THE JOURNAL OF THE PHILATELIC LITERATURE SOCIETY AND ITS SUPPLEMENTS

By Abhishek Bhuwalka
Presentation at Stockholmia 2019
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History of *The Philatelic Literature Society* and its famous members

*The Journal of the Philatelic Literature Society*

Supplements to the Journal
(1) Advertisement Supplements, (2) Six Supplements, and (3) Other ‘Short’ Publications
THE SOCIETY AND ITS MEMBERS: A BRIEF HISTORY
## Genesis of the Society

Herbert Clark, Fred. Melville, and others on the need for a philatelic literature journal and perhaps a literature society as well

Meeting at Melville’s House on 1 Aug 1907 attended by seven where decision to form a society “...to accomplish good work in a much neglected branch of philately”

Circular sent to those likely to be interested to attend the inaugural meeting

Inaugural meeting at Anderton’s Hotel on 19 Sep 1907 attended by 16 where the Society constituted itself

Society comprised the noted bibliophiles of the age, perhaps of all time

## Objectives of the Society

- **Promote and Encourage the Collection and Study of Philatelic Literature, and to Circulate Amongst Its Members Information Thereon**
- **Compile and Publish Bibliographies and Other Works Related to Philately**
- **Provide a Medium for the Sale and Exchange of Duplicates**
- **Undertake All Such Matters as May Further These Objects.**
WATERING HOLES

Inaugural meeting held at Anderton’s Hotel, Fleet Street, London

Most meetings held at St. Bride’s Institute, Bride Lane, London
BIBLIOPHILE MEMBERS...1

**Sir Edward D. Bacon**  
(1860 – 1938)  
• Greatest philatelist of all time?  
• Compiler of the Crawford Catalogue  
• Curator to the Tapling Collection and Royal Collection 1913-1938  
• RDP 1921

**Bertram T. K. Smith**  
(1872? – 1938)  
• Son of Alfred Smith, one of the earliest stamp dealers  
• Edited *Alfred Smith & Son’s Monthly Circular* 1899-1918  
• Mainly known for his work and contributions to the Society and its Journal

**Frank J. Peplow**  
(1872 – 1935)  
• Expert in the stamps of Japan and Argentina on which he self-published books  
• Co-owner, with L. W. Fulcher, of *The Philatelic Record* 1909-1914  
• RDP 1933

**Lionel W. Fulcher**  
(1865 – 1945)  
• Expert in the stamps of Japan, Venezuela, and Peru  
• Hon. Librarian of RPSL 1902-1928  
• Co-owner and Editor of *The Philatelic Record* 1909-1914  
• RDP 1921
Fred. J. Melville  
(1883 – 1940)  
• Philatelic history’s most prolific writer  
• Founder of *The Junior Philatelic Society* and edited its journal *Stamp Lover*  
• RDP 1921

Peter J. Anderson  
(1853 – 1926)  
• One of the earliest stamp collectors and researchers of philatelic literature  
• Wrote a series of notes on *Early English Philatelic Literature* in the mid-1880s  
• RDP 1921

H. Edgar Weston  
(1874 – 1958)  
• Biggest philatelic literature dealer of the early 1900s under the name “Victor Marsh”  
• Purchased many libraries but most famous purchase was Moens’ two-ton stock of philatelic literature in 1907 for £570

Major Edward B. Evans  
(1846 – 1922)  
• Specialised in Mauritius and later Confederate States, the Mulready, and Indian States  
• Editor of *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal* and *Gibbons Stamp Weekly*  
• RDP 1921
Hofrath V. Suppantschitsch
(1838 – 1919)
• Library of German-language philatelic literature up to 1900 was the most complete
• Compiled bibliographies of German literature
• His books found their way to *Collectors Club of New York*

Dr. Emilio Diena
(1860 – 1941)
• Greatest Italian philatelist?
• Specialised in the stamps of Italy and States and wrote many monographs on them
• Library still maintained by Diena family
• RDP 1921

William R. Ricketts
(1869 – 1956)
• Greatest philatelic indexer with: *The American Philatelic Society Philatelic Index* (A-G) and *The Philatelic Literature Bibliography Index* (A-Library)
• One of the greatest philatelic bibliophiles of all time
• RDP 1921

Hiram E. Deats
(1870 – 1963)
• Foremost US collector of postage and revenue stamps of US and Confederate States
• Prolific Literature Collector
• Lost the chance to acquire the Tiffany library to Lord Crawford in 1901
• RDP 1933
## OFFICE BEARERS

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<th>1907 – 1913</th>
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<td>President</td>
<td>E. D. Bacon</td>
<td>B. T. K. Smith</td>
<td>L. W. Fulcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>B. T. K. Smith</td>
<td>L. W. Fulcher</td>
<td>F. J. Peplow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hon. Secretary</td>
<td>F. J. Peplow</td>
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<td>E. B. Evans</td>
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MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

Peak membership touched 84 at the end of 1911 and 1914 before falling sharply next year to 68.

In 1915, eight enemy members and nine other members removed for non-payment of subscription dues.

