



"RECORD MONTHLY"

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RECORD PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 175, CHRISTCHURCH.

STAMP WEEK AT CHRISTCHURCH

POSTAGE stamps, so they say, never depreciate in value and stamp collectors seem always to be increasing in numbers. Stamp congresses or conventions are the accepted thing in Britain and the United States, and the custom is now well established in New Zealand. The first New Zealand Congress was held at Wellington in 1922, and the sixth is to open at Christchurch on October 19. At the same time the week beginning October 15, is to be observed as Stamp Week in the city and an exhibition, including a comprehensive display by the Post and Telegraph Department, will be held.

The keenness of collectors is reflected in the scale of stamp values. At an International Philatelic exhibition just held in New York, the stamps on display were insured for more than a million dollars. The collection belonging to the late Alfred H. Caspary is being

sold at auction; the sales will spread over nearly two years, and it is expected that the collection will realise more than a million pounds. Here in New Zealand, the late Sir R. Heaton Rhodes's collection of New Zealand stamps will be placed on display at the Canterbury Museum. This collection is reputed to have a value in excess of £50,000, and it is confined to stamps of New Zealand.

New Zealand stamps are among the most popular with collectors. This popularity is attributable to the diversity of the issues, to the existence of exhaustive studies published by the Royal Philatelic Society of New Zealand, and to the co-operation given to collectors by the postal authorities.

An important historical set of stamps will appear early next year. This set is for the use of the New Zealand expedition under Sir Edmund Hillary, which will operate in the Antarctic. Inscribed Ross Dependency, two values of the set contain a map showing the location and extent of the Dependency. The highest value contains a portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and is similar to the present "Official" issue except that the Queen is shown facing left.

Postage stamps have been used to support territorial claims in the Antarctic. The stamps of the Falkland Island Dependencies have indicated the British view that large areas to the south of South America are claimed by Great Britain. Both Argentina and Chile have disputed this claim. Both countries have sent representatives to occupy stations in areas which they covet, and both have issued postage stamps for the purpose of delineating tracts for which they make territorial claims. The Australian Commonwealth has raised its flag on two sectors known as Australian Antarctic Territory, and a small sector known as Terre Adélie is claimed by France, which has recently issued postage stamps in support of her claim.

Because a Russian admiral, Bellingshausen, was in charge of an expedition in 1820, the U.S.S.R. has displayed an interest in the Antarctic, and it is possible that the Russians may stake a claim in the southern regions on the

grounds of discovery. America has, in the past, set her face against the acquisition of land in the southern continent, and has intimated that she does not recognise the claims of others.

There is a precedent for the provision of distinctive postage stamps for the New Zealand expedition, because, on two previous occasions, special issues have been provided by New Zealand for expeditions to the south polar regions. In 1907, Edward Shackleton was sworn in as a New Zealand postmaster by his friend, Sir Joseph Ward, and contemporary penny stamps of New Zealand were adapted for his use by having the inscription "King Edward VII Land" overprinted in green. In November, 1910, Robert Falcon Scott took the oath as a New Zealand postmaster. He was supplied with New Zealand stamps of the values of 1/2d and 1d, overprinted with the inscription "Victoria Land" in black.

A few of the stamps produced for the Shackleton and Scott expeditions were employed on mail written by members of the expeditions. The bulk of the issue of 1910 was attached to specially printed forms which were later sold at a high premium for the benefit of the funds of the expedition.

Not a great deal of interest was taken by stamp collectors in the issues of 1907 and 1910 when they appeared, but the situation will be entirely different next year. Many thousands of the stamps will be ordered by collectors, and the expedition may be embarrassed by the weight of mail which will have to be carried down to the New Zealand base so that it may pass through the post office there and thus receive the special date stamp of the expedition.

When Admiral Byrd led an expedition to Little America in 1933, the quantity of philatelic mail was so great that many of the envelopes were delayed for one year. A similar delay is expected with mail carried down by Admiral Byrd's latest expedition, "Operation Deep Freeze." The weight of the mail on this occasion was seventeen tons. Assuming that the envelopes have an average weight of 1/2 oz., it will be seen that a colossal number of souvenir covers would be represented.

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THE three pictorial stamps which will be used by the N.Z. Antarctic expedition. The 3d value is blue, the 4d cardinal, and in the 8d the land-masses are shown in cardinal and the remainder in ultramarine.

