

# The Clock and the Beaver...Related?

By Rick Cohen



Sort of! Allow me to explain. Having expanded my philatelic interests into topicals and themes, I recently began to explore the 'Concept of Time' as a new theme collection. There are stamps of clocks, sundials, etc. but I wanted to learn more about the subject of time zones. As most of us know, there are 24 time zones encompassing planet Earth, but not quite true! There are half zones and quarter zones too! Who helped pioneer this idea?



Sir Sanford Fleming (born January 7, 1827, deceased July 22, 1915) was a Canadian engineer and inventor. Born and raised in Scotland, he immigrated to colonial Canada at the age of 18. In 1862, Fleming presented a plan for the Canadian Transcontinental Railway, which connected the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. He was present when the last spike was driven in 1884.

After missing a train in 1876 in Ireland because the printed schedule listed p.m. instead of a.m., he proposed a single 24-hour clock for the entire world. He advocated for the adoption of a standard or mean time and hourly variations from that mean. He also helped convene the International Meridian Conference in 1884, where the international standard time system was adopted.

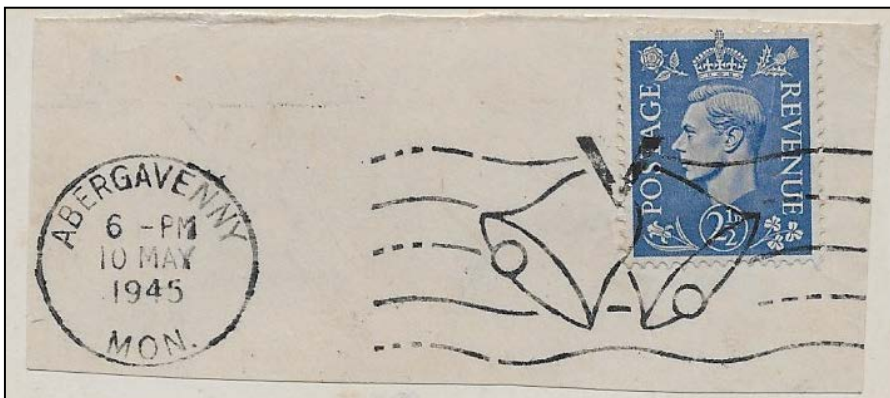
So, that helps explain "the clock," what about the beaver you ask. A little more research into Sir Fleming revealed that he designed Canada's first postage stamp...Scott #1, the 3 pence orange beaver! A man of many talents.....

[Editor's note: Rick Cohen is a welcomed first time contributor to the *Philatelic Missive* – we encourage everyone to write up something of interest. This monthly newsletter survives on material provided by the membership of the CFSC. Rick is the son of our oldest active member, Lynn Cohen who is still collecting and will be celebrating his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday this September.]

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## VE Day – 71 Years Ago by A. Stephen Patrick

On May 8, we remembered Victory in Europe over Germany in 1945, 71 years ago. My GI dad was in the area of Salzburg, Austria, where he spent the next three months training for the invasion of Japan -- until the drop of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Royal Post created a souvenir machine cancellation to be used around the country to celebrate the end of the war. Two ringing bells are suspended from a capital V. The cancel is from Abergaveny, Monmouth, only two days after the declaration. This shows that the cancel was probably prepared in anticipation of the war's end.





# Reminiscences

By Michael Rogers

## “Manners matter”

**T**he China market was exceptional in the mid 2000s: prices climbing and most everything selling. My problem was finding enough to go around. Then I was still Michael Rogers Inc doing public auctions, mail sales, price lists and stamp shows. By experience I knew nothing Chinese would come in through the front door, offered for sale.

That meant road trips!

It was a great gig going on the road. Barry Williams was a friend that I knew from my first year working in Atlanta in 1972 or so. Barry knows coins and drives plus is a welcome companion for those long miles. We'd start off in a direction, not returning home for weeks.

Say, 2007 or so, we were tooling around Utah and I received a phone call from my office, relaying a message from a Chinese lady in Omaha. Her late father was a customer of mine 20 years before, and part of the collection could be shown to me the next day if I would be there between 2:30 and 3:30 pm. I recognized his name and knew it was worth the hike. Barry drove all night. We arrived and I have to say I was pretty tired.

