

From the Stamp Specialist:

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RUSSIAN ZEMSTVOS

A Compendium of Existing Information With Additional Information Based on Original Research

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FOREWORD

The Russian Zemstvo stamps open an intensely fascinating study for the serious philatelist. Unlike United States Postmasters' Provisionals, Scandinavian locals, Swiss hotel adhesives and kindred quasi-official stamps, Zemstvos served a legitimate postal duty so nothing could be more erroneous than depriving them of catalogue listing

A century ago Russia was as unknown as our wild west, yet portions of that vast land had postal routes as early as 1290. During the last half of the nineteenth century the rural districts (Zemstvos) inaugurated a service to complement that of the Imperial Government. Some prepared stamps; others did not. Records indicate that approximately 3,000 different major varieties of stamps have been issued.

The finest privately built collection of Zemstvos was completed by Agathon Fabergé, a wealthy jeweler who lived in St. Petersburg during the glorious days of the Russian Empire. (See Figs. 1-4, p. 22 & p. 34 for examples from the Faberge Collection.)

In about 1917, when the revolution terrorized the capital, Fabergé fled to Finland with what stamps and diamonds he could carry, to seek a new home. As his finances diminished one collection after another was sold through a syndicate of London bankers. Most of my nine-volume collection of Zemstvos consists of the Fabergé lot. The rest of it came from a large accumulation sold in London, in 1940.

My collection consists of 8,704 items, including minor varieties, full sheets, covers, etc. Among them are a number of specimens which neither my co-worker, Christian L. Dull, nor have I been able to find listed in any of the standard works or auction catalogues.¹

Some of the Zemstvos are extremely rare. As early as 1870, single items fetched around \$200. In 1890, \$600 was paid for single specimens, while in the aforementioned London sale of 1940, \$125 was paid for a three-kopek of Lokhvitzá, and \$75 for a 20-kopek, Yelisavetgrad.

This article is written as a direct tribute to Agathon Fabergé. I have known him personally, and perhaps will meet him again. He was unquestionably the greatest philatelic scholar I have ever met and am happy to know that the stamps he studied so seriously should have been the means of providing an income after his fortune was swept away in Russia.

In closing, I should like to express my appreciation to Ernest A. Kehr, for valuable assistance rendered in the selection and photography of the illustrated material.

¹ The following items are in my collection yet are not listed elsewhere:

- a. BOROVICHY, 1878, blue and black (catalogues list only green and black.)
- b. BUGULMA, 1904-1907, without surcharged control number.
- c. GLAZOV, 1898, block showing stamps printed sideways, also same type in large format.
- d. STARAYA RUSSA, 5 Kopek, proof impressions. (See Fig. 5, p. 23)
- e. STAROBYELSK, 1893-1895, 3 Kopek, imperforate.
- f. TIKHVIN, 1887, 3 Kopek with double row of horizontal perforations.
- g. ZYENKOV, 1898, 3 Kopek without period after "3."

IN ALL philately there are no adhesives which afford the serious student more opportunities for original research, the basis for highly specialized collections, and limitless hunting grounds, and yet these colorful, interesting stamps have been all but neglected by but a few philatelists.

The omission of a listing of Zemstvo stamps of Russia in the catalogues is a matter of no small amazement to the advanced collector when he considers the postal and historical background of these adhesives which served an actual postal duty. The "Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue," annually issued by Scott Publications, Inc., lists and prices the adhesives of Wenden but neglects all the other Zemstvos in spite of a policy which purports to chronicle "every recognized adhesive postage stamp ever issued by any government. . . ."

[Scott continues to list Wenden in back-of-the-book Russia, but not the Zemstvos issues. See Fig. 6 page 23. JFD.]

There can be but two explanations which might justify the catalogue editors' stand in omitting these Zemstvos. There is so little generally known information pertaining to this large group of stamps that the average collector is not sufficiently interested in them to devote in an already bulky volume, the effort, type and paper necessary. Or perhaps the editors, with a shrug of the shoulder, simply dismiss them as locals and let it go at that without even desiring to weigh the evidence that they are considerably different than "locals" of the United States and many foreign nations.

Notwithstanding scholars' general acceptance of the fact, Zemstvos really and actually were a part of the Imperial Russian Postal System.

The Imperial Government in Russia had established mail routes as early as 1290, to collect and deliver communications in the larger settlements along them, although the small villages and towns in the districts beyond the mail routes had no means of benefitting from this service. The mail—what little of it there was—usually lay around way stations for weeks, months and even years.

Around 1860, Imperial Russia was divided into thirty-six administrative provinces which might be compared to our states. These, in turn, were subdivided into 371 rural districts not unlike our counties, and called Uyezdy.

The ancient postal service, established nearly 600 years before, was operating rather effectively for the afore-mentioned larger communities. Regular adhesive stamps had been introduced in 1857, and imprinted envelopes and other postal stationery preceded the adhesives. The Zemstvos, however, were without service until they decided to handle their own between their towns and the points where they could meet the Imperial Post Roads. Alexander II, in 1864, signed an authorization to enable the Zemstvos to begin this rural postal service and from that date until the end of the World War the stamps of the Zemstvos were in circulation and use.

This authorization was very limited, even contradictory, but it was the nucleus of a bright future, and during those first decades, the Zemstvos' service enjoyed such rapid progress that wider and more far-reaching powers were granted by the Imperial Government.

Previous restrictions were eliminated so that a more harmonious cooperation between the rural and the Imperial system was effected. By 1870, a decree, called "Ukaz" by the Russians, was enacted to grant wider rights to the Zemstvos. Its major stipulations were:

1. Anyone wishing to avail himself of the Zemstvo Post's service had to obtain a written order of authorization from the Board of the Local Council. (This restriction was withdrawn in 1888.)

2. The Rural Post must not infringe upon the Imperial Postal Service proper.

3. The Zemstvo mail pouches must not bear the crossed posthorns which are the symbol of the Imperial Postal Service.

4. The Zemstvo postage stamps must differ in design from the adhesive used by the Imperial Post.

Between 1864 and 1870, twenty-nine of the thirty-six governments already had started Zemstvo posts and these were operated with a fair degree of success



This map and separate maps by regions can be accessed at <http://www.rossia.com/stamps/zemstvos/zemregions.htm>

LIST OF ZEMSTVO GOVERNMENTS

I	Olonets	XIX	Ryazan
II	St. Petersburg	XX	Tambov
III	Pskov	XXI	Penza
IV	Novgorod	XXII	Simbirsk
V	Vologda	XXIII	Samara
VI	Tver	XXIV	Chern
VII	Yaroslav	XXV	Orel
VIII	Kostroma	XXVI	Kursk
IX	Vyatka	XXVII	Voronezh
X	Perm	XXVIII	Saratov
XI	Smolensk	XXIX	Poltava
XII	Moscow	XXX	Kharkov
XIII	Vladimir	XXXI	Bessarabia
XIV	Nizhny Novgorod	XXXII	Kherson
XV	Kazan	XXXIII	Yekaterinoslav
XVI	Ufa	XXXIV	Taurida
XVII	Kaluga	XXXV	Don
XVIII	Tula	XXXVI	Livonia (Wenden)

in spite of restrictions and obstacles. After the Ukaz was passed progress was rapid and almost universal throughout European Russia.

Gradually the officials in charge of the Imperial Post discovered that the Zemstvos were in fact an asset to their system, consequently encouraged existing ones to expand, and others to inaugurate new routes.

The officials of the Zemstvos' service were primarily small land owners, professional men and teachers and the service was operated entirely as a convenience for the people.

