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TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS	Dr. Peter P. McCann, 6660 St. James Crossing, University Park, FL 34201-2238 USA; email: P103226706@cs.com

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Editor: Dr. Everett L. Parker, 719 Moosehead Lake Rd., Greenville, ME 04441-9727 USA
Telephone: (207) 695-3163; FAX: (207) 695-3163; email: eparker@midmaine.com
Please address correspondence regarding articles in this publication to the Editor.

Membership Director: Mr. Tom Girdaldi, 1305 Scottsdale Way, Modesto, CA 95355 USA
Telephone: (209) 571-1345; email: teg43@aol.com
Please address membership questions to the Membership Director (this includes address changes).

Advertising Manager:
Vacant

Awards Editor: Paul A. Larsen, 14 Wilson Ct., Park Forest, IL 60466 USA; email: PALStamp@aol.com
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The 1947 "One Penny" Provisional Overprint of Barbados

Did a Postal Emergency Lead to a Philatelic "Ruse" and a Collector's Disappointment?

By **Jerone R. Hart**
Treasurer

Background

On Thursday, April 10, 1947 the Colonial Postmaster of Barbados, H.N. Armstrong, sent a memo to the Colonial Secretary of Barbados informing him that the shortage of one-penny stamps was acute. A January 1947 shipment of 455,400 one penny stamps (3,795 post office sheets) from the London printer, Thomas De La Rue & Sons, was now exhausted and the post office only had 120,000 halfpenny stamps left as a substitute that no doubt would be exhausted in a couple of days. Armstrong asked the Colonial Secretary to immediately send a telegram to the Crown Agents in London informing them of the emergency and asking them to get the printer to ship an emergency printing to the GPO in Bridgetown via express airmail on British South American Airways.

BSAA flights left London on Saturday afternoon for Kingston, Jamaica arriving on Sunday morning. At Kingston, the shipment would be transferred to a British West Indian Airway's flight bound for Barbados, eventually arriving Sunday evening. The Colonial Secretary immediately telegraphed the Crown Agents with the emergency request. Unfortunately, the London printer, De La Rue, buried by other post-war work, was unable to comply with the request for the one penny stamps as quickly as the post office in Barbados needed.¹

On Saturday, April 12, the Chief Postal Clerk of the GPO in Bridgetown informed the postmaster that the supply of halfpenny stamps was almost exhausted and were be-

ing sold at a very abnormal rate. He informed Armstrong that it appeared that "certain stamp dealers" on the island were trying to exhaust the supply and force the post office to overprint other definitives in what the Chief Postal Clerk called "a philatelic ruse." The Chief Postal Clerk came to this conclusion after one of the island's stamp dealers asked him if an order for £100.00 of halfpenny stamps would exhaust the post office's supply!²

By Thursday, April 17, 1947, the emergency supply of one penny stamps had not yet arrived from London and the entire supply of half-penny stamps was exhausted. By late morning, the postmaster proposed to the Colonial Secretary that part of the stock of carmine two penny definitives could be overprinted "One Penny" and used until the emergency supply of stamps arrived from London. On Friday, April 18, the Colonial Secretary sent a memo to the Colonial

Treasurer authorizing the immediate overprint of a portion of the inventory of two penny stamps by a local printer.

The Overprinting

On Saturday, April 19, 1947, the Advocate Company Limited of Barbados (a printing firm that still prints the largest newspaper in Barbados) overprinted the first batch of two penny stamps. The overprint "ONE PENNY" was applied in two lines on each stamp on the sheet. The overprint plate was made from slugs cast on a Ludlow Type-casting machine. The overprint was deliberately staggered so that the word "ONE" did not fall in the same position in relation to the word "PENNY" each time the overprint was applied to a particular stamp on the sheet. This was done as a security measure to help prevent possible forg-



Figure 1



Figure 2

eries. The post office sheets of 2d stamps, all carrying the cylinder or plate #1, had 12 horizontal rows with 10 stamps per row for a total of 120 stamps per sheet. Because of the change in the position of the word "ONE" in relation to the word "PENNY" on every stamp, the sheets had 120 stamps, each with a slightly different positioned overprint.



Figure 3

In total, there were four different batches of sheets overprinted on four different dates. There were two different types of sheet perforations involved in the overprinting. The majority of the sheets that were overprinted were perforated 14, and appears to have come from requisition #3441/1 shipped from London on September 27, 1944. If we turn to Bayley, we see that this shipment of 267,120 stamps (2,226 sheets) went into inventory at the GPO on September 30, 1944.³

There can be little doubt that the perforated 14 overprinted provisionals came from this batch of 2d carmine definitives. It is also interesting to note that of the 1,728,688 2d carmine definitives shipped to Barbados between 1942 and 1948, all but this small batch of 267,120 2d definitives were perforated 13 1/2 x 13. Thus, 1,461,568 2d carmine stamps were perforated 13 1/2 x 13. Yet, only a very small number of sheets were overprinted that was perforated 13 1/2 x 13. It would appear that the post office did not differentiate between the different sheet perforations when these sheets were pulled for overprinting. To the best of my knowledge, there are no post office records to indicate just how many sheets of each different type of perforations were overprinted. Again, if we turn to Bayley, we see that requisition #3367/1 for 2d carmine definitives was shipped from London on January 24, 1944. This shipment of 301,080 stamps, perforated 13 1/2 x 13, (2,509 sheets) went into the GPO's inventory on February 7, 1944.⁴

Again, there can be little doubt that the remainders from this shipment of stamps were the source of the 13 1/2 x 13 overprinted provisionals. Thus, we find a rather interest-

ing situation when it comes to the catalogue value of the 2d carmine definitive in both the unoverprinted and the overprinted state. In the unoverprinted state, the 2d carmine in perforation #14 is much scarcer than the same stamp perforated 13 1/2 x 13. However, in the provisional overprinted state ("ONE PENNY"), the perforated 14 stamps are considerably more common than the overprinted provisionals perforated 13 1/2 x 13.

The first overprinting was done on Saturday, April 19. One thousand sheets were overprinted totaling 120,000 stamps. As a further security precaution, the overprints on this first batch of sheets was placed in the bottom half of each stamp (see Figure 1). This batch of overprinted stamps went on sale on Monday, April 21. A second overprinting of 500 sheets (60,000 stamps) occurred on Tuesday, April 22. The overprint on this batch of sheets was placed about in the center of each stamp (see Figure 2). A third overprinting was made on Monday, April 28 and involved 334 sheets (40,080 stamps). For the third overprinting, the overprint was placed in the upper half of each stamp. A fourth and final batch of 167 sheets (20,040 stamps) was overprinted on Thursday, May 1 and, like the third overprinting, the overprint was placed in the top half of each stamp (see Figure 3).⁵

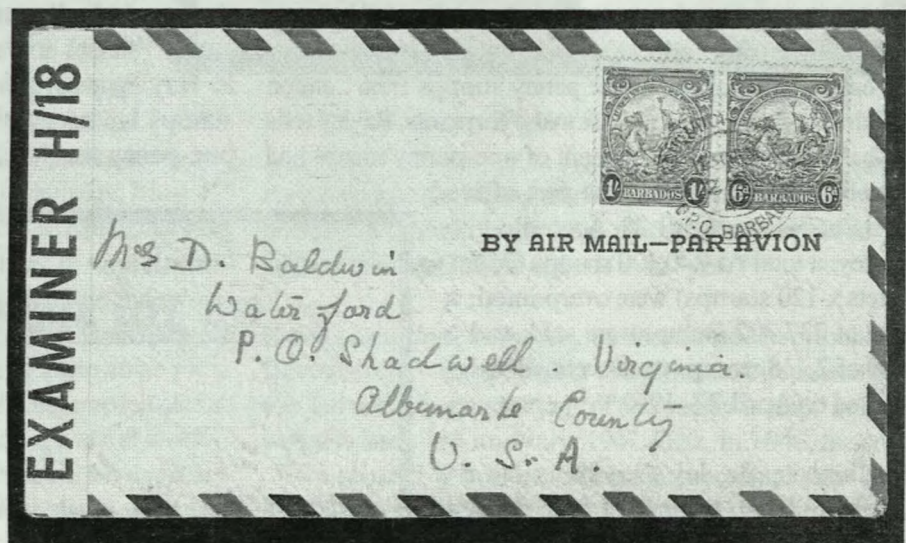


Figure 4

Thus, between April 19 and May 1, 1947, the Advocate Company Limited overprinted a total of 2,001 sheets totaling some 240,120 stamps.

Within hours of these stamps going on sale on Monday, April 21, 1947, the first 1,000 sheets were sold out! Since the stamps were only being sold in Barbados, stamp dealers and the Barbados Philatelic Society acting with some

Continued on page 6

degree of unity cornered the market and began selling the stamps to overseas dealers and collectors at a very nice profit. By Wednesday, April 23, fearing another stamp crisis and shortage, the GPO put a limit of 12 stamps per person per post office visit. The post office, believing

master Armstrong in a letter to a collector dated November 20, 1947 (see below). In his letter to a collector in the United Kingdom, Armstrong states: "During that time we issued 237,806....." Armstrong's number would indicate that a total of 2,314 stamps were withdrawn and eventually destroyed. After reviewing these numbers, I am more inclined to accept Bayley's numbers simply because Bayley researched this matter in such great detail. Moreover, the difference between Armstrong's numbers and Bayley's numbers is small in the overall scheme of things, only a difference of 104 stamps, less than a full sheet!

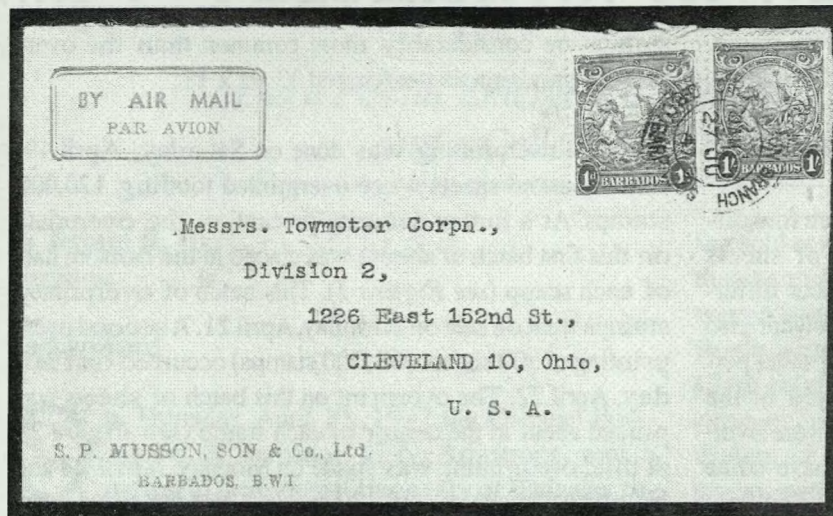


Figure 5

that this limit would slow down sales, inadvertently created an even greater demand for the stamps. To circumvent the limit, dealers began paying local residents to go to the post office, stand in line and purchase the 12-stamp limit.

