

ROBERT WALLACE, M.P.,

AND

JAMES CHALMERS

The Scottish Postal Reformers.

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Letters,  
Recent Press Articles, & Recognitions  
AT HOME AND ABROAD.

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BY

PATRICK CHALMERS,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

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"The true story of the Adhesive Stamp."—*Saturday Review*.



LONDON :

WILKINGHAM WILSON & CO., ROYAL EXCHANGE

1890.

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PRESENTED  
TO  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
BY

*The Author*





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1890.

Since this Pamphlet was in print, important information has been obtained at the London Philatelic Society's Exhibition, now published in my Circular "The Adhesive Stamp Fraud brought to light," and to which I beg to

refer.—P.C.

# Dedication.

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TO T. MARTIN WEARS, ESQ.,  
AND OTHER PROMOTERS OF THE DUNDEE  
JUBILEE EXHIBITION OF POSTAGE STAMPS.

DEAR SIRS,

While Philatelists throughout the world are now celebrating the jubilee year of the introduction of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, it is especially fitting that Dundee, its birthplace, should take part in the celebration, and most gratifying to find that such is your intention.

I consequently avail myself of this opportunity to publish some "Letters, Press Articles, and Recognitions" having reference to James Chalmers, the originator of this stamp, the perusal of which will, I am satisfied, be gratifying to you and to his countrymen in general; for you will perceive that in every land to which the use of this stamp has spread, the name of that Dundee postal reformer is now widely recognised, and ever increasingly so, as that of the man to whom this world-wide boon is owing.

Scotland, moreover, possesses another name well worthy of remembrance this jubilee year of our great postal reform — that of Robert Wallace, of Kelly, M.P. for Greenock—

who, by years of persistent labours in and out of Parliament, gathered together the principles of, and prepared the public mind for, that scheme of reform subsequently introduced by Sir Rowland Hill ; but which scheme was rightly looked upon as impracticable until saved and carried out by the invention and happy proposal of James Chalmers of the Adhesive Stamp many years before the Penny Postage Bill was brought forward.

Permit me further to call your attention, in Part II. of this publication, to the appeal I have ventured to make to the noble Lords, the Members of Parliament, the Provosts, and other leading men connected with Scotland, for the purpose of drawing attention to the services of these Scottish postal reformers at this juncture, and to arouse some sympathetic aid in my efforts to vindicate their memory. My appeal has already borne fruit in having produced a valuable response on the part of the influential Scotchman now conducting the *Liverpool Daily Post*; while it would be wrong to doubt that other patriotic minds and the Scottish Press in general will yet come forward to claim the share in this work to which the land north of the Tweed is entitled. What said the most prominent of these noble Lords some time ago when addressing the Edinburgh students?—"Above all, my young friends, be Scotch"—that is, "Cherish the traditions of your country; add to them if you can," a favourable opportunity for doing which now presents itself to the Scottish Press and public. Your Philatelic Exhibition in Dundee will do much to bring about this more extended recognition of the names and



services of these benefactors in having obtained for the nation penny postage reform.

By your kind permission the same display of Chalmers' early stamps to be exhibited by me here, along with his plan and letter, the model from which the first English stamp was taken and in use to this day, will be likewise exhibited at Dundee, with the additions of his likeness from all quarters of the globe.

I remain, DEAR SIRs,

Yours very faithfully,

PATRICK CHALMERS, *F.R.Hist.Soc.*,

*Honorary Member of the Société Internationale de Timbrologie, Paris, and of Ten American Philatelic Societies.*

WIMBLEDON,

May 15th, 1890.

I would further direct special attention, as being confirmatory of my own statements but from wholly independent sources, to the article from the *Newcastle Daily Leader*, page 47, and to the letter addressed to the Press by Mr. B. St. J. B. Joule, page 48.

The article on "Penny Postage" which you have just unearthed from *Chambers' Journal* of 6th June, 1863, and republished in the *Stamp News* for this month, probably written by the late Dr. Chambers himself, and which states that Sir Rowland Hill did not originate the Adhesive Stamp, confirms from this high authority my long-standing contention to that effect.—P.C.

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# London Jubilee Philatelic Exhibition

OF MAY NEXT.

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LONDON PHILATELIC  
SOCIETY, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE  
ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMP ON 6TH MAY, 1840.

EXHIBITION OF THE STAMPS OF JAMES CHALMERS, ORIGINATOR  
OF THE ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMP.

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WIMBLEDON, *March 14th*, 1890.

SIR,

My attention having been drawn to the Exhibition of Adhesive Postage Stamps intended to be held at the Portman Rooms in May next, I propose to send in for exhibition, with a donation towards the expenses, and if consistent with your regulations, the following specimens of Philatelic interest :—

- 1.—*Fac-simile* of letter - press Adhesive Postage Stamps on sheet of paper gummed at the back, submitted by the late James Chalmers, book-seller, Dundee, to the Mercantile Committee of the City of London, by letter of date 8th February, 1838, to Mr. Henry Cole, Secretary to said Committee—the originals are now in the Library of the South Kensington Museum. The printed explanatory remarks, as by copy herewith, to be at same time displayed :—

EXTRACT FROM THE LETTER OF JAMES CHALMERS  
*handing his plan of the Adhesive Postage Stamp to the Mercan-  
 tile Committee of the City of London, and now in the South  
 Kensington Museum Library, bequeathed by the late Sir Henry  
 Cole :—*

“ 4, CASTLE STREET, DUNDEE,

“ 8th February, 1838.

“ I conceive that the most simple and economical mode of  
 “ carrying out such an arrangement (that of prepayment of  
 “ letters) would be by slips (postage stamps), prepared some-  
 “ what similar to the specimen herewith shown.

“ With this view, and in the hope that Mr. Hill's plan (of a  
 “ uniform Penny Postage) may soon be carried into operation, I  
 “ would suggest that sheets of stamped slips should be prepared  
 “ at the Stamp Office, on a paper made expressly for the purpose,  
 “ with a device on each for a die or cut resembling that on  
 “ newspapers; that the sheets so printed or stamped should then  
 “ be rubbed over with a strong solution of gum or other adhesive  
 “ substance, and, when thoroughly dry, issued by the Stamp  
 “ Office to town and country distributors, to stationers and others,  
 “ for sale in sheets and singly. . . . Merchants and others,  
 “ whose correspondence is extensive, could purchase these slips  
 “ in quantities, cut them singly, and affix one to a letter by  
 “ means of wetting the back of the slip with a sponge or brush.  
 “ . . . Others requiring only one or two slips at a time  
 “ could purchase them along with sheets of paper at stationers'  
 “ shops, the *weight* only regulating the rate of postage in all  
 “ cases, so as a stamp may be affixed according to the scale  
 “ determined on.

“ Again, to prevent the possibility of these being used a  
 “ *second* time, it should be made imperative on postmasters to  
 “ put the Post Office town stamp (as represented in one of the  
 “ specimens) across the slip or postage stamp.”

This statement is accompanied by several specimens of  
 a suggested stamp about an inch square. A space divides  
 each stamp for cutting off singly. One of the specimens is  
 stamped across with the *quasi*-postmark, “Dundee, 10th  
 February, 1838,” to exemplify what Mr. Chalmers states

should be done to prevent the stamp being used a second time.

Brought forward in the House of Commons, the 5th July, 1839. After plans had been called for from the public and nothing better found, adopted by Treasury Minute of date 26th December, 1839.

2.—Photograph of Adhesive Postage Stamp by the same James Chalmers, bearing the *quasi*-post-mark, "Dundee, Sept. 24th, 183—," the last figure after the 3 being illegible. The original of this early stamp by James Chalmers is in the possession of Mr. H. G. Hanson, stamp dealer, Cardiff.

3.—Photograph of Adhesive Postage Stamp by the same James Chalmers of the year 1834. In this stamp the word "used" is stamped over the stamp for the purpose of showing how to obviate same being used a second time—a suggestion improved upon in the latter specimens, Nos. 1 and 2, by stamping the postmark over the stamp, as ultimately adopted and now in use. The original of this stamp is in the possession of the well-known Herr Sigmund Friedl, of Vienna, and is thus referred to in a Vienna paper announcing the Exhibition there :—

From the *Deutsches Volksblatt*, or German Journal for the People, of 4th March :—

" THE INTERNATIONAL POSTAGE STAMP EXHIBITION AT VIENNA, 1890

" On the occasion of the Jubilee of Postage Stamps (6th May, 1840–1890), an Exhibition will be opened under the patronage of the Minister of Commerce, and contain objects of great interest, not only for experts, but also for the general public, and especially for students of historical culture. In the foremost ranks will be found the first type of adhesive stamps projected in August, 1834, by the Inventor, James Chalmers,

“ and of which the only one in known existence is at present in  
 “ the Postage Stamp Museum at Unter-Dobling. This simple  
 “ and unadorned little slip of paper, which was only recently  
 “ unearthed, has become an object of Philatelic veneration.” . .

As it is stated in your Prospectus that the Exhibition is to be of stamps issued “ during the past fifty years,” I am uncertain whether these earlier stamps, on the plan and principle afterwards followed in the first English stamps issued by Messrs. Bacon and Petch, the engravers, by order of H.M. Treasury in the spring of 1840, can be admitted. Probably, however, under Class 8, as “ Curiosities and Objects of Interest,” they may be admissible, as to which I ask the favour of being informed.

I remain, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

PATRICK CHALMERS.

CHARLES COLMAN, Esq.,  
 Hon. Sec. EXHIBITION COMMITTEE,  
 4, LOMBARD COURT, E.C.

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PHILATELIC SOCIETY, LONDON.  
*Exhibition Offices*—4, LOMBARD COURT, E.C.,  
 LONDON, *March 20th, 1890.*

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 14th inst., enumerating the things you desire to exhibit, which will come appropriately under Class 8.

Kindly let me know the value you place upon them, in order that we may fix the insurance.

Yours very truly,

CHARLES COLMAN.

PATRICK CHALMERS, Esq.

WIMBLEDON, *March 22nd*, 1890.

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for your letter of 20th inst. accepting my proposal to exhibit under Class 8 at the forthcoming Philatelic Exhibition certain specimens of letter-press adhesive postage stamps produced, prior to the year 1840, by the late James Chalmers. Dundee, conveying the principle he advocated for the purpose of prepayment of postal matter, and which specimens I will consequently have pleasure in forwarding to you in good time.

As these specimens are not original, but only fac-similes or photographs already widely published as respects No. 1 in the Philatelic Press of the United States of America, France, Germany, and elsewhere, with likeness of James Chalmers as having been the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, such are of no value in case of loss, and therefore need not be covered by insurance.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

PAT. CHALMERS.

CHARLES COLMAN, Esq.,

*Hon. Secretary Exhibition Committee.*

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Philatelists throughout the world and the Press will now see this long-existing controversy as to who was the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp brought to a conclusion in favour of James Chalmers. The already complete evidence as to his production of this stamp in August, 1834, and of his having been the first to urge this plan upon the proper authorities for the purpose of carrying out in practice the proposed uniform penny postage scheme is now confirmed by the production of the stamps

themselves. On the other hand the very Society to which Mr. Pearson Hill belongs, the London Philatelic Society, now admits that Sir Rowland Hill did not invent the Adhesive Postage Stamp, thus completing what alone remained to put aside the extraordinary pretensions to that effect, and to dispel a long-existing delusion. I may add that neither the Postmaster General in his Jubilee speech nor the London Press in their Jubilee articles now make any claim whatever as to Sir Rowland Hill having been the inventor of this mode of prepayment by Adhesive Stamp, the chronology of which, from its invention by James Chalmers, to its ultimate adoption at his instance and initiation is subjoined.

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## Chronology of the Adhesive Postage Stamp.

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Invented by James Chalmers, bookseller, Dundee, in the month of August, 1834. (See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, after special investigation, and *Dictionary of National Biography*, &c.)

Sent by James Chalmers in December, 1837, to the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the proposed Penny Postage Scheme of Mr. Rowland Hill. The letter of acknowledgment of Mr. Wallace, the Chairman, is of date 9th December, 1837.

Again sent in February, 1838, to the Mercantile Committee of the City of London, endeavouring to obtain Parliamentary sanction to the proposed Penny Postage Scheme. Of this Committee Mr. Cole (afterwards Sir Henry Cole) was Secretary, and he has bequeathed



Mr. Chalmers' letter and plan as now in use to the South Kensington Museum Library, given in detail at page 29 of my pamphlet lately issued.\*

At the same time, Mr. Chalmers' plan came under the notice of Mr. Rowland Hill, whose reply to Mr. Chalmers, of date 3rd March, 1838, was unfavourable.

On the introduction of the Penny Postage Bill into Parliament in July, 1839, the Government disapproved of Mr. Rowland Hill's plan of an impressed stamped cover [see page 10], and all was dismay as to how the same was to be carried out. The great argument of the opponents of the Bill was—"Why should we be called upon to pass this Bill when no mortal being at that moment had the remotest conception of how it was to be carried into execution?" (see "Hansard"). In this dilemma Mr. Wallace in the Commons, and Lord Ashburton in the Lords [see page 11], brought forward the merits of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. Plans were advertised for from the public, and nothing better having been found, the Adhesive Stamp was adopted by Treasury Minute of date 26th December, 1839, *two years after* Mr. Chalmers had sent his plan to Mr. Wallace, in conjunction with Mr. Hill's plan of the impressed stamped cover [see page 17]. A contract for the supply of Adhesive Stamps, at the price of 6d. per 1,000 stamps, was made with Messrs. Bacon & Petch, Fleet Street [see page 21], but it was not until the following May, 1840, that the stamps came into use.

The connection betwixt Mr. Chalmers as the originator and the adoption of the Adhesive Stamp is thus clearly established. Mr. Hill, however, availed himself of his despotic position in the control of the new Penny Postage system to set aside, by letter of 30th January, 1840, and

\* "How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme. Letter of the Dundee Bankers and Merchants to the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury." Effingham Wilson & Co., Royal Exchange.

upon a flimsy pretext, the claim of Mr. Chalmers, thus usurping the merit to himself.

