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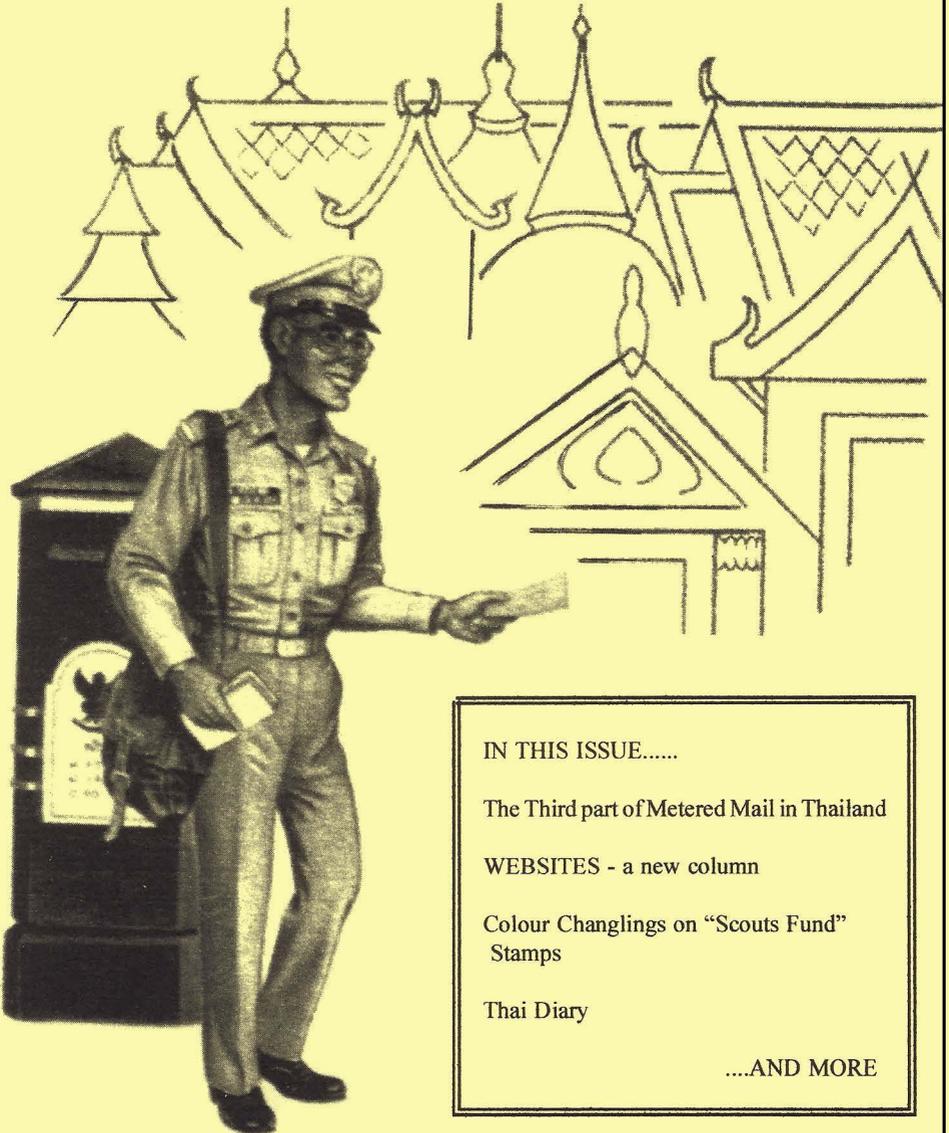


# The Thai Times

JOURNAL OF THE THAILAND PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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Stamps

Thai Diary

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## Colour Changlings of the 1920 “Scout’s Fund” Types I & II Overprinted Postal Cards

Frederick P. Lawrence, Ph.D., FRPSL

In the August 2003 issue of *The Thai Times* Stephen Parker asked about a green-to-blue colour changling of the 3 satang stamp of the 1910 King Rama V ‘Garuda’ issue. Such green-to-blue colour changlings seem not to be unusual for early 20th century Thailand postal products, owing to the corrosive atmosphere of the tropics, which adversely affects paper products. I thought that our readers might like to see some similar colour changlings of the 1920 “Scout’s Fund” Types I & II overprinted postal cards.



1919 Satang Green on Dirty White Postal Card printed by Waterlow & Sons – Type II overprint. This card shows the very rare ‘double overprint’ and ‘almost completely missing head’ errors. Note also the green-to-blue changling.