Everything was as it should be: nice older lady in a comfortable home in the suburbs. On the table were the stamps for me to examine. I set my attache case where she could see what I was doing. Last thing I would ever want is the suspicion that her stamps might end up in my case. Out came the magnifier and tongs. Careful, careful.

And by golly, it sure was a fine selection! China classics to about 1930 with some back of the book, organized on stock cards, all identified. Large Dragons, a \$5 Red Revenue (damaged), multiples of the lower values, long definitive sets, mint, used, varieties. Just great stuff.

I started off by stating what I always do, when I am dealing with a knowledgeable collector, I feel as if I am on a level playing field negotiating. In an inheritance, I believe the material ought to go to auction because the family rarely knows the marketplace. Nope, they wanted to sell. A cleaner transaction.

I went through it a couple of times and offered \$65,000. She got up and telephoned

her mother in New York City. Upon her return to the table, much to my dismay, she tells me that she forgot half the lot in the bank and could I return sometime in the future? (“Lady, I don’t live here!”)

A few months later, I had a table at NAPEX in Washington, D.C. I phoned Omaha and set up an appointment, changing the deal. Because I was driving way out of the way I wouldn’t have the time for protracted negotiations. “Just tell me what you want; I will have payment in the form of cashier’s checks.”

She did, and I did. It was wonderful. More of the same and just beautiful quality. Then she carried on with beautiful words, asking if I would like to meet her mother in NYC who had more. Sure! I was invited to visit later that summer.

I met her Mom in late August in a fine older home in Brooklyn. Respectfully I removed my shoes and handed her two navel oranges for good luck. My son’s grandparents are Taiwanese like her. I followed her to the kitchen where lay PRC complete sheets and big blocks plus a huge Treaty Port inventory. She told me her asking price which I accepted. It was a tad low on the PRC and a bit high on the Treaty Ports. Another big chunk of money paid on the spot.

Then she asked if I wanted to see more. Would I?!

We descended to the basement where there were mountains of cartons, shelving units with stockbooks and clothes in disarray. Chinese characters were written on the boxes. She asked me to translate one. I could not and said so. She asked me to open another but as my gut told me her late husband had probably sealed it, I would be disrespectful opening it. I declined. She turned her head to me thoughtfully, as if she was making a decision. Then she asked if I wanted to buy the basement. I figured this was the last she had so said, “when you invite me.” Clearly that was the right response because she said: come before the ASDA show this fall.

September arrived and I had a comprehensive medical exam. We had great health insurance through our company so it was the sensible path.

Come October and I had my days

planned. Barry and I would drive up to Brooklyn to meet with the Chinese family. He had to stay outside with the inventory in the van for security. Friday and Saturday for traveling. Sunday to view and buy it. Monday and Tuesday to merge it into the MRI inventory and ship the excess purchased home. The show dates were Thursday through Sunday. Drive home Sunday evening afterwards.

On the way up, I sure felt poorly. I was getting left hand chest pains but knew it couldn’t be my heart because I had just had the medical exam. Fortunately, I always take a wide variety of pain medicines for migraines so I was well equipped for anything, I thought.

Come the Sunday for the purchase, I was running a fever and my chest was killing me. Little relief from the oxycodone. And I was doing a really poor appraisal. I poked my nose into a carton of what I thought were Taiwanese postcards; later I found out they were valuable Qing Dynasty mixed franking covers. I saw a stock book of cheap China junks, only to find out later there was a mint block of the 1897 10 candarin surcharge on 9 cent dowager on the back page. Conversely, big envelopes of mint stamps that I assumed were gummed turned out to be no gum.

But I purchased it anyway. All I could do Monday and Tuesday was lie on the bed, wondering what was going on with my chest. Entering the show, beginning to set up, revenue dealer Eric Jackson grew concerned, saying “Mike, you look terrible. Are you sure you should be here?” Got home to the hospital where the diagnosis was a collapsed lung.

Those three purchases kept MRI in Chinese stamps for a couple of years. I remember the enthusiasm the collector had in his acquisitions as I take pride in helping so many afterwards. ☒



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