MONTSERRAT - EXTRACTED FROM:-

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MONTSERRAT
A Country Worth Collecting?

Hugh Jefferies

Montserrat was in the news headlines recently when Hurricane Hugo swept across the island, destroying most of the buildings and causing considerable injury and loss of life. Once again a small country, well known to stamp collectors, came to the attention of the public at large most of whom were probably unaware of its existence—let alone where it was.

To be honest its reputation among stamp collectors took something of a knock during the mid-1980s when the island stepped up the number of stamps it issued but the present administration seems to have brought this under control again and the number of sets issued is back to four or five per year.

Early History

Montserrat is a small volcanic island in the Leewards group about 30 miles south-west of Antigua. It is about 32 square miles in area and rises to a height of just over 3000ft (Mount Soufrière).

The island was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage in 1493 and named after a mountain monastery in Spain which was illustrated on SG 313, It was colonised from St Christopher by Sir Thomas Warner in 1632 the tercentenary of which was commemorated by the famous engraved set of 1932. Many of the colonists were of Irish extraction hence the harp in the Colony's badge a central part of many stamp designs from SG 14 through to SG 576. Though taken twice by the French (in 1664 and 1782) it was finally ceded to Britain in 1783.

Monserrat's first organised postal service was started in 1702 when it was included in Edmund Dummer's West Indian Packet Service. This service was abandoned as far as Montserrat was concerned in 1711, however, and until a Government Packet Service was instituted in 1755 it had to rely on private carriers. The earliest recorded postal markings are two straight line marks, one spelled 'MONTSERRAT' and the other 'MONTSERRATT' both on letters of 1796. In 1836 a circular marking in the well known 'fleuron' pattern came into use. This is well illustrated in the border of the miniature sheet which came out with the 1976 set commemorating the Island's stamp centenary. Also shown on the same sheet is a map of the 18th and 19th century packet and mail boat routes to and from the Island.

The First Stamps

A branch of the British Post Office was established at Plymouth, the Island's capital, in 1852 and the 'crowned circle', also illustrated on the aforementioned miniature sheet, was brought into use. Stamps of Great Britain were used at this office between 1858 and 1860, four values being known to have been thus employed; 1d., 4d., 6d. and 1s. although only the 1d. and the 6d. are priced in the *British Commonwealth Catalogue*.



Inverted 'S'

Between 1860 and 1876 the Island was once again without stamps, outgoing mail receiving a 'MONTSERRAT/PAID' c.d.s. but in 1876 1d. and 6d. stamps were issued by overprinting current values of Antigua. These stamps, which were on watermark Crown CC paper, perf 14, are rare on cover and are normally found cancelled with the 'A08' obliterator. Reference to the catalogue shows that the 6d. exists in both green and blue-green shades, in fact the latter shade was never issued since the printers (presumably) found that overprinting the normal (blue-green) Antigua 6d. was unsatisfactory and made a special printing in bright yellow-green. A shade not found on the basic Antigua stamp.

Though the original 6d. stamp was produced in sufficient quantities to last until the end of the reign, the 1d. was reprinted in 1884 by overprinting on the Antigua watermark Crown CA stamp, perforated both 14 (7) and 12 (13). Meanwhile other values had been added to the set although these were not overprints on Antigua but standard Queen Victoria key type designs inscribed 'MONTSERRAT'.

The 2½d. red-brown and 4d. blue on Crown CC paper were issued in 1880, both values being reissued in 1884 on the new Crown CA paper. The following year the colours of these two stamps were changed to ultramarine and mauve respectively.

Varieties

There are a number of interesting points to remember about these Victorian stamps, particularly the overprinted values. Firstly, the basic Antigua stamps include a number of interesting varieties with two major re-entries being found on the 1d. (R1/8 and R2/8) and no less than six on the 6d. Some of these are quite easily spotted by looking at the white lettering of 'ANTIGUA' or the value. Most of them show evidence of doubling of these letters as well as duplication in the engine turned background.

Secondly, as is mentioned in the Catalogue, there is an interesting constant variety consisting of an 'inverted "S"' in MONTSERRAT which has been found on all printings of both values. It does not, however, appear on every sheet although on those sheets which it does appear, it occurs twice. The natural inference from this is that there were two separate overprinting plates, one of which contained 120 impressions and could overprint a complete sheet while the other, of 60 impressions, had to be used twice. One of the results of the two operation overprint was that they were often out of alignment, resulting in vertical pairs from the upper and lower halves of the sheet having the overprint further apart or closer together than normal—see our front cover illustration (*courtesy of SG in London*).

Needless to say the 'Inverted "S"' occurs on the 60 setting plate (R2/3) and thus the variety is found on both R2/3 and R7/3 in the finished sheets. Leonard Britnor in his book *Montserrat* was of the opinion that the variety occurs 'most frequently' on the 6d. value. On the 1d. it is least scarce on the Crown CC, perf 14, scarcer on the Crown CA perf 12 and scarcest of all on the Crown CA perf 14. Findings which today, as in 1965 when they were documented, do not accord well with catalogue quotations. One example only of the 6d. blue-green with 'inverted "S"' is known—the other which must have existed, has never been found. A number of watermark varieties may also be found on these stamps; all of the overprints on Antigua are known with watermark reversed (except the 6d. blue-green) while the 1d. Crown CC (1) and the 1885 2½d. ultramarine (10) can both be found with watermark inverted.

Another interesting feature of the period is the many 'bisects' which exist on both the 1d. and 6d. values. In 1883 a need arose for a ½d. stamp and, rather than surcharge an existing value, as was done in many other West Indian islands, authority was given to bisect the 1d. value. The 6d. trisected (as 2d.) and used in combination with a bisected 1d. to make up the 2½d. overseas rate, does not appear to have been authorised, however. Perhaps not surprisingly most of the bisect covers in existence were 'philatelically inspired', including the one illustrated in which five 1d. stamps have been bisected to make up the 2½d. rate. The Catalogue also noted that an unofficial '½d.' overprint, in either black or red, may be found on bisected 1d. stamps.

Forgeries, Fiscals and Stationery

Among Queen Victoria stamps to have been forged are the 1876 1d. with extra overprint to make a 'double overprint' and the 1884 1d. perf 12 of Antigua with 'MONTSERRAT' overprinted on it in seriffed capitals. The 2½d. red-brown also exists forged, lithographed on to genuine paper but is identifiable, as the forgery is significantly darker than the genuine article.

Montserrat also issued 1d. inland revenue stamps but though these are known with postal cancellations, such use does not appear to have been authorised in the same way as it was on other islands. For the record, there were two basic stamps; a large format design in shades of carmine, issued in 1870 and a smaller, definitive size stamp in lilac, issued ten years later. The former exists perf 12½ or 12 and printed on either horizontally or vertically laid paper.

The first item of postal stationery, a 1½d. postcard, incorporating the familiar keyplate stamp impression with Queen Victoria's head in an octagonal surround was issued in 1879 for use on international mail. This was replaced by a new design in 1884 when a 1d. inland card and 1d. and 1½d. 'reply' cards were also introduced.

Leeward Islands Take Over

In October 1890 stamps inscribed 'Leeward Islands' were issued for use on all the islands within the group and individual issues for Montserrat, as well as Antigua, Dominica and the others were withdrawn. In 1903 Montserrat stamps came ino use again and were available alongside Leeward Islands issues in all post offices until the latter were withdrawn and invalidated in 1956.

Any collection of Montserrat should therefore include Leeward Islands stamps used on the island but it is fair to say that to put together a representative collection would be difficult to say the least. Part of this can be explained by the relative populations of the eight islands in the group which were quoted by Jack Grumbridge in *GSM* in May 1939 as being:

Dominica 47,394
Antigua 32,680
St Kitts 18,805
Nevis 13,472
Montserrat 13,264
Virgin Is 6100
Anguilla 5465
Barbuda 1020

King Edward VII and King George V

Three sets were issued during the reign of King Edward VII, in each of them the nine values to 2s.6d. were standard small size definitives depicting the badge of the colony, while the top, 5s., value was a larger stamp with the monarch's head in a border of fancy scrollwork and leaves—the same design was used for the higher values of Dominica and Antigua. The first set was on Crown CA paper except for the 5s. value which was on the old Crown CC stock (The 1d. can be found with watermark inverted). The second set, which also began to appear in 1903, was on Multiple Crown CA paper, four values of which, the ½d., 2d., 3d. and 6d. can be found on ordinary paper as well as the chalk surfaced paper which was standard for the rest of the set. In 1908 a new set in revised colours but again on Multiple Crown CA paper appeared. The badge design also provided the stamp imprint for postal stationery cards, wrappers and envelopes.

In 1914 the 5s. was replaced by a stamp with the new King's head and in 1916 the 'Badge' series was replaced by a new design incorporating both the badge of the Colony and the King's head in one small size stamp. In 1917, in common with many other territories, the ½d. green was overprinted 'WAR STAMP' to pay the additional tax on all letters sent to other parts of the Empire. This overprint was applied in both red and black, using a plate employed also for the stamps of other colonies. We know this to be the case as, on the first stamp in the bottom row, the letters of the overprint are marginally shorter than the rest of the sheet, being 2¼mm as opposed to 2½mm high. A similar phenomenon exists on stamps of the Virgin Islands, among others. In 1919 a special printing was made of the 1½d. stamp with the value and 'WAR STAMP' applied in black in one operation (thus combining the postage and tax charges in one adhesive). The length of the fraction bar on this stamp varies between 1mm and 1½mm with the shorter variety being found on stamps 3 and 6 from R2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. The distance between the '1' and the '½d.' also tends to vary somewhat (see illustration), the two being particularly close together on R9/2.

From 1922 onwards the definitives began to appear on the new multiple script CA paper with all values up to the 3d. (except the 3d. purple on yellow paper, issued in 1927) being on ordinary, unsurfaced paper and all higher values, including the 1927 3d. on chalk surfaced paper only.

Postmark Interest

Up until this time all postmarks, other than the 'A08' obliterator had incorporated the word MONTSERRAT around the top of a single circle datestamp and although there is some variation in the size of the lettering and the diameter of the circle, they were, presumably, all used at the GPO in Plymouth. In the 1920s however a new c.d.s. 'GPO PLYMOUTH/ MONTSERRAT' was introduced and, at the same time special cancellers were provided for sub-post offices in some of the outlying villages. Among those which are known to have existed before the end of the 1930s are Cudjoe Head, Harris, St Johns, St Peters and Salem. Montserrat or Leeward Islands stamps cancelled by postmarks of any of these offices are extremely scarce and well worth looking out for.

Commemoratives

1932 saw the issue of the 10-stamp 'Tercentenary' set commemorating the colonisation by Sir Thomas Warner. The island's first real pictorial issues, they were one of the 'blue chip' investment sets of the late 1970s.

Montserrat's set of four stamps for the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935 was in the standard colonial omnibus design with printing done by Waterlow and Sons. The famous vignette plate flaws, such as the 'Extra flagstaff' (peculiar to Bradbury Wilkinson plates), are not to be found on the Montserrat set but that is not to say that they are unworthy of study. A constant re-entry, manifesting itself most obviously around the figures of the date has been shown to us recently by Mr A J Ainscough of the Silver Jubilee Study Circle but unfortunately its position has not yet been identified.

King George VI

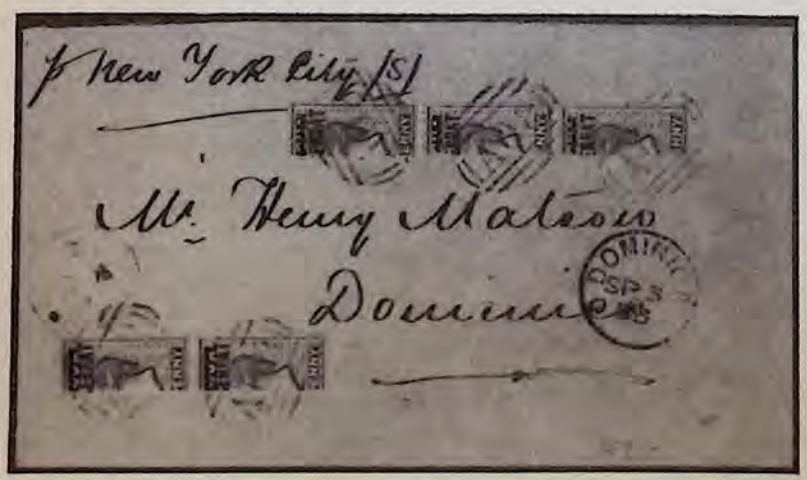
The handsome King George VI definitives, incorporating three different designs over the 12 values, were issued, perf 13, on 2 August 1938. Like previous definitive series it ran to a top value of 5s. During 1942 and 1943 all values were issued line perf 14 and in 1948 two new values, 10s. and £1, were introduced, both perf 12. There are some worthwhile shades in the perf 14 series and the original ½d. and 1d. are known to have been made up into vertical coils from ordinary sheets; coil join pairs would therefore be a worthwhile addition to any Montserrat collection.

Commemorative sets during the reign of King George VI, and indeed Queen Elizabeth too, up to 1967, provide little of interest. From the 1937 Coronation set to the 1966 UNESCO issue they participated in every omnibus set produced and apart from one or two minor plate varieties on some of the later Queen Elizabth sets and two 'missing colours' which are listed in the Catalogue, there is very little of any real interest.

Queen Elizabeth

In 1951, in common with the other Leeward Islands, the Montserrat currency changed from sterling to the West Indian dollar with £1 being equal to $4.80. Accordingly a new set of definitives from 1c. to $4.80, incorporating seven different vignette designs between the 13 values, was issued recess printed by Bradbury Wilkinson. The same set was reissued in 1953 with the head of Queen Elizabeth substituted for that of her father. Two new values, a ½c. and a 48c. were added in 1956 and 1957 respectively and the following year the four stamps depicting the 'Map of the Presidency' (½c. and 3c.) and the 'Badge of the Presidency' (6c. and $4.80) were reissued with the captions amended to read 'Map of the Colony' and 'Badge of the Colony' respectively. This change reflected the Island's change of status from a 'Presidency' within the Colony of the Leeward Islands, to a separate Colony in its own right.

Five bisected 1d. stamps to make up the 2½d. rate to Dominica





Block of four 'WAR STAMP' surcharges: 1 & 2 show variation in spacing of '1' and '½'; 4 shows short bar in fraction

By the 1960s the population of Montserrat was beginning to decline slowly as the inhabitants emigrated to the larger islands or to the UK. Literacy was much improved however and this is reflected in an increase in the number of sub-post offices and an increase in the amount of mail emanating from them. By 1960, for example, new offices had opened at Bethel, Dyers and St Patricks, in addition to those mentioned above. Stamps and, more especially, covers from these offices remain relatively scarce however and worth holding on to when you see them.

Two later additions to the first Queen Elizabeth definitives were a noticeably darker shade of the 6c. issued in 1962 and the 2c. green on Block CA watermark paper (as opposed to the original Script CA) in 1964. Both are worth looking for as the set was replaced by a new one depicting fruits and vegetables, issued on 16 August 1965. In spite of (or because of, depending upon your point of view) the change from recess printing to photogravure, the set is an attractive one. First issued with the block watermark upright (it is known inverted on the 1c. and 12c.), six of the values were surcharged in 1968 while the following year and the year after, seven of the original set and three of the surcharges were reissued with watermark sideways. Again two values, the 3c. and the 10c. are known with the watermark inverted—or, rather, sideways inverted.

Since the fruit and vegetable set of 1965, there have been five definitive sets issued by Montserrat. Birds, issued in 1970, Flowering Trees (1976), Fish (1981), Birds again (1984)) and Sea Shells (1988). All have been attractively designed and produced and in the case of the first birds set offer some challenge to complete with two separate papers, sideways and upright watermarks, (and inverted and sideways inverted varieties) as well as provisional surcharges and official overprints.

Commemoratives to Look For

From 1967 the number of commemoratives increased to 16 or 18 per year, a level which is still the norm and by today's standards probably not an unreasonable one. True there were a couple of years in the mid-1980s when things got a little out of hand—in 1986 there were 44 different stamps and no less than nine miniature sheets—but those days are now past and things are now back to a more respectable level. Also around this time a number of so-called 'errors' were produced which are not listed in the Catalogue.

For the most part modern Montserrat commemoratives are well designed, well produced and attractive and not without philatelic interest. The 1973 set, commemorating the 480th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of the island, included a miniature sheet perforated 13½ × 14½ as opposed to the 13½ × 13¾ of the normal sheet stamps. Less than 4500 of these sheets were issued, the watermark on which was normally Block CA inverted. However the sheet is also known with watermark upright. The following year a set of four was produced for the 25th anniversary of the University of the West Indies. A very small quantity of the 60c. was discovered with watermark inverted but it is only known used in this condition.

