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**STUDY CIRCLE**

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JANUARY 27th, 1954

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**BULLETIN No. 148      MARCH 1991**



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*Representative:*

## **OBJECTS**

1. **TO promote interest in and the study of the stamps and postal history of the islands that comprise the British West Indies and in addition BERMUDA, BRITISH GUIANA (GUYANA) and BRITISH HONDURAS (BELIZE).**
2. TO issue a quarterly BULLETIN containing articles, items of interest and other features.
3. TO loan books from the Circle library (**home members only**). Borrowers bear postage both ways.  
**List supplied upon application to Hon. Librarian accompanied by an s.a.e. (9" x 6½") - 2nd Class postage for 150gm rate required.**
4. TO publicise 'wants' and furnish opinions on stamp(s) and/or cover(s) for a nominal fee.
5. TO encourage, assist or sponsor the authorship and publication of definitive handbooks, monographs or other works of reference appropriate to the aim in para 1 above.

## **MEMBERSHIP&SUBSCRIPTION**

**MEMBERSHIP** - Is WORLD WIDE in scope and open to all whether they be new or advanced collectors.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** - The ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION is £6 for members residing in the UK or Europe and £8 for members who reside elsewhere.

**Subscriptions (dues) are payable on 1st January each year and, subject to what is mentioned below, in sterling** (by personal cheque or Standing Order drawn on a U.K. Bank, a Banker's Draft, International Money Order, Postal Order or local currency *notes* - no coins will be accepted - e.g. dollars, marks, francs etc.).

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## IN THIS ISSUE

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Programme	1	British Honduras	13
Stampex comment - The Replies	2	BWI - Imperf.between stamp and margin	14
Stampex Display	3	Jamaica - Free Franks of Jamaica	15
Antigua	9	Book Review	17
Barbados - 50c Cricket stamp	9	Wanted	18
British Guiana - Yarikita Postal Agency	11	Membership Listing	18
British Guiana	13		

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## PROGRAMME

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### 1991

Sat.     27 April 2.15p.m                      AGM and Auction

Venue: The Bonnington Hotel  
London.

### BWISC CONVENTION

Fri.       11 October -                      Venue: The Regent Hotel  
Sat.       12 October -                      Royal Leamington Spa

Further information about the Convention will be in the June Bulletin.

### 1990 ACCOUNTS

The Accounts, due to unforeseen circumstances, will be published in the June Bulletin.

## STAMPEX COMMENT - THE REPLIES

With regard to the letter submitted by Dennis Mitton and printed in the December 1990 Issue (Bulletin No. 147), replies have been received from several members. Enclosed herewith is the complete response from Mike Wilson as well as comments from others.

Dear Editor,

As the Hon. Secretary I am responsible for arranging the programme of meetings for the Study Circle and thus the display by Mr. Jackson at our October meeting. So perhaps you will allow me a little space to reply to Dennis Mitton's letter concerning the display of Dutch West Indies to which he so much objected.

Yes, Dennis, we do have some of the very best collections of BWI material in the world among our members, but getting a member to display and to display something that has not been shown in the immediate past decade is the problem, and will remain so. Nevertheless, I do take your point, and would agree if the display given had been Outer Mongolian pre-adhesive newspaper wrappers, Cuba or some similar subject. However, as those members who were present for Mr. Jackson's display will know there were many items which originated from places which at the time were British before later reverting through the process of war or peace treaty to Holland, had passed through British islands or used the same mail routes as mail from the British islands. Other items had postal markings which were akin to those used in the British islands, particularly from Surinam where there is a close resemblance to British Guiana. When I invited Mr. Jackson I had already seen his display and knew what he could do for us.

No, we are not philatelically bankrupt. Nor, I hope, are the members of the BWISC so philatelically bigoted that they are unable to appreciate an occasional display of material from another Caribbean grouping which overlaps our own and which contained so much that was "British".

Perhaps my mistake was one of labelling. Instead of calling the display simply "The Dutch West Indies" it ought to have been "Another View of the Caribbean"!

I remain unrepentant,

Signed: Michael Wilson.

