

Postal Service and Philately in U.S.
Dai Dingguo's Philatelic Articles

戴定国集邮文选

星条旗下的集邮和邮政

上海辞书出版社



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1945 年生于上海，1963 年入北京大学化学系就读。1984 年获理学硕士学位。后在上海同济大学化学系担任讲师，1987 年被评为同济大学优秀教师，同年获同济大学科研成果一等奖。1989 年应邀去美国亚利桑那州立大学化学系任访问学者和研究教授，从事相对论量子化学的科学研究，在国际学术杂志上发表学术论文 50 余篇。1993 年起为《上海集邮》“美国航讯”专栏写稿，并陆续为《集邮》、《文汇报》、《新民晚报》、《中国集邮报》和美国《世界周刊》等撰写专栏文章。他还积极参与组织当地华人华侨的爱国活动，写有大量宣传文章。



序

集邮在中国复苏以来，为之服务的书报杂志源源不断地诞生，目光敏锐的编辑自然不会忽略有价值的选题，上海辞书出版社在连续出版了若干种林霏开先生的集邮散文集后，试探性地向我约稿，我几乎不假思索地向他们建议：先编戴定国先生的作品选。这是因为，原先在报刊上发表的文章而有资格结集出版的，必是值得保留的作品，初次发表之时一定发挥过作用，而且今后还不时会有用处；我深知自己的作品主要供给资深集邮者参考，他们善于翻检原刊而又大多具有保存期刊的习惯，因此何时成书，反倒不太重要，而戴定国的作品读者面广，上至邮政部门发行邮票的决策人物，下涉还在集邮大厦前徘徊的“门外汉”，阅读他的作品都会获得开卷有益的效果，任何时期都会有相当数量的新读者。

邮政是集邮的基础，只有邮政通信发展了，大量发行邮票才师出有名。当今集邮业务的收入已占邮政业务总收入的很大比例，但另一方面，现在早已不是“家书抵万金”的年月了，先进的电话、传真和电子邮件既快又省，在人际交流中势不可挡地挤占着邮政信函的地位。邮政会不会衰退？集邮会不会萎缩？广大集邮爱好者对此都很关心，邮商们需要以此调整自己的计划，邮政部门也想了解发达国家的情况，于是戴定国身在异域所见所闻的通信掌故、邮政改革经验、邮票发行政策、新邮出台内幕，以及世界各国具体的新发行邮票等等，势必受到读者的普遍欢迎，读者称他的文章“为国内集邮者打开了一扇窗户”，林霏开说他“行文的特点是翔实、新鲜，对沟通大洋两岸、引进他山之石大有益处”。

戴定国出身在一个集邮的家庭里，父亲原是旧中国三大邮会之一的新光邮票会会员。上海市集邮协会成立之初，入会条件非常严格，必须展示相当水平的藏品，他父子俩却顺利地成为了早期的个人会员，而且都是拙编会刊《上海集邮》的忠实读者和作者。《上海集邮》每年举办“十大集邮新闻评选”，凡从大约四十条候选条目中选中七条以上的都可获得纪念品，当时类似的活动还不很多，因此参加者十分踊跃，每年都有上千人获赠，某年却有一位投票者，选十条中十条，根据刻板的规则，他并没有较其他投票者多得纪念品，但是他的名字已深深地印在了编者们的记忆里，那位观察力、分析力、判断力高人一等的投票者就是戴定国。

睽违数年后，我忽然收到他从美国寄来的稿件，原来他已从同济大学去了亚利桑那州立大学研究量子化学，那是一个生存竞争激烈和工作节奏紧张的地方，完全是出于对集邮的热爱，当他在国际一流的学术期刊上发表了多篇论文，在职业从事的科研工作中作出了优秀成绩，才又重拾癖好，在业余时间收集资料、写作邮文。那是 20 世纪 90 年代初，正是我国集邮队伍迅速发展，邮票发行工作和集邮活动都需借鉴经济发达国家经验的时候。我认定他有能力向各方面的读者正确传达美国邮票和美国集邮的现状，于是不断地给他“出题目”，他在彼岸则不懈地“做作业”。后来他告诉我，在星期一到星期五的科研工作之余，他每天都能写成一篇短小的邮文，但在星期六和星期日，他需要整整两天，才能完成一篇供《上海集邮》的稿件。我出的题目没有现成的答案，他对高难度题目的解答却具有浓厚的兴趣。

