

The PhilateliKid

The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)

Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)

www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org

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In the May 2022 issue of *The PhilateliKid*, we began brief descriptions of various “Back of the Book” (“BOB”) listings in the Scott Catalogues. In subsequent issues we looked at stamps which begin with the letter “B,” “BK,” “C,” “CB,” “CE,” “CL,” “CM,” “CO,” “CVP,” “D,” “E,” “F,” “FA,” “J,” “JQ,” “K,” “L,” “LO,” “O,” “-P,” “PN,” “PR,” “PS,” “Q,” “QE,” “QI,” “R” (Part 1), “R” (Part 2), “RC,” “RD,” “RE,” “REA,” “REF,” “RG,” “RH,” “RK,” “RN-D,” “RV,” “RY,” “SPCVP,” “U,” “UC,” “UX,” “UY,” “WS,” “WX,” “#X,” and State, followed by a number. This month we will look at “PC.”

Stamps Beginning with the prefixes “PC.”

Stamps with an “PC” prefix are **Postage Currency**.



Obverse & Reverse (actual size)



At the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, people started hoarding coins, resulting in there not being enough coins in circulation for normal business needs. Fortunately, there were postage stamps available that could be substituted for coins, but there was a problem. Being made of small pieces of thin paper, postage stamps were easily damaged, and because the backs of stamps had “gum” on them, they could easily get stuck to almost anything, including clothing. To solve the problem, the U.S. Congress authorized printing currency with postage stamps on them. (In those days, people thought of gold and silver as money. Many people were very suspicious of “money” that was printed on paper, but postage stamps seemed more acceptable.) So, for a very brief period, lasting less than a year, **Postage Currency** was printed and distributed. Unlike stamps, postage currency was printed on the obverse and reverse sides (front and back), and thus is ungummed. **Postage Currency** was subsequently replaced by **Fractional Currency**, which was essentially the same as Postage

Currency, but did not feature postage stamps, appearing more like miniature dollar bills. The Scott Specialized Catalogue of stamps and Covers does not list **Fractional Currency**, but it does list **Postage Currency**. Some Postage Currency was issued with perforated edges, but like postage stamps, and some was issued imperforate. The 10¢ Postage Currency, at left, has one 10¢ stamp printed on it. (Scott PC 6.) Note the words “Postage Currency” printed at the top and “U.S. Postage” printed above Washington’s head.

The 10¢ Fractional Currency illustrated at right is not Postage Currency and therefore is not listed in Scott.



More about Stamps Beginning with the prefix “RK”

In the stamp collecting hobby we are fortunate to have people from all walks of life, including people who work in areas that few of us ever get the opportunity to learn much about. We normally know what a doctor or dentist does, and in government, what a mayor, governor, president, Member of Congress (“MC”), senator, or judge does. Last month we looked at a rarely discussed aspect of our government, namely Consulates. It turns out that we have a retired member of the Foreign Service, John Hotchner, who spent his lifetime serving in that area of our federal government, and who graciously has contributed to our newsletter some information about Consulates with the following explanation

Virtually every permanent diplomatic mission (Embassy, Consulate General or Consulate, has a Consular Section, whose job it is to provide a range of services to American citizens abroad, but also to issue visas to aliens wishing to visit the United States or to immigrate. The Embassy Consular Section is also headed by a Consul General (or if a large Embassy, a Counselor for Consular Affairs (CCA), "Counselor" being a very senior diplomatic rank), who is part of the Ambassador's so-called 'country team' (The analog to the president's cabinet). The Embassy Consul General has supervisory authority over the consular operations at what are called 'constituent posts' at other major locations in the same country. Constituent posts may be Consulates General or (smaller) Consulates; depending upon size, staffing and reporting and liaison duties. The CG is headed by a Consul General. A Consulate is headed by a Principal Officer.

CCAs are invariably career Foreign Service officers, who are Consular Cone officers as a career specialty. So are most Consuls General and Principal Officers at constituent posts; though they may not be Consular Officers if the major reason for the constituent post is a focus on other than consular work. But there are some CGs who are political appointees, selected for their services or contributions to a newly elected president. and hopefully with some directly related international experience.

Take as an example, Italy. Rome (the capital) is the site of the Embassy and it is a very large operation which rates a CCA. There will be consulates or consulates general in other major cities (Naples, Milan, Palermo, for example). They do more than just consular work, for example, political, economic, labor reporting, liaison with major home-government entities and sometimes international organizations headquartered there. They are in fact mini-embassies, but subject to the authority of their supervisory levels in the embassy as well as to the CG or Principal Officer.

Consular Sections are broken down into Passports and Citizenship, Visas Services, and American Citizen Services. The latter is what we generally think about when we think of American Consuls because they help Americans who are born, die, get arrested, get caught up in natural disasters or local insurrections, who need documents notarized, voting assistance, help with registering to obtain US government services to which they are entitled though living abroad; and they help families in the US track down Americans who have gone missing abroad, and arrange extraction of Americans when something goes horribly wrong such as the precipitous American withdrawal from Afghanistan.

There is an extensive schedule of fees for the various services provided by consuls, and the RKs documented payment of those fees. They are most often seen in passports of the period - \$9 for passport issuance, \$5 for passport renewal. The stamps are collected on and off document, though the latter are more interesting and challenging. The period of time when these were used was from 1906 to 1955.

Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are greatly appreciated and if \$10 or more you will be sent a written receipt. You also can donate via PayPal on our website: www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org or www.yummystampcollecting.org which redirects you to the same website.