Other Comments in brief:-

I can see relevance with my own collecting area of Leeward Islands - it gives me a broader outlook with better understanding - John Griffiths

I have discovered the other islands in 'my' Leewards Group of the BWI and have considered myself fortunate in recently finding such postal history material as St. Kitts to Saba and Anguilla to St.Kitts via St.Martin (both French and Dutch) - would be sorry to see us become too insular - Chris May

On the face of it Dennis Mitton's comments are very valid and he has a point - However you try and get a good speaker, it is far more difficult than you would think - A suggestion, how about four or five members showing (not to exhibition standard) sheets from their collections - John Dutton

I was sad to read the comments - The display was well received and enthusiastically applauded by those present - Bob Swarbrick

A strange display for a B.W.I group - A collector, (but not of the BWI).

## **STAMPEX DISPLAY**

At the meeting in London on Wednesday 1 7th.October last at Autumn Stampex members and friends gathered in the Floral Room 'A' of the Royal Horticultural Hall to listen to a talk given by Mr. John Jackson entitled "The Dutch West Indies".

Mr. Jackson commenced by saying that he had a feeling of trepidation in accepting the kind invitation to display his Dutch West Indies to the BWISC. This was largely because he realised that the Study Circle was solely concerned with the British areas of the West Indies and not with the foreign territories. He said that he was attempting to present a display which would have some relevance, albeit perhaps limited, to any West Indies collector and at the same time show some of the interest available outside the British territories, as most of the shipping services which carried Dutch mail also carried mail from many of the British Islands.

The Dutch Colonies in the West Indies comprised two territories, the island colony of Curacao (later known as the Netherland Antilles) and consisting of the islands of Curacao, Aruba and Bonaire, off the north coast of Venezuela, and the islands of Saba, St. Eustatius and the southern half of the island of St. Martin situated about 500 miles to the north, clustered near the British island of St. Kitts. The second Colony is the mainland territory of Suriname, sandwiched between British and French Guiana.

The Postal History of the two Colonies before the Napoleonic Wars is largely tied up with the Geotroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie, a chartered trading company. During the 18th. Century there was no organised mail service, letters being carried by the GWC or any suitable ship. The earliest postal markings were not in fact applied in the West Indies but at the office of the GWC in Amsterdam where mail was processed for distribution (fig.1).

The indicated postage of 6 stuyvers was for the stretch between the port of Texel, where the ships arrived, and Amsterdam. The postage from the West Indies to Texel was probably free. Four types of the handstamp exist, two types 15mm diameter and two types 20mm in diameter. They are known on about three covers from Suriname and perhaps fifteen from Curacao in private collections.