我在《上海集邮》为他特设的专栏名，最初叫“美国航讯”，后来彼此用 e-mail 联系，就改为“海外网讯”，请看其中的部分篇名：《美国的集邮人数和邮票市场》、《高学历高收入的美国集邮者》、《美国的畅销邮票和佳邮评选》、《美国近年邮票发行和集

邮状况》……每篇都需花费他的巨大劳动。他以一位自然科学研究者认真执着的工作作风,严谨缜密的治学态度,先进快捷的通讯手段,以及东方人特有的聪明睿智,来从事双休日的这项“文化消遣”,受惠的是集邮界的众多读者,其中,得天独厚最先享受的就是我。

他在《上海集邮》的专栏已进入第十一个年头,在此期间,他还曾先后为《集邮报》、《文汇报》、《新民晚报》、《中国集邮报》、《中国邮政报》和《生肖集邮》杂志等撰写邮文,并被世界发行量最大的集邮类刊物《集邮》杂志评为优秀作者。1997年起,他在美国和加拿大发行量最大的中文杂志《世界周刊》开辟“邮票天地”专栏,因内容丰富、文风活泼、语言生动而在美国和加拿大华人中具有广泛的影响。

科学家是讲究工作效率的,戴定国为了取得美国的集邮资料,他加入了美国集邮协会,并向美国集邮界介绍中国的集邮状况,于是他肩负了双向沟通大洋两岸集邮文化的使命。他的成绩很快受到美国邮政总局的重视,并随时向他提供新邮发行资料。在美国邮政总局和集邮媒体的定期对话会上,在美国年度邮票图稿揭幕式上,他是唯一被邀请与会的华人。

从庆贺香港回归祖国的时候起,戴定国积极地投入了当地华侨的爱国社会活动,主要担任宣传方面的工作;从他的邮文中,我们也能看到他身在异邦,心系华夏的满腔赤忱。

本书由戴定国自选,都是历年来海内外报刊上发表的邮文,结集前并经作者作了必要的增删。

邵 林

2003年1月

Preface

Ever since the revival of philately in China, a continuous stream of philatelic newspapers and journals were launched and established. An editor with a keen eye certainly will not neglect any valuable topics. After publishing several philatelic prose collections of Mr. Lin Feikai, the editors of Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House explored possible future projects with me. Without hesitation, I recommended they publish the best of Mr. Dai Dingguo's articles into a book before all else. If any published newspapers or journals articles are worth keeping for a long time, they are qualified to be published in a book. I know that my own articles mainly are used as a guide for senior philatelists who often have the habit of keeping original journals for easy references. Thus it is not very important to publish my book immediately. Mr. Dai's readers cross a wide spectrum, from philatelic lovers, to laymen who are new to philately, as well as policy maker of stamp issue in the headquarters of Post Department. Reading his articles always leave the reader with a sense of growth and newfound wisdom. That is why his articles always attract so many new readers.

The foundation of philately is the postal service. Issuing huge quantities of stamps must be coupled with the advancement and progress in the postal service. Philately has become a significant source of postal income. On the other hand, letter mailing has decreased in popularity, as fast and cheap communication channels such as telephone, fax and e-mails have become the preferred way of

communication for many people. The time of "A letter from home is worth ten thousand pieces of gold" is over. Will postal service fade away? Is philately facing possible extinction? Many stamp collectors concern about these subjects. Stamp dealers need to adjust their plans accordingly, and the headquarters of postal service wants to get more information on the postal service in the developed countries.

Mr. Dai Dingguo resides in the United States. His articles are welcome by the readers for their timeliness in introducing interesting philatelic stories, experiences of postal reform, policies of stamp issue, background of new stamp designs in U. S. and many other countries. These are few of the reasons why his articles are wildly popular amongst many readers. Readers call his articles an open window to the world for Chinese stamp collectors. Mr. Lin Feikai, The famous philatelic writer, expressed his appreciation for Mr. Dai's article, stating the distinguishing features of Dai's article are full and accurate materials, fresh and insightful, greatly beneficial in bridging both sides of the Pacific Ocean for education and exchange.