By the close of business on Thursday, May 1, 1947, the GPO in Barbados had received and entered into inventory the emergency supply of one penny stamps from London and thus withdrew the provisional overprints. Bayley tells us that the emergency shipment of one penny stamps had actually been received by the post office in Barbados on April 28. According to Bayley, a total of 240,120 stamps (2,001 sheets x 120 stamps) were overprinted; a total of 237,702 stamps were sold; and a total of 2,418 stamps were eventually destroyed on April 27, 1950.⁶

In a footnote, Bayley also tells us that on April 27, 1950, a block of four stamps was removed from the remainders to be destroyed and were stamped in purple "SPECIMEN" by the Board of Survey (the bureau appointed with the responsibility for destroying the stamps). This block was then given to the Colonial Postmaster for inclusion in the Official Album of the Post Office.⁷

There is a bit of a conflict between Bayley's numbers and the number of stamps issued given by Colonial Post-

London on April 28, they would have stopped the sheets that were being overprinted by the Advocate Company on April 28 (third batch overprinted) and certainly would have stopped the batch of sheets that were overprinted on May 1. Much of the answer to this perplexing question lies in the date and day when this shipment of "emergency" stamps arrived in Barbados. Again, we can turn to Bayley and his data on the "blue-green" one penny stamps. Under requisition #3658/1, a shipment of 240,000 one-penny stamps, perforated 13 1/2 x 13, was dispatched

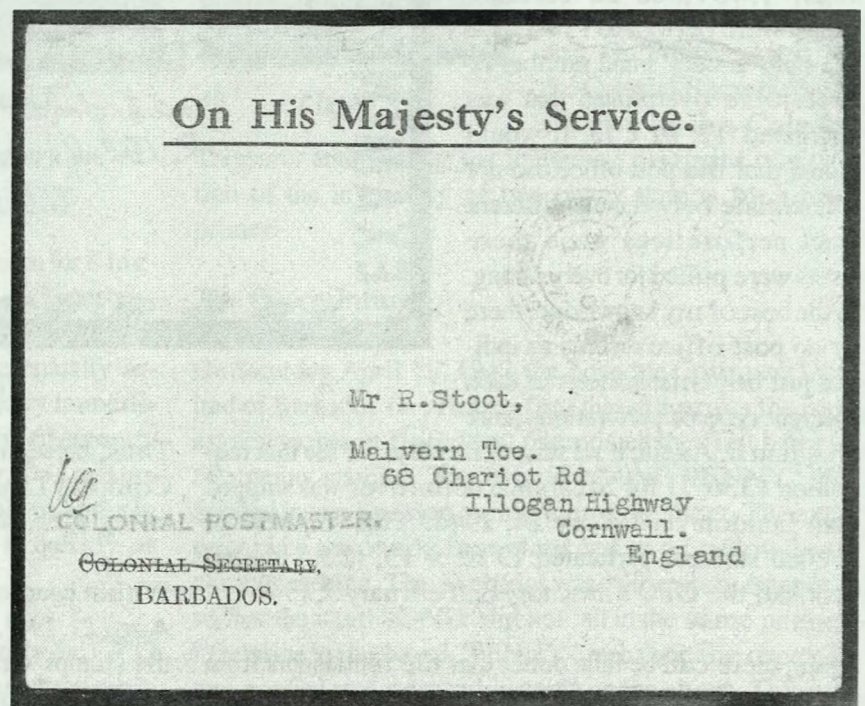


Figure 6

from London on Friday, April 25, 1947.⁸

In reality, the stamps probably left the printer, De La Rue, in London on Friday afternoon only to be held at the British South American Airways office until the flight out to Kingston, Jamaica on Saturday afternoon (April 26) actually departed. This flight would have arrived in Kingston sometime during the morning of Sunday, April 27. At Kingston, the shipment of stamps would have been transferred to a British West Indian Airways flight that then made its way through the Caribbean before landing in Trinidad. After a brief layover in Trinidad for refueling, the plane then went on to Barbados, arriving in the early evening on Sunday. Since it was Sunday night when the packet of 1d emergency stamps arrived in Barbados (the GPO would have been closed), they were probably held at the BWIA office overnight before being delivered to the GPO in Bridgetown sometime during the morning of Monday, April 28. (For an excellent study of British West Indian Airways and the August 1947 merger with BSAA, see Dr. Reuben A. Ramkissoon, "The Story of British West Indian Airways (BWIA) 1940-2000," *British Caribbean Philatelic Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 2, p. 3-11, April 2002; Vol. 42, No. 3, p. 7-23, July 2002; Vol. 43, No. 3, p. 13-15, July 2003).

Again, turning to the Bayley data for this stamp, the "Inventory Date" indicates that this shipment of one penny stamps from London didn't make it into the post office's inventory until Thursday, May 1,⁹ thus necessitating a continuance of the overprinting and sale of the one penny provisional stamps. In all probability, a postal clerk had to count and inspect each and every sheet in the shipment before it went into inventory. It would have been a very time consuming chore at the very least. Since there was still a supply of the provisionals on hand at the post office and more overprints in the works, I suspect that the Colonial Postmaster made the decision to continue the sale of the provisional stamp until the close of business on Thursday, May 1 when the stamps were withdrawn from sale. Then, on Friday, May 2, the next day, the post office began issuing the one penny stamps from the emergency shipment from London.

The Circumstances

Were the overprinted stamps really necessary? Did stamp dealers and the Barbados Philatelic Society manipulate the supply of stamps before the overprinting and thus force the post office to authorize the issuing of this provisional? And, did the dealers in concert with the Barbados Philatelic Soci-

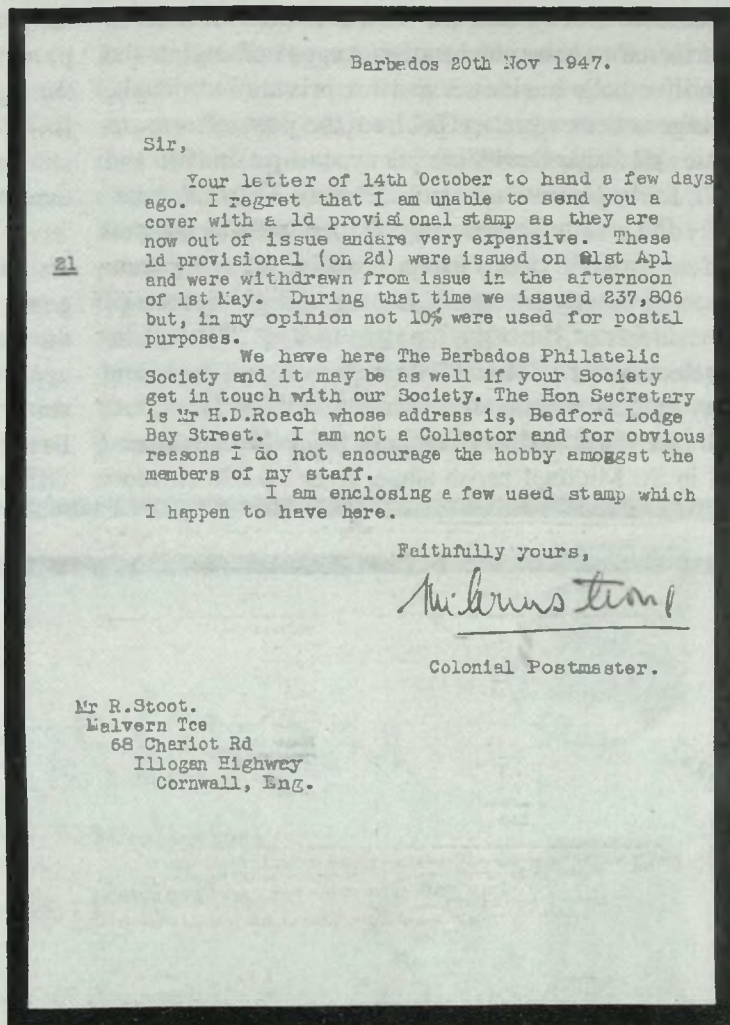


Figure 7

ety manipulate the stamp market once the provisionals were released in order to reap huge profits? The answer to all three of these questions appears to be "yes."

Having said that, however, we should not overlook the fact that there were a number of legitimate circumstances that led to the huge shortage of one penny stamps in Barbados in late 1946 and early 1947. First, in 1946, the post office reduced a number of significant postal rates that had been in effect during World War II. For example, the rate for wartime airmail letters to the U.S. was 1/6 (see Figure 4) and was one of the most used rates during the period. In 1946, this rate was lowered to 1/1 (see Figure 5). The post office also believed that after the war there would be a huge decrease in the use of airmail services and a return to the use of surface mail as had been the case before the outbreak of the war. Unfortunately, this was a significant miscalculation on the part of the GPO in Barbados. In effect, the exact opposite occurred, the use of airmail greatly increased in the period directly after the war.

Continued on page 8

In addition, shortly after the war ended, the GPO saw a huge increase in the number of packages coming into the island for both businesses and for private individuals. Package notices were sent out from the post office to addresses all franked with one penny stamps. In 1946 and 1947, Barbados saw a huge increase in economic prosperity and residents began paying their bills by mail, all franked with one penny stamps. Finally, the voting franchise was greatly increased after the war giving most of the residents of Barbados the right to vote. The legislative elections of 1946 and 1947 were hotly contested and many of those running for office sent out circulars about their candidacy and qualifications. It has been estimated that in St. Michael parish alone, over 30,000 circulars

the stamps as the "notorious one penny overprint." Today, although somewhat difficult to find, single examples of these stamps can be bought for less than a dollar or two.

As the title of this article suggests, many collectors "missed the boat" and were extremely disappointed that they could not purchase examples of these stamps directly from the Philatelic Bureau at the GPO in Bridgetown. For several years now, I have collected Post Office Official mails from Barbados. A few years ago, I



Figure 8

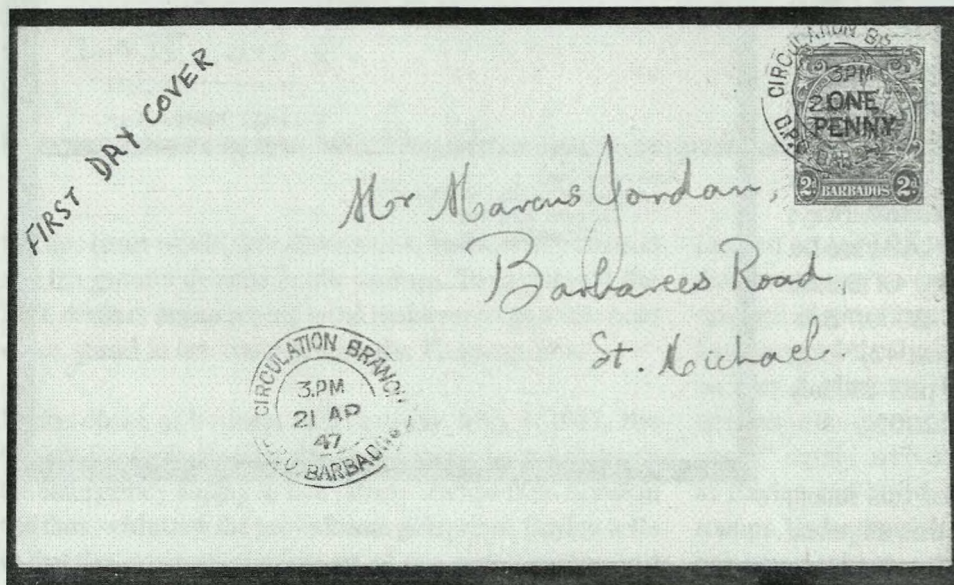


Figure 9

were sent to voters in the days leading up to the elections, all franked with the one penny definitives. Thus, there can be little doubt that by April of 1947, the GPO in Barbados faced a major crisis that culminated in a huge shortfall of one penny stamps.

