

Eric Bateson Article – Evolution of Philatelic Covers



Figure 5

Grenada – 1909 – A Durre cover with the Queen Victoria tablet set, to Gera, Germany.

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

Affiliated to the Association of British Philatelic Societies

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) and the Postal History and markings of all other Caribbean territories during any period that they were under British administration or control, and those British Post Offices which operated in the Caribbean, and Central or South America.
- 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.
- 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 paragraph 1 above.

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SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS & INFORMATION
Biennial Convention

To be held at the Corus Hotel, Warwick, on Friday 30th September and Saturday 1st October 2005.

Formal speakers / displays by:

- Alan Becker – St. Vincent
- Brian Brookes – St. Christopher

The Programme and booking form is included in this issue and on the web site.

Philatex 2006

23rd to 25th February 2006 at the Horticultural Halls, Greycoat St London SW1.

To include a BWISC Meeting – details to follow

Members' Displays

In the September issue James Podger provides a description of a display of Cayman Islands presented by Graham Booth at Worthing.

It has been suggested that members send to the Editor, dates and places where they are to display, so that others who either collect the subject, live close by etc might have the opportunity to attend. Extending this idea, if anyone knows in advance of a BWI display or competitive entry, please send the Editor details and advanced publicity will be provided in the Bulletin.

Subscription

Please view the bottom right of the mailing sheet to check if your subscription has been paid.

GENERAL PHILATELIC INFORMATION & EVENTS
Hampex 2005

22nd October 2005 at Wickham Community Hall near Fareham.

ABPS National Philatelic Exhibition -

Friday 24th & Saturday 25th November 2006, to be held at the Riviera Centre, Torquay.

Information available from: ABPS Torquay 2006 29 Bowhay Lane Exeter EX4 1PE

Argyll Etkin

Argyll Etkin have informed us that they have new premises at 27 Regent Street, Piccadilly Circus, London SW1Y 4UA, with entrance in Jermyn Street.

Stamp Magazine

An article is appearing in the June edition by John Davis entitled 'War Tax Showcase'.

BERMUDA POSTAGE STAMPS & POSTAL HISTORY

(All numbers Ex B&K Five reigns cat 1991 – This cat is available @ £15)

1894 QV 1/- CW V18 – A range available

Part reconstruction – 118 copies – **£580**

Block of 10 – **£50**

Block of 8 – **£40**

Block of 4 – **£20**

1910 – 1934 Ship Type – A mint range of printings (62 stamps)

$\frac{1}{4}$ d to 1/- CW G1 to 10, G37 to 51 etc

£240

King George V – 1924 – 10/-

10/- G54 – **£90**

10/- G54A – **£125**

King George VI – 1938 – SPECIMEN overprints

1d to £1 (16) SP1 to 16 – **£975**

2/- to £1 (6) – **£875**

King George VI – 1938/53 Definitives

1d – 1/- (CW 1 to 10) – **£30**

Key Type 2/- to £1 – **MOST AVAILABLE**

1941 – Keyplate

2/- CW11A – A complete sheet,
incl. SCROLL FLAW
£550

2/6 Line Perf CW 18 – A18
lower right block of 4, SCROLL FLAW
AVAILABLE

1951 – £1 Keyplate

CW 26 – Fine Block of 8,
lower left, rows 4/5, stamps 1/4
£300

CW 26A – Block of 15 (R1/5, No 10/12)
(including stamp R1/11 – **No White Island**)
£1150

12/6 Prague Cover

1947 Cancelled Hamilton 18 June 1947 to Prague, arrival 23 June BK CW15BB
AVAILABLE

Postal History

1939 – 1951 – A collection of covers, mainly Key Plate,
Some 60 covers, includes some Censor mail etc. Largely Air Mail outward
£5500

1951 King George VI Provisional Wrappers

$\frac{3}{4}$ d on $\frac{1}{4}$ d – unused – **£12**

A range of used – mostly to BOWIE

$\frac{1}{4}$ d on $\frac{1}{4}$ d – 12 different Post Offices

£125

$\frac{3}{4}$ d on $\frac{1}{4}$ d – 12 different Post Offices

£125

Books

Dickgiesser – Yendall 1980 (red) – **Price £20**

Also 1985 (green) Book 2 – **Price £50**

Potter & Shelton (reprint) 1997 – **Price £35**

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**MINUTES OF THE 51st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BWISC
HELD AT 2:15 PM SATURDAY 23rd APRIL 2005**

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting was opened by Peter Ford, who extended a warm welcome to the 30 members present.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Steve Jarvis and Phillip MacMurdie.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting on 24 April 2004 as published in the June 2004 Bulletin had one error. The meeting was, of course, the 50th AGM and not the 49th as stated. It was proposed by Nigel Chandler and seconded by Dennis Mitton to accept the minutes and this was approved by the members present.

4. Report by the Hon. General Secretary (Peter Boulton)

Last year's programme of events included the AGM and members auction on 24 April 2004. This was fully reported in the Bulletin for June 2004. The highlight of the year was our Golden Jubilee meeting held at the Royal and our very successful auction held at Spinks. These were admirably reported and described in the December 2004 Bulletin.

Our main event for the current year is our biennial Convention to be held on 30 September and 1 October. This will be held at the same place as in 2003, but the hotel name has since changed from the Honiley Court Hotel to the Corus Hotel Warwick. Further details and the booking form will be published in the June Bulletin. The membership now stands at a total of 347, of which 231 are UK members and 116 are overseas members. This shows a net increase of 18 compared with last year. One member died during the year, three members resigned and 4 members were removed due to failure to pay their subscriptions, even after reminder letters. However, we have now gained 26 new members, which more than replaces the losses. The membership database is working satisfactorily and is continuously being updated. Changes of addresses etc. and new members are recorded in each issue of the Bulletin. A total of 100 amendments have been received during the year, following the publication of individual member's details on the back of the Bulletin address label. Members are urged to let me know about any change of address as soon as possible, otherwise they may miss an issue of the Bulletin.

5. Report by the Hon. Editor (Steve Jarvis) – read by Peter Boulton

The Bulletin has been well supported by members over the last year, with sustained contributions of articles, so much so, that my normal target of 36 pages has often been extended to 40 pages due to my embarrassment of riches.

However, any publication is only as good as the next edition and I therefore ask Members to please keep the articles flowing – not just major research articles but also half page snippets are very useful and interesting to readers. The Jubilee edition of March 2004 contained colour for the first time and I believe its continued use significantly enhances the appeal and usefulness of our journal, although it does add another complication organizing the sheets and disappointing contributors who only appear in b&w. My thanks to Peter Ford who undertakes the colour printing in Spain and who has to deal with the various consumable supply and courier challenges.

I have built a good working relationship with our print finisher (Sarsen Press in Winchester) who have proven to be very flexible and helpful. My envelope stuffing and stamp sticking procedures have now been refined and apart from boxes and paper turning the dining room into a production line for about a week, the process is fairly hassle free (but I do wish for more self-adhesive denominations).

Finally, my thanks to Charles Freeland for his regular Auction Update and excellent proof reading work.

The web site continues to evolve and I thank Peter Fernbank for converting another 30 old bulletins to electronic format. We have now reached edition 79 on-line.

(Peter Ford then mentioned the fact that we had entered the 2004 Bulletins to the ABPS journal competition and won the prize, which was a £100 cheque. The Bulletin will also be entered for a similar competition to be run by the American Philatelic Society.)