Dai Dingguo was born in a philately family. His father was a member of Xin-Guang (new light) Stamp Association, one of the three famous stamp associations in the old China. During the early period of Shanghai Philately Association, the requirements for the membership were very strict. Everybody had to show a quality personal stamp collection in order to be approved for membership. Both his father and Mr. Dai himself were accepted as two of the earliest members, as well as faithful readers and authors of "Shanghai Philately" edited by me.

Every year "Shanghai Philately" conducted a poll to vote for Top Ten Philately News out of about 40 candidates. Winners were

awarded souvenirs if he picked at least 7 correct items. Such activities were not common during the 1980's, so many stamp collectors were eager to vote. Thousands of people were award souvenirs every year, however, there was one person who picked all ten correct items one year. According to the rules, there was no extra prizes, but his name was remembered by all editors. That person with superb observation, analyze skills and judgment is Dai Dingguo.

It has been years since Mr. Dai departed from Tong Ji University in Shanghai to engage in scientific research of quantum chemistry in Arizona State University in U. S. One day I received his manuscript from the U. S. There is always an intense tempo of work and struggle for existence in the U. S. After publishing several academic thesis in first-rate international scientific journals and achieving excellent results in his area of research, he picked up his hobby and started collecting data and writing philately articles during his spare time.

In the early part of the 1990's, there was rapid development of philatelic team in China. Both the new stamp issues and philatelic activities were modeling after the experiences of developed countries. I was convinced that Mr. Dai is very qualified to report and analyze the situation of stamp and philately in U. S. correctly to readers in China. I continued to give him topics of interest from our readers, and he always did his best writing articles to meet expectations of Chinese stamp collectors. Later he told me that he could write one short article each night during weekdays, but for the Shanghai Philately articles, he would often spend an entire Saturday plus Sunday. There was no readily available answer to any of my article topics. He enjoys the challenge of solving problem with high degree of difficul-

ties.

I set up a special column for him in Shanghai Philately called U. S. Air News. Over the next several years, since we mainly communicate by e-mail, the column's name was changed to The Net News Overseas. Please take a quick glance at some of the topics in his column: The Population of Stamp Collectors and the Stamp Market in U. S., The U. S. Stamp Collectors with High Education and High Income, The Top-Selling Stamps and Popularity Polls in U. S., The Situation of U. S. Stamp Issues and Philately in Recent Years, etc. He exerted great efforts in writing each article. Each weekend, he takes up writing as his favorite pastime with the serious astuteness of a nature scientist-meticulous, intelligent, and highly efficient. Many readers benefit from reading his articles and I always have the privilege of being the first one to enjoy them.

It is the 11th year of his column in Shanghai Philately now. During this period he wrote many interesting and valuable philatelic articles for Philately News, Wen Hui News, Xinmin Evening News, China Philately News, China Post News, Zodiac Philately, etc. He was awarded as an Excellent Philately Author by the monthly Philately, which has the most readers among all philately journals in the world. In 1997 he started a special column called Stamp Field in World Journal Weekly, which has the most circulation among all Chinese newspapers and journals published in the U. S. and Canada. His articles in this column have a wide influence on Chinese people who live in the U. S. and Canada, for their substantial content and lively writing style.

Scientists often stress efficiency in their work. To getting more information, Mr. Dai joined the American Philatelic Society. He in-

roduced Chinese philately to the U. S. and undertook the task of linking up philatelic culture between both sides of the Pacific Ocean. Soon his efforts were recognized by the United States Postal Service. His name is on the USPS media list to receive advance postal news on new releases and other media matters. He is the only Chinese journalist invited to attend the semiannual United States Postal Service/Philatelic Media Meetings, as well as to the unveiling ceremony of new stamp designs each year.

Mr. Dai has made many positive contributions to the activities of local Chinese societies since the time of Hong Kong returning to China. In his philatelic articles we can also see his love, enthusiasm and sincerity for China.

The articles in this book are selected by Mr. Dai. All of them were published in philatelic newspapers and journals in China or U. S. in recent years. The author made the necessary additions and deletions for some articles.

Shao Lin
January 2003

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