

# The Wrangle Government

By Dave Parsons

Baron Peter von Wrangel; (August 27, 1878 – April 25, 1928), also known by his nickname the **Black Baron**, was a Russian officer of Baltic German origin in the Imperial Russian Army. During the final phase of the Russian Civil War, he was commanding general of the anti-Bolshevik White Army in Southern Russia. Being the last hope of “Old Russia” he and his Cossack troops were the remaining core of the Czar’s army. France recognized his government as the official government of Russia from 1919-1921. Being driven by revolutionary forces to the sea, Wrangel organized a mass evacuation on the shores of the Black Sea evacuating the White forces from the Crimea in 1920 where Allied warships rescued them and took them to Constantinople. The Wrangle Government continued to exist there for a few months longer.

While interred in Turkey and Serbia, the exiled government turned to creating postage stamps. They could not afford to create their own plates but took stamps from Russia, Ukraine, and Russian Offices in Turkey, applied surcharges to them and issued them in 1921. These were the stamps of the Wrangle Government. The stamps bore the surcharge meaning “Post of the Russian Army”. They were to be used for communications between the refugees, however, these folks could not afford postage or know how to contact friends or relatives so used copies are seldom found. Few were sold to the public and reprints are common.



These stamps may be found listed in Scott Catalog under Russia Offices abroad- Offices in the Turkish Empire. They were picked up as a Raffle Prize at a recent club meeting and provide a glimpse into a period of history unfamiliar to the author.

*Dave Parsons is a member, and his collecting interests include U.S. used and BOB, Mint U.S. Commemoratives, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, South Africa, and Liberia.*