In 1920 the 3 satang green postal card of the 1919 issue printed by Waterlow & Sons, Ltd., London, and copied from the 1913 Vienna issue, was one of three cards overprinted with both the “Scout’s Fund” Types I & II overprints. The overprints on the 3 satang green postal cards surcharged them +2 satang for the benefit of the Tiger Scouts. The Type I overprints were applied with a rubber handstamp, and the Type II with a copper handstamp [1].

On February 1, 1913 a series of postal cards was issued, which was printed by The Imperial & Royal, Court & State Printing Department of Vienna, Austria. This issue shows the head of King Rama VI (Vajiravudh), and the *indicium* is similar to adhesive stamps issued October 15, 1912, with an inscription and *krut* symbol in red to the left of

the *indicium* and a vertical line on the face of the card, dividing the message space on the left and the address space on the right. In 1918, when a new supply of these cards was needed, Siam was at war with Austria and unable to get cards from Vienna, so they were ordered from Waterlow & Sons, Ltd., London, with instructions to duplicate as nearly as possible the design of the Vienna cards. In June, 1919 the copied cards were issued. The series included a 3 satang green on a dirty white card. The Waterlow cards differ from the Vienna cards in two ways: the Waterlow imprint appears in the lower left corner of these cards, and the vertical dividing line is missing from the face of these cards. [2]



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Figure 1 and 2 show mint 1919 Waterlow 3 satang green on dirty white cards with 'Scout's Fund' Type I and II overprints, and Figures 3 and 4 show green-to-blue colour changlings of these cards, respectively. Figure 5 shows a green-to-blue colour changling of the Type II overprinted card, with the 'double overprint' and 'almost completely missing head' errors.

Technically speaking, we should probably call these cards 'sulfuretted' or 'oxidized', instead of 'colour changlings'. L.N. Williams distinguishes between these terms as follows [3]:

**Colour changling:** This term is used to designate a stamp of which the colour has undergone a permanent change to another colour range since printing, because one constituent or more of the ink has been dissolved, either fortuitously or otherwise. Such colour changlings occur either by exposure to light or because the stamp has been placed in a liquid or subjected to certain fumes or heat.

**Sulfuretted:** Combined chemically with sulfur. In stamps, sulfuretting occurs if lead in one of the constituents of the printer's ink becomes changed, in the course of time, to lead sulfide by action of the atmosphere; this causes the original colour, usually blue, green, red or yellow, to become brown or black. The term 'oxidized' is sometimes a misnomer for 'sulfuretted'.

The corrosive atmosphere of the tropics oxidized not just the green *indicia* of these dirty white cards, but the entire cards, turning the *indicia* to blue and the card stock to brown. If these cards had stayed longer in country before being passed to collectors outside of Siam, they would have continued oxidizing until they became a very dark brown.

The 1910 King Rama V 'Garuda' was printed by Messrs. Giesecke & Devrient, in Leipzig, Austria [4]. Although the 'Garuda' issue was printed in Leipzig in 1910 and the Rama VI cards were copied in London in 1919, the green inks used for the 3 satang values were very likely quite similar, and so both oxidized in the same way in the tropics, resulting in similar blue-to-green colour changlings.

Endnotes:

[1] 'The Tiger Scout Stamps' in *The Bangkok Times*, February 23, 1920. Reprinted in *The Bangkok Times Weekly Mail*, March 1, 1920 (Vol. XXIV, No. 9), p. 1.

[2] Linnemann, Henry S. *The Postal Stationery of Siam 1883-1935*, American Philatelist Handbook, Series 1938, No. 2, Whole No. 4, pp. 17, 21-23.

[3] Williams, L.N., *Fundamentals of Philately*. American Philatelic Society Handbook, Revised Edition, 1990, pp. 600, 604.

[4] The Siam Philatelic Society, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Postage Stamps and Post-and Letter-Cards of Siam Issued during the years 1883 to 1919*, Bangkok, 1920, pp 70-71.

[In the next issue of The Thai Times, Vol. XLVI, No. 2 (August 2004), the editor acknowledged that there had been some difficulty in accurately reproducing the color illustrations for this article. A free, 4 x 6" standalone insert was included entitled "Replacement Illustrations - Thai Times April 2004 - pages 14 & 15". The SOSSI webmaster has replaced the 5 images in this article with improved versions while producing this pdf.]