In many cases these postal services were operated free of charge, but even in cases where a small fee was levied, such income as was derived from the sale of stamps rarely covered the expenses of the post. The heaviest expense, naturally, was the salaries of the clerks and post riders, since the officials worked on a "dollar-a-year" basis.

A letter mailed within one Zemstvo and addressed to any part of that rural district required only the Zemstvo stamp. A piece of mail sent from one Zemstvo to another required three stamps: one to carry it from the first Zemstvo to the Imperial route, one to carry it over the Imperial route, and one to carry it thence to the address within the second Zemstvo.(Figs. 7-8, p. 23)

That these Zemstvo services served a very useful purpose is best understood when we realize that Imperial Russia in Europe alone covered 2,250,000 square miles! One of the Russian Provincial Governments, Vologda, alone covered 155,000 square miles and had a population of 1,366,000 inhabitants.

Like many parts of our own United States at that time, it took the Russians a long time to penetrate isolated regions of their vast empire. Some territory bordering on Siberia might just as well have been in another world, so vastly different were the people and their customs, their civilization and their land's topography.

We have the statements of historians to testify to the value of this Zemstvo service in developing Russia, but as this is a philatelic monograph we are more concerned with its stamps and that is an entirely different matter, for there are many contradicting statements pertaining to the actual number of stamps that were issued by the Zemstvos between 1865 and 1917, and to the actual number of Zemstvos that availed themselves of the right to issue them. We, (I, Dull & Kehr) carefully checked the published handbooks and articles on the subject and then compared the information contained in them with descriptions of Zemstvo stamps offered at auction since these works were published and found no small number of discrepancies. And then checking all these sources against the nine-volume collection we have built after many years of hunting for these elusive and neglected adhesives, we found additional specimens that were mentioned nowhere else. (First Zemstvos stamp, Fig. 9, page 24.)

This really is not as surprising as it may seem at first, for in the field of Zemstvos the philatelic researcher is not confined merely by a quest for knowledge and original study. It still is open to the hunting for unrecorded specimens.

As a rule the officials of the Zemstvo Posts were either reticent or suspicious, or both, unwilling to disclose information pertaining to their business. For

more than forty years prior to the cessation of Zemstvo service collectors and dealers sought to obtain specimens or information relating directly to them right from the officials themselves. All but a few such requests were completely ignored so that contemporary factual information is non-existent.

Very often the system by which the various Zemstvos were operated was so primitive that even up to recent years, no local postal records were maintained so that research in this direction is futile. There simply was nothing to discover. In many cases no specimens of the issues had been submitted for reference to St. Petersburg. (See Fig. 10 page 24 for a rare philatelic exception.)

Orders, submitted by philatelists, were more often refused than filled. There are records of instances where whole sheets were ordered by dealers, but where only a single specimen was supplied.

Other Zemstvo regulations made it necessary for a person wishing to mail a letter to bring the letter to the office, pay for the fee and allow the clerk to affix the stamp so that at no time was the stamp handed to the person who paid for it.

There is one case on record where a collector, after waiting a long time for these Zemstvos, instead of getting his stamps, received a call from a Secret Police representative who investigated the "strange request for postage stamps." He was compelled to prove that he was not connected with a sinister plot to overthrow the empire and when he displayed his albums, catalogues and other philatelic accessories as evidence, he was proclaimed a lunatic!

What we do know about Zemstvos now represents the quiltwork of scraps of data gathered by students and investigators through the years.

Foreign collectors and dealers—German, English and French—were more interested in the Zemstvos than were the native Russian philatelists.

The first monograph on these stamps was published by J. B. Moens of Brussels, in 1875. It was called, "Les Timbres Postes Ruraux de Russie." At about the same time Edward L. Pemberton's "The Stamp Collector's Handbook," a serially published philatelic reference guide, devoted some fifty pages to listings and illustrations, although no prices were quoted for any individual specimens. Another study of the Zemstvos was written by Dr. John Edward Gray as part of his "Catalogue of Postage Stamps." The foremost English reference source is W. Herrick's "Catalogue of Russian Rural Stamps." Stanley Gibbons also treated this fascinating subject in a special catalogue published in London in 1899.

The Germans devoted considerable time and effort to Zemstvos in their philatelic literature. In 1880 Lubkert's work was published. In 1895, P. Treskow's "Katalog der russischen Zemstvo Postwertzeichen" appeared as a serial feature of the "Austrian Philatelist."

This work, unfortunately never was completed. It treats the Zemstvos in alphabetical order and only goes as far as the Bogorodsk issues of 1891. Philip Kossack published his "Preiskatalog de Postwertzeichen der Russischen Landschaftsaemter" in Berlin in 1912:

Russian literature on Zemstvos was inaugurated by D. Chudnovski's "The Description of Russian Zemstvo Stamps, Envelopes and Wrappers," published

at Kiev in 1888. It contains no illustrations or prices so it is of little reference value.

Russian philatelic study of the Zemstvos was limited to the activities carried on by the members of the St. Petersburg branch of the Dresden Philatelic Society in about 1881. F. L. Breitfuss, who with Agathon Fabergé, were two of the wealthiest Russian philatelists, became president of this study circle and began extensive correspondence with Zemstvo officials in his quest for data pertaining to their stamps. Notwithstanding the numerous difficulties he encountered in this search such answers as he received were later turned over to the society as the nucleus for published works.

G. R. Kirchner, vice-president of the St. Petersburg group, and E. S. Lenz, its secretary, made an actual study of the stamps, and ordered specimens from the various Zemstvos for distribution to members of the Dresden Philatelic Society. It was about this time that C. C. Schmidt and Fabergé entered upon their studies of these adhesives.

After the death of Breitfuss and the retirement of Lenz, Schmidt was elected president and one L. L. Breitfuss (probably the son of F. L.), was made secretary. Under their direction members continued to be supplied with such Zemstvo stamps as could be obtained. Later the society was reorganized to form the nucleus of what became the Russian Philatelic Society of St. Petersburg.

Another group of serious students like E. van der Beeck, A. G. Goldstege, Sievert, Hornung and Albert Steidel held forth in Moscow.

The material accumulated by the aforementioned philatelists enabled Schmidt and Fabergé to issue a catalogue in 1914, published in German at St. Petersburg called "Die Postwertzeichen der russischen Landschaftsaemter," the most complete and thorough study of the stamps yet attempted. (From letters A to L—partly complete). The publication was discontinued on account of the outbreak of the World War.

In 1925, The Moscow Philatelic Society published a book based on this work but is a condensation up to the letter L. The rest of the alphabet is a complete, independent work.

The following parts were lost to posterity when, during the Russian revolution, commissars enjoyed a reign of destruction. They burned all books which they could not understand or appreciate. It is known, for example, that many works of Schmidt and Fabergé, written in German, and some of their precious stamp collections, were used to heat the abode of Theodore Sollogou, a prominent Russian man of letters, in 1917.

Most of the Zemstvos' stamps were made either by lithography or typography—recess or intaglio engraving was not used at all—and the specimens in any representatively complete collection run the gamut of graphic art, from the crudest blob of inky form to the most ornately designed vignette and exquisitely printed product.

The vast difference in the quality of adhesives depended primarily upon the cultural development of the district by which they were issued. A poor community with a large population of illiterates usually issued a crude label—most often the simple impression of a handstamp on a wide variety of papers. (See pp. 28-32 for a range of issues from primitive to ornate designs.)

A wealthy, progressive and industrious Zemstvo usually had stamps embodying skillful designing and highly artistic reproduction, not infrequently in a myriad of colors and sometimes, embossing as well.