What is the use of a scheme, however excellent, even had same been original on the part of Mr. Hill, if you cannot carry it out in practice? This jubilee year of the Reformed Postal System finds the Adhesive Stamp still indispensable to the postal system, the commerce and revenues of all nations. Is its celebration to pass without so much as a word of acknowledgment to the memory of the man who, himself unrewarded, bestowed this boon upon his country and the world?

PATRICK CHALMERS.

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*From the SATURDAY REVIEW, January 18th, 1890.*

“An old controversy is recalled by Mr. Patrick Chalmers, F.R.H.S., who narrates the true story of the Penny Adhesive Stamp—‘How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme,’ puts the case of ‘Adhesive Stamp’ (Chalmers) against ‘Stamped Envelope’ (Rowland Hill) with undeniable force.”

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*From the WHITEHALL REVIEW, January 11th, 1890.*

“Mr. Patrick Chalmers’ fresh pamphlet, ‘How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme,’ comes opportunely at a period when we are celebrating the Jubilee of this reform—for without the Adhesive Stamp that reform would certainly never have assumed practical shape. It is here proved from the speeches of the Ministry when introducing the Penny Postage Bill, that ‘the plan of Mr.

Rowland Hill was that an impressed stamped cover was absolutely to be used in all cases'—exactly as Mr. Hill himself had stated when explaining his plan in letters to the Postmaster-General. Not a word of an Adhesive Stamp."

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"But more than this, if possible, is the disclaimer of Mr. Rowland Hill himself which Mr. Patrick Chalmers has unearthed from the article 'Post Office' in the *Penny Cyclopædia* for June, 1840, written by or under the supervision of 'Rowland Hill, Esq., F.R.A.S., one of the Committee of Management.' Alluding to the prepayment of postage which Mr. Hill had initiated, the article goes on to state:—"The means of doing so by stamps were not suggested in the [first edition of the pamphlet, and Mr. Hill states that this idea did not originate with him.' Just so, until with the unexpected success of the Adhesive Stamp, which proved the saviour of the new scheme, arose likewise on the part of Mr. Hill that pretension of having been its originator which has hitherto deluded the world."

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"Having exposed this delusion, and demolished that pretension for all time, Mr. Patrick Chalmers proceeds to establish the title of his father, the Dundee bookseller. The invention of the Adhesive Stamp by James Chalmers in the year 1834 is proved by abundant evidence. Then, in December, 1837, Mr. Chalmers sends his plan of an Adhesive Stamp to Mr. Wallace, Chairman of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to examine the proposed penny postage scheme. Again, in February, 1838, Mr. Chalmers sends his plan in a letter to the Mercantile Committee of the City of London, whose secretary, Mr. Cole, afterwards Sir Henry Cole, has bequeathed same to the South Kensington Museum Library.

The pages transcribing this letter and plan from the original, nearly two years before the Penny Postage Bill was brought forward, are full of interest, giving us as they do the very thing we are yet using after fifty years' faithful but, to our shame be it said, unrequited service. The steps by which, through the intervention of Mr. Wallace and others, the Adhesive Stamp came ultimately to be adopted by Treasury Minute of December 26, 1839, after plans had been applied for from the public and nothing better found, are clearly traced in this pamphlet from official sources."

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*From BRIC-A-BRAC, January, 1890.*

Mr. Palmer, the well-known stamp merchant of the Strand, thus writes:—

"We should be glad to hear that it had been decided to mark the Jubilee of the Postage Stamp by some tardy act of recognition of the benefit conferred upon the civilised world by James Chalmers, whose name will be remembered as long as the post runs as the originator of the Adhesive Stamp, and who has special claim upon the attention of Philatelists. It is entirely owing to the perseverance of Mr. Patrick Chalmers that James Chalmers has, in this generation, been recognised as the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp, and that his name will go down to posterity as the benefactor of his kind. The position which was so long usurped by Rowland Hill has been wrested from that postal reformer by Patrick Chalmers, who has restored to his father's name the honour to which it is entitled—an honour only too long denied to it."

Mr. Palmer accompanies these remarks with a portrait and biographical notice of James Chalmers.

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*From the STAMP NEWS, for January, 1890.*

(THEÓDOR BUHL & Co., London.)

“ JAMES CHALMERS.

“ THE INVENTOR OF THE ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMP.

“ In now celebrating the jubilee year of the Penny Postage Reform of 1840, which introduced to the world that Adhesive Postage Stamp so interesting to philatelists, it is only due to our readers that we should say something as to the origin of this stamp, and how the same came to be adopted in the reformed postal system of this country, subsequently spreading to all others, and so forming the foundation of that now immense business of stamp collecting which it is our province to cultivate and extend. A pamphlet opportunely published by Mr. Patrick Chalmers, entitled ‘ How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme,’ gives a full and interesting account of the origin of this stamp, clearly proving from abundant evidence that the same was the invention of his late father, James Chalmers, bookseller, Dundee, in the year 1834, prior to which period Sir Rowland Hill himself has left it upon record that an adhesive stamp for postage purposes was ‘ undreamt of.’

“ In December, 1837, James Chalmers laid this plan, as being preferable to the impressed stamped covers proposed by Mr. Rowland Hill, before the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into Mr. Hill’s scheme. Again, in February, 1838, Mr. Chalmers laid his plan before the Mercantile Committee of the City of London, then using every effort to get uniform penny postage established. His letter to Mr. Cole, the Secretary, on this occasion, may now be seen in the South Kensington Museum Library, having been there bequeathed by Sir Henry Cole, along with other papers having reference to the

movement. The pages in the pamphlet referring to this, and giving the plan of James Chalmers in detail, are of the highest and most curious interest. The advantages of the Adhesive Stamp are ably set forth in this letter, while the same is accompanied by specimen stamps on a sheet of gummed paper, showing the principle ultimately adopted, and in use to the present day.

“When the Penny Postage Bill was brought into Parliament, in July, 1839, Mr. Hill’s plan of stamped covers was disapproved of by the Government, and much dismay existed, amid the jeers of the opponents of the scheme, as to how the same was to be carried out. In this difficulty Mr. Wallace, the Chairman of the Select Committee, proposed this Adhesive Stamp. After plans had been applied for from the public, and nothing better found, the Adhesive Stamp was at length officially adopted by Treasury Minute of 26th December, 1839 (two years after James Chalmers had sent his plan to Mr. Wallace) in conjunction with Mr. Hill’s plan of impressed stamped covers. These latter, however, as displayed in the ‘Mulready’ envelope, were so firmly rejected by the public that nearly the entire quantity prepared had to be destroyed, while a sufficient supply of adhesives could only be produced by working night and day; the contractors being Messrs. Bacon and Petch, of Fleet Street, at the rate of sixpence the thousand stamps.

“It is thus seen that Sir Rowland Hill had nothing to do with the origin of the Adhesive Stamp, the merit of which, however, in his despotic position he managed to secure over the head of the Dundee bookseller. How this was done, and much more of interest, will be found in Mr. P. Chalmers’ pamphlet, which should be in the hands of every Philatelist, and of all desirous of knowing the facts attending penny postal reform, with respect to which so much misconception has hitherto existed.

“Our space will only admit of adding that James Chalmers is now the recognised originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp by the great number of Philatelists throughout the world, an appendix of fourteen pages being taken up in giving only a very condensed account of these recognitions. His likeness in our present issue is reproduced from one of the many portraits now to be found in the Philatelic papers.”

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*From the DAILY TELEGRAPH, of January 13th, 1889.*

“The credit for it (the reformed postal system) according to a pamphlet just published by Mr. Patrick Chalmers, should be divided between Sir Rowland Hill, who has hitherto got all the credit, Mr. Wallace, M.P. for Greenock, and Mr. James Chalmers, a bookseller at Dundee. It is claimed for the last-named by his son that the conception of the Adhesive Postage Stamp first entered his head in 1834, three years before Sir Rowland Hill’s celebrated pamphlet on cheap postage first saw the light in 1837, and credit for the invention is accorded to Mr. James Chalmers by the writer of his life in Mr. Leslie Stephen’s *National Biography*. Mr. Chalmers died in 1853, and the Dundee papers in the lengthy obituary notice which they inserted, stated that ‘in the opinion of many, including Mr. Joseph Hume, M.P., a large part of the credit given to the inventor of the penny postage should have been accorded to our modest fellow-townsmen.’”

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*From the TOPICAL TIMES, January 25th, 1890.*

“On the occasion of the Penny Postage Jubilee the Postmaster-General reviewed at considerable length the history of the introduction of penny postage. Encomiums

as bountiful as they were deserved were showered upon the memory of Rowland Hill, the deviser and initiator of the great postal scheme. No one will grudge these oratorical honours conferred upon a subject who served his country well and truly. But what does strike the investigating mind as constituting a wilful and unjust omission, is that a name almost equally prominent in the history of this great reform should have been absolutely ignored. The person whose connection with this movement has been left unhonoured and unsung is none other than James Chalmers, a bookseller of Dundee, the inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. A retrospective glance will convince us of the grave injustice which has been done in passing him by."

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"When the Penny Postage Bill was introduced in Parliament in July, 1839, the Government disapproved of Mr. Rowland Hill's plan of an impressed stamp cover. This created no small dismay, and gave rise to the usual jeers from opponents, which invariably greet an unsuccessful measure. It was in this crisis of impending doom that the merits of the Adhesive Postage Stamp were brought before the Government, and adopted by Treasury Minute of December 26th, 1839. It was in May, 1840, that the stamps of which Rowland Hill had written disapprovingly in 1838 came into use. Why has this connection of Mr. Chalmers as the originator of the Adhesive Stamp—a claim so clearly established—been set aside? Apparently the only explanation forthcoming is that, upon a flimsy and untenable pretext, Mr. Hill has usurped the merit to himself. The time has now come when this grievous error should be put right, and that James Chalmers, who enabled the penny postage scheme to be carried into effect, should be invested with at least secondary honours. As I have before suggested, the oblivion into



which his name has been cast is an insult to his memory, and 'an act of ingratitude which should be immediately repaired.

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*From the HAMMERSMITH EXPRESS, December 25th, 1889.*

“THE POSTAGE STAMP—WHO INVENTED IT ?

“ Our readers will remember that we recently gave a brief history of the Penny Post, and in this connection we have received from Mr. Patrick Chalmers, of Wimbledon, a pamphlet in which he seeks to establish his father, the late Mr. James Chalmers, of Dundee, as the inventor of the Adhesive Penny Postage Stamp. In doing so he brings forward some powerful arguments in favour of his contention, and shows that Sir Rowland Hill never even entertained the idea of such stamps when urging his scheme upon the authorities. His plan embraced either the payment of the penny with the letter, or by means of stamped paper, and stamped letters or covers. It would appear, indeed, that for some time after the penny postage scheme had received official sanction great difficulty had arisen as to how it should be worked, and, although Sir Rowland himself was at the head of affairs, the Government had actually to advertise for tenders for the purpose. James Chalmers was one of fifty persons who had plans to propose, and his suggestion of the bit of paper with a design upon one side and an adhesive substance upon the other was approved. It was adopted by Treasury minute of 26th December, 1839, in conjunction with Mr. Hill's proposals, mentioned above. When the penny post came into actual operation we are told that the stamped covers were entirely rejected by the public in favour of the Adhesive Stamp. Finding the latter successful, it is suggested that Hill unfairly allowed the honour of having been the inventor to fall upon him.”

*From the WHITEHALL REVIEW, February 1st, 1890.*

“The complete and most accurate version is told in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, an authority which admits of no contradiction.”

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*From the CIVIL SERVICE GAZETTE, March 1st, 1890.*

“THE SERVICES OF ROBERT WALLACE M.P. FOR GREENOCK.

“THE SIR ROWLAND HILL MANSION HOUSE  
COMMITTEE.

“Mr Patrick Chalmers, F.R.Hist.Soc., &c., writes:—  
‘Particulars with respect to the services of Mr. Wallace will be found in the following queries which I respectfully addressed to H.M. Postmaster-General, the ex-Postmasters-General, and others present at the late commemorative dinner, where alone the name of Rowland Hill was toasted as the man to whom we owe that penny postage reform so loudly praised by the various speakers. Queries likewise addressed to that large body of the Press engaged in erroneously lauding the same as that of the great genius who invented, proposed, and carried out by his sole efforts and ingenuity the postal reform now being celebrated. Are you aware—

“‘1. That the reformed postal system was not the work of one year nor of one man, but that the abuses and mismanagement of the Post Office occupied the attention of the public and of public men both in and out of Parliament for many years prior to the advent of Sir Rowland Hill; that a “Commission of Inquiry” was at length appointed, much evidence both as to complaints and remedies obtained, and which Commission issued in all ten reports?

“‘2. That Mr. Wallace, M.P. for Greenock, a leading postal reformer, in moving, on the 9th July, 1835, for “a

Select Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the management of the Post Office," urged amongst other improvements which he had already submitted to the Postmaster-General that "letters shall be charged by weight, and that charges on letters having envelopes, or on double or on such like letters, shall be discontinued"—(see "Hansard," Vol. 29)—afterwards repeating this proposal before the Commission of Post-Office Inquiry, which he had been the means of getting appointed.

"3. That the fifth report of this Commission, of date April, 1836, recommends the enactment of a low and uniform penny postage on "Prices Current." and similar mercantile publications, then subject to the same high and variable rates as were letters, and charged by sheet, to be now prepaid by stamp impressed upon the sheet of paper, and charged by weight in place of by sheet, at the rate of one penny the half-ounce—Mr. Wallace, as above proved, having long previously already urged the principle of "charge by weight" on letters?

"4. That the then Mr. Rowland Hill, about this period, and otherwise unoccupied, fortunately joined this body of postal reformers, of whom his elder brother, Matthew Davenport Hill, M.P. for Hull, was one; receiving prior to the issue of his pamphlet of 1837 from Mr. Wallace "an additional half-hundredweight of those heavy blue-books," beyond those into which "he had already dipped" his "only sources of information for the time"?—(See 'Life of Sir R. Hill,' page 246, under date 1836.)

"5. That neither in his pamphlet of 1837, nor in his "Life," written by himself, does Sir Rowland Hill divulge or make any reference whatever to the provisions of this fifth Report, identical as they are with his own proposal of 1837, with respect to letters, and which proposals have consequently been mistaken in general as having been his own conception? Never has misconception been more complete. But more.