Indeed, there can be little doubt that both the stamp dealers of the island and the Barbados Philatelic Society played a key role in manipulating the remaining supply of one penny and half penny stamps in order to force the post office into the emergency overprinting of the two penny carmine definitives thus producing a unique provisional issue. However, it is my contention that this shortage of 1d stamps would have happened sooner or later with or without the help of the dealers on the island. The whole affair caused many rumblings throughout the philatelic world. Although at the time these stamps brought dealers nice profits, within 10 years of being issued, collectors around the world shunned them and referred to

the cover and letter seen in Figures 6 and 7. The cover is interesting in that the GPO in Bridgetown also experienced a shortage of "official" post office envelopes and had to borrow a supply from the office of the Colonial Secretary. The postmaster, H.N. Armstrong, crossed out the title of "Colonial Secretary" at the bottom left of the cover and hand-stamped in purple ink "Colonial Postmaster" with his initials above the handstamp ("HA"). The cover carried an official paid marking dated November 20, 1947 (Clarke's B4a, see Figure 8) and was addressed to a Mr. R. Stoot in Cornwall, England. As interesting as this

cover may be, I believe that the enclosed letter is important and vastly more interesting because it relates directly to these provisional overprints. Mr. Stoot apparently wrote to Postmaster Armstrong trying to get a cover franked with the "One Penny" overprinted provisional. In his November 20, 1947 reply (typewritten on the back of a preprinted Philatelic Bureau form) Postmaster Armstrong informed Mr. Stoot that he was unable to comply with his request because the stamps had been sold out and withdrawn on May 1 (1947). Postmaster Armstrong informed the collector that the post office had sold 237,806 and of those stamps sold, in his opinion, "not 10% was used for postal purposes." Indeed, this appears to be the case. My own research indicates that probably less than five percent of the provisional stamps sold by the post office were postally used with the majority of the usages being philatelic or used on first day covers. Indeed, commercial uses of this stamp on cover are extremely scarce.

Types of Material Available to Collect

Although, not exactly considered a rare or even a scarce stamp, it can be very difficult to find examples of this overprinted provisional, especially in fine used condition. Rarely one can find, with some difficulty, a complete sheet perforated 14 offered by one of the auction houses. Over the years that I have collected this stamp, I have seen three or four complete sheets being offered and all were perforated 14. I have never seen a complete sheet perforated 13 1/2 x 13 until recently. Within the past month or two, I received an email from Murray Payne, Ltd. of the United Kingdom, dealers in George VI stamps and covers. The email informed me that they were offering a complete sheet of the 1947 "One Penny" overprint perforated 13 1/2 x 13 on their website at www.murraypayne.com. I immediately went to the web site and sure enough, they have a perforated 13 1/2 x 13 sheet. The sheet is described as being a "very rare multiple." Indeed, it may even be a unique piece.

Once in a while, on such Internet sources as eBay, one can find mint and used singles, blocks of varying sizes; some of the more prominent varieties and an occasional cover being offered for sale. Although these stamps sell cheaply, when they can be found, I suspect because they are inexpensive and considered to be of little importance or "notorious," many of the 237,806 stamps originally sold by the post office have over the years probably been lost or destroyed by ravages of time. Perhaps it is the stamp's reputation as being an unnecessary issue that has also contributed to its demise.

Covers

As mentioned above, over the years that I have collected this issue, I have managed to obtain only a total of 11 covers. In analyzing this small cover population, it becomes very apparent that the majority of covers franked with this provisional issue are philatelic in nature. Covers that are overfranked and addressed locally are a dead give-away that they were the creation of some collector or dealer. Of the 11 covers in my possession, no less than seven can be identified as being philatelic in nature. However, several of these covers are very interesting and deserve mention here.

The first of these covers are two locally addressed "First Day of Issue" usages. One was addressed to St. Michael (see Figure 9) and was franked with a single provisional stamp perforated 13 1/2 x 13. The stamp was canceled by the "Circulation Branch G.P.O. Barbados" double circle cancel (Clarke's type E18) and is dated April 21, 1947 with a time code of 3:00 p.m. Bayley states, "The first printing was on perforation 14 stamps."¹⁰ From this first day cover it would appear that at least some sheets perforated 13 1/2 x 13 were overprinted on April 19, the date of the first overprinting, and were sold on the first day of issue, April 21. I, as well as a number of other collectors, have measured the perforations of this stamp on this cover

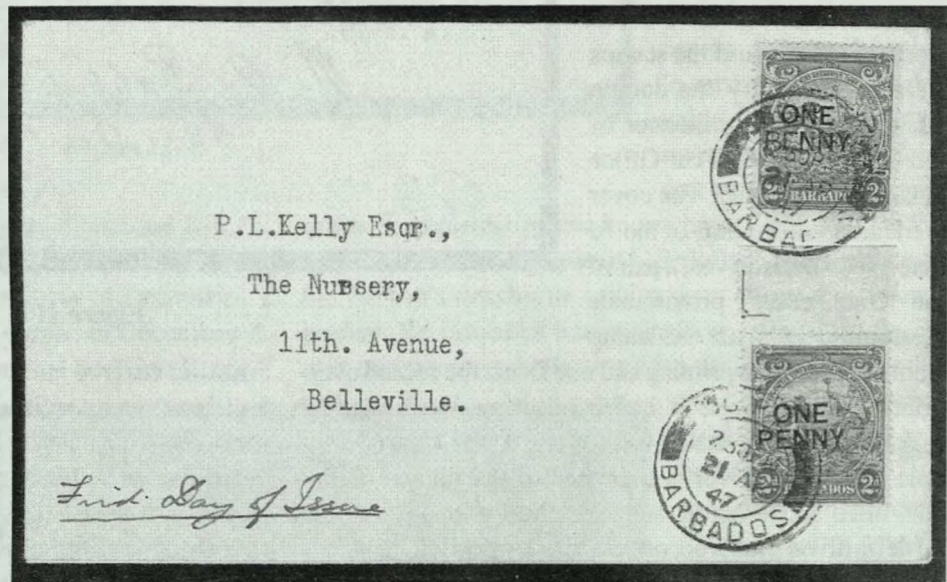


Figure 10

several times and there can be no doubt that the stamp is perforated 13 1/2 x 13. Since it carries a cancellation date of April 21, the provisional has to be from the first overprinting, thus indicating that some sheets perforated 13 1/2 x 13 were overprinted by the Advocate Company on April 19.

The second FDC (see Figure 10) was franked with two copies of the provisional that were perforated 14 and were canceled by a double circle obliterator/datestamp (Clarke's type E17) and is also dated April 21, 1947 with the time code of 2:30 p.m. Both of these first day covers would seem to confirm that at least a small portion of the 1,000 sheets involved in the first overprinting of April 19 contained sheets that were not only perforated 14 but were also perforated 13 1/2 x 13. Although these are the only two first day of issue covers that I have in my possession, it would appear these stamps probably went on sale during the early afternoon of Monday, April 21. I also suspect that the post office was totally ambivalent to the dif-

Continued on page 10

ferences in sheet perforations. After all, the GPO, no doubt, was more concerned about getting the overprinted "ONE PENNY" stamps out to the public for use, thus averting a further crisis, rather than distinguishing the differences in sheet perforations on the overprinted stamps.

The next cover of interest (see Figure 11) is a registered use to M.H. Robertshaw in Sheffield, England. The cover is dated April 25 (1947) and the stamps were canceled by the double circle datestamp/obliterator of the Christ Church Post Office (Clarke's type M7). The cover is franked with a pair of the 1d blue-green definitives, a pair of the "One Penny" provisionals (perforated 14 with one stamp from the first overprinting and one from the second overprinting) and a single of the 2d definitive for a total of 6d making up the registered surface rate to the United Kingdom. Since the cover is addressed to the notable philatelist M.H. Robertshaw, and is franked with a pair of the 1d definitives that were out of stock by April 25, a pair of the provisional one-penny stamps and an example of the 2d carmine without overprint, we can safely assume that the cover is indeed a philatelic creation. Nonetheless, the cover is unusual because it was registered and correctly franked.



Figure 11

Another cover of interest (see Figure 12) appears to be a legitimate commercial use. The cover is a registered airmail use to Jamaica. The cover was franked with a 4d definitive and a block of four of the perforated 14 one-penny provisional, thus making up the registered airmail rate to Jamaica of 8d. The stamps were cancelled by the St. Lawrence "S.O." (sub-office) datestamp/obliterator (Clarke's type M8) of July 7, 1947. From the St. Lawrence Post Office, the cover was forwarded to the GPO in Bridgetown as indicated by the R.L.O. datestamp (Clarke's type J6) of July 8 on the back of the cover. The cover arrived in Kingston, Jamaica on July 15 and then was forwarded to St. Ann's Bay, arriving on July 16 as indicated by the backstamps.



Figure 12

The final cover of interest (see Figure 13) is dated November 28, 1947 and is a registered airmail use to La Mesa, California. The cover was franked with two of the 3d definitives, a single of both the 8d and the "One Penny" provisional (perforated 13 1/2 x 13) for a total franking of 1/3. The stamps were cancelled by the large single circle "R.L.O." datestamp of the GPO (Clarke's



Figure 13

type J6). The cover was backstamped with the R.L.O. datestamp, also of November 28, as well as a purple Miami, Florida Air Mail Section receiver of December 2 and a La Mesa receiver, also in purple, of December 4. Since this is a very late postal use of the "One Penny"



Figure 14

provisional, over eight months after first being issued, this helps to lend credence to the fact that the cover is a legitimate commercial use.

Used Stamps

It is no secret that used examples of this stamp are much scarcer than mint examples. A quick look at *Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue Commonwealth & British Empire Stamps 1840-1952* (2005 edition) shows the perforated 14 issue (SG 264) is listed at £1.75 (approximately \$3.25US) in mint condition while a very fine used ex-

ample is catalogued at £2.50 (\$4.65US). The 13 1/2 x 13 perforated provisional (SG #264d) is listed at £3.00 (approximately \$5.60US) in mint condition and £5.00 (\$9.25US) in very fine used condition. However, in reality, the Gibbon's pricing on this stamp doesn't really reflect true market value, but it does, to some extent, reflect the scarcity between mint copies and used copies. In terms of true market value, a single of this stamp (in either perforation type) in either mint

or fine used condition can be purchased, when found, for as little as 25¢ to a couple of U.S. dollars. And, although, the Gibbon's catalogue pricing does show a difference between the prices of a mint single vs. a used single, my own experience in collecting this provisional issue is that the difference between mint and used should be much greater. As I mentioned earlier in this piece, my own research indicates that 95% of the stamps found from this issue in dealer stocks are mint while only five percent are used. Used copies can certainly be classified as being truly scarce in comparison to the number of mint copies to be found.

Scarcer still are large used multiple pieces. In the 10 years that I have been accumulating and collecting this issue, I have only found three used multiples that are larger than a block of four. The three pieces were all cancelled by the R.L.O. (Registered Letter Office) datestamp of the GPO (Clarke's type J6). The first of these pieces is a left margin block of 10, perforated 14 (see Figure 14) and was cancelled on July 28, 1947. This piece is not only interesting because of its size, but because it shows the major variety "Broken E" in the word "Penny" of the overprint. The variety is in row No. 1 of the block

Continued on page 12

No. 4 (see *Figure 15*). This variety is listed in Gibbon's as 264e.

The second item (see *Figure 16*) is an upper top left sheet margin block of 15, also from the perforated 14 sheets and was cancelled by the R.L.O. datestamp of May 5, 1947. The stamps are from Rows No.1, 2 and 3 and are Stamps No. 1-5 of the complete sheet. Because the overprint is located in the upper part of the stamp design, it would appear that this block came from sheets of either the third or fourth overprintings done on April 28 or May 1. Sadly, this large used piece has no detectable major varieties.



Figure 16

The third item (see *Figure 17*) is a bit more interesting. It is a right sheet margin block of 15, also perforated 14. The stamps are Stamps No. 6 through 10 from Rows No. 6, 7 and 8 of the complete sheet. As with the two items above, this block was also cancelled by the R.L.O. datestamp of May 28, 1947. As with the block above, the "One Penny" overprint is in the top part of the stamp and indicates that the stamps came from either the third or the fourth overprinting. What makes this block interesting is the presence of a very large plate scratch that runs from the end of the word "REGNANTES" in the oval above the King's head to the scroll at the upper right of the adjacent stamp. This scratch is on the first stamp of

the second row of the block (sheet position Row No. 7, Stamp No. 6). Since this is a very pronounced scratch, it must also be present on the regular unoverprinted 2d carmine issue. However, this scratch remains unlisted in any of the stamp catalogues. Nonetheless, large used multiples, that is pieces greater than blocks of four,

are indeed extremely scarce and should command a substantial premium over the catalogue value for individual used stamps.



