

Barbados 1855 4d by Fitz Roett



Figure 6

Cover to the U.S. dated 10 February 1859 and bearing
(1d.) Deep Blue, SG 10 (Sc 6) and (4d.) Brownish-red.
1d. Inland rate + 4d. Packet charge to St. Thomas pre-paid.
Black '10': 10¢. U.S. packet charge due.

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IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
Programme Of Society Events	
Antigua - General Post Office	Michael Rego 4
Antigua - QV keyplate sloping 2 Update	Charles Freeland 5
Antigua - The Year Of The Great Flood - 1969	D. C. Ford 7
Barbados – The 1855 (4d) Stamp	Fitz Roett 10
Cayman Islands - The King Edward VII Plate 2	James Podger and Kevin Darcy 16
Postage Revenue 1d & 6d Denominations.	
Montserrat - War Stamp 1½d Black And Orange. SG 62	John Davis 26
St Lucia - 1892 Tax Marking	Alister Kinnon 26
St Vincent - Postmark Forgery?	John Cowell 27
Trinidad - 21mm Circular Datestamp (Proud Type D15)	Michael Medlicott 27
Virgin Islands - The William Frazer Collection	Simon Goldblatt 29
Auction Update	Charles Freeland 32
Membership & Library	35

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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

	Page		Page
BWISC Publications	5	BWISC Publications	27
Argyll Etkin	6	Murray Payne	28
Peter Singer	6	Willard S Allman	28
Pennymead Auctions	8	BCPSG	33
Bonhams	9	Bridger & Kay Guernsey	34
Grosvenor Auctions	15	Frederick P. Schmitt	34
Spink	18/19	Stamp Insurance Services	34
Stanley Gibbons	25	Harmers	Back Cover

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ANTIGUA

GENERAL POST OFFICE

By MICHAEL REGO



Photo]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, ANTIGUA.

[José Anjo.

G.P.O. The picture taken by Jose Anjo a local photographer, shows the General Post Office and postmen of St.John's, circa 1922. There appears to be two rankings of postmen, with most having the white cork-hats dating back to Victorian times, while two men carry a small peaked black cap. Over the main door is a large sign 'General Post Office' facing the High Street. At this time St.John's General Post Office was situated on the left-hand side of High Street looking inland, not too far from where the street terminated near the main landing wharf. St.John's was the only part of the island where postman delivered letters door-to-door, the other people of the island had to collect their mail from the nearest village post office.

The building is connected by telephone and telegraph, and is typical of many in St.John's at this period, (some still survive), but is distinctively recognisable from the roof having three peaks, the first being smaller than the other two.

At this time, 1922, the GPO was responsible not only for St.John's, and Barbuda, but 11 sub-offices. The rental of a Private Letter Box at the GPO, depending on size, was rated at 5s to 10s a year. The letter-post limits were governed by size and were 2 feet in length by 1 foot in width or depth. The posting of any letter for abroad containing coins was prohibited, and if discovered, after acceptance, would either be compulsorily registered at double the registration fee or returned to the sender.

Postal Rates in 1922. The letter rate within the Leeward Islands was 1d for the first ounce then ½d for every additional ounce. Letters to the UK, British Empire and the United States, including the US Virgin Islands and Porto Rico, was 2d for the first ounce, then 1½d for each additional oz or fraction thereof. All other foreign countries were 3d for the first ounce, then 1½d for each additional oz or fraction thereof. Postcards were rated at 1½d single, 3d reply card. Book postage included not only books, but newspapers and any printed matter charged at ½d for every 2 ounces or fraction thereof. The book-post was governed by size similar to that of the letter post for British countries with a weight limit of 5 lbs, but for foreign countries it was not to exceed 18 inches in

length and 4lbs in weight. All overseas parcels were subject to Customs regulations. If a newspaper within the colony (Leeward Islands) was published it would be rated at ¼d for 4 ounces. Registration fee could be applied to all postal matter except parcels, unless destined to the US, the rate being 3d, for advice of delivery 3d, the limit of compensation was £2.

Parcel-Post was limited in size, length, breadth, depth to 3½ feet and weight to 11 lbs. Rates to Leeward Islands colonies were 6d to 3 lbs, 1s 0d to 7 lbs, 1s 6d to 11 lbs. And to the UK and its possessions 2s to 3 lbs, 3s 9d to 7 lbs, 5s 0d to 11 lbs, and to the US at 6d per lb.

Overseas Mail. British and foreign mails were conveyed by steamers of the Royal Mail Line (Canada-West Indies) and the Quebec Steamship Company (New York-West Indies). These two steamship services provided a West Indies inter-island mail connection (via Canada) or (via New York), for onward European mail transmission.

ANTIGUA

QV KEYPLATE SLOPING 2 UPDATE

BY CHARLES FREELAND

My article in the March bulletin was shortly followed by a discovery that confirmed my beliefs. This was a left hand pane of the 1887 2 1/2d ultramarine that shows a different flaw state from the two left hand panes in the Swetland and Pearse collections. On my pane, pos 3/1 shows the large 2 sloping (Gibbons type 3), compared with the normal 2s on the other two panes. The other constant flaws, the second sloping 2 on 7/1 as well as the more minor flaws on 5/1, 6/3 and 10/4 that I mentioned in my earlier article are the same as the other panes.

The evidence confirms that we have two flaw states signifying damage to pos 3/1 of the plate during one of the printing runs that was imperfectly repaired. What is intriguing is to consider that as the same duty plate was used for both right and left panes, we should be able to find a right hand pane with a normal 2 in pos 3/3.....please check your holdings.

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ANTIGUA

THE YEAR OF THE GREAT FLOOD - 1969

By D. C. FORD

Antigua was for many years an island whose main agricultural interest was the production of sugar. Due to a natural change in climate or wind, the average rainfall fell from some 40 inches to less than 10 inches, which made the cultivation of sugar impossible, or uneconomic.

In 1969 there was a change in the weather pattern. In April/May there was one night in particular when it rained, and rained, and rained. I was there employed in a bank.

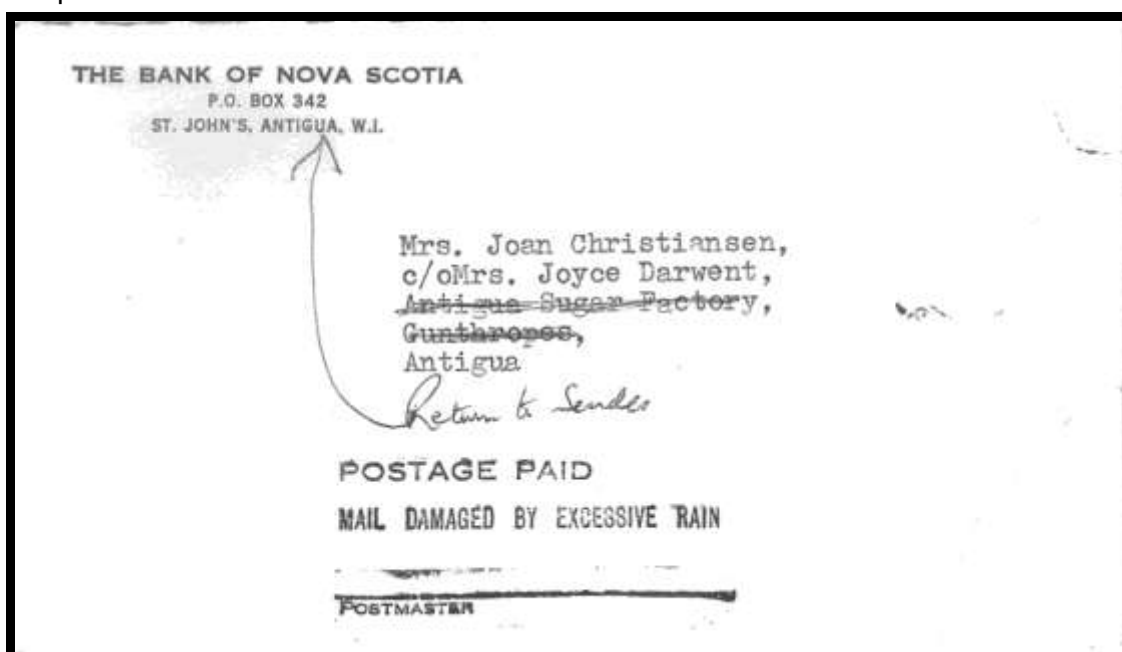
On the night in question I was at a party in a converted sugarmill house, which was conical in shape with living accommodation built some 20 feet above the ground, with glazed-in views all round. The large room was like a doughnut sitting on a cone. After some time had passed, eating and drinking, a storm began to dominate the pleasant proceedings, of such ferocity that a scene from Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* was the only comparison. It appeared to be all round the building.