“ ‘ 6 That, so far from Sir Rowland Hill having ever been officially acknowledged as the first person to propose a uniform penny postage on letters, he has been distinctly officially told to the contrary as under :—

“ ‘ Extract from Treasury Minute, of date 11th March, 1864, conferring upon Sir Rowland Hill, upon his retirement from active service, his full salary of £2,000 a year :

“ ‘ My Lords do not forget that it has been by the powerful agency of the railway system that these results have been rendered practicable. Neither do they enter into the question, as foreign to the occasion, what honour may be due to those who, before the development of the plans of Sir Rowland Hill, urged the adoption of uniform penny postage.

“ ‘ 7. That in the *Times* of 30th September, 1885, will be found the biography of at least one man, the Rev. Samuel Roberts, M.A., of Conway, “ one of the earliest advocates of postal reform,” who, several years prior to [1837, had memorialised the Government to the above effect. That Mr. Roberts was aided in his declining years by a grant of £50 from Her Majesty’s Bounty Fund, and by subscriptions from the leading men of the day, in his manifesto returning thanks [for which Mr. Roberts has stated the proposal of a uniform penny postage to have been well known before Rowland Hill joined the circle of the reformers.

“ ‘ 8. That it is thus proved that, however great the services of Sir Rowland Hill, invention or originality of conception formed no part of his merits ; that, indeed, his penny postage scheme was simply an unacknowledged reproduction of the prior proposals of other men, devoid of any of that genius of invention with which he has been so largely credited.

“ 9. That the non-originality of Sir Rowland Hill has been recognised by his Mansion House Memorial Fund Committee, subsequent to my having drawn their attention to the above-named fifth report, as may be read from the *City Press* of date 18th March, 1882 :—

“ ‘ ROWLAND HILL MEMORIAL.

“ ‘ On Thursday a meeting of the Rowland Hill Memorial Committee was held at the Mansion House, the Lord Mayor presiding. A discussion arose as to the inscription upon Mr. Onslow Ford’s statue to be erected at the Royal Exchange, which had been determined at a previous meeting to run thus : “ Rowland Hill—He founded Penny Postage.” Mr. Whitehead now proposed that the last sentence should run : “ He gave us the Penny Postage.” Mr. Northover seconded. The Lord Mayor (Sir J. Whitaker Ellis) thought that a mere mention of the name, birth, and death on the statue would be sufficient. Dr. Walter Lewis moved for and Mr. Causton, M.P., seconded, the following inscription : “ Sir Rowland Hill, K.C.B., born 1795, died 1879.” Mr. Whitehead withdrew his motion, and the latter suggestion was unanimously adopted. Mr. C. Barry moved, and Mr. R. Price seconded, the following addition to the words : “ By whose energy and perseverance the National Penny Post was established.” Eventually this was carried by nine votes to six, the Lord Mayor voting in the minority.”

“ ‘ It will be seen that the above proceedings on the part of the Committee amounted to a complete admission of the discovery I laid before them—viz., that the penny postage scheme of 1837 was not an invention, but only a copy. The change in the inscription was important and significant —“ He founded Penny Postage ” was unanimously abandoned. He “ established ” it was substituted, while a minority of six to nine were in favour of an inscription merely nominal. At a subsequent meeting, at which the Lord Mayor was not present, a third inscription was adopted equally admitting the non-originality of conception, but doing so in such a manner as not to disturb the preconceived impressions of the reader or of the public.

“ 10. That the “ Mercantile Committee of the City of London,” a body of London bankers and merchants specially associated for the purpose, were largely, if not, indeed, mainly instrumental in obtaining Parliamentary sanction for this reform by a liberal expenditure of time and money, and by having through their Secretary, Mr. Henry Cole, obtained over 2,000 petitions from the country in favour of the Bill? Not once has any modern writer or speaker so much as alluded to the influence and labours of this Committee, attributing, on the contrary, the entire merit of the passing of the Bill to the energy of Sir Rowland Hill.

“ 11. That the net revenue from the Post Office previous to 1840 having been £1,634,000, it was not until the year 1863, when Sir Rowland Hill retired, that an equal revenue was obtained, the comparative loss to the revenue in the interval having amounted to fourteen millions sterling. (See House of Commons Return of Post Office Revenue, dated 16th July, 1866.)

“ 12. That Mr. Rowland Hill, having wholly failed in proposing a practicable plan for carrying out in practice the scheme which he had introduced, the Treasury by Treasury Minute of date 23rd August, 1839, after the passing of the Bill, invited plans and suggestions from the public for that purpose, resulting in the adoption of the Adhesive Postage Stamp in conjunction with Mr. Hill’s plan of impressed stamped wrappers or envelopes.

“ 13. That “ shortly afterwards” the envelopes had to be destroyed as useless, while “ though working both night and day,” the supply of adhesive stamps failed to meet the demand (“ Life of Sir Rowland Hill ”). Thus the Adhesive Stamp saved and has carried out the reformed postal system—indispensable, moreover, to this day to that system and to the commerce and revenues of the world.

“ 14. That the Adhesive Postage Stamp was the invention of James Chalmers, bookseller, Dundee, in the month

of August, 1834, and had been urged by him upon the proper authorities as early as December, 1837, and upon Mr. Hill himself in February, 1838—and of which plan Mr. Hill subsequently availed himself of his position in the public service to usurp the merit. For proofs and particulars of this I refer to my publication just issued, entitled “How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme.” ’ ’

It is thus seen from the above, a copy of which I have sent to Mr. Pearson Hill and to each member of the Sir Rowland Hill Mansion House Committee, that this Committee abandoned the point of “originality” on the part of Sir Rowland Hill. The items Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7 in my above statement further prove this non-originality from official and other sources. A more extraordinary delusion never existed than that the reformed postal system was an invention or original conception on the part of Sir Rowland Hill. When the time comes for this fact to be more generally realised and the scales fall from the eyes of a deluded public, we shall have the *Times* pointing out, “Why, we told you some time ago that uniform penny postage had been proposed by the Rev. Samuel Roberts, of Conway, years before Sir Rowland Hill came forward,” and, “as for the Adhesive Stamp, if you will refer to our columns of 30th August, 1839, a fortnight *after* the passing of the Penny Postage Bill, you will find we announced Rowland Hill’s plan to be solely that of impressed stamped envelopes, while it is clear that James Chalmers had officially proposed his Adhesive Stamp years before.”\* Then will Scotland, too, venture to claim its own. “Rowland Hill, indeed! Why,

\* In its postage article of 18th April, the *Times* now alludes to Sir Rowland Hill as having “introduced” uniform postage—the right term at last. If the *Times* would now inform its readers who aided Sir Rowland Hill to “introduce” and carry out this reform, justice would be done to all parties.

he got all his proposals from our countryman, Wallace, who, when Rowland Hill gave up his school and took to postal-reforming, provided him with the whole materials for his subsequent pamphlet of 1837; while our other countryman, Chalmers, showed how alone the reformed system could be carried out.' ”

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*From the ECHO, January 25th, 1890.*

“ Mr. Chalmers insists that Sir Rowland Hill did not invent the Adhesive Stamp, but that the honour belongs to his own father. And now some cruel iconoclast comes forward to prove that adhesive postage stamps were in use in France in the latter part of the reign of Louis XVI. These stamps or labels were only gummed on the upper half, leaving the lower half free, which the postman tore off when the letter was delivered.”

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“ THE ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMP.

“ *To the Editor of the 'Echo.'*

“ SIR,—The stamp you allude to as having been in use in Paris (not in France) in the reign of Louis XVI., has never been recognised as an Adhesive Postage Stamp. Sir Rowland Hill himself has left it upon record that, up to the year 1834, an Adhesive Postage Stamp was ‘undreamt of.’ The same with all Philatelists throughout the world, including France itself, where the Société Internationale de Timbrologie, Paris, has officially recognised James Chalmers as the originator. The same with the post-offices of Paris, Rome, and Berlin, with whom Sir Rowland Hill has hitherto been looked upon as the originator but now coming round to Chalmers, never



any one in France or elsewhere—a cruel attempt here to strip Chalmers of his due now that the pretensions of Hill can no longer be maintained.

“ Yours, &c.,

“ PATRICK CHALMERS.

“ WIMBLEDON,

“ *January 27th.*”

*From the CROYDON REVIEW, December, 1889.*

“ At this season of the year what an inconvenience there would be in sending Christmas cards if there were no such things as postage stamps. Yet when the penny postage scheme was first thought of the postage stamp had no existence in the mind of Mr. Rowland Hill in 1837. He then proposed that the poundage should be paid in coin, or that stamped covers and sheets of paper and stamped wrappers should be supplied from the stamp office. Fancy the dismay there would be amongst stationers generally if the Government were to resort now to such a proposal! Fortunately there is no possibility of this. Thanks to the late Mr. Chalmers, Mr. Rowland Hill's scheme was saved by the invention of the Adhesive Stamp, and Mr. Patrick Chalmers, of Wimbledon, has, after patient labour, obtained the most complete recognition of his father's invaluable services to the country. There are very few Philatelic societies anywhere who have not passed resolutions acknowledging the stamp to having been originated by the gentleman referred to. All honour to Mr. Chalmers for asserting the rights of his father to be recognised as a benefactor.”

From BRIC-À-BRAC, *February, 1890.*

“THE JUBILEE.

“In the miles upon miles of print in which the Jubilee of the Postage Stamp has been celebrated, in all the rhapsodies of the newspapers, we find the name of the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp persistently ignored. Is this ignorance wilful? It must be. It is as if the word had been passed round that James Chalmers was to be ignored, and all the butter was to be melted for Sir Rowland Hill. A little praise we think might well have been spared for the modest inventor, whose brain fashioned the scheme by which Rowland Hill profited, and who placed the whole world under obligation to him by the invention of the Adhesive Stamp. It is a rule for some newspaper offices never to acknowledge an error. The *Times*, like the king, ‘can do no wrong.’ For years Sir Rowland Hill has been hailed as the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp, and when Mr. Patrick Chalmers, bent upon vindicating his father’s memory, came forward armed with proofs, the cry of the newspaper is, ‘Take away your proofs. We won’t look at them. We have said that Sir Rowland Hill invented the postage stamp. How can we say now that we have been wrong all along? What’s that you say? We are robbing James Chalmers of his reputation. Well you can’t expect us to sacrifice our reputation.’

“We read that the statue of Sir Rowland Hill that stands outside the Royal Exchange was decked with flowers on Jubilee day. For Sir Rowland Hill the flowers, but for James Chalmers the imperishable bays.”

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A MEMORIAL FOR CHALMERS.

Upon this subject the following letter appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—

“DEAR SIR,—In commemoration of the Jubilee of the Postage Stamp, I take a timely opportunity to suggest that a public subscription be raised for the purpose of erecting a memorial to James Chalmers, of Dundee, the inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. Rowland Hill, who profited by Chalmers’ invention, has his statue; and if a tribute were tardily paid to James Chalmers I should be happy, for one, to subscribe to a fund for that purpose. Among stamp collectors alone I should think a sufficient sum might be collected.

“Yours truly,

“J. W. PALMER.

“281, STRAND, W.C.,

“January 9th, 1890.”

Again :—

“CHALMERS VINDICATED.

“THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMP.

“THE CHAIN OF EVIDENCE.

“Mr. Patrick Chalmers’ new pamphlet, ‘How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme,’ is published at an appropriate moment, just at a period when we are celebrating the Jubilee. It is here proved from the speeches of the Ministry when introducing the Penny Postage Bill, that ‘the plan of Mr. Rowland Hill was that an impressed stamp cover was absolutely to be used in all cases,’—exactly as Mr. Hill himself had stated when explaining his plan in letters to the Postmaster-General link by link.

“The chain of evidence as respects his father is put together by Mr. Patrick Chalmers. The connection between Mr. Chalmers as the originator and the adoption of the Adhesive Stamp is clearly established. Mr. Hill,

however, availed himself of his position in the control of the new penny postage system to set aside, by letter of 30th January, 1840, and upon a flimsy pretext, the claim of Mr. Chalmers, thus usurping the merit to himself. What is the use of a scheme, however excellent, even had same been original on the part of Mr. Hill, which it was not, if you cannot carry it out in practice? This jubilee year of the reformed postal system finds the Adhesive Stamp still indispensable to the postal system, the commerce, and revenues of all nations. Is its celebration to pass without so much as a word of acknowledgment to the memory of the man who, himself unrewarded, bestowed this boon upon his country and the world?"

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*From BRIC-A-BRAC, April, 1890.*

“ ‘ WITHERED LAURELS.’ ”

“ It seems that the Fates are on the side of James Chalmers, the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp. Rowland Hill's laurels, it appears, are withering, for we read in the *City Press* that the ‘tribute to the memory of the late Sir Rowland Hill, which has been for some time suspended round the neck of the statue at the Royal Exchange, has become rather *passé* on account of its extreme shabbiness and dilapidated appearance, withered laurels and soiled inscription.’ It is well those laurels have withered, and the hand of Time has effaced that inscription. It would be proper to remove the memorial, and to put up a statue of James Chalmers in its place.”

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*From the DETROIT FREE PRESS, London, February 1st, 1890.*

“ It is claimed that the man who made Penny Postage a success was not Sir Rowland Hill, but a Scotchman,

named James Chalmers, who invented the Adhesive Postage Stamp. His son, Mr. Patrick Chalmers, of London, has written a pamphlet setting forth 'How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme.' James Chalmers was a Dundee bookseller, and he invented the Adhesive Stamp in 1834. Rowland Hill's idea was an impressed stamped cover that was to be used in all cases. This was found to be very cumbersome, and the invention of Mr. Chalmers had to be adopted at last, and thus Penny Postage became a success."

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*From the MAN OF THE WORLD, January 18th, 1890.*

"In all the newspaper articles I have read on the subject of the Jubilee of the Post Office—and they were all very much the same thing—it surprises me that no mention is made of James Chalmers, the bookseller of Dundee, who was incontestably the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp now in universal use."