In not a few instances the stamps of Russia and other foreign countries served as models by local artists who lacked the ability to create original designs. These copies are so similar to the original specimens that at a distance they might be recognized as Bavarian, Hungarian, Danish, Swiss or Icelandic stamps. The plagiarism was so close that only the inscriptions and figures of value were altered to produce the Zemstvos.

Naturally, not every district had facilities to produce their own stamps and had to order their stamps elsewhere.

The State Printing Works of the Imperial Government in St. Petersburg was of course in a position to handle the printing orders from Zemstvos better than the small local print shops in the outposts of the empire. They first made rather attractive stamps for Ardatof and Bakhmut, and later used the same designs for stamps of other Zemstvos printed by the same government works. The basic design was retained and only the inscriptions were altered to satisfy local needs, recalling the practice introduced by de la Rue, London, firm when it used the familiar Victoria, Edward and George "key plates" for different British colonies. (See Figs. 11-13, page 24.)

These standard designs were very carefully prepared and portions of them were embossed to add to the stamps' attractiveness. While this method was practical, since fine stamps could be obtained at low prices from St. Petersburg, it was not always possible for an outlying Zemstvo to obtain necessary stamps in time because of the slow transportation facilities or a rush of work at the Government Printing Works. Not infrequently a supply did not arrive in time, necessitating the local production of provisional issues. This condition accounts for a crude issue sandwiched between two exquisitely-made sets, or the overprinting of obsolete issues, supplies of which were on hand. But then again, this is nothing new in philatelic history, the classic sample of which is found in the Cape of Good Hope woodblocks. (See Figs. 14-16, page 25.)

The multitude of minor varieties of locally-produced Zemstvo stamps which the philatelist can distinguish, can hardly be attributed to a desire of exploiting collectors, in view of the reticence of Zemstvo officials in supplying even single copies of their stamps to anyone residing beyond the district.

It is logical to suppose that these minor varieties were caused by either the carelessness of printers or the limited supplies of type fonts in small communities. In making up the printing surface for a sheet of two-kopec stamps, for instance, the printer and the Zemstvo officials were interested only in getting stamps that were correctly inscribed, and which had the appropriate figure of value prominently displayed. The fact that one or more figure-slugs were of a different type font was immaterial to them. A philatelist might be concerned with such trivialities as whether the third stamp of a pane had no period after the figure, or whether laid or wove or quadrille paper was used, but to the persons connected with the Zemstvo postal service, all that mattered was whether a customer could determine the face value of the stamp. (See page Figs. 17-18, p. 25 for examples of crude printings.)

We have already mentioned the stipulation that no Zemstvo stamps might bear any resemblance to adhesives of the Imperial Russian Post. This was a particularly important regulation in the beginning. An entire supply of Melitopol stamps was confiscated because Imperial officials felt the similarity was too close.

Later this regulation was not rigidly enforced. Therefore we see a strong similarity between Russian stamps and those of Bugulma, Morshansk and Buguruslan, except that the colors were different. (See Fig.12, page 24.)

According to research and investigation carried out since the writer began an active interest in Zemstvo stamps, he had determined that about 3,000 major varieties were issued by this postal service in rural Russian communities. In addition to adhesives, some of the Districts had postal stationery, specimens of which are an important adjunct to a collection.

Naturally it would be impossible to enumerate here all the varieties found among the Zemstvo stamps, but that the collector who never has known anything about their fascination may be introduced to the possibilities in studying them, the writer lists a few unusual items, selected at random.

The 1874 issue of Tikhvin is probably the most unusual example of inexperienced workmanship. The person who made the handstamp from which these were produced carved the design as he expected to see it in the finished stamp. His surprise probably was no less startling than that of collectors who see the stamps today, for here is a stamp in which the vignette and all inscription are in reverse so that they must be held to a mirror in order to become legible. (See Fig.19, page 26.)

The scarcity of paper and/or printing facilities is responsible for many odd-looking sheets of many early issues. Five, six, eight or ten stamp designs were made up and used as a printing surface. In the printing of them a sheet of paper was fed into the press so that the impression was made near one edge; the paper then was shifted and a second impression struck off, and so on until the entire sheet of paper was impressed with stamp designs. (See Fig. 17, p. 25.)

Sometimes in making the second, third or fourth impression the sheet was turned around to produce tête-bêche pairs. Three rows of normally printed stamps and one row, placed sideways is not unusual.

Some of the Zemstvos added control numbers to the stamps to simplify bookkeeping records. These were added to the stamps either when the stamps were made (by surcharging the stamps) or later, when the necessary figures were added by pen in blank spaces left on the design for that purpose. (Fig. 20)

Another method of controlling the number of stamps sold by clerks was the introduction of counterfoil issues. These really are two-panel stamps, printed se-tenant and representing at once a stamp to be affixed to a letter and a "receipt" to be retained by the clerk to help him figure how much money he should have in his till at the end of a fiscal period. (See Fig. 21, p. 26)

In some instances the stamps of various denominations were printed from the same plate or stone, not unlike the Bull's Eyes of Brazil, so that it is possible to get a sheet comprising one and two-kopec adhesives printed in the same color, and se-tenant to each other. (See Fig. 22, p. 26)

The first Zemstvo was opened in the Vetluga District of the Kostroma Province; the first adhesives were issued in September, 1865.

Up to 1870, the Zemstvos had not been fully legalized, nevertheless about twenty districts had opened their own postoffices and were regularly selling stamps. The following is one tabulation of the Zemstvos' postal history by decades:

	<i>Number of districts having stamps</i>	<i>Number of major varieties issued</i>
1865-1869	30	53
1870-1879	102	433
1880-1889	92	469
1890-1899	94	793
1900-1909	70	331
1910-1917	48	348
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	436	2,427

In conclusion, the writer expresses the hope that this compendium of previously discovered information, spiced with originally conducted investigations, will spur and encourage other collectors to take a more serious interest in these postage stamps, that someday, perhaps, all philately will be able to know all there is to know about them. (See Fig. 23, page 27 for a recent discovery.)

Too long have Zemstvo stamps been neglected; they will never have the popularity of such classics as Swiss cantonals, full length Victorias, Cape triangles and Canadian pence issues; nor the investment appeal of Trans-Mississippi's or 1847's, but that they have all the other qualifications to recommend them to a genuine philatelic *student* is a foregone conclusion!

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English

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- "Illustrated Catalogue of Postage Stamps," by Dr. John Edward Gray.
- "Catalogue of the Russian Rural Stamps," by W. Herrick. Date of original printing unknown, but the Scott Stamp and Coin Company's edition was published in 1896.
- "Local Stamps and Russian Zemstvos," by Stanley Gibbons, Ltd., 1899.

German

- "Russische Postwertzeichen," by Lubkert, 1885.
- "Katalog der russischen zemstvo Postwertzeichen," P. Treskow, 1895. This work was published serially in the "Austrian Philatelist," but goes only as far as the Bogorodsk issues of 1891.
- "Prieskatalog der Postwertzeichen der russischen Landschaftaemter," Philip Kosack, 1912.

Russian

- "The Description of Russian Zemstvo Stamps, Envelopes and Wrappers," by D. Chudnovsky, 1888. This work lacks illustrations and prices.
- "Zemstvo Stamps of the Poltava District," P. P. Ganko, 1914.
- "Russian Rurals," C. C. Schmidt, 1910-16. This work goes only as far as Zemstvos beginning with the letter "K," and was never completed.