I struggled to get home in a small car, and was fortunate to do so without incident. Another friend who lived on a small incline reported that during the storm there was at least 18 inches of water on a 30 degree slope, on the road outside his home.

The morning brought a report in the local radio and press that some 12.5 inches of rain had fallen in the night. Storm drains in excess of 20 feet deep were overflowing with water. An earth dam constructed to retain water in the event of rain was moved some 300 feet by the power of the water. (At the month's end the total rain for the month was given as 29.5 inches.)

In the banking world we gradually began to receive complaints from our overseas correspondents that they were not receiving correspondence or drafts in settlement that had been expected. After several enquiries at the main post office in St. John's, the Postmaster finally admitted that a quantity of mail had been damaged by water as a result of the excessive rain, which had seeped into the premises. It was then revealed that the mail was usually sorted on the floor, had been left there overnight and when the ground floor was flooded, the mail was not then in a fit state to be forwarded.

I illustrate a copy of the only cover which became available to me at this time, which bears the handstamp: POSTAGE PAID / MAIL DAMAGED BY EXCESSIVE RAIN / POSTMASTER



As is to be expected the space for the signature had been left blank. Whilst not exactly philatelic, the very popular book 'Don't Stop The Carnival' by Herman Wouk was on sale at the time and recorded in part similar scenes to those experienced in Antigua, in particular, where the rain fell offshore into the sea for no apparent reason. After the Great Flood this event continued regularly and until I left the island there was no recurrence of the storm and the dry semi-drought conditions continued.

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BARBADOS

THE 1855 (4d) STAMP

BY FITZ ROETT

INTRODUCTION

In 1688, the British Mail Packet service was extended to overseas ports and an Agency is stated to have been opened about this date in Bridgetown. The Agency was, in effect, a sub-office of the General Post Office, London and was operated by a Packet Agent and a Deputy Postmaster. This situation continued for some 163 years.

The local Post Office Act was passed in 1851, and the island assumed responsibility for the inland mails. A scheme was then developed for the operation of the inland Post Office. It was not, however, until April 1852 that the first postage stamps were issued.

With the passing of the 1851 Act, the Postmaster General in London naturally assumed that there would be no further need of the Packet Agency. However, this was not the case, and after much bickering the Inland Post Office and the Imperial Packet Agency were amalgamated by an Act passed in 1854.

At this time, the inter-colonial packet letter rate, exclusive of the inland rate, was 4d per ½oz. The Inland Postmaster, therefore, ordered a supply of new (4d) stamps for the optional pre-payment of postage on inter-colonial packet mail.

REQUISITION

The first requisition for red stamps was sent on 11 November 1854 ⁽¹⁾. Accordingly, the order for 50,000 stamps was invoiced on 28 December 1854. The undenominated plate, comprised of 110 subjects arranged in 11 horizontal rows of 10 stamps, was used to print the new value. Bayley ⁽²⁾ states that the new value, the (4d) Brownish red, SG 5 (Sc 4), was probably put on sale immediately after its arrival in the island, early in 1855. According to Kenton and Parsons ⁽³⁾ the stamps would have left on the 'La Plata' departing Southampton on 2 January 1855 and arriving at St. Thomas on 17 January. The stamps would have then been transferred to the 'Derwent' which departed St. Thomas on 18th January, arriving in Barbados on 21 January 1855.

UNUSED

In unused condition, these stamps were virtually unknown until the Perkins Bacon remainders came on the market towards the end of the nineteenth century. From the printing records ⁽⁴⁾, it can be noted that some 20 extra sheets were printed. These additional sheets were usually called "waste or allowance" and should have been destroyed. However, some or all eventually found their way on to the market. Bayley ⁽²⁾, in quoting the late Charles J. Phillips, estimated that between 200 and 1,000 stamps of these imperforate stamps, mostly printed on blue paper, have survived. However, no mention is made of the Crown Agents find of 1896.

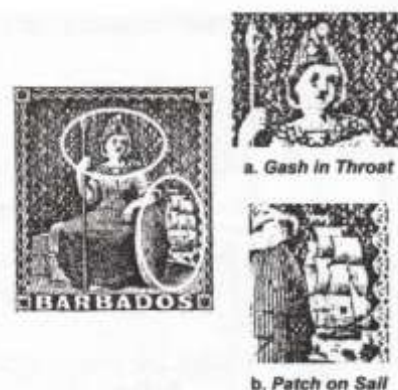
It is, perhaps, from this source that the "other varieties have come to light, some of which have been given catalogue status, while others have not." (Bayley Pg. 207).

MULTIPLES

The largest block of these stamps that we have been able to trace is the one illustrated in the Bayley ⁽²⁾ handbook. This is a lovely block of 25 from the Snowden, ⁽⁵⁾ Bailey ⁽⁶⁾ and Hurlock ⁽⁷⁾ collections. Next is the Burrus ⁽⁸⁾ block of 10 (5 x 2) and the two blocks of 9, the first ex Charlton Henry ⁽⁹⁾, Amundsen ⁽¹⁰⁾, and the second ex Messenger ⁽¹¹⁾, Hackmey ⁽¹⁶⁾ and de Silva ⁽¹⁸⁾. The other blocks larger than four we have noted are those of 8 (2x 4) from the Praportchetovitch ⁽¹⁹⁾ collection, 6 (3 x 2) from the Benwell ⁽¹²⁾ collection and the one illustrated in Figure 1.

PLATE VARIETIES

The two varieties recorded on this plate are: (a) Patch on Sail (Position 104) and (b) Gash in Throat (Position 109). Variety (a) appears on the Messenger block cited above, and in Figure 2, while Variety (b) is shown in Figure 3. The illustrations of the flaws are reproduced from an earlier article in the British Caribbean Philatelic Journal (BCPJ) ⁽¹³⁾



USED

The used examples normally encountered bear the G.P.O. numeral # 1 cancel. However, in all probability supplies of the stamp were sent to the other parish post offices. Their use from these offices appears to have been very limited, as any examples bearing the parish Type C 1 cancel ⁽¹⁴⁾ are rare. To date, we have noted stamps cancelled from only the following parishes: #3 (St. Philip), #5 (St. John), #6 (St. Joseph), # 7 (St. James) and # 10 (St. Peter). Of these, perhaps two examples are known from St. James, two from St. John and the others are all solitary examples. The St. Peter example is shown in Figure 4. In an effort to expand the listing of the parish cancels, we invite feedback from readers who may have hitherto unrecorded numbers in their collections.

MULTIPLES

Used pairs are exceedingly rare (see below) and we have, so far, not recorded a strip or block. Once again we invite feedback from readers.

WHITE PAPER VARIETY

In the Bayley ⁽²⁾ handbook on Pg. 28, attention is drawn to the existence of the (4d) printed on white paper. The single known used copy (Ex Snowden ⁽⁵⁾, Sir James Marshall ⁽¹⁷⁾ and Bailey ⁽⁶⁾ and which carries an RPS certificate) is illustrated.

BISECTED

Also on Pg. 16, Bayley draws notice to the bisected (4d) on fragment, presumably used as a 2d value. Why this item should exist is anyone's guess, since there is no recorded information pertaining to a shortage of 1d stamps between 1855 and 1861, when the imperforate (4d) was in use. Bayley states simply "..... status is uncertain."