In 1975 a rather 'gimicky' booklet was produced with self-adhesive stamps depicting Carib artefacts. It sold out very quickly but, thankfully, the experiment has not been repeated. In 1983 the set of four issued to commemorate the bicentenary of manned flight was specially overprinted 'INAUGURAL FLIGHT Montserrat–Nevis–St Kitts'. However the stamps were not put on sale in the normal way but used on flown flight first day covers. The overprints are not listed in the Catalogue although they are noted and a price given for a cover. While the issue may sound a little suspect, it is probably no more so than some of the early airmail overprints of Newfoundland, for example.

Unfortunately Montserrat has tended to be linked with certain other island territories whose new issue policies were guided by the same agency—however, it should be pointed out that even during their 'busiest' stamp issuing period, they issued less than half the number of stamps that a couple of nearby islands produced and were involved in only one 'Leaders of the World' set—for John J Audubon in 1985. All in all then modern Montserrat issues present an attractive, philatelically interesting and, by today's standards, not an exploitative collecting group.

Officials

In 1976, shortly after the setting up of a philatelic bureau on the island, some of the current 'Birds' definitives were overprinted 'OHMS' in seriffed capitals for use on mail sent out from the bureau. They were not put on sale in either mint or used condition and have always had a high price in the catalogues in relation to their face values—especially the $5 and $10 stamps. Among less obvious items worth looking out for on this set are double overprints on the 10c. and 30c. values, a sideways inverted watermark (also on the 30c.) and the 10c. with overprint omitted in pair with normal. The overprint having been applied locally, it is perhaps not surprising that a number of minor varieties, such as raised stops and damaged letters, exist, but owing to the fact that full sheets have never been available for inspection, their positions have never, so far as I am aware, been ascertained.

In 1976 the new flowering trees definitives were likewise overprinted 'OHMS', this time in bold italics but although these were never made available to collectors mint, they could be purchased cancelled to order. The overprint is known inverted on the 5c., 15c., 20c. and 55c., and double on the 55c. Sideways inverted watermarks exist on the 15c. and $5 and the constant variety 'missing stop after S' is known on all values, occurring twice in the sheet on R1/3 and R3/5. Two further sets of 'OHMS' overprints on the flowering trees appeared in 1980 and the following year the new 'Fish' definitives appeared similarly overprinted. From this set on, however, Officials were made avilable to collectors mint as well as used and are listed accordingly in the Catalogue.

Montserrat then provides something to interest all collectors whatever their tastes. A fascinating early postal history; an early stamp issuing period that includes few howling rarities yet provides plenty of good varieties for the astute collector to keep an eye open for; highly attractive recess-printed issues between 1932 and 1965 and a more recent stamp issuing policy of providing attractive issues in reasonable numbers and, despite a couple of years in thich things seemed to get a little out of hand, a declared intent to issue future commemoratives in reasonable quantities. Add to this the possibilities for the postmark enthusiast and the fact that one can extend a collection to include Leewards stamps used on the island and this little country would seem to have a very great deal to recommend it.

References

L E Britnor, *Montserrat*, British West Indies Study Circle (1965).
Capt A E Hopkins, MC, 'Montserrat', *The Regent Empire Stamp Encyclopaedia*, ed Robson Lowe (1935).

'Village' cancellations are worth looking for. From top to bottom: Bethel, Cudjoe Head, Salem and St John's



MONTSERRAT

PHILATELIC MAGAZINE, Mar. 2, 1951

TOURING AROUND THE EMPIRE

A BIT OF IRELAND IN THE CARIBBEAN



MONTSERRAT

Nearly all of the first settlers in Montserrat were Irishmen which accounts for a harp figuring so prominently on the badge of the Colony. No wonder they call it the "Emerald Isle of the Antilles." Floods and hurricanes have often wrecked the lime crop but it still remains the island's chief industry.

FAR away amid the deep blue waters of the sunny Caribbean lies the tiny island of Montserrat which, curiously enough, is known as the "Emerald Isle of the Antilles." There are reasons for this, however, which will soon become obvious. Let us first be certain of the location of this tiny British colony.

Like St. Kitts, recently discussed in this series, Montserrat is one of the four presidencies of the Leeward Islands, and lies some 27 miles south-west of Antigua or about 35 miles from Nevis. Indeed, Montserrat like St. Kitts and Nevis is one more section in the volcanic chain of the Lesser Antilles.

It can perhaps be best described as a mountain top rising from the sea in a steady slope to a height of three thousand feet. This topmost point is known as the Soufriere (from the French soufre—brimstone or sulphur) the volcanic derivation of the name being obvious. Readers who have followed this series since its commencement will no doubt remember that there are "Soufrieres" on St. Lucia, Dominica and St. Vincent also.

Like the other islands in the Leewards group, Montserrat's hot season lasts from May to October while heavy rains can be expected between August and January. It is a mere 32 square miles in area and supports a population of 13,000.

It was in the year 1493 that Montserrat was sighted by Columbus who, struck by its resemblance to a mountain near Barcelona, gave it the name by which it is still known. When the Captain of the King's Body Guard, Sir Thomas Warner, brought out English colonists to St. Kitts in 1623 he did not settle any on Montserrat, but in 1632 he and his son despatched a few to the smaller island and these, strangely enough, were nearly all Irish!

Even to this day the people of Montserrat speak with a strong Irish brogue and even on the Colony's badge a harp stands out prominently. Thus, the nickname of the "Emerald Isle of the Antilles" would appear to be justified.

In February, 1667, Montserrat was invaded and taken by the French who, in the previous year had captured St. Christopher and ravaged Antigua. However, the Gallic occupation was a brief one. In July, 1667, the Treaty of Breda declared Montserrat to be English, and English it remained until 1782 when, after the battle of Brimstone Hill on St. Christopher it capitulated to the Frenchmen once again. Two years later it was again ceded to England and since that date the British have remained in possession.



Government House, Montserrat.

In 1896 a great flood devastated the island and was accompanied by a number of earthquakes, causing considerable destruction and loss of life. While the island's economy was still reeling under this blow another, even heavier, fell in 1899. This time St. Kitts–Nevis and Montserrat were swept by a terrific hurricane followed, almost immediately by a second. Montserrat was the worst sufferer, churches, schools and rectories as well as many houses being almost totally destroyed. The large school chapel of St. Mary's situated in the chief town, Plymouth, and which was built in 1838 in commemoration of the emancipation of the slaves, was destroyed save for the chancel, while St. Anthony's Church just outside the town was razed to the ground.



Worst still was the damage done to crops particularly to the limes for which the island has become famous all over the world. These fine plantations, originally laid out in 1852, were devastated and the patient work of many years destroyed in a few hours. None the less, replanting was carried out with energy and to-day Montserrat limes have regained all their old celebrity.

Sugar is still grown but no longer has the importance it held in days gone by. The great sugar depression of 1884 is still remembered, and to-day the island places more reliance upon its crop of Sea Island cotton, made famous on the current definitive stamps. Papain, the dried juice of the papaw, and famed as a relief for dyspepsia is also cultivated and exported in some quantity.

But the island has another industry —stamps! In 1948 the post and telegraph services brought in a revenue of 143,377 dollars. In the same period the Sea Island cotton exports were valued at 383,380 dollars. So it will be seen that stamps are very, very important.

(Continued under)



Hand-pressing limes on an estate in Montserrat.

It was in September, 1876, that the island first achieved the dignity of its own stamps when the Antigua Queens were overprinted "Montserrat." In 1880, the familiar De la Rue keyplate issue appeared, but when the Leeward Islands were granted a general issue in 1890 Montserrat (like Antigua, the Virgin Islands, etc.) issued no more stamps of its own. Then, in 1903, they appeared again, much to the disgust of the philatelic world. In chronicling the new issue, Messrs. Gibbons, in their *Monthly Journal* commented :—

"We have received a series of stamps for this place (Montserrat) which retired from the stamp trade some years ago, but has now taken it up again with renewed vigour . . . The design, of all except the highest value, is of small size and shows what we presume is the device of the Colony, consisting of a young Lady struggling with a Cross and a Harp —we prefer this description to one that has been suggested to us, of an Itinerant Female Musician holding on to a Sign-post . . ."

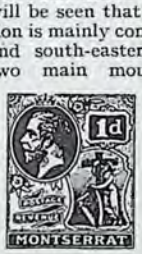
Necessary, or unnecessary, the stamps of Montserrat have achieved considerable popularity down the years, yet, save for one or two bisects and the two top values of the Tercentenary issue of 1932, a fine and reasonably complete collection could be made without applying to the bank manager for an overdraft.

If you were to visit the island you would find that the steamer would have to lie off the shore while you and your baggage were transferred to a small boat and taken to the wharf. You would find that Plymouth, the capital, offered but little entertainment and perhaps its most impressive building would be Government House situated on the cliffs amid charming gardens and commanding a superb view over the dark blue sea.

All visitors make a point of visiting the Soufriere, already mentioned, but there are in fact two Soufrieres ! Most impressive is that known as South for it is comprised of boiling streams which bubble from the very sides of the mountain while other vents emit steam and sulphurous vapours.

Other trips for visitors (and you can go by car, carriage or pony) include visits to the plantations and especially to Harris Village which lies amid the hills near the centre of the island and provides some splendid views.

Montserrat is dotted with the remains of numerous forts and batteries, chief among these being Forts St. George and Barrington. It is a long climb up to the former which is situated some 1,200 feet above sea level on the summit of St. George's Hill, but once it has been reached a splendid panoramic view of almost the whole island can be obtained. It will be seen that land under cultivation is mainly confined to the western and south-eastern sides, while the two main mountain ranges are thickly forested except in the north where the bare summits of hills are outlined against the sky.



Small mountain springs scattered throughout the island are the sole source of water supplies. The town of Plymouth, together with the southern part of the island west of the middle mountain chain are supplied with water from four springs in the mountains east of the town. The output of three of these is brought to a reservoir on the high lands above the town. The discharge of the fourth spring is divided, part of it being piped to the southern villages of St. Patricks, Trials, Morris and O'Haras. The remaining part of its output is piped to the Plymouth reservoir.

Have you noticed the fascinating names of the villages ? There are others—Farm, Bethel, Tuitts, Long Ground, Salem, Ginger Ground, Cherry Village, Jubilee Town and Paradise !

Montserrat does not possess expansive beaches like Nevis or Antigua, but there are many spots along the coast where swimming may be enjoyed. Social, tennis and cricket clubs provide other sources of entertainment for tourists.

Housing on the island is all privately owned but control is maintained by the operation of the Public Health Ordinance. Structurally, the houses are built of imported lumber with galvanised roof covering or shingles. Local lumber is sometimes used. The houses vary in size and height—one or two storeys according to taste but rarely higher. Twenty-six concrete houses for the labouring classes were built in an attempt to solve the housing problem created by the hurricanes of 1924 and



1928. These houses were given out on a hire purchase system and the great majority of tenants have proved satisfactory.

Continued from page 173

Value Tablet
5 h. Original : Frame equally thick all round.
Forgery : Frame thicker between second and tenth pearl.

Ornaments (Over the figure of value) :
Original : Clearly defined.
Forgery : Blurred and partially re-engraved.

Sheet Margins
Originals : Rotary or flat-bed bearers (see above).
Forgeries : Thick rule all the way round the sheet, with rounded corners ("Jubilee Lines").

Ultra Violet Reaction
Originals : Pale green (5 h.). Very dark red (10 h.). Paper appears green.
Forgeries : Deep green (5 h.). Pale red (10 h.). Paper appears pure white.

The printing on the originals appears also to be much clearer under U.V. light.

It can thus be seen that there is very much more to this series than Gibbons' Catalogue or a straight set can lead us to believe, and it is hoped that this article will promote the further specialised study of this interesting and inexpensive set.

GSM June 1990



In January this year I wrote an article on the stamps of Monsterrat which included mention of a re-entry on the 1s. value of the 1935 set commemorating the Silver Jubilee of King George V, I had intended to include an illustration of this interesting variety with the article in question but somehow it was omitted so I illustrate it here instead.

The re-entry affects the top right corner of the frame plate and is most obvious around the figures of the date above the King's head. As stated in the Montserrat article, the variety was shown to us by Mr A J Ainscough of the Silver Jubilee Study Circle who would be interested to know its sheet position.

Montserrat

GSM Nov '90



Two very good sets for the future are the 1986 Mail Packet Ships (696/9) and Tourism (710/13). These very modern issues are highly thematic and, in my opinion, the quantities purchased during their time of currency are nowhere near sufficient to meet current or future demand. Expect moderate price increases for several years to come,. and the long-term future looks promising. Other sets in the same period are scarcely less desirable, for example Halley's Comet issue (682/MS690), 1986 Christmas (714/7), 1987 Sharks (719/MS723), Bird surcharges (724/8), Butterflies (730/3) and 1987 Christmas (734/MS738). My advice—get them all, unmounted mint or fine used.

MONTSERRAT

PHILATELIC MAGAZINE, Aug. 9, 1946

THE DEVICE OF MONTSERRAT

By Rev. W. M. O'RIORDAN, C.F. (County Dublin)

I HAVE been interested in a recent query, and the answer to it, which you have published in the *Philatelic Magazine*. I refer to a query which appeared in your issue of Dec. 28 last as to the meaning or origin of the "Device of the Colony" of Montserrat, as depicted on its stamps. It is a point about which I have often wondered, and would like, with your permission, to put before your readers my own ideas.

Montserrat was discovered by Columbus in 1493, and was so named because of a resemblance to the mountain of that name in Spain, which in turn is so called because of its jagged appearance. The island was colonised by Sir Thomas Warner in 1632—the tercentenary was celebrated philatelically in 1932. It was taken by the French in 1664, restored to the British in 1668, again came under France in 1782, and was finally restored to Britain in 1784.

One of the first "planters" of Montserrat was a Captain Antony Brisket, an Irishman from Co. Wexford. He was made Governor of the island by



the first Earl of Carlisle, the titular proprietor of the Caribbee Islands, who died in 1636. His son, another Antony Brisket, held a similar position in the island. In the Colonial State Papers there is a petition from Brisket to the King, praying to be restored to his lands in Montserrat. He states that "Petitioner's father, by commission from the Earl of Carlisle, at his own great cost gained from the Indians and planted the Island of Montserrat." A report from Sir Wm. Willoughby attached to this petition states that Brisket, when the French took the island, "being of the Irish nation, accepted a commission from the French King and M. de la Barre to be governor, especially of the Irish inhabitants of the leeward side, and was governor there till the retaking of the Island by His Majesty's forces.

Again, Col. William Stapleton, who had been Governor of Montserrat from 1668 to 1671, and who was himself an Irishman, writing a report to the Lords of Trade in 1676 says, "In Montserrat most part are Roman Catholics, it being first settled by that persuasion . . ." He adds, that in Montserrat there are "six Catholics to one Protestant."

That the settlement in Montserrat was definitely Irish in character is confirmed by other documents of the period. Thus, a government agent of the fleet sent out to capture San Domingo in 1655, writing home said: "We passed Monserrat, planted by English and Irish." And Sir Wm. Willoughby in 1668 reports that Montserrat is "a fine little island, but almost wholly possessed by Irish."

It can be taken, then as certain that in the early years of its history as a British Colony, Montserrat's inhabitants were predominantly Catholics of Irish origin, And that, to my mind, is the clue to the meaning of the Device of the Colony. The harp, the well-known heraldic device of Ireland, has reference to the Irish origin of the Colonists, while the figure clinging to the Cross typifies their adherence to their Catholic Faith. It should be borne in mind that in the 17th Century the Catholic Faith was proscribed in Ireland.

I would be very glad to have ctiticism of this theory, and in particular would be glad to know when this Device was first used in connection with the Colony of Montserrat. In conclusion I wish to say that most of the facts mentioned, were derived from an article on "Early Irish Emigration to the West Indies," by the Rev. Aubrey Gwynn, S.J., M.A., of University College Dublin, which was published in *Studies*, a Dublin Quarterly, in December, 1929.

MONTSERRAT

STAMP COLLECTING, Nov. 30, 1962.

The early Postal History of Montserrat: 1702-1890

By L. E. BRITNOR (*continued from p. 389, November 23rd*)

POSTAL RATES

Very little has been mentioned so far about the Postal Rates, as it has not been possible to trace many specific instructions for Montserrat prior to 1879. It is probably fairly safe to assume that these were in line with those from the other West Indian Islands, including Jamaica, and for the sake of guidance the following figures are given:—

In 1774 the Packet Letter rate to England was

Single sheet ..	1s.6d.
Double	3s.0d.
Treble	4s.6d.
Packages at ..	6s.0d. per oz.

In 1814 these rates were reduced to

Single sheet ..	1s.3d.
Double	2s.6d.
Treble	3s.9d.
Packages at ..	5s.0d. per oz.