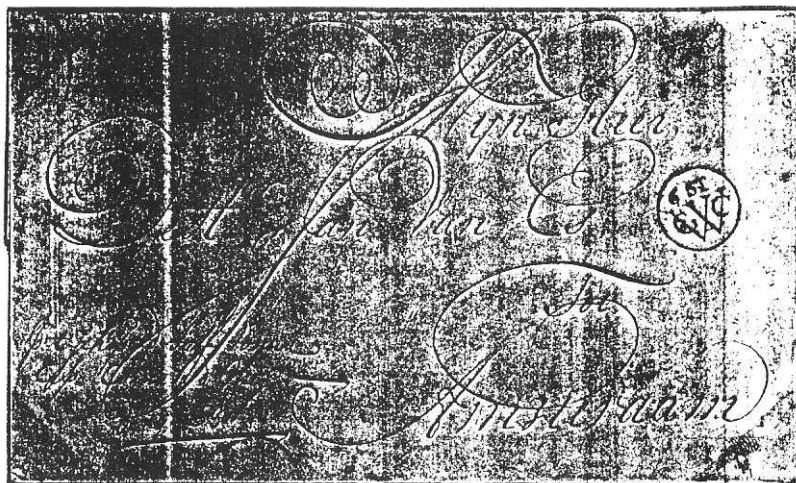


Fig. 1

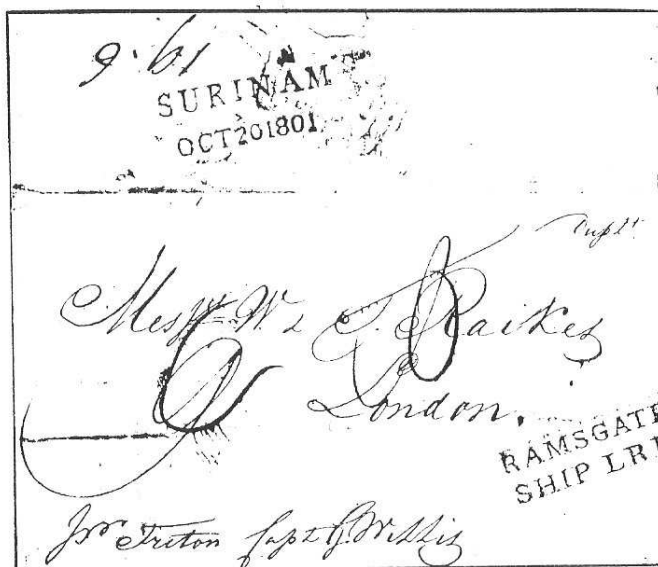


Fig. 2

In 1795 Holland was occupied by Napoleon which meant war with England and the loss of her Colonies. The British occupied both the West Indian Colonies and this resulted in their first postal markings. Figure 2 illustrates the two line SURINAM/date handstamp used on 20 October 1801. Until recently only two examples of this marking were known, dated 1805 and 1807. However a few years ago two more examples appeared both dated 20 October 1801 and being the original and duplicate of the same letter sent by different ships. A common practice during this period when commerce was subject to the depredations of French Privateers. These two examples were the first known use during the first period of British Occupation as Suriname was handed back to the Dutch in 1802 following the Treaty of Amiens, and recaptured again in 1804.

In Curacao the merchants organised a sailing schooner to connect with the packet boats at Barbados. From 1808 the most attractive intaglio handstamp as shown on figure 3 was used. It is shown on a consignees letter, about 8 examples are recorded. A second type is known with a lower case "e" in "OFFICE". The sole known example was sold in the Robson Lowe "Yates" Auction in July 1940, its present whereabouts is unknown.

In 1810 a direct packet service was started from Suriname to Falmouth, the British Post Office using the well known fleuron datestamp, recorded from 1812 to 1816. A similar service operated from Curacao between 1811 and 1815 also using the fleuron. St. Martin was captured on 16th. February 1810 and a British Post Office was opened to serve the three occupied Dutch Windward Islands. A feeder line from St.Kitts incorporated them in the British Packet System. The fleuron datestamp inscribed "ST MARTINS" (fig.4) is probably one of the scarcest British P.O. markings - two examples are recorded in private collections and a third is illustrated in "The Plantation Papers".

Following the defeat of the French, Suriname and Curacao were returned to the Dutch, postal connections were initially very poor, the Dutch organised a regular service to Curacao between 1825 and 1834. However, it is interesting to note that most mail between Holland and the Colonies from 1842 to 1885 was carried under contract by the British Royal Mail Steam Packet Company - a company which is well known to all BWI Postal Historians. Pre-stamp letters usually bear the annotation "via Southampton" or "per W Indian Mail Steamer" (figs.5 & 6) or something similar.

The Dutch finally managed to organise their own service in 1884 following the foundation of KWIM in 1882. Figure 7 shows a Suriname formula postcard carried on the first return trip of the Prins Maurits. Readers will note the routing handstamp applied to this card - "WEST INDIE/ZEEPOST". These markings are a feature of Dutch mail and provide a study in themselves - they indicate the route to be taken and indicate whether the mail was to be carried by Dutch, British or French services. The direct route by Dutch ships of the KWIM being cheaper.