COVERS

If the stamp, as we assume, was issued in January, 1855, it is somewhat surprising to learn that the earliest known date of use is 11 August 1856. This famous cover is shown in Figure 5. Subsequent O.H.M.S. covers recorded for Barbados, indicate that the inland (1d) in postage was not applied to official mail. Thus, the (4d) stamp pre-paid the inter-island packet charges. This is at variance with the Amundsen ⁽¹⁰⁾ catalogue description, wherein it is stated: 'Lot 19 the use of the 4d stamp, it also exemplifies the use of this stamp to pre-pay the quadruple rate of Island postage'. We discussed the manuscript notations with the late Jack Arnell who was convinced that they are some sort of accounting markings. Two other (4d) covers without an additional stamp have been recorded by us. Firstly, Lot 40 in the Hart ⁽¹⁵⁾ sale shows only a 4d stamp -- clearly a (1d) stamp, to pre-pay the inland postage is missing from the cover. The other cover is from the well-known 'Beckles' correspondence to Demerara (see below) dated 1861 and also lacks a (1d) stamp. This cover is new to us, but is currently for sale in a London auction without the correct annotation i.e. stating a stamp is missing!

Despite the fact that only 50,000 were issued, the usage of the stamp continued for a further five years. Our latest recorded use on cover is dated 9 August. 1861. The next consignment of (4d) stamps was not invoiced until 26 September 1861. This is the Rough Perf. 14 to 16 Dull rose-red stamp, SG 25 (Sc 17).

Usage of the (4d) can be divided into two distinct groups:

Type (i) Optional and, later, compulsory pre-payment of postage on inter-colonial packet mail, and

Type (ii) Compulsory pre-payment of packet charges on mail to the U.S. via St. Thomas and / or Havana.

Of the covers we have recorded, the total is roughly divided equally between Types (i) and (ii). To date, we have not recorded the (4d) used on cover with any of the blue paper (1d)'s, SG 3/4 (Sc2, 2a). Both of these stamps are known used on cover until 1857, so the possibility exists a new discovery awaits a lucky philatelist! Subsequent usage on cover can be found with the ensuing (1d's), thus: Imperf. (on white paper), Pin Perf., and Clean Cut. In Figure 6 (front cover), usage of the (4d) with an Imperf. (1d) is demonstrated - Type (ii).

Figure 7 depicts the (4d) on cover with a Pin. Perf. (1d) - Type (i). This combination introduces us to two items which rank amongst the finest in Barbados philately, namely used pairs of both values on cover. We have recorded no other pairs, on or off cover. One cover is illustrated on Plate IV of the Bayley (2) handbook, while the other was Lot 10064 in the Hackmey⁽¹⁶⁾ sale. Both are from the "Beckles" correspondence. Finally, the (4d) is also recorded used on cover with the Clean Cut (1d) SG 18 / 19 (Sc 14 / 14a). In conclusion, (and thanks to Michael Hamilton) we wish to place on record the existence of a superb cover which, to the best of our knowledge, has never been on the auction market. It is an 11d rate, 1860 cover to Aden franked with single copies of the (4d), 6d, and (1d), SG 5, 11 and 15 (Sc 4, 8 and 11).

CONCLUSION

In this brief article we have attempted to bring together the succinct facts relating to the imperforate (4d) stamp of Barbados. Any additional information is welcomed from readers and will be the subject of a follow-up article, if warranted.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author wishes to acknowledge the help of Mr. Charles Freeland in providing information from his collection and in checking the manuscript.

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19. 'The Praportchetovitch Collection', Plumridge and Co. 20 - 21 April 1933.

Figure 1.



Mint block of six of the (4d) Brownish red, SG 5 (Sc 4).

Figure 2



Mint block of four showing the variety 'Patch on Sail' (Position 104) - bottom left stamp.

Figure 3



Mint single showing the variety 'Gash in Throat' Position 109

Figure 4



Used example cancelled with the # 10 parish numeral of St. Peter

Figure 5



O.H.M.S. cover to St. Lucia franked with a copy of the (4d) Brownish red and dated 11 August 1856 -- the earliest known date of use of this stamp.
The stamp pre-paid the inter-island packet rate.
(Ex. Charlton Henry, Amundsen and Tomasini).

Figure 7



Cover to Antigua dated 10 April 1861 and franked with a (1d) Deep blue Pin Perf 14, SG 15 (Sc 11) and (4d) Brownish red.
1d Inland rate - Red manuscript '4', 4d Inter-island packet rate pre-paid.
(Ex. W. S. Davy, C. Bayley).

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CAYMAN ISLANDS:

The King Edward VII Plate 2 Postage Revenue 1d & 6d Denominations.

By James Podger and Kevin Darcy.

The authors are conscious that in over 90 years, since the King Edward VII plate 2 Postage & Revenue 1d and 6d stamps were issued, there has been no formal record of their existence. Our intention with this article is to show when these stamps were produced and why they have been ignored, from the various philatelic literature published, in the intervening years, with the exception that in 'The Royal Philatelic Collection' by Sir John Wilson, it is recorded that the collection contains, '6d I PI No 2'. [In 1997 James Podger presented Her Majesty The Queen with a top left block of four of the 1d from plate 2, for the Royal Collection.] In 2001, The Victoria Stamp Company sold the Charles Freeland 'Collection of Cayman Islands', which included an upper left corner marginal plate 2 control number block of 4, of the 1d carmine: This block realised \$80. The earliest specialised book on Cayman Island philately, 'The Cayman Islands: Their Stamps and Post Office', by D.B. Armstrong (In collaboration with C.B. Bostwick and A.J. Watkin), states, for the King Edward VII Postage and Revenue series, "The Stamps are printed from the general Colonial 'Postage and Revenue' key-plate, No. 1, in sheets of the same size and composition as the 'Postage-Postage' series which they superseded".

In 1907 the Cayman Islands changed the design of their postage stamps, from the 'POSTAGE POSTAGE' key-plate to the 'POSTAGE REVENUE' key-plate. The De La Rue Private Day Books contain information on all the printings for the 'POSTAGE REVENUE' issue, as recorded in, 'Cayman Islands: The De La Rue Records', by James Podger, published in 'The British Caribbean Philatelic Journal' June 1997.

The 'De La Rue Plate Register', held in the British Library, lists plate 1 as being the only plate number used for all the King Edward VII 'POSTAGE REVENUE' issues; see Figure 1. De La Rue fulfilled nine requisitions, for the Crown Agents, of the 'POSTAGE REVENUE' series: The first dated 20 November 1907, which was for the ½d and 1d values; the last dated 7 July 1911, which was for the ½d, 1d, 2½d and 6d values. Of the nine requisitions for this issue, there are six that contain printings of the 1d value, as part of a larger requisition of denominations, three that contain printings of the 6d value, also as part of a larger requisition of denominations: Of these requisitions, there are three where the 1d and 6d values are printed as part of the same order, Requisition 59/08, 21 August 1908, Requisition 6/09, 4 March 1909 and Requisition 51/11, 7 July 1911.

We now have to examine from which requisition the plate 2 stamps were issued. This becomes an elimination exercise which is based on the 6d overprinted specimen and on issued colours. The first requisition, which included both stamp values, was when the 6d overprinted 'specimen' was issued to the Universal Postal Union. The colour of the specimen issued is dull purple & bright purple, which corresponds with the colour of the stamps printed from plate 1; see Figure 2. Thus the 59/08 requisition 6d value must have been printed from plate 1. It is harder to make a case for the 6/09 requisition, but we assume that these were also printed from plate 1, based on the following supposition: The last Cayman Island requisition for King Edward VII, 51/11 on 7 July 1911 was for four values, as previously mentioned. There is a note in the De La Rue Private Day Books which mentions that the order was subsequently split and the 1d & 6d values were put under order 52/11. The authors believe that this split in the order, by De La Rue, was where plate 2 was inadvertently used; see Figure 3. The case for our assumption is strengthened by the fact that there are no other denominations known from plate 2. Also, the correspondence of the time lends itself to the two stamps being from the 1911 printing.

There are ways to tell whether one has a non plate number example, from plate 1 or from plate 2, although this is not strictly true for most of the 1d stamps.

We start with the 6d: From plate 1 the stamp is coloured dull purple & bright purple, from plate 2 the stamp is dull purple & violet-purple.

For the 1d value there is no difference in colour between the two plate numbers, the stamps being all carmine, although it is mentioned in a letter from Harry Huber to J.E.W., dated 24 Dec 1915, "1d, Edward, P & R, plates 1 and 2. I don't think the colour shade is a good means to determine the individual stamps. Every printing varies slightly. Though I confess that the 1d, plate 2, only one printing ever sent out – are more of a rose-carmine, compared with the carmine of plate 1".

