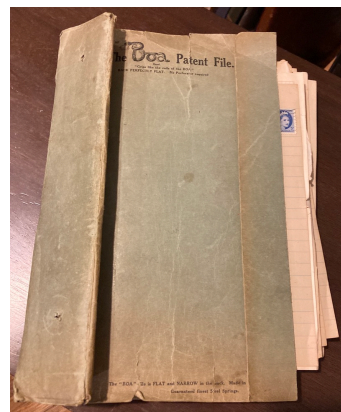


EYE ON THE SPARROW PART TWO

EDITOR'S NOTE: Herewith, the second part of my study of the philatelic sparrow, in which the author makes a closer study of the binder filled with humble stamps that recently came into his possession.

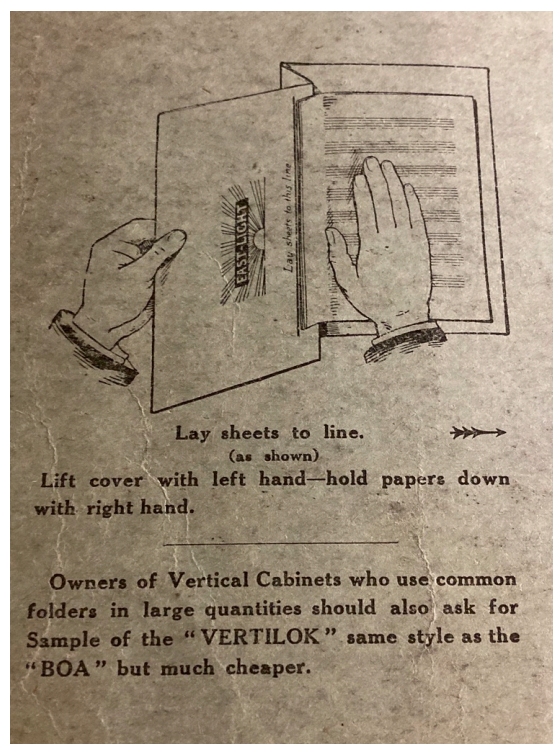


accompanying slogan reads: "Grips like the coils of a boa." The binder is undated, and sure is a century old at least. This curious stationary item is

explained in a couple of illustrations, which I will let you interpret as you may. Far as I know, the Boa Patent File never caught on, on either side of the Atlantic.

Since many of the stamps in the folder are from Britain, Canada and the Antipodes, I am inclined to think the collector who put this together was from England.

When I started paying attention to the contents of this bizarre folder, I quickly discovered a few items of note. I include them here, with captions. There also were isolated stamps from Great Britain and elsewhere that I didn't happen to have in my collection. So they were added. Some fun.





These stamps from Sarawak (above), a British colony that is now part of Indonesia — are 150 years old. They would be worth something, except for the fact that someone decided to cut off the perforations.



This charming little item (above) comes from Hastings, England, site of William the Conqueror's victory over the Anglo-Saxons in 1066. The bloody Norman Invasion is recalled in the postmark's cheeky message: "Hastings: Popular with Visitors Since 1066."

The next and

Above is a beautiful set from Bahawalpur, a state of Pakistan that issued its own distinctive stamps between 1947 and 1949. These particular labels are not for postage. They were used to signify court fees paid. "Revenue" stamps like these proliferated in the nineteenth and 20th centuries, to certify everything from dog licenses to marriages licenses, patents to playing cards. Most stamp collectors ignore revenue stamps. This collector included a few. (See more below.)





These revenue stamps from England serve a number of purposes, as noted. (The Army official stamp is not a revenue stamp.) The pale tints and portraits mark them as from the Victorian era, which ended with the queen's death in 1902. The lilac hues remind me of Miss Havisham's dusty parlor in Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations." Since I don't collect revenue stamps, I haven't bothered to try and find out their value.



These revenue and official labels come from Great Britain, India and Ireland. Notice the two dog-license stamps.



These old Victorian-era postage stamps from the Australian state of Queensland would be worth plenty, if they weren't so beat up. To his (or her) credit, this collector forthrightly noted each of the stamps' major flaws. No kidding.



At left the only U.S. revenue stamp included in the group. Notice the elegant portrait of George Washington and the intricate border. U.S. revenue stamps have their own catalogs and ardent collectors.

The next and concluding essay on this subject (whatever it is — oh yes, philatelic sparrows) focuses on the very common stamps, presented in profusion — a ubiquity of sparrows, if you will — that make up the bulk of this little collection. Don't miss it!

TO BE CONTINUED