Figure 15

Varieties

This issue has a number of both major and minor varieties that are quite collectible. For those who are interested in fly-speck philately, this provisional issue offers a treasure trove of minor errors in the application of the overprint and can provide hours of fun sorting these out. Such catalogues as the aforementioned *Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue Commonwealth & Empire Stamps 1840-1952*, *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*, Volume 1, A-B and *The King George VI Common-*

wealth Postage Stamp Catalogue, published by Murray Payne, Ltd. of the United Kingdom, list most of the major varieties found on this issue. However, the collector can find a number of specialized articles, published over the years, on this issue that are more helpful, especially when it comes to fly-speck philately.

The Scott catalogue, Volume 1, A-B (2005), on page 660 gives this issue the catalogue number 209 in the perforated 14 format, and number 209b for the 13 1/2 x 13 perforated stamp. The only major variety that the Scott catalogue lists is No. 209a, a "Double Surcharge" that is not priced (more will be said on this variety below). Thus,

in general, the Scott catalogue listing is not very helpful in providing useful information on the types of major varieties to be found on this issue.

Turning to the Gibbons catalogue, there is a more comprehensive listing of major varieties. On page 60 of the 2005 catalogue, the 1947 "One Penny" overprinted provisional is given catalogue number 264 for the perforated 14 stamp, and number 264d for the perforated 13 1/2 x 13 issue.

Gibbons, under both numbers lists three major varieties: (a) Extra frame line (a constant variety originating on the 2d carmine in the unoverprinted state); (b) a "Short Y" in the word "Penny" of the overprint; and (c) a "Broken E" in the word "Penny" of the overprint. All three of these major varieties are listed under the stamps of both perforation types. Interestingly, unlike the Scott catalogue, Gibbons makes no mention of a double overprint variety.



Figure 17

of these numbers (25 and 26), there is listed three varieties: (a) "broken N's"; (b) "short Y"; and (c) "broken E." Between the two listings in the Payne catalogue is a note that states: "A double surcharge is reported to exist, but we have not seen this." However, this statement in the catalogue was recently nullified by the company itself. In the Murray Payne Ltd. Philatelic Postal Sale 1 of June 30, 2006, Lot 91 on page 10 of the sales catalogue states: ".....hinged mint with clear double overprint, centered left. Signed Herbert Bloch, the first example we have seen (see *Sixth Sense* 62). SG unlisted/CW 25e." The lot was estimated at £1200.00 (about \$2,237US).¹¹



Figure 18



Figure 18a

The King George VI Commonwealth Postage Stamp Catalogue, published by Murray Payne Ltd. (1997 edition) has a more comprehensive listing of the varieties on the 1947 Provisional Issue of Barbados. On page 32 of this volume, section (a) is listed as the perforated 13 1/2 x 13 stamps and given number 25. Section (b) is listed as the perforated 14 stamps and is given number 26. Under each

However, despite the good efforts of the folks at Murray Payne, I know of at least two other examples of a double overprint and a possible third. Two examples of a "double overprint" came up at a Shreves Philatelic Auction of October 17-18, 2003. Lots 1993 and 1994 (see *Figure 18 and 18a*) had identical descriptions that read, "209a/b, 1947 'One/Penny' surcharge on 2p Bright rose red, perf. 13 1/2 x 13, double surcharge, mint single with two distinct surcharges that are of nearly equal intensity, the first overprint is displaced about 1/2mm higher, o.g., centered to the left as all known examples are, very fine; Stanley Gibbons does not list this variety and Scott is requesting information about its existence, the reason is the collector knows of only three copies, all of which were last sold in the 1970s and two are offered here; 1957 Friedl and 1976 APS certificates (G.G. #264d var.)." Each lot was estimated at \$200-\$300 U.S. and each lot actually

Continued on page 14



Figure 19

sold for \$375. At the moment, I have no idea as to the whereabouts of these three “double overprints.”

However, I believe that a fourth example exists and is currently in my possession. A year or so ago, I bid on a rather large lot of these provisional overprints on eBay and won the lot. Although I wasn't expecting much, I was extremely and pleasantly surprised when I received the lot from the seller. The lot contained a number of

mint and used singles as well as large blocks with both types of perforations; blocks of four, six, eight, 12 and a block of 53. In total, the lot contained 164 stamps and turned out to be a real bargain in terms of the varieties that it contained. The block of 53, which is perforated $13\frac{1}{2} \times 13$, (see Figure 19) is a right sheet margin block from Rows 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the full sheet. Row 5 contains Stamps 2 through 9 (a total of eight stamps) while Rows 6, 7, 8, 9 contain Stamps 2 through 10 (a total of nine stamps per row). This block of 53 may be the largest mint piece of the $13\frac{1}{2} \times 13$ sheet perforations to have survived. In Row 6, Stamp 10 of the sheet (Row 3, Stamp 9 of the block), the overprint is much thicker and much darker than the overprints on the other stamps in this block.

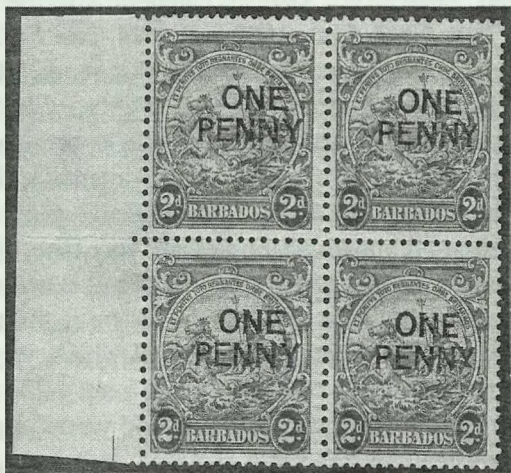


Figure 20

If one uses a 10 power magnifier to examine the overprint on this stamp, it appears that the overprint was struck twice during the overprinting process. This is the only stamp in the block that has these characteristics. In addition to this oddity in the block, Row 6, Stamps 6 and 7 show two major scratches; one that runs from the back of the crown on the King's head to the scroll of the adjacent stamp to the right; and a separate scratch that runs from

the back, bottom of the King's robe, across to the adjacent stamp on the right and through the figure of the horse. I have never seen a catalogue listing of this particular variety. Finally, in Row 5 of the block, Stamp 9, (Row 8 of the sheet, Stamp 10) there is a large dot over the upper right of the letter "O" of "One." This dot appears to have been the result of some sort of foreign matter on the plate during the overprinting. Again, looking at this block and the placement of the overprint, which is in the top half of



Figure 21



Figure 22

the stamp design, we must conclude that this block of 53 came from a sheet that was from either the third or fourth overprintings done on April 28 and May 1. This is important to keep in mind in relation to the discussion below on the "broken E" variety.

Another major listed variety is the "short Y" of the overprint (see Figure 20). The example shown here is from Row 6, Stamp 2 of the



Figure 23

13 1/2 x 13 perforated sheet (see Figure 20a). Since the overprinting is located in the upper half of the stamp, this variety probably came from either the third overprinting (of April 28) or fourth overprinting (of May 1). This variety does not appear to be constant because other pieces in my possession from the same position on the sheet do not show it. Perhaps this is a variety that only showed up late in either the third or fourth batches



Figure 23a

of sheets that were overprinted. According to both Payne and Gibbons, this variety exists on stamps of both perforation types. However, I have never seen this variety on a perforated 14 stamp. Lot 90 in the June 2006 Murray Payne Philatelic Postal Sale is this variety, in a block of four, and is listed as being perforated 13 1/2 x 13 from Sheet Row 6, Stamp 2. In comparing this variety in my possession with the photo of the variety in the Payne sale, the overprints appear to be exactly in the same position on the stamps, thus lending credence to the idea that the "short Y" variety, at least on the perforated 13 1/2 x 13 sheets, came from the same batch of overprinted sheets.

It is also quite possible that the printers discovered the error and repaired the "short Y" before completing the overprintings. I would be interested in hearing from any BCPSG members who might have an example of this variety in their possession that is perforated 14.

The next major variety is known as the "broken E." This error occurs on the "E" of the word "Penny" in the overprint. In this variety, the middle or center crossbar of the letter "E" is nearly or completely missing. This variety does appear to be constant, at least in one or two batches of the overprinting and occurs on Row 7, Stamp 4 and again in Row #1, also Stamp 4 of both types of perforated sheets. The "broken E" on the pair of stamps seen in Figure 21 is from the perforated 14 sheet while the "broken E" in the pair in Figure 22 is from a perforated 13 1/2 x 13 sheet. If

Continued on page 16

you look back to Figure 14, the used left margin block described above and canceled by the R.L.O. datestamp of July 28, 1947, you will see that the fourth stamp in row 1 of this block also shows the "broken E" variety. The block is perforated 14. I suspect that this used block maybe somewhat of a unique piece for all "broken E" varieties that I have seen or have been offered were mint examples. This is the only used example that I have encountered showing the "broken E" variety.

Again, turning to the block of 53 in Figure 18 mentioned above, the fourth row of stamps in the block (actually Row 7 of the sheet) contains Stamps 2 through 10. If we accept the Lockyer theory about placement of the overprint in relation to the batches overprinted (overprint located in bottom part of the design is from the first overprinting; overprint in middle of design is from the second overprint; and overprint in top half of the design comes from the third and fourth batches of sheets to be overprinted) then this block of 53 must have come from the third or fourth batches of overprinted sheets. If we look at Row 4 of this block (actually Row 7 of the complete sheet) and we count three stamps to the right (Stamp 3 of the block is actually Stamp 4 of the complete sheet), we should find a "broken E" variety. However, this stamp does not show the "broken E" variety. I suspect that the "broken E" variety occurred during either the first or second overprintings, or possibly both, and when the error was discovered it was repaired and thus does not occur on the third and fourth overprintings.

In collecting or acquiring this variety, one should be very careful. I have seen stamps offered as being the "broken E" where the center crossbar is half the length of the nor-

mal crossbar or the very end of the bar is damaged. These abnormalities are not the true "broken E" variety. In the true "broken E" variety, the center crossbar of the "E" is 95% to 100% missing. I have seen these partially missing crossbars being offered at prices ranging from \$50 to over \$100 for a single mint stamp, depending on the perforation. Whenever possible when buying this variety, it is best to buy a position piece that shows exactly where in the sheet the variety originated.