Thus, the 1d needs other ways to determine from which plate number the individual stamp is printed. Unfortunately, the only stamps that can be identified, apart from plate number singles or multiples, or lower marginal pieces from plate 2 where the plate number is not used, as coming from either one or the other plates, are those from the left pane of plate 1, numbered 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 28, and 1 and 2 from the right hand pane, as these all show a deterioration in the frame line at upper right of the name value tablet, see figures 11 & 11a for an example used on cover, dated MY 4 10. These frame breaks were identified in 1909, and written about in Gibbons Stamp Weekly, issue dated 10 Jul 1909. The 1d can also be identified as being printed from plate 1, when used with a cancel dated prior to 7 July 1911. See Figure 4 showing a 6d from plate 1 cancelled with a Georgetown type 4 canceller dated NO 24 08.

There are three full panes of the plate 2 1d carmine known. Luckily they are of both left and right upper panes and thus show a 120 forme sheet; see Figures 7 and 8. No full panes of the 6d value from plate 2 are recorded: Multiples are shown in Figures 5 and 6. Figure 5 shows a strip from the left pane, and Figure 6 shows a block from the right pane. There are two known covers with 1d stamps from plate 2, see Figure 9, postmarked Georgetown JU 18 12 and figure 10, postmarked Cayman Brac MR 29 13.

Why are these two values, printed from plate 2, not recorded in any philatelic literature? It would appear that there was a mini conspiracy, suppressing the information in 1912. A letter from Harry Huber to A.J. Watkin says, "The fifth and last letter contained a block of four of the 1d., Edward VII, showing plate #2, and this I am sending enclosed herewith. In answer to a specific enquiry as to whether the 2½d had been issued from plate #2, the answer is in the negative. But a further bit of information was given which surprised me greatly, and which concerns a higher denomination which was printed from plate #2. **Keep this to yourself, however, until I manage to send off and secure a block.** He says that the 1d and 6d stamps were the only two denominations issued with plate #2. It's strange that Ewen's has made no chronicle of this fact. Now, doesn't that surprise you?"

There are a considerable number of references to the 1d and 6d values, printed from plate 2, in the A.J. Watkin archive: Most are from personal correspondence. These are reproduced, to show readers how much interest plate 2 caused at the time.

Letter from Harry Huber to A.J. Watkin, 30 Jul 1912: "I note what you say about the 1 of Edward VII type being printed from plate #2, and that you have a corner block, showing no control. If you care, I'll try to secure you a block showing the control when I next write to the Islands. I believe that I have already mentioned that I have secured a pane of 60 of the 1d. This shows but one control number (naturally, of course, since the sheet is composed of four panes), being the right hand, upper pane. But I also have secured a small block of twelve, showing control #2. I haven't been able to find out from the Islands – or from any one, in fact, whether the 2½d re-issue sent out at the same time was printed from plate #1 or #2. It would seem strange if this should be printed from plate #1, and the 1d from plate #2, but sometimes these strange things are done, and it may have happened in this case."

Letter from Harry Huber to A.J.W., 10 Sept 1912: "Now in regard to that much discussed plate No.2 – The 1d re-issued in the fall of 1911 was printed from plate #2, which contains, as you know, four panes, each containing 60 stamps, but before being sent to the Islands each sheet of 240 stamps was divided into two sheets of 120 stamps, two panes of 60 side by side. Thus the pane which I have (upper, right hand) shows the plate #2 above the fifth stamp. No number at all appears in the lower margin, so evidently this is where your block which you secured from Ewen's and showing no plate number, came from. The lower margins of the two upper panes would show no marginal reference at the bottom, neither would the two lower panes show marginal references at the top. The other small block of the 1d which I have is from the upper left hand pane, and shows #2 above the second stamp. I am going to ask my correspondent in Grand Cayman to try and secure for me a pane, or at least a large block, showing the plate number in the lower margins of the sheet, if such have been sent out to the Islands. Of course, on the sheet of the 1d, plate #1, the plate number appears four times, - at the bottom and top of each pane."

Extract from a letter, from Harry Huber to P.M., 22 Oct 1912: "However delay after delay occurred, and it was finally necessary to order another printing of the 1d and 2½d, Edward VII stamps. These arrived in the Islands sometime in October or November, last year. The 1d was printed from plate #2 instead of plate #1, as formerly. Do you collect plate numbers? I have been able to secure a

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very nice pane of 60 of the 1d showing the control #2 at the top, but of course, the bottom margin is blank."

Letter from Harry Huber to A.J. Watkin, 26 Oct 1912: "Compare this 6d (Plate 2 AJW) with the 6d of plate 1, and you will discover a remarkable difference – so much so that it's not all that difficult to distinguish single copies. Also notice the dark purple of the head plate, and the pinkish lilac of the duty plate. The greatest difference is the appearance of the beard."

Extract from a letter, from Harry Huber to P.M., (Percy Mercer) 20 Nov 1912: "And all the margins on the large blocks of stamps I have received from the Islands have always shown plate #1, except in the case of the 1d and 6d stamps which were 're-issued' in the fall of 1911, and which came from plate #2, 4 panes of 60 stamps each. However, full 240-stamp sheets were not sent to the islands, but rather in 2-pane sheets. I have only seen, so far, the upper margins showing plate #2 (lower margins of the two upper panes would naturally be blank)."

Letter from Harry Huber to AJ Watkin, 14 Dec 1912: "I don't believe that the 1d, plate 2, will show the differences as clearly as in the 6d, plate 2. At least I've not been able to discover them in the panes of 60 I have. Except of course that the breaks in the lines enclosing the tablet wherein 'Cayman Islands' is printed do not appear. But of course this wouldn't be a means of spotting single copies."

Extract from a letter, from Harry Huber to J.E.W., (*Name not known, but maybe it has been written wrongly and should be E.W.J.*) 17 Apr 1913: "I have read with much interest your comments on the 1d and 6d, plate 2, Edward stamps. As you say, the ink used for the 6d duty plate has much more carmine in than that used for plate #1, and the printing is very much blurred. This blurring I believe will account for most of the differences found in the 1d and 6d stamps from plate #2."

Letter from E.W.J. (E.W. Jennett) to P.M., 19 Aug 1913: "I am sorry that I could not get King Edward 1/- and 6d with Plate Number, they have a lot of loose and broken sheets which they are trying to get rid of it is hard to get one with the number."

Extract from a letter, from Harry Huber to A.J. Watkin, 20 Nov 1913: "This follows out a line of reasoning which occurred to me some while back, but I have never said anything about it, waiting for the time when someone else should broach the subject. This would account for our being able to obtain the 1d and 6d, Edward, plate 2, in the upper right and upper left panes, and showing the control at the top, but not the lower right and lower left panes, showing the control at the bottom. As I believe I told you in one of my previous letters, I have succeeded in getting a strip of the 6d, Edward, plate 2, showing the lower margin blank"

Extract from a letter, from J.E.L. Cox to A.J. Watkin, 27 Jun 1915: "Have you noticed that Cayman 1ds. '07-9 1d has Plate (2) as well as Plate (1). I only noticed it the other day that those I had bought over at my last visit were (2) and what I got the previous visit were (1)."

Extract from a letter, from Harry Huber to J.E.W., 10 Aug 1915: "1d and 6d, Edward, P&R, plate 2. The conditions here are exactly the same as in the present issue. The Edward, plate 1, sent to the Islands, in 1908, consisted of 120-sheets (*sic*), 2 panes of 60, with narrow dividing margin. Showed four controls, plate 1. The 6d Edward, plate 2, sent out in 1911, consisted of 120-stamp sheets, 2 panes of 60, with narrow dividing margin. Showed 2 controls, both in upper margin. Lower margin was blank. The panes supplied were the UL and UR (not LL and LR as we find in the current George stamps). The Edward, control 2, can be likened to the ¼d, George, 120/240, except for the position of the panes."

Extract from a letter, from Harry Huber to J.E.W., 24 Dec 1915: "1d Edward, P&R, plates 1 and 2. I don't think the color (*sic*) shade is a good means to determine the individual stamps. Every printing varies slightly. Though I will confess that the 1d, plate 2, only one printing ever sent out – are more of a rose carmine, compared with the carmine of plate 1."