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On former occasions I have already given articles and notices in recognition of James Chalmers from about thirty of the London and suburban Press, including such papers as the *Morning Post*, *City Press*, *Metropolitan*, *Home and Colonial Mail*, *Sunday Times*, Trübner & Co., Sampson Low & Co., *Bookseller*, *Star*, &c. Also from many provincial papers, including such as the *Oldham Chronicle*, *Bradford Observer*, *Western Daily Press*, *Norwich Argus*, *Brighton Argus*, *Dover and County Chronicle*, *Colchester Chronicle*, *Essex Standard*, *Burnley Express*, *Barnsley Times*, *Wigan Observer*, *Stockport Advertiser*, *Yorkshire Gazette*, *Wakefield* and *West Riding Herald*, *Lydney*

*Observer, West of England Observer, Manchester Guardian, Northern Echo (Darlington), Wednesbury Herald, &c.*

Recent provincial notices are now added :—

*From the BATH AND CHELTENHAM GAZETTE.*

“PENNY POSTAGE.—Neither the London Press in their late Jubilee articles, nor the Postmaster-General in his Jubilee speech, make any claim whatever as to Sir Rowland Hill having been the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, of which Mr. James Chalmers, bookseller, of Dundee, is now the acknowledged inventor.”

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*From the BRIGHOUSE AND RASTRICK GAZETTE, January 25th, 1890.*

“The contributions to the literature of the Jubilee of Penny Postage Reform must necessarily include those of Patrick Chalmers, of Wimbledon. For some years he has been proving that his father, the late James Chalmers, of Dundee, was the inventor of the Adhesive Postage label which saved the Penny Postage scheme. The perseverance with which he has followed his inquiries and the persistency with which he has issued from the press pamphlet after pamphlet, have not only convinced those who have made the history of the English Post Office their study, that he is stating nothing but facts, but also led to a very general public acceptance of his (once disputed) accuracy. Patrick Chalmers may now be congratulated on the information that Herr Sigmund Friedl, of Vienna, the eminent Philatelist, has in his museum one of these adhesive stamps, printed as a specimen by James Chalmers in the year 1834. This ought to remove any doubt that any one might previously have held as to the honourable inventiveness of the Dundee bookseller. We have already gone

through the other proofs in these columns, and so need not recur to former evidence. Some years ago all praise for everything connected with the early progress of postal reform was given to Rowland Hill. Scarcely a word has been said this year in the leading papers in support of the claim of his being the inventor of postage labels; it needs but another step for them to take to acknowledge what nearly all the Philatelist journals have done—that to the world-wide use of Postage, Inland Revenue, and other Adhesive Stamps, we are indebted to James Chalmers.”

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*From the WIGAN EXAMINER, March 2nd, 1889, on a former pamphlet:—*

“ It is needless to say that the pamphlet is on the vexed question of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, which, like the Bacon-Shakspeare controversy, is always with us. It may be said, however, that here and elsewhere the filial affection of Mr. P. Chalmers has been so far rewarded in that he has succeeded in making out a remarkably strong case in favour of his father’s claim to the credit of the invention that has done more than any other single cause for the improvement of the postal systems of the world.”

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*From the CUMBERLAND ADVERTISER, January 28th, 1890.*

“ An old controversy is recalled by Mr. Patrick Chalmers, F.R.H.S., who narrates the true story of the penny Adhesive Postage Stamp—‘How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme’—and puts the case of ‘Adhesive Stamp’ (Chalmers) against ‘Stamped Envelope’ (Rowland Hill) with undeniable force.’—*Saturday Review*, January 18th, 1890. It is not difficult to understand the feelings of Patrick Chalmers, who sees the memory of Sir Rowland

Hill kept green and honoured, when his own father, to whom the success of the Penny Postage scheme was greatly due, is almost forgotten."

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*From the NEWCASTLE DAILY CHRONICLE, Nov. 20th, 1889.*

"WHO INVENTED THE POSTAGE STAMP?—Was it not Mr. James Chalmers, of Dundee, who, in 1834, made in his own printing-office the first adhesive stamps that were ever seen or heard of? That invention facilitated immensely the great reform of the postal system in 1839–40, but it really preceded the latter by half-a-dozen years."

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*From the EASTERN DAILY PRESS, Norwich, Jan. 11th, 1890.*

"I don't know whether Mr. Patrick Chalmers is still alive; but even if he is not, he must have left behind him many champions who firmly believe that he, and not Sir Rowland Hill was entitled to the credit of the Penny Post. I have seen pamphlets on this subject, and I expect to see more. At any rate, it will be surprising if Mr. Chalmers' friends allow the Jubilee to pass without a demonstration."

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*From the EASTERN EVENING NEWS, Norwich, January 21st, 1890.*

"The London Correspondent of the *Daily Press*, commenting a week or two ago on the Jubilee of the Penny Post, inquired whether Mr. Patrick Chalmers was alive, adding that if not he must have left behind him many champions who firmly believed that he, and not Sir Rowland Hill, was entitled to the credit of that invention. Mr. Patrick Chalmers is indeed alive, and we have received letters and pamphlets from him in evidence of the fact. From them we



gather that he is still pegging away at the old controversy. He does not himself lay claim to the distinguished honour which has been imputed to him. The man who has challenged the right of Sir Rowland Hill to be called the sole author of the Penny Postage, and whose identity has been mistaken, was the late Mr. James Chalmers, the father of Patrick. But the mantle of James Chalmers has to some extent fallen upon the shoulders of his son, and the latter has vigorously endeavoured to substantiate his father's contention. The branch of the reform that is claimed by the late Mr. Chalmers' admirers was the origin of the Adhesive Postage Stamp—a most important introduction, as those who still remember the fantastic and fanciful designs of the previous stamps will readily attest. In the interesting publication 'How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme,' his son contends that the adhesive quality of the stamp was first invented in 1834. Three years later [the inventor laid his scheme before a Select Committee of the House of Commons which had been appointed to inquire into the proposed cheapened rate of postage. Neither the Committee nor Sir Rowland Hill, to whom it was simultaneously shown, approved the idea, the latter declaring in July, 1839—the very year when it was subsequently adopted—that an 'impressed stamp cover should absolutely be used in all cases.' If this be correct, and its authenticity is based upon the impartial 'Hansard,' then Mr. Patrick Chalmers has made out a strong case on behalf of his father's invention. As its value to all ranks of society has become year by year more apparent, it is only fair and just that the inventor of the 'sticking plasters' should no longer be clouded in obscurity. Without venturing to express an opinion upon the rival claims, we trust that where the stakes are so large history, which must be left sole judge of the matter, may adopt the Virgilian maxim, *Palmarum qui meruit ferat.*"

“CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE,  
“CAMBRIDGE, 15th November, 1889.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I am desired by the Master and Fellows to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of your interesting sheet on Penny Postage Reform (see page 22 *ante*—*Civil Service Gazette*) which has been carefully added to your previous publications on this important subject. We eagerly await the issue of your forthcoming publication.

“I am, &c.,

“(Signed) S. S. LEWIS,  
“*Fellow and Librarian,*”

[Pamphlet—“How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme”—subsequently acknowledged in same terms and approved. I regret being unable to present any similar letter from any Scottish College or Professor of History, in which quarters, as far as I am aware, no interest whatever is taken in this subject. From the United States many such letters as the above have reached me from Historical Societies, Colleges, and Public Libraries, in addition to the merely formal acknowledgments.

The *Lydney Observer*, and other West of England papers, have copied the same sheet above named.]

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*From the NORTHERN WHIG, Belfast, January 15th, 1890.*

“While everybody may remember with gratitude, and more particularly at this time, the name of Sir Rowland Hill, it is by no means certain that we are indebted to him for the success of the Penny Postage system. Mr. Patrick Chalmers, of Wimbledon, has issued a pamphlet claiming that the gratitude of the world on this score is due to his

father, James Chalmers, a Dundee bookseller, who invented the Adhesive Stamp, and, as the pamphlet declares, introduced it to the notice of Rowland Hill. It is well known that before the Adhesive Stamp came generally into use the Penny Post represented a grievous loss to the revenue, and many high authorities, not the least of which is the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, have admitted that the credit of inventing it belongs to James Chalmers."

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*From the SOUTH WALES DAILY NEWS, Cardiff, December 27th, 1889 (a paper of great influence and large circulation).*

“THE FORTHCOMING JUBILEE.

“Early in the coming year the Jubilee of the introduction of the Penny Postage will be celebrated with more or less display throughout the country. There can be no doubt as to the impetus given to trade, commerce, correspondence, and the spread of knowledge by that beneficent measure. We do not, however, wish to anticipate what should be said on the tenth of January, 1890. We would not, indeed, have made any reference whatever to the subject at present but for the fact that there is a popular error to be removed before the day of Jubilee arrives. Sir Rowland Hill's share in this splendid reform is not likely to be overlooked next month, and in some circles all the praise will be lavished upon him. In view of this probability we have only to ask the public to pause before giving all the credit to the general favourite. It will hardly be disputed that we owe the Penny Postage system to Sir Rowland more than to any other person. He pushed the scheme forward briskly, and in a measure brought Parliament to admit that the experiment must, at least, be temporarily tried. But Rowland Hill's

notion was to stamp the outside cover or envelope, not to employ an adhesive stamp. For the invention of the Adhesive Postage Stamp the public are indebted to Mr. James Chalmers, a Dundee printer, who made such stamps and exhibited them in the year 1834. They were printed by common types and washed on the back with a solution of gum. This Mr. Chalmers took a lively interest in several of the social questions of his time, the chief of his employments being devoted to plans intended to facilitate correspondence and the rapid and easy conveyance of information. When Parliament seemed likely to discuss the proposals to make sweeping changes for the better in the postal system of the country, Mr. James Chalmers was by no means idle. He suggested the Adhesive Stamp to the authorities, but without effect. He communicated his idea to Rowland Hill, but only to be quietly snubbed. His letter to Sir Rowland Hill recommending the Adhesive Stamp seems to have mysteriously disappeared, and the only question remaining has to do with the unaccountable abstraction of some official documents from the State papers. Mr. Chalmers' claim to be the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp cannot possibly be set aside. The evidence is to be found in at least one contemporary newspaper, the *Arbroath Herald*, in an article dated the 11th October, 1839. We mention this, not because it is a matter of the very highest importance, but because the more obscure inventors or discoverers are too frequently kicked to one side to clear the way for the pet of the public. We may give Chalmers his due without detracting in the least degree from the merits of Rowland Hill. At the same time, we cannot altogether free the latter from blame. He might have publicly admitted Mr. Chalmers' claims. The most he ever did seems to have amounted only to the bare admission that the idea of the Adhesive Stamp did not originate with him. He might

have gone a step further. Mr. Hill's own plan of stamp covers completely broke down, and had it not been for the Adhesive Stamp invented by Mr. James Chalmers, the Penny Postage experiment might have collapsed. To Mr. Chalmers are we indebted for the ultimate triumph of the scheme. The idea was a grand one ; it has done more for the world than it is possible to sum up in a few words. Trade and commerce could never have got on as they have done without the Penny Postage, and therefore it is the more desirable that justice should be done to the merits of those who have figured prominently in rendering practical so signal a measure of reform."

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*From the MUMBLES OBSERVER, Swansea, January 24th,  
1890.*

“THE JUBILEE OF THE ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMP.

“On the 10th of the present month the Adhesive Postage Stamp, the invention of Mr. James Chalmers (Dundee) completed its first Jubilee—an event which was subsequently celebrated by a public banquet at which were present the Postmasters-General, past and present. This great and important reform, which without the Adhesive Postage Stamp would never have assumed practical shape, is tersely and ably treated in a pamphlet issued by Mr. Patrick Chalmers, and entitled ‘How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme.’ The book comes opportunely, and all through its pages there is unmistakable documentary evidence which proves conclusively that Rowland Hill was *not* the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp. In this pamphlet will be found summarised recognitions of Mr. James Chalmers’ claim by several hundred newspapers, magazines, public men, &c., all of which have been the spontaneous outburst on behalf of a man who has rendered

the whole world more good than can ever be properly and adequately estimated and rewarded. For many years his son, Mr. Patrick Chalmers (a fellow of the Royal Historical Society), has laboured indefatigably, and with the greatest success, to dispel and expose the popular but erroneous hallucination that Rowland Hill was the original inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. Mr. Hill's scheme was simply to have the stamp embossed upon paper, and not in any way gummed. It was in 1834 that James Chalmers invented the Adhesive Stamp, as has been undeniably proved by abundant evidence. In December, 1837, he sent his plan to Mr. Wallace, chairman of the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to examine the proposed Penny Postage scheme, and eventually Mr. Chalmers' scheme was adopted. A remarkable and significant fact presents itself in connection with the banquet to celebrate the Jubilee of the Postage Stamp. In all the speeches which were delivered, not one single reference was made to Rowland Hill as being the inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. This is a fact which has a most important bearing in favour of Mr. James Chalmers. Space will not permit us to refer further to this interesting subject at present, but we will return to it later on."

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*From the CARNARVON HERALD, February 28th, 1890.*

"Mr. Patrick Chalmers, of Dundee, who has for many years been indefatigable in vindicating the claim of his father to the invention of the Postage Stamp, has sent a circular letter to the leading London Welshmen, reminding them that this year is the Jubilee of Penny Postage, and suggesting that at the forthcoming festivities in honour of St. David, they should not forget the claims of the Rev. Samuel Roberts, of Conway ("S. R."), upon

the gratitude of the country at large. Mr. Roberts, as is well known in Wales, was one of the earliest advocates of postal reform; and it was to a large extent in recognition of his service in that direction that he received a grant from the Royal Bounty Fund in his old age."

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## SCOTLAND.

Though a large number of the Scottish Press, including every paper in Forfarshire, has at one period or another warmly recognised the services of James Chalmers (that "neglected inventor" once so styled in a sympathetic article by the *North British Daily Mail*) yet now, strangely enough, when the very occasion has arisen for specially recalling these services, something like total silence has reigned. Probably the prominence now given in Part II. to the services of Mr. Wallace, another Scotchman, may bring about an alteration in this respect—meantime I can only reproduce what has reached me; at same time asking, "Are the words addressed to the Edinburgh students referred to in my 'Dedication'—words re-echoed by the Press—to be a mere mockery, very well for show, but not meant for use?" If to be acted upon, surely now is the time for Scotland to put in her claim as having been a heavy contributor to that great postal reform now being recalled and celebrated.