Sometime before 1860—probably in the region of 1840 when the R.M.S.P.Co. began carrying the West Indian Mail—the method of charging for Packet Letters was altered to 6d. per ½ oz. This rate remained in force until 1863 when, on April 1st, it was raised to 1s.0d. per ½ oz. (3d. per ½ oz. if carried by Private Ship).

Correspondence regarding joining the Universal Postal Union started in 1876, and it was finally agreed that Montserrat, together with the other Leeward Islands, should join, which she did on July 1st, 1879. In consequence of this, new rates of postage were announced in a Post Office Notice dated June 17th, 1879:—

Letters	4d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards	1½d. each.
Printed Papers and Patterns ..	1d. per 2 oz.
Newspapers	1d. per 4 oz.

Commercial Papers. The same as for Printed Papers, but with the proviso that the minimum charge for any Packet shall be 2½d.

Unpaid Letters will be charged on delivery with double postage.

A Post Office Notice of March 11th, 1882, made further reduction in these rates:—

Letters ..	2½d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards ..	1d. each.

Newspapers, Printed Papers, Books, etc., ½d. per 2 oz.

Commercial Papers. The same as for Printed Papers, except that the minimum charge for each Packet is 2½d.

Patterns, same as Printed Papers, except that the minimum charge for each Packet is 1d.

In 1885 it was proposed to introduce a parcel post in Montserrat. The Colonial Secretary of Antigua pointed out to the P.M.G. that no local arrangements existed in Montserrat for the delivery of parcels except at the Post Office, and therefore the only inland charge would be for the additional labour in handling. The P.M.G. replied on September 11th:—

> By a recent contract with the R.M.S.P.Co. the sea conveyance to and from the Leeward Islands is 2d. per lb. A rate of 7d. per lb. is therefore suggested, made up as follows:—
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Sea conveyance .. | 2d. per lb. |
> | British Inland Rate .. | 3½d. per lb. |
> | Colonial .. .. | 1½d. per lb. |
> | Total .. .. | 7d. per lb. |
>
> *P.S.*—To the above rate it may be necessary to add, in the case of those Islands in your jurisdiction to which the Contract Mail Service does not extend, for the conveyance from the nearest Island included.

The extension of the Parcel Post to Montserrat actually started with the outward steamer from Southampton on January 14th, 1886. Originally the limit of weight for such parcels was 7 lb., but this was raised to 11 lb. on July 1st, 1886, the rate charged remaining at 7d. per lb.

POSTAL MARKINGS—UP TO 1900

Reference has already been made to the despatch of two hand-stamps in 1705, and that that was the last which was heard of them.

After the Government Packet Service began operating to the West Indies in 1755, hand-stamps gradually came into use in those parts. The earliest recorded use for Montserrat, however, was not until 1796. No precise dates can be assigned for the sending out of these first two types, as the G.P.O. records of hand-stamps do not begin until 1826.

Type N1. MONTSERRAT, in seriffed capitals, measuring 39 mm. by 3½ mm. Recorded used April 3rd, 1796.

Type N2. MONTSERRATT, in seriffed capitals, measuring 43 mm. by 4 mm. Recorded used October 12th, 1796. It may be noted that the name was often spelt with two final "T"s in official documents of this period.

Type N3. The Montserrat fleuron mark was peculiar to this island. It is enclosed in a single circle of diameter 32 mm. Sent out from G.P.O. London July 5th, 1836 (*Fig.* 1).

It is interesting to note that up till about 1840 the use of hand-stamps in Montserrat was very spasmodic. Consequently, many of the letters emanating from there bear no mark of origin. For example, in a batch of correspondence examined for the years 1820–23, out of nearly 40 letters none bore a Mont-

(*Continued on page* 421)



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig 4



Fig. 5

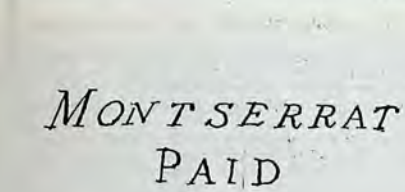


Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

The Early Postal History of Montserrat (*continued from p.* 419)

serrat hand-stamp; all had the London receiving mark, and several bore the boxed PACKET LETTER mark of that period, whilst two had English Ship Letter marks.

Type C1. The circular date-stamp, 27 mm. in diameter, with the name in seriffed capitals. Sent out November 4th, 1840 (*Fig.* 2).

Type C2. C.D.S., 25 mm. in diameter, with the name in sans serif capitals. Sent out December 16th, 1847 (*Fig.* 3).

Type C3. C.D.S., 21 mm. in diameter, with the name in sans serif capitals. Sent out August 14th, 1861 (*Fig.* 4).

Types O1 and O2. Two obliterators, of the horizontal barred oval type, inscribed AO8, almost identical, were sent out, one on April 14th and the other on April 28th, 1858 (*Fig.* 5). They were employed for cancelling the adhesives when G.B. stamps were used for the prepayment of postage from 1858 to 1860. They were brought into use again when Montserrat issued its own adhesives in 1867, and remained in use until at least the 1890s, because stamps of the Leeward Islands (Queen's head key plate design) can be found cancelled with these marks.

Forgeries of O1 and O2. These have been noted on some of the " Speratis " as follows:—

(*a*) The " AO8 " is practically full; the serif on the right leg of the " A " is broken and does not show; " A " is broken at top and bottom.

(*b*) Similar to (*a*) but the serif of the " A " has been touched in.

Type P1. MONTSERRAT/PAID, in two lines, in sloping seriffed capitals. Recorded used on November 23rd, 1836 (*Fig.* 6).

Type P2. The " Crowned Circle " mark, consisting of a single circle. Sent out July 15th, 1852 (*Fig.* 7).

Type P3. A single circle, 23 mm. in diameter. Sent out on August 14th, 1861 (*Fig.* 8). This mark has been found used as a cancelling mark in the 1870s and 1880s.

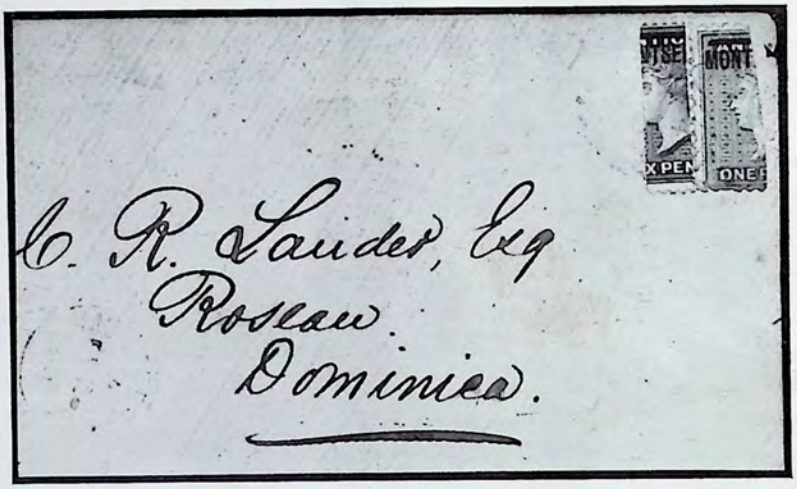
Type S1. MONTSERRAT/SHIP LETTER, measuring 38½ mm. by 12 mm. In seriffed capitals, top line 4 mm. high, lower line 4½ mm. high. Sent out from the G.P.O. probably in 1841 or 1842, but so far no example of its use has been traced (*Fig.* 9).

MONTSERRAT.

PHILATELIST, Sept. 1961.

From the Bainbridge Collection.

One Third and One Half



An unusual cover from Montserrat to Dominica franked by a trisected 6d. (=2d.) and a bisected 1d. (=½d.). The stocks of 2½d. brown were exhausted early in 1884 and such fractional provisionals were used until the arrival of the 2½d. blue.

For The PLANTATION PAPERS - MONTSERRAT - by Colin Maycock - see after ANTIGUA Plantation Papers

MONTSERRAT

PHILATELY, May-June, 1965.

MONTSERRAT—WAR STAMPS

by Leonard E. Britnor

Generally War Stamps have not proved very popular during recent years, and apart from such well known varieties of the overprints as those which occurred in the case of Jamaica, they have received but little study from philatelists.

A careful scrutiny of the War Stamps of Montserrat has revealed a few constant varieties which have not, apparently, been hitherto recorded.

These stamps were first issued on 8th October 1917, following an Order in Council of 9th May 1917, which imposed a ½d. War Tax on all letters to places within the British Empire, except within the limits of the Federal Colony of the Leeward Islands. This tax was extended to cover letters to the United States on the 15th May.

The first issue consisted of the ½d. value overprinted "WAR STAMP" in red. A similar issue in May 1918 was overprinted in black.

A special printing of a 1½d. stamp was made in 6th March 1919; this combined the normal postage rate (1d.) and the War Tax (½d.) The stamps were in black and orange, the "1½d." and "WAR STAMP" being printed in black in one operation.

The varieties so far discovered are:—

1. 8 October 1917.
   (a) In the first stamp of the last row of each pane the words "WAR STAMP" are printed in slightly smaller letters measuring only 2¼ mm. high instead of 2½ mm. as in the normal stamp. (see Fig. 1)
   (b) A further variety has been noted, namely one printed on thin paper.
2. May 1918.
   (a) It seems obvious that the same setting was used for the black overprint as had been used for the red one, as the same small lettering occurs, and in the same position as in 1a above.
3. 6 March 1919.
   (a) The spacing between the "1" and the "½" is slightly less than it is in the normal and this variety occurs in the last stamp but one in the first row. (see Fig. 2)
   (b) There is a long fraction bar to the "½", being nearly 2 mm. instead of about 1½ mm. (see Fig. 3). The precise position of this variety has not yet been ascertained and the writer would be grateful for any information on this point.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

MONTSERRAT

STAMP COLLECTING Aug 15, 1968.

MONTSERRAT: The Emerald Isle of the West



By James Mackay

THE island of Montserrat has been nicknamed the Emerald Isle of the West, not so much on account of its pleasant green appearance as due to the fact that the island was almost entirely peopled by Irish settlers during the 17th century. The links with Ireland are maintained to this day in the names of the places and the people of Montserrat, and the distinctly Irish brogue with which the inhabitants speak. Symbolic of the Irish connection is the island's coat of arms, featured on many stamps from 1903 till 1965, which depicts a female figure holding an Irish harp.

Montserrat was discovered by Columbus in 1493, during his second voyage to the West Indies, and named by him after a mountain near Barcelona. The island is extremely mountainous, with three volcanic groups dominating its 32 square miles land area. A familiar landmark is the distinctive St. George's Hill, which overlooks the capital, Plymouth, and is shown on the stamps of 1932 marking the tercentenary of the British settlement. The highest mountain is Chance's Peak (3,002 ft.), in the southern part of the island. A waterfall on the side of this mountain was depicted on the 15c. stamp of the recent International Tourist Year series.

The island was more or less ignored by Europeans till 1632, when Sir Thomas Warner despatched a party of colonists from St. Kitts. The first settlement was short-lived, however, since the French captured the island in 1664. Four years later, Montserrat was returned to Britain under the Treaty of Breda, and remained under British control till 1782, when the French again seized the island. Following the Treaty of Versailles which brought the war between Britain and her American colonies to an end, Montserrat was ceded by France to Britain which has been in control of the island ever since.

The island formed one of the " presidencies " of the former Leeward Islands colony, but when that colony was dissolved in 1956, Montserrat became a colony in its own right. This necessitated the alteration of the inscription on three of the then current definitive stamps (½c., 6c. and $4.80), substituting the word COLONY for PRESIDENCY. Consequently, the original versions are rather scarce and a little difficult to find, the $4.80 being quite an expensive stamp.



[The 6c. "Arms of Presidency"

Prior to the release of distinctive stamps in 1876, Montserrat used British stamps which can only be identified by the barred obliterator with the numerals "A 08" used in the post office at Plymouth. The earliest stamps of Montserrat consisted of the contemporary 1d. and 6d. of Antigua, suitably overprinted. For 10 years (1880–90) Montserrat had ½d., 2½d. and 4d. stamps, but in the latter year the separate issues for the islands in the Leeward group were discontinued and the somewhat monotonous keyplate designs of the Leeward Islands were introduced instead. The islands in this group protested at the loss of philatelic revenue and, in 1903, individual sets were re-introduced*. The issues during the reigns of K.E.VII (1902–10) and K.G.V (1910–35) merely featured the king's profile and the island's coat-of-arms, but attractive pictorial designs were adopted for the K.G.VI series issued in 1938.

Carr's Bay (featured on several values of the 1938 series) is noted for its scenic beauty and its wonderful beaches. The soft, grey sand of Montserrat is volcanic in origin and renowned throughout the West Indies. The heavy nature of the volcanic sand means that the coastal waters are crystal clear, ensuring ideal conditions for skin-diving. Aquatic sports were featured on the 16c. stamp in the recent International Tourist Year series.

The staple industry of Montserrat is sea island cotton, and many acres are devoted to this crop. The cultivation terraces were illustrated on one of the 1938 designs and also in the definitive issues of 1951 and 1953. The later sets also employed a design featuring " ginning ", as the processing of cotton is called. The island is also noted for the abundance of excellent fruit and vegetables which are grown there. The 4c. stamps in the 1951 and 1953 issues featured tomato-picking, while a fine truss of tomatoes is shown on the current 6c. stamp. Some idea of the astonishing variety of fruits and vegetables grown in Montserrat may be gained from the current definitive series, which features items ranging from the mundane onions and cabbages to the more exotic avocado pear (2c.) and the egg plant ($4.80). Bananas (24c.) have been increasingly cultivated for export in recent years, while papain, the dried juice of the paw-paw (60c.) is also exported for medicina purposes.



Ginning Cotton



The mundane cabbage

Plymouth, named after the famous seaport in the south-west of England, from which many of the settlers in the West Indies set out, has preserved much of its quaint, old-world charm. A general view of

(*Continued on page* 1419)

* See "Leeward Islands: An Enquiry " by Edgar Lowy, STAMP COLLECTING, February 13th, 1953.

MONTSERRAT

Montserrat (*continued from page* 1417)



Government House

the town appeared on the tercentenary series, while several stamps in the 1951 and 1953 sets depicted the Government House, a stone and timber structure in the Old Colonial style. Plymouth (population about 3,000) is reported to be the cleanest city in the West Indies. Another landmark in Plymouth is St. Anthony's Church, on the outskirts of the town. This Anglican church appeared on the 12c. stamps in the 1951 and 1953 sets. The 14,000 inhabitants of the colony mainly adhere to four religious faiths: Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Seventh Day Adventist.

Montserrat used to be regarded as a quiet backwater of the Caribbean, a delightful haven of rest for those in search of peace and quiet. Nowadays, although Montserrat has retained its simple, quiet charm, it makes a more positive appeal to the visitor. Attractive residential development is taking place along the new roads on the Isles Bay Hill. Luxurious modern hotels and comfortable chalets are situated conveniently beside the Belham River Valley golf course, reputed to be the finest golf links in the West Indies (24c. of the Tourism issue). The 5c. stamp of the same series featured sailing in "Sunfish"—the happiest and most light-hearted craft in the world. With a mere puff of wind they can register up to 15–20 knots—a puff more and over you go! Wapping Beach is the headquarters of the Montserrat Yacht Club, with the "Quarter-Deck" night club and the "Anchorage" bar and restaurant nearby. Montserrat, for all its peacefulness and serenity, has a great deal to offer the tourist holiday-making in the Caribbean.



Best links in the West Indies

With changes in postal rates in most British Caribbean countries, Montserrat has also had to overprint some current definitive stamps. Thus, six values with the new rates were released in May, showing lime, bananas, cabbage, pumpkins, sweet potatoes and eggplants, Again, collectors can savour, through stamps, some of the choice vegetables grown in this "greenhouse" of the Caribbean.

PHILATELIC MAGAZINE 21 Nov. 1969

MONTSERRAT

the commonwealth review

Montserrat Today

by Clive Drummond

MONTSERRAT issued its first commemorative set on April 18th, 1932. Through the following years it frequently joined in the omnibus series sponsored by the Crown Agents, and in the last couple of years has produced its own designs to fit international themes such as the tourist year, or Carifta, and Christmas or the Olympics, but it was not until July 29th, 1969, that it issued its second commemorative set, purely and simply to advertise Montserrat, and Montserrat alone.



Montserrat is a tiny island in the British Caribbean, with its population around 12,000, and the principal export appears to be manpower. There is in the United Kingdom, a large band of islanders, who came here to get work, and one by-product is that most of the modern definitives and commemoratives in the lower denomination ranges are quite easy to find in real commercially used condition.

After the Tercentenary commemoratives of 1932, with their 10/– face value, and small sales, as present catalogue prices confirm, there was an almost reluctant participation in special issues. Even the 5/– Silver Wedding was as low as any colony would go.

