

Cancellation Devices of the International Institute of Agriculture 1906-1946

Historical Background

The International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) was founded by David Lubin of Sacramento, California in 1905 while in Rome, with the financial support of King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy. The IIA was organized as an international non-governmental body in a 1906 conference with representatives of over 40 nations. It became the source of reports on agricultural law, statistics, plant diseases, fertilizers, entomology, soils, etc. This organization's importance in the development of worldwide agriculture cannot be overstated.

Exhibit Scope

Although the Institute utilized Italian postal services, it maintained an internal postal facility to track postage expenses of official mail. This marcophily exhibit presents examples of all Institute cancellation devices.

Exhibit Development

Exhibit development progresses chronologically by appearance of devices. Examples of service mail are used exclusively to demonstrate device use and illustrate the evolution of changes at the IIA postal facility. The demise of the Institute and its 1946 absorption by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is also shown through overprinted stationery.

Philatelic Knowledge and Research

Care is taken to ensure proper descriptions of philatelic elements to demonstrate knowledge of philately and includes information on cancel devices, rates, rarity or other justified information as appropriate. Personal research is evidenced through discovery of new device type IIA.S1B.



Discovery copy of IIA.S1B
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Condition and Rarity

Covers are selected for best condition, bearing in mind service mail is seldom pristine. Folds, creases, nicks, small tears or missing corners are indications of actual transit through the mail system of the time. The majority of IIA mail was printed matter, typically destroyed after receipt. Examples of IIA service mail may be found in League of Nations or FAO exhibits. Due to material scarcity (only 74 items reported/recorded in 40 years of use!), this is the only exhibit comprised solely of IIA material. Rarity of service covers is determined from published sources. The exhibitor maintains the international census of mail from the IIA. Key items are matted on sunflower/olive matts.

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|---|---------|
| • Earliest recorded service printed matter from the Institute device IIA.S1A | Page 1 |
| • Earliest recorded service mail from the Institute and datestamp device IIA.S1A | Page 2 |
| • Earliest recorded example of datestamp device IIA.S1B | Page 3 |
| • Printed matter with example of datestamp device IIA.S1B (Discovery Copy) | Page 3 |
| • Service cover from the office of David Lubin (1 recorded) | Page 4 |
| • Earliest recorded example of datestamp device IIA.S2 | Page 5 |
| • International Society of Soil Science service mail (2 recorded) | Page 7 |
| • Forwarded official mail from Italian Senate (1 recorded) | Page 8 |
| • Registered post card (2 reported) | Page 9 |
| • Overprinted IIA service stationery for use of the FAO (4 reported) | Page 12 |

Literature References

- David Lubin: The Grandfather of the FAO, *"The Journal"* (United Nations Philatelists, Inc), Vol 33, #4
- A FAO Forerunner Cover, *"The Journal"* (United Nations Philatelists, Inc), Vol 26, #3
- The Origins of the FAO, *"The Journal"* (United Nations Philatelists, Inc), Vol 29, #3
- The International Institute of Agriculture - 1910-1946, Fran Adams, 2020, Amazon Kindle Self-Publishing
- International Institute of Agriculture - Cover Census, <http://franadams.com/projects.html>