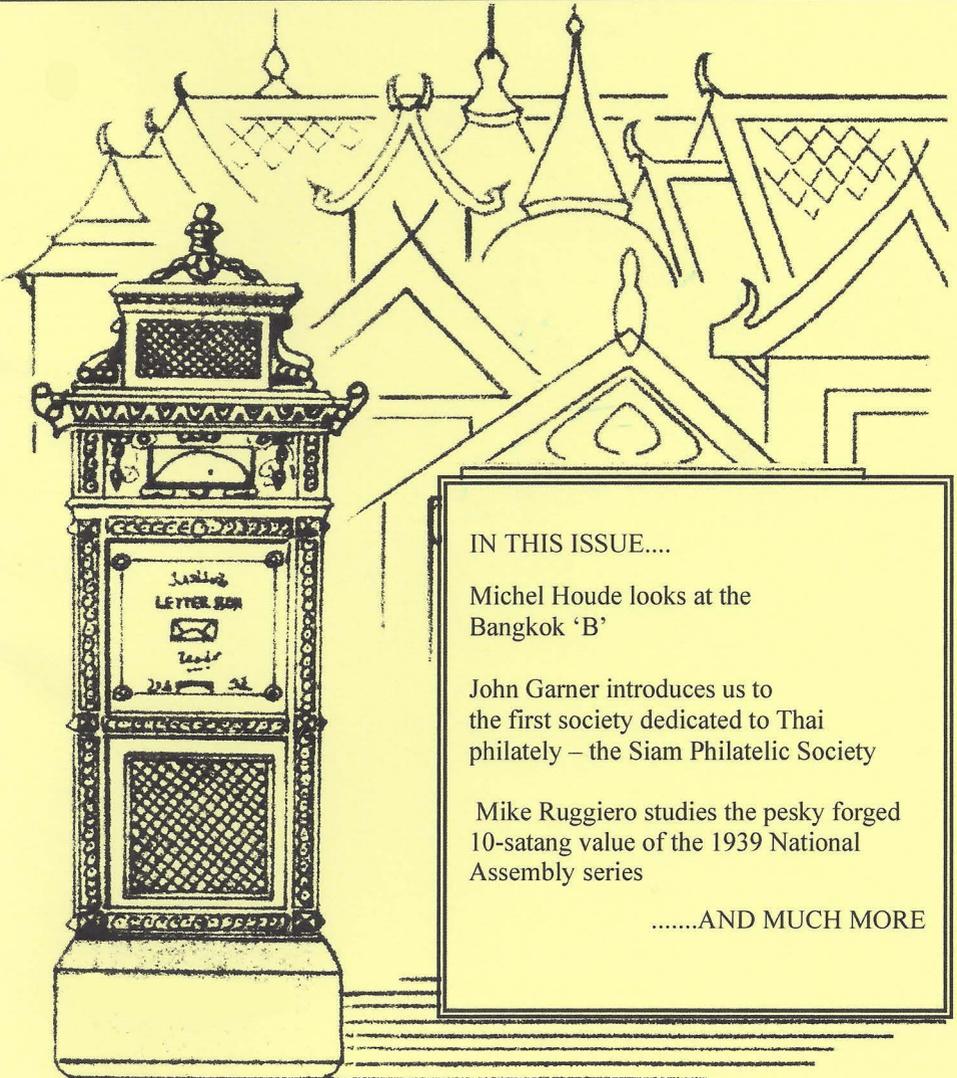


# The Thai Times

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IN THIS ISSUE....

Michel Houde looks at the Bangkok 'B'

John Garner introduces us to the first society dedicated to Thai philately – the Siam Philatelic Society

Mike Ruggiero studies the pesky forged 10-satang value of the 1939 National Assembly series

.....AND MUCH MORE

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**FOLLOW UP****Postcards of Thai Participation in Foreign Fairs and Expositions**

Frederick Lawrence focusses on the Seattle World's Fair in T.P. McDermott's article [December 2007 number]

The image of the real-photo postcard of 'The Boulevards of the World' at the 1962 Century 21 Exposition in Seattle [Seattle World's Fair] in T.P. McDermott's article, "Postcards of Thai Participation in Foreign Fairs and Expositions" in the December 2007 issue of *The Thai Times* brought back memories from 45 years ago. In 1962 I was 15 years old, and had been collecting Scouts on stamps for two years, having started with the Boy Scouts stamp collecting merit badge while working for my Eagle Scout rank. In the late summer of 1962 my father took a job with the Boeing Co., and we moved to Seattle, Washington from central Pennsylvania. When we arrived in Seattle, the World's Fair had about two weeks left before its scheduled closing. Sensing that I might not have another opportunity to see a world's fair for some time to come (to date I have not yet been to another), I rode on the bus system one hour each way from our new home in southeast Seattle to the fair grounds north of downtown, on several days, determined to see as much of the fair as I could before it closed.