At long last we have a set that tells something about the island, with its development project series of four. The 15c. stamp so clearly advertising the telephone service recalls that the old completely manual exchange, was replaced by a new fully automatic dial telephone system on April 1st, 1967. Like in so many other scattered places around the world, Cable and Wireless were responsible for the installation, while the English firm of Ericsson Telephones Limited made the exchange equipment. Still in its infancy there are 480 subscribers, and three exchanges, one at Plymouth the capital, and the others at Bethel and Woodlands.

Under the banner "Knowlege is Power", a 25c. denomination looks at Education, and the blackboard in the design repeats the slogan "New Schools", familiar in places nearer home. Primary Education is provided free, and is compulsory up to 13, with the opportunity of staying on to 15. Five new schools, and an extension to the secondary school have been opened within the last three years, but the real problem is teachers. They are sent abroad to the United Kingdom, Jamaica and Canada, to train in modern techniques and methodology.

Of more direct interest to the philatelist is air transport which gets the 50 cent value. Seaplane connections began in 1931, although regular services were a long time in coming, but it was not until 1953 that a grass strip was constructed, followed by a runway in 1956, extended in 1967. Now served by Leeward Islands Air Transport, the current timetable shows an air bus connection twice daily with Antigua, as well as one daily service from Antigua to St. Kitts via Montserrat and Nevis. These air bus routes do not require reservations and guarantee a seat if you check in 30 minutes before the flight.

The top denomination of 1 dollar, looks at the Electricity Supply which came to Plymouth in August 1955. As the years went by, demand outstripped supply, and a new system was commissioned in January 1967, and needed a million dollar loan.

Montserrat has a difficult problem to steer an independent course with such a small land area, and low population. It is no wonder that the Caribbean Free Trade Association seems like the answer to a dream, and should go in some way to make the island self supporting.





Most of the definitives today are provisional surcharges, for the higher values when issued in 1965, were expressed in British West Indian dollar equivalents of the old sterling currency, so that there are odd denominations like 24 and 48 cents. The whole range from 12c. to 4.80 dollars has been surcharged from 15 cents to 5 dollars, and as the original watermarked paper runs out, they are re-appearing on sideways watermark paper still in provisional form. The set, which concentrates on the food that is grown in the island, mainly delectable tropical fruits and vegetables, must be in urgent need of replacement soon.

Face value of the three special sets for 1968 was exactly one pound, and the two so far in 1969 match this average. Although perhaps rather higher than strictly necessary, they are only following the pattern that seems to be firmly set throughout the world, and a collection of the moderns will keep the newer collector very happy, while swinging back to the older issues, the country offers a compact group for study, with its own published handbook, *Montserrat* by L. E. Britnor, published in 1965.



Commonwealth Commentary

BY ANGOL

THERE hasn't been much movement in new printings of QEII Commonwealth definitives lately, for no doubt the printers are up to the elbows turning out that multitude of UPU and Churchill issues. In addition, of course, there are the Christmas sets, but there was a small release 4th December which consisted of a new printing of the Barbados Postage Dues 2c. and 6c. These resulted in a new perforation i.e. perf. 12¾ x 13(C), and for Swaziland there were the 2c. and 3½c., but apart from slight shade differences, there was nothing about these to interest collectors.

There is one new release, however, which—amongst dealers at any rate—is providing scope for discussion. Recently, running short of several low values, Montserrat surcharged certain remainders of recent special issues, as well as some of the $1 current definitive. It got around that the overprinting had been very limited. So much that very few copies are said to have been sent direct to the United States, while it is also true enough that the supplies received by the Crown Agents were nothing like enough to supply even dealers' initial orders.

Later, however, one of the stamp magazines printed the news as coming from one who obtained the information from Montserrat itself, that around 20,000 copies of each of the five stamps with the surcharges existed. This information could, of course, be correct, although one would hardly think that there would be so many left over of the 50c. and $1 UPU stamps, in view of the popularity of this issue.

However, one point in the announcement is certainly not correct. It is stated that apart from a few minor shifts, varieties are non-existent. As a matter of fact, the 2 of the 20c. on the first stamp, third row, bottom pane, is actually of a different fount from all the others. Also the 0 of the 02c. second stamp first row is broken. However, even if the figures quoted prove to be correct, the two UPU values 05c./50c., 35c./£1.00 are likely to be worth getting hold of now, such is the growing popularity of the UPU Centenary issues. This is a popularity which already exceeds the anticipated demand. The UPU stamps were rather overshadowed by the Churchill Centenary issues, and of course, these latter are also very much sought after, but the UPU have the pull, as they form part of a theme with world wide popularity.

Another of the Montserrat stamps which was surcharged was the 60c. of the 25th Anniversary University of the West Indies, and here, there would certainly be enough stamps left over for overprinting purposes, for the Crown Agents have released the sales figures of the set and only 6,005 copies of the 60c. apparently were sold.

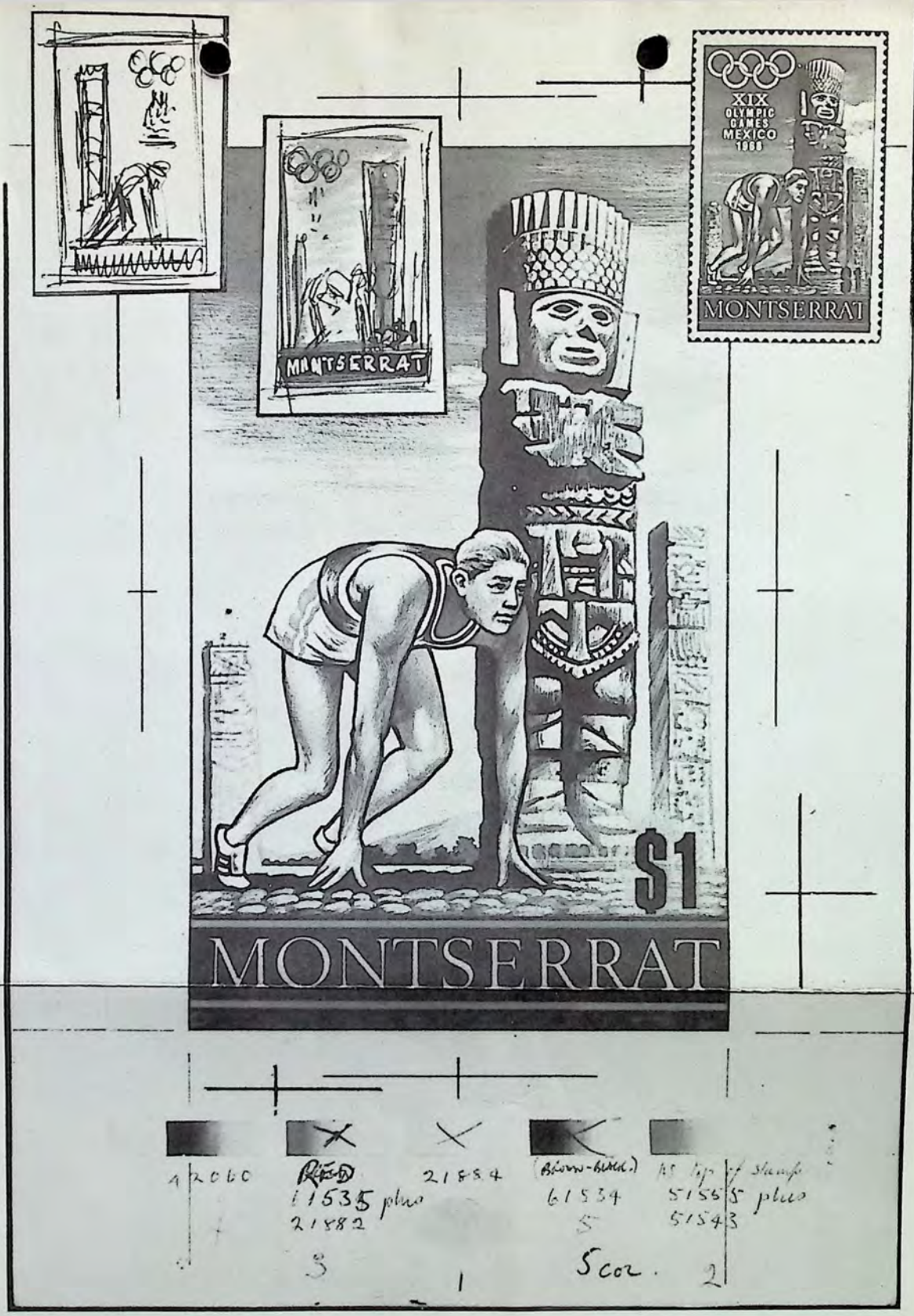
Collectors of QEII Commonwealth stamps would be very interested in comments made recently by Gibbons regarding these issues. In referring to the new edition of their Elizabethan Catalogue (what a change for the better this latest edition is!) they state (and who knows better than they?):

"Stamps of the last 22 years, particularly of Great Britain and Commonwealth countries are becoming the valuable stamps of tomorrow, much more rapidly than at any other time in the 134 year history of adhesive postage stamp issues". In view of the publicity that the "classics" receive *ad nauseum*, these comments make good reading for QEII collectors who can't help feeling that their stamps do not always receive a fair crack of the whip in certain quarters.

While our own British stamps are tops in popularity here in Britain (as is to be expected), those of Australia are not far from taking second place and it's not just a case of sticking in new stamps, but also the various printings of the definitives made available by the Crown Agents. Fortunately they know their job, which is more than can be claimed for some philatelic agencies. I have mentioned this point before, and recently the Crown Agents received supplies of new printings of the "Coral Crab" 3c. stamp and also the "Aboriginal Art" 35c., and in both cases they will prove of interest to most collectors of Australian stamps.

The 3c. was printed on the KP6T paper. This is whiter and rather heavier than that used previously. There is also a shade difference, with the latest having the background of a rather darker green. As for the 35c. stamp, this is now in line with the rest of the set as it is now printed on the KP5D paper which is much whiter than that used originally.

Previously all four values had appeared on a relatively cream paper. Next there was a reprint of three values (20c., 25c. and 30c.) on this KP5D white paper. Now the last value has come out thus which completes the set. Incidentally these variations are all listed in both SG and CW catalogues.



The $1 in vertical format, originally planned as part of another set. Shown here are the artist's preliminary sketch and colour rough, together with the final artwork and the issued stamp





Left—the colour rough. Above—the artwork and Right—the issued stamp



sprinter (15 c.), progressively shaping to the adopted layout, lettering and emblems; three colour trials of the horizontal designs—interesting because the colours actually used are those on the stamps; a trial design in vertical format (a bare outline); a sketch of the $1 vertical stamp, totem on the left; and a colour rough of the same stamp, totem on right as finally executed.

The three horizontal designs, 15, 25 and 50 cents, all accepted by Montserrat, are in a matching, consistent style (the $1 is 'odd man out' and we shall see why), two-thirds of the design area providing the main feature—sprinter, weightlifter and gymnast. These, and the figures of value, comprise the basic artwork; the territory name 'MONTSERRAT', Olympic rings, bowl of flame, laurel and inscriptions in the right-hand panel, also the Montserrat badge (which the artist derived from previous Montserrat issues), are superimposed through the medium of transparent overlays, as also is the attractive Greek Key border which has an obvious connection with the Olympics.

The lettering 'MONTSERRAT' is the type-face Microgramma Bold, a 'square' face, while the classical Roman lettering in the panel is noteworthy for the unusual treatment of the letter 'X' in 'XIX' and 'MEXICO'. Gyula originally planned putting the denominations at the top right-hand corner on all three stamps, but because of the composition of the 25 c. he had to place this denomination at the bottom. The value '50 cents' would, incidentally, have looked better in the upper left-hand corner.

The vertical $1 stamp is completely different in style from the other three stamps. It was, in fact, originally planned as part of a triptych for another set, and was submitted to Montserrat through the International Philatelic Agency of New York. The authorities thought it attractive and added it to the three stamps, making an Olympic foursome. It shows an athlete crouching at the start of a race, with the dominating totem close by, one of the famous Atlantes from Tula, fifty miles north of Mexico City. The Atlantes are columns in the form of warriors 15 feet high, which decorate porches and façades, or support the roofs of temples. Atlas, of course, supported the pillars of the Universe.

The seriffed lettering 'MONTSERRAT' is Berling Medium, and this fine stamp is in five colours.

AN ISSUE IS BORN

Montserrat

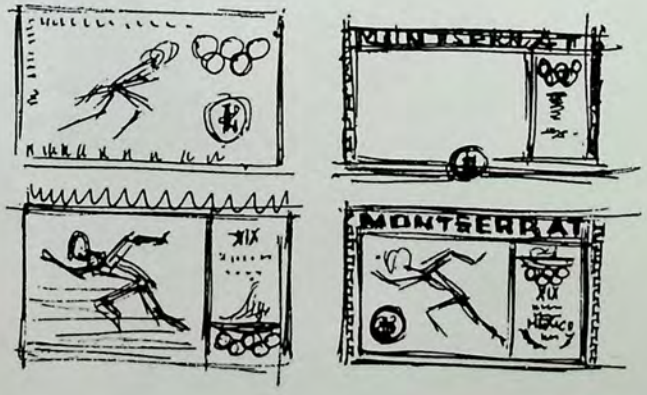
Olympic Games, 1968

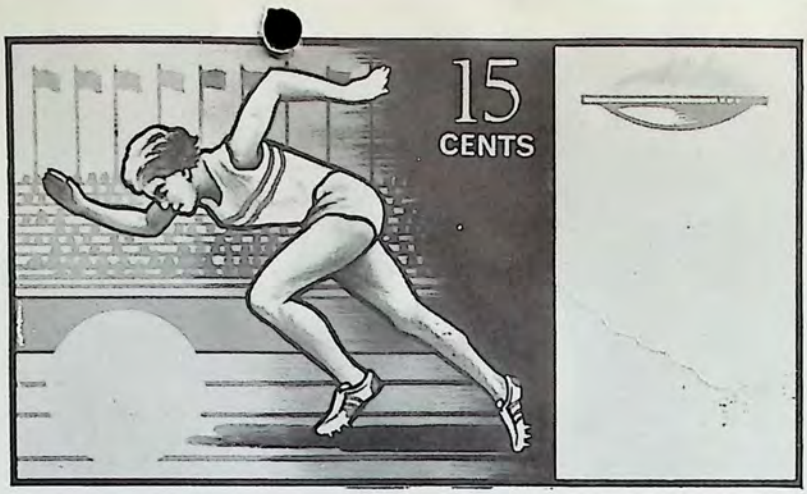
With all the excitement of the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico still in our minds, we present the design story of Gyula Vasarhelyi's four stamps for Montserrat which were issued on 30 July. These designs are typical of this artist's work—balanced, well-planned, colourful and bold, the athletes' figures strongly outlined, emblems and inscriptions neatly assembled. Our thanks to the artist for his helpful notes, and to the Crown Agents for permitting us to reproduce the completed artwork.

The Crown Agents' brief, dated October, 1967, called for three designs from which it was hoped that the Montserrat authorities would accept two for the four proposed stamps. The colours were limited to three for each design, and the artist had a free choice of subject within the expressed preference for athletes performing. Subject references and/or photographs are usually supplied, but in this case Gyula was left to his own devices. He is meticulous about every detail of his designs, and the Reference Library in Darlington is the main source of his information and invaluable for his work.

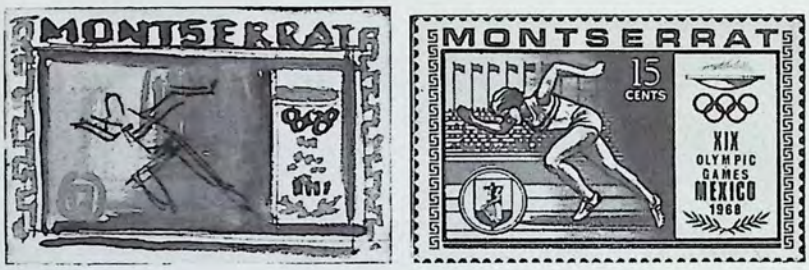
Gyula always progresses from roughs to finished sketches which are submitted to the clients and upon which the final artwork is based. His 'thumbnail' sketches comprise four preliminary drawings in horizontal format, mainly concerned with the woman

The 'thumbnail' sketches





Left—
The artwork, colour rough and finished, printed 15 c. stamp



Below—
The various stages of the 25 c. stamp—note the transparent overlays on the artwork



Sep. 26. 83.

Montserrat · Postage Stamps.

Existing and proposed Schemes of Colours

Existing colours

Proposed Colours for Surcharged stamps.


1d



Colour established by the International Postal Convention for this duty.




d
2½ Proposed colour, being that established by the International Postal Convention for this duty

Colour agreed to in Cas's Letter of 4 Dec. 83




4d Proposed colours




6d





6d

When submitting this proposed scheme of colours to the Crown Agents on 26 September 1883, necessitated by the change of colour of the 2½d established by the International Postal Convention, De La Rue pointed out that as the 1d could not be brought nearer the agreed shade by copperplate printing, it was an opportune time to change to surface printing by the key-plate system for the 1d and 6d copper plate stamps.