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*From the PEOPLE'S JOURNAL, Dundee, April 5th, 1890.*

"On the day of the celebration of the Jubilee of the Penny Post the action of the Dundee postal authorities in declining to deliver a postal wreath at the grave of the late James Chalmers, the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp, drew

public attention to the fact that the chains which were stolen from the granite work round the grave had never been replaced. A Dundonian, now a member of one of the leading business firms, who in his earlier days had been a postman, arranged for the chains being replaced, and yesterday this was done."

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*From the PIPER o' DUNDEE, January 8th, 1890.*

"This week sees the Jubilee of the Penny Post—a jubilee in which Dundee may very fairly claim a special interest, not only on account of the great value of the Penny Post has been to the trade and commerce of the city, but more especially because we are proud of the share which our late townsman, James Chalmers, had in making the Penny Post possible and popular. As the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp, James Chalmers enabled Sir Rowland Hill to introduce the Penny Post—a reform which has made our postal system the wonder and admiration of the world."

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*From the SCOTTISH BORDER RECORD, March 8th, 1890.*

"CHAMBERS' JOURNAL.

"The story of Penny Postage is told in this Journal for March, but it makes no reference to one important element of the scheme—the Adhesive Stamp. There is no doubt that Rowland Hill adopted the expedient, which was the invention of Mr. Chalmers, bookseller, Dundee, without such recognition as Mr. Chalmers was entitled to, and no history of the reform is complete which ignores this."

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*From the GLASGOW LITERARY JOURNAL, April, 1890.*

“JAMES CHALMERS, THE ORIGINATOR OF THE ADHESIVE POSTAGE STAMP.—We have received several circulars on this important question, showing beyond a doubt that the claims of James Chalmers, the pioneer of the Penny Postage system, have been passed over. We have only to note that the claimant was a native of Dundee to inspire interest in the matter, and also give a reason why the claims of the Englishman, Rowland Hill, found favour with a clique of his narrow-minded countrymen.”

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As Sir Thomas Clark has been appointed Chairman of the Executive Council of the forthcoming Exhibition at Edinburgh, which may possibly include an Exhibition of Postage Stamps, the following letter continues to be of much interest, though already previously published :—

“CITY CHAMBERS, EDINBURGH,  
“February 23rd, 1888.

“DEAR SIR,

“I have received the papers you have sent me regarding your father’s claim to be the originator of the Adhesive Stamp.

“The evidence is very conclusive, and as one who used long ago to have constant relations with your father, I rejoice at your success in establishing his claim.

“I am,

“Very truly yours,

“(Signed) THOMAS CLARK,

“Lord Provost of Edinburgh.”

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I conclude this section of my Press articles by asking special attention the two now following, confirming as they do from able and independent sources my own statements as to the non-originality of Sir Rowland Hill.

When a man of note dies, the busy journalist of the day can only reproduce the accepted position of his life and the halo, deserved or otherwise, with which he has managed to surround himself. Daily journalists cannot examine into so as fully to certify all the statements, or ransack old volumes to get at the facts. That is the duty and the task of the later historian, or of some one specially interested, such as has fallen upon myself in vindicating my late father's title to having been the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. In this way has the Press, as a rule, fallen into the mistake that uniform penny postage, with all the valuable principles of the scheme, were actually the conception originally of Sir Rowland Hill himself. Indeed, in not a few instances, writers, and more especially speakers, would have us believe that Rowland Hill, "touched with the sorrows of the poor," sat down and wrote out this system of relief from the old postal system clean out of his own head, "though he had never been inside a post-office," and then forced same upon Parliament and the Post Office all by himself. Marvellous genius indeed, if true; but, unfortunately for such writers, it is now seen that Mr. Hill had only to consult "Hansard" and the Blue Books with which Mr. Wallace provided him, and to listen to what Mr. Wallace and other prior postal reformers of the period told him. Yet all writers have not fallen into the mistake about the genius and invention of Sir Rowland Hill, with one remarkable instance to the contrary from the *Newcastle Daily Leader* of January 16th, these remarks find a pleasant confirmation and appropriate conclusion.

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*From the NEWCASTLE DAILY LEADER, January 16th, 1890.*

“The notices which have been published and the speeches which have been delivered in celebration of the uniform Penny Postage, elaborate and interesting though they have been, have omitted several points which ought not to have been overlooked. Perhaps the most remarkable and important of these omissions is the practical aid given to the reform by the Committee over which Mr. Wallace, the Member for Greenock, presided, and which recommended the adoption of the principle of a uniform Penny Postage. It was on the Report of this Committee that the Bill authorising the reform was passed. The evidence taken was at once strongly condemnatory of the old system, and urgent in favour of the plan generally spoken of as Rowland Hill’s, though several other public men in the provinces had advocated the same scheme even before Mr. Hill’s pamphlet was published in 1837. Few of the present day writers seem acquainted with that evidence. If they had been they would not have failed to have commented on the open and fearless confessions of evasions of the then existing postal law which were made before Mr. Wallace and his Parliamentary colleagues. In particular, the late Mr. Duncan M’Laren, who was examined at great length, cited various striking illustrations of unconcealed evasions. The old system was objected to, not merely because it was costly, but because it was slow and inefficient. Thus it had lost the respect and confidence of the people, and notwithstanding the threatened penalties, the people were able to defy the law with impunity. The lesson to be drawn is that unless legislation and administration are suited to the needs of the people, and command popular confidence, they soon lose popular respect and submission, and in the interests of good government a change of system becomes urgently necessary.”

The writer of the following letter or "Warning," (brother of the eminent *savant* of the same name, lately deceased and whose scientific discoveries and services have formed matter of eulogy throughout the Press) will be listened to in quarters where my voice has failed to penetrate:—

" A WARNING.

" *To the Editor of the 'Rothesay Chronicle.'*

" SIR,—It is scarcely likely that the next year will go by without its being celebrated as the jubilee year of the great postal reform of 1840. I wish, therefore, to warn Scotchmen against making Sir Rowland Hill the hero of the epoch. If they will take the trouble to study the history of the era they will find that though Sir Rowland Hill received in the aggregate £80,400 for his alleged discovery or reform, his claim rested upon nothing better than popular impulse.

" It was Mr. Wallace, M.P. for Greenock, who urged the adoption of weight as the guide to postal charge, and that charges on letters having 'envelopes, or on double, or on such like letters, should be discontinued.'

" With regard to the uniform penny postage on letters, it is proved that whilst conferring upon Sir Rowland Hill, on his retirement from active service, his full salary of £2,000 a year, a Treasury Minute, dated 11th March, 1864, distinctly states that it had been by the powerful agency of the railway system that the Penny Postage had been rendered practicable, and that the question as to what honour was due to those who *before* its development by Sir Rowland Hill had urged its adoption had not been considered.

" Sir Rowland Hill having failed in proposing a practical plan for carrying out the scheme which he had borrowed from Mr. Wallace, the Treasury invited plans and

suggestions from the public (after the Bill had been passed), the result being the adoption of Adhesive Postage Stamps. Sir Rowland Hill's envelopes were destroyed as useless, whilst 'though working both night and day,' it was some time before the demand for the Adhesive Stamp could be met.

"And who invented the Adhesive Stamp? James Chalmers, bookseller, Dundee, in the month of August, 1834, who had urged it on the House of Commons Committee in 1837, and upon Mr. Hill himself in February, 1838, and of which Sir Rowland, availing himself of his position in Government service, usurped the merit.

"Mr. Wallace urged that weight should be the guide for postal charges, and Mr. Chalmers, by his invention of Adhesive Stamps, secured the success of Mr. Wallace's recommendation, and Mr. Rowland Hill cunningly obtained not only all the credit, but all the reward.

"Yours, &c.,

"B. ST. J. B. JOULE.

"ROTHESAY, 13th November, 1889."

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## PART SECOND.

[Copy.]

“ WIMBLEDON,

“ *February 10th, 1890.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Having received from you on two separate occasions the formal recognitions of the Town Council and City Council of Dundee in favour of my father, the late James Chalmers, as having been the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, it is my pleasing duty now to inform you that the London Philatelic Society, of which Mr. Pearson Hill is a member, has now abandoned the pretensions set up as to such stamp having been invented by the late Sir Rowland Hill.

“ Such abandonment must be considered conclusive of this long-standing dispute—leaving James Chalmers the undisputed inventor of this indispensable feature in the possibility and success of the reformed postal system.

“ I beg you will be good enough to lay this letter, formally or informally, before the Lord Provost and members of the City Council.

“ I remain, DEAR SIR,

“ Yours respectfully,

“ WM. HAY, Esq.,

“ *City Clerk, Dundee.*”

“ PAT. CHALMERS.

## Jubilee of the Penny Postage.

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THE SERVICES OF ROBERT WALLACE, M.P. FOR GREENOCK, AND JAMES CHALMERS, BOOK-SELLER, DUNDEE.

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*“To the Lords, Members of Parliament, and other leading men connected with Scotland.”*

“MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“The country is now celebrating the jubilee year of the reformed postal system of 1840, a boon for which we are indebted not alone to the late Sir Rowland Hill, but also to the two Scottish postal reformers above named—men whose services have so far been wholly overlooked by the Press and public; an omission which, I am sure, the statement of a few facts will induce you to aid me in taking means to rectify.

“With respect to the services of Mr. Wallace, I cannot do better than ask your perusal of the following letter from some writer unknown to me, lately published in the *Star* newspaper:—

“THE PENNY POST AND WALLACE OF KELLY.”

“SIR,—Being an admirer of the *Star’s* independent spirit, coupled with its firmness on matters of public interest, I solicit insertion of this short letter. My desire is to ask how it comes to pass that in all the outpourings of the London Press on the Jubilee of the Penny Postage, not one word that I can see or hear of has been said of Robert Wallace, of Kelly, then M.P. for Greenock, which he represented from 1833 to 1845. Mr. Wallace was one of the soundest and most laborious members

that ever sat in the House of Commons. Among his other great services he was the very first to assail the then Post Office abuses, and to urge their reform. I am old enough to have a grateful recollection of his numerous efforts on behalf of the public, and especially in the matter of Post Office reform, and it was while he was so engaged that Sir (then Mr.) Rowland Hill stepped in with his proposal for a penny postage. That gentleman always frankly attributed to Mr. Wallace the first conception of what was carried out, and also that its being so was solely to be attributed to his indomitable and persevering energy in and out of Parliament. Mr. Hill wrote at the time: 'By four years of incessant attacks, Mr. Wallace destroyed the prestige once enjoyed by the Post Office, and exposed it to the wholesome influence of public opinion.' Mr. Wallace's services in this cause were universally known, and widely acknowledged. He was presented with the freedom of the City of Glasgow and of the boroughs of Aberdeen, Paisley, Perth, Dingwall, Inverness, and Dornoch, with an address by the inhabitants of Kilmarnock, and another from the Postmaster-General of France. His admirers presented him with a public testimonial in the form of an annuity of £500, for his private means had suffered through his devotion to the service of the public. He died in 1855 at the age of 82. How the above labours of a great and noble-minded Scottish reformer, ever staunch and true, come now to be ignored must puzzle all acquainted with them, and I therefore again ask you to give this short and imperfect record the wide publicity of the *Star's* circulation.

"Yours, &c.,

"A SCOTS HOME RULER."

"Such is the fitting tribute paid to the memory of the man who, by years of labour in and out of Parliament, prepared the soil and sowed the seed from which Sir Rowland Hill alone has reaped the produce—the man who gave Rowland Hill all the information and arguments which enabled him to draw up his pamphlet of 1837—a Scotchman, like James Chalmers, who at a critical moment showed Rowland Hill how alone the scheme he had



introduced could be practically carried out; yet the services of both now equally left out of sight, their memory equally ignored by the Press and the public of their country at such a juncture as this, when, if true to their traditions, the voice of Scotchmen should have been heard loudly asserting their usurped rights.

“ One of the most important principles of the reformed postal system, that letters shall be charged by *weight* and not by *sheet*—a vital principle erroneously attributed by modern writers and speakers to having been the conception of Sir Rowland Hill—was urged by Mr. Wallace in the House of Commons as early as the 9th July, 1835. Mr. Wallace at same period obtained a ‘Commission of Post Office Inquiry,’ which Commission issued in all ten reports, with a large amount of evidence and suggestions on postal reform, a leading question of the day. These Blue Books, with his own personal aid and information, were furnished by Mr. Wallace to Mr. Rowland Hill on his subsequently joining the circle of postal reformers, for the very purpose of drawing up the scheme which Mr. Hill so ably put together in his pamphlet of 1837, though in the proposals contained in which pamphlet originality of conception formed no part, as pointed out in the Treasury Minute of date 11th March, 1864, and also admitted by the Mansion House ‘Sir Rowland Hill Memorial Fund’ Committee.

“ But what was the use of the scheme, even had such been original, if no mode had been shown whereby same could be carried out in practice? and in proposing any practicable plan for this purpose Mr. Rowland Hill wholly failed. Consequently, when on the 5th July, 1839, the Penny Postage Bill was brought forward in Parliament, all was dismay as to how the scheme was to be carried out. The great argument of the opponents of the Bill was,

‘Why should we be called upon to pass this Bill when no mortal being at that moment had the remotest conception of how it was to be carried into execution.’ (See ‘Hansard.’) In this dilemma Mr. Wallace favourably suggested the Adhesive Postage Stamp.

“This stamp was the invention of James Chalmers in the year 1834. (See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, after special investigation, and *Dictionary of National Biography*.) On the appointment of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, in November, 1837, to inquire into the proposed Penny Postage scheme, Mr. Chalmers laid this plan before the Committee — the letter of acknowledgment of Mr. Wallace, the Chairman, is of date 9th December, 1837. Mr. Chalmers again sent his plan in February, 1838, to the Mercantile Committee of the City of London, endeavouring to obtain Parliamentary sanction for the proposed Penny Postage scheme. Of this Committee, Mr. Cole (afterwards Sir Henry Cole) was Secretary, and he has bequeathed Mr. Chalmers’ letter and plan as ultimately adopted and yet in use to the South Kensington Museum Library.