There are a number of handbooks on Cayman Islands philately that have been published since the 52/11 requisition was indented:

- 'Cayman Islands', by Melville.
- 'The Postage Stamps of the Cayman Islands', by Melville.
- 'The Cayman Islands Their Postal History Postage Stamps and Postmarks', by Aguilar & Saunders.
- 'The Postal History of the Cayman Islands', by Giraldi & McCann.

None of these record plate 2 as being used. Note that the Book by Giraldi & McCann is on postal history but is listed here for completeness.

Quantities printed: These figures are taken from the requisitions listed in the De La Rue Private Day Books.

There were 115,800 of the 1d value, and 35,520 of the 6d value printed. Looking at the authors' supposition, this means that of these, 60,000 of the 1d and 23,040 of the 6d are from the plate 2 printing to fulfil requisition 52/11.

Based on the above requisition quantities and that stamps printed from plate 1 were in settings of 120 and from plate 2 were in settings of 240, as the pioneer Cayman philatelists reckoned, the following plate number examples are possible:

1d	plate 1	1860 examples
1d	plate 2	1000 examples
6d	plate 1	416 examples
6d	plate 2	384 examples

There is one anomaly, which needs to be mentioned. This will not have a bearing on the plate numbers possible for the plate 2 printing. In the examples to hand, the bottom margin from each is un-perforated vertically (the same as printings from plate 1). In 'Notes for Philatelists', by M.N. Oliver, there is an illustration of the 240 forme plate 2 Key-plate: This shows that the margin between the upper and lower panes was perforated vertically, in the same way that the top margin above the upper panes is perforated. This variation in the printing needs to be explored. The authors believe that there were no stamps printed from the lower part of the plate 2 forme: De La Rue solely used the upper part of the plate 2 forme to print the two values. 'The Postal Services of the Gold Coast 1901-1957', has a plate 2 pane of the Gold Coast 6d, illustrated. This has the same marginal make-up as the Cayman Island 1d panes illustrated in this article. This also explains why the Cayman pioneer philatelists were unable to find any plate numbers, or positional pieces, from a lower pane. The De La Rue Private day Book for July 1911, records the following:

'500 sheets 1d x 120 = 60000 stamps'

'192 sheets 6d x 120 = 23040 stamps'

This means that the quantity of plate numbers possible, from the plate 2 printing, would be the same as if printed in 240 forme:

1d	plate 2	1000 examples
6d	plate 2	384 examples

Illustrations:

- Except where attributed, all illustrations are from James Podger's collection.

The authors would like to thank, The Royal Philatelic Society, London, for permission to use material from the A.J. Watkin archive; Christopher Podger and Graham Booth, for proof reading the draft copy and their suggestions thereon.

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Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7 (Reduced)



Figure 8 (Reduced)



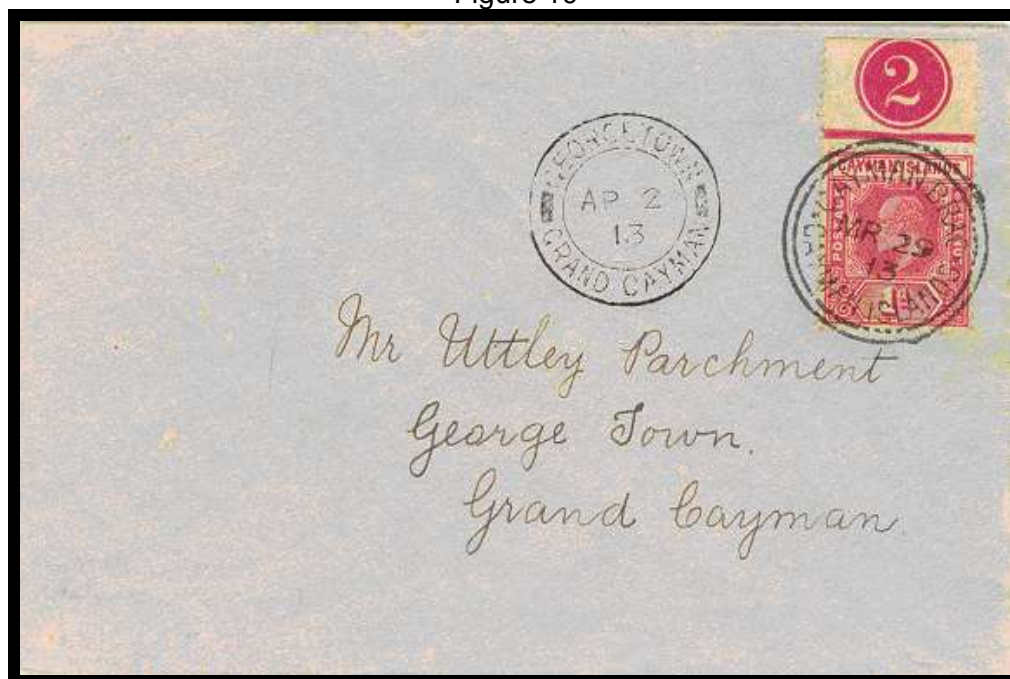
Graham Booth collection

Figure 9



(Note that the 3d pair show broken frame lines, at upper right, in the name tablet)

Figure 10



Graham Booth collection

Figure 11 (Reduced)



Figure 11a (Enlarged)



[1d from figure 11, with frame break at top right]



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MONTSERRAT

WAR STAMP 1½D BLACK AND ORANGE. SG 62

BY JOHN DAVIS

Messrs Ewens received their first consignment on 4th April 1919. They reported that the despatch date from Montserrat was 6th March, and assumed that this was the day of issue. This date has been perpetuated by other philatelic commentators, including Britnor, and more recently Stanley Gibbons. My guess is that Ewen's assumption has been interpreted by others as fact.

However, I have not seen any Government or Post Office records that report an official first day of issue. Can any members enlighten me?

It just so happens that I have an internal cover mailed to a Miss Gunn of Plymouth, Montserrat that has been franked with a strip of 3 of the 1½d WAR STAMPS cancelled with a date stamp for 4th March 1919, two days earlier than all reported dates. I am claiming that this to be the earliest known date of usage, (and probably the real first day of issue) unless any members can claim earlier known dates.

To add to its interest, the stamp on the left has the variety '1 and ½ closer together'.



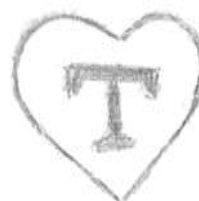
ST LUCIA

1892 TAX MARKING

BY ALISTER KINNON

I have recently acquired a cover posted from St Lucia to Barbados on 14 January 1892 and posted using a provisional halfpenny on half of sixpence stamp. Nothing unusual in that or in that it attracted attention by being underpaid. However the tax mark is one which I have not seen reported as being used in St. Lucia. It is an 11 or 12 mm 'T' with serifs, enclosed in a heart shaped border measuring approx 24mm from top to bottom, an enhanced copy of which is shown.

Is such a mark known to have been used in St Lucia or in any other West Indies territory?



Editor's note: Our two proof readers DN and CF believe this is a Barbados mark.

ST VINCENT

POSTMARK FORGERY?

BY JOHN COWELL

I illustrate a St Vincent postmark dated 7 May 1905, the stamp is the 1906 MCA wmk and was in a collection which I was handling on behalf of a postal auction for whom I do some describing. Opinions welcome on whether the postmark is a forgery (Brian Cartwright states it is not a Mme Joseph) or whether MCA paper was used at this date.



TRINIDAD

21MM CIRCULAR DATESTAMP (PROUD TYPE D15)

BY MICHAEL MEDLICOTT

Edward Barrow's pieces in our sister publication *British Caribbean Philatelic Journal* (Vol.42 No.3 & Vol.43 No.3) have thrown some doubt on previous assumptions about which office(s) used Proud type D15, pending receipt of their own datestamps, and whether there were more than one similar instrument.

It is reasonably clear from available covers that the first period of use (5 Jan 89 – 12 May 92) was at G.P.O. Port of Spain, and that D15 was put into reserve when the GPO received its first set of 'PORT-OF-SPAIN' datestamps some time in 1892.

D15 surfaced again in 1897. My earliest date is on a loose stamp for 7 Jan 97 (expressed as '97 JA/7') with no code letter, and this eccentric dating is typical of a postal agency or rural office. Proud, presumably quoting Joe Chin Aleong, assumed that D15 was located at Indian Walk throughout its second period of use (9 Jun 97 – 15 Feb 07 according to Proud, but now antedated), and this assumption was probably based on the illustrated cover.