The final variety that I wish to discuss is one known as

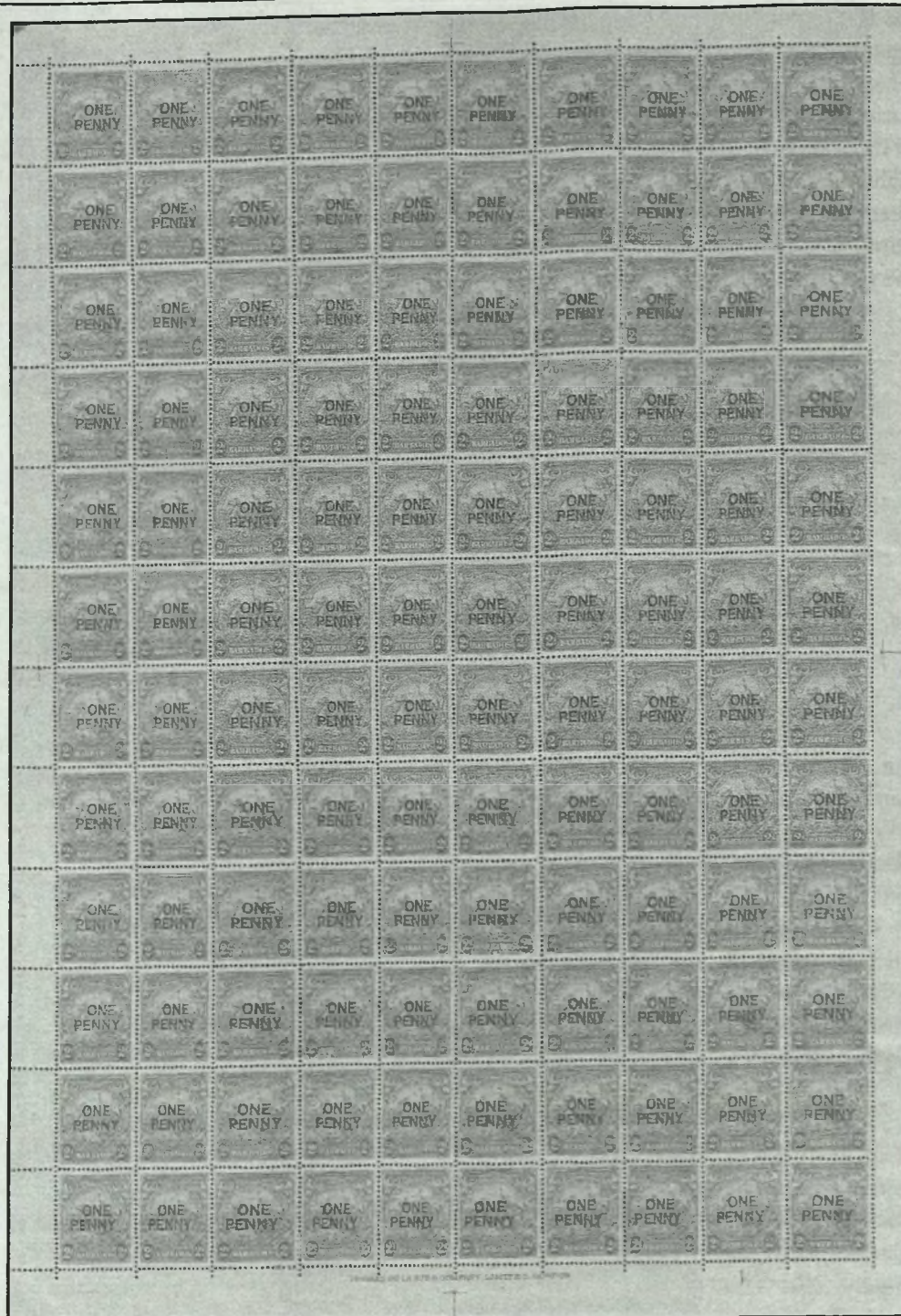


Figure 24

the "double frame line" (see *Figures 23 and 23a*). This variety appears on the 2d carmine unoverprinted sheets and has the Gibbons catalogue number of 250d ea and is catalogued at £27.00 (about \$50US) mint and £38.00 (\$71.00US) used. This is a constant variety that appears in Row 11, Stamp 9 of all sheets of the 2d carmine issue including the overprint provisional stamps. For the overprinted provisional stamps, the perforated 14 with this variety is given the Gibbons catalogue number 264a and is priced at £70.00 (about \$131.00US) mint and £80.00 (\$149.00US) used. The perforated 13 1/2 x 13 is given the catalogue number 264da and is priced at £170.00 (\$317.00US) mint and £200.00 (\$374.00US) used. I submit that this variety is way overpriced in Gibbons in relationship to the market. I also submit that if one looks hard enough for this variety, it can be found without paying anywhere near the Gibbons catalogue price. Since the Scott catalogue does not list this variety in either the non-overprinted or overprinted state, it can sometimes be found in dealers' stocks priced quite reasonably.

In closing, I would like to offer up one more item that I recently acquired, a full sheet of the perforated 14 overprinted provisionals (see *Figure 24*). The sheet does have two examples of the "broken E" (one example in Row 7, Stamp 4 and one in Row 11, Stamp 4). The constant variety double frame line is also present in Row 11, Stamp 9. However, this sheet, again perforated 14 does not show the "short Y" variety in Row 6, Stamp 2, lending credence to the idea that this variety only occurred on the overprinted perforated 13 1/2 x 13 sheets. The overprint on this complete sheet appears to be in the center of the stamp design. This would indicate that this sheet came from the second batch of 500 sheets that were overprinted on April 22, 1947.

If anyone has additional information on this issue, I would encourage you to write to the editor of our *Journal* so that it can be included in a future issue or, if you wish to pass that information on to me directly, you can send it to P.O. Box 206789, Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520-6789, or via email address to: jrh93@SBCglobal.com.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Edmund A. Bayley, *The Stamps of Barbados*. (Willey, St. Michael, Barbados: Cole's Printery Ltd., 1989), 174-8.

² Richard Lockyer, "King George VI Varieties, Part 31 - The 1947 Barbados Surcharge," *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, (February 1994), 53.

³ Bayley, *op.cit.*, 154.

⁴ *Ibid*, 154.

⁵ Lockyer, *ibid*, 53.

⁶ Bayley, *op.cit.* 178.

⁷ Bayley, *ibid*, Note (2), 178.

⁸ Bayley, *ibid*, 150.

⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰ Bayley, *ibid*, 178.

¹¹ Murray Payne Ltd., Philatelic Postal Sale 1 - 1 June 2006, printed in the United Kingdom, 10.

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Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue Commonwealth & British Empire Stamps 1840-1952, 2005 edition.

Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue, Volume 1 (A-B), 2005 edition.

Clarke, George L., Reynold Radford and Stephen Cave. *Barbados Post Office Markings to 1981*. Surrey(?), England: the British West Indies Study Circle, 1982.

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British Virgin Islands World War II

Airmail Routes and Rates

By Roger G. Schnell, M.D. and Dr. Peter P. McCann
Of the USA

The British Virgin Islands did not have the facilities to handle direct airmail service until after World War II. Thus, all wartime airmail from the British Virgin Islands was either carried to St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands for onward air transmission or was sent by ship to Puerto Rico to make the airmail connection.

FAM 6 initiated airmail service to the U.S. Virgin Islands on September 29, 1929. This airmail service was irregular. Surface transportation provided by the twice-weekly sailings of the SS *Catherinel* delivered mail to New York in five days compared to six days for the airmail. In the late 1930s, Powelson Airlines flew from Puerto Rico to the U.S. Virgin Islands. It did not have a contract with the U.S. Post Office and in the early 1940s carried the mail "gratis" as a favor to residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Powelson line became Caribbean Atlantic Airlines on November 12, 1942. On December 2, 1942, the airline received CAB approval to carry the mail between Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This route was known as AM 59. Because of the War Secrets Act, the airline schedule was not published until September 1944, when it showed daily service. Thus, wartime airmail from

the British Virgin Islands could go by boat to St. Thomas or Puerto Rico and by air from there to destination.

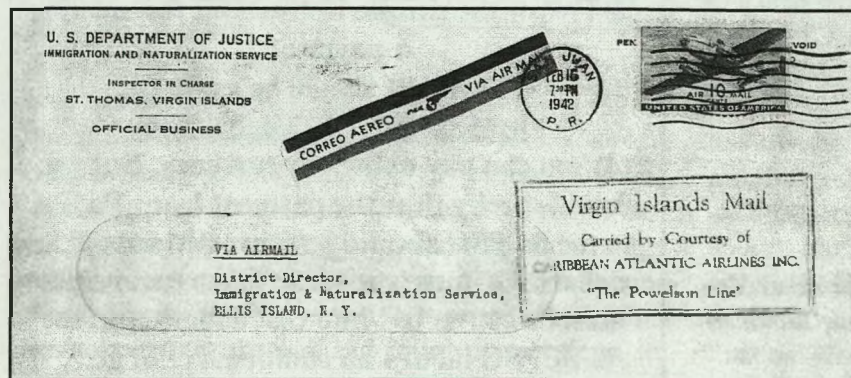
Wartime airmail from the British Virgin Islands was not common for several reasons. First, the British Virgin Islands did not have direct air connections. Secondly, there were few commercial interests on the islands that required rapid responses provided by airmail service. Thirdly, the schedules were not always reliable, and finally airmail was not inexpensive.

British Virgin Islands to the United States				
Date	Rate	Registered	Censor	Transit Mark
June 19, 1942	10d		Miami	
September 7, 1942	11d		Miami	
January 26, 1943	11d		Miami	
March 25, 1943	3/-	Yes	Miami	St. Thomas
August 26, 1943	5/1d	Yes	Miami	St. Thomas
February 1, 1944	11d		St. Lucia	St. Thomas
March 29, 1944	2/3d	Yes	Miami	OMS
October 11, 1944	11d			St. Thomas

When the war reached the Caribbean, many air services were curtailed or suspended. Because many of the British Gazettes and SROs for postal matter are incomplete (most records were destroyed by a fire in 1950), the exact airmail rates from the British Virgin Islands are unclear. *The Leeward Islands: Notes for Philatelists* by M. N. Oliver has a table of airmail rates during the period derived from a series of articles by George W. Bowman,

originally published in the British West Indies Study Circle Bulletin in 1971. However, when comparing them to specific letters, many rates did not fit. In an attempt to clarify these rates, we surveyed airmail letters in our collections from the British Virgin Islands during the World War II period.

Although this is a small sampling, it appears that the rate from mid-1942 through 1944 was 11d per ounce. Registration was 3d. The June 1942 cover may be underfranked 1d. Two of the three heavyweight letters do not fit this

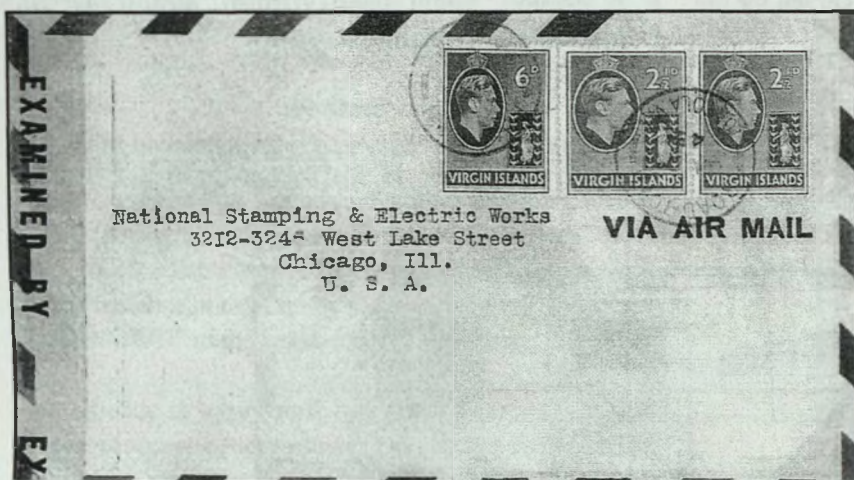


Letter to New York, carried "gratis" to San Juan by Caribbean Atlantic Airlines. Franked with 10 cent adhesive for flight on Pan Am FAM 6 to Miami and Ellis Island, New York.

British Virgin Islands to England

Date	Rate	Registered	Censor	Transit Mark
June 5, 1941	1/10d		San Juan	
July 18, 1941	1/10d		San Juan	
July 22, 1941	9/-	Yes	BVI	St. Thomas
January 26, 1942	2/6d	Yes	San Juan	San Juan
July 15, 1942	2/6d	Yes	OMS	St. Thomas*
July 7, 1943	1/10d		England	St. Thomas
August 6, 1943	1/10d		England	St. Thomas
November 7, 1943	1/1d**		New York	St. Thomas
September 7, 1944	1/10d		England	St. Thomas

* Also San Juan **Airmail to New York



Tortola, British Virgin Islands, January 26, 1943, sent to New York City at 11d.

rate schedule and appear to be overfranked. This may be philatelic intent or ignorance on the part of postal employees as to the appropriate rate.



