

Tip 178 - Your title Page sets the stage for your exhibit – make it stupendous

It is frequently said that the first page in an exhibit, the Title Page, is the last one prepared. It is only after the exhibit is completed and the exhibit plan is completed that the Title Page can be finalized.

One danger for exhibitors is that if the Title Page is the last page prepared, it may not have as complete of a review or revision process as some of your other pages, to allow you to make it as good as possible. It occasionally happens that in the rush to get an exhibit ready for a show, shortcuts are taken in finalizing the Title Page. Try to avoid this. Prepare drafts of your title page throughout your exhibit development process and revise them as you revise your exhibit. Make the Title Page the last page finished, not the last page written.

John Hotchner has discussed in other philatelic publications, and I have echoed his sentiment here, that gold medal exhibits have gold medal pages including gold medal Title Pages. Figure 178-1 is the title page from James Maxwell's *China's U.S. Constitution Commemoratives: Through-the-line Usages.*, This exhibit was awarded the Single Frame Grand Award; the title page is a Grand Award Title Page.

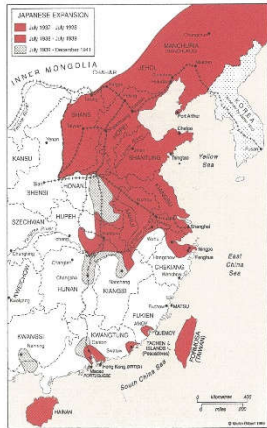
China's U. S. Constitution Commemoratives: Through-the-Line Usages

On July 4, 1939, China issued four stamps commemorating the 150th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution. The Japanese attempted to prohibit their use in the occupied areas and, after Pearl Harbor, even visited stamp shops and collectors to confiscate the stamps. In 1931 Japan had conquered northeastern China and created the puppet state of Manchukuo. The Japanese were angered by the map on the stamps which still showed Manchukuo as part of China and by the presence of the United States flag next to China's flag.

Japan had invaded China in 1937, but the Japanese let the Chinese continue to produce the stamps. Shanghai fell in November 1937, and Canton, the last remaining seaport, fell in October 1938. Thereafter, China was almost completely isolated from the rest of world. By 1939 China was divided into "Occupied China" and "Free China."

These covers were mailed from within, or evaded or transited, Occupied China. Most covers are international because this did not endanger the recipient.

To circumvent the blockade, Hong Kong provided international airmail connections until it fell in December 1941. Surface mail from western China went by rail through Indo-China, until the Vichy French agreed to close that route in June 1940. Some mail from Free China went via cities in Occupied China. Various deceptions were used to send mail from Shanghai. Some mail went west on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. In the south, the coastal province of Fukien, with its many estuaries, was ideal for smuggling to Hong Kong. Some mail was hand carried by individuals and posted at sea. In the spring of 1940 the Burma Road was reopened.



PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

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- Via Hong Kong 3-4
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- Via Occupied Cities 7-8
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- Via Trans-Siberia Railroad 12
- Fukien Province Smuggling 13-14
- Posted At Sea 15
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Your order for stamps has been received and under Kuningting cover is forwarded herewith. You are advised not to use the Commemoration Stamps for franking of mail matter in the occupied areas.

POST OFFICE,
Kuningting, 1939 June, 1939.

Instructions from Kuningting advised against use in Occupied China.



Die Proof of engraved portion of design

Issue Date: July 4, 1939 Quantity 2,000,000 each
 Sale suspended: March 31, 1940 Sheet size: 100 (10 x 10) with gum
 Demonetized: May 1, 1940 Perforation: Gauge 12
 Without plate numbers or printer's imprints
 Printing process: Engraved, with flag by offset lithography
 First Chinese stamp printed using two processes.
 Printer: American Bank Note Co. (appears below frame in Chinese)

INTERNATIONAL RATES DURING THIS TIME FRAME

Date	Postcard	Letter		Fees to UPU Countries			
		First 20g.	Succ. 20g.	Registered	A.R.	Express	Reg. Exp.
2/1/36	.15	.25	.15	.25	.25	.50	.75
9/1/39	.30	.50	.30	.50	.50	1.00	1.50

An airmail surcharge was applied based upon the route taken, airline(s) involved, and destination.

Figure 178-1

The page is wonderful. It starts at the very beginning of the story with a die proof of the stamp that is the subject of the exhibit; it includes the postage rates; it shows a map showing the periods of Japanese expansion to allow a viewer to understand the postage paid and the fluid nature of the “lines” through which the mail moved. All this is essential context for a full understanding of the material. There is a plan of the organization showing which pages of this single frame exhibit which elements of the exhibit. Production information is included. There are three additional factors to consider when you look at this page:

1. This is a postal history exhibit. By providing stamp production information and rate tables on the cover page, James was able to focus the remainder of the pages on the rates and routes of the covers themselves. Sometimes it can be confusing to combine production information with postal history material in a single exhibit. This can be especially true in a single-frame exhibit.
2. James acquired a marvelous instruction form from the post office in Kuming, China warning against using these stamps in Occupied China – the exact subject of the exhibit. What a wonderful collateral piece!
3. James does something else that is not always appreciated by viewers of an exhibit. Consider that for every item on a page there are imaginary vertical lines that marks its boundaries on the right and left of the item. These imaginary lines exist for every element of an exhibit page: a philatelic item, a block of text or even entries in a table. The more vertical margins in different locations that there are on a page, the more visually jarring the page is.

On this page, the left margins are aligned, the two text boxes on the lower right have the same margins and the left side of the collateral label is aligned with the bulleted elements in the Plan of Organization. There are a small number of vertical margins and consequently the page is not at all jarring. A lot of thought went into the development of this page.

Not all of us have die proofs nor are they needed for many exhibits. We can all create high-quality title pages by thinking about the essential elements –an introduction, starting at the beginning, necessary information, appropriate collateral material and good design- and employing them to strengthen our exhibit.