“In the above-named dilemma on the introduction of the Bill, Mr. Wallace, as already mentioned, favourably suggested this Adhesive Stamp. After plans had been applied for from the public, and nothing better found, the Adhesive Stamp was officially adopted by Treasury Minute of date 26th December, 1839, *two years* after Mr. Chalmers had sent this plan to Mr. Wallace, in conjunction with Mr. Hill’s plan of the impressed stamp cover. The latter, as exemplified in the ‘Mulready’ envelope, was rejected by the public, and the large quantity prepared was destroyed as useless; while only by working night and day could a sufficient supply of Adhesive Stamps be maintained. My pamphlet lately published, entitled ‘How James Chalmers saved the Penny Postage Scheme,’ gives a more detailed

account of all this, with recognitions of James Chalmers from all quarters of the globe, mainly in consequence of the extensive practice of Philately, or Stamp collecting, which obtains in America, France, and Germany. The London Philatelic Society, of which the son of Sir Rowland Hill is a member, now admits that Sir Rowland Hill did not invent the Adhesive Postage Stamp. These foreign recognitions, however, are not confined to the Philatelic world and literature—State and University Libraries, Historical Societies, Post Offices, and newspapers take up the record, such as the following just to hand :—

“ *From the CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, February 8th, 1890.*

“ INVENTION OF POSTAGE STAMPS.

“ The Postage Stamp will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary next year. The invention is due to Printer James Chalmers, of Dundee, who died in 1853, and who finally, with his system, the Adhesive Postage Stamp, conquered the whole civilised world. England, fifty years ago, introduced the Postage Stamp, and, according to a decree of December 21st, 1839, issued the first stamps for public use on May 6th, 1840. A year later they were introduced in the United States of North America and Switzerland, and again, a few years later, in Bavaria, Belgium and France. One of the most important and valuable collections of Postage Stamps is in the German Imperial Post-Office Museum, which contains over ten thousand Postage Stamps and other postal-delivery devices.”—*American Notes and Queries.*

“ Seeing, then, how largely this boon of universal penny postage is due to two Scotchmen, I ask is it fitting that their countrymen, in and out of the Press, should at this juncture look quietly on and so fail to vindicate the credit which is due to Scotland and to the memory of these benefactors? Why should London writers and speakers, brought up under preconceived impressions, absorbed as they are in the worship of one man, and who never heard of Mr. Wallace and his Blue Books, or of the Mercantile

Committee whose energetic proceedings and expenditure obtained Parliamentary sanction for the measure, be expected to turn round upon themselves and admit mistakes, while those more immediately concerned in claiming what is their due, look on with silent indifference? Is it to be said, and that saying to go the round of foreign lands now rapidly recognising the services of James Chalmers, that no Scottish Lord or notable could be found to aid or countenance me in this national as well as personal work or, with one or two exceptions, even to read a line I have written? On the contrary, I trust the response to this appeal will be such as to show the country before the 6th of May next, on which day, 1840, the Adhesive Stamp was first issued to the public, a boon still indispensable to the postal systems, the commerce and revenues of the world, that it was to a Scotchman, James Chalmers of Dundee, the origin of that stamp is due.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ Yours most faithfully,

“ PATRICK CHALMERS, *F.R.Hist.Soc.*,

“ *Honorary Member of the Société Internationale de Timbrologie, Paris, and of Ten American Philatelic Societies.*

“ 1, MAYFIELD ROAD,

“ WIMBLETON, *March*, 1890.

“ Should this appeal result in my being favoured with permission to dedicate a short pamphlet on the subject to one or more of the noble Lords and gentlemen I now address, the desired publicity to the services of these Scottish benefactors would probably be obtained.”

Having sent a copy of the above to the Editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*, lately representative in the House of Commons for a Glasgow constituency, the following very satisfactory article was the result of this gentleman's desire to forward what it is to be hoped may be a national expression :—

*From the LIVERPOOL DAILY POST, March 21st, 1890.*

“THE JUBILEE OF THE PENNY POSTAGE.

“In connection with the jubilee this year of the reformed postal system of 1840, the services rendered thereto by Robert Wallace, M.P. for Greenock, and James Chalmers, bookseller, of Dundee, are being urged as against the hitherto almost exclusive recognition of Sir Rowland Hill's work in bringing about the reform. This omission has been pretty general. When, on the 5th July, 1839, the Penny Postage Bill was brought forward in Parliament, all was dismay as to how the scheme was to be carried out, the great argument of the opponents of the Bill was, ‘Why should we be called upon to pass this Bill when no mortal being at this moment has the remotest conception of how it is to be carried into execution.’ In this dilemma Mr. Wallace suggested the Adhesive Postage Stamp. This stamp was the invention of James Chalmers in the year 1834. After plans had been applied for from the public, and nothing better found, the Adhesive Stamp was officially adopted by Treasury Minute of date 26th December, 1839. The London Philatelic Society, of which the son of Sir Rowland Hill is a member, now admits that Sir Rowland Hill did not invent the Adhesive Postage Stamp. The Adhesive Stamp was first issued to the public on the 6th May, 1840.”

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In addition to the Scottish Lords and Members of Parliament, I have further endeavoured to arouse some

interest in this subject on the part of the Provosts of the chief towns in Scotland, by writing to each the following letter:—

“ WIMBLEDON,

“ *February 12th, 1890.*

“ MY LORD PROVOST,

“ The country is now celebrating the Jubilee of uniform Penny Postage.

“ I desire to call your attention to the services of Mr. Wallace, of Kelly, M.P. for Greenock, who nearly fifty years ago was presented with the freedom of the City of Glasgow and of six other cities or burghs in Scotland, as having been the real founder of our reformed postal system.

“ To another Scotchman, James Chalmers, of Dundee, we are indebted for the Adhesive Postage Stamp. The circular herewith gives further particulars.

“ Are you content, my Lord Provost, that the present occasion should pass without a word of acknowledgment in the Press or on the part of any of our leading Scotch men of the services of our countrymen.

“ I address a similar letter to each Provost in Scotland, in the hope that some means may be arranged by way of vindicating Scotland's share in this great and beneficial reform.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.,

“ PAT CHALMERS.”

I have written a letter as above to the Provosts of Aberdeen, Arbroath, Ayr, Brechin, Cupar-Fife, Dumfries, Dundee, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Forfar, Glasgow, Greenock, Inverness, Kirkcaldy, Montrose, Paisley, Perth, St. Andrews, and Stirling, but so far have heard nothing of any satisfactory nature in reply.

My part having been performed, any vindication of Scotland's share in Penny Postage reform and title to take part in celebrating this Jubilee now rests with the Scottish Press and public. Should these pages be read by any such it may be some encouragement to find from the following Appendix the wide appreciation now obtained in other quarters to the services of James Chalmers, whose name in permanent connection with his world-wide boon is now assured, abroad at least, if not yet fully so at home.

## APPENDIX.

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### RECOGNITION OF JAMES CHALMERS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

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In former publications I have already given copies of numerous articles and notices in recognition of James Chalmers as having been the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, including thirty of the London Press, with a fairly numerous body of the Provincial and Scottish papers, headed by the "Encyclopædia Britannica" and the "Dictionary of National Biography." Special mention should also be made of the Glasgow Post Office Magazine, "The Queen's Head," containing an able article in recognition of Chalmers, nearly 5,000 copies of which were subscribed for by the *employés* of the various post-offices in the United Kingdom. This article has been favourably received, including reviews by Philatelic journals on the Continent and in the United States.

To now print in full the additional articles which have more lately been published, and continue to come forward, would extend this publication to quite a further 250 pages. For the present, consequently, I must content myself with a mere summary or indication of these valuable recognitions. The names of the home Press are already given.

In Arbroath, the birthplace of James Chalmers, a volume of much interest and erudition, entitled "Arbroath, Past and Present," compiled by Mr. McBain, banker, Arbroath, has lately been published. In this work a biographical notice of James Chalmers is given, from which I extract the following:—

"To James Chalmers, a native of Arbroath, is due the distinguished honour of being the inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, which was not only the means of saving the Penny Postage Scheme of this country, but of conferring a lasting benefit on the commerce of the world. . . . This honour for a time was claimed for Sir Rowland Hill, but thanks to the untiring exertions of his son, Patrick Chalmers, of London, James Chalmers' claim to the honour has been indisputably



established, and is now universally admitted.\* The benefits which have accrued from this invention are incalculable, and to-day every civilised nation is still reaping the fruit of the inventive genius of this distinguished Arbroathian."

In Dundee, in a late publication entitled "The Roll of Eminent Burgesses of Dundee, 1513 to 1886," "published by order of the Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council," edited by a distinguished writer there, Mr. A. H. Millar, and entailing much labour and research, a lengthened article is given detailing the career of James Chalmers, in the course of which his services are brought forward in terms similar to the Arbroath article. The resolution of the Dundee Town Council, of date 3rd March, 1883, formally recording their townsman to have been the originator of the Adhesive Stamp, "that indispensable feature in the success of the reformed Penny Postage Scheme," is here again brought forward, and the work is in the hands of many Scottish noblemen, wealthy merchants, and the public.

Something more than newspaper recognitions may now be recorded. In Wednesbury, Staffordshire, not far from Kidderminster, where a statue of Sir Rowland Hill has been erected, a paper was lately read by a literary gentleman, Mr. J. E. Ryder, at a meeting of the Springhead Mutual Improvement Society, entitled "A Monumental Mockery," alluding to the adjacent statue at Kidderminster. In this paper Mr. Ryder points out that Sir Rowland Hill invented nothing whatever, giving the prior sources from which he obtained the Penny Postage Scheme, and further recognising James Chalmers as the man to whom we owe the Adhesive Stamp, which saved and has carried out that scheme. "A discussion followed, and the evidence and arguments adduced in the paper were found to have resulted in convincing those present of the justice of the claims set forth. Votes of thanks to the essayist and chairman terminated the meeting."

Again, in the important town of Sheffield, Mr. G. R. Vine, a local *savant* and philatelist, has read a paper entitled "The Postage Stamp; or, the History of a Fascination," before the "Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society," in which the services of James Chalmers are set forth, and "the honour, no mean one," of having been the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp unhesitatingly ascribed to him. "The working out of a plan based upon previous Parliamentary Reports, &c., of a low-priced

\* Unfortunately, this is yet by no means the case, the *Times* and others of the leading London papers continuing wholly to ignore the services of James Chalmers. Of this, however, Scotchmen cannot well complain, as these papers might fairly retort, "Why should we admit our mistakes, seeing how indifferent Chalmers' own countrymen remain to the matter? Not one of your patriotic lords, or leaders, or merchant princes takes the smallest interest in the subject."

postal rate is due in a general sense to Rowland Hill." Mr. Vine writes me: "When I delivered this paper there were present some old Sheffield Post Office reformers, notably the Britains (one the late Mayor of Sheffield), Alderman Hobson, and others; but in the discussion which followed the delivery none of those present cared to dispute your claim."

I have already mentioned that four out of the five philatelic papers published in this country have recognised Chalmers. *The Stamp Collector's Gazette* contains the following: "How about the 'Chalmers-Hill controversy?' I have had correspondence with both, and have read pamphlets on both sides, and I am of opinion that Mr. Chalmers has the best of it. When abuse steps in, and a man questions the sanity and honour of his adversary, I think one may safely give the other side the benefit of the doubt, if any. But there is no doubt in this case that Mr. P. Chalmers has made his case clear."

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Coming now to the recognitions of James Chalmers abroad, it is mainly to the pursuit of Philately or postage-stamp collecting that I am indebted for the warm interest which has been taken in the fresh light I have thrown upon the origin of the Adhesive Stamp. In the United States of America, and on the Continent of Europe, stamp collecting forms a large branch of business; this study is pursued to an extent quite unknown here, and Philatelic Societies flourish in abundance. Hitherto the name of Sir Rowland Hill alone has been recognised as the inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, or of the Penny Postage scheme itself; but from the evidence now adduced by me, these impressions have been widely admitted as having been a mistake, and the origin of the stamp transferred to James Chalmers. Nor has this transfer been confined to the Philatelic world. Historical Societies, Universities, and State Libraries, with members of the Press, having likewise admitted my claims.

#### THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

To the 13 Philatelic Societies in the United States already mentioned, I am now enabled to add several others which have formerly recognised James Chalmers as the inventor of the stamp, the various designs of which in all countries of the world it is the special object of the Philatelist to collect, and the list is now as under:—

The Chicago Philatelic Society	...	Chicago, Illinois.
The Pomeroy	„ „	... Toledo, Ohio.
The St. Louis	„ „	... St. Louis, Missouri.
The Lansing	„ „	... Lansing, Michigan.

The Newton Philatelic Society ...	Newtonville, Massachusetts.
The Jamestown ,, ,, ...	Jamestown, New York.
The Charleston ,, ,, ...	Charleston, South Carolina.
The Black Hawk ,, ,, ...	Rock Island, Illinois.
The Belle City ,, ,, ...	Racine, Wisconsin.
The Luther ,, ,, ...	Luther, Michigan.
The Salem ,, ,, ...	Salem, Massachusetts.
The New Milford Philatelic Society	New Milford, Connecticut.
The Detroit ,, ,, ...	Detroit, Michigan.
The Minneapolis ,, ,, ...	Minneapolis, Minnesota.
The Rhode Island ,, ,, ...	Providence, Rhode Island.
The Fitchburg ,, ,, ...	Fitchburg, Massachusetts.
The Denver Stamp Collector's League ... ..	Denver, Colorado.
Clan Cameron, No. 7, O.S.C. ...	Providence, Rhode Island.
Grand Clan of Rhode Island, O.S.C. ... ..	Providence, Rhode Island.
The Pennsylvania Stamp Collec- tors' League ... ..	

Ten of the above Societies have been good enough to elect me an honorary member, and several of the Philatelic journals have published a biographical sketch of James Chalmers, with portrait.

But the Philatelists of the United States, in addition to their local societies, have formed themselves into one grand united body, termed the American Philatelic Association. This Association meets once a year, attracting members and delegates from all parts of the Union to enjoy a fortnight's discussion in support of their favourite pursuit. At the meeting held in Chicago, in August, 1887, the following resolutions were passed, with one dissentient:—

“ SECRETARY'S OFFICE,

“ GRAND CROSSING, ILL.,

“ September 12th, 1887.