Road Town, Tortola, July 13, 1942, airmail to England at the 1/10d rate (Wilson correspondence).

These rates do not agree with the rates published by Oliver and Bowman. They showed rates of 10 1/2d for 1941 through July 1943 and 10d for July 1943 through 1947.

The lack of St. Thomas transit markings on covers prior to March 25, 1943, suggests surface transfer to Puerto Rico and onward air transmission to Miami and the U.S. After that date, airmail was probably carried from St. Thomas by Caribbean Atlantic Airlines (or "Carib Air" as it came to be called) to Puerto Rico for onward air transmission.

One aberration is the cover with the St. Lucia censor. How or why this cover went to St. Lucia and then to the U.S. is unclear.

Five letters in this list were from a Rev. L. Wilson, Tortola, BVI, to a Mrs. Ruth Wilson, Yorkshire, England. An airmail cover to Canada dated August 17, 1942, bears 10/-.

A review of the nine examples listed shows:

- 1/10d rate to England (five examples)
- 1/1d airmail to New York and surface to England
- 1/1 + 3d registration = 2/5d registered double weight letter via airmail to New York and surface to England. The two 1942 covers with 2/6d (or 2/6 1/2d) are slightly overfranked.
- 9/- letter could be an 8x rate registered letter, airmail to New York, surface to England (overfranked 1d), but is most likely philatelic.

A letter of interest is one from the BVI to England which was carried to St. Thomas and placed in the U.S. mails. The rate was 10¢ airmail St. Thomas to U.S. plus 30¢ trans-Atlantic airmail to England for a total of 40¢, less expensive than the 1/10d rate from Tortola. The British Virgin Islands are only about three miles from St. Thomas, an easy and frequent trip by boat.

The above rates to England are different than those listed by Oliver and Bowman. They show airmail to England as 2/6 1/2d for 1941 through 1943 and 2/4d for 1944 through 1947.

Continued on page 20

Summary

Probable Airmail Rates 1941 - 1944

BVI to U.S. 11d per ounce

BVI to England 1/10d per ounce

Wartime rates for many countries are difficult and complicated. In most cases, the schedules could not be published because of wartime security. Postal employees were not always aware of rate and route changes that sometimes occurred quickly and without adequate notice. Philatelic covers further complicate attempts to determine airmail rates. We hope that this article may entice other collectors to add information to this database and further substantiate (or refute) the wartime rates shown for the British Virgin Islands.

References

G. W. Bowman, "By airmail from the Leeward Islands," *British West Indies Study Circle Bulletin*, December 1971 (15-18), June 1972 (29-41), and September 1972 (72-79).

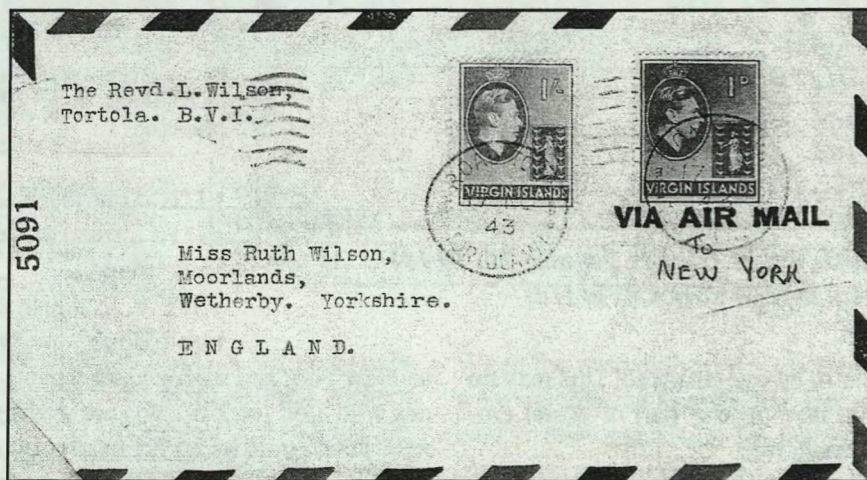
M. N. Oliver, "The Leeward Islands: Notes for Philatelists," *British West Indies Study Circle*, London 2000, 168-169.

J. O. Sullivan, "Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands Internal Airmail," *Airpost Journal*, December 1985, Volume 59, 92-101.

R. B. Preston, "Virgin Islands Airmail," *Airpost Journal*, December 1965, Volume 37, 86-87.

Endnote

This article was reprinted with permission from Airpost Journal, Vol. 75, No. 6 (June 2004), p. 223-227.



*Road Town, Tortola, November 17, 1943 to England
"Via Airmail to New York," 1/1d rate.*



*Addressed to Reverend Wilson, Road Town, British Virgin Islands,
"Charlotte, Amalie, Virgin Islands" CDS April 30, 1943, franked with
four 10 cent Prexy 1938 adhesives, sent to Yorkshire, England.*

Addressed to Anguilla ... but missent to Anguilla!

By Dr. Reuben A. Ramkissoon, FRPSL
Of the USA

An erroneously addressed cover was apparently dispatched for anticipated "MISSENT" markings. Post-marked at Tel Aviv, Israel on October 23, 1992 by a machine cancellation of seven wavy lines, the cover carries an impossible address of Alfred Milner, P. O. Box 411194, Jamaica, Kingston, Anguilla, and West Indies (*see Figure 1*).

The cover bears five "MISSENT" markings, none of which originates from Jamaica. A somewhat worn 54mm square purple handstamp applied over the address portion provides five reasons for non-delivery of the mail. In this instance, a red check manuscript mark indicates "UNKNOWN" as the reason for non-delivery.

The absence of transit and receiving datestamps is not helpful in accepting or explaining the several "MISSENT" handstamp markings present on the front of this cover: "MISSENT TO BERMUDA," 56 x 4mm; red straight-line is repeated twice. It is believed THE BRITISH POST OFFICE red lettered re-sealing labels are overstruck by the MISSENT handstamps, and were likely applied in Bermuda. "MISSENT TO GUYANA," 44 x 4mm, black straight-line, and "MISSENT/ TO/ SRI LANKA" 30 x 34mm, is a rectangular enclosed three line handstamp.

The most correct address sequence should be addressee's name, post office box number, Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies. Based on the different locations of the "MISSENT" strikes, the Jamaica, Kingston address was not pursued, as there are no Jamaica markings.

An alternate deliverable address could be addressee's name, P. O. Box Number, Anguilla, West Indies. This is the final considered destination, the fifth and last of the "MISSENT" markings, struck in red as a "MISSENT TO ANGUILLA" straight-line handstamp, 70 x 7mm, which was first used at the General Post Office (GPO), Valley, Anguilla in 1991. This letter reached The Valley, Anguilla on June 8, 1993, as shown by cancellation datestamps on both the front and reverse sides of the cover at The Valley. (*See Figure 2*)

And so, a misdirected Middle East cover with completely

wrong address points, arrives at its stated termination location of Anguilla — but a wrong address nonetheless — and is rightfully returned to the sender about eight months later, as the end of a series of "MISSENT" destinations.

Despite its philatelic birth, the cover journeyed from the Leeward Islands in the Caribbean to Bermuda in the north-western Atlantic, across the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean to Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon), and across the South Atlantic to Guyana (formerly British Guiana) on the northeast coast of South America, and finally back to the Caribbean and the Leeward island of Anguilla, before it is ultimately returned to its sender in Israel.

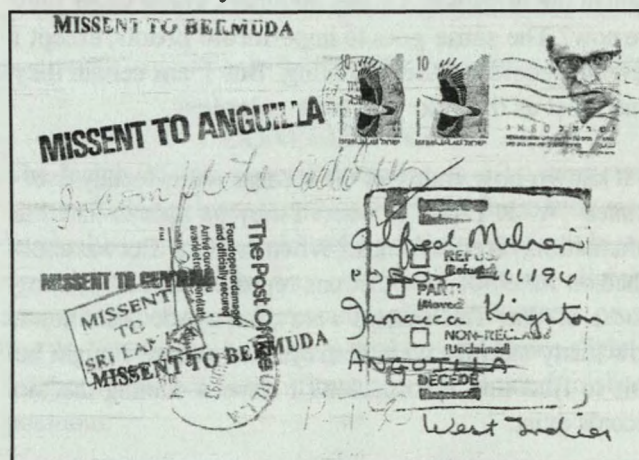


Figure 1: Note impossible address on this October 23, 1992 cover to Jamaica, Kingston and Anguilla, West Indies, and five "MISSENT" markings from diverse locations.

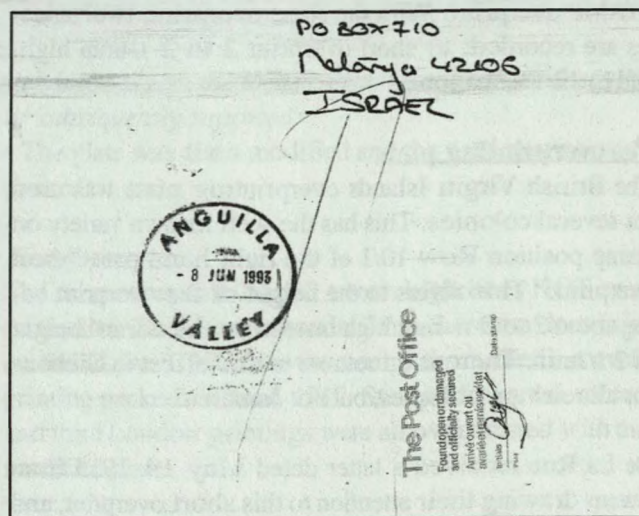


Figure 2: After this cover reached its Anguilla destination, it was finally re-directed back to Israel.

More "War Tax" research for stamps of St. Lucia and Jamaica

By John Davis
Of the United Kingdom

My research continues into the St. Lucia and Jamaica War Tax stamps. I am presenting some additional information that may be of help to BCPSG members, and I welcome comments that will help to prove or disprove my conclusions.

ST. LUCIA

I know that adopted and unadopted essays exist from the Robson Lowe sale of February 1979, but I would like a photocopy or scan of them, or -- even better -- to have sight of the originals. Do any members know where they are now? The same goes to imperforate proofs, except I have no record of them existing. But I am certain they must exist as they do with other colonies.

Is it known how many of the stamps were locally overprinted "WAR TAX" or where I may be able to find this information, if records exist? When the War Tax was abolished on June 30, 1919, Ewens reported that all existing stocks of War Tax stamps were destroyed. Is it known how many stamps were destroyed or where I might be able to find this information? I have a feeling that no records exist.

JAMAICA

I am researching the Jamaica De La Rue "smaller" WAR STAMP overprint. With the short overprint, two varieties are recorded: a) short overprint 2 to 2 1/4mm high, and b) 12 1/2mm long.

The overprinting plate

The British Virgin Islands overprinting plate was used for several colonies. This has the well known variety on stamp position Row 10/1 of the right hand pane "short overprint." This refers to the height of the overprint being about 2 to 2 1/4mm high instead on the normal height of 2 1/2mm. There is a footnote to this effect in Gibbons for all relevant colonies, but not Jamaica.

De La Rue received a letter dated May 19, 1919 from Ewens drawing their attention to this short overprint, and they replied on May 21 to say that "the plate has been rectified." This overprinting plate was then only ever used for Jamaica overprints.