Fig. 3

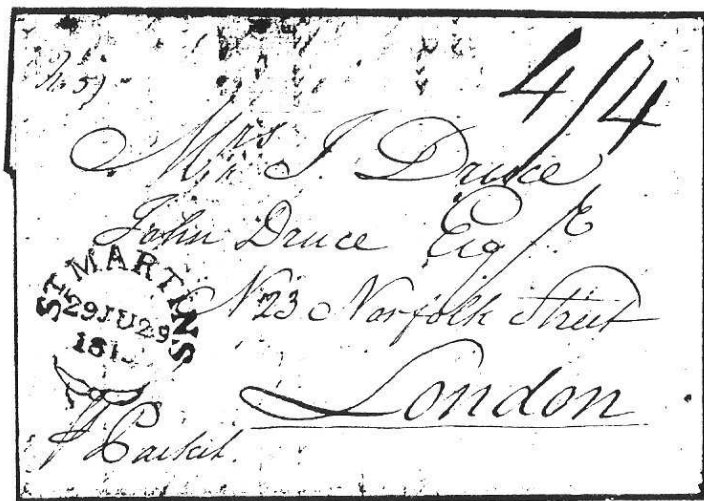


Fig. 4



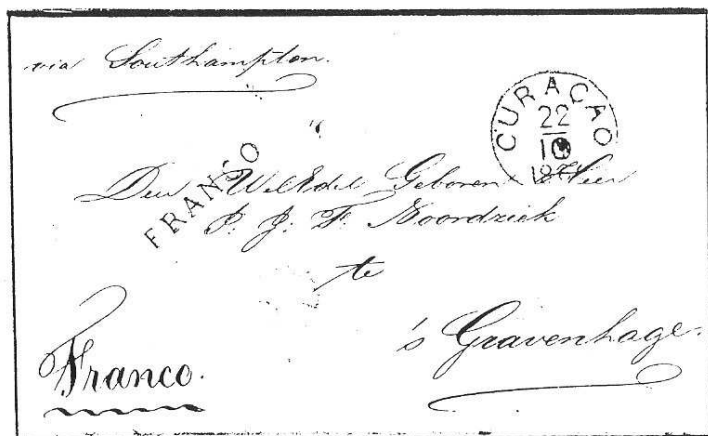
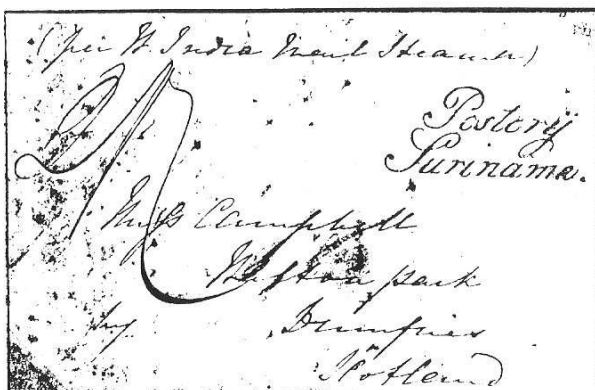


Fig. 8

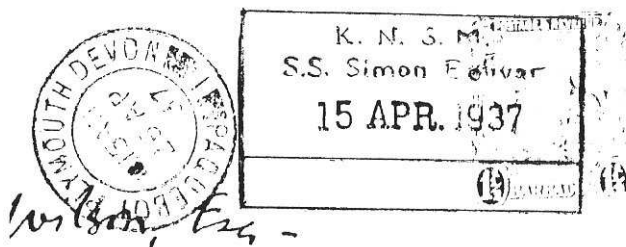
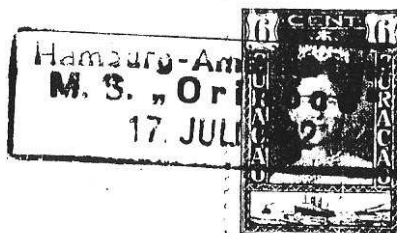


Fig. 9



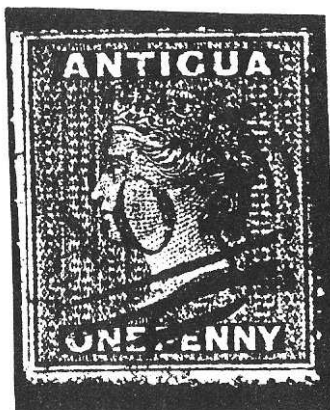
In 1912 the KWIM was merged with the KNSM - all its boats having postal agents onboard authorised to cancel mail, usually with a large boxed handstamp. These provide a field for an extensive study as the line operated a large number of boats covering many ports, including many in the BWI (fig.8). This was the main carrier of mail from Holland until World War II.