This cover, formerly in the Addiss collection, addressed to Boston, Mass. bears SG137 tied by D15 code 'A' dated FE15/07, a clear strike suggesting recent cleaning of the datestamp. It is backstamped Princes Town code 'C' same day, where it would have joined the railway, and G.P.O. Port of Spain (type D49) 6.45 p.m. same day. The Princes Town transit mark is significant, because it narrows down to four the possible offices of origin; St. Juliens and Elswick already had their own datestamps, and Tableland was not to open until 1909; only Indian Walk on the feeder roads to Princes Town was open (since 1895) and had no datestamp of its own.

I have definite anonymous earlier strikes, all on loose stamps, dated 97 JA/7 (as above), MR 30/97, 3 MY/97, 20 MY/97 and OC 9/2, all with no code letter.

Although I find Barrow's superimposition (Fig. 3 p. 3 Vol 42 No. 3) unconvincing evidence by itself of two distinct datestamps, his card of JA 3/01 and Ray Stanton's card of AU 25/03 did credibly originate at New Town, and do indicate the existence of two almost identical datestamps.

As a tentative conclusion, therefore, I suggest that type D15 with no code was used at New Town from at least January 1897 until it received its own datestamp (1908?), and that a second type D15 with code letter 'A', and possibly 'C', was used at Indian Walk from some time after its opening on 2 Dec 95 until it received its own datestamp, which was despatched by G.P.O. London on 4 Jun 07.

Reports of other usage of these rather rare datestamps after 1897 confirming or refuting this conclusion would be very welcome.

BWISC PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM DAVID DRUETT AT PENNYMEAD AUCTIONS.

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King George VI

Bahamas

SG 152a 1938-41 2d grey. VFU pair, light slogan cancel, right stamp R3/5 RP short 'T'

£150

SG 162/a 1942 ½d Landfall. VFUM LP of 60, few bends in top selvage. R9/4 thin 'L', 9/6 long 'E', 10/1 damaged LL corner

£45

Barbados

SG 250ca 1941 2d claret. VFU, R11/9 'extra frameline' £40

British Guiana

SG D4 1944 Postage Due 12ct smooth paper strip of 3 on cover from Hereford, London 'T' tax mark. Fine commercial cover, ex Nathan

£65

Grenada

SG 152c 1950 ½d chocolate on chalky paper. VFUM

Plate 3 block of 25, R7/8 large retouch by second 'A' £18

SG 153b 1938 ½d yellow-green, perf 12¼ x 13¼. VFUM vertical coil-join strip of 4

£14

Jamaica

SG 118 1937 1d Coronation. VFM corner block of 6 with Plate 1A. R9/3 large mark left of Queen's nose £15

SG 121-22 1938 ½d green and 1d scarlet. Mint vertical coil-join pairs, ½d one short perforation £20

CW 5b 1944 1½d light red-brown. VFU £60

Montserrat

SG 63 1922-29 ½d brown. VFUM, nice 'confetti' flaw at top right of portrait oval £22

Literature 'Montserrat', LE Britnor. BWISC, 1965 privately bound £60

St Kitts-Nevis

SG 69b 1947 1d pink. VFU example on piece with full inverted 'Sandy Point' CDS of 27 My 47 £15

SG 73g 1952 commercial cover to UK. Bears 3d, 6d, 1/- chalky paper values, nicely tied £15

SG 77 1938 5/- perf 13 x 12. VFU with large part Madame Joseph faked cancel #350 £12

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VIRGIN ISLANDS

THE WILLIAM FRAZER COLLECTION

BY SIMON GOLDBLATT

So seldom does a worthwhile group of Virgin Islands material reach the market that our Circle membership has virtually forgotten how to collect the territory. Yet I should be failing in my responsibility as Group Leader (and effectively sole flag-waver) if I did not comment on Bill Frazer's sale (Spink, 20 May 2004). The commentary comes before the sale, and Charles Freeland's analysis of the highlights, provided in 'Auction Update', will view the event from a rather different perspective.

When the Burrus collection was sold, the entire holding of Virgin Islands was combined in a single lot. It was Bill Frazer who bought it. It was this acquisition which kindled his interest in the classic stamps of the colony.

The Burrus holding set a very high standard for Bill, who was reluctant to descend below it. Thus I remember being able to pick freely from a collection in a Manchester stamp shop, which Bill had earlier turned down as having nothing of particular interest for him: surprising, in a way, because he clearly liked SG20, a stamp full of character and here still reposed the Snowden used example with long tailed 'S'; anyway, I have given it a good home.

He also left behind there an almost complete sheet of the 1d perf 15 from transfer B, missing the stamp at top left, because he already had a similar item, less the stamp at bottom right – see lot 568. Also, I am sure, he found the 1d perf 15 a rather tedious stamp; he could have had scores from the stock just mentioned and he turned them all down. There was one thing he missed in so doing: that is, the correspondence between the first printing of that stamp and the 6d SG10 and 13 – 50 issued sheets of 20 in each case. You identify it, as I have explained on other occasions, by wide margins, colour, and above all, blind perforations (see Spink's recurrent references to missing perforation holes); and unless I have been asleep, there is not a single first issue perf 15 1d amongst the Frazer holding of almost 650 of the classic 1d, 4d, 6d, 1s issues of Nissen & Parker.

Had Bill so wished, you can be sure he could have owned ten times as many of the slightly less than 100,000 stamps originally issued. Lot 571 features the 6d perf 15 as 'the sole example' used in the collection – but that was all he felt he wanted. For he sold me my first example from his dealer's stock.

When it comes to rarities, he usually had them. I watched him buy what has now become lot 502, from a Robson Lowe auction (from memory, £210, even in those days). I cannot imagine that another will turn up. As for the classics on cover, he probably never lost a chance to acquire these: the huge gap in time between lot 551 from 1869 and lot 594 from the very end of 1878 will show you just how impossible these covers are. I suspect you will never find the Nissen & Parker 1d on cover, except with one or more other values. Not surprisingly, from my point of view, on the 1869 cover one sees the 1866 1d being used; on the 1878 cover, there is the first appearance of the 1868-76 1d, and by now the DLR watermarked stamps were in issue. The fact is that almost the whole of these 1d stamps was taken up by the stamp trade without ever being used.

In between the two covers mentioned comes a cover of 1872, a wreck of a 1s stamp on a wreck of a mourning cover. So this is all that he could find from Tortola, until one comes to 1880 and beyond.

He was a very proud owner of the 4d on 1s on cover in early 1888 to G Campbell, Jersey, which he confidently believed to be the only example on cover, and contemporary at that (lot 679). This item was part of the original Burrus acquisition: those who keep their eyes open have a prospect of finding other correspondence from Tortola to Campbell – but SG42 again? Absolutely not.



Well worthy of note are two presumably self-addressed covers of 9 FE 1891 going to Munich, each bearing a 1s stamp, one with the coloured margins, one without. This, remember, was in that controversial period when Leeward Islands stamps had been distributed, and several of the colonies were uncertain whether their own issues could still be used. Not so the Virgin Islands: you continue to find the stamps with cds from 1891 onwards; and the postmaster here was right, vindicated by the announcement of Joseph Chamberlain to Parliament in 1893.

Three covers from 1880 and 1881 bear 4d values: otherwise the earliest issues hardly figure; and where they do, it is in combination with DLR issues, and in one case to the same Munich address together with a Leeward Islands 1s also. DLR issues on cover before the arrival of Leewards stamps are made to look easy with 12 examples; I cannot myself ever recollect being offered one, but I have usually stayed away from major auctions since the buyer's premium was introduced to the UK. As for valuations, some of these seem to me to be tongue-in-cheek.