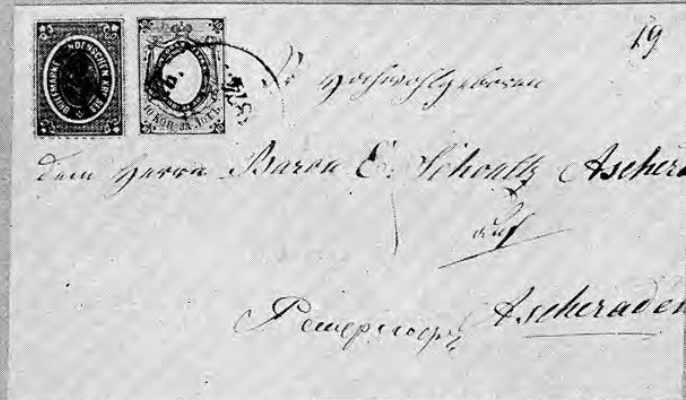
Pages 11-20 are reproduced from the original Stamp Specialist article. New images start on page 22.



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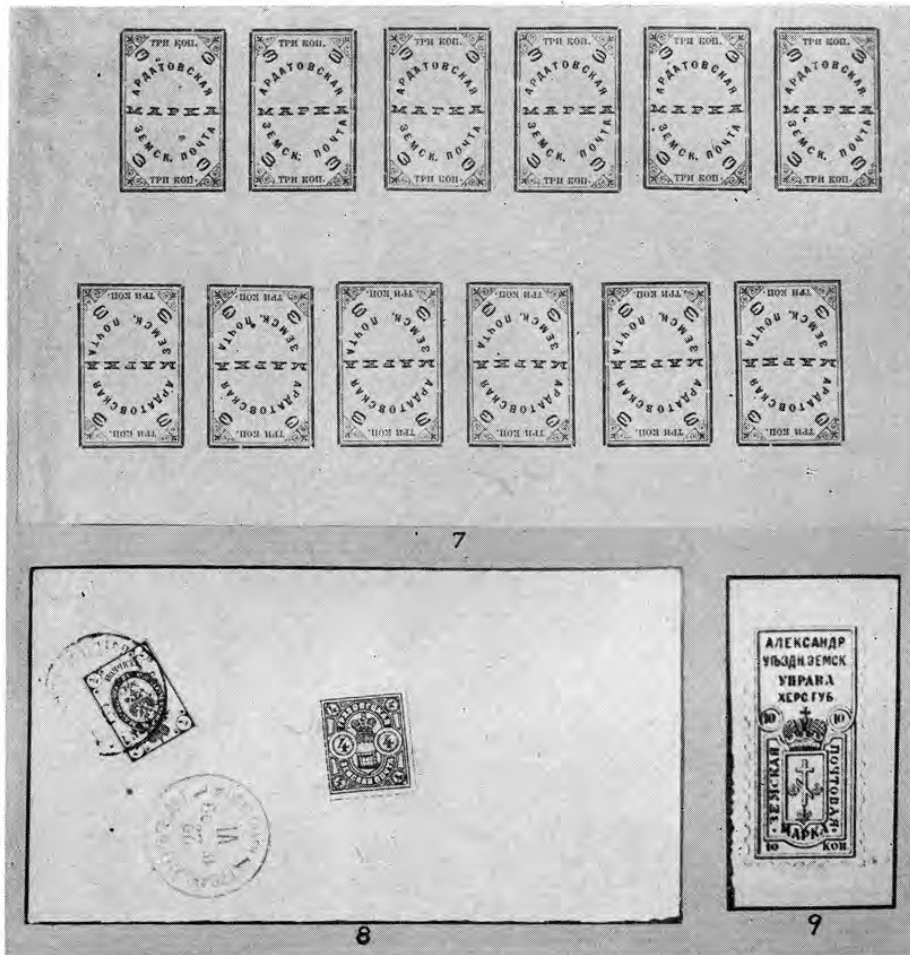


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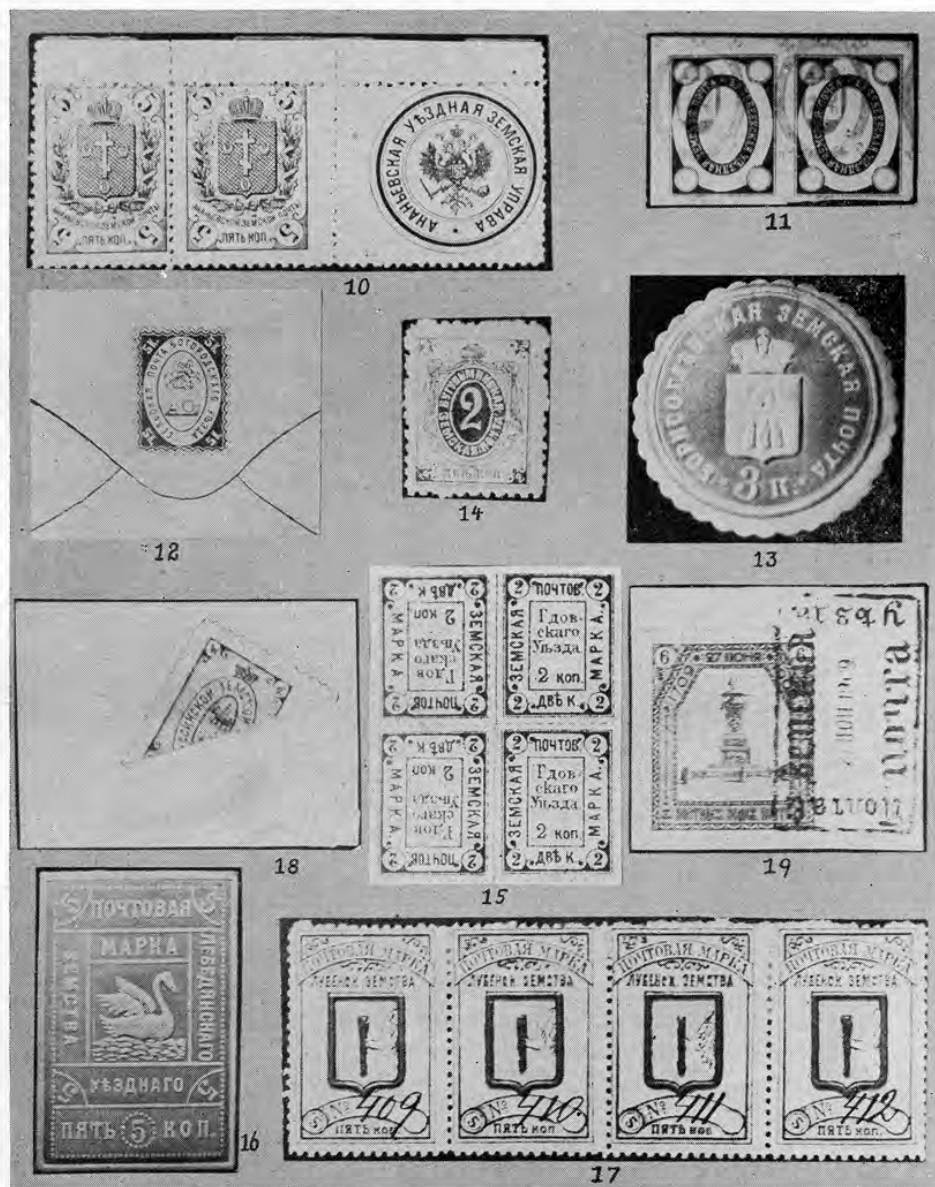
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS NOS. 1 to 6.