Orders for Jamaica WAR STAMPS

Three orders were placed with De La Rue for the Jamaica overprint, as follows:

- Requisition 3/19 – with an amendment on May 5, 1919 for 1/2d and 3d stamps. De La Rue confirmed that the British Virgin Islands overprinting plate would be used. These were packed on June 12, 1919. Quantities: 1/2d: 995,760; 3d: 86,880.

- Requisition 93/19 – September 1919 for 1/2d and 3d stamps. These were packed on December 15, 1919. Quantities: 1/2d: 1,010,160; 3d: 404,760.

- Requisition 117/19 – November 1919 for 3d stamps only. These were packed on February 3, 1920. Quantities - 3d: 390,480.

The British Virgin Islands overprinting plate would also have been used for the second and third overprintings as there is nothing in the Crown Agents Correspondence Books, the Colonial Stamp Books nor the Private Day Books to suggest otherwise.

The overprinting plate must have been rectified on May 20 or 21, 1919, so the short overprint would not exist on either of the two later printings. The question is whether the overprinting plate was rectified before or after the first overprinting, and whether the short overprint can exist on stamps from this overprinting. Unfortunately, the De La Rue Plate Issue Register, that would have provided us with the answer, no longer exists for the period prior to 1923.

Reference material

- The short overprint variety is not listed in Gibbons, and the only current recognition of its existence is on the 3d, which is listed in the *Bridger and Kay 1980 Commonwealth Five Reigns Catalogue*. (Incidentally, B & K also list the normal overprint as being 13mm long, but only 12 1/2mm long in conjunction with the short [height] overprint variety on stamp in position Row 10/1 – upper right hand pane.)

- *Stamp Collecting* on March 20, 1920 reported that the smaller overprint in position Row 10/1 of the right hand pane is present on the 3d from the first overprinting, but an earlier report of March 6, referring to the "second

Library Report

By David Wilson

BCPSG Librarian

After 10 years in the role, Dan Walker has recently stepped down as the BCPSG Librarian. I would like to thank him for the time and energy that he has brought to the position over an extended period of time.

The contents of the library have now been transferred into my care and my contact details can be found at the front of each issue of the *Journal*, and will be repeated at the end of this article. By the time this issue is distributed, or very soon thereafter, the updated library catalogue will be available on the BCPSG web site (<http://www.bcpsg.com>) together with the rules for borrowing.

May I invite members to consult the listing and forward requests for loans to me as and when required. It is worth observing that, as presently constituted, the library's holding of general philatelic reference works and comprehensive volumes on the foundations of the subject is not strong. Rather, the concentration of publications is in the area of *Journal* extracts and short articles on subjects of interest to the BCPSG members. I hope this resource will continue to be of value to you as you pursue your interests.

David A. Wilson

P.O. Box 1135

Great Falls, VA 22066-8135

email: Wilsondajx@cox.net

More "War Tax" research

Continued from page 22

London overprint" recorded that the smaller overprint on the 3d had been altered to normal size.

- *Ewens Weekly Stamp News* for April 10, 1920 referred to the first London overprint of the 1/2d and 3d, with a note that the short overprint "2.25mm high" is present on the 3d. They made no further reference to the short overprint on subsequent De La Rue printings of either value.

- *Jamaica: Its Postal History, Postage Stamps and Postmarks*, Chapter 13 of which was written by H. Cooke, also made reference to the short overprint on the 3d: 2mm high and 12 1/2mm long (instead of 13mm).

- EJP (*Encyclopaedia of Jamaica Philately*) page 01-09-03 recorded the normal overprint 2 1/2mm high and 13mm long. Page 01-09-28 referred to the short overprint on the 3d: 2mm high and 12 1/2mm long, and on page 01-09-29 listed an example from Derek Sutcliffe's collection which is 12 1/2mm long, but was silent about its height.

- My research has found no references about a shorter overprint existing on any of the 1/2d stamps.

- All stamps of both values from my collection are 12 1/2mm long, except some of the 3d stamps where the overprint is in slightly thicker letters, and the length closer to, but never as much as, 13mm.

CONCLUSIONS

The length of the normal overprint is 12 1/2mm, not 13mm. References to the normal being 13mm long may have relied on earlier philatelic writings, and not based on original research. Any overprints that are slightly longer exist because of pressure applied to the press, causing the lettering to be slightly thicker, and hence slightly longer. These are insignificant and not limited to sheet positions.

Relying solely on contemporaneous reports:

- With the first London overprinting, the 3d stamps were overprinted first, from the unmodified British Virgin Islands plate.

Relying solely on the lack of anything contemporaneously, or subsequently reported:

- The plate was then modified and the 1/2d stamps overprinted.

Therefore:

The short overprint 2mm-2 1/4mm high does NOT exist on the 1/2d. The short overprint 2mm-2 1/4mm does exist on the 3d, but ONLY on the stamps from the first overprinting packed in June 1919. Stamps from the second and third London printings were all overprinted with the modified plate.

I welcome comments from members, especially those who have positional examples of both values that will prove or could disprove any of my conclusions.

Lots of news in St. Vincent philately

By Peter Elias

St. Vincent Study Group Leader

I am happy to report that there are a lot of interesting new developments going on the world of St. Vincent philately!

1) There is currently a book in the works that will cover both St. Vincent and St. Lucia postal history, written by Edward Proud and being co-authored by Joe Chin Aleong. I will also be adding my two-cents worth and am reviewing the postmark section of the book and provide some additional materials. There has been a great gap in philatelic literature (*i.e.*, books) about St. Vincent postal history since the book by Pierce-Messenger-Lowe was published in 1971; that book, however, only covered postal history through about 1915. This book should make up for that and take it up to independence in 1979. I hope the book will be available soon.

2) St. Vincent started "Express Mail" service on July 18, 2005 according to Ms. Celene Jack. There are special envelopes in use, and rates are divided into three zones:

Zone A:

Barbados, Grenada, Trinidad & Tobago, St. Lucia:
EC\$33.00 per pound with \$5.00 for any additional pound.

Zone B:

Wider Caribbean: EC\$49.00 per pound with \$10.00 for any additional pound.

Zone C:

United States: EC\$75.00 per pound with \$15.00 for any additional pound.

When I first saw the rates, I thought that this would be a great way to use up all those high dollar gold-foil Star Trek (and other) stamps that have been issued in the past, but alas, that is not to be, as postage stamps will not be used on those envelopes, and only a receipt will be issued.

3) Starting sometime in 2005, the St. Vincent Postal Corporation issued new "square" postmarks to the various village post offices. My first look at once came in the mail from the South Rivers village post office, dated June 21, 2005 (*see Figure 1*). Also shown (*Figure 2*) is a postmark from the Fancy Post Office, located in the extreme northern edge of St. Vincent. Other village postmarks seen by the author are from Byera, Calder, Sandy Bay, Greggs, Lowmans Hill, Rose Bank and Canouan Island in the

Grenadines of St. Vincent. Postmarks from some of the other villages from October 2005 still had the older style double and single circle postmarks.



Figure 1

South Rivers cancellation

The postmarks are actually not quite square, measuring 32mm wide and 27.5mm tall. They incorporate the vil-

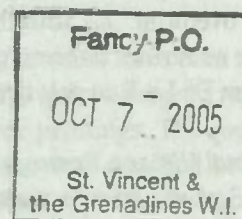


Figure 2

Fancy Post Office cancellation

lage name followed by "P.O." on one line, then the date and "St. Vincent & the Grenadines W.I." on the bottom two lines.

The main post office in Kingstown also has a new large single-circle postmark (*see Figure 3*). The diameter is 38mm. It has been noted in both black and blue inks. As you can tell, the postmarks are now square! At this point, I do not know which post offices will be receiving these devices (as some of the older round ones have been in use for decades!). Also, no word yet on the "first day of use" for these postmarks.

4) Registration labels have also undergone a change. The latest registration label from Kingstown has the number

in red instead of black (see Figure 4). It was used on a cover postmarked on June 22, 2005. The red numbers are also a first (although since this publication is in black & white, you won't be able to tell from the illustration). Otherwise, there does not appear to be any other change



Figure 3

New single-circle postmark for Kingstown

in the design. Whether the village post offices will receive these I do not know yet.

As a reminder, if you enjoy St. Vincent philately, please consider joining my St. Vincent "Yahoo" discussion group

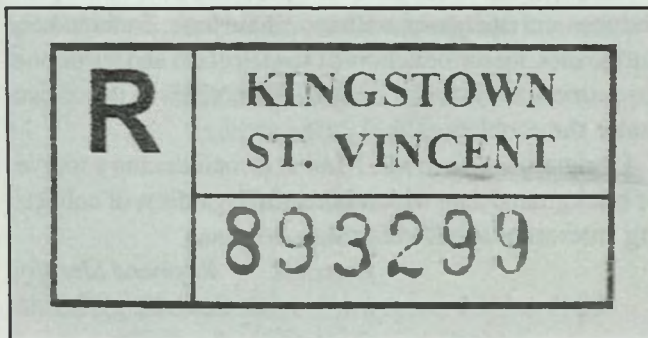


Figure 4

*New two-color (black and red) Kingstown registration label (number is in red)
[shown at 180 percent of original]*

(if you have not done so yet already). There is no cost, and it is the quickest and most efficient way to communicate amongst ourselves. To sign-up, go to:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/stvincentstamps>.

You can send/post messages from the group web sites, or from your regular email software (but you have to use the email address you signed up with).

Barbados institutes new Postal Codes

By Keith H. Bayley

Barbados Study Group Leader

In September 2005, the Barbados Postal Service introduced international Postal Codes to replace the local postal codes. For the information of our members, especially those who collect Barbados, the Postal Codes are as follows:

BB11000 - 11999	GPO Bridgetown
BB12000 - 12999	Eagle Hall, St. Michael
BB13000 - 13999	Welches Road, St. Michael
BB14000 - 14999	Brittons Hill, St. Michael
BB15000 - 15999	Worthing, Christ Church
BB 16000	Grantley Adams International Airport, Christ Church
BB17000 - 17999	Christ Church
BB18000 - 18999	St. Philip
BB19000 - 19999	St. George
BB20000 - 20999	St. John
BB21000 - 21999	St. Joseph
BB22000 - 22999	St. Thomas
BB23000 - 23999	West Terrace, St. Michael
BB24000 - 24999	St. James
BB25000 - 25999	St. Andrew
BB26000 - 26999	St. Peter
BB27000 - 27999	St. Lucy
BB28000	Warrens, St. Michael

You will notice that Grantley Adams International Airport and Warrens offices have only one Postal Code. This is because there is no mail delivery from these offices. There are only post boxes and the renters have to go there to get their mail. However, all other services are available.

Your editor's request ...

In order to complete my "reference collection" of the BCPSG *Journal*, I need copies prior to July 1984, when I joined the society.

If you have any you'd be willing to "donate to the cause," I'd appreciate a call or email. I'll gladly reimburse shipping costs.

Everett Parker

(207) 695-3163 or email to eparker@midmaine.com

LETTERS

St. Lucia first flight cover**To the Editor:**

In Dr. Ramphal's article in the October 2006 *Journal*, he illustrated a St. Lucia first flight cover and asks for information. I can supply the following.

The "Castries/ 1st/ air mail/ St. Lucia" canceller was produced to cancel the stamps on covers to be carried on the first southbound airmail flight of September 22, 1929, and also on the first northbound flight of September 26. The covers were datestamped elsewhere on the envelope. It was only used for these two dispatches; however, the central slugs were removable and in the absence of adhesive air mail etiquettes, the postmaster has the "1st" removed and used the handstamp as a cachet on subsequent air letter. The latest use I am aware of was on a cover to New York dated December 13, 1929.

The mail carrying aircraft on the southbound flight was piloted by Charles Lindbergh and on the northbound flight by Jack Tilton, Lindbergh having flown south from Trinidad on his honeymoon. The northbound flight was delayed overnight in Trinidad, which is why covers are dated September 25, although the flight was on the 26th.