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

INCOME STATEMENT : YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2004

(Subject to Audit)

	£'s	2004	£'s	2003
INCOME :				
Subscriptions		3,269		3,157
Publications – Sales less commissions	2,697		14	
Less: <i>Printing costs</i>	(2,782)		-	
<i>Publication advertising</i>	150		-	
<i>Depreciation of printer</i>	(470)	(405)	(470)	(456)
Auction and other donations		5,316		1,083
Opinion fees		-		225
Interest received less tax		(13)		(13)
TOTAL INCOME		8,180		3,996
EXPENDITURE :				
Bulletin Costs less advertising	1,392		1,649	
Bulletin printer repairs	245		376	
Distribution and editorial expenses	1,352	2,989	880	2,905
Library - Cost of removal		11		-
Meeting room hire		-		335
50 th Anniversary weekend – net cost after recoveries		762		-
Wipex 2002 – net cost after recoveries		-		20
ABPS affiliation fee		136		135
Officers administration – Stationery, postage, telephone etc		205		294
Bank charges		91		-
Website		72		-
		4,2660	0	3,689
SURPLUS INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		3,914	£'s	307

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2004

ACCUMULATED FUND

Balance at 1st January 2004	2,076		18,049
Add: Surplus for the year	3,914		307
Dollar conversion reserve	(117)		79
	5,873		18,435
Less : Stocks of publications at cost	-		(16,359)
	5,873	£'s	2,076

REPRESENTED BY:

Printer (net of depreciation)	1,410		1,880
Cash at banks	2,053		2,394
Debtors – amounts due to us	5,019		475
	8,482		4,749
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(2,839)	(2,355)	
Other creditors – Amounts due by us	(220)	(318)	(2,673)
	5,873	£'s	2,076

AUDITORS REPORT

To be supplied after audit.

6. Report by the Hon. Treasurer (Ray Stanton)

Firstly I have to report that I am unable to present final audited accounts to the AGM due to the illness of Tony Farmer, our Auditor. We all wish Tony a speedy recovery. However I am able to present Accounts, subject to audit, and I am pleased to be able to report that the Income statement for the Study Circle for the year ended 31st December 2004 shows a surplus of £3,914.

This is due to the extremely successful Jubilee Auction which contributed most of the figure of £5,316 shown as 'Auctions and other Donations', a figure which is net of the running costs of the auction and catalogue production. All those involved with the Auction should receive our grateful thanks as the finances of the Study Circle have been radically improved as a consequence.

Sales of publications, now via David Druett as distributor, were also extremely successful, and this has enabled us to take a decision, with which I hope the meeting approves, to change our accounting procedures relating to publications. In the past the accounts have recorded the stocks at cost but then written them down to zero on the basis that the future sales were uncertain. We have now in the 2004 accounts written old stocks off fully. In the future, wherever possible we will set current years sales against current years printing costs, as reflected in the income statement this year.

Income from subscriptions is gradually improving as the increase in rates two years ago comes through, and continues to fully cover, along with advertising receipts, the cost of producing and distributing the bulletin.

With regard to expenses, we have saved on meeting room expenses due to the generosity of Grosvenor Auctions but we did incur a net cost of £762 in staging the 50th anniversary weekend being the cost of the facilities at the Royal and a small subsidy towards the meal at Gettis restaurant.

7. Report by the Hon. Librarian (Ian Jakes)

There has been a loan of 19 books to 6 members during the year. This compares with a loan of 27 books to 10 members during the year ended April 2004.

Whilst the Librarian adds information to the scrap books from time to time, no other members have provided information for the scrap books during the last 12 months. This compares with 2 members providing such information in the year ended April 2004.

2 members have requested, and been provided with a copy of the Library Catalogue. 3 books have been added to the Library in the last 12 months - all donated. The book 'Founded Upon The Seas; A History Of The Cayman Islands And Their People' was donated by Cayman Islands National Archive and the other additions are 'Bahamas The Local Overprinted Special Delivery Stamps of 1916-1917' By Ludington donated by Peter Fernbank and 'The Queen's Stamps - Travelling Exhibition - 2002 Jubilee Celebrations' donated by Michael Sefi, keeper of the Queen's Collection.

I am quite willing to carry out research in the Library for members. In the last 12 months two members have availed themselves of this facility, one requiring information concerning postal stationery, and the other requiring information concerning forged St. Vincent postmarks.

Finally, I received a request for general information from a man, who lives in Slovenia. He had obtained my address from our website.

8. Report by the Hon. Publications Officer (Peter Ford)

During 2004, much of my time was taken up with the production of the catalogue for our 'Golden Sale'. There were several frustrations en route; nevertheless, I feel that the time and money which was devoted to its production was, in the end, worthwhile. As a matter of interest, it cost approximately £3,500 to produce 700 copies, which were distributed free to all BWISC members as well as BCPSG members. This may explain why some of us on the Committee were looking a little concerned during the auction on the day, as with a commission of 10%, we had to sell £35,000 worth of material to recover our outlay.

Although we didn't publish anything during the year, work was progressing on books which will see the light of day this year or next. Amongst these are the book, samples of which I have brought along today, Terence Dickinson's 'British Guiana Picture Postcards'. I was hoping to be able to publish Mike Rego's 'Steamship Lines to the Caribbean' as one volume; however, it turned out to be a somewhat larger work than I had envisaged, with between 700 and 800 pages. To publish such a volume would have proved too much for our finances and would have probably cost the

buyer a sum in excess of £100. We have therefore, decided to publish it in 3 or 4 volumes, the first of which I hope to have out by June, with the next by the end of the year. We have been fortunate in that the Trustees of the Roses Caribbean Philatelic Society's Fund have seen fit to lend us some £3,500 to fund this project.

Other projects in the pipeline are a handbook on Trinidad, Volume 8 on the Airmails in our Jamaica Encyclopaedia; a booklet on Bermuda in World War I censorship should follow shortly and there are other booklets, one on the Turks & Caicos and one on the Cayman Islands.

The major success last year has been in our sales figures. We have had David Druett of Pennymead Auctions as our distributor for just over a year now, and his pro-active stance has resulted in our selling some 265 volumes. This has been both as a result of David's work and the discounts offered to buyers. This last has been made necessary in order to reduce stocks, the storage of which was becoming critical. These sales have brought in some £2,672 of income, after commission and postage costs. I hope that this collaboration between David and ourselves will continue, so that we can reach out to as many people as possible, to encourage them to take an interest and commence collecting material from our area of philately.

9. Report by the Hon. Public Relations Officer (Philip MacMurdie) – Read by Peter Ford

50th anniversary Publicity

2004 and the 50th anniversary celebrations have provided an unprecedented challenge and a great opportunity for the Circle to raise its profile within the philatelic audience. Having taken on the role as publicity officer at short notice I was pleased to be able to complete and have published articles within the following publications:-

- Gibbons Stamp Monthly (GSM)
- The ABPS Bulletin
- The BCPSG Journal
- And the George VI study circle journal.

The articles within GSM were particularly well received and included illustrations of a number of the lots on offer from the anniversary auction in addition to a complete resume of the Study Circle itself and details about the anniversary celebrations.

The only disappointing note was that publicity within the US proved very difficult. Despite sending various communications to US magazines etc nothing was forthcoming.

Going forward –

I plan to send each of the UK magazines an update as to our activities on a periodic basis, including details of our annual auction as well as any society displays.

In addition it would be very useful if we as a society could furnish GSM with some articles for future publication. This will also allow us to remain in the forefront of peoples minds with respect to West Indies philately whilst further enhancing our growing reputation as one of the leading Philatelic research groups.