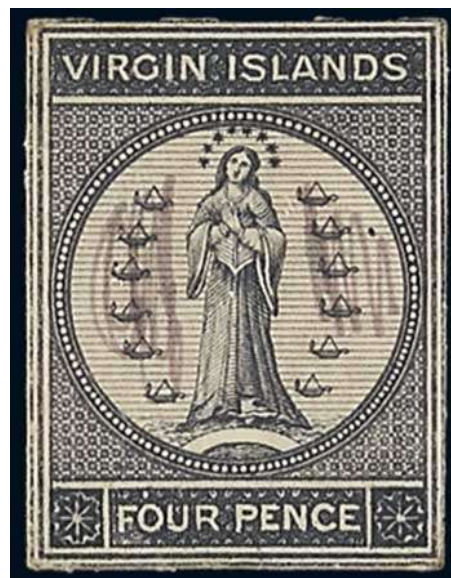
The Frazer example of the missing Virgin is correctly plated at position 8. It is crucial to note here the straight edge at right. This tends further to confirm Migliavacca's belief in the number that got into circulation; because, in addition to examples from the lower two rows – rendered improbably by the straight edge at foot of stamps from row 2 – positions 9 and 10 also now become improbable. Are examples met from positions 4 and 5? To my chagrin I have not kept a check – has anyone? I have at least checked paper on this occasion: it is anything but the transparent bluish or greyish paper of SG20, as I had earlier supposed. On the contrary, it is quite soft and quite dense, and from my brief inspection did not marry with the paper of SG18, 19 either. Even the thin seemed different in character from defects that one meets on the issued stamps. If I have to characterize this famous stamp, I regard it as a trial stage, part of the decision to super-impose coloured margins on the original SG11/14. The missing Virgin itself I continue to class as a phantom error, and you can take that how you will.

I have said little of pre-stamp letters as, because of the survival of the Walters correspondence, these are not scarce. The indifferent quality of the GB 6d used in Tortola (contrast the lovely 4d) and the total absence of a 1d value have surprised me. Proofs of the first issues, Bill Frazer had in abundance. These have always figured in major collections since a hoard was discovered in a stamp shop in St. Martin's Lane in the 19th century: Bill certainly fancied the die proofs of the 1d and 6d in combination, and the well-known large multiples of the 6d plate proofs in blue and rose-vermillion – usually from the rejected transfer. I noted no examples of the 1866 1d in plate proof form. As these can be found from time to time it is another instance of the owner's lack of affection for the 1d stamps.

However, he made sure of his compound perfs (lot 549 and 550) whose plating positions I have not checked at the time of writing, though the used example is ascribed to row 1 / 2. The unused example should also come from columns 2 to 5, because (from one of mine) one gets an imperf effect, from a defective attempt at perforating, at the left margin. The A13 postmark on lot 550 comes either from the standard use of this canceller (up to about 1872) or its reintroduction about the turn of the century. Instances of A13 used as original are, of course, lots 510, 511, 551; other instances are necessarily equivocal, so there is no firm evidence whether the scarce compound perf was distributed in period, or whether usage stems from remaindered stamps processed in Tortola after 1900.

One point I omitted to check was the incidence of watermarks on the 1866 6d; these are not uncommon, and the specific mention within lot 547 should not lead one to infer that this block alone showed a watermark. Indeed, that remarkable multiple of nine, forming lot 534, with its huge bottom margins, seems to hint at watermarking in the illustration.

The essays comprising lots 552 and 553 are splendid, especially as the latter evidences the commendable decision not to use for the 4d stamp the lamps that so suitably adorn the 1866 values. Yet am I alone in finding the 1s prototype (lot 554) wholly uninspiring? One can only commend the artist who moved from this base to the finished article.



Returning to the stamps as issued, I have drawn attention previously to the 'clean' and 'dirty' states of the 4d and 6d transfers. Of three complete sheets of the 4d value, two were 'clean' and one was 'dirty' – demonstrated best by the defective 'A' in 'ISLANDS' at the bottom right. With the 6d values, I concentrate on the large 'V' variety, of which the collection contains 5 'clean', 2 'dirty', and one in a half-way state showing both the cleared white central flaw of the clean version, and the jagged colour flaw at top left of 'V' in the dirty version. Nevertheless, I have seen enough variation between two stamps from the same plate position of the same transfer not to pay too much attention to this kind of discrepancy. I remain firmly of the view that there were, two, exactly two transfers for each value: whether side by side on the stone, as with impressions of the 1d value, or successively from a preserved transfer, I know not; though I incline to the first view, it is not certain that 'clean' and 'dirty' stamps survive in equal numbers.

Back now to proofs of the 4d value; and the range of brown shades in which they were produced include colours very close indeed to those used by DLR. Taking the impressive block of 15 (lot 563), perhaps it is only the Nissen & Parker sheet format that proves completely that it is that firm, not DLR, who produced it. However, when one comes to the DLR plate proofs – see lots 643-6 – it is material to note that Crown CA paper was used; and, if one goes back to the DLR 1d of 1877, there is a proof sheet on card. I might be raising questions where none exist.

Much as DLR must have resented using lithography for Virgin islands stamps, Bill Frazer abandoned his mistaste for the 1d value, when it came to these issues: by his standards, three sheets in green, and four in red (let's face it, this latter not a real challenge) could be considered OTT. He went in for multiples, of course, and I remember him telling me once that he found the DLR key type 2½d red-brown the hardest of all to acquire in blocks. I can only suppose that at some point he lost his enthusiasm for ordinary issued stamps; because several blocks came on to the market in the next few years, and I do not believe he troubled to acquire one. Coming to the higher values, I noted that, while he only had one sheet of each of the 6d and 1s stamps, he had four sheets of the 4d. This might help to explain my own failure to pick up a sheet for myself.

We should observe in passing that Campbell in Jersey figures again as the receiver of an OHMS cover bearing each of the three top values in 1889; when I mentioned the 4d on 1s on cover, I gave no undertaking that its use was 100% commercial. There again, it may have been.

Virgin Islanders have for many generations shown pride in their home territory (and a lovely setting it is). Entirely in character they were five years ahead of other Leeward Islanders in seeking to reintroduce stamps of their own. The birth of the St. Ursula issue is attractively documented in the Frazer collection with an original essay on large card, a master die proof with blank value tablet, the embryonic set on Appendix sheets, and single imperf colour trials of the issued stamp. We remember, of course, that when the original plate was prepared for printing, it cracked; thus accounting for the long delay between the preparation of the essay in March 1898, and the supply of stamps at the very end of that year. The technical hitch is reflected in the proof material: on close inspection, the original product was sharper, clearer and more precise than the issued stamps. The craftsman responsible was probably less than pleased to have to do his work all over again.

The reign of Queen Victoria was by far Bill Frazer's favourite period, and there was not much he was attracted to keep from the later reigns. Here I leave the Spink catalogue, excellent of course in its quality, to speak for itself. My final comments, therefore, will be on postal markings. There is nothing to say that is new of itself. The marks are few and well known. What we do have is an indicator of condition, especially, of the A91 killer at various dates, and what comes through to me is how heavy or irregular are the strikes on each of the earlier covers. Even when newly introduced, at the time of the 1872 cover, the cancellation shows overkill. The ink would have dried from time to time, of course, and if you meet a cancellation as indistinct as on the cover lot 597, it is still healthy. I had with difficulty reached a healthy diagnosis for an example of SG20 of my own sharing an indistinct cancel on piece with a 1d green; and the sight of this cover is a valuable confirmation. The corollary is that when you meet a neat, well-defined 'A91' cancellation you can date it with confidence to the 1890's.

AUCTION UPDATE**BY CHARLES FREELAND****Spink 20 May**

Given Simon Goldblatt's concern that the market would have difficulty in absorbing this huge specialised collection of one of our smallest territories, my personal ambitions were high for the sale of Bill Frazer's Virgin Islands. My hopes were raised by the sparse room, only ten present apart from the Spink staff, although these included four active dealers (Fraser, Lea, Kinns and Taylor). Sadly, these gentlemen, together with agents Lancaster and Weeks and a very aggressive bidder represented by Spink staff, meant that bargains were few and far between. It was especially nice to meet up again with Roger Downing, who had travelled from Tortola with a list of targeted acquisitions, while Simon Goldblatt and I were ready to pounce on any unconsidered trifles.

Unlike some of the specialised auctions I have reported on in recent years, the spoils for this event were divided into a smallish pool of about 25 buyers, confirming that it is a far narrower collecting area than say Bahamas or Bermuda. Despite this, the hammer prices for the sale totalled over £200,000 (pretty well exactly double the lower estimate) and not a single lot was unsold. Two buyers, Taylor and Spink's customer, each spent close to a quarter of that sum, although Taylor was surely acting for one or more personal clients as well. Roger Downing bought several of the 1d green sheets, which went very high and made him the third biggest spender. Four more buyers, including Kinns on behalf of Gibbons, spent around £10,000 each.