In promotional material for the fair, I read that there was a display of stamps at the Thai pavilion. I determined to go there, in the hopes of seeing some real 1920 Scouts overprints. Up to that time I had only see pictures of these overprints in catalogues and

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philatelic publications. So, during one of my visits to the fair, I hiked out to 'The Boulevards of the World' which were located in the far northwest corner of the fair site, just behind the Opera House. I located the Thai pavilion, entered, and spotted the prominent display of colourful, mostly modern Thai stamps, which had been lent for display by a Mrs Rose E. Nortum of Seattle, a name that I did not recognise.

not to see older, rare Siam stamps, especially the Scouts overprints, I left the pavilion, and promptly forgot the experience.

Less than a year later, in his 'Topical Themes' column in the June 1963 issue of *The American Philatelist*, David Torres wrote about "Thailand's Scout's Fund Overprints" (pp. 679-680). The information in his article, he wrote in a preface, was

"... supplied by Mrs R.E. Nortum of Seattle, Washington, who owns one of the finest collections of Thailand in existence. Part of her collection was on display at the Seattle World's Fair from August 1, 1962, until the closing day. As the only private collector with an exhibit at the Fair, Mrs Nortum can be justly proud of this once-in-a-lifetime honour."

Bingo! Now I knew who Mrs Rose Nortum was! And, illustrated in the article were the famous le May cover, bearing the six Type I Scout overprints, postmarked from Ban Pong on February 4, 1920, the first day the overprints were authorised for postal use, and a mint postal card with Type III overprint. I drooled all over the article's illustrations.



Fast forward 17 years to 1980. I was then an officer in the US Air Force, assigned to a facility in El Segundo, California. That year Mrs Nortum began the sale of her stamp

collection. And one of the first pieces she offered for sale was none-other than the le May cover. She sought estimates of its value from auctioneer George Alevizos, whose office was then located in Santa Monica, and Dr. Carlos Swanson, who was living in Loma Linda. When I heard that the le May cover was on offer, I called Mrs Nortum in Seattle. I was completely unknown to her, so I introduced myself to her over the phone by saying that I had gone to high school in Seattle from 1962 to 1965, and I had seen her display of stamps at the Thai pavilion at the Seattle World's Fair in 1962. She seem genuinely surprised that anyone would remember having seen her stamps there, and thanked me profusely for my mentioning this to her, 18 years later. After a brief negotiation, I bought the le May cover from her. [Illustrated on preceding page] It is still in my collection today, and is one of the high points in the Siam "Scout's Fund" overprints section of my current competitive exhibit.

After her death, the remainder of her stamp collection was sold in Hong Kong at auction by PHILA CHINA (part of Greg Manning Galleries) on 26 April 2003. There were five mint postal cards with Scouts overprints. [The remaining four are shown on the next page.] I have no doubt that one of these was the card illustrated in the 1963 *American Philatelist* article. If I had had access to additional funds back in 1980, I would have tried



to buy her postal cards with Scouts overprints, too – but alas, that was not to have been. After the PHILA CHINA auction, I learned that a Scouts collector, who himself lives in Hong Kong, bought some of the five postal cards. The whereabouts of the remaining postal cards from her collection are as yet unknown to me.

All of these memories, triggered by a real photo postcard from the 1962 Seattle World's Fair! In your wanderings over the Internet, if you should see another of these postcards, please let me know. I'd like to have one, not only as a souvenir of my visits to the fair, but also as a reminder of Rose Nortum and my acquisition of the famous le May

cover from her, which was clearly enabled by my having briefly stopped by the Thai pavilion to see her display of stamps at the 1962 Seattle World's Fair.



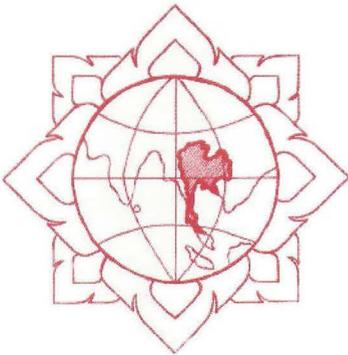


# The Thai Times

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## IN THIS NUMBER....

John Garner discusses his 'pathetic' cover, illustrated above and on the back cover.

Derek Burrows gets the low down and the length of Patrol Boat Tor 991.

Geoff Farrier finally tells the story of Captain Jones

Del Smith brings us up to date with what's new at Thailand Post.