I must extend my thanks to Charles Freeland, Peter Ford, Derek Nathan and Simon Goldblatt for their guidance and assistance throughout 2004.

10. Report by the Chairman of the Committee (Peter Ford)

In reporting to the membership this year, I am in a slightly awkward position as to where to begin. We have, as befits our 50th anniversary, had a most successful year. I shall begin by reporting on our celebrations at the end of October. This was a two day event, the first of which was held at the Royal Philatelic Society premises at 41, Devonshire Place; the day was well attended and members had the opportunity to witness two first class displays by Michael Medlicott on 'West Indies Revenues' and Joseph Hackmey on 'Grenada'; to both of whom I extend my thanks. As well as this, there were many informal displays representing all the West Indian colonies. I would like to thank all who took part that day, especially Derek Nathan, who despite being indisposed in the time running up to the event, did an excellent job of liaising with Paul Moorcroft to make the day run smoothly. Also, I must mention Michael Oliver, who despite his distance from London, did a very creditable job of organising the informal displays.

The second day was a 'trade day', held at Spinks auction rooms. This was a very pleasant venue where our dealers found themselves with plenty of space to display their wares and plenty of eager collectors with money to spend. The highlight of the day was, of course, our 'Golden Jubilee'

auction. Our venerable auctioneer, Simon Goldblatt, had, by means I didn't care to enquire into too deeply, cajoled members to put up for auction, some of their treasured possessions. We had a catalogue of 50 items each with a minimum value of £500. The auction started slowly with the first dozen items selling at reserve, if indeed they sold at all. Lot 13, unlucky for some, certainly enlivened the proceedings, eventually selling for £20,000. This must be a record realisation for a sale organised by a specialist society, and one unlikely to be superseded for many a year. After this the auction attained a momentum of its own and subsequent lots gained a lot more interest. Eventually, I have to report some 37 of the 50 lots sold, total realisations reaching a magnificent total of £68,600. To this amount we must add the takings of our concurrently running Private Treaty sale, some £3,567 plus the amount from the members' table that day, £1,326. Total sales that day reaching just short of £74,000. I must again thank everybody involved in making this day such a success.

However, the one person who deserves the most praise is Simon Goldblatt. Not only was the auction his concept, but he worked tirelessly to persuade vendors to part with their material and also canvassed members of the London philatelic trade to see if such a project was likely to succeed. Finally, he was, as usual, an excellent auctioneer – this fact borne out by the comments of all the professional auctioneers present. We are very lucky to have Simon, who works very hard every year running our annual auction, which last year was again very successful with realisations of over £16,000 including post-auction sales. It was with this in mind that your Committee decided to award Simon with Honorary Life Membership of our Study Circle. I hope that you, the membership present, concur with this decision.

The time I have taken reporting our Golden Jubilee events should not detract from the other essential work done by your Committee. However, in the interests of brevity, I will make mention of these only briefly. The high standard that our quarterly Bulletin has maintained has been recognised by the award of the ABPS Society Journal Award. This is primarily due to the efforts of our Hon. Editor, Steve Jarvis, who has not only been proactive in soliciting articles but has improved the appearance of the Bulletin immeasurably. This process will, no doubt, continue. Credit is also due to contributors, without whom, such a successful journal would not be possible. Steve is also responsible for the website which has been contributing to the high profile of our Study Circle. Whilst writing this report, I looked at the website to find that it has had some 2100 'hits'.

Our Treasurer kept us all with our feet firmly on the ground during the run-up to our Jubilee celebrations by keeping a close eye on our expenditure. I feel that he has good reason to be satisfied with our accounts at the end of the year. Our Secretary has also been beavering away in the background, as well as making arrangements for our biennial Convention in September/October, details of which will be announced in the June Bulletin. Finally, I extend my thanks to my Committee, who are sorely tried by my constant demands on their time and energy, never failing to come up with the goods when asked.

Finally, I have to report that our Hon. Auditor, Tony Farmer has not been well lately; I am sure I reflect the wishes of the membership by wishing him well and a speedy recovery.

11. Re-Election of the Chairman of the Committee

Peter Ford was re-elected unanimously.

12. Re-election of Officers

The President, Vice-Presidents, Hon. Officers and Messrs. M.Hamilton and D. Mitton have all agreed to continue as members of the Committee. Consequently, all are automatically re-elected.

13. Re-election of the Hon. Auditor

Volunteers to audit the accounts of the Circle were requested from the audience, but since none were forthcoming, a new auditor will have to be found.

14. Other Business

Peter Ford stated that he had managed to obtain a room at Philatex in 2006 for formal displays. During the discussion, Charles Freeland suggested that informal displays would also be welcome.

NEW! BRITISH GUIANA PICTURE POSTCARDS NEW!

By Terence Dickinson

A new exciting book from the BWISC which catalogues all known picture postcards of British Guiana. It includes a listing of the hand-painted postcards, QSL cards and postcards of ships associated with British Guiana. There is also a scarcity guide which will be of value to collectors of these picturesque postcards. **PRICE: £28.00 (BWISC members' discount £3.00)**

This book will be available early in the New Year and can be ordered from David Druett of Pennymead Auctions at 1, Brewerton Street, Knaresborough, N. YORKS, HG5 8AZ, UK or via e-mail at Pennymead@aol.com, or via Telephone at 0044 (0)1423 865962 or Fax at 0044 (0)1423 547057.

Please state that you are a member of the BWISC so as to obtain members discount. Also advise if airmail or surface mail is required for overseas orders.

NOTE: Post & packing are extra. Orders will be dispatched with invoice and prompt payment is requested. Payment by Sterling cheque or US or Canadian dollar check can be accepted. Credit cards accepted (not AMEX). Also payment may be made in Euros (cash only).



Offers from stock

<p>Antigua SG 55-61 1921-22 watermark MCA set of 7. F-VFM £135</p> <p>Bahamas SG 155a 1941 1/- on thin striated paper. VFM £200 SG 201-16 1954-63 VFUM collection of blocks of 4 to 1/- (better shades inc. 1962 4d, 10d in blocks). Col-join pairs ½d-1/- (5), and set with 2/- and 5/- shades £125 SG 247-61 1965 definitive set of 15. VFUM cylinder blocks of 4 £100</p> <p>Barbados SG 237 1932 1/- perf 13½ x 12½. VFM £30 SG 299a 1960 80ct bl-green & pale maroon. VFUM £22</p> <p>British Guiana SG 272-82 1921-27 set of 11. VFM/UM £48 SG 317a 1951 \$1 bright violet perf 14 x 13. VFM £200</p> <p>British Honduras SG 212 1962 \$2 Jacamar. VFUM cyl. 1A block of 4 £38</p> <p>Dominica SG 142a-50a 1962 shades of 2ct, 5ct and 10ct. VFUM £20</p>	<p>Jamaica SG 91-103 1921-29 set of 13. VFM £85 SG 143-44 1948 Silver Wedding. VFM Plate no. pairs, 1½d Plate '1', £1 '1a' £25</p> <p>Leeward Is. SG 80 1928 £1 purple and black on red paper. VFM £145 SG 81-87 1931-32 Die 1 st of 7. VFM, 6d UM £75</p> <p>St. Kitts-Nevis 1938-50 reference run-through of all different perfs and shades per CW. Mostly fine mint, but some used or faulty. Ex Baldwin £175</p> <p>St. Lucia CW 42a 1930 2ct perf 14½ x 14. VFUM block of 4 from sheets, centred top right £50</p> <p>St. Vincent SG 164-77 1949-52 set of 19 plus extra reprints (17). VFUM £65</p> <p>Turks & Caicos SG 191, a 1937 ½d Coronation. The two shades. VFU £20</p>
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Postage Extra




AUCTION REPORT

As we have come to expect auction realisations running into five figures, there was little sympathy for the auctioneer's gloomy predictions one week before the event. Behind a catalogue whose format and content seemed to reinforce our claim to be one of the leading specialist societies of the philatelic world, lay a trail of minor misfortunes: two descriptions melded into one lot in Anguilla; a Barbados item lurking under Bahamas; two lots with identical numbers; a choice illustrated item withdrawn; a mis-numbered illustration; and, by far the worst of all, a proportion of our members getting catalogues with pages shuffled, pages duplicated, pages missing. An auction "book" with only a quarter of the lots covered, with 7 days to go, sounded ill-omened.