The sale started strongly with Taylor securing the first three lots of pre-adhesives for over £3,000, brushing aside competition from one of our VPs. In retrospect, the 1815 Paid to England cover was a bargain at £1,900 (all prices plus 15%) and throughout the day the prices for covers were not excessive, reflecting the absence of the gentleman from Louisiana who has been very stubborn at many similar events. The next highlight was the GB 4d cancelled A13 at £3,000. The relatively common Nissen and Parker colour proofs occasioned strong bidding from three quarters, with Spink's customer and a phone bidder sharing the nicer ones at 2-3 times estimate. This pattern was maintained for nearly all the specialist stamp pieces (proofs, varieties and multiples), though most of the straight stamp lots containing duplication were absorbed by the dealers at around estimate. There were several lots containing undescribed varieties where I had hopes of scoring, but sadly others had spotted them too, so none of them went really cheaply. For example, lot 601 (estimated at £300-350) where the long tailed S flaw was on the grey paper stamp, was driven up to £1,100. Another indication of the strength of demand was that where there were two identical lots, the second was often more expensive than the first. This was particularly notable on lots 580 and 581, where the marginal block of the 1867 1/- with one showing long-tailed S flaw fetched £1,300, £500 cheaper than the succeeding block with no flaw.

The other highlights were, with one major exception, predictable. The exception was the infamous Missing Virgin, which was sold for £28,000, less than half the price of Frazer's other example last Spring... the market must be getting saturated. The two 1d compound perfs each fetched £5,500, reasonable for the used copy of which only three are recorded but dear for the off-centre mint example (there are currently rumours that both have received a thumbs down from the experts)

As mentioned, the prices for covers were for once not ridiculous. The best two, the 1869 mixed franking cover and the 1878 6d rate to Antigua, fetched £7,000 and £5,000. The other early covers, many of them extremely rare, were scooped up by an eager room, with your two VPs securing three neat usages each. The two unique later covers, the 1888 4d on 1/- and the 1899 4d with F for E in pence went for £2,000 and 2,900 respectively.

My final comment concerns the 20 odd lots of complete sheets. It was no surprise to see the very high prices for the 1d green sheets, which presented one-off opportunities to acquire important study pieces, but I was amazed to see the two 4d / 1/- sheets fetch £6,500 (admittedly I do not possess one). Several of the other (less rare) early sheets fetched around full Gibbons after accounting for the premium.

It may not be for a generation or more before the Virgin Islands collector sees another offering like this one... if you missed it there is no excuse.

Shreves 12 June

The Goslings are one of the oldest Bermuda families. Several members must own military postcards addressed to Mrs Gosling at the family home in Underwood, Paget East written by one of their sons from the Western Front in WW1. So our interest was aroused when the collection of the late Malcolm Gosling came under the hammer.

It was difficult for those not resident in Dallas or New York to assess the scale of the collection as the bulk of it was contained in ten massive remainder lots. However, Shreves' superbly illustrated colour catalogues enable buyers to view the single lots in all their glory. It was clear from these 180 lots that Gosling was a discriminating collector with a passion for the large keyplates. Nearly all the major keyplate varieties were present, often in positional blocks. Moreover, they must have been kept in an air-conditioned environment as the condition was nearly all fresh and fine.

My own bidding expectations were modest although as it turned out I secured several nice items at reasonable prices. The sale was unreserved so there were some inevitable bargains, but these were nearly all faulty or duplicated lots. As I have noted before, the Bermuda market is heavily oversold, though buying interest for the good stamps remains strong. One feature was the distinct interest in relatively minor varieties that have recently been listed by Gibbons (the check the box mentality evidently remains alive and kicking). However, bidders' confidence suffered from the fact that Shreves' descriptors do not list the Bermuda keyplates by printing, although for many of the GVI stamps Gosling had allocated the printings, apparently correctly. The family will have been satisfied but there were few outstanding realisations and my own results indicate that more could have been achieved. Exceptions were the upper left blocks of the 1932 12/6 at \$2,000 and the 1943 2/- with blank upper right scroll at \$1,700. Note Shreves charges 10% to buyers and sellers, less than many.

Future events

Spink is holding a BWI sale on 21-2 October that contains some juicy specialist collections. The two that have caught my eye are a booklet collection that includes nearly all the rare early booklets of Barbados, Br Guiana, Jamaica and Trinidad and the Cyril Bell collection of Grenada. I have a photostat of Cyril's exhibit of the Grenada revenue stamps and it is a lovely lot. Apparently the remainder of the collection is not so exciting but it is extensive. We are also promised a fine offering of Frederick Mayer's Antigua, nice selections of Bahamas and St Lucia, plus a "wonderful collection of St Vincent with plenty of rarities and covers".

Another exciting event looms in February next year when Sothebys will offer the Sir Gawaine Baillie BWI. A "closet" collector, I have seen Sir Gawaine buying exceptional Bahamas in the Staircase and Ludington sales, but it is still a surprise to learn that the presale estimates exceed £10mn. He did not collect used or covers, but it sounds as if those interested in mint multiples and proof material will have good reason to visit the Bond St galleries again, though I sincerely hope the 20% premium that shocked us last time has disappeared.

The next Victoria auction is scheduled for 9 October and we are promised the "Nashville" collection of British America ensuring rarities across the board including St Vincent and Antigua.

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	& SG163E Imprint block of six		<u>St Lucia</u>	KGVI ½d 1c 2c Strips of 4	£10
	10/- SG163 block of four		Some coil join strips of above are available		
	10/- SG163F block of six	£125	<u>St Lucia</u>	KGV ½d 1d	£15
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Revisions to contact details should be provided to the Hon. Secretary, Peter Boulton, address inside front cover.

In this issue and in future, membership updates will be issued as loose booklet style inserts for the membership booklet.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**IAN JAKES.**

I received a letter from the Cayman Islands National Archive, which reads: You will note that the Library now has a new history book "Founded upon the Seas; A History of the Cayman Islands and Their People." Researched and written by the noted Caribbean Historian Dr. Michael Craton, and the Cayman Islands New History Committee, the copyright of which, is in the Cayman Islands Government, George Town, Grand Cayman.

The book itself is the first comprehensive history of the Cayman Islands and covers the period from pre-history to the current day, consisting of 532 pages, including a 15 page index. It is soft bound. The ISBN Number is 976-637-117-2. It was first published in Jamaica in 2003 by Ian Randle Publishers, 11 Cunningham Avenue, Box 686, Kingston 6 www.ianrandlepublishers.com. It is also published in the USA 2003 by Ian Randle Publishers Inc., where the ISBN Number is 0-9729358-2-7. It includes numerous old historical photographs in black and white with old documents and more modern photographs in colour. It is an extremely readable book and can be recommended to all those interested in the history of the Cayman Islands.

The location of this new book is 2.9.5 Al. Whilst there is mention of Cayman's Philatelic History in the book, the information provided is quite basic, although there is mention of an alleged scandal relating to variations and misprints on surcharged stamps which appeared in an issue of the magazine "Truth" in January 1908 as conveyed to the Colonial Secretary by the Ipswich Stamp Dealers, Messrs. Whitfield King on 31st January and 20th February 1908. This account is in the Cayman Islands National Archive, and I have asked for full details. If this is received I will prepare a report for a future bulletin.

Those interested in Cayman Islands Postal History Stamps and Postal Stationery, as recorded in the BWI bulletins from 1954 to 2003, would do better to borrow the Library copy of the information sent to the Cayman Islands National Archive (reference 2.9.6 top)

Library lists supplied upon application to Hon. Librarian accompanied by an S.A.E. (9" x 6½") – 2nd Class postage for 150 gm rate required.

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Bermuda: 1938-53, perf. 14, 2/-,
horizontal pair with variety, broken Scroll.
Sold for £1,647 in our October 2003 auction.



Bermuda: 1938-53, perf. 14, £1,
horizontal pair with variety, broken Scroll.
Sold for £941 in our October 2003 auction.



Bermuda: 1938-53, perf. 14, 12/6, horizontal pair with variety, broken
Scroll. Sold for £1,117 in our October 2003 auction.

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