Apart from the Companies mentioned above the German HAPAG line maintained a service with Curacao from 1871 (fig.9). The Red "D" Line from New York to Venezuela called at Curacao from 1881 until it was taken over by the Grace Line in 1937 and was a major carrier of mail to and from North America. In addition there were a number of other services available and interested collectors are recommended to the two excellent books, "A Postal History of Curacao" by F.W. Julsen and A.M. Benders and "Suriname - A Postal History 1700-1956" by Dr.J.D. Riddell.

Mr. Jackson concluded his display by saying that he hoped that readers had found the display of some interest as it had by necessity only dealt with aspects of a very large subject. Hopefully diehard BWI collectors will perhaps have a small appreciation of where their collecting paths cross with their "foreign" brethren!

The vote of thanks for this most enjoyable display was then given by Mr. Bob Swarbrick and resulted in enthusiastic applause from all of those present.

## ANTIGUA



The illustrated stamp clearly shows rouletting on one side. I do not see how this could have been faked as the projections clearly show it to be torn off. I should like to hear from anyone on how it could have come about.

John Challis

## BARBADOS

### 50c Cricket Stamp of 1988

I must thank Brian Reeve, B. Alan Ltd. of 27 Maiden Lane, London for letting me print extracts about the production of this stamp from his company's Variety Club News Sheet.

The Herman C. Griffith stamp was issued thirty-five days after the rest of the set because, just prior to the day of issue it was discovered that the wrong portrait had been included on the stamp.

Mr. Reeve, along with the co-operation and blessing of CAPHCO and the assistance of Mr. Niles, Assistant Post Master General to the Barbados Post Office was able to piece together the reasons behind the delay in issue.

The Caribbean Cricketer's issue spanned three countries - Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica. Common to all the designs was the bat, stumps and ball which formed the border. Featuring on the Barbados 50c stamp was the Buckle Trophy which is one of the oldest and most interesting of cricketing antiques. Found in the United Kingdom, the owner Clive Williams, put it up as a

challenge trophy to be played for in the West Indies. The buckle portrays a slave playing cricket in Barbados. The fact that the batsman is in Barbados has been proved by the identification of the background scenery.



The Wrong Cricketer

Lawson Bartlett

Normal

Herman C. Griffith

When the basic artwork was supplied to Walsall Security Printers they were also supplied with a selection of photographs of players to be illustrated, but as no suitable photograph existed of Griffith, a team photograph was supplied with instructions written on the back that he was third from the left.

Unfortunately as this was written on the back, someone got their left's and right's mixed up and the photograph of a player by the name of Lawson Bartlett was used. No one along the checking line spotted the mistake and so the production of the stamp was completed.

On the day prior to the issue, the young son of Herman C. Griffith was given a sneak preview of his father's stamp. He quickly spotted the error at which the Barbados Post Office issued instructions to withdraw the 50c stamp. CAPHCO were telexed in time to prevent them releasing any of the errors through their agencies and the printers were instructed to immediately rectify the fault and produce a corrected version as quickly as possible.

Everything had been covered and an embarrassing mistake had been avoided, or so everyone thought. But no-one had told the Parcels Counter at Bridgetown Post Office and so a small quantity were legitimately sold over the Post Office Counter, thus making this stamp fully worthy of catalogue status as a genuinely issued postage stamp.

Denis Charlesworth

Advert

MURRAY PAYNE LTD

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WILLIAD S. ALLMAN

Advert

PETER SINGER



# BRITISH GUIANA

## YARIKITA Postal Agency

Some postal markings are indeed rarer than cotton-reels. So said Townsend and Howe, and one such is the circular datestamp for YARIKITA (type 21e) classified 'extremely rare', with only one strike recorded at the time they wrote (1970).

YARIKITA was one of two offices on the Amacura river, which forms the boundary with Venezuela in the remote North West district, opened briefly for miners in the area. It was served by boats plying between the mines and Morowhanna on the coast, terminus of the North West Steamer. Although its precise location is not recorded, it was probably at the confluence with the Yarikita River, principal tributary of the Amacura on the British Guiana side.