- FIG. 1. PETROZAVODSK, 1901, Vertical half of a two-kopek, used on a visiting-card envelope as a one-kopek adhesive.
- FIG. 2. KALOMNA, 1891, strip of four, showing se-tenant two and three-kopek stamps used on a postal stationery envelope.
- FIG. 3. Cover showing use of Wenden stamp of 1872-'75 used in combination with an Imperial Russian adhesive.
- FIG. 4. GRIAZOVETZ, 1911-'13, two Zemstvos used in combination with Imperial Russian stamps.
- FIG. 5. ZOLOTONOSHA, 1892, Vertical margin strip of four consisting of a pair of 10-kopek, black, red, carmine, gold and magenta at top, and a pair of 3-kopek, black, green, gold, red and dark green at bottom. Registration mark is at right.
- FIG. 6. ODESSA, 1881, Envelope imprinted with a handstamped Red Cross design.



CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS NOS. 7 TO 19.

- FIG. 7. ARDOTAV, block of 12, with six se-tenant pairs.
- FIG. 8. GRAZIOVETZ, 1899, Copy of Danish stamp of 1882, used in combination with Russian Imperial stamp.
- FIG. 9. ALEXANDRYA, 10k, black and rose with "perforations" drawn around stamp design, but which had to be cut or torn apart beyond this margin.
- FIG. 10. ANANIEV, 1896, pair of 5k se-tenant with a counterfoil used to check the number of stamps sold by postal clerks.
- FIG. 11. BELEBEY, 1908, Misplaced blue center on brown frame design.
- FIG. 12. BOGORODSK, Postal stationery, 5k printed on flap of laid-paper envelope.
- FIG. 13. BORISOGLYEBSK, 1872, Scalloped edge-stamp embossed in pale blue.
- FIG. 14. BUGULMA, 1892, a vague reproduction of Russian Imperial stamp of 1857, showing printed control number, 12.
- FIG. 15. GDOV, 1887, Block of four showing two tête-bêche pairs.



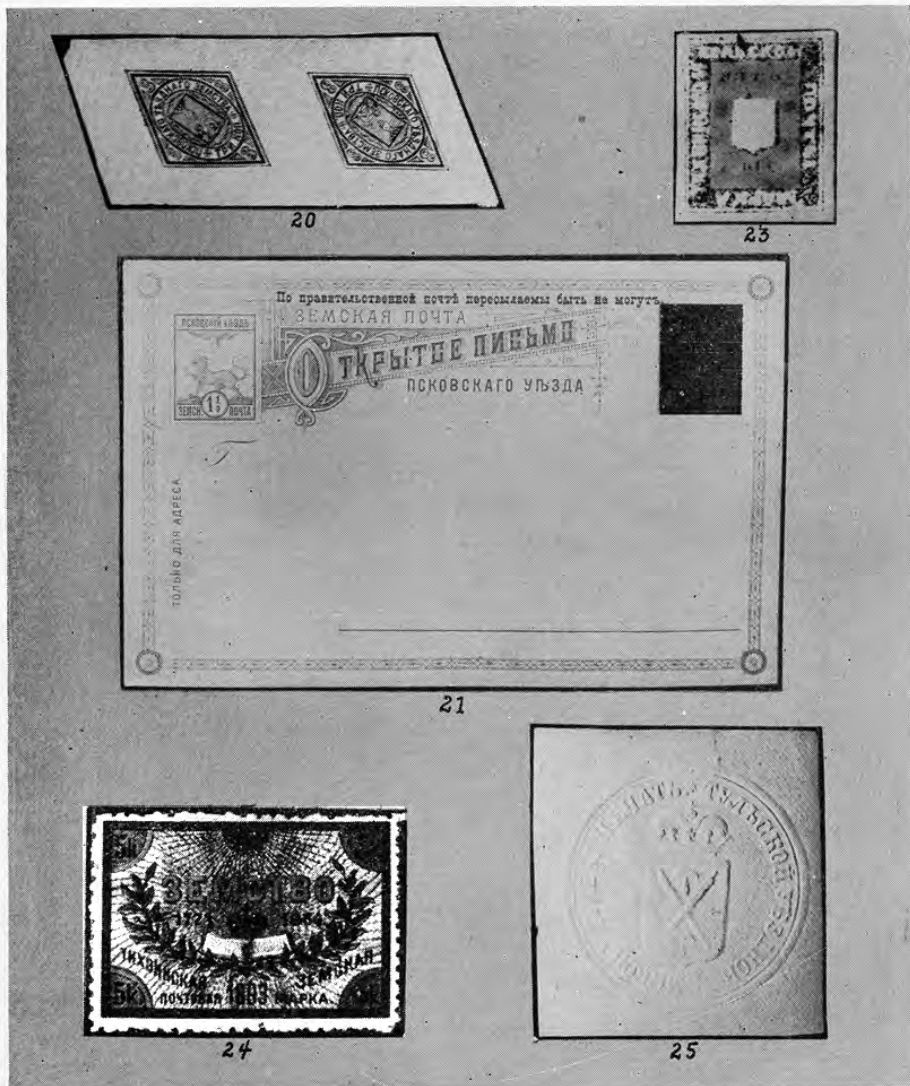
CAPTIONS CONTINUED

FIG. 16. LEBEDYAN, Embossed in pale green, this stamp shows the influence of Western Australian designs.

FIG. 17. LUBNY, 1895, Strip of four showing the control numbers written in a blank space by pen and ink.

FIG. 18. OSA, 1889, Diagonal half of four-kopek used as a two-kopek stamp.

FIG. 19. POLTAVA, 1909, a crudely-lithographed design tied to piece.



CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS NOS. 20, 21, 23, 24 and 25

- FIG. 20. PSKOV, 1881, Pair of three-kopek, tête-bêche.
- FIG. 21. PSKOV, 1895, Postal card of 1893, printed in pale blue overprinted in red and black with new value.
- FIG. 23. TIKHVIN, 1878, One of the crudest Zemstvos: a rough lithographed frame and hand-tinted center.
- FIG. 24. TIKHVIN, 1893, Showing the contrast of printing this large adhesive is neatly lithographed in many colors including gold.
- FIG. 25. TULA, Colorless embossing on white, laid paper of a small envelope.

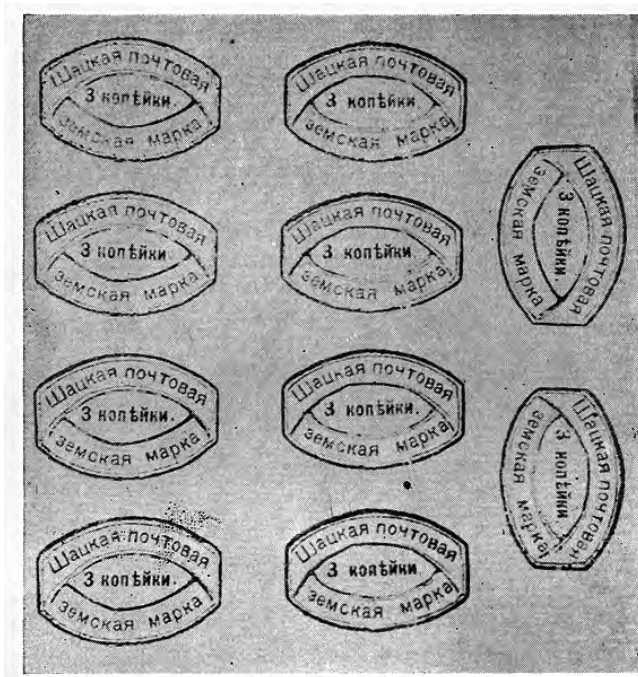


FIG. 22. SHATZK, 1888, full sheet showing how two additional designs were squeezed sideways into the right margin to conserve paper.