This scheme was agreed except that the colour of the 4d should be made distinct from the 1d.

A blank duty die proof in mauve was submitted on 30 November 1883 and approved by the Crown Agents on 4 December 1883.

Proofs of perforation 12 are the two 6d proposed for colour and the blank duty 4d mauve.

Ex National Postal Museum
1990 19 sheets

MONTSERRAT
Sept. 1876
Wmk Crown CC. Perf 14
Recess printed & then overprinted.



File Copy



120 Set.



File Copy



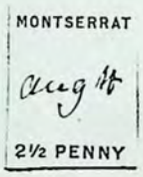
FILE COPIES

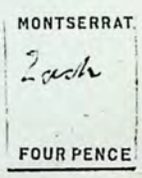












Jan 1880
Letterpress

13th August 1879
Name & duty die proofs
from which 60 leads were struck

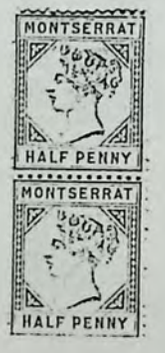
1884-85
Wmk Crown CA
1d Recess overprinted, others letterpress











FILE COPIES

Nov 84



Dec-83



No change in ovpt from 1876



120 Set

Nov 84



M O N T S E R R A T

This essay of Sept. 13, 1901, was submitted at the request of the Colonial Secretary, Antigua, on July 15, 1901, when he wrote that separate issues of Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat and St. Kitts were proposed, and submitted material for the design. The Crown Agents approved it for values up to 5/-, but instructed us to use the approved Antigua design for the 5/- denomination.

Sept. 13th 01.



Dupl.

Colour of Border

Centre Black.







27th. March 1903.

Montserrat

Regr. 68/01.

Appendix A.

½d 

6d 

1d 

1/- 

This colour scheme for the new K.E.VII issue of 1903 was approved by Sir William Mercer on March 31st 1903, with a black and scarlet from the substitute stamps on Appendix B (on the following page) in preference to our recommendation for the 5/- denomination of grey-green & scarlet.

2d 

2/- 

2½d 

3/6 

3d 



5/- 

Approved
Mercer 31.3.03

27th March 1903.

Montserrat

Regn. 65/01.

Appendix B.

Doubly Fugitive borders; Singly Fugitive Arms







Singly Fugitive borders; Doubly Fugitive Arms

















Singly Fugitive borders; Doubly Fugitive heads

See A.



1903
Letterpress Perf 14
Crown CA



Original Blank Duty Die Proof



FILE COPIES
120 set
1903 & 1908
issues



















1903 - 8

Typo. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Crown C.A.



1908 - 13

FILE COPIES
with dates of printing

June 08 Sep 09 Sep 09 Sep 09



June 08 June 08



ISSUED STAMPS



Montserrat
1908 - 13





1914



On April 5 1916 a new design was requested embodying the head of the King as well as the arms of the Colony. This submission was approved April 10th

10 April 1916



Monserrat

1916 - 23

Typo. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Crown C.A.

FILE COPIES

Aug 1916
120 Set Key
" Guppls





















Key die proof





A. J. H. 13 JUN 1916

















1916-23
continued











WAR STAMP
ISSUES

FILE COPIES







1919
Special printing in orange
Value & "War Stamp" inserted in black
at one printing.

October 1917





1918



1922 - 29
Typo. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Script C.A.

File copies with dates
of printing



Issued Stamps



1922 - 29

0001343



























Approved Colour Proof



MONTSERRAT

Tercentenary Issue

APPROVED COLOUR PROOFS.

Approved for Colours of ½d, 2d & 2/6 duties
[illegible]

Approved for colour
[illegible]

(ALTERNATIVES)

✓ ½d



5/-

✓



✓ 2d



✓ 2/6



Approved for Colours of 1d, 1½d, 2½d & 6d duties
[illegible]

Approved for Colours of 3d & 1/- duties
[illegible]

2½d



3d ✓



✓ 1d.



✓ 6d.



1/- ✓



✓ 1½d



Alternative Colour Proofs
NOT APPROVED

APPENDIX 15th February, 1932

½d.  X

2d.  X

3d  X

1/-  X

2/6  X

5/-  X

APPENDIX A (ALTERNATIVES) 16th Feb. 1932

½d.  X

1/-  X

1/-  X

2/6  X

5/-  X

APPENDIX B (ALTERNATIVES) 18th Feb. 1932

X 
1/-

X 
1/-

5/-  X

MONTSERRAT
18 April, 1932
Tercentenary Issue

Recess. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Script C.A.

APPROVED

Blank Duty Die Proof

Die aff^d

29/1/32.





THOMAS DE LA RUE & COMPANY, LIMITED, LONDON

1



THOMAS DE LA RUE & COMPANY, LIMITED, LONDON.

1







12 May, 1937
Coronation Issue
Recess. P.14. Mult.Script C.A.







2nd June, 1953
Coronation Issue
Engraved by Bradbury Wilkinson
Recess. Wmk. Mult. Script C.A. Perf 13½ x 13



Oct. 1884.



MONTSERRAT

2 August, 1938

Recess. P.13. Mult.Script C.A.











1942
Recess Perf.14.
Mult. Script C.A.



1













1

1



1942
- continued -







1



1

1948





MONTSERRAT

Crowned Circles of the Caribbean

by Peter P. McCann

The great British postal reform of 1840 saw the introduction of postage stamps in Great Britain, which was quickly followed by a fairly rapid request from the British Colonies and other overseas offices for a similar type of method of prepayment for mail. At the time, generally these requests were not allowed. However, mainly because of the introduction of new Packet Mail Services, a decision was made and published in December 1841 to issue and provide individual postal handstamps to the Colonial and other foreign British postal services.

The release of the handstamps was for use for mail from these Colonial and other British foreign offices where the postage was collected upon delivery. Alternatively, a Crowned Circle handstamp was to be applied to note that the postage was prepaid, i.e., in advance, as noted by an appropriate numerical manuscript marking. These now prized Crowned Circle marks were first supplied in 1842, and were used as originally issued for more than twenty years, often long after the final issuance of postage by many of the post offices involved. Interestingly, in a number of the smaller places the Crowned Circles were sent to, the markings wound up being used in ways other than their strict original purpose.

The Crowned Circles are a very popular collecting area of British postal history and collectors of them compete with collectors of specific countries where the Crowned Circles were used. They were used in 34 British Territories ranging in size from places like Canada and New Zealand to tiny offices like Montserrat and the Turks Islands in the Caribbean area. Not surprisingly, the latter two Crowned Circles, along with those of Bermuda and the Virgin Islands, are the most difficult to find.

Paid at Montserrat



Paid at Montserrat

The Montserrat Crowned Circle is not much more plentiful than the Turks Islands mark with eight examples known to exist from the period 1852 to 1861, where it was used at the Montserrat Post Office in the traditional fashion described above. However, Montserrat was, at the time, one of the true backwaters of the British Empire and, in fact, did not even get its own postage stamps until 1876, and even these were simply Antigua stamps overprinted "Montserrat."



Figure 3. A September 1860 use of the Montserrat Crowned Circle.

For various reasons, from 1883 until 1886 there were periodic shortages of the, by then, disliked Antigua overprinted stamps, and the Montserrat postmaster literally reached into his drawer and started occasionally using the old 1852 "Paid at Montserrat" Crowned Circle as an indicator of prepaid postage due to the shortage of stamps. The provisional use of the Crowned Circle can be seen on only four remaining examples of the mark on cover, usually stamped in red, although one of the four examples known has the mark inked in black.

Figure 3 shows a splendid example of the "Paid at Montserrat" Crowned Circle on a letter sent to London on September 3, 1860 (noted on reverse), via Packet Boat mail and can be seen as received on September 27, 1860. The rate from 1854 was 6d, 5d to the Imperial Post plus 1d to the Montserrat Post office. Note the marked 1d due to the Montserrat P.O. was crossed out in red to indicate prepayment.

The Provisional Period (1883–1886) of the use of the Montserrat Crowned Circle

is seen in Figure 4 on a letter sent on December 15, 1883, the earliest recorded Provisional Period use of the mark. The letter was received in the neighboring island of St. Kitts the next day, on December 16, 1886, and paid a special commercial papers rate from 1879 of 2½d per ½ oz.



Figure 4. The earliest known example of the provisional use of the Montserrat Crowned Circle, December 15, 1883.

The second Provisional Period letter seen in Figure 5 is the only example struck in black and has elicited many theories as to why this is the case. It is the author's own thought that it was simply a matter of convenience at the time that a black ink pad was used for both the Montserrat date stamp and the "Paid at Montserrat" Crowned Circle. The letter was sent on July 23, 1886, by Packet Boat mail to England, and received on August 9, 1886 (shown on reverse). The rate paid was the then standard UPU 1879 rate of 4d per ½ oz.

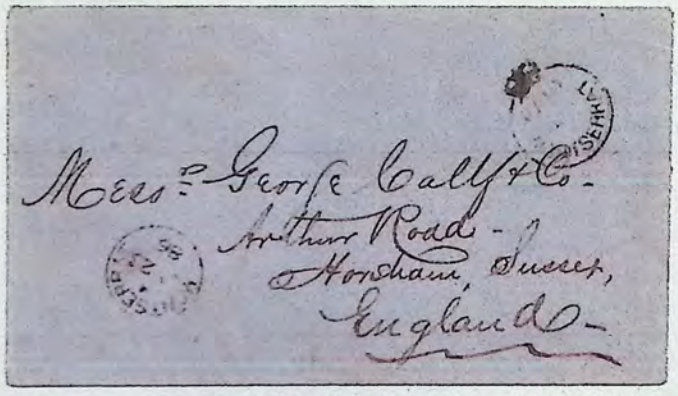


Figure 5. The only recorded black provisional use of the Montserrat Crowned Circle, July 23, 1883.

As a final note about these uses of the Crowned Circles discussed above is the fact that all of the examples are likely true commercial uses and not contrived by collectors. This probably reflects that the popularity of aspects of philatelic postal history did not really develop until much later into the twentieth century.

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THE JAGGED MOUNTAIN



Views of the Island of Montserrat

THE Island of Montserrat (British West Indies) lies in the Leeward Is., and is about 26 miles south-west of Antigua. The name, given it by Columbus, was inspired by the jagged ridges of volcanic peaks which rise in places to 3,000 ft. from sea-level. The original Monte serrado (*Mons serratus*—Latin for serrated mountain) is a monastery on a mountain in Spain which possesses the famous "Black Virgin", a small black statuette of the Virgin Mary, famous for its wonder-working. (It has been philatelically depicted by Spain in 1931 when a special set was issued for the 900th anniversary of the foundation of the Monastery.)

Sir Thomas Warner is the great figure in the colonisation of the colony, having led the first British colonisation attempt in 1623. Sir Thomas is buried in St. Kitts (his burial-place is to appear on the forthcoming St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla issue) but it is claimed (with some justice) that St. Anthony's Church (shown on two values of the new set) is the second oldest church in the B.W.I. It was only consecrated in the present building in 1930, and the edifice had served before as barracks, court house, Council Chamber, House of Assembly and schoolroom.

The Badge of the Island, which has frequently appeared on the stamps, commemorates the nature of Sir Thomas' bold experiment—he took Irish Catholics and English Protestants out with him to St. Kitts with—alas !—the inevitable result. The Irish moved to Montserrat (1632) and adopted the Irish figure which clings to the True Cross whilst retaining a firm grasp on the "Harp that once", etc.



Apart from various conquests by the French and reconquests by us, the Island's history has been quiet and the present population of about 13,000 is largely employed in the twin industries of sea-cotton growing (established early in the present century) and tomato growing (1925). Both of these are shown on stamps of the new set. The Government is conducted in Plymouth (the capital) and by a Governor, a nominated Executive Council and a Legislative Council partly elected, partly appointed. The majority of the population are negroid.

The island is very beautiful, and though liable to minor volcanic action, it is mainly in danger from hurricanes. Two of these struck in 1924 and 1928, but it missed the track of the most recent.

Some of this information is credited to the Crown Agents for the Colonies, with thanks. The most pregnant paragraph in their description starts: "In only a few places are there level stretches large enough for a cricket field" Alas ! even the Garden of Eden had a serpent, and it is no longer surprising that Sir Thomas' English settlers should leave this island to the Irish, a nation addicted to more robust sports requiring less level space !









MONTSERRAT: The Emerald Isle of the West



By James Mackay

THE island of Montserrat has been nicknamed the Emerald Isle of the West, not so much on account of its pleasant green appearance as due to the fact that the island was almost entirely peopled by Irish settlers during the 17th century. The links with Ireland are maintained to this day in the names of the places and the people of Montserrat, and the distinctly Irish brogue with which the inhabitants speak. Symbolic of the Irish connection is the island's coat of arms, featured on many stamps from 1903 till 1965, which depicts a female figure holding an Irish harp.

Montserrat was discovered by Columbus in 1493, during his second voyage to the West Indies, and named by him after a mountain near Barcelona. The island is extremely mountainous, with three volcanic groups dominating its 32 square miles land area. A familiar landmark is the distinctive St. George's Hill, which overlooks the capital, Plymouth, and is shown on the stamps of 1932 marking the tercentenary of the British settlement. The highest mountain is Chance's Peak (3,002 ft.), in the southern part of the island. A waterfall on the side of this mountain was depicted on the 15c. stamp of the recent International Tourist Year series.

The island was more or less ignored by Europeans till 1632, when Sir Thomas Warner despatched a party of colonists from St. Kitts. The first settlement was short-lived, however, since the French captured the island in 1664. Four years later, Montserrat was returned to Britain under the Treaty of Breda, and remained under British control till 1782, when the French again seized the island. Following the Treaty of Versailles which brought the war between Britain and her American colonies to an end, Montserrat was ceded by France to Britain which has been in control of the island ever since.

The island formed one of the " presidencies " of the former Leeward Islands colony, but when that colony was dissolved in 1956, Montserrat became a colony in its own right. This necessitated the alteration of the inscription on three of the then current definitive stamps (½c., 6c. and $4.80), substituting the word COLONY for PRESIDENCY. Consequently, the original versions are rather scarce and a little difficult to find, the $4.80 being quite an expensive stamp.



The 6c. "Arms of Presidency"

Prior to the release of distinctive stamps in 1876, Montserrat used British stamps which can only be identified by the barred obliterator with the numerals "A 08" used in the post office at Plymouth. The earliest stamps of Montserrat consisted of the contemporary 1d. and 6d. of Antigua, suitably overprinted. For 10 years (1880–90) Montserrat had ½d., 2½d. and 4d. stamps, but in the latter year the separate issues for the islands in the Leeward group were discontinued and the somewhat monotonous keyplate designs of the Leeward Islands were introduced instead. The islands in this group protested at the loss of philatelic revenue and, in 1903, individual sets were re-introduced*. The issues during the reigns of K.E.VII (1902–10) and K.G.V (1910–35) merely featured the king's profile and the island's coat-of-arms, but attractive pictorial designs were adopted for the K.G.VI series issued in 1938.

Carr's Bay (featured on several values of the 1938 series) is noted for its scenic beauty and its wonderful beaches. The soft, grey sand of Montserrat is volcanic in origin and renowned throughout the West Indies. The heavy nature of the volcanic sand means that the coastal waters are crystal clear, ensuring ideal conditions for skin-diving. Aquatic sports were featured on the 16c. stamp in the recent International Tourist Year series.

The staple industry of Montserrat is sea island cotton, and many acres are devoted to this crop. The cultivation terraces were illustrated on one of the 1938 designs and also in the definitive issues of 1951 and 1953. The later sets also employed a design featuring " ginning ", as the processing of cotton is called. The island is also noted for the abundance of excellent fruit and vegetables which are grown there. The 4c. stamps in the 1951 and 1953 issues featured tomato-picking, while a fine truss of tomatoes is shown on the current 6c. stamp. Some idea of the astonishing variety of fruits and vegetables grown in Montserrat may be gained from the current definitive series, which features items ranging from the mundane onions and cabbages to the more exotic avocado pear (2c.) and the egg plant ($4.80). Bananas (24c.) have been increasingly cultivated for export in recent years, while papain, the dried juice of the paw-paw (60c.) is also exported for medicinal purposes.



Ginning Cotton



The mundane cabbage

Plymouth, named after the famous seaport in the south-west of England, from which many of the settlers in the West Indies set out, has preserved much of its quaint, old-world charm. A general view of

(*Continued on page 1419*)

* See "Leeward Islands: An Enquiry" by Edgar Lowy, STAMP COLLECTING, February 18th, 1953.

ntserrat (*continued from page* 1417)



Government House

the town appeared on the tercentenary series, while several stamps in the 1951 and 1953 sets depicted the Government House, a stone and timber structure in the Old Colonial style. Plymouth (population about 3,000) is reported to be the cleanest city in the West Indies. Another landmark in Plymouth is St. Anthony's Church, on the outskirts of the town. This Anglican church appeared on the 12c. stamps in the 1951 and 1953 sets. The 14,000 inhabitants of the colony mainly adhere to four religious faiths: Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Seventh Day Adventist.