Figure 1 is a contemporary postcard showing gold-diggers' boats moored at Rockstone; although these were photographed on the Upper Essequibo, they are probably quite similar to those plying the Amacura and Yarikita rivers. With their stout hardwood hulls, eight to ten thwarts and rudimentary shelter amidships or aft, they were designed for teams of men to negotiate formidable rapids on the torrents of British Guiana, carrying mails and supplies between the coastal towns and the remote settlements of the interior.

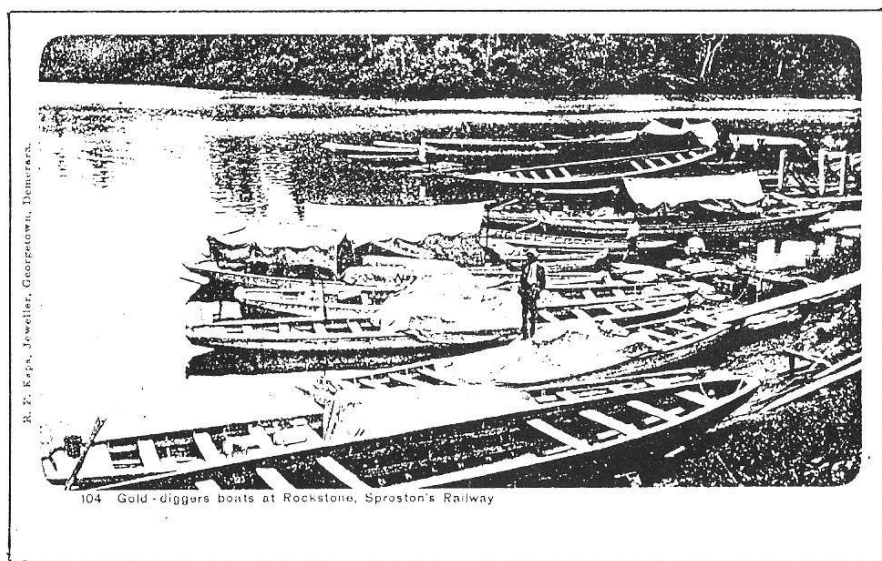


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Townsend and Howe record that Yarikita office was known to be open only for a little over four months in 1919, from 15th February to 30th June; oddly, their only recorded strike is for 20th October 1922, which may indicate two periods of opening.

When a large parcel of Montgomery Ward covers came on to the London market in 1983, it yielded several little excitements, and among the best was a Yarikita cover (figure 2) which is likely to be unique. It is a two cent stationery envelope (type 2c) with an additional War Tax 2 cents, crisply struck twice with the Yarikita cds dated 21st June 1919 - within the recorded period of opening - and backstamped in transit through Georgetown 6.30pm 26th June.

Now, a third example has turned up, seven years later in a general collection; it is on a loose stamp and is dated 4th October 1919, extending that 'first' period of opening.

Can anyone record another example of the Yarikita cds, or indeed identify the whereabouts of Howe's example of 20th October 1922? Have we any evidence to show whether this remote and ephemeral office was opened for longer or more than once?

Michael Medicott

## BRITISH GUIANA

Townsend and Howe "The Postage Stamps and Postal History" note on pages 340 and 341 the illustration and description of the Demerara "no stops" two circle datestamp with month in two letters, giving period of use as 1866 to 1872.

I have this (fig.19) on an incoming cover from Liverpool (by French ship via St. Nazaire, Martinique and thence by Ligne C) dated NO 26 67.

I have it also on 2 cents orange dated SP 6 67 and on 24 cents, setting 3, (perf.12½) dated OC 27 67 and (two copies) dated JA 7 68. Perhaps other dates are known as cancellations?

A more general question is why Georgetown (Demerara) oscillated between three and two letter months in datestamps. T & H in notes on the "A03" duplex and on datestamps (fig.9-11 and fig.12-17) indicate these differences, but do not explain the "why" or the casual change from month before day to day before month. Georgetown in its American type (fig.20) reverts to three letter month before day numeral.

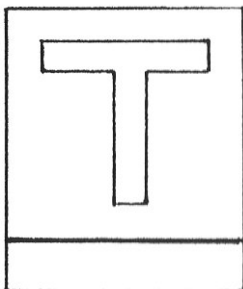
For the record my cover noted at foot of page 228 of T & H has Georgetown (American type) JAN 5, 1880 contrasting with DEMERARI/PAQ.FR.C No1 dated 5 JANV 80. The 8 cent rose stamp is cancelled by cut "cork". It is addressed to London (Paid 26 JA in red) not Scotland.