Just as usual, the auctioneer was wrong, and the members came up trumps. Owing to the zeal of our Editor, a corrected version of the catalogue was on the Circle website within hours of his learning of the problems. A flurry of last-minute bidding gave the auction book a healthier tone – though still well under par. And if the 31 bidders registered did not represent a record number, they made up for deficiencies in every other respect. In the end, over 60% of the lots were sold, and realisations of over £14,000 showed that, whatever the slips along the road, the auction team had put together offerings that matched the high standards that we set for ourselves.

There were flat spots, of course. Eleven times during the sale five lots or more were passed in succession ("Pass" means "Fail", explained the auctioneer at one point), and there was one sequence of ten unsold lots, with British Guiana – badly affected by the defective catalogues in circulation – by far the major sufferer. Yet the rhythm of the auction was not really disturbed, and there was steady and sometimes vigorous interest in most of the BWI territories. Barbados was keenly supported. British Honduras, Grenada and Jamaica all flourished. Leeward Island material was in strong demand, and from that point there were buyers for almost everything, until we were half-way through Trinidad. It is almost traditional for interest to die away at this stage, and momentum can be lost for good. Not this year: buyers came back on the scene for the maritime and other Trinidad covers, and more than half the last 80 lots changed hands.

When totalled up, prices realised were more than 4% above the corresponding valuations, so is the auction team starting to slip? Probably not: once one allows for the margin for improvement lying in stamps of high quality – for example lot 37 of Bahamas (6d perf 13, £220) and lot 443 of St Lucia (QV 6d pair, £140) – a few possible bargains to be had in our under-described groups of covers, and the



familiar hunger for postmark material of St Vincent, statistics tend to come back into balance. Indeed, much of the percentage uplift lay in the Montserrat bisects on cover, illustrated on the front of the catalogue. Room bidders were content to see this go to a book bidder for a modest £340; but it turned out that a further faxed bid had arrived in time for the auction and had not been taken into account. The adjusted sale price was £620, against the estimate of £400.

The other high-flyers in the sale are easy to understand. The Barbados Britannia 1d, used strip of five (lot 96) fetched £110 against its estimate of £20, with the book of six competing bidders left far behind at a mere £60, while Esk and Solent (Leeward lots 378 and 379), but not Eden, approximately trebled their £28 estimates at £80 and £90.



Nothing could better illustrate the contrast between commercial and philatelic covers than St Vincent lots 481 and 482. The former, estimated £95, attracted six book bidders, and went for £150. The latter, estimated £180, went to a solitary room bidder for £140. Both buyers will have got satisfaction; possibly they each got a bargain.



Some statistics on forgeries may be noted. This year 26 lots featured forgers and fakers in one context or another: 21 of these were sold, the ones left behind containing for the most part very familiar productions by Spiro. Prices paid ran out at more than 15% above the estimates, which themselves reflected a buoyant market for such items. Will the rising trend continue? Watch this space!

Room bidders captured 205 of the 387 lots sold under the hammer.

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This year Douglas N. Muir, Curator of Philately at The British Postal Museum and Archive, and Hugh Jefferies, Editor of Gibbons Stamp Monthly, were the judges. They record their findings – and announce the results.

Last year saw the first ABPS award for local society newsletters. This year the award has been extended to include specialist society journals and there are now two awards for these very different categories. By their very nature local society newsletters are more ephemeral than specialist society journals. While members might be expected to attend meetings of their local society the job of a specialist journal is to spread information to a worldwide membership, many of whom will not attend any meeting.

...

Specialist Societies

Turning to specialist society journals made us consider what we thought essential in such organs. As mentioned, the audience is different from that of a local society, and thus the purpose of the journal and the challenges facing the editor are also quite different.

Members are clearly interested in the overall subject, but within that there may well be a very wide variety of particular themes or areas. Over a period these should be reflected in the journal. The eternal cry of nearly every editor in this position is 'Please send me more articles' and the danger is that only a few do, so that you end up with the same authors repeatedly. If at all possible this should be avoided.

There are various aims in a specialist journal but first must come the dissemination of accurate research. You are trying to unite a geographically disparate group of people and so a group sense of identity is also important. As far as content is concerned it should be varied, well illustrated, relevant and, of course, accurate. References to previous articles or books should always be given, remembering that future students will want to know what else has been published on the subject. In each issue of the journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain there was a very useful listing of recent articles in other, particularly foreign, magazines. This might be an idea for other societies.

With modern reproduction technology colour illustrations are now quite feasible and within reach financially. It should be remembered that the attraction of the hobby is not black and white.

Taking these criteria we examined the submitted journals separately and then discussed our findings together, coming to a clear result. Individually we both came to the same conclusion and by the same margin. The two front runners were the journal or bulletin of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain and the British West Indies Study Circle. Both were well illustrated with a good range of content and references in professional layouts, but the winner is the British West Indies Study Circle Bulletin.



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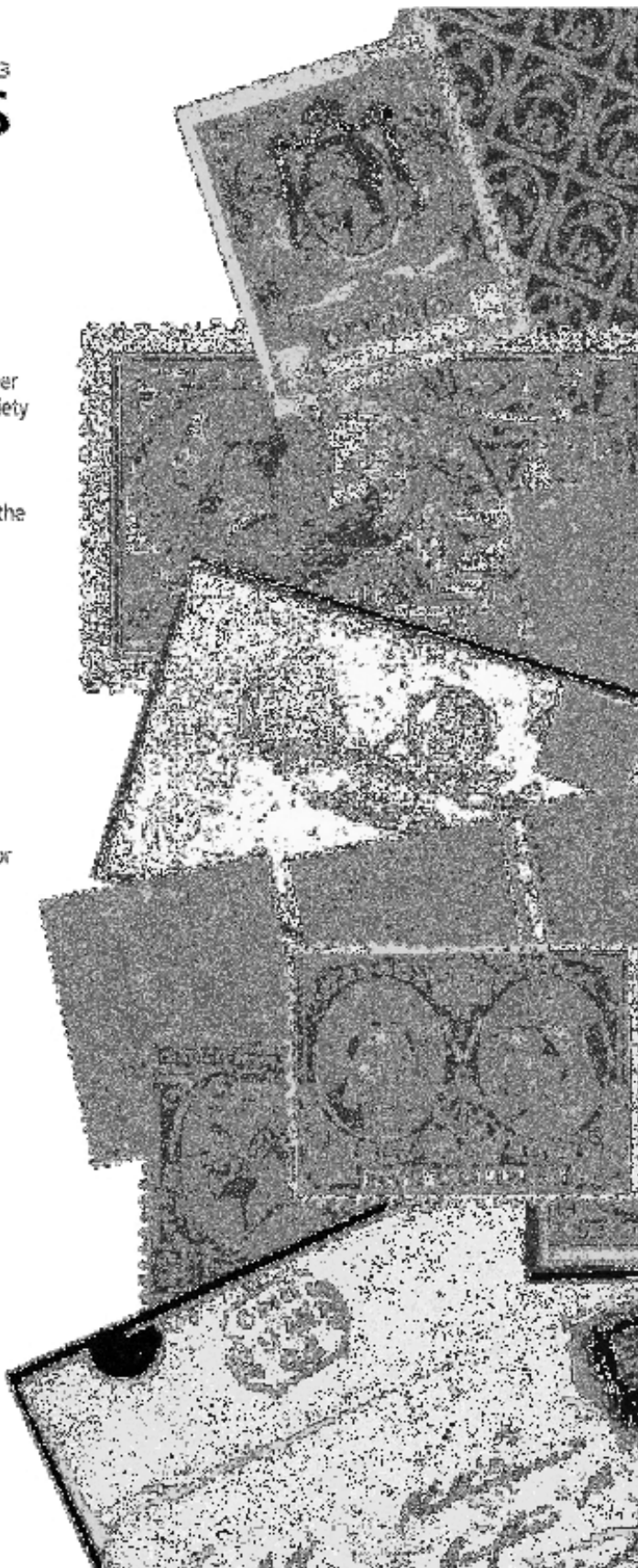
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THE EVOLUTION OF PHILATELIC COVERS OF BRITISH WEST INDIES 1880 – 1935