Montserrat used to be regarded as a quiet backwater of the Caribbean, a delightful haven of rest for those in search of peace and quiet. Nowadays, although Montserrat has retained its simple, quiet charm, it makes a more positive appeal to the visitor. Attractive residential development is taking place along the new roads on the Isles Bay Hill. Luxurious modern hotels and comfortable chalets are situated conveniently beside the Belham River Valley golf course, reputed to be the finest golf links in the West Indies (24c. of the Tourism issue). The 5c. stamp of the same series featured sailing in "Sunfish"—the happiest and most light-hearted craft in the world. With a mere puff of wind they can register up to 15–20 knots—a puff more and over you go! Wapping Beach is the headquarters of the Montserrat Yacht Club, with the "Quarter-Deck" night club and the "Anchorage" bar and restaurant nearby. Montserrat, for all its peacefulness and serenity, has a great deal to offer the tourist holiday-making in the Caribbean.



Best links in the West Indies

With changes in postal rates in most British Caribbean countries, Montserrat has also had to overprint some current definitive stamps. Thus, six values with the new rates were released in May, showing lime, bananas, cabbage, pumpkins, sweet potatoes and eggplants. Again, collectors can savour, through stamps, some of the choice vegetables grown in this "greenhouse" of the Caribbean.

New Watermark in Lesotho

On July 22nd, the current 5c. Lesotho definitive was placed on sale in Maseru with the new Basuto Hat watermark, which appears to be placed in the paper in curves rather than straight lines or diagonals. Printings are from plates 1A 1A, but the sheet is now perforated through the bottom margin.

The new 3c. definitive (featuring sorghum, a basic crop) was placed on sale on August 1st, also with the new watermark, and is an additional denomination to the current definitive range. The stamps are printed from plates 1A 1A in sheets of 50. Perforation is through the right-hand margin with an extension perf. in the bottom margin and three extension perfs. in the left-hand margin.

D. R. Williams (in Maseru),
Sec., Durham P.S.

"Quoting You" —LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opinions expressed are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor

OUR CHANGING HOBBY

SIR,—A recent article on postal history commented *inter alia* on the rarity of top exhibition awards being given to 20th century material.

In recent years, there has come about a complete shift of emphasis in our hobby. With classic material, the emphasis is on the method of printing, the plate numbers, retouches, inverted frames, spoon cancellations and so forth. The pictorial content of the stamp usually matters little, one monarch's head being very much like another's and, in some cases, such as the Penny Red, being retained in use almost indefinitely.

With modern stamps, the picture on the stamp is probably the most important feature. With postal services being almost exclusively in the hands of national governments, stamps are an ideal vehicle for propaganda and we see Argentina claiming the Falkland Islands, and Guatemala claiming British Honduras. The stamps of the Third Reich give us a very good indication of the Nazi way of life, probably more effectively then a dry text book.

While one can buy books galore on the Penny Black, cancellations on classic French stamps and so forth, where can one buy a book to tell one who was Maryse Bastie (France 1955), why the Italians issued National Defence issues in 1924 and 1926, or why the European Catholic Doctors met (Malta 1964)?

Will it take another generation before the writers, publishers and exhibition organisers recognise the shift of emphasis?

Walton-on-Thames. I. P. DUNKLEY.

WHEN IS A USED STAMP . . .?

SIR,—How many more descriptions are forthcoming to describe the condition of used stamps? Gone are the days of "mint and used". Nowadays it is "mounted" and "unmounted" mint, and the phrases used to describe cancelled stamps are so numerous that one never knows what one has ordered until the order arrives. We have "fine used", "very fine used", "superb used", "good used", "average used", "medium used" and simply "used". The latest phrase is "commercially used", which seems to mean a cancellation of any kind whatever. The prices for used stamps vary so greatly depending upon the type of cancellation that it is becoming essential for all dealers to agree upon and use a range of standard descriptions so that each dealer is advertising on a common basis and thereby not taking an unfair advantage over his competitors by using superlative clichés. A service of this kind would be welcomed by all collectors and I feel that the time has come for someone to take up the initiative and give the lead. Are you listening, P.T.S.?

Sabah, Malaysia. GORDON T. PEARSON.

POSTMARKING F.D.C.s

SIR,—Is Britain technologically behind countries such as Switzerland, Austria, Luxembourg, or Monaco? If not, why is it that the British Post Office is unable to produce large, nice, clear—often pictorial cancellations especially for First Day of Issue? And how is it that in spite of often applying two postmarks, one on and one off the stamps, on the Continent, it has not been necessary to apply the ridiculous rule of only cancelling a full set of commemorative stamps with special postmark?

London, N.W.10. D. LOTFI.

ANTIGUA FLAW DATA

by William G. Cornell

Following on to the discussion in the June Journal (pages 118-19) of the headplate flaw discovered by E.K. Thompson on the Victorian keyplate issues of Antigua, Nevis, Montserrat and the Virgin Islands, Harold Gosney points out that both Turks Islands and St. Lucia also used the general colonial keyplate and reports the flaw on a copy of the Turks Islands, S.G. 65, $2\frac{1}{2}$-pence ultramarine of 1893.

Charles Freeland likewise notes Turks Islands and St. Lucia and also points out the similarity of the Grenada keyplate stamps to those discussed above. Freeland reports the Thompson flaw on the Antigua S.G.19, $2\frac{1}{2}$d red brown of 1879 used, and confirms the flaw plating as NOT present at stamp 15, left pane on the Virgin Islands, S.G. 28, $\frac{1}{2}$d blue green of 1883.

W. J. Redgrave reports the flaw on the Nevis, S. G. 27, 1d carmine of 1884. One further piece of information, in the June Journal article I made an error when I said that I had "verified E.K. Thompson's plating on the RIGHT pane of Antigua S.G. 28." This should have read "LEFT pane," meaning that I confirm no flaw at Stamp 15, left pane. Charles Freeland called the error to my attention.

Whence, the hunt so far has turned up examples of the flaw on nine different stamps of Antigua, Nevis, Montserrat and Turks Islands. Further, the Turks Islands and St. Lucia collectors are now warned that examples of the flaw must exist on their keyplate issues, and are asked to report on these.

The flaw must also exist on the Cyprus and Natal keyplate stamps, since a total of eight colonies used the general colonial keyplate, according to John Easton in the "De La Rue History of British and Foreign Postage Stamps." I shall alert the Cyprus Study Circle to the Thompson flaw.

e now know that both keyplate Die I (all four Leeward Islands colonies stamps) and Die II (Gosney's Turks Islands example) contain the flaw. Further, both Antigua Plate 1 (S.G. 19-23) and Plate 2 (S.G. 27-30) have the flaw, according to the headplate numbers reported in Section 5.3 of the Antigua Monograph in the October 1973 Journal (page 142).

Redgrave reports that the shape of the flaw is somewhat variable, but that the sketch of Mark Swetland in the June Journal is generically accurate. For example, Redgrave's copy of Nevis S.G. 31, 4d gray lacks the thread of color connecting the horizontal frameline to the triangle.

As Swetland has pointed out, we will need enlarged photographs of examples for the final monograph documentation of the Thompson flaw.

The case of the Grenada "modified keyplates" requires special consideration and it is requested that our Grenada specialists furnish help. Thus, the Grenada stamps used the general colonial keyplate, but with the name and value tablets and enclosing outer framelines dropped off. The cropped portions leave blank spaces which were filled by the new name and value inscriptions.

In addition, the stamps appear tete-beche in the panes of 10 horizontal rows of six stamps. Thus, alternate rows are "upside down" and vertical tete-beche pairs are cataloged by Gibbons.

Easton conjectures, since pertinent De La Rue records were destroyed, that the panes were printed in single operations with strips of six of three kinds of imprint locked up in a "printing chase." The kinds of imprint would be 10 strips of head and frame, six double strips of name (top and bottom imprint wasted in margins), and five double strips of value.

Easton further conjectures that the 10 head strips were separate (rather than duplicates from a master strip), and were left in one position for all duties, as were the six double strips of name. With all this in view, it is possible that the Thompson flaw may occur on the Grenada stamps. The only clue so far is that Charles Freeland reports a pane of one of the Grenada stamps with no apparent flaw. Help!!

Cot Printery thus joins an elite group: today, there are only 12 firms still printing stamps in the world, according to the *Advocate*. The newspaper adds that the company, located in Christ Church parish, has a staff of 40 and state-of-the-art pre-press and printing technology. It intends "to print all of the postage stamp requirements for Barbados, currently estimated at about $250,000 worth of stamps, by 1995." The following year, Cot Printery will be tackling the CARICOM postage market, estimated to be between US$2.5 million and US$3 million annually."

"DESTROY THIS BOOK!"

Derek Worboys, *Madame Joseph Forged Postmarks*, edited by Roger B. West. London: The Royal Philatelic Society, London, and the British Philatelic Trust, 1994, 122 p., hardcover.
ISBN 0 900631 29 5 and ISBN 0 871777 08 9.

When Derek Worboys learned of the existence of the devices used to produce these forgeries, he sought to enlist the help of a number of stamp dealers in order to purchase these materials, publish a full list of the forged postmarks and illustrate them, and thus make them known to collectors. The reaction was apparently less than enthusiastic: "Frankly," writes Worboys in the Prologue to *Madame Joseph Forged Postmarks*, "I was amazed at the negative response. It almost appeared that many of those consulted actually wanted publication suppressed!"

Although one may indeed regret this type of attitude, it is perhaps not as surprising as one might wish: many collectors have already found, to their dismay, that a number of their "fine used" stamps (especially high values) were subjected to Madame Joseph's very skillful artistry. And many dealers have probably found similar items in their stock.

The 438 postmarks (plus a number of miscellaneous other markings, such as cork cancels, and surcharges and overprints) shown in this book are extremely well done, and it is easy to see why experts were confounded by them. The period covered by these forgeries span the years 1852 to 1967. The British West Indies area is particularly well represented:

Antigua	8	forgeries	
Bahamas	9	"	
Barbados	7	"	
Barbuda	1	"	
Bermuda	5	"	
Br. Guiana	8	"	
Br. Honduras	7	"	(incl. type O-3)
Br. Virgin Is.	8	"	
Cayman Is.	9	"	
Dominica	8	"	
Grenada	11	"	
Jamaica	3	"	(incl. 'AO')
Montserrat	8	"	
Nevis	1	"	
St Kitts	8	"	(incl. 'A09')
St Lucia	11	"	(incl. 'A11')
St Vincent	8	"	(incl. 'A10')
Trinidad	4	"	(incl. 'A14')
Turks Is.	5	"	(incl. 'T I')

In connection with Worboys' book, the following note has been received from Morris Ludington:

"I have recently been sent photocopies of the Bahamas and Bermuda postmarks illustrated in Derek Worboys' book, *Madame Joseph Forged Postmarks*. On checking their dates, I found that Bahamas, illustration no. 41, and Bermuda, illustration no. 64 (dated 15 AUG 43 and 16 JAN 44, respectively), were both Sundays, when the post officer were closed. It might be worthwhile to check the dates on the forged postmarks of other colonies, in case other Sunday dates were also used."

MONTSERRAT.

16th November 1840. Impression from G.P.O. Proof Book No. 4.

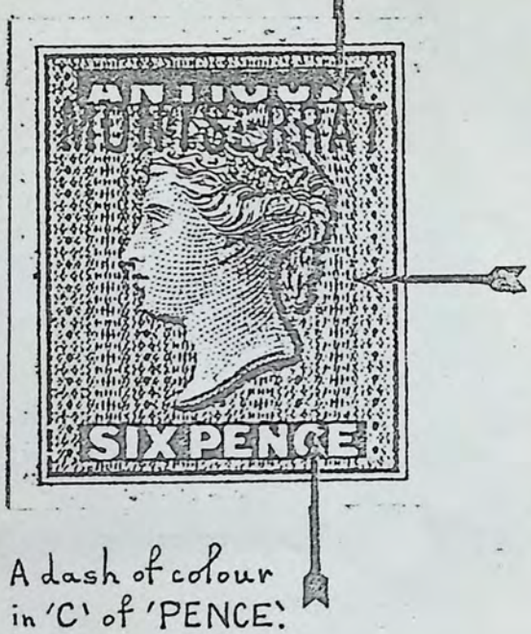
To what Place	Date when sent	Stamps
Sent to Manchester	Novr 11 1840	MONTSERRAT NO 5 1840 BROUGHTON HARPURHEY
Montserrat	Novr 16 1840	MONTSERRAT NO16 1840 new —
Manningtree	Nov 7th 1840	MANNINGTREE NO17 1840 upaird
Merriott	Decr 11th 1840	MERRIOTT
Sent to Guildford	January 12 1841	MERROW
Maldon Repaired	March 18th 1841 J.C	MALDON MR18 1841

MONTSERRAT

1876. Watermark Crown CC.
Six pence: Recess printed.

A re-entry on the six pence plate.

White line under the final 'A' of 'ANTIGUA' not always apparent.



Very considerable doubling of engine turning where shaded.

A dash of colour in 'C' of 'PENCE'.





This re-entry is on stamp 7 horizontal row 8, (No. 91 on sheet). Discovered by A.J. Séfi.



MONTSERRAT

1876. Watermark Crown CC.
Six pence: Recess printed.

A re-entry on the six pence plate.

White line under the final 'A' of 'ANTIGUA'.

Doubling of the inner frame line below the final 'A' of 'ANTIGUA'.

Very considerable doubling of engine turning where shaded.

Coloured mark outside the outer frame line.

Sloping duplication of the inner frame line.





This re-entry is on stamp 10 horizontal row 6, (No. 70 on sheet). Discovered by Revd. W.G. Iremonger.

MONTSERRAT

1876. Watermark Crown CC.
Six pence: Recess printed.

A re-entry on the six pence plate.



A slight doubling in the 'S' of 'SIX'.

A slight doubling in 'P' of 'PENCE'.







This re-entry is on stamp 11 horizontal row 5, (No. 59 on sheet). Discovered by A.J. Séfi.





MONTSERRAT

1876. Watermark Crown CC.
Six pence: Recess printed.

A re-entry on the six pence plate.



The engine turning has quite a "twisted" appearance here.

Doubling of the vertical strokes in the engine turned background extending to the right hand corner of the stamp.



This re-entry is on stamp 10 horizontal row 10, (No. 118 on sheet). Discovered by the late W.E. Lea.

Sept. 26. 83.

Montserrat Postage Stamps.

Existing and proposed Schemes of Colours

Proposed Colours for surface printed stamps.

Existing colours





Colour established by the International Postal Convention for this duty.





2½d Proposed colour, being that established by the International Postal Convention for this duty

Colour agreed to in Cable Letter of 4 Dec 83





4d Proposed colours









6d

When submitting this proposed scheme of colours to the Crown Agents on 26 September 1883, necessitated by the change of colour of the 2½d established by the International Postal Convention, De La Rue pointed out that as the 1d could not be brought nearer the agreed shade by copperplate printing, it was an opportune time to change to surface printing by the key-plate system for the 1d and 6d copper plate stamps.

This scheme was agreed except that the colour of the 4d should be made distinct from the 1d.

A blank duty die proof in mauve was submitted on 30 November 1883 and approved by the Crown Agents on 4 December 1883.

Proofs of perforation 12 are the two 6d proposed colour and the blank duty 4d mauve.

Ex. National Postal Museum
1990 19 sheets

MONTSERRAT
Sept. 1876
Wmk Crown CC. Perf 14
Recess printed & then overprinted.



File Copy ✓



120/Set.



File Copy



FILE COPIES

Jan 1880
Letterpress

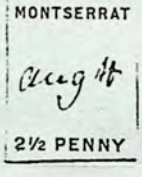
13th August 1879
Name & duty die proofs
from which 60 leads were struck













1884-85
Wmk Crown CA
1d Recess overprinted, others letterpress











FILE COPIES

Nov 84



Dec. 83



No charge for overprinted same 1876



120 Set

Jan 84



Montserrat
1908 - 13





1914

4x6d





On April [illegible] a new design was requested embedding the head of the king as well as the arms of the colony. This submission was approved April [illegible]th

10 April 1916



MONTSERRAT

This essay of Sept. 15, 1901, was submitted at the request of the Colonial Secretary, Antigua, on July 15, 1901, when he wrote that separate issues of Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat and St. Kitts were proposed, and submitted material for the design. The Crown Agents approved it for values up to 5/-, but instructed us to use the approved Antigua design for the 5/- denomination.