Did this cover travel by Ligne A to St. Nazaire. There are no backstamps to assist.

Peter Jaffé

## BRITISH HONDURAS

Some years ago, here in Hong Kong, I bought a single copy of a used British Honduras 4d mauve (perf.14), issued in either 1879 or 1882 and cancelled with an "O" obliterator. What puzzles me is the watermark.



The watermark, shown to the left, appears to be a large letter T underlined with a straight line that goes right across the width of the stamp. I have not been able to find any reference to such a watermark and I should be most obliged if anyone could tell me how it came about.

Chris Wilson

# BWI GENERAL

## Imperf between stamp and margin.

Stanley Gibbons Part 1 catalogue lists "imperf. between" varieties, i.e. the omission of a vertical or horizontal line of perforations in the middle of the sheet, but not those at the edge of the sheet which result in "imperf. between stamp and margin" varieties. One can speculate about the reasons for this distinction - possible confusion with stamps which were regularly produced with wing margins, for example - but there is no evidence that "imperf. between" are more common than "imperf. between stamp and margin", quite the reverse in the case of the BWI.

It is also debatable whether a missing row (or column) of perforations in the middle of the sheet is more significant than one at the edge. In the case of a line perforation, I would suggest not. For a comb perforation, one could perhaps question the importance of a one stamp shift in the alignment, causing a double row of perforations in the opposite margin. Nonetheless, such an occurrence should be picked up by the quality controllers (as no doubt many were, sadly for collectors).

Notwithstanding Gibbons policy, I would suggest that varieties imperf. between stamp and margin are eminently collectible. They are certainly elusive and expensive to acquire. I have attempted to draw up a checklist of those items recorded from the countries covered by the Study Circle, up to and including the reign of George VI. I would welcome additions to the list or supplementary information.

Antigua	1863	1d rosy mauve	(top margin)
Barbados	1861-7	½d green/deep green	(left margin)
Barbados	1906	½d olive blossom	(top margin)
Barbados	1906	1d olive blossom	(bottom margin) in full sheet
Bermuda	1894	1/- green	(right margin)
Dominica	1879	4d blue	(right margin)
Dominica	1938	2½d purple and blue	(bottom margin)
Jamaica	1921-9	2/- light blue and brown	(bottom margin)
St. Lucia	1949	6c orange	(left margin)
St. Vincent	1863	1d rose red perf.11-12½	(bottom margin)
St. Vincent	1890	2½d/4d chocolate	(right margin)
Virgin Islands	1899	1/2d green	(left margin)
Virgin Islands	1899	1d red	(right margin)
Virgin Islands	1899	2½d ultramarine	(left margin)

Charles Freeland

# JAMAICA

## Free Franks of Jamaica

A word of warning - don't even consider collecting them - they are obsessional!

Way back in 1961 a member from Texas, Al Johnson, wrote a brief article on these fascinating marks in the BCPSG Journal. I say brief, for although it ran to six pages, it hardly scratched the surface! Even subsequent updates hardly did the subject justice.

In my quest for information, I had access to the Library at the Commonwealth Society, in particular to copies of the "Handbook of Jamaica" that fount of all knowledge in matters philatelic. This marvellous book was published annually in Jamaica and was constantly up-dated.

Having examined and photocopied various years, I began to realise what a vast, but fascinating subject these Free Franks are.

Briefly, it seems that the right to allow mail to pass, without charge, within the island's shores was vested in the Governor.



(c.1847)

Over the years, throughout the British Postal System, certain categories of mail were handled without charge. This system was in use before the Island took over the Postal Service In 1860 and it was carried on and extended in the years that followed. This privilege was in fact divided into several categories.

Thus 'Officials and Public Functionaries' in other words - the Governor, Judges, Tax Authorities and similar persons had the right to send and receive mail free of charge. Lesser dignitaries and Government Departments could send, but not receive, mail without charge.

