occurred in the one-hundred-sheet, at least 100 specimens of this "newly" discovered stamp must exist and in all probability more. The date of cancellation October 28, 1909, as well as the light traces of wear, indicate that it was printed at the same time as 72 Db of 1905 - 1906.

How is it now possible to be sure that we do note have a 72 E? This requires a very deliberate investigation. First of all, the normal differentiation between "E" and "F": the vertical perforation has in both cases 14 teeth, which are by "E" within a perforation of 11 1/2:12 and by "F" 11 3/4:11 3/4.

This would indicate that there exists a small difference in height (see also illustration in the Specialized Catalog on page 90 which facilitates the comparison). Additionally, these illustrated stamps various small characteristics of perforation 11 3/4 of field 39, which is also used for the perforation of 72 A and 89 B of 1906. The sheet reconstruction for the 72 A is practically complete.

It was also possible for me to examine and take pictures of various half-sheets with the 89 B in the archives of the PTT. The arrows in the following illustrations draw attention to the most important irregularities, namely larger teeth, smaller teeth which prove, if proof is still necessary, that this stamp was perforated with the 11 3/4 gauge. A forgery of these small, fine features, combined with those specific to the field, is nearly impossible. ♦

FIRST DAYS OF USE OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND PRE-1945 INTERNATIONAL LABOR OFFICE STAMPS

By Richard Powers. [An update of an article which first appeared in "The Journal of United Nations Philatelists", No. 12-5, p. 56, June 1989 and later appeared in a revised form in "Unopost, UNOP-Zeitschrift für UNO-Philatelie", No. 3-91, p. 26, June 1991.]

Before February 1, 1944 the Swiss Post Office treated its stamps overprinted for use at the League of Nations (SdN) and the International Labor Office (BIT) like philatelic stepchildren. During more than twenty years these stamps were available in mint form for use only on official correspondence.

Collectors had to be satisfied with canceled copies soaked off service covers or with canceled-to-order (CTO's) sold by the Post Offices in Geneva or Bern. The latter can normally be distinguished by the fact that they still have gum and the stamps bear a clean cancel of the post office at the League of Nations in