BY ERIC BATESON

Interest in philatelic covers has existed for many years, the object being either to obtain used stamps to augment a stamp collection or specifically to collect stamps on covers¹. From a review of my own collection and many years of study of auction or dealers' catalogues, philatelic covers appear to fall into three eras, with some overlap depending upon the date of postage and the address.

Philatelic covers of West Indian origin appeared in the 1880s, Continental European before the Great War of 1914 – 1918, British and American post war. The continental covers are markedly philatelic and are regarded as 'classical'. Therefore, from a philatelic point of view the eras can be divided into pre-classical, classical and post-classical.

Era		Country of origin
Pre classical	1800 – 1900	West Indies
Classical	1900 – 1915	Continental Europe
Post classical	1915 – 1935	Britain and United States

The majority of philatelic covers of the pre-classical era are of personal origin and the stamps on the covers are usually unrelated. A representative example in 1883 from Trinidad (Figure 1) and later covers with sets of stamps in 1896 from Barbados (Figure 2) and from the Turks Islands in 1900 (Figure 3) are shown. Covers produced by dealers appeared around this time generally of simple format and are illustrated by a cover in 1882 from British Guiana (Figure 4).

Philatelic covers of the classical era can usually be identified because the names and addresses of the recipients are printed on the envelopes. They show series of definitive stamps (Figure 5), commemorative stamps (Figure 6) and sometimes a single high value stamp (Figure 7).

They are probably the product of dealers who must have bought up stocks of current or withdrawn Colonial stamps in London and sent them out to postal departments throughout the world to have the stamps postmarked on self addressed covers².

Two names seen on classical philatelic covers in the early 1900s are those of Jackson of Birmingham and Zissler of London but the majority are German with names ranging from Bickel to Zander. Most numerous are those of Kiderlen (Figure 7) and Kinze (Figure 8). Kiderlen's are an exception to the rule being hand addressed but definitely philatelic because the stamps on his covers are few in number or single but of high value in excess of postal requirements. Classical covers are also seen from other European countries including Austria-Hungary, Belgium, France and Switzerland.

The advent of the first world war saw a marked reduction of these classical type covers from Germany and continental Europe presumably as a result of the hostilities. The less attractive covers of the post classical era now appeared, Wilson³ of Birmingham was most prolific. His were neatly typed with part sets, pairs, or single stamps on the covers (Figure 9). Covers of the Reverend Iremonger⁴ of Bristol are also common and are distinctive because his name and address was applied by a rubber stamp in red ink (Figure 10). There is nothing to indicate that the Reverend gentleman was a dealer but the plethora of covers bearing his name suggests he had a business interest in philately.

Other British names are noted including Ewen's Colonial stamp market, Kimber, Highfield, Southampton, Oswald Marsh, Marshall (Manchester) and the Sheriff of Southampton (was he really a commercial dealer?). Those of Sibberling of the Isle of Wight and McMichael of Scotland are more attractive and reminiscent of those of the classical era.

From the West Indies covers with sets of stamps to Miss Doorly of Government House St Lucia (Figure 11) are interesting and also those to Husbands Esq. Secretary of the Philatelic Society of British Guiana. His are different with a single stamp and hand written address presumably as the result of philatelic correspondence.

War tax stamps on covers should be mentioned and are often found addressed to Wilson, Ewens etc but some have West Indian addresses including Clarke of St Lucia and Littlepage of Port of Spain.

The stamps of George V continued to appear on covers in the post-classical era and, in addition to those of British and West Indian origin, covers to the United States became more frequent. Often seen are those of two clergymen, the Reverend Meister and the Reverend Pastor and also of lay persons including Prieth, Montgomery Ward, Nicoletich and Tittman. These covers of American origin are typical of the post-classical era being handwritten (with the exception of those of Nicoletich) and normally bear only one or two stamps. They are also probably the result of philatelic correspondence but are useful in filling gaps in collections of stamps on covers. A typical example is shown (Figure 12). Roessler should be mentioned because his were selected for their philatelic interest (Figure 13) and are similar to covers of the classical era.

The pictorial and other new issues of stamps of the later years of the post-classical era demonstrate a return to covers with full sets of stamps. Sir Charles Belcher's name is frequently seen. His covers were always sent to a poste-restante West Indian address. An illustrative cover is shown (Figure 14) with the complete set of the pictorial issue of Trinidad and Tobago addressed to another member of the British nobility, Lady Tew.

Finally, mention must be made of first day covers. Early examples are known, many of which may be incidental but some are deliberate. Figure 15 shows the County Union of British Guiana set with the first day postmark of 1931 (21 July). They became established as a new area of collecting with the Omnibus issue of the Silver Jubilee George V and Mary. Those produced by the Westminster Stamp company of London are the most attractive (Figure 16).

This article is an overview and space prevents a more complete coverage of the subject. It can also be regarded as an introduction to the philatelic covers of the classical era which are distinctive in appearance and can form a most attractive collection of used stamps on covers.

References

- 1 Bateson Eric M. BWI Study Circle Bulletin, March 2004, 200: 8-14.
- 2 Brunner R. Personal communication 2004 (Munich Philatelic Library). "Neither Paul Kiderlen or Julius Kinze are listed in the German Who's Who of philately as not important philatelists but purely stamp dealers who supplied their clientele with self produced covers".
- 3 British Philatelic Trust, 2004. William Wilson (1847-1932) was a dealer, initially in the USA (Scott Stamp and Coin Company) and subsequently in the UK in partnership with his son.
- 4 Stanley Gibbons, Stamp Collecting Who's Who, 1960 p.49. The Reverend William Iremonger (b.22/07/75) was a member of several philatelic societies but was not particularly interested in the West Indies. There is no reference to him being a stamp dealer.



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Figure 3

Turks Islands – 1900 – cover bearing several Q. Victoria values between SG 59-72.
Possibly sent by the doctor to himself when visiting the islands on HMS Alert.