A third category existed - Persons, Societies or Groups who applied to the Governor for the privilege of Free Postage for a limited period - in fact a form of subsidy. As in many subjects, the Victorians had a great respect for order and

honesty, and rather than handing out sums of cash to the applicants they permitted mail to pass without payment for a limited period of time.

Thus, the lists were therefore ever changing. Sometimes longer, sometimes shorter, depending possibly on some officials decision to have a purge!

There are some famous examples which command high prices in an auction - the Red Cross label of 1917, signed by Ashenhiem and War Contingent Fund are keenly sought.

However there remains a large number of similar organizations who had this privilege which as yet remain to be discovered. Such as the 'Inspector of the Hookworm Campaign' or 'Officer in Charge of Low Temperature and Marketing Experimental Station' (with titles like these they deserved free postage) or 'Coleyville Wireless Station' or 'Protector of Immigrants'.

We read that Mrs. Briscoe of Montpelier was authorised to send packets of wool to be knitted into socks for troops in 1919 and also to receive back - post free - the finished article. Just what St. Faith's Guild actually did will probably remain a mystery - but anybody seeing Ruth Smythe's signature on the envelope has struck pay-dirt!

Believe it or not, in 1937 seventy two departments could send and receive mail post free and fifty five might send but not receive correspondence. The wonder is how the post office survived at all! It became obvious from reading these lists that when the roll became too long it was reviewed and many groups were dropped. From that it will be obvious that some departments privilege had a very short life.

Thus the 'Director of Kingston Athenaeum' the theatre in the Capital only had the privilege for a very short time, possibly in the guise of a donation for a specific reason.

These marks, similar in all respects to the T.R.D's, are double lined ovals, with the description of the recipient around the top and the word FREE in the centre. Obviously variations exist in style.



These marks were phased out gradually in the post-war period, being replaced by initially the Crown in a circle and latterly a Pineapple used with the words

Official Paid. In this form specially printed envelopes were used and far from any decline in usage, quite the reverse is the case. Some splendid titles exist - the 'Brotherhood of Port Royal' is one such case.

Should enough members be interested in a listing and supply examples from their own collections, we could publish a more accurate listing - but as I said at the beginning - beware, they are addictive!

Bob Swarbrick

## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **THE "TOWN" CANCELS OF BRITISH HONDURAS, 1880-1973 by Edward F. ADDISS.**

Published by the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group (1990)

Priced at \$15.50, (USA printed matter postpaid). Overseas postage rates are US\$1.50 extra (surface) or \$4.50 (air mail).

Orders may be sent to the following addresses with full remittances to cover the cost of the Monograph and return postage.

In the UK: R.V. Swarbrick,  
In the USA: M.W. Swetland,

This Monograph gives much useful information into the early history of the region as well as details of the early posts and the transporting of the mails.

The inclusion of a map showing the location of the various post offices between 1862 and 1973 will be most helpful to all postmark collectors.

The postmarks are divided into various groups for easy reference. Each group giving a complete list of the types known, as well as the size and where used. A list of post offices (in alphabetical order) gives the type of mark recorded for that office as well as the earliest and latest recorded dates of use. It also gives much useful information regarding the history of the office.

Postal rates up to 1931, town populations and postal routes in 1921 as well as an extract from the 1921 Report on the General Post Office by the Colonial Postmaster are included at the end of the book.

This book in total is most enjoyable to read and will be of great importance to all who collect this region of the Caribbean. The introduction refers to the fact that this monograph is the first instalment of an ongoing project devoted to the postal history of British Honduras, I look forward to reading the future instalments when they come out.

G.J.

## WANTED

Examples of U.S. ships on Shake-down cruises to Jamaica, preferably with details of vessels. Buy or exchange - all letters answered.

Bob Swarbrick,

## MEMBERSHIP LISTING

### New Members

Longley, P.

Nicholson, Martin P.      )

Harvey, M.R.               .

### Special Interests

### Address Changes

Boylan, R.J.

Higgs, R.

MacKay, A.J.

Webster, M.

### RESIGNED

Edmondson, R.

Edwards, J.L

Advert

CHRIS RAINEY



Advert

GEOF MILSON

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ARGYLL ETKIN LTD

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