111 different names became the Society’s members during its existence.
DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY

Society ceased activities with publication of the last issue of the Journal in 1918

Attempt made in May 1922 to reconstruct the Society and a Provisional Council appointed

Society published the Supplement to the Crawford Catalogue in Jun 1926 for which funds had long been earmarked

Finally dissolved in 1929 when the balance of the funds in hand, £118, was divided equally and presented to RPSL and the Junior Philatelic Society for their libraries

Copies of the Crawford Catalogue and its supplement presented to libraries across the world and remaining stock of publications handed over to the Royal for sale or presentation

What brought about the demise?

- Bacon appointed as the Curator of the King’s Philatelic Collections in late 1913 and had resigned as President of the Society
- Peplow sold his library in Mar 1917 and Smith his in Apr 1918 indicating their waning interest in literature
- In the years to its dissolution, it became clear that the Society’s work could not be continued due to lack of volunteers
Issued from Jan 1908 to Jul/Dec 1918 – 43 issues

100 numbers of each issue were printed only for members

- Unnumbered copies exist especially of the latter years because members at any point in time always lower than copies printed.
- Numbers beyond 100 exist (highest 107 recorded) probably because new members not allotted numbers of resigned or removed members

Vol. I No. 1 had an extra 50 printed for review purposes with a note no *exchange copies* would be sent out in the future!

Complete runs are rare; possibly 22-24 in all

Finally it is the most valuable philatelic journal in the world
EDITORS OF THE JOURNAL

King-Farlow has the editor as F. J. Peplow throughout its 43 issues

Some others think Smith or Bacon could have been editors or co-editors

Perusal of last page of each number indicates editorship was shared:

- 12 issues from Jan 1908 to Dec 1910 edited by Peplow
- 25 issues from Jan 1911 to Jan 1917 edited by B. T. K. Smith
- Peplow took over again for six issues from Apr 1917 to Jul/Oct 1918

The Journal of the Philatelic Literature Society is issued to Members only. All communications respecting the Journal must be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. F. J. Peplow, 185, Barry Road, Dulwich, S.E., to whom matters relating to the Advertisement Supplement must also be sent.

No. 2 of the Journal will be published on April 15th, and correspondence relating thereto must reach the Hon. Secretary not later than March 20th. It is, however, earnestly requested that such correspondence may be sent at as early a date as possible after the publication of the present Number.

Impression.—Of this Number of the Journal 100 copies have been printed for Members of the Society, of which this copy is No. 2. In addition, 50 unnumbered copies have been printed for review and specimen purposes.
PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JOURNAL

Oversized Grey Card Covers: measuring approx. 31 x 24 cm / 12.2 x 9.5 inches

Handmade Watermarked Paper: measuring approx. 29.5 x 23 cm / 11.6 x 9 inches

Deckled Edges
Center Sew Binding
Characteristics lost when bound
CONTENTS OF THE JOURNAL

Long Works
- Bibliographies of Periodicals
- Bibliographies of Publications of Dealers / Collectors / Authors
- Holdings of Philatelic Libraries of Societies and Collectors
- Miscellaneous Instructional Articles
- Announcements and Society Reports

Short Snippets
- Notes on various philatelic works, mainly journals (~ 400)
- Smaller Library Reports (~ 100)
- Queries and Replies

Illustrative Plates
- Stamp Catalogues
- Early Journals
- Price Lists
The Publications of Alfred and Stafford Smith.
A Paper read before the Philatelic Literature Society, July 16th, 1929.
By BERTHAM T. K. SMITH.

Dr. Gray and his Catalogues.
A Paper read before the Philatelic Literature Society, February 26th, 1908.
By FRED. J. MELVILLE.

The Philatelic Writings of Judge F. A. Philbrick, K.C.
By E. D. BACON.

The Philatelic Publications of M. Pierre Mahe.
(1875-1896).
By B. T. K. SMITH.

The Philatelic Publications of E. L. Pemberton.
By F. J. PELOW.

The Early Publications of J.-B. Moens.
The first work issued by the late J.-B. Moens was his "Manuel du Collectionneur de Timbres-poste," the preface of which is dated January 1892. Of these there are two varieties, one having on the title-page and wrapper the imprint of Moens (Brussels) and the other the imprints of Moens (Brussels) and other imprints of Moens (Brussels) and other imprints of Moens (Brussels) and other imprints of Moens (Brussels) and other imprints of Moens (Brussels) and other imprints of Moens (Brussels).

Imprint on title-page.
Imprint on wrapper.