Sept. 13th 01.



Dupl.

Colour of Border
Centre Black.







33919

27th March 1903.

Montserrat

Regn. 68/01.

Appendix A.

1d 

6d 

1d 

1/- 

This colour scheme for the K.E.V11 issue of 1903 was approved by Sir William Mer on March 31st 1903, with a black and scarlet from the substitute stamps on Appendi B (on the following page) in preference to our recommendation for the 5/- denomination of grey-green scarlet.

2d 

2/- 

2½d 

2/6 

3d 



5/- 

Approved

March 31 3.03

27th March 1903. 391941

Montserrat

Regn. 03/01.

Appendix B.

Doubly Fugitive borders; Singly Fugitive Arms







Singly Fugitive borders; Doubly Fugitive Arms.















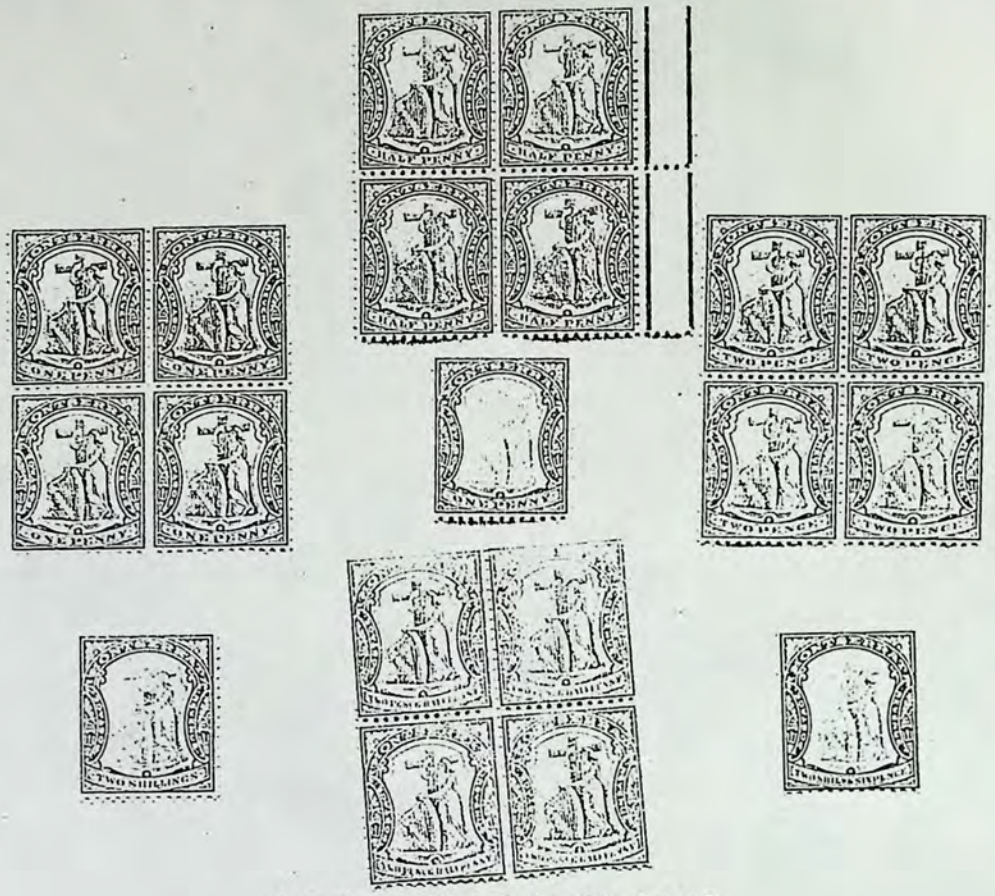


Singly Fugitive borders; Doubly Fugitive heads

See A.



1903
Letterpress Perf 14
Crown CA



Original Blank Duty Die Proof







FILE COPIES
120 set
1903 & 1908
issues















1903 - 8

Typo. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Crown C.A.

391943



1908 - 13

FILE COPIES
with dates of printing





ISSUED STAMPS



Monserrat

1916 - 23

Typo. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Crown C.A.

3391945

FILE COPIES





















Key die proof





4 x ½d



A. J. H. 13 JUN 1916















1916-23
continued

391946











WAR STAMP
ISSUES

FILE COPIES







1919
Special printing in orange
Value & "War Stamp" inserted in black
at one printing.

October 1917





1918



000 1948

























Approved Colour Proof



Alternative Colour Proofs
NOT APPROVED

1950

APPENDIX 15th February, 1932

½d.  ✓

2d. 

3d 

1/- 

2/6 

5/- 

APPENDIX A (ALTERNATIVES) 16th Feb. 1932

½d. 

1/- 

1/- 

2/6 

5/- 

APPENDIX B (ALTERNATIVES) 18th Feb. 1932


1/-


1/-

5/- 

MONTSERRAT

Tercentenary Issue

APPROVED COLOUR PROOFS.

Approved for Colours of ½d, 2d & 2/6 duties
[illegible]

Approved for colour
[illegible]

(ALTERNATIVES)

✓ ½d



✓



✓ 2d



✓ 2/6



Approved for colours of 1d, 1½d, 2½d & 6d duties
[illegible]

Approved for Colours of 3d & 1/- duties
[illegible]

2½d



3d ✓



✓ 1d.



✓ 6d.



1/- ✓



1½d



MONTSERRAT
18 April, 1932
Tercentenary Issue

3891951

Recess. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Script C.A.

APPROVED
Blank Duty Die Proof

Die aff^d
29/1/32.





1



1





12 May, 1951
Coronation Issue
Recess. P.14. Mult. Script C.A.

0001952







2nd June, 1953
Coronation Issue
Engraved by Bradbury Wilkinson
Recess. Wmk. Mult. Script C.A. Perf 13½ x 13



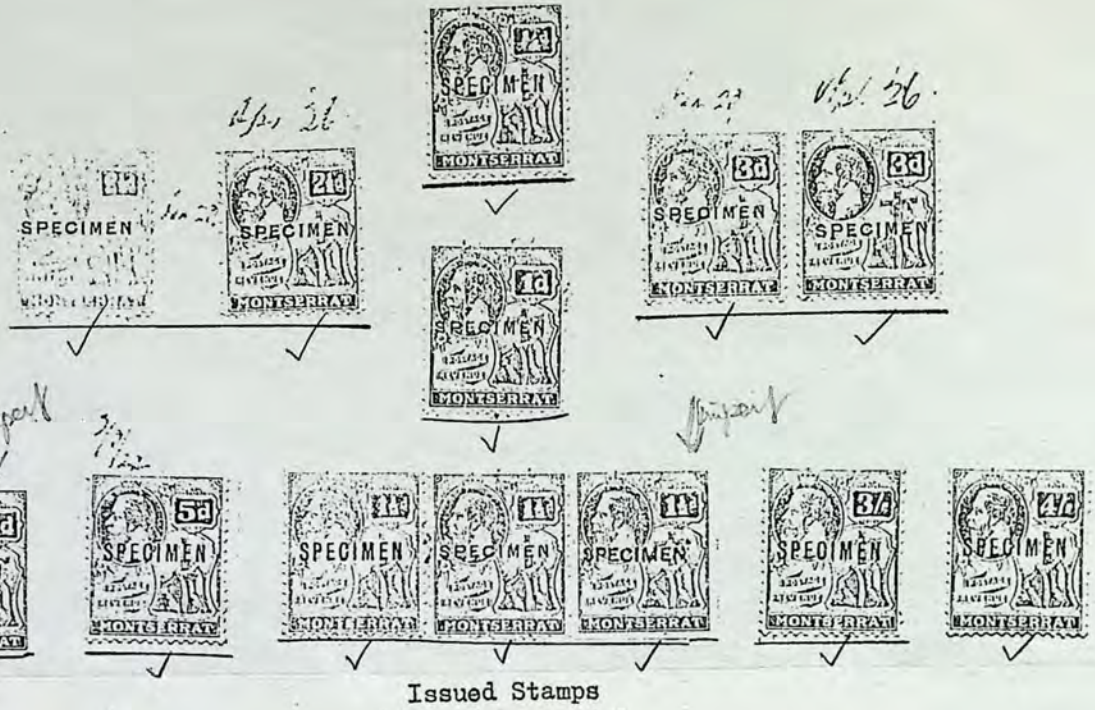
Oct. 1887.



1922 - 29
Typo. Perf.14. Wmk. Mult. Script C.A.

0391947

File copies with dates
of printing



Issued Stamps









0001953

MONTSERRAT

2 August, 1938

Recess. P.13. Mult.Script C.A.



THOMAS DE LA RUE & COMPANY, LIMITED, LONDON



4x2d



THOMAS DE LA RUE & COMPANY, LIMITED, LONDON





1942

Recess Perf.14.

Mult. Script C.A.



1







4 x 2d





1



1



1942

- continued -





1



1

1948





BRITISH EMBASSY

LISBON

INF

21 March 1979

C J Barwick Esq
4 West Close
Bollington
Macclesfield
Cheshire

Dear Mr Barwick,

Thank you for your recent letter. I suggest that your write direct to the Mint explaining your request. The address is:-

Imprensa Nacional - Casa da Moeda
Dom Francisco Manuel Melo 5
LISBON 1

68 56 84

Yours Sincerely

D A Roycroft

D A Roycroft

29.379

IMPRENSA NACIONAL - CASA DA MOEDA
(EMPRESA PÚBLICA)
ADMINISTRAÇÃO

Mr. C. J. Barwick
4 West Close
Bollington, Macclesfield
Cheshire SKIO 5LA
ENGLAND.

Nº.30/A2/79

Lisbon, 6th April 1979

Dear Sir,

Replying to your letter of 29th March ult., which contents we duly noted, we are glad to inform you that your visit to our Stationery Office will be most appreciated.

You may contact Mrs. Paula Lacerda, the Office Librarian, and she will be pleased to show you whatever you want to see about stamps issued for our former colonies.

The address of the Library is: Rua da Escola Politécnica LISBOA, inside IMPRENSA NACIONAL building.

Yours sincerely,

João Almeida Ricardo

(João Almeida Ricardo)

Rua de D. Francisco Manuel de Melo, 5 — Lisboa - 1
Telefones 68 56 84 e 68 60 47

MONTSERRAT

1876. — Timbres d'Antigua de 1873 avec MONTSERRAT en surch. Fil. CC ⁴⁄₅. Dentelés 14.

1	2
SG1	SG2
1 p. carmin.	6 p. vert.

1880. — Effigie de Victoria dans un octogone. Fil. CC ⁴⁄₅. Dentelés 14.

3	4
SG4	SG5
2½ p. brun.	4 p. bleu.

1884. — Timbre d'Antigua de 1884 avec MONTSERRAT en surcharge. Dentelé 12.

5
SG12
1 p. carmin.

1884-85. — Type de 1880. Fil. CA ⁴⁄₅. Dentelés 14.

7	8	9	10	11
SG6	SG9	SG10	SG11	SG12
½ p. vert.	2½ p. brun.	2½ p. outremer.	4 p. bleu.	4 p. lilas.

1884. — Timbre d'Antigua de 1884 avec MONTSERRAT en surcharge. Dentelé 14.

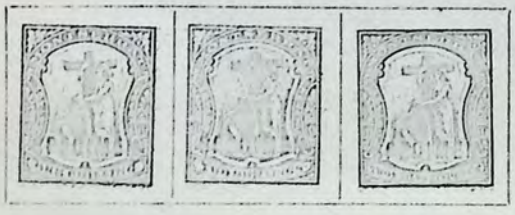
6
SG7
1 p. carmin.

1903. — Figure allégorique. Fil. CA ⁴⁄₅. Dentelés 14. SG 14-27



ALSO OVERPRINTED "ULTRAMAR"

Effigie d'Edouard VII. Fil. CC ⁴⁄₅. SG-23





1905-08. — Id. Fil. CA multiple. SG 24-32



23	24
SG23	SG24
1 p. rouge et gris.	2 p. brun et gris.

25	26	27	31	28	29	30
SG27	SG28	SG29	SG33	SG30	SG31	SG32
2½ p. outremer et gris.	3 p. violet brun et brun orange.	6 p. olive et violet-brun.	5 sh. rouge et gris.	1 sh. violet brun et vert.	2 sh. brun orange et vert.	2 sh. 6 p. noir et vert.

MONTSERRAT

1908-09. — Id.



SC-36 38 SC-39 40 41 44 45 46

1914. — Id. Effigie de Georges V.



SC-47

Papier blanc au verso.



SC-46a



SC-48 SC-49-52

1916. — Figure allégorique et effigie de Georges V. Fil. CA multiple. Dentelés 14.



SC-49 50 51 52 53 55 57

1917-19. — Timbres de 1916 avec WAR STAMP en surcharge.



58 59

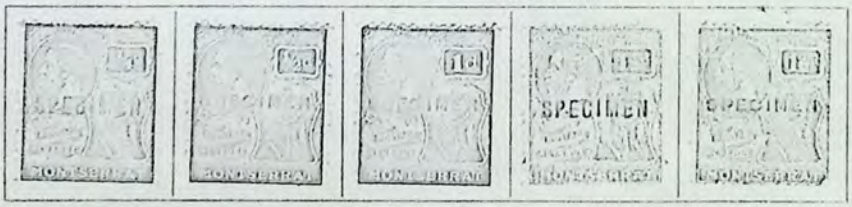


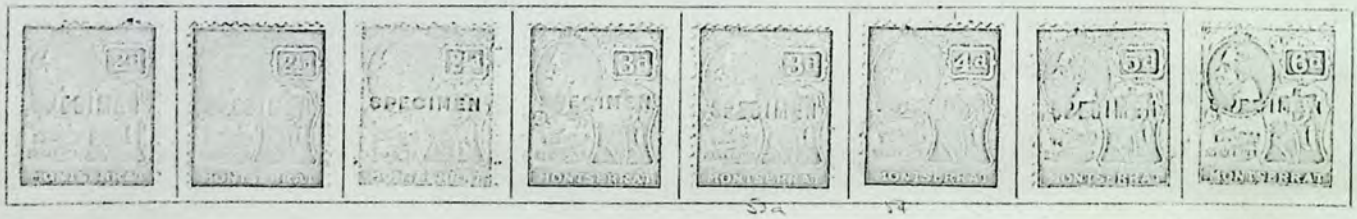
SC-60 61



62

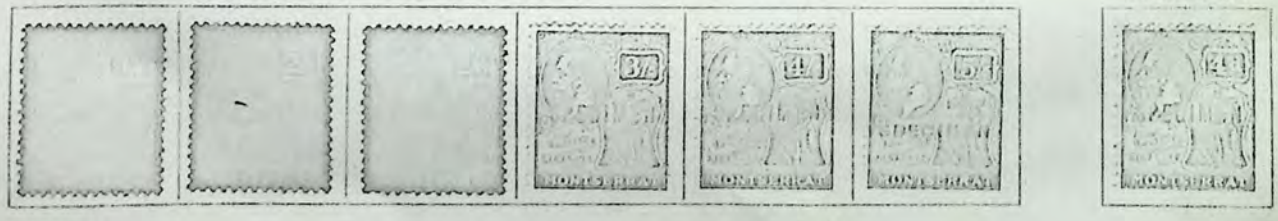
1922-26. — Type de 1916. Fil. *E4* multiple. Dentelés 14.





SC-

Fil. CA multiple.



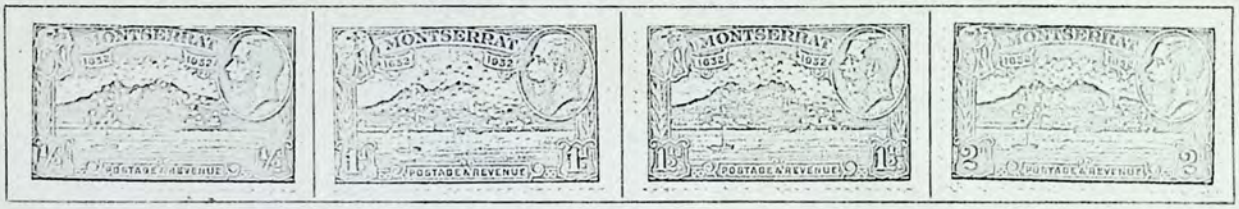
MONTSERRAT

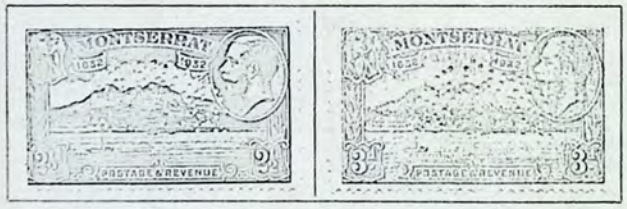
1928. — Type de 1916. Fil. Ⓜ multiple. Dentelés 14.





