

# The PhilateliKid

## **The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)**

**Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)**

[www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org](http://www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org)

July 1, 2025

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,” “MR,” “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,” “UXC,” “UY,” “UZ,” “WS,” “WX,” “#X,” and State, followed by a number. This month we will look at “RF.” All stamps illustrated are from the author’s personal collection, unless otherwise noted.

### **Stamps Beginning with the prefix “RF”**



In the Scott Catalogue, items listed with the prefix “RF” are revenue stamps that were affixed to decks of playing cards. Decks of playing cards first were taxed in



1862. The stamps that were used originally were revenue stamps, but they were used for a variety of items, not just playing cards. The first stamps that were issued for playing cards only were issued in 1894. Playing cards required a revenue stamp to be affixed to the opening of the cardboard box that contained the cards. Thus, when the pack was opened, the stamp had to be torn, or cut in half, thus rendering them undesirable for stamp collectors. The revenue tax on playing cards was repealed on June 22, 1965.

Scott Catalogue identifies 29 different types of RF stamps. However, one of them, RF 23 (see illustration above, left) exists only as a precancelled stamp. There are known to be 16 different precancels. The precancels identify the company that manufactured the playing cards. The red precancel on the stamp at left is “U.S.P.C. CO.” which stands for United States Playing Card Company.

### **Letters to the Editor**

Readers: In the June 1, 2025 issue of *The Philatelikid*, we featured stamps of Zaire that were overprinted with the date 25-9-74 (September 25, 1974) but the date made no sense to me. Luckily, one of our readers knows why. A big thank you to Rick Birdsall for the following explanation!

Dear Editor,

(Regarding the Ali-Foreman boxing fight in Zaire): It (the fight) was originally scheduled for September 24, 1974, capping three days of parades and celebrations in Zaïre, as the dictator was eager to show off his country. However, Foreman received a cut — I don’t remember exactly how — and the fight had to be postponed.

The two biggest places it made a difference were in the stamps of Zaïre, and in the undercard.

The stamps were initially printed with the intended Sept. 24 date, but were overprinted with the Sept. 25 date when it was rescheduled so that the fight would be broadcast at 10 pm in the U.S. eastern time zone. (The switch was worth it, as a billion people tuned in, then the largest television audience ever.)

When it was further delayed into October due to Foreman’s injury, Zaïre didn’t bother to redo the overprint date.

The original undercard featured 3 matches between Massachusetts and upstate New York boxers. Those matches went on because they had already committed the air time (U.S. broadcast rights were out of Pittsfield, Mass.) The replacement undercard in October featured 4 matches, again between mostly rural Massachusetts and upstate New York boxers. This was all happening and was a Big Deal in the local news when I was growing up in that area. – Rick Birdsall

## DEAD COUNTRIES

Beginning in October 2024, we illustrated stamps from “Dead Countries.” We looked at Newfoundland, Hawaii, Croatia, Bavaria, Cyrenaica, Basutoland, British Honduras, Dahomey, French Congo, Middle Congo, French Equatorial Africa, Belgian Congo, and the Peoples Republic of the Zaire, and Eastern Rumelia. This month we will look at Southern Rhodesia, Rhodesia, Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and Zimbabwe Rhodesia.

The country known today as Zimbabwe (pronounced Zym – bob – way) has issued stamps under the name Zimbabwe since 1980. Previously it issued stamps as **British South Africa Company (Rhodesia)**, then **Southern Rhodesia** (1898 to 1965), then **Rhodesia** (1965 to 1979) then briefly as Zimbabwe Rhodesia (1979 to 1980.) From 1953 to 1963 Zimbabwe was part of **Rhodesia and Nyasaland**. As far as I can tell, there were not any stamps issued with the name **Zimbabwe Rhodesia** on the stamp.

To understand Zimbabwe, it is essential to understand Rhodesia. Rhodesia was a British Colony formed in the late 1890's by mining magnate Cecil Rhodes, after whom the colony was named. For centuries prior to then, the area was ruled by numerous kingdoms, none of which issued stamps.

Zimbabwe is completely landlocked. A landlocked country is a country that has no border on an ocean, and thus is surrounded by the land of other countries. Zimbabwe is surrounded by the countries of South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique.

I'll bet you cannot guess what currency is used in Zimbabwe. Hint: The main language spoken in Zimbabwe is English. (See below for answer.) Zimbabwe has about 16 million inhabitants, and is considered to be a poor nation. The leading cause of death today in Zimbabwe is

HIV/AIDS, which outnumbers the second most frequent cause of death, COVID-19, by approximately 50%. Almost one fifth of the young teenage women (ages 15 to 19) are married to men who are more than 10 years older than they are.



Zimbabwe is located south of the Equator, which means that it is entirely located in the Southern Hemisphere of the world. (There are only 19 countries in the world that are entirely located in the

Southern Hemisphere. 13 additional countries straddle the Equator, and thus they are in both the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere. There are a total of 195 countries in the world.)

Note: **Northern Rhodesia** is now **Zambia**, and **Nyasaland** is now **Malawi**. (See next month's *The Philatelikid*.)

Answer: The currency used in Zimbabwe is the U.S. dollar.

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