Varieties a, b, and c were illustrated in the Journal of 1925 (Vol. VI, Plate III, VIII); variety d we have not seen, but it is given in the Crawford Catalogue. The wrapper is pale green in colour, except in the case of varieties b, where it is dark green. The only known impression of the wrapper is issued in 1925. (Vol. VI, Plate III, VIII).
OTHER ARTICLES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
BOOK REVIEWS
PLATES OF JOURNALS AND CATALOGUES
A total of 688 pages across the 43 issues

78 plates consisting of 180 illustrations

Average pages per issue was 15 to 22 depending on the year
THE SUPPLEMENTS TO THE JOURNAL
SUPPLEMENTS TO THE JOURNAL

- Advertisement Supplements to the Journal
- Six Supplements to the Journal
- Other ‘Short’ publications circulated with the Journal
One of the objectives of the Society was: “to provide a medium for the sale and exchange of duplicates”

Printed on light bluish-grey machine-made trimmed paper and sewn with the main pages of the Journal

Issued *gratis* with Journal and could be bought by non-members for 2s6d.

Likely 100 or a little more printed per issue apart from Jan 1909 for which 250 extra printed

Possibly only four or five runs of Journal exist with their advertisement supplements intact
MORE ON THE ADVERTISEMENT SUPPLEMENTS

Supplements such as advertisements, inserts, etc. give a flavour of the times:

• Who were the dealers?
• What items were available and popular?
• What prices were prevailing?
• In this particular case, what were the wants of bibliophiles who advertised?

Advertisers included:

• Victor Marsh, the sole consistent advertiser throughout (12 of 29 pp)
• Earl of Crawford through Stanley Gibbons, Ltd.
• Noted bibliophiles - collectors and dealers
ADVERTISERS: BIBLIOPHILES AND DEALERS
DEMISE OF THE ADVERTISEMENT SUPPLEMENTS

Eight issues in initial three years (4 + 2 + 2) carried a total of 29 pp

Advertisement Supplements saw only limited interest even in the first year

Attempt made to improve response by printing 250 extra copies with Vol. II No. 1 (Jan 1909) for “gratuitous circulation”

“Lack of support” and falling revenues led to supplement being printed twice a year instead of quarterly

Falling advertisement revenues saw the supplement being discontinued with Vol. III No. 4 (Oct 1910)

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Council have decided to print 250 extra copies of the Advertisement Supplement for January, 1909, for gratuitous circulation among Non-Members of the Society interested in Philatelic Literature.

It is hoped that this greatly extended issue will induce Members to send Special Lists of Wants and Offers, which should secure exceptional publicity among Collectors and Dealers.

The charge for Advertisement Space to Members is practically the cost of Printing, and this issue will give Members an opportunity of having their Lists printed in a convenient form.

All copy for this number must be in the hands of the Hon. Secretary not later than 1st January, 1909.
SIX SUPPLEMENTS TO THE JOURNAL...1

Issue Number: Vol. I No. 4 (October 1908)
Compiled by H. Edgar Weston
Print Run of 150. Price 2s6d for non-members

Issue Number: Vol. II No. 3 (July 1909)
Compiled by B. T. K. Smith since Index to Vol IV was not issued
Print run likely 100
SIX SUPPLEMENTS TO THE JOURNAL...2

Issue Number: Vol. V No. 1 (January 1912)
Compiled by B. T. K. Smith since title page or index to Vol IV not issued
Print Run of 100

Issue Number: Vol. II No. 4 (October 1909)
Compiled by B. T. K. Smith since original index incomplete
Print run likely 100
SIX SUPPLEMENTS TO THE JOURNAL...3

Issue Number: Vol. V No. 1 (July 1912)
Compiled and printed by H. E. Deats in Dec 1900
Print run not known

Issue Number: Vol. XI No. 3-4 (July - October 1918)
Compiled by W. R. Ricketts and printed by Deats in 1917
Print run 225; 100 made available to Journal
Portrait of the late Earl of Crawford

In memorium of Lord Crawford, the greatest bibliophile

Issue Number: Vol. VI No. 2 (April 1913)

Portrait of P.J. Anderson

In honour of valuable contributions to Journal

Issue Number: Vol. XI No. 3-4 (July/October 1918)
OTHER “SHORT” PUBLICATIONS OF THE SOCIETY…2

Statutes of the Society and List of Members (1908)

• Issue Number: Vol. I No. 4 (October 1908)
• Seven articles unchanged throughout. Members comprised 13 societies and 41 individuals

A Check List of Philatelic Publications in the English Language for the year 1909 (1910)

• Issue Number: Vol. III No. 4 (October 1910)
• Portion of checklist concerning Great Britain and its Colonies published in Stamp Collector of Sep 1910 by William R. Ricketts

Statutes, List of Members, Publications of the Society (1912)

• Issue Number: Vol. V No. 3 (July 1912)
• New impression of the work similar to one published in 1908


• Issue Number: Vol. IX No. 3 or 4 (July or October 1916)
• New edition of the statues along with list of members and details of publications
The Philatelic Literature Society and its Journal had a brief but glittering career.

Complete run of the Journal hallmark of a serious philatelic bibliophile’s library.

What would constitute “completeness”?  
- 43 Issues
- 43 Issues + Covers
- 43 Issues + Covers + Advertisement Supplements
- 43 Issues + Covers + Advertisement Supplements + Six Supplements and “Short” Publications

First reprint of the Journal edited by Dr. Wolfgang Maassen has made it accessible.

Photo Courtesy: HH Sales