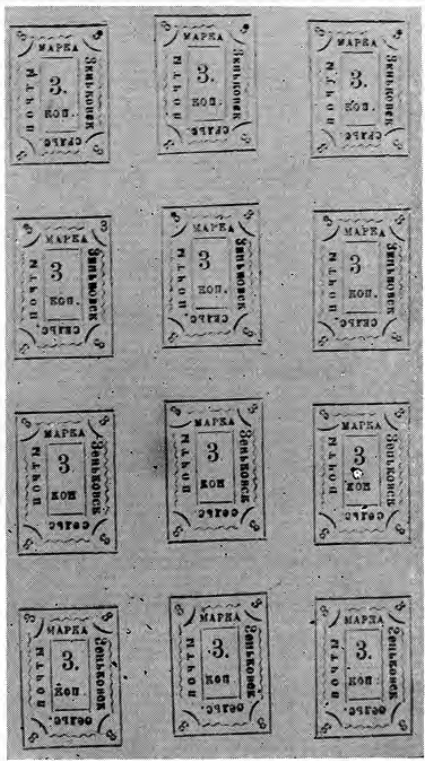
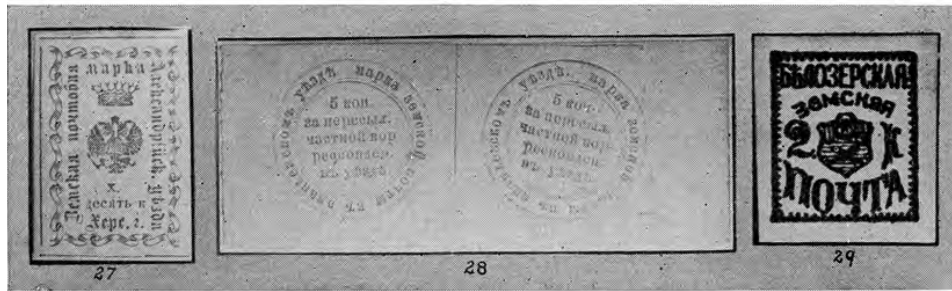
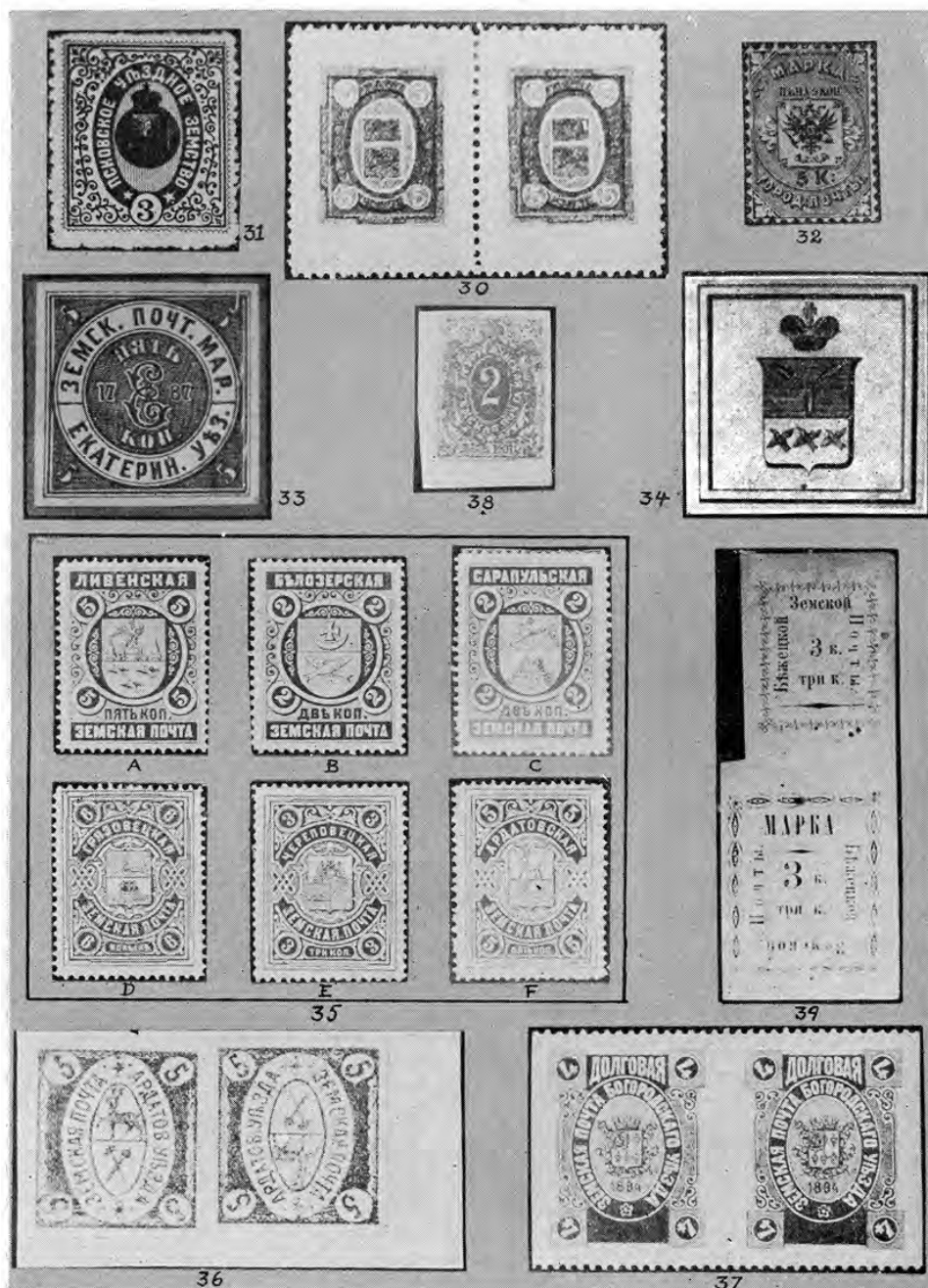


FIG. 26. ZYENKOF, 1898, Full sheet of three-kopek showing numerous minor varieties due to handset type faults.



CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS NOS. 27 TO 39

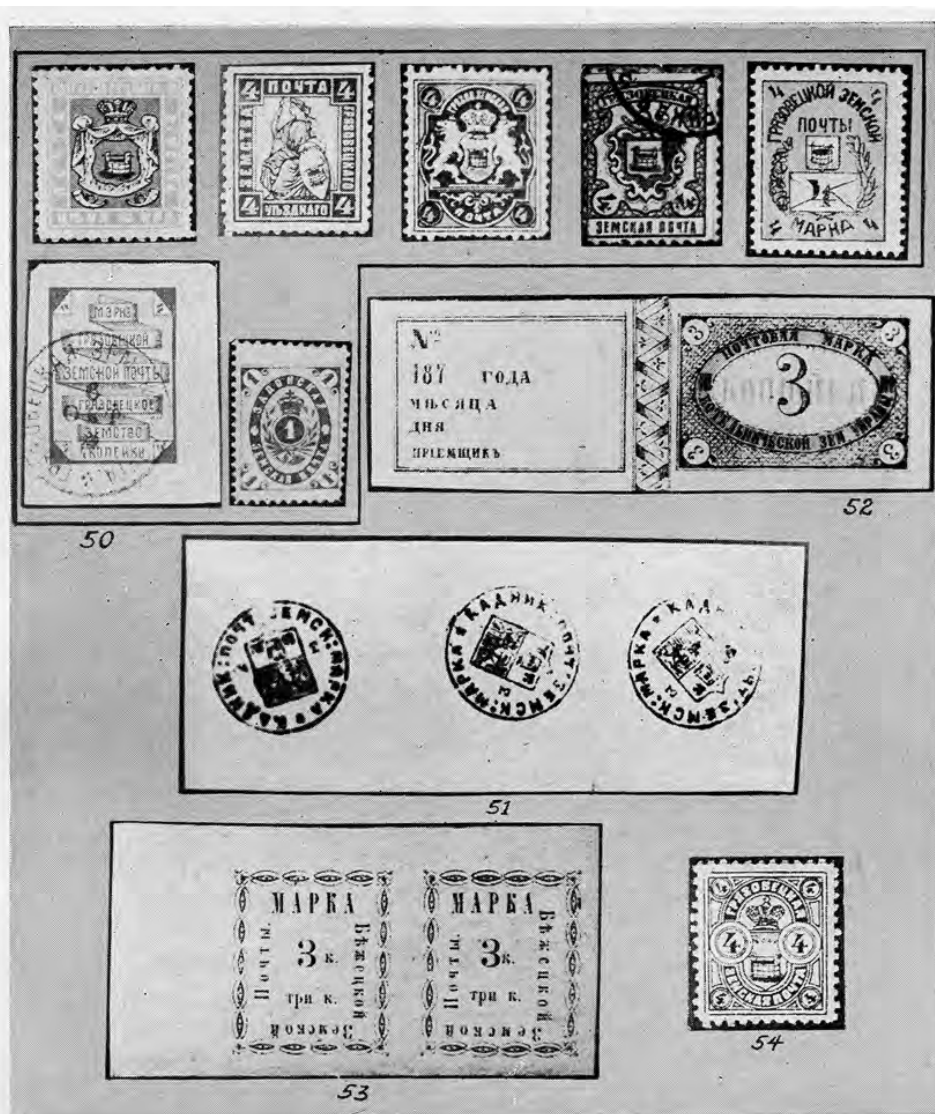
- FIG. 27. ALEXANDRYA, 1880, Lithographed in blue.**
- FIG. 28. ANANIEV, 1875, Pair of pale-blue, 5-kopek stamps showing misplacement of handstruck eiché.**
- FIG. 29. ATKARSK, 1872, one of the earliest lithographed stamp designs.**
- FIG. 30. KOBELYAKY, 1907-'08, pair of crudely designed stamps printed gaily in blue, yellow, red and rose.**
- FIG. 31. PSKOV, 1902, A colorful stamp printed in black, carmine, yellow, blue and green.**
- FIG. 33. YEKATRINOSLAV, 1872, A comparatively well lithographed design of the early period.**
- FIG. 34. DYELOZERSK, 1882, a simple lithographic design on grayish-white paper.**
- FIG. 35. "Key Plate" stamps produced in St. Petersburg for various Zemstvos. They were embossed and printed in various colors. Shown here are issues for Ardatov, Byelozersk, Cherepovetz, Lubny, Sarapul, Gryazovetz.**
- FIG. 36. ARDATOV, 1880, pair of crudely lithographed tête-bêche.**
- FIG. 37. BOGORODSK, 1895, pair, imperf. vertically.**
- FIG. 38. BUGURUSLAN, 1890, crudely lithographic copy of early Imperial Russian stamps.**
- FIG. 39. BYEZHETZK, se-tenant pair of large and small design, made to conserve paper.**





CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS NOS. 40 TO 54

- FIG. 40. GADYACH, 1900, misplaced red center in olive frame.
 FIG. 41. GLAZOV, 1898, fine typographed pair, one printed sideways.
 FIG. 42. KRASNY, a vivid battle scene printed in no fewer than seven colors and several shades thereof.
 FIG. 43. MORSHANSK, 1886-'95, two well printed stamps in gold, blue, red, black, yellow, green and violet.
 FIG. 44. NOLINSK, 1915, crudely typographed tête-bêche gutter pair.
 FIG. 45. POLTAVA, 1912, First and only Zemstvo made from photo-lithographed plates.
 FIG. 46. BOBROV, 1872, tête-bêche pair printed in black on violet-rose paper, from handset type.
 FIG. 47. KONSTANTINOGRAD, 1913, made from handset type and printed in red on rose paper



CAPTIONS CONTINUED

- FIG. 48. LOKHVITZA, 1911-'12, a crudely executed design of some artistic merit, printed in pale rose and gray-black.
- FIG. 49. OSTROGOZHISK, 1880, a huge stamp made from handset type.
- FIG. 50. Various issues of GRIAZOVETZ, 1894-'99, which are copies of various foreign issues, including Swiss, Hungarian, Icelandic and Bavarian stamps of earlier years and one which is similar to the Portuguese stamp of 1935.
- FIG. 51. KADNIKOV, strip of three made from a handstruck impression and showing irregularity.
- FIG. 52. KOTELNICH, 1895, finely lithographed stamp and control counterfoil at left.
- FIG. 53. BYEZHETZK, 1893, pair showing difference caused by hand-setting. Word at left is above level of the "3" in the center on the left stamp, and even with it on the right stamp.
- FIG. 54. ZADONSK, 1888, design copied from Denmark's early stamps.

Web References

There is a wealth of information about Zemstvos on the web. The sites I found to be particularly useful are listed here. JFD.

http://www.rossica.org/v_gallery/

http://www.localstamps.com/Stamp_images/Russia/Zemstvo/Zemstvo-list.html

<http://zenius.kalnieciai.lt/europe/russia/zemstvo/zemstvo.html>

http://www.america.gov/russian_stamps.html

<http://www.philatelicdatabase.com/tsarist-russia/poltava's-zemstvo-post/>

From the Faberge Collection (page 2)



Fig. 1

Pereslavl 1879-80, 3k dark blue and carmine, stamp from unrecorded issue without a dot inside "p" in "Pereslavskaia" (arrow), very rare. This issue had been described by A. Faberge in his handbook. (Reminder: for closer looks at images, use your pdf magnifier tool.)

Atkarsk black on grey-yellowish paper, one of five known examples. ex Faberge



Fig. 2

Belebey 1897, 2k blue, used on a piece together with Russian Imperial stamps of 3k carmine and 7k blue, tied by zemstvo date stamp, ex-Faberge



Fig. 3

Belebey 1908 2k brown & blue, top sheet margin imperf block of four, blue color inverted and shifted, brown frame omitted from the top pair, ex-Faberge.

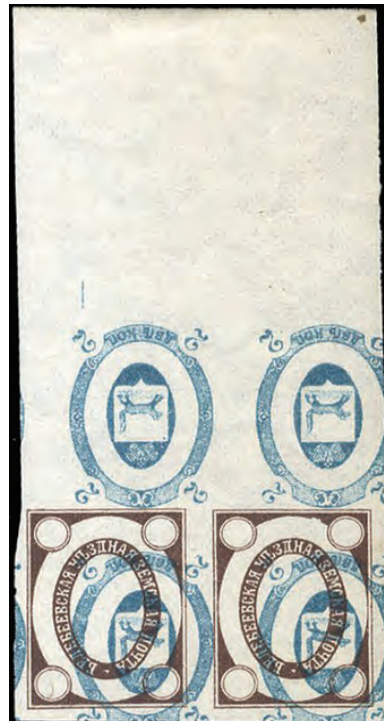


Fig. 4



Fig. 5. An example of a Staraya Russa 5k proof impression, similar to what would have been in the author's collection (page 2).



