

The PhilateliKid

The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)

Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)

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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,” “CBO,” “CE,” “CL,” “CM,” “CO,” “CVP,” “D,” “E,” “F,” “FA,” “J,” “JQ,” “K,” “L,” “LO,” “LOX,” “M,” “O,” “OXF,” “-P,” “PC,” “PN,” “PR,” “PS,” “Q,” “QE,” “QI,” “R” (Part 1), “R” (Part 2), “RC,” “RD,” “RE,” “REA,” “REF,” “RG,” “RH,” “RK,” “RL,” “RN-D,” “RO,” “RS,” “RV,” “RY,” “-S,” “SPCVP,” “TD,” “U,” “UC,” “UX,” “UY,” “WS,” “WX,” “#X,” and State, followed by a number. This month we will look at “MR.” All stamps illustrated are from the author’s personal collection, unless otherwise noted.

Stamps Beginning with the prefix “MR.”

In the Scott Catalogue, items listed with the prefix “MR” are War Tax stamps. The majority of war tax stamps were produced during and immediately after World War I. The tax was an increase in regular postage to help pay for the extra costs of war. Some stamps were produced by overprinting regular issues with “WAR TAX” or “WAR STAMP.” While they were meant to pay for the war tax only, they were often applied toward postage and registration fees. In some cases, the War Tax stamp was supposed to be an additional stamp that would be put on a letter next to the regular postage stamp. However, as in the red three (3) cent stamp illustrated at left, one stamp paid for both postage (2¢) and the war tax (1¢). (Note the “1T¢” **added** cost.)



MR1

MR3

Many British colonies issued War Tax stamps during and immediately after WWI. The United States never has issued stamps specifically identified as War Tax stamps, but regular postage in the United States was increased by one cent during and after World War I to help pay for war expense.

DEAD COUNTRIES

Beginning in October 2024, we illustrated stamps from “Dead Countries.” We looked at Newfoundland, Hawaii, Croatia, Bavaria, Cyrenaica, and Basutoland. This month we will look at **British Honduras**, and **Dahomey**.

British Honduras

British Honduras is now named Belize. It is located in Central America, surrounded by Mexico on the North, Guatemala on the West and South, and the Caribbean Sea on the East. It is the smallest of the seven Central American Countries both in size and in population. Its size is only 8,867 square miles, about the size of New Jersey. Its population in 2025 is estimated to be 417,300 people, which means it has about the same number of people as Minneapolis, Minnesota or Bakersfield, California.



Before European settlers arrived, the Maya lived in the area now known as Belize. Later, Spanish settlers arrived in the 1500's, 1600's, and 1700's. However, British settlers began coming on the late 1700's and early 1800's. By 1817, Britain gained control and British Honduras officially became a British colony in the late 1800's. The first postage stamps were issued in 1866

by British Honduras, featuring the profile of Queen Victoria. In 1973, British Honduras changed its name to Belize, but continued as a British colony. On September 21, 1981, Belize became an independent country. It is interesting to note that AFTER independence from Britain, Belize issued a stamp on November 13, 1981 which had a symbol of Queen Elizabeth II in the upper right-hand corner. The 35¢ stamp featured at left has a crown with "E II R" immediately below it in the upper right-hand corner. This symbol continued on many stamps of Belize until December of 1987!

Dahomey



Dahomey were issued in 1899. Those stamps carried the inscription "Afrique Occidentale Française," and the word "Dahomey." Translated from French to English it means "French West Africa." Those stamps can be found in the Scott Catalogue under "Dahomey." The Scott Catalogue shows 139 stamps issued by Dahomey.

In 1945, Dahomey began using stamps marked "Afrique Occidentale Française" without "Dahomey." Those stamps can be found in the Scott Catalogue under French West Africa." Those stamps, in addition to also had "RF" on the stamp. "RF" is an abbreviation of Republique Française.

French West Africa was several French colonies lumped together. It included Dahomey, French Guinea, Senegal, Ivory Coast, French Sudan, Upper Volta, Niger, and Mauritania. In 1958, each of those French colonies became republics. Dahomey became the Republic of Dahomey. Scott Catalogue lists 88 stamps issued by French West Africa from 1943 through March 21, 1959.



The **Republic of Dahomey** was proclaimed on December 4, 1958. It began issuing stamps on March 1, 1960, although it officially proclaimed its independence on August 1, 1960.

On November 30, 1975 the Republic of Dahomey changed its name to the **People's Republic of Benin**.



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