

## ***From the Stamp Specialist, Part One:***

*Where I could not find color replacements, I retained the black & white images from the original article. In addition, I have interspersed on separate pages relevant images, placing them as close as possible to the appropriate text pages. Rounding out the study will be additional images and descriptions not covered by the author. JFD.*



### **SIAM-THAILAND**

*By Adolph Klingenstein*

*(From the Stamp Specialist 1943 Green Book)*

**S**SIAM, or Thailand, as it is now called, is a very interesting country, both for the general collector and for the specialist. In the regular issues, there are but sixteen used varieties and twenty-nine unused varieties that are priced at \$10.00 or more, and there are many opportunities for plating, for discovering unlisted varieties, and for assembling interesting cancellations.

For the collector of limited means, Siam is an ideal country. The number of normal postage stamps issued is 163, the number of justified surcharges is only 84, so that even including these overprints the total is but 247. In addition to this, there are about 200 minor varieties, making a grand total of 447. This of course does not include the semi-postals or airmail stamps. The great majority of these can be obtained for a few cents each and a representative collection of beautiful and well printed stamps can be assembled at a very small cost. It is worthy of note that until 1920, a period of thirty-seven years, not a single error in perforation took place.

The first issue appeared in 1883, and consisted of five values. There are many minor varieties in this issue, however, and #1 comes both imperforate and imperforate horizontally. These varieties are very elusive, but this gives interest to the chase.

About the year 1900, a large quantity of remainders of the first issue, with the exception of the 1 Att value, was sold by the Post Office Department, and this fact accounts for the number of unused specimens that are now obtainable. Genuinely used copies of all values are far rarer than catalog prices indicate. Many of the used copies bearing both Siamese and English postmarks are either improperly applied or are pure fakes.

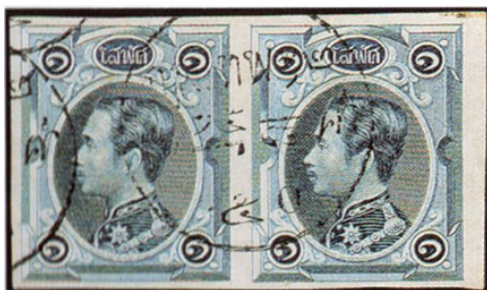
Postally used copies on original covers of this first issue are rarities of the first water. The late Charles J. Phillips once told me that he only recalled having seen two covers and these were both in the Row collection now in the London



Thailand 1883 First Issue, left to right:  
 1 sol blue, 1 att carmine, 1 sio vermilion, 1 sik yellow, 1 salung orange (Sc. 5)



1 sol blue (Sc. 1) strip of four with 1 sik yellow (Sc. 4) and 1 salung orange (Sc. 5) on cover to Singapore, tied by Bangkok/P/Paid/21.1.87 circular date stamp (c.d.s.) with Singapore /Jal 2.87 arrival backstamp.



1 Sol indigo shade, Imperf pair, Sc. 1b

Museum. I myself have seen less than half-a-dozen covers, which were in the collection of Hans Lagerloef, Philip H. Ward, and a few others, but one of the finest of all I believe to be the one which I am showing in the accompanying illustration. At the time these issues appeared, Siam was a particularly backward country, so that correspondence was not extensive, and, in addition to this, very few of the covers which were used have been saved.



One of Philately's Real Rarities, Unique. A registered cover with 2 pairs of the 1 songpy value, Scott's No. 4. From Bangkok to Louisville, Ky., via Hong Kong.

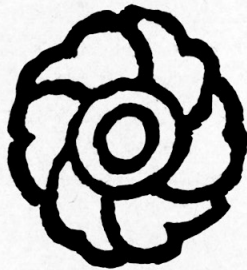
The large number of surcharges issued by Siam has had its effect in making the stamps unpopular, largely due to the fear of collectors that there must be many counterfeits. A great number of them are to be found in the 1885 issue, when a change of rates required a surcharge of a new Tical value on the #1 stamp. The Tical surcharges of Siam present one of the most difficult problems that the specialist has to contend with. The fact that the surcharge multiplied the face value of the 1 Solot stamp 128 times made it a tempting field for the forger, who made them to defraud the government as well as the collector. As a result, the study of this provisional has been greatly complicated and until recently doubt existed as to the precise identity of the genuine types. Many of the forgeries were very skillfully executed and it can be easily seen why they were accepted as genuine by the Post Office officials. The first student to make a special study of these surcharges was Mr. Holland in his book, "The Postage Stamps of Siam with Special Reference to the Issues of 1889-1900," which was published by the *Boston Philatelic Society* in 1904. He described four distinct types. Shortly after the appearance of this book, Bertram W. H. Poole in the *Philatelic Journal of Great Britain* showed five types which he claimed were genuine. Mr. Row, an outstanding specialist in these issues, stated that there were more forgeries than genuine copies to be found among the stamps on the market. At the present time, about twenty forgeries have been identified and are known to have been issued.



