

Tip 351- Writing About your Material may allow you to Improve your Exhibit

I think we have all had the experience that when we write something for publication, we more often than not, learn more about the subject than we knew before we began. I was recently reminded that additional positive things can happen as well. When we write for publication, we may be able to enhance our exhibit.

I was writing an article about a very obscure revenue subject (Provisional “Notarial” overprints on Queen Victoria Foreign Bill stamps of India) and I wanted to be thorough. I went through my material, my notes and the standard reference work on the subject (yes, there is one) to make sure I knew the full scope of the subject. In addition, I went through everything listed on eBay to ensure I found everything that might be relevant. I examined, very carefully, each of the items that came up as search results.

To my surprise, I found, and now own, two previously unreported varieties of one of these provisional overprints. I may have seen the varieties before, while they were listed on eBay, but I never looked carefully enough to see that these were new varieties until I was getting ready to write about the subject.

The article I wrote was a pretty good article. As a result of my being thorough, it was complete, up-to-date and contributed to the literature. More significantly, from an exhibiting perspective, as a result of setting out to prepare an article, not only did I learn more, but I discovered new items (previously ‘hiding’ in plain sight) and I’ve improved my exhibit. Not only did I improve my exhibit, but I anticipate receiving higher ratings from judges when they review my exhibit. One of the indicators of knowledge – an element that is scored during the judging process – is published articles. When I submit a synopsis, I will cite myself for this section of the exhibit. Another element that is scored is research. New discoveries count as research. All this was due to deciding to write a small area of my overall exhibit of Indian Revenue Stamps During the Reign of Edward VII.

For those who are curious, details of the provisional overprints are shown below.

1 Rupee EDVII Foreign Bill overprinted “Notarial” in black after 1903, date uncertain

Three varieties of the black overprint are known as shown in Figures 351-1, 351-2 and 351-3. The varieties shown in Figures 351-2 and 351-3 are previously unrecorded.

Figures 351-1a, 351-2a and 351-3a show these differences in the overprints.

Figures

351-1



351-1a



351-2



351-2a



351-3



351-3a



The three types vary in the following manner:

Type 1: Sans Serif letters, at the base of the King's portrait and within the inner frame lines (Figure 351-1);

Type 2: Serif letters, across the upper portion of the King's head extending across the width of the entire stamp (Figure 11); and

Type 3: Serif letters, across the lower part of the King's head slightly wider than the inner frame lines and with a stop (period) after the word (Figure 12).

Who knows what other discoveries may be waiting in plain sight?