“ MR. PAT CHALMERS, LONDON.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ It is my pleasant task to inform you that at the second Annual convention of the American Philatelic Association, held in Chicago, Ill., on August 8th, 9th, and 10th, the following resolutions were adopted:—

“ *Resolved*: That this Association, upon proof submitted by living witnesses, does endorse the claims made by Mr. Patrick Chalmers on behalf of his father, the late James Chalmers, as inventor of the Adhesive Stamp; and be it further—

“ *Resolved*: That the congratulations of this Association be extended to Mr. Patrick Chalmers for the success his untiring

efforts have attained in establishing beyond doubt an important historical fact ; and be it still further—

“ *Resolved*: That the Secretary be instructed to forward a copy of these resolutions to Mr. Patrick Chalmers, and have the same published in the official journal.’

“ With deep personal regard, I beg to remain,

“ Yours very truly,

“ S. B. BRADT,

“ *Secretary American Philatelic Association.*”

To which Mr. Bradt added in a further kindly letter :—

“ Accept my profound congratulations on the ever-increasing strength you are adding to your cause, and my wishes for the speedy arrival of the time when its justice shall be universally conceded.”

During the two years which have passed since obtaining the above valuable recognitions, Mr. Pearson Hill and some adherents of his in America have been using every endeavour to get these resolutions set aside. Mr. Hill has widely circulated his pamphlet, “ *The Chalmers’ Craze Investigated*,” besides, along with his adherents, having addressed a stream of letters to the Philatelic Press. Having no case of his own to present, that pamphlet and these letters have consisted of little else than abuse and denunciation of me, one or other of these adherents having implied that my claim is a fraud, and that my witnesses have been “ *talked over or bribed*” by me, a statement for which Mr. Pearson Hill cannot be held responsible. When it is borne in mind that these witnesses include such men as the late Mr. Wm. Thoms, of Dundee, the late Mr. Ritchie, Hawkhill, the late Mr. Nicoll, of Glasgow, Mr. Prain, of Brechin, Mr. Maxwell, now Vice-President of the Hull Literary Club and brother of the Dundee gentlemen of the same name, with other former *employés* of Mr. Chalmers, all not even previously aware of my existence, Scotchmen can well afford to smile at such a charge. My friends there have wisely refrained from noticing statements which refute themselves ; and a valued correspondent in Chicago, Mr. W. Janssen, just writes, under date March 25th :—“ Really I see very little opposition on this side. I have met a great many men of different Philatelic Societies, and those that I found well posted on Philatelic matters were unanimous in the opinion that to your father is due the glory of this great invention. In fact it could be doubted only by those not well read on the subject. I wish you complete success in your labour, and to be considered a willing worker in your noble cause.”

Many letters to a similar effect continue to reach me ; but I now leave the United States and proceed to

## PARIS.

Here the Société Internationale de Timbrologie, with branches at Moscow, Odessa, and Stockholm, has passed formal recognition in favour of James Chalmers as having been the originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, and has further been pleased to elect me an honorary member of the Society. The official journal of the Society, *L'Union des Timbrophiles*, having a circulation of 5,000 copies monthly, editor M. Nalés, has given a biographical sketch and portrait of James Chalmers, and has continued to publish matters of interest and progress on the subject as they rise.

The *Echo de la Timbrologie*, official journal of the Société Française de Timbrologie, published at Douai by Ed. Fremy Fils, has issued a series of articles in recognition of James Chalmers.

It is with no small satisfaction that I present the following letters from the headquarters of the French and Italian Post Offices :—

## “ RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE.

“ PARIS, le 13 Avril, 1889.

“ MONSIEUR,

“ J’ai reçu la brochure concernant le revendication des droits de feu James Chalmers, votre père, à l’invention du timbre-poste adhésif que vous avez bien voulu m’adresser avec votre lettre du 10 courant. Je l’ai lue avec beaucoup d’attention et intérêt et je l’ai déposé à titre de document historique parmi les collections de la bibliothèque de l’Administration à côté de vos autres publications que nous possédons déjà.

“ Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, avec mes remerciements pour votre gracieux envoi, l’assurance de ma haute considération.

“ P. LE CONSEILLER DE ÉTAT,

“ Directeur Général des Postes et des Télégraphes,

“ Le Chef du Secrétariat.

“ Monsieur PATRICK CHALMERS,

“ 1, Mayfield Road, South Wimbledon, S.W.,

“ Angleterre.”

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“ ROME, le 6 Mai, 1889.

“ MONSIEUR,

“ Par votre honorée lettre du 29 Avril dernier vous avez bien voulu me transmettre une brochure concernant la revendication des droits de feu James Chalmers, votre père, à l’invention du timbre-poste adhésif, et je vous offre pour votre obligeant envoi mes remerciements très empressés.

“ J’ai lu avec intérêt cette brochure, qui éclaire un point

important d'histoire postale, et je vais le déposer dans la Bibliothèque de cette Administration.

“Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de ma parfaite considération.

“Le Ministre,

“LACAVA.

“À Monsieur PATRICK CHALMERS,  
“1, Mayfield Road, South Wimbledon, S.W.,  
“London.”

The recognition contained in the official journal of the Berlin Post Office will be found under the head “Berlin.”

### VIENNA.

Here I have been specially fortunate in having been favoured with the support of the keen Philatelist and able writer, Lieut.-Col. Charles von Gündel, from whose pen has issued a translation, published in the *Postwertzeichen* of Munich, of Mr. Macintyre's article in the *Glasgow Magazine*. Col. Von Gündel has likewise contributed many articles in favour of James Chalmers to the German Philatelic journals, giving an account of the Penny Postal Reform and the services of Chalmers in having initiated the stamp which saved it. Von Gündel has further contributed to the *Wiener Briefmarken Zeitung* an able criticism of the late pamphlet of Mr. Pearson Hill, in which article the fallacies contained in that pamphlet are exposed, and the allegations dealt with *seriatim*, and effectually answered.

The same Vienna journal, Editor H. Koch, has published articles in recognition of Chalmers, who has, moreover, been recognised by the Austrian Philatelic Club of Vienna.

The *Welt Post*, conducted by Herr Sigmund Friedl, proprietor, of the extensive International Stamp Museum, Unter-Döbling, Vienna, has afforded me warm support, and has published a biographical sketch of James Chalmers, with portrait.

The *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, in lately noticing the remarkable museum of Herr Friedl at Unter-Döbling, remarks:—

“Portraits, pamphlets, and similar matter, remind us that the Postage Stamp introduced in 1839 by Rowland Hill, of the English Post Office, is not considered as his creation, but as that of James Chalmers, a printer of Dundee. We see the first English Stamp—a most wonderful sight! We need not be surprised did the Imperial German Postal Museum possess one, since there the Museum is maintained by the State, but the institution in Döbling owes its establishment to the exertions of a private individual.”

## BERLIN.

Here James Chalmers has been formally recognised by the Berlin Philatelic Club, and an article in two numbers, descriptive of his services, has appeared in the *Mittheilungen des Berliner Phil. Club*, the journal of the Society.

In *Der Sammler*, "organ der Berliner Briefmarken-Borse, and der Vereins der Briefmarken Sammler zu Berlin," published and edited by Dr. Brendicke, has appeared an excellent likeness and biographical notice of James Chalmers.

It is further with no small satisfaction that I present the following translation from the *Deutsche Verkehrs Zeitung*, or German Traffic Journal, "organ of the General Post Office and Telegraphic Affairs, and their officials," of Berlin, August 31st, 1888 :—

"Until a short time ago Sir Rowland Hill, the late British Post Office Secretary, known through his reforms in Postal matters, has been looked upon as the inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. However, lately, only through careful investigations, it has been ascertained that this service is due to the bookseller, James Chalmers, of Dundee, who died in 1853.

"Chalmers' carefully worked-out ideas and plans were laid before the British Treasury, and his system of the Adhesive Postage Stamp was adopted by Treasury Minute of the 26th of December, 1839. At this time Rowland Hill was an official of the British Treasury.

"On the 6th May, 1840, namely, forty-eight years ago, the first issue of Adhesive Postage Stamps, appeared in England."

The article goes on to notice the periods at which other nations adopted "the indispensable invention of Chalmers, until such had been adopted by all the countries of the globe, as time passed on."

The above article has been reproduced by such leading German papers as the *Frankfort Gazette*, and others. Same has appeared in the original German in the *Londoner Zeitung* circulating amongst the German community in this country.

## LEIPZIG.

In this Philatelic stronghold my success has been very marked. In the first place, the *Illustriertes Briefwarken Journal*, the organ of thirty-seven Philatelic Societies, published by Gebruders Senf, and having a bi-monthly circulation of 20,000 copies, has recognised and written about the services of James Chalmers in four articles continued in nine numbers of the issue.

On the frontispiece of this important journal appears the head of James Chalmers, in conjunction with that of Sir Rowland Hill.

Several articles, in six numbers, from the pen of Col. Von Gündel, descriptive of the Penny Postage Reform and the services of James Chalmers have, with the sanction and assent of Dr. Moschkau, the editor, appeared in his journal, the *Illustrierte Briefmarken Zeitung*, the organ of several societies. I regret that space compels me for the present to withhold translations of these able contributions.

#### FRANKFORT.

Here the large and important Philatelic Society, the Verein für Briefmarken, Herr Albert Schindler, Secretary, has formally recognised James Chalmers; the *Illustrierte Frankfurter Briefmarken Zeitung Universum*, editor H. J. Dauth, has published throughout eight numbers a long article having reference to the services of Chalmers.

#### DRESDEN.

The *Deutsche Briefmarken Zeitung*, edited by Herr E. W. Grossman, Secretary to the Dresden Philatelic Verein (not the Internationaler Society), has published two articles in recognition of Chalmers.

#### MUNICH.

In the *Mittheilungen des Bayerischen Philatelisten Vereins*, the official journal of the large Bavarian Philatelic Society, Herr Anton Bachl, the Secretary, has produced two articles on the fresh light I have thrown as to the origin of the Adhesive Stamp. Other articles in recognition of Chalmers have appeared in *Das Postwerthzeichen*, editor Mr. Larisch.

#### MARISCH-OSTRAU.

The *Philatelistischer Borsen-Courier*, editor Herr C. C. Sauer, has published three articles in support of my cause, including the criticism already mentioned under the heading of "Vienna," upon the article in the *Liverpool Daily Post*.

#### CZERNOWITZ-AUSTRIA.

The Czernowitz Philatelic Society *Orient* has formally recognised James Chalmers. To Herr Mittelman, of this Society, my special thanks are due for much appreciated correspondence and warm support.



## STOCKHOLM.

In the *Tedning för Frimerkamlare*, the editor, M. R. J. Bruzelins, has published an account of the services of James Chalmers as originator of the Adhesive Stamp, with portrait.

## CONSTANTINOPLE.

An excellent Philatelic journal published here in the French language, *Le Timbre Levantin*, editor-in-chief, M. Hissard, has a wide circulation throughout the Levant and elsewhere. In this able paper lengthened articles have appeared in vindication of the services of James Chalmers; and to its editor and conductors, M. M. I. Tchakidji et C<sup>ie</sup>, I am under great obligations.

## LATER RECOGNITIONS.

Since the foregoing pages were in type some further recognitions of the highest value and importance read throughout the entire German Philatelic world, comprising thousands of studious and intelligent men, have reached my hands. One of these is comprised in Schwanberger's, of Leipzig, Postage Stamp Collecting Book, or Album (awarded the first prize at the Amsterdam Convention), the tenth edition, for 1890, termed his Jubilee Edition. This work, price 18 marks, presents the likeness and autograph of James Chalmers, with a biographical notice of his services as originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp, written by Lieut.-Colonel Karl Von Gündel, of Baden-Vienna. It is published at Leipzig by Ernest Heitman, publisher of Dr. Moschkau's journal, the *Illustrierte Briefmarken Zeitung*, and commands an extensive circulation.

Nor are those recognitions confined to the Philatelic Press, but extend to papers read by the public at large. The Illustrated papers *Über Land und Meer*, published at Stuttgart, and having wide circulation, and the *Neue Illustrierte Zeitung*, published at Vienna (papers holding a position on the Continent corresponding to our *Graphic* and *Illustrated London News* here), have each published a biographical notice in recognition of James Chalmers, with a well-executed likeness.

The *Zeitgist* (*Spirit of the Age*), Berlin, editor L. Horn, has published a long and able article on Postage Stamps, including such passages as the following:—"Adhesive Postage Stamps are, it is well known, an invention of modern times, and in May, 1890, it will be fifty years since their introduction in England. Gradually all other countries have followed suit. . . . Up to only a very short time ago the late Sir Rowland Hill was generally regarded as the inventor; we now know that such is not the case. . . . In the year 1834 James Chalmers,

a printer of Dundee, who had already devoted much attention to postal matters, recommended their use, specimens of which he produced." A sketch of the introduction of penny postage in 1837 up to that of the Penny Postage Bill in July, 1839, is then given, "when absolute ignorance reigned as to how the scheme was to be carried out." Plans were invited, the Adhesive Stamp adopted, the merit of which Hill improperly took to himself. Upon his death "letters were published in the Dundee papers claiming the invention for James Chalmers, who died in 1853. The attention of his son, Patrick Chalmers, was thereby drawn to the matter, and he at once proceeded to follow it up; and notwithstanding the opposition of Pearson Hill, a son of Sir Rowland Hill, he succeeded so well in his efforts that at the present day no one has any doubt that his father, James Chalmers, was the inventor of Adhesive Postage Stamps. Thus with Chalmers' invention, which Hill so unscrupulously laid claim to, and with the work of Bacon and Petch, the engravers, the first step was accomplished. Continental improvements have been made ever since," with an account of which and of the mode of preparing stamps, the article concludes.

