

He'll Use Washington On All Christmas Mail

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL
Assemblyman, 46th District

At the request of many citizens who have asked me to express my opinion of what they describe as "the four, new, funny-looking Christmas stamps," I render this report.

I am extremely anxious to get back to reporting state issues. This postage-stamp business is a federal issue. The works of art described below were produced in the U. S. Bureau of Printing and Engraving.

Washington 25, D. C., and definitely not in Texas! If you want to see for yourself what the still-life water-colors look like, almost any U. S. Post Office has them for sale at five cents apiece, but you really should examine a

whole sheet of the stickers before you make a purchase. All stickers on the same sheet are not alike. The little pasters are in groups of four. The ones I have were torn from the upper left-hand corner of a complete sheet by a patient gentleman in the postal service. He said that each group of four is called a "block" by philatelists.

I ASKED him what philatelists were and he said that they are people who collect stamps which they put in albums. I asked him why they do not put the stamps on envelopes like other people. He did not reply but he did tell me that for 20 cents I had acquired a "block of four."

Now I hope to return to the main stream of American thinking, rowing my boat near to the right bank, carefully avoiding all rocks and shoals.

The paster in the upper left-hand corner of the block has a green stem out of which extend four large and two small, spiny-margined, green holly leaves. Superimposed are about nine, bright-red holly berries, although when I look at the berries closely I find that some of the berries are not entirely red. Those berries are not quite ripe. The stem, leaves and berries seem to lean toward the right at an angle of about

45 degrees from the perpendicular.

Near the lower right-hand corner is the arabic numeral 5 with a small letter "c". In a horizontal, extremely straight line across the bottom of the stamp, engraved in very small, fine print are the words "United States Postage." The use of the words "red," "extremely," "right" and "holly" is botanical and not political. I am opposed to getting botany and politics mixed up with anything, either religious or sacreligious. "Holly is sometimes used for decorations at Christmas time," and "the holly tree is associated with scenes of good will and rejoicing." Please see Webster's

New International Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition, Unabridged, available in many libraries, for verification of the above words and phrases.

THE STICKER on the right of the holly paster has a spray of pretty mistletoe berries and leaves. The berries are pale white and the leaves are a dull green, but the mistletoe spray hangs from a bright red ribbon, tied in a bow, all ready for someone to walk under it and wait to be kissed. The words "United States Postage" are the same as those on the left-hand sticker, but "5c" is all the way to the left. There is no "c". It is just the small letter "5".

The sticker in the lower right-hand corner of the block-of-four has what appears to be a red pine cone

pointing downward toward the words "United States Postage," probably to let the U.S. postal employees know that this is not an anti-tuberculosis stamp. There are three short cuttings from a pine tree. They are greener than the green on the other three stickers. The "5" and the little "c" are in the upper left-hand corner of this object.

NOW WE hasten to complete our report. The sticker at the left and bottom has a scarlet poinsettia flower with very small white and green berries. The stem and the six leaves are described in botanical textbooks as "deep green." The digit "5" and the small letter "c" are in the upper right corner. The words "United States Postage" are not located at the bottom of this collector's item. Those words are on the left edge, but you cannot read them from the top to bottom. You must look at the poinsettia, twist the sticker toward the right (starboard) about 45 degrees, and then you can see "United States of America," proudly running from left to the right! Incidentally, the poinsettia was named in honor of Joel R. Poinsett, of Charleston, S. C., who introduced the plant to the United States when he was U. S. Minister to the Republic of Mexico, in 1828.

Each of my outgoing envelopes containing Christmas cards will bear a U. S. five-cent stamp which has George Washington looking proudly to his right. General Washington knew why Dec. 25 is always a holiday for everyone and a Holy Day for some who look for the light to the right.

Merry Christmas to all!

Instructor First Aid Course Set

An instructor first aid course will be offered at regional Red Cross headquarters, 390 W. 7th St., San Pedro beginning Dec. 8, according to Captain Walter West, first aid chairman for the Torrance-Lomita Red Cross branch.

Five sessions, conducted on consecutive Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 to 10 p.m., will be taught by Ralph Miller, field representative of the Los Angeles Red Cross Chapter's Safety Services staff.

Prerequisites include a minimum age of 18 years, the advanced first aid course within the last three years, and the desire to teach first aid.

Enrollment for the free session is available by calling Red Cross, TE 8-8321.

PE Engineer Retirement Announced

The retirement of William O. Baker from Pacific Electric Railway following a career of more than 41 years has been announced.

Baker, who resides at 1222 Crenshaw Blvd., started railroading in 1923 as a fireman in Wilmington. In 1929 he was promoted to locomotive engineer. He held this post for the remainder of his service with the railroad except for a 4-year stint as road foreman of engines for PE during World War II.

An active Mason, Baker is past master of Wilmington Lodge 198, Wilmington Royal Arch Chapter 141, Harbor Council 45 and San Pedro Commandery 60.

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