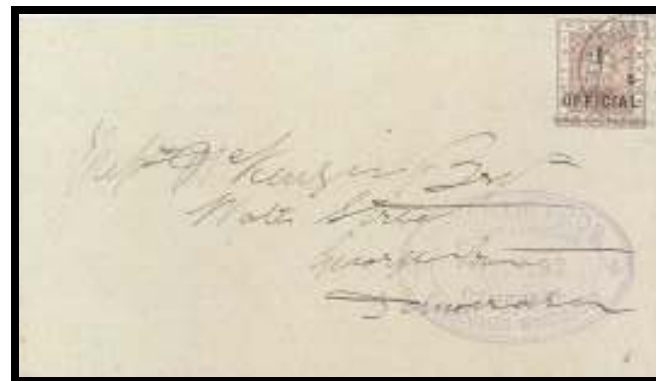


Figure 4

British. Guiana – 1881 – local Mackenzie Bros cover
with the figure 1 surcharged on the 48 cents red brown official stamp (SG154).



Figure 6

Barbados – 1906 – A Thurm cover with the Nelson Centenary
Sent to Berlin.



Figure 7

Trinidad – 1913 – Kiderlen cover with the 5s Britannia value,
SG 131, lilac and mauve to Ulm on the Danube, Germany.



Figure 8

Bahamas – 1914 – Kinze cover with George V MCCA set.
to Halberstadt, Germany.



Figure 9

British Virgin Islands – 1928 – Wilson cover to Birmingham
with George V and Virgin Is. values between SG126 – 130.



Figure 10

Leeward Islands, posted in Nevis – 1929 –
with a pair of matching Reverend Iremonger covers,
one with the 3s value and the other the 4s value Die II MSA.

Figure 11



Montserrat – 1932 – cover bearing the lower values of the Tercentenary issue
to Miss Dooley, Government House, St Lucia.

Figure 12



Grenada – 1909 – cover with Badge of the Colony values 3d and 6d (SG84 and 85),
an early letter to Benedict Prieth, New Jersey.



Figure 13

Bahamas – 1930 – Tercentenary set on 1st daily flight cover Nassau to Miami sent by one philatelist (Walter Hess) to another (Roessler of New Jersey).



Figure 14

Trinidad & Tobago – 1938 – Pictorial set SG230a to 238 to Lady Tew of Greenacres, Hartley Wintney, Hampshire



Figure 15

British Guiana – 1931 – Local first day cover bearing the Centenary set to Kidman Esq. Albertstown.



Figure 16

St Kitts – 1935 – A choice illustrated first day cover with the Silver Jubilee set to the Westminster Stamp Company of London

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BAHAMAS

QUEEN'S STAIRCASE ISSUE – VIGNETTE PLATE 3

BY PETER FERNBANK

During the thirty-year life of the Queens Staircase issue six vignette plates were made. Plates 1 and 2 were provided at the start of the issue in 1900 and each appears to have been used randomly, the use of plate 2 predominating. After only approximately 99,000 sheets had been printed both were retired in 1918 and replaced by two new plates, 3 and 4. The vignette plate numbers for plates 1 and 2 were provided once only on the sheet, positioned on the left-hand corner of the sheet in the side margin, 6mm from the frame of the adjacent stamp (Fig.1 & 2). Plate number examples are obtainable, but they are by no means common. The plate numbers for plates 3 and 4 were positioned half way up the left-hand margin but 21mm from the frame of the adjacent stamp (Fig. 3). Because of the excessive width of the margins all round the sheet they were trimmed to a more manageable size (note 1), and in the process the plate number imprint on all plates made after 1 and 2 were cut off in the vast majority of cases. For this reason plate number examples for these later plates are rare, and for the specialist this produces some problems in positively identifying which plate was used for the various printings made around 1917-1919 (note 2). To the best of my knowledge plate numbers from 5 and 6 are not rare – they just don't exist!

It is believed that Plate 3 was retired prematurely after only a few months in use. It is known for certain that it was employed for the only printing of the War Charity issue in December 1918 (for which plate 4 may also have employed), but only two, possibly three, plate 3 examples of this issue are known to exist (see note 3). It may also have been used on one or two other printings (possibly 3d purple on yellow, SG76 and 76a, and 3d War Tax (Gisburn), SG98), but I am not aware of any plate number examples existing for these values.

Plates 3 and 4 were made at the same time, almost certainly by the same process. Apart from the plate numbers I have been unable to determine any difference between them in terms of the relative position, shape or size of the various markings in the margins. However, I have a block of ten of the War Charity issue with the plate 3 imprint (Fig.3), and a complete sheet without a plate number (note 4). On studying the two there were various scratches on the plate (note 5) that were present on both and I was therefore able to identify the sheet as emanating from plate 3. Of the 60 stamps in the sheet there are fifteen that exhibit plate scratches, listed and illustrated below. The large number of scratches on the plate may well have been the reason it was retired so early in its life. In the absence of any other means of plate identification the presence of these scratches can positively identify other Queens Staircase values emanating from plate 3. In addition, of course, they also identify the position on the sheet of an individual example.

On the basis of these plate scratches I would welcome information from members on any other values that can be positively identified as emanating from plate 3.

NOTES

- 1) The trimming of the sheet margins was rather crudely performed. In many cases the margins are not parallel with the row of adjacent stamps, and indeed the edges of the sheet are not always straight. Gisburn and others have stated that the printers guillotined the sheet margins, but I really cannot imagine that De La Rue would have performed this task so unprofessionally, particularly since they had the necessary guillotining machinery readily available. I strongly suspect the trimming of the margins was done in the Bahamas by the postal authorities.
- 2) Ewens Colonial Stamp Mart., the leading new issue dealer of the time, only found one sheet with a plate 4 imprint (of the 1d wmk. MCCA) from all the many sheets that passed through their hands.
- 3) I obtained my Plate 3 block in 1988, but have never publicly displayed it. A block of fifteen with plate 3 imprint was sold in the 'Staircase' sale at Spink in 1999 (which re-appeared in the recent Graham Hoey sale at Cavendish), and it was stated in each case that only two examples were known. Whether or not that included my block is not known.
- 4) When I purchased my War Charity sheet a number of years ago I was given the choice of a dozen or so similar sheets. In each case the plate number had been trimmed off.

- 5) These scratches were very probably created during the cleaning of the plate (possibly by a speck of grit on the cleaning rag). De La Rue's recess printing plates were made of copper, and the firm consistently referred to recess printing as 'the copper plate process'. Because they were made of copper they were easily scratched and suffered over time from the effects of compression due to the high pressures sustained during the printing process.

Figure1



Vignette Plate 1

Figure 2



Vignette Plate 2

Figure 3



Vignette Plate 3 Frame Plate 2

Plate scratches on Plate 3.

Some of the scratches illustrated below are quite faint, although they may be easily seen under slight magnification, but for illustrative purposes it has been necessary to strengthen the lines. However, their position is as stated (Stamp Row/Column) on the illustrations below).



14 (2/2)



15 (2/3)



20 (2/8)



27 (3/3)



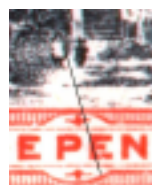
29 (3/5)



30 (3/6)



31 (3/7)



32 (3/8)



38 (4/2)



42 (4/6)



43 (4/7)



44 (4/8)



48 (4/12)



51 (5/3)



51 (5/3)



55 (5/7)

BARBADOS**1882 1d ROSE BISECTED, WITH A B4 CANCEL****PETER LONGMUIR**

As pointed out in the March Bulletin, purchases on E-Bay can be risky. Amongst a few bargains lurk others where descriptions may not match reality.