Fig. 6. May 19, 1902 Russian 4k stationery card to Erlangen, also with Wenden 1901 brown and green (Wenden Sc. L12), pen-cancelled; card cancelled by Stockmanshof circular date stamps (upper right) and Erlangen receiver (lower left). Scott lists the Wenden issues as Locals, L1-L12 (page 2).



Fig. 7. A folded letter mailed within one Zemstvo, using only that Zemstvo's stamps. In this case, it was addressed to the Osinsk county administration. Since a 3-kopeck stamp was not available and the rate for a letter within the Zemstvo), an Osinsk 1906 2k and bisect 2k were used to pay the fee (page 5).

Fig. 8. Postcard mailed on 10 May 1903 with bisected 5-kopeck Chuchin No. 12 stamp and transferred on the same day to government PO Yunovka where a 3-kopeck arms type stamp was added. It arrived at its destination the city of Kharkov on May 12. So far this is the only recorded use of a bisected stamp by this Zemstov (page 5).





Fig. 9. The first Zemstvos stamp, the 1865 Schlisselburg 5k black on green paper (page 5).



Fig. 10. A rare example of a Zemstvos stamp issued for philatelic purposes, the Kherson 1884 10k brick red and black official reprint—in this case with center inverted. (page 6)



Fig. 11. Stamps of Ardatof and Bakhmut produced by the Russian State Printing Works. (page 8).



Fig. 12. Above, two Buguruslan 2k stamps with designs very similar to those of Imperial Russia. (pages 8, 9) Right, a Zadonsk issue copied from Denmark (Sc. design type A6; see page 8.)



Fig. 13. Arms key plate issues of Zolotonosha, Morshansk, Lubny, Poltava and Konstantinograd. (page 8)



Fig. 14. Bielozersk's third Provisional issue, 1908, this example with inverted 3k surcharge on 2k yellow brown on yellow paper (page 8).



Fig. 16. Pereyaslaf 1875 Provisional issue, 3k stamp altered to 5k in red ink—the only known example (page 8).



Fig. 15. Lebedin 1899 Provisional, with black surcharge "2" on the 5k blue stamp of 1898, one of only nine known used copies (page 8).



Fig. 17. Above, crude Ardatov production; right, Irbit printing with one stamp inverted (page 8).

Fig. 18. Tver 1871 2k rose and dark violet blue block of six, four stamps with incorrectly printed "2k" (page 8).





Fig. 19. This Tikhvin stamp shows the center value correctly, but the rest of the design was incorrectly carved as it was seen instead of as a mirror image. The result was a reverse image when applied to paper! Notice the word "MARKA" is printed as "AKRAM" in the lower left of the oval frame. (page 9).

Fig. 20. This used 5k yellowish-rose Lubny issue has delivery control number "1197" in manuscript in the center. (page 9)



Fig. 21. Two examples of stamps with counterfoils: Right, from Zadonsk, also showing the control number "2025", which was written in at the post office on the stamp and the counterfoil, recording who mailed the letter. Below from Kotelnich. (page 9)



Fig. 22. Pskov 2e-tenant printing with 1k, 5k, and 10k values and in differing colors. (page 9)

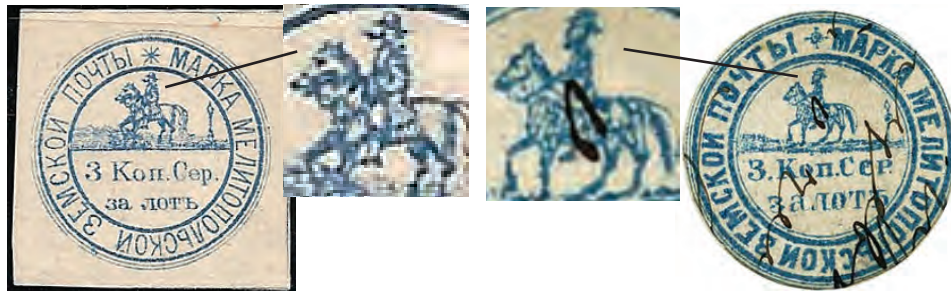


Fig. 23. In 2011, researchers at the Smithsonian’s National Postal Museum discovered one of the finest collections of Russian stamps ever assembled—right in the vaults of the NPM.

The collection was assembled by G. H. Kaestlin and in 1984 was donated to the museum by

his estate. Within the collection of 14,000 stamps was this pair of a previously unknown issue of Zemstvo stamps from Shlisselburg. In a field of study that is so vast and with little original records of issue, additional discoveries such as this are still possible. (page 10)

Additional images not referenced in the text:



The Melitopol Zemstvo –“horseman not smoking” issue. In the left, stamp, the horseman is smoking a pipe; in the right he is not. Melitopol issued stamps from 1867 to 1876. On the 1871 issue, one of eight known copies, depicts a horseman not smoking while the later issues of 1872–1876 show the horseman smoking a pipe.

From the NPM’s Kaestlin Collection, “Soroki issued stamps from 1878 to 1898...the first of which was a 3-kopeck, black, yellow, pale-rose and blue stamp, of which only four are known to exist. In 1880, Soroki issued a revised stamp using the same plates but changed colors with the river bed unclearly outlined in red and inverted the printing plate, bringing the river above the town’s 16th century castle.



Printing varieties:

Griazovetz 1894
imperf between



Tikhvin, 1896, 3k multicolored pair, imperf vertically.



Gdof pair,
right stamp inverted

Assorted shapes:



Versogonsk



Borisoglyebsk



Alexandrya



Volchansk



Dankov



Boguchary 1871
handstamp

A few more copycats:



Lebedyan, ala Western Australia's Swan



Gryazovets and Sapozhak, ala British Empire "Seated Britannias"

Variations on a theme:



Pskov "Lions". Reminder: for a closer look at any or all, use your pdf magnifier tool

Assorted shapes, sizes, designs and towns



Berdyansk



Bezhetsk



Bielozersk



Bogodorsk



Borovichy



Bugulma



Chembar



Chistopol



Dukhovshina



Kobelyaky



Kologriv



Konstantinograd



Kungur



Livny



Lokhvitza



Nalchik 1915 5k left sheet margin block of four with a complete oval Zemstvo "25. Nov. 1915" date stamp—reportedly the earliest recorded cancellation for this value.



Oversized 1k Ostrogozhsk



Okhansk



Perm



Rzhev



Schigry



Shatsk



Solikamsk



Sudzha



Ustysolsk



Vetluga



Zolotonosha

The Krasny Pictorials:



Krasny issued stamps from 1890 until 1912 when it issued two commemorative stamps honoring of the 100th anniversary of the 1812 War with France led by Napoleon Bonaparte. On 23 June 1812, the invasion of Russia commenced, and on September 7, 1812, the French were victorious in the Battle of Moscow.

However, owing to the Russian army's scorched earth tactics, the French found it increasingly difficult to forage food for themselves and their horses. Subjected to the severe Russian winter, the French suffered greatly during their retreat, and of more than 400,000 frontline troops, less than 40,000 made it back.

Pictured above, the stamp on the left pictures "Nyevyerfosky's Heroic Deed" and that on the right pictures "The Retreat of the French Army." See also page 34.



A complete sheet of the 1912 stamp pictured on the left on page 33, consisting of 72 stamps (6x12), including 30 tete-beche pairs as each block of six is inverted relative to the block to the side and above or below it, ex-Faberge.