Philaately in its modern incarnation, has been around for a couple of decades. The term originated from the Greek words 'philos', meaning 'study' and 'atelia', meaning tax free. Ridiculed at its infancy in 1842, stamps soon caught on with the world, and by the turn of the 20th century, Stamps were the passport for letters. From giant arrows drawn across North America, to two way radio, stamps played a crucial role, as its importance grew from a two pence postal service to pacing the news of World peace in 1945.

And, with the celebrations, commemorative stamps were ushered into existence. First issued by New South Wales in 1888, stamps became a form of national heralds. Philately would follow suit, however, half a decade earlier. It all began with an 1841 advert in The Times of London placed by a young lady, being 'desirous of covering her dressing room with cancelled postage stamps'.2 Mere accumulation rapidly progressed to collection, and by 1861, Oscar Berger-Levraut and Alfred Potiquet had published the first systematic list.3 1908 saw the first thematic catalogue, put up by Stanley Gibbons, delving into a lexicon of varied topics, which finally captured the milieu of Medical Philately. The stamps were ephemeral, but the history of medicine they conveyed, was anything but trivial.

Fielding Garrison, a military physician is considered the father of medical philately.2 The first medical themed stamp to meet a modern eye was in 1931, commemorative of 50th Anniversary of the Red Cross Society. However, a World War I promotional stamp, "Greatest Mother in the World" is often regarded as the first, unclassified medical stamp.

Country of Origin: India

Stamp Profile
Issued for: Birth Centenary of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy.
Issued by: Indian Posts and Telegraph Department.
Denomination: 50 paise.
Description: The stamp, printed in Burnt Sienna shows Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, and the façade of R.G Kar Medical College, Kolkata. 20 lakh stamps were printed, and they lasted in circulation up to 1983.4

References

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