

# THE PALIMPSEST

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## Stamps as Hobbies

Stamp collecting represents the largest single hobby in the United States—or perhaps for that matter the World. Ever since the first United States stamp was issued in 1847 (just six months after Iowa became a State) a steadily mounting interest in postage stamps has been manifested by Americans. Prior to World War I, added interest developed with the issuance of various United States Commemorative stamps.

During the past half century a wide variety of specialists have developed among philatelists. Some specialize only in United States stamps, or in the stamps of Canada, Mexico, South America, Central America, or the islands of the Caribbean. The stamps of England, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia, and other European countries have their devotees. The continents of Africa and Asia, or special countries within these vast areas, afford a fertile field for collectors. Pre-cancelled stamps, plate number blocks, postmarks, meter advertising, and revenues offer still other opportunities for



stamp enthusiasts. The field has become so large that specialists have developed in a wide variety of subjects — art and architecture, literature and music, religion and education, trains, ships and airplanes, animals, birds and fish, kings, queens and presidents, rivers, lakes and waterfalls, maps, inventions and sports, exploration and discovery, and a score of others.

One of the largest, fastest growing fields of philately deals with First Day Covers. By 1965 the "First Day of Issue" had become so well-advanced that the Washington Press of Maplewood, New Jersey, was publishing an 88-page catalogue (already in its 32nd edition) which divided the various First Day Covers as follows:

Section A — Air Mail Issues

Section B — Air Mail Stamped Issues

Section C — Commemorative Issues

Section D — Commemorative Stamped Envelopes

Section E — Regular Issues

Section F — Regular Issues Stamped Envelopes

Section G — Coils, Imperforates, Booklet Panes

Section H — State Overprint Stamps (Kansas and Nebraska)

Section I — Certified Mail, Special Delivery, Special Handling

Section J — Postal Cards

In addition to the above, the book contained similar categories in the United Nations Issues.