1932. — Vue et effigie du roi dans un médaillon. Fil. Ⓜ multiple. Dentelés 13½ × 14.







1935. — Timbres commémoratifs du Jubilé du roi Georges V. Fil. Ⓜ multiple. Dentelés 11 × 12.



1937. — Commémoratifs du couronnement du roi Georges VI. Fil. Ⓜ multiple. Dentelés 14.

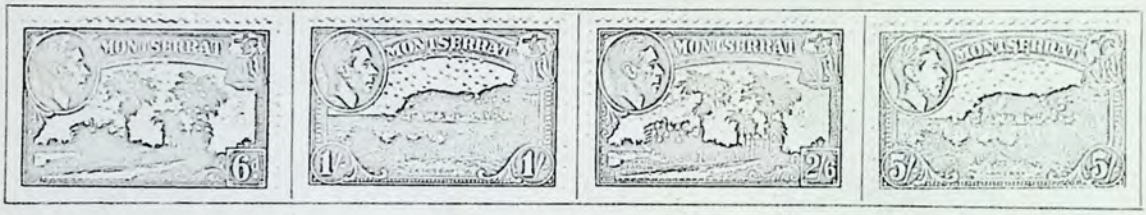


MONTSERRAT

1938. — Effigie de Georges VI et vues diverses. Fil. ☙ multiple. Dentelés 13 ou 14.







1946. — Commémoratifs de la Victoire. Fil. ☙ mult. Dent. 14.



1948. — Types de 1938. Fil. ☙ mult. Dent. 12.



1948. — Commémoratifs des noces d'argent des souverains britanniques. Fil. ☙ mult.

Dentelé 14 × 15.



Dentelé 11 ½ × 11.



1949. — Commémoratifs du 75e anniversaire de l'U. P. U. Fil. ☙ multiple. Dentelés.



MONTSERRAT

1951. — Com. de l'inauguration de l'Université des Antilles anglaises. Dentelés 14 × 15.



1951. — Effigie de Georges VI et sujets divers. Fil. ⊠ mult. Dentelés 11½.







1953. — Couronnement d'Elizabeth II.
Fil. ⊠ mult. Dent. 13½ × 13.

1951. — Effigie de Georges VI et vue.





1951. — Effigie de Georges VI et vue.



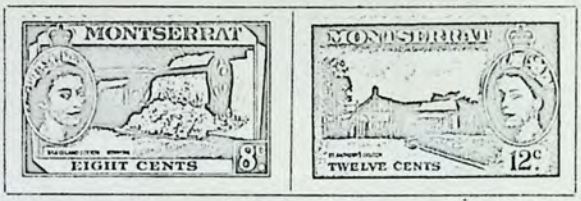
1953. — Types de 1951 avec effigie d'Elizabeth II. Fil. ⊠ mult. Dentelés 13½ × 13.



MONTSERRAT

1955-57. — Types de 1951 avec effigie d'Elizabeth II. Filigrane CA multiple. Dent. 11½.





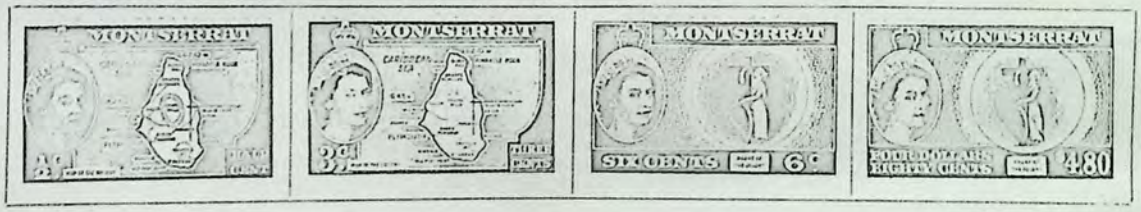




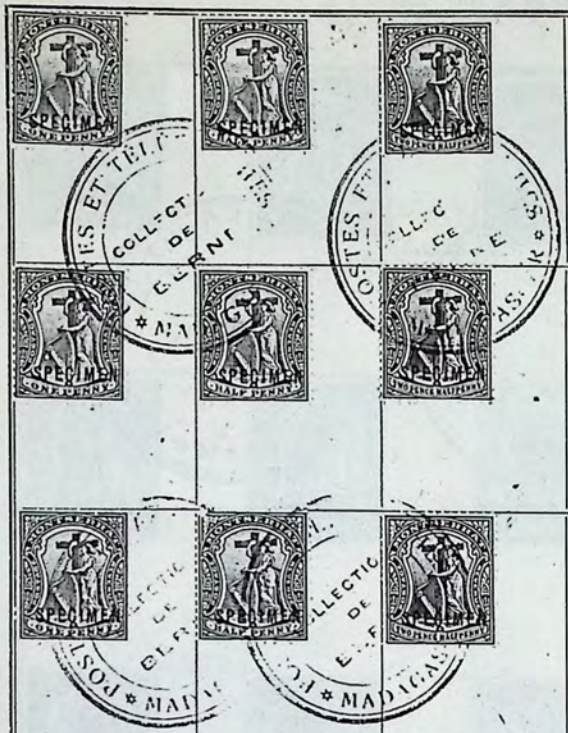
1958. — Fédération des Indes occidentales. Fil. CA mult. Dent. 11½ × 11.



1958. — Types de 1953-57. Légende : COLONY. Fil. CA mult. Dent. 11½.

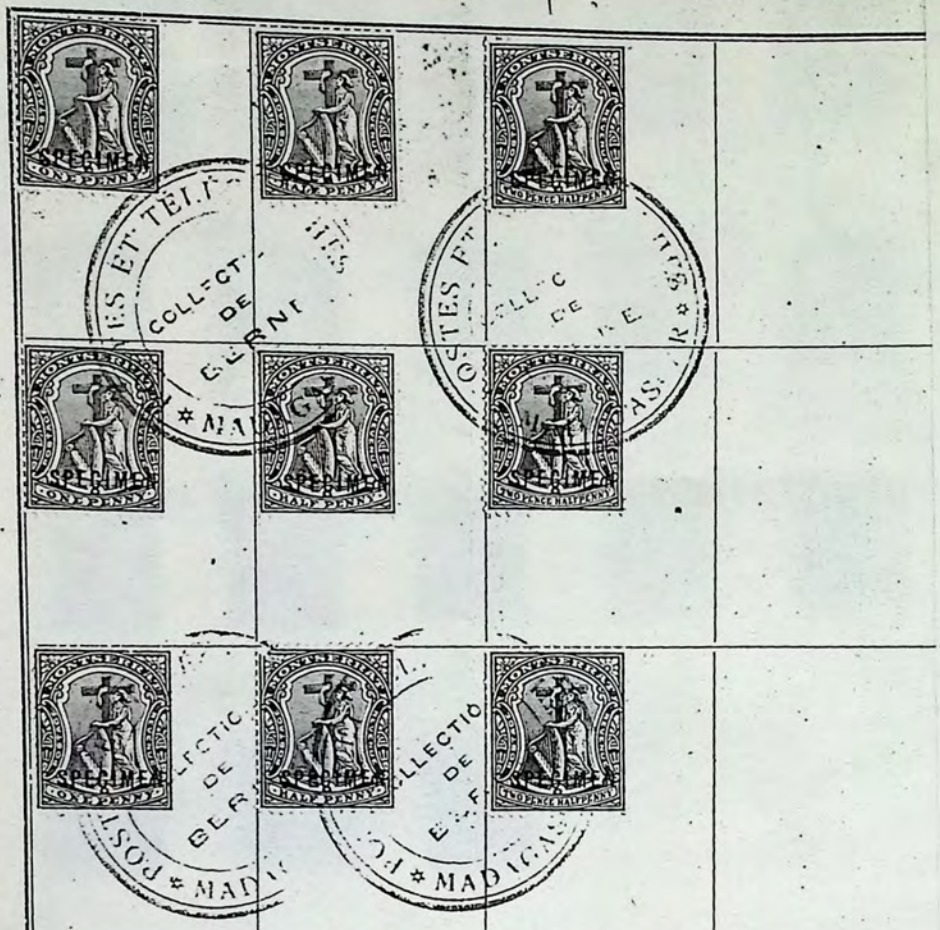


Montserrat

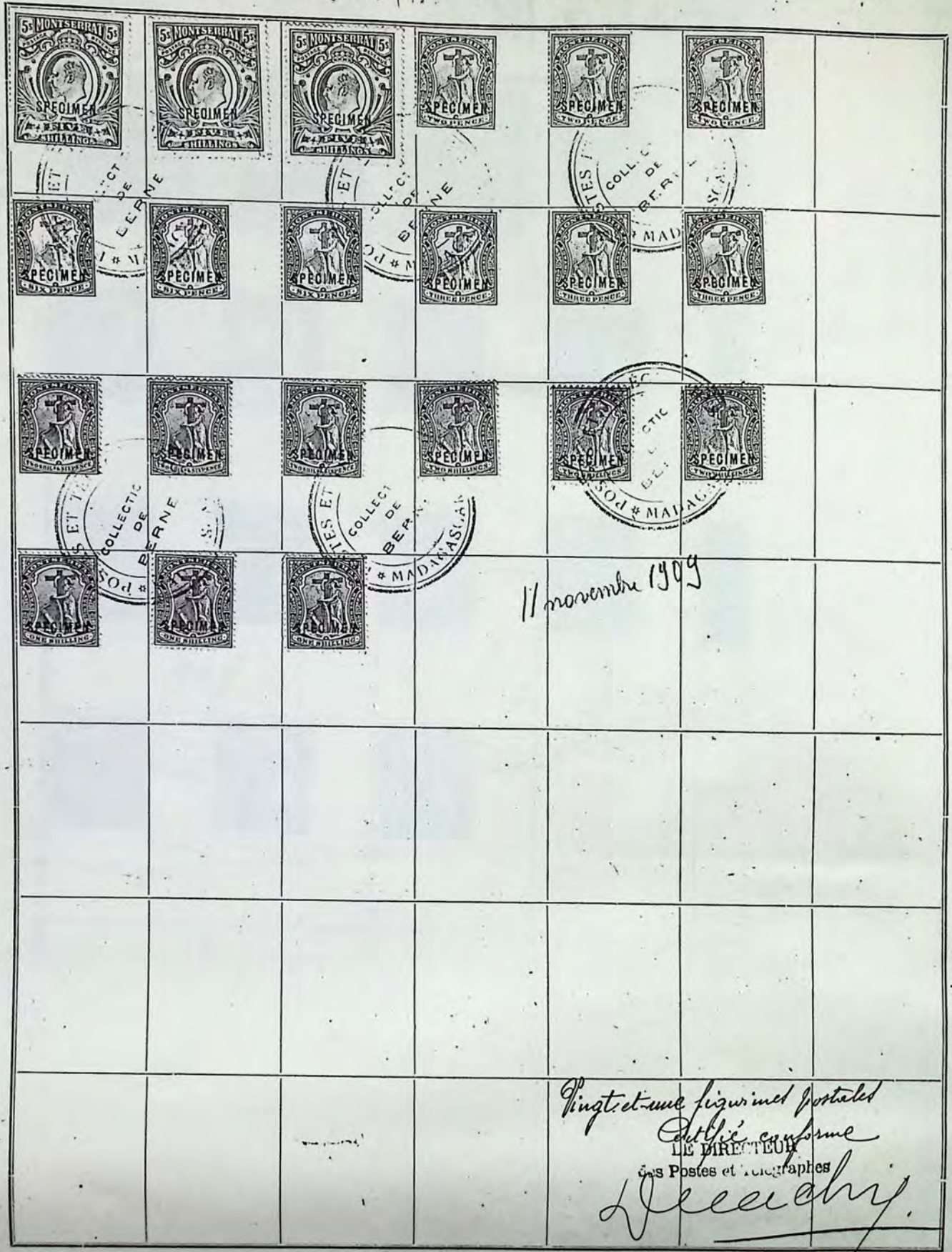


Neuf figurines postales
Certifié conforme
LE DIRECTEUR
des Postes et Télégraphes
Delachy.

Montserrat


MONTSERRAT
SPECIMEN
ONE PENNY
HALF PENNY
ONE PENCE HALFPENNY

Montserrat



11 novembre 1909

Vingt et une figurines postales
établies conforme
LE DIRECTEUR
des Postes et Télégraphes

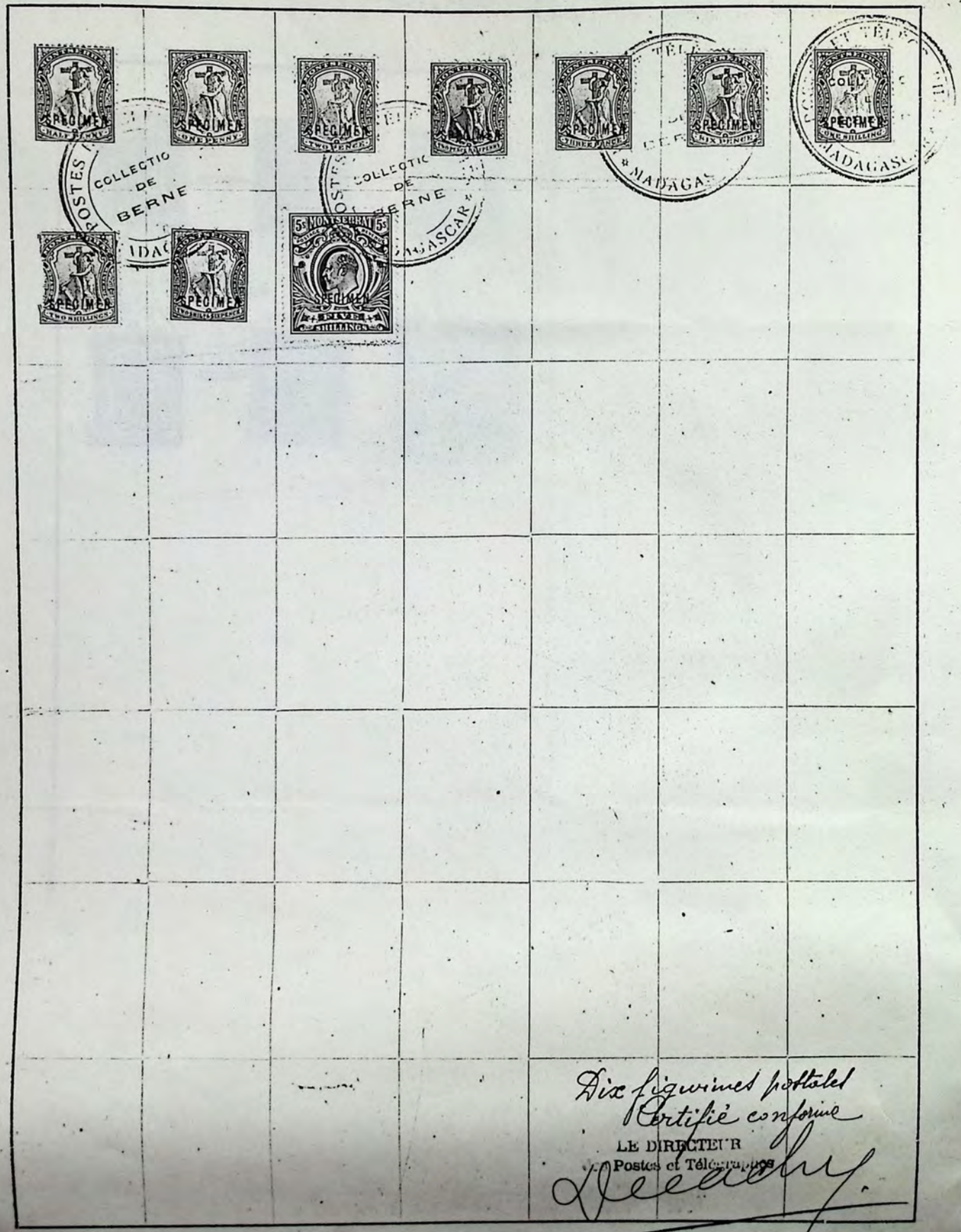
Montserrat



11 novembre 1909

Montserrat (Possession anglaise)

0034



Dix figurines postales
Certifié conforme
LE DIRECTEUR
Postes et Télégraphes

10

Montserrat (Possession anglaise)

0034



FICE MADAGASCAR RECEIVING HANDSTAMPS ON U.P.U. MATERIAL: MONTSERRAT

ous stamps issued during the period of 1905-12 and received by the administration ixed to ledger sheets, each stamp tied by a large red double circle "POSTES ET ELEGRAPHES/COLLECTION DE BERNE/MADAGASCAR" handstamped, each page signed by "LE DIRECTEUR DES POSTES ET TELEGRAPHES" and numbered. Both normal and specimen stamps were circulated by the Universal Postal Union at Berne, and sent to the French postal authorities in Paris who distributed them to the postal administration in Madagascar. A magnificent and undoubtedly unique group.

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