Synopsis: **“How Franklin D. Roosevelt Collected Worldwide Stamps”**

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This innovative article addresses unusual subject matter, as it focuses on details of how President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) collected worldwide stamps based on careful analysis of the more than three hundred intact original album pages and over five thousand stamps personally mounted by FDR that are now in my reference collection. No previous study has ever had access to such a wealth of original material, as there is a virtual absence of FDR’s personal stamp album pages in museum collections. The article carefully analyses FDR’s hand-written notations and the arrangement he chose in laying out these album pages himself on blank quadrille paper, showing numerous examples and thereby definitively demonstrating FDR’s approach to collecting worldwide stamps.

Stamp collecting was an especially important part of FDR’s life and perhaps his primary means of relaxation. According to his White House Physician Admiral Ross McIntire, “Roosevelt spent well over two thousand hours while he was president tending to his collection.” The collection provided him with much needed solace while he dealt with the stress of combating the Great Depression and later leading the Allies to victory during World War II.

The wide publicity that FDR avidly collected stamps helped lead to a “Golden Age of Stamp Collecting” for the hobby, and FDR’s stamp collecting is also of some historical importance. For example during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill records watching FDR relaxing with his stamps, and FDR’s military advisors were often surprised by the depth of his knowledge about the geography of remote regions in the Pacific Ocean, something FDR attributed to his lifelong interest in stamp collecting. In fact, men such as Admiral Ernest King and General George C. Marshall grew accustomed to seeing FDR with his stamp collection when visiting the White House. Thus, it might be argued that a study of original album pages from FDR’s personal stamp collection and how he collected stamps, is of importance in providing insight into one of the greatest historical figures of the twentieth century.

“How Franklin D. Roosevelt Collected Worldwide Stamps” provides thorough treatment of a challenging subject, and the great impact of FDR on the hobby of stamp collecting can hardly be overstated. However, the wide dispersal of FDR’s stamp collection in the 1946 H. R. Harmer auctions has made addressing this topic especially difficult, but with perserverance and luck, the author has been able to accumulate enough material for definitive study. The results presented in this article provide important new information for readers that will be of lasting value, both to the hobby of stamp collecting itself and to those who are interested in this aspect of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s life.