1885 Tical surcharge  
issue, Sc. 8  
Type 1 surcharge



Cover to Switzerland with 1885 Tical surcharge Type 2 surcharge  
tied by Bangkok P Paid November 22, 1886 c.d.s and St. Gallen  
December 25, 1886 arrival marking on reverse



**The Chakr. or so-called Boomerang Watermark as it appears on the stamps of the 1887-91 issue.**

The succeeding issue of Siam was printed on paper with a Chakr watermark, sometimes called a Boomerang, and this is the only issue that was printed on watermarked paper. As the postal rates changed frequently at this period, this particular issue was extensively surcharged, and the specialist can find innumerable varieties. Both Roman and Antique type were used in making the surcharges, and occasionally one will find a mixture of both types on the same surcharge. Some of the surcharges even appear on the back of the stamps. Despite these innumerable surcharges, there is little reason to believe that they were made for philatelic purposes. They were the best that could be done with local print shops so that collectors really wishing to make a study of these stamps find them very interesting. Only a very small number are listed in Scott's Catalog.

The 1899 issue owes its existence to the fact that the King decided that he would like to have his own picture on the stamps but when he saw the proofs of the finished product they did not meet with his approval and he ordered them all destroyed. However, a few of them did get out, especially through the post office of Korat, Puket-Battambang, and many were used before they could be called in. The original printing consisted of 1,000,000 of each value but only 10,000 of the three lower values and 5,000 of the two higher values were ever issued. They are quite rare on cover. I don't believe the 4 and 10 Atts were ever genuinely used. All were postmarked, however, at Korat in December 1899, evidently to order.

In 1900, with the change of rate, a new issue was again called for, with many new values. At this time, a design of the King was secured that met with his approval, and this issue was used until 1906. During this period, some additional surcharges were made necessary because of the exhaustion of the 1 att and 2 att values.

In 1906, the design was changed to a very beautiful bi-colored issue which really struck the fancy of stamp collectors. In 1907, however, higher values were demanded, to prepay postage on foreign shipments, so that fiscal stamps were surcharged for the 10, 20 and 40 Tical values. Not many of these were issued and they are all very rare. This naturally has led to some counterfeiting on the fiscal stamps but these can frequently be determined by the fact that the counterfeiters did not always use the correct fiscal values on which to place their surcharges. Expertly repaired stamps must also be guarded against in these higher values, for many of them were used on bags of mail for China and the Chinese had a habit of cutting slits in the stamps before returning them.



1887 King Chulalongkorn issue (Sc. 11-18) Trial Color Proof in colors of the 24 att (Sc. 17) with 4 cents tablet value in Chinese & Roman



1889-90 1 att on 2 att  
Sc. 25



1889-90 1 att on 3 att  
Sc. 26



1889-90 2 att on 64 att  
Sc. 42



1889-90 10 att on 24 att  
Sc. 57



1899 rejected issue  
4 att. Sc. 73



1899 rejected issue  
10 att. Sc. 74, with  
Korat cancellation



1899 accepted issue  
24 att. Sc. 87



1902 10a on 12 a  
Battambang provisional,  
Sc. 85a



1905 New design  
24a, Sc. 104



1907 20 Tical on  
Fiscal issue, Sc. 107

In 1908, a shortage of 1 att value again developed and of the various surcharges that appeared at this time, the 2 att on 24 and the 9 att on 10 are the scarcest. An unusual error occurred on this issue in the mistaken spelling reading "9 Hatts." According to records, only 600 of these were ever printed.

In 1908 a commemorative was issued to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the reign of King Chulalongkorn. Special cancellations were used on these issues and are very desirable. The 1 att stamp has one listed variety, which shows a Siamese 3 instead of a 2 in the third line, but there are a number of other varieties that are not listed. This variety was finally corrected by adding a stroke to the 3 which made it a 2 again. They are scarce enough to make the hunt interesting. There are enough other varieties, such as a small "i" in the word "Jubilee" to make it an interesting hunt for the specialist.

This brings us up to the Coronation Commemorative Issue of 1908, which in my opinion is one of the finest brought out by any country. The selection of complementary colors in each value was a particularly masterful job. The number issued was very small as compared to the usual number issued of other commemoratives and the 40 Tical is an especially rare item in mint condition. It took me many years to locate a fine copy of it.



**One value of the very attractive coronation commemorative issue of 1908, showing the statue of King Chulalongkorn, which was printed in superb color combinations.**

There are some interesting surcharges on the 1909-1910 issue, and the 14 s on 12 a, lilac and carmine, is an especial favorite with the writer. This item is seldom seen in used condition and in fact the entire issue is very elusive. In the same year, there appeared an entire issue surcharged in Satang values. For many years, the 2 s on 2 a, violet and slate, (Scott's #129) was an especially rare item, priced as high as \$60.00. This price was entirely justified at the time but a large find of sheets was made and they began to make their appearance in every auction sale. It was the writer who called this matter to the attention of Hugh M. Clark, editor of Scott's Catalog, and as a consequence he reduced the price to the \$4.00 at which it is now quoted. In the meantime, the entire find has been assimilated, so this stamp is certainly due for a rise, as only 9800 were printed.





1908 2a on 24a with inverted surcharge, Sc. 111a



1908 Jubilee Issue, left with Siamese date 137; right with date corrected to 127. [I cannot find the difference; if someone else can, please let us know. JFD.]



1908 Jubilee Issue, 4a on 5a, right stamp imperforate on three sides, Sc. 115a



1908 Coronation Commemorative 40 tical high value, mentioned by author, 1922 SCV \$950 mint.



1909 2s on 2a, Sc. 129, mentioned by author with an SCV of \$4.00 in 1941, 1922 SCV \$60 mint or used.

To Be Continued