Just before Xmas, an 1882 1d bisected on piece was offered with a somewhat flattering description – 'Scott 81b used on piece Incredible \$115.00++ WOW'-, recognised by me as having a forged postmark cancel but still a 'want'. My bid of \$20 was quickly overtaken. However, I had warned both the seller and the successful bidder of my suspicions, and once the latter had indicated a reluctance to pay, the seller agreed to withdraw the item, and then allowed me to purchase it for my \$20.

Readers may be interested in the postmark cancel of B4, which is unknown genuinely on any Barbados stamp. Besides this example, shown below, I was also aware of two others, both on the same SG91 bisected, all three with different dates.

My E-Bay purchase; dated JA 2 88, is identical to the one sold 'as is' by Harmers in their Br. Comm. Jan 1971 sale – lot 199 – and the other shown below dated MR 1 88, is ex Del Harris.

The third example, dated MR 15 88, is in none other than the Queen's Royal collection, but without any reference to its suspect nature!

I would be pleased to team of any other examples.



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BARBADOS

PREVIOUSLY UNRECORDED 1815 'PAID TO ENGLAND' MARKING

BY STEFAN HEIJTZ

A couple of years ago, an entire letter turned up with a 'BARBADOES AP 29 1815' fleuron, as well as a circular 'PAID TO ENGLAND' marking in red, both struck across the flap on the back of the letter. At the time, this was a complete mystery, but with the help of Mike Hamilton as well as various publications, it has been possible to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the 'PAID TO ENGLAND' marking was indeed struck in Barbados, and that it was a marking used by the Barbados Packet Office. Another part of the mystery was to try to calculate the rates charged, and this also proved to be very complex, but in the end this part was solved as well.

PAID TO ENGLAND markings seem to have been supplied to a number of the British Colonies in the West Indies (and elsewhere) and in T. Foster's book about Jamaica, he mentions that a 'PAID TO ENGLAND' marking was in use between 1810 and 1811 (subsequently an example used in 1813 has been recorded as well). He also mentions that 'similar handstamps but of varying size are known used from St Christopher and the Turks Islands and were probably issued to other Caribbean colonies. They are all extremely rare'. An example from Tortola from 1815 has also been recorded. It is surprising that these markings were issued at all. It is fully understandable that prepayment of postage was used very little at this very early stage around 1810 and that this is the reason for why these markings are so rare. The Napoleonic wars made shipping very unsafe and to prepay the postage for a letter which had a small chance of arriving at its destination didn't make sense. There was however a second reason for the use of these markings and this is explained below.

The letter from Barbados has two rates charged; the obvious '1/4' in black at the lower left, but also a red '1/6' at the top right underneath the 'SHIP LETTER LIVERPOOL' Crown. The '1/4' can easily be explained since this is the double inland rate for a letter from Liverpool, the port of arrival, to Lancaster, the destination. At the time, the inland rate was 8d for a distance between 50 and 80 miles and the distance between Liverpool and Lancaster falls within this range. Two times 8d. is 1s.4d so that makes sense.

But what about the '1/6' in red? This has turned out to be the fascinating part of this mystery. In 1814, an attempt was made by the GPO to prevent ship letters to by-pass the Post Office, and this produced one of the most bizarre episodes in British postal history, the 'Withdrawn Ship Letter' (WSL) scheme (for a full and comprehensive description of the WSL scheme see 'For the Port & Carriage of Letters' by David Robinson, page 117). It became illegal to place letters onto any ship privately (which had been allowed previously) unless the item had first been taken to the Post Office and a fee had been paid. This fee was equal to one third of the rate (sea postage and inland rate combined) chargeable if the letter had been sent by packet boat and inland post, and it was calculated on the single rate divided by three and rounded down to the nearest halfpenny. Multiple rates were then just multiplied with the WSL fee. Special markings were applied to the letters when the WSL fee had been paid and these handstamps were applied across the reverse joins of the letters. This was done deliberately to reduce the possibilities of fraudulently opening a letter marked as paid to insert further letters!

In this case the combined packet + inland single rate would have been: Barbados to Falmouth 1s.2d + inland rate Falmouth to Lancaster also 1s.2d making the total 2s.4d (=28d). 28d divided by three and rounded down to the nearest halfpenny equals 9d In this case we have a double letter so two times 9d = 1s.6d and this is exactly what was paid by the sender.

Any doubts about the fact that the letter may not have originated in Barbados can easily be turned down since another letter from the same correspondence exists. It was sent by the same person to the same addressee a few months earlier and it also refers to the same estate on the island. However, this other letter was sent unpaid via St Thomas so there is no 'PAID TO ENGLAND' marking on it!

The illustrations show the front (Figure 1) and back (Figure 2) of the letter as well as an improved version of the 'PAID TO ENGLAND' marking (Figure 3)



Figure 1



Figure 2



BRITISH HONDURAS

Curios from my Collection

By Charles Freeland

I acquired the illustrated label, described as unique at the time, many years ago and no other example has come to my attention. I would like to ask whether any one else owns an example. It is elegantly engraved and still bears full gum, though it has suffered some rough handling. The design has the character of a Delandre WW1 label and is inscribed Postage One Penny, but there is no indication it was raising funds for the war effort.



Perforation errors are occasionally seen, but few are as dramatic as the one illustrated. The pane was evidently folded before being perforated and the top row (identifiable by the wide margin) was mis-perforated, creating a partial IMPERF AT TOP MARGIN AND IMPERF BETWEEN variety. This strip was in the Leonard Snowden collection of Br Honduras, sold by Robson Lowe on 5 April 1944.

BWISC PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM DAVID DRUETT AT PENNYMEAD AUCTIONS.

Author	Title	Price (Member's discount)
Deakin HF	Advanced Barbados Philately	£13 (£2)
Toeg EV	Dominica Postal History, Stamps, Stationery to 1935	£25
Jarvis & Sutcliffe	GB Stamps Used in Jamaica	£38 (£6)
Oliver MN	The Leeward Islands. Notes for Philatelists	£53 (£8)
Toeg EV	Leeward islands Adhesive Fee Stamps	£10
Britnor / Freeland	Montserrat to 1965	£16 (£2)
Borromeo F	The Philately of Nevis	£13 (£2)
Wike RG	Airmails of Trinidad & Tobago	£25

BRITISH HONDURAS

WHEN IS A POSTMARK NOT A POSTMARK?

BY SIMON GOLDBLATT

The observations that follow relate to three cancellations that will not be found in Proud's recent work.

'SANT ...' was a mark referred to by Ed Addiss. He ascribed it to Santa Ana and labelled it TDC 26. If the use of a large format 'S' and an outer circle of perhaps 38mm, together with a certain imbalance to these part strikes (because all that Ed saw or else heard about was the commencement 'SAN') might set one wondering, it was Ian Matheson who revealed that this is in fact a fiscal marking for Santiago Castillo. So there you are. Yet anyone who takes this for a postal marking can be forgiven. The violet ink of the strike is very convincing.



'Belize' with no code or date is a phenomenon that I have not met before. It is struck on a very washed out SG84, producing a striking contrast between the highly fugitive ink used for the key-type King's head, and the very durable one to produce name and value tablets. If someone gets to work on the recorded and tabulated G.P.O. marks, this will probably turn out merely to be a familiar c.d.s devoid of its plugs. Even so it is an oddity. Can one infer a particular purpose, or do we just allow the official responsible a human touch of absent-mindedness?

