

Curiosities from my Collection

We all have curiosities in our collections, don't we? Just the odd scrap which caught the eye on a sales table or in a packet, very often not connected with our main stream collecting. The words '*what on earth is that?*' spring to mind. And of course a little curiosity may set us off in a new direction – the Georg V overprinted with IEF or CEF did that for me. IEF? Indian Expeditionary Force. I was to find that there is a list of Forces Post Offices (FPOs) for the period from which we can trace the movements of the army. CEF – China Expeditionary Force – but why were we in China? ... was it because of the Boxer Rebellion? ... er, let me look at the dates ... and another interesting line of research opens up.



Sometimes the scrap of paper to which the stamp is stuck is interesting in itself. Here is an Indian 5 Anna stamp which has been used fiscally and stuck on shipping documents which have nice engraved headings even if incomplete. (Ross Line – something Ross?) The stamps are very heavily embossed by way of cancellation using a beautiful triangular embossing tool. This one dates from 1874.



Still in India I came across these stamps with overprinted letters and wondered what they were. Dr Brown soon came up with the answer. They are of course used as telegraph stamps sliced in half horizontally by way of cancellation (I hope I have that right) and by careful collection we can read the city of issue – in this case Karachi - stolen from the Internet so that you can see the whole thing. Usually we find odd stamps with half the city on them to piece together.



If you have curiosities in your collection I'm sure our Editor, Susan Taylor, would like to know about them.
Charles