.....AND MUCH MORE

## SCOUT-FRANKED EARLY SIAM AIR MAIL COVERS

In his "Aviation in Siam - The Early Years - Part 3" article in the April 2009 issue of *The Thai Times*, Geoff Farrier illustrates five early Siam air mail covers. When you thumb through the five parts of Nils Ramm-Erickson's *Airmails of Siam*, you see many more early Siam air mail covers. A large number of these covers were philatelically inspired and/or prepared by dealers, such as M. Savat Konchanath, The Oriental Stamp Co., and C. J. Chan. Many of these covers are colourfully franked with multiple low-value stamps, often from issues released years before their use on the covers. This can be understood on the basis of two considerations. First, the covers were created for stamp collectors, who strongly favour colourful, multiple-stamp frankings. Second, the dealers were using up remaining stocks of low-value stamps from earlier issues, after the lower-quantity higher values had been exhausted making up complete sets - stamps which we would today call "discount postage."

Our member, Frederick Lawrence, is a Scouts-on-stamps collector in the USA. His interest in Thai philately begins with the 1920 "Scout's Fund" overprints. He points out that since there were higher quantities of the lower-value overprints produced, there should have been small quantities of some of the lower-value overprints in dealers' stocks during the period of early Siam air mail, some of which found their way into multiple-stamp frankings on air mail covers. Since the surcharges for the Scouts were high, relative to the face values of the stamps, few overprints were used for postage on covers. So, Scouts-on-stamps collectors like Frederick scour the auctions and dealer stocks for early Siam airmail covers franked in part or in total with "Scout's Fund" overprints.

Frederick has kindly compiled a list of Scout-franked early Siam air mail covers in his "Scouting On Stamps 'Classics'" exhibit:

| "Scout's Fund"<br>Overprint Type | Date                  | Franking   | Description   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| Type I                           | December 30,<br>1930  | 2s+3s, 3s+2s,<br>15s+5s, & three<br>other stamps | Registered,<br>second round-trip Bangkok-Hanoi<br>Goodwill Flight<br>(expertized Holcombe)  |
|                                  | August 26,<br>1931    | 5s(on 6s)+5s &<br>five other stamps              | Registered,<br>first flight inaugurating contract air<br>mail, Korat and Udorn<br>(expertized RPSL)                                   |
|                                  | September 24,<br>1931 | 15s+5s & one<br>other stamp                      | Registered,<br>French Bangkok-Marseilles air mail<br>service, addressed to E.C. Monod,<br>President of the Siam Philatelic<br>Society |

| "Scout's Fund"<br>Overprint Type | Date                | Franking   | Description   |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|--|---|
| Type II                          | May 2,<br>1925      | Full set   | Nagor Rajasima to Ubol,<br>addressed to<br>N. Lamchiek Konchanath,<br>c/o The Siam Dispensary   |
|                                  | June 28,<br>1927    | 2s+3s, 5s+5s,<br>10s(on 12s)+5s,<br>& 15s+5s     | Unofficial mail carried on the second<br>Dutch trial flight between Amsterdam<br>and Batavia, with<br>Don Muang Aerodrome cancel            |
| Type III                         | May 2,<br>1925      | Blocks of four of<br>2s+3s & 3s+2s               | Nagor Rajasima to Ubol,<br>addressed to<br>Mrs. M. Frankford,<br>c/o The Siam Dispensary  |
|                                  | October 2,<br>1928  | 10s+5s &<br>25s+25s                              | Inauguration of Bangkok- Marseilles-<br>London service, by air over latter leg,<br>addressed to C.J. Chan,<br>c/o a correspondent in London |
|                                  | May 21,<br>1931     | Strip of four<br>50s+30s & one<br>other stamp    | Registered,<br>French Bangkok-Marseilles air mail serv-<br>ice, addressed to E.C. Monod, President<br>of the Siam Philatelic Society        |
|                                  | October<br>26, 1937 | 3s+2s, 5s+5s,<br>15s+5s, & three<br>other stamps | Registered,<br>Bangkok to Sourabaja, Netherlands In-<br>dies, KLM air mail etiquette  |

Frederick also has an underlying genuine December 30, 1933 first return flight via Imperial Airways, Bangkok-Athens air mail cover, with forged Type I overprints applied to two stamps (expertised APS), which suggests that forgers also understand how "Scout's Fund" overprints can appear on air mail covers. Frederick's list is not a statistically valid sample, but rather just those covers which he has been able to acquire for his exhibit since the early 1970s. He reports that he has passed on a couple other covers, franked with Type III overprints, because they didn't fit into his exhibit. When these are taken together with the covers in the list, the proportions of the three types of "Scout's Fund" overprints on early Siam airmail covers appear roughly in line with the believed-issued quantities of the overprints.