Another valuable addition to my list consists of an article extending to twenty columns in two numbers of the Leipzig journal, the *Illustrirte Briefmarken Zeitung*, already named, and entitled "Chalmers' Merits," written by Herr Franz Himmelbauer, a distinguished German Philatelist. This article consists of a learned exposition of the various plans or suggestions in the way of prepayment of postage which have existed in former times in several countries, and showing that all or any such were essentially different from the simple and effective invention of James Chalmers. We are told, "There is no better proof of Chalmers' merits, so long unrecognised, than the circumstance that his adversaries are still diligently engaged in seeking all possible opportunities of wresting from him the recognition which he has at last succeeded in obtaining. When it was no longer possible to maintain Hill's claims to having invented the Adhesive Postage Stamp on account of the satisfactory proofs in favour of Chalmers, "then it was sought to show that Chalmers had been anticipated. But no such thing—such attempts have wholly failed—a critical and learned examination proves the plan of Chalmers, "this thinking, calculating, disinterested, patriotic postal reformer," to have been quite original, and in this confirming other learned writers on both sides of the Atlantic, including Sir Rowland Hill himself, who has left it on record that up to the year 1834 "adhesive postage stamps were undreamt of." "Adhesive Stamps," writes Himmelbauer further, "constitute Chalmers' great invention, by which he has earned the thanks of posterity. Stamps are an historical monument in the culture of the world,

and their inventor is therefore a man who merits the best thanks of the world of culture. . . . Chalmers practically carried out the idea which no one had previously even expressed in words—this is his merit. He recognised the superiority of his letter-stamp over Hill's stamped wrappers and sheets of paper, as well as the great future awaiting his invention, and that constitutes his further merit." The mode of obliteration as shown in one of Chalmers' specimens by crossing same with the *quasi* Post Office mark, "Dundee, 10th February, 1838," and as suggested by him, "remains to the present day." The article concludes: "The Chalmers-Hill dispute may be regarded as having been decided in favour of the former. The most difficult task for the industrious investigator has been overcome. All that his adversaries can do is to adduce statements with a view to annoy him, which statements, however, can easily be disposed of. But they have had to be gone into, and the writer of this has therefore ventured by his modest endeavours to elucidate the questions referred to, and to add a notice of the obliteration, which was also Chalmers' idea. We should always separate adhesive stamps from wrappers or envelopes—the latter are a practical embodiment of an idea which is centuries old; the former an invention of James Chalmers, citizen of Dundee."

The above article and that from the *Zeitgeist* have likewise both appeared in full in the columns of *Philatelia*, published at Brunswick, a journal "devoted to the general interests of the science of stamps," and organ of the Society bearing that name domiciled at Brunswick, with a branch at Reval.

No better illustration of the inconsistency of Mr. Pearson Hill and his friends, of their incoherent attempts to disparage the work of James Chalmers could be asked than now to point to these articles, especially to that of Herr Himmelbauer, effectually disposing as they do of his opponent's latest move of pooling the value of the Adhesive Stamp as being after all only "a very minor detail," and no novelty whatever! And this in the face of the record of Sir Rowland Hill himself already quoted, and moreover after Mr. Pearson Hill had begun by telling us in his publication that "prior to Sir Rowland Hill's proposals in 1837 prepayment of postage would have been impossible and *any suggestion for stamps useless.*" That objection having been disposed of, it is now sought to show that the Adhesive Postage Stamp is a very old affair indeed. Such contradictory and despairing attempts to underrate the services of Chalmers now that the Rowland Hill delusion can no longer be kept up, sufficiently answer themselves; and, did not much prejudice still exist, scarcely required Himmelbauer's learned article to scatter to the winds; while it is universally admitted by all other countries and their post-offices, as proved by the letters from Paris, Rome, and Berlin I have given, that the Adhesive Stamp originated in our own.

A late copy of the *Wiener Briefmarken Zeitung* has just reached me, containing an able and important article by Lieut.-Col. Von Gündel in reply to some criticisms which have appeared in certain Philatelic papers by the friends and supporters of Sir Rowland Hill, "who, by the way, are rapidly decreasing in numbers." "In these," says Von Gündel, "we find nothing but empty, sophistic phrases, distractions, and perversions of the facts, spiced with offensive remarks; but we never met with any proofs." He quotes an article from the *Philatelic Record*, of London, the chief supporter of Mr. Pearson Hill, yet containing the following important admission:—"It is stated therein as follows: 'Neither in the writings of Sir Rowland Hill, nor anywhere else, do we find the slightest proof that he (Hill) ever claimed to be the inventor of Penny Postage.'" Then it goes on to say: "We believe that Hill was the inventor of the Adhesive Postage Stamp just as little as that James Chalmers was." Von Gündel then pertinently asks: "Therefore, if even the opponents of Mr. James Chalmers have been compelled to admit in the most unmistakable language that Rowland Hill invented neither the Penny Postage nor the Adhesive Stamp, why do certain parties show such hostility that P. Chalmers on his part is compelled to say the same and to adduce proofs? The reasons for such conduct are too transparent to require enumeration. Indeed, the writer evidently appears not to know the pamphlets of Mr. P. Chalmers at all, or if he may have read one or two of them, it can only have been in a very perfunctory manner; otherwise he would have found that they are written in a dignified tone, that they do not contain any offensive remarks, and that the true merits of Sir R. Hill are impartially recognised therein and appreciated. He would also have known the real reason why Mr. P. Chalmers did not come forward with his claims until after the death of Sir Rowland Hill."

It is thus seen that at last my opponents admit as respects Sir R. Hill precisely what I have been striving to prove; yet, so far from offering any explanation or apology for so tardy an admission, visit their displeasure upon my devoted head for having at length succeeded in dissipating this world-wide delusion of fifty years.

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It is thus seen, that *where attention has been given by any impartial mind* to this matter of national and historical interest, the result has been something like a unanimous verdict that James Chalmers was the Originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. That my list of Continental recognitions does not include the entire Philatelic body is much owing, as I am informed by some of the heads of these societies, to the difference of language preventing their members at large from grasping the

facts of the case so as to overcome long-cherished delusions. The same may be said with respect to many editors, literary men, and others here, too prejudiced even to *read* what has been published, with many important cases of which nature I am well acquainted.

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### LATER.

Letters from Lieut.-Colonel Von Gündel, Herr Himmelbauer, and Dr. Former, show the continued and increasing interest taken in this subject by German Philatelists. Under date March, 6th, Von Gündel writes: "All is in the best way for your cause. This moment I have received a letter from an editor wherein he begs a Jubilee article for May 6th, with a likeness of James Chalmers. To the Jubilee will appear by Mr. Heitman (of Leipzig) a little work with the portrait, the proofs, and the Memorial of James Chalmers — for that I am now writing a closing word. The little book is written by Mr. Finke and will be of good use for your cause. Mr. Finke declares therein distinctly that no other but J. Chalmers is the true Originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp." Again, on April 10th: "I have written for the festival number of the *Exposition*, that will be printed in 10,000 copies and will come in many hands, an article of seven columns, wherein I celebrate James Chalmers duly. For number of May of the *Borsen Courier* I have also written a festival article. Dr. Former is the President of the Brunswick Philatelic Society, that has about 200 members—it is very good that he will write the biography of J. Chalmers for the *Philatelia*. Has Mr. Himmelbauer sent you his last article in the *Munich Postwertzeichen?* That paper is the organ at the Kjobenhaus Philatelic Club, with about 370 members; the editor is Mr. Larisch, and you have there a paper that will be of best use for your cause."

Lieut.-Col. Von Gündel writes, the 24th April: "Mr. Heitman, of Leipzig, one of your warmest adherents, publishes now also another new Stamp Album with the likeness and biography of James Chalmers. His Jubilee festival pamphlet brings the likeness, the proofs, the monument, and the autograph of your revered father, and an after-word by me of eleven pages, and the book will surely be much spread. The *Philatelisten Börsen Courier* publishes in its next number the portraits and biographies of James Chalmers and Sir Rowland Hill, with a long article by me. The *Frankfurt Universum* wishes also an article. The number of the *Welt Post* with the Jubilee article you have surely already received. Of that number is printed 10,000 copies, and almost any one who visits the Exposition takes also

a copy. In the *Vienna Volks Zeitung* of 22nd is a short but very good article concerning James Chalmers. I believe that paper Mr. Himmelbauer has sent you. It is much read by the under classes of the population, and it is good that these also learn something of the cause. . . . In the *Wiener Tagblatt*, a *very widely spread* paper, I find a long "feuilleton" wherein is said that James Chalmers was the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp. . . . The Emperor and some Archdukes have visited the Stamp Exposition."

The situation is shortly summed up by the *Vienna Weekly News*, of April 22nd: "The Vienna Postal Exhibition under the protectorate of the Marquis Bacquehem, the Austrian Minister of Commerce, which was opened last Sunday, is sure to attract general interest. The Exhibition occupies two spacious halls of the Austrian Museum on the Stuben Ring. Stamp Collectors will delight to feast their eyes on the accumulations exposed to view. Half a century has now passed since the first stamp was issued, and the late James Chalmers, the Father of the Stamp, as he is deservedly called, would have reason to feel proud of the inestimable service he rendered the civilised world could he be amongst us at the present day and witness the show now on hand."

Thus, the great Vienna Philatelic Exhibition has resulted in a triumphant vindication of the memory of James Chalmers as having been the Originator of the Adhesive Postage Stamp. The *Welt Post*, with portraits and biographical sketch of the leading German Philatelists now doing honour to Chalmers, with other communications, public and private, to the same effect as the above continue to reach me.

Is Scotland to continue looking on with silent indifference to the memory and services of her countrymen thus warmly recognised in other lands?

## LATER.

*May 13th.*—I am just advised of an important accession to my supporters in the person of the learned Dr. Moschkau, a name well known throughout the Philatelic world, the friend and correspondent of the late Sir Rowland Hill. This accession is announced to Lieut-Col. Von Gündel, of Vienna, in the following note :—

“ Dear Colonel,—I beg to forward you herewith the last number of the *Gartenlaube* containing my Jubilee article, and request your kind acceptance of same. You will gather from it that on the question of the invention of postage stamps I entirely share the views expressed by you, and for which you deserve the greatest praise.

“ I am, with friendly greeting,

“ Yours truly,

“ OYBIN, 3rd May, 1890.”

“ DR. MOSCHKAU.

This article is long and exhaustive of the question which has been at issue, and now thoroughly in acknowledgment of the world-wide services of James Chalmers as having been, in the year 1834, the inventor of the Adhesive Stamp for postage purposes. The *Gartenlaube*, an illustrated paper, is published in Leipzig, and my German friends here and abroad inform me has an enormous circulation, put at 300,000 copies, “ is the oldest and most wide-spread family paper in Germany, to be found in every coffee-house and hotel, and all over the German-speaking part of the Continent, and beyond its borders.” Another agrees that it is “ read by millions.” This conversion of Dr. Moschkau, hitherto my chief obstacle, to the logic of facts virtually carries the universal recognition of James Chalmers by the German Philatelic world, consisting of tens of thousands of studious and intelligent men.

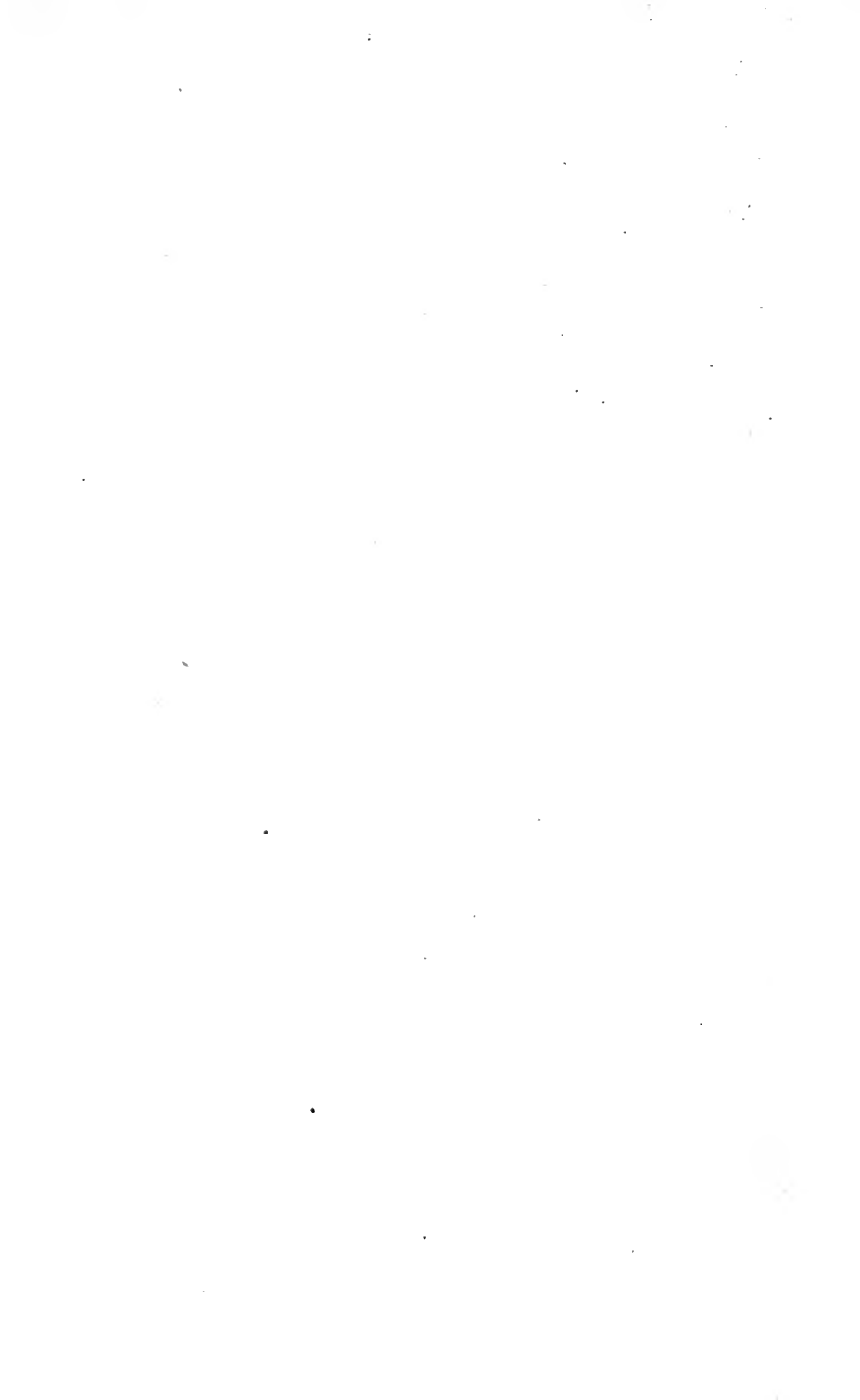
P. C.













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