Alister Kinnon
Pavenham, Bedford
United Kingdom

Inventory of Bermuda stamps**To the Editor:**

I'm currently trying to make an inventory of the H2 "PAID" circular datestamps of Bermuda and very kindly ask that our members take a few moments to list any that you have.

This request is in two parts: firstly, only fully dated examples of the "PAID" cds without code above date. Secondly, any "PAID" cds showing code above date. For these details of part and full strikes required listing what-ever portions of the date visible.

When submitting details please put the denomination alongside and, if possible, quality of strike ranging upwards from fair, good, fine, very fine, superb.

Michael Hamilton
5 Winbrook Fold
Winfrith, Newburgh, Dorset DT2 8LR
United Kingdom

Statistical data**To the Editor:**

The two articles by Mr. Richard Maisel on statistical data for the British Caribbean (*The Empire Abstracts and*

Tables) offer interesting (yet somewhat cryptic) snapshots of postal life in the early years of the 20th Century.

The seemingly dull statistics carry with them a great deal of surprising philatelic information. In Jamaica, (Table 7, Part II, April 2006) the drastic drop-off in foreign-bound post cards in 1907 reflects the results of the great earthquake of January 1907 that destroyed Kingston and damaged other major cities. This, in turn, caused a reduction in tourism resulting in fewer tourist post cards. The corresponding increase in foreign-bound letters possibly shows orders for new stock and the "We're Okay" letters to family and friends abroad. External events have real impact on mail volume.

This also opens an area for potential philatelic research as to the dramatic growth of postcards -- especially tourist postcards -- in a very short period. Note that Table 3 (Bahamas) increases from 14,000 cards in 1903 to 50,000 in 1906. Table 4 (Barbados), 17,000 in 1902 to 100,000 in 1906. The same trend is seen in the remaining countries/tables. Why? The author lists some possible reasons. How does this correlate with the number of tourists, the economic prosperity of the U.S. and Great Britain, and why all at once?

Mail volume is influenced by internal post office procedures and rates along with external events. Earthquakes, hurricanes, the introduction of the telegraph and telephone (to name a few) may reflect in these tables -- IF we can make the correlation.

Congratulations to Mr. Maisel on introducing a source of background data which is useful regardless of collecting interest or specific country.

Raymond Murphy
St. Petersburg, Florida

Election of Officers

The election of officers of the BCPSG was held by the Board of Trustees and the following individuals were elected to serve a two-year term, assuming their offices on January 1, 2007:

President -- Jack Harwood
Vice President -- Ed Waterous
Secretary -- Duane Larson
Treasurer -- John Seidl
International Representative -- David Druett
Editor of the *Journal* -- Everett Parker

Respectfully submitted,
Duane Larson, Secretary

BCPSG Exhibits and Awards

By Paul Larsen
Awards Chairman

MILCOPEX 2006, September 15-17
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Following is a listing of recent British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group (BCPSG) member exhibit participants and awards.

Washington 2006, May 27 - June 3
Washington, D.C.

Peter Elias
4 Rings - *The History of Audi (Lit.)*
Large Silver
Stamping Around -
Monthly Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club
Silver-Bronze

Reuben Ramkissoon
Development of the United States Lunar Exploration
and
The Trinidad WWI Red Cross Label that Became
Postage Stamp for a Day
(Ben's above exhibits were in the
Invited Class
and not for competition.)

INDYPEX 2006, July 7-9
Indianapolis, Indiana

Duane Larson
Lundy Island 1900-1969
Vermeil
Lundy: The Alternative Collection, 1853 to 1929
(Cinderella, Fantasy Stamp Designs)
Bronze

BALPEX 2006, September 1-3
Hunt Valley, Maryland

Michael Nethersole
Stamps of St. Vincent, 1861-1937 (QV thru KG5)
Vermeil
India - Stamps of Queen Victoria's Reign
Vermeil

Southeastern Stamp Show 2006, September 22-24
Marietta, Georgia

Raymond Murphy
Jamaican Tourism Foundation, Growth and Impact
Silver, AAPE Award

George Bowman
Victoria Barred Oval Cancels
Court of Honor Exhibit
Railroad Traveling Post Offices in Victoria
Gold; American Philatelic Congress Award for write up

Reuben Ramkissoon
Postal History of Trinidad 1797-1885
Gold, Pre-1900 APS Medal
The Trinidad WWI Red Cross Label that Became a
Postage Stamp (SF)
Gold, Best Single Frame Award,
APS 1900-1940 Medal

ESPAÑA 06, October 7-13,
Malaga, Spain

Reuben Ramkissoon
Development of United States Lunar Exploration
Gold
Paul Larsen
Caroline Islands to 1914:
The Spanish and German Periods
Large Vermeil

Filatellic Fiesta 2006, October 20-22
San Jose, California

Reuben Ramkissoon
Air Letter Sheets (Aerogrammes) of Trinidad and
Tobago 1943-1988
Gold, APS 1940-1980 Medal,
BCPSG Multiframe Medal,
UPSS Marcus White 4th Award
Trinidad Connections of the 1931 Dornier DO-X South
American Flight (SF)
Gold, BCPSG Single Frame Medal
Steve Schumann
New Zealand Postal Stationery 1876-1940
Grand Award, Gold,
UPSS Marcus White Grand Award

President's Message

By Jack Harwood

Happy New Year to each of you! I hope that 2007 will be a successful and prosperous one for you and your loved ones. It certainly promises to be an interesting and exciting one for our group.

Plans for our Annual Meeting in St. Vincent are nearing completion. There is still time for you to make arrangements and join us there. If you expect to make the trip, and did not send in the "Pre-registration form" enclosed in the last issue of this journal, please contact me directly via email or regular mail (addresses inside front cover). We need to have an accurate count of participants. A final registration form will be included with the April *Journal*. You should also have completed airline and hotel reservations. If you have not done so, please do it now. Time is getting short.

We plan to conduct our annual auction during the St. Vincent meeting. Auction manager Howie Austin can still use more lots. This would be a good time to get them together, and sent to him.

Group Trustees have completed the election of officers for the 2007-2008 term. Jerry Hart asked to step down as treasurer, and John Seidl has been elected to replace him. Jerry has served the group with distinction for the past several years, implementing a number of changes and improvements to our financial reporting system. On behalf of the officers, trustees and members of the group, I extend sincere thanks to him for the many hours of hard work he has put into the job. I have enjoyed working with him, and getting to know him personally, and look forward to his active participation in the group in the future.

I hasten to welcome new treasurer John Seidl to the executive committee, and look forward to working with him. Other than the treasurer's position, your officers remain unchanged. For members residing in the United Kingdom, there has been one modest change. Ray Stanton has agreed to accept membership renewal payments in Pounds Sterling. Ray is the current treasurer of our U.K. sister society, the British West Indies Study Circle. So U.K. members may now remit payments for both groups to Ray. The same is true of members in the U.S. who belong to both groups. BCPSG treasurer John Seidl serves as North American Representative for the BWISC, so those who belong to both groups may remit directly to him for both. We hope this arrangement will make currency transfers between countries easier, and simplify pay-

ments by members, too.

Finally, your editor can always use more articles. They may be long or short, on any subject relating to British West Indies philately. Many of you have fascinating hidden gems among your holdings. Why not take a few minutes to write about one or more of them? Your editor will thank you, and the membership will benefit from your input. You may also benefit, as members with similar interests or material are likely to contact you. Hope to see you in St. Vincent!



Advertising Rates for the British Caribbean Philatelic Journal for 2007

The following advertising rates will be effective as of January 1, 2007. All billing for advertising will be done in December preceding the year in which the advertisements will appear. Advertisers will be billed in December 2006 for advertising in the 2007 Journals. Advertising rates are based on (1) single-issue insertion or (2) a four issue (complete year, January through December) rate. The rates effective as of January 2007 are:

Type and size Ad	Cost/Single Insertion	Cost/Year 4 Issues
1/4 page	\$30.00	\$100.00
1/2 page	\$75.00	\$250.00
Full Page	\$100.00	\$350.00
Back Cover	\$125.00	\$400.00
Single-Sided Insert*	\$80.00	\$300.00
Double-Sided Insert*	\$125.00	\$400.00

* The single-sided and double-sided insertions are stand-alone pages inserted into the Journal by the printer. The cost of the insertions also includes the cost of printing.

As can be seen from the above rates, there is a significant reduction in the cost of advertising on an annual basis as opposed to single insertions. The British Caribbean *Journal* is a good place to advertise material from this very popular area of philately. We distribute about 400 journals four times a year and the philatelic interests of our members range from beginning collectors to very advanced collectors and exhibitors. Our journals reach members in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, the Caribbean as well as many other countries of the world. For further information, please contact your Treasurer at jseidl@mindspring.com.

Membership Director's Report — By Tom Giraldi

New Members

All new applicants listed in the last issue of the Journal have been accepted as members of the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group. Congratulations and welcome to the Group.

New Applicants

Robert Anderson, 17 Brookwood Rd., Attleboro, MA 02703 USA. Philatelic interests: Bahamas, Barbados, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, Scandinavia, U.S. plates and singles. Sponsored by Tom Giraldi.

Neil H. Hunter, 1F-293 Perry St., Port Perry, ON L9L 1S6 CANADA. Philatelic interests: Bermuda, BWI, Aero-philately, Canada, Trans-Atlantic (1937-1945). Sponsored by Tom Giraldi.

Change of Address

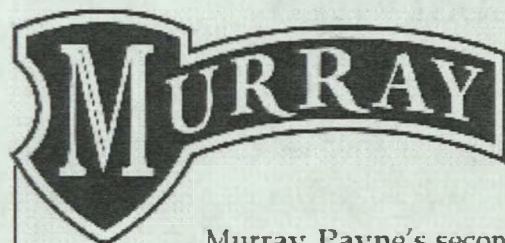
B. Reid Hill, P.O. Box 788, Friday Harbour, WA 98250 USA

Ellsworth B. Mink, 1780 Creekside Dr., Apt. 423, Folsom, CA 95630-3843 USA

John Tyacke, 803-57 Charles St. West, Toronto, ON M5S 2X1 CANADA

Dale Wade, P.O. Box 491, Hayesville, NC 28904-0491 USA

If any member has information, such as a change of address, to be included in the Membership Director's Report, please contact me, either by mail (see inside front cover of the Journal) or by email, at TEG43@aol.com Thank you.



British Commonwealth Auction No. 2

Murray Payne's second Postal Auction (no buyer's premium!) is scheduled to take place in March 2007. Properties so far received include Dr Peter Dawson's unmounted King George VI collection and part of Harold Green's Leeward Islands; the King Edward VII, King George V, and King George VI 10/-s and £1s. Contact us now to ensure you receive a catalogue.



Leeward Is
CW 12aB -
#591 flaw



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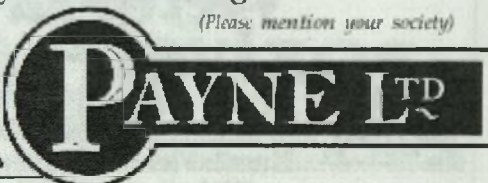
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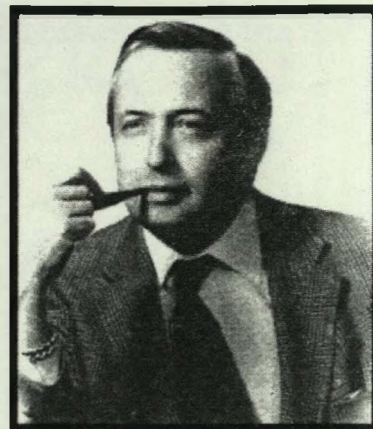
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