

## The "Tiger" Arms of Irkutsk

By Greg Balagian

Two stamps issued by Russia in 2011 picture the current arms of Irkutsk that resemble a rather odd feline. [See the mew listing on page 27.]

Originally the arms of Irkutsk were approved on October 26 of 1790 by Russian Empress Yekaterina II. The description stated that the shield would have a running Amur tiger with a sable in its mouth. [See the illustration above.]

During the reign of Czar Alexander II, the word tiger was replaced by *babr* which is a tiger in the local dialect of the Russian language.

Apparently on July 5, 1878 during a royal decree about 47 Coats of Arms of



The arms of Irkutsk went from a tiger to a beaver due to a clerical error.

various Russian provinces and regions, the paperwork was mistakenly transcribed from *babr* to *bobr*, which in Russian means "beaver."

While the arms of Irkutsk never had an image of a beaver on it, the actual beast was often depicted as beaver-like.

The mistake was finally corrected 119 years later, in 1997, but unfortunately the image on the arms was kept as an animal not quite like a tiger. 🐾

## Baroque Lions: Lorca, Spain

By Greg Balagian

Two facing lions rampant are on a bas-relief at the entrance to the 17th century Baroque Palace of Guevara, also called *Casa de las Columnas* (House of Columns), in

Lorca, Spain.

On January 2, 2012, Spain issued a self-adhesive



strip of five **Heraldic lions in bas-relief are in Lorca, Spain.**

depicting various architectural attractions in the city of Lorca, located in southeastern part of the country. One of the stamps depicts the heraldic lions found on the outside of the palace. 🐾

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## Advertising Cover: Hercules and the Nemean Lion



-From the collection of Greg Balagian

This advertising cover for Hercules Powder depicts Hercules wearing the Nemean lion's pelt after killing it as one of his 12 labors. The 2¢ Washington stamp has a flag cancel and date stamp, "January 11, 1904, Findlay, Ohio."



The Lion's paw sculpture, located in Sri Lanka, is on a recent stamp.

## Sri Lanka - Lion's Rock Fortress

By Greg Balagian

Sri Lanka's Lion's Rock (*Sigiriya*) is a palace fortress built in the shape of a huge lion by King Kashyapa in the 5th century. The 1214-ft (370 m) granite peak was his refuge.

When the rock was discovered by British major Jonathan Forbes in 1831, the lion's head was intact; it has since crum-

bled. A pair of large paws on either side of a central stairway are all that remain of the sculpture.

On September 27, 2011, Sri Lanka issued a stamp for World Tourism Day depicting the Lion's Rock. 🐾

As punishment for killing his children,



reece Scott 980 (1970)

Hercules was commanded by King Eurystheus to complete 12 onerous tasks. The

first was to kill the lion of Nemea who terrorized the area and was impervious to arrows. Hercules strangled the lion and brought back its pelt.

You can contact the editor for a FREE updated checklist of Hercules and the Nemean Lion on stamps begun by Eileen Meier in 2001 and updated by Greg Balagian in 2012. 🐾

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