The last example has to be '(RAD)IO OFFICE', in place of the more familiar 'RADIO STATION'. It leaves me

wondering why we collectors are so uppity over telegraphic usage, and the like. After all, this was an important aspect of post office business up to the 1970's; and where (as, for instance, British Solomon Islands) the local postal canceller was used indiscriminately for telegraphic and very occasional postal use of the top value, collectors ask no questions and cheerfully accept as fine used the rather plentiful KGV £1 value. Apart from that, a telegram might start off over the air or down the wire, but it generally had to be delivered by a messenger. So even though the original cancelled stamp stayed static at the office of despatch, it generated a postal function.



Other cancelled stamps stay static too, but send consignments on their way. One meets for example, Postage Due high values of Victoria paying the consignment value of bulk newspaper despatch, but the pen-cancelled stamps do not travel with the consignment.

Besides, in British Honduras itself, how do we explain the Consejo c.d.s.? Ed Addiss told us that Consejo was a telegraphic office, and Proud classifies it in the same way. I expect that each had access to a source of record. Yet the village does not appear even to have been on a telegraph line, and one sees the c.d.s. only on low value stamps. My mental picture is of the 2c and 5c values paying the cost of a local lad legging it over to the nearest actual telegraph station – probably the merest fantasy on my part!

Whatever the explanation, my feeling is that we should accord telegraphic usage the same status as assumed postal usage. A high value that comes off a telegraph form is sure to have pulled its weight. A postally used example is much more likely to have journeyed on a philatelic cover, paying far above the normal rate. In fairness, collectors of British Honduras are forward-thinking here. There are few postmark enthusiasts who would not accord a handsome premium, related to scarcity, to decent examples of Consejo, Radio Station, and now of course Radio Office.

CAYMAN ISLANDS

THE SCANDAL

BY IAN JAKES

ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES IN 1907/8 CONCERNING THE WITHDRAWAL ISSUE AND SALE OF POSTAGE STAMPS

Continued from March Bulletin.

The Responses to the Various Allegations by The Cayman Islands Commissioner

These unfortunately, are not known but the responses to the allegations can probably be obtained by reading Aguilar, reading the documents used to support the allegations and using my legal training. Aguilar relies heavily for the 1907 and 1908 period on serious study by early 20th century specialist Cayman Islands philatelists who were clearly influenced by the official Cayman Islands Post Office records.

The Commissioner would have dealt at great length with the easy issues first and pointed out the culpability of the Governor of Jamaica himself. The best form of defence is to attack.

Aguilar states, and the Commissioner would undoubtedly respond, in respect of the 4d Brown and blue, the 6d Olive and Rose, the 1/- Violet and Green and the 5s Salmon and Green issued on 13 March 1907 as follows:-

'On 9th November 1906 the Justices and Vestry of the Cayman Islands passed what was styled 'The Stamp Duty Law ' or Law 9 of 1906... .. it was laid down... that these duties were to be paid by means of local stamps. In consequence an order was immediately placed for (these stamps) shortly after the bi-coloured stamps were placed on sale the Governor of Jamaica gave instructions for the withdrawal from circulation of the remaining stocks of all the single coloured denominations... .. the instructions were duly carried out resulting in the necessity for the provisionals '

Aguilar comments *'At the time it was thought that there was some misunderstanding and it was the withdrawal of the 6d and 1s that was intended'*. The Commissioner would not have mentioned this fact.

The Commissioner would also have made no reference to other comments in Aguilar: *'Despite exhaustive enquiries no explanation is forthcoming for the adoption of two colours for these stamps. Moreover, in view of the fact that the 5s value was introduced primarily for fiscal purposes it is odd that the 'POSTAGE-POSTAGE' key-plate was retained... ..approximately a year later the issue was superseded by another employing the 'POSTAGE REVENUE key-plate.'*

The Commissioner would have reminded the Colonial Secretary of Jamaica that he authorised the issue of POSTAGE & REVENUE design, ½d green, 1d carmine, 2½d ultramarine, 3d purple/yellow, 4d black and red/yellow, 6d dull and bright purple, 1s black/green, 5s green and red/yellow and 10s green and red/green and that he also authorised the issue of the ½d on 1d surcharge.

The Commissioner would have referred the Governor of Jamaica to the Commissioner's letter dated 11 June 1907, which lead to the Colonial Secretary of Jamaica's actions. Aguilar states: *'..... on 11th June 1907 the Commissioner ... wrote to the Colonial Secretary of Jamaica 'I have the honour to report that a large foreign order has reduced my stock of ½d (half penny) stamps to 17 (seventeen) sheets which at the ordinary rate of sales will not last me eight weeks. I am therefore forwarding 40 sheets of penny stamps of which I have a good stock with a request that they may be surcharged ½d and returned to me as soon as possible.*

I shall in the course of a few months, if sales continue as then are at present, be getting short of other denominations, when I will submit the question of a new issue of all denominations to His Excellency.'

Observation by Melville: 'No present submission or promise of an early one, nothing of the kind. No present hurry! Wait till we are short!'

Query-

Was there really a 'large foreign order,' or were the ½d stamps put on one side for sale by W.M. Cochran and to create the conditions for a surcharge?

The Colonial Secretary of Jamaica, if he considered that there may have been a scandal at this point, certainly gave the Commissioner the benefit of the doubt, as is evidenced by his reply dated 26 July 1907 reported in Aguilar:

'Sir,

1. *I am directed by the Governor to acknowledge receipt of your letter ... explaining that a large, foreign order had reduced your stock of ½d stamps to seventeen sheets, and forwarding forty sheets of penny stamps with the request that they may be surcharged ½d.*
2. *In reply I transmit herewith a copy of the Secretary of State's circular dispatch of the 8th August 1893, on the subject of surcharge postage stamps, and to request you to be so good in future as to refuse to supply the speculative demands of dealers until you have a good stock. Copies of the Secretary of State's circulars of 27th September 1896 and 19th September 1905 are also enclosed for your information and guidance. (The writer has not seen these last 2 circulars).*
3. *As the surcharge in this case may be regarded as necessary for the convenience of the public, the Superintendent of the Government Printing Office has been instructed to surcharge the stamps as requested and I am to request that you will not sell any of these surcharged stamps except across the counter.*
4. *In conclusion, I am to add that the Governor is not prepared without substantial reason, to authorise a new issue of stamps, and to request you to report on this question as soon as possible. I am to say that if a fresh supply of halfpenny or other stamps is required a requisition should be sent forward in due time to enable them to be obtained, from the Crown Agents before the stock in hand is exhausted.*

I have etc.

H. Clarence Bourne

(Colonial Secretary) '

The circular dated 18 August 1893 referred to in this letter was issued by Lord Ripon and reads as follows:-

*Downing Street
18th August 1893*

Sir,

My attention has been called to the practice of issuing surcharged postage stamps, and to the temptations which it affords to postmasters and treasurers and other public officers, of making irregular profits by dealing with stamp dealers and collectors.

If proper care is taken to maintain a sufficient supply of stamps, the practice of surcharging is unnecessary, and it should never be resorted to unless absolutely required for the convenience of the public, and in every such case the officer responsible for keeping up the supply of stamps should be liable to be fined.

I have etc. RIPON".

Aguilar continues: *'The Commissioner responded on July 29th 1907 to the effect that the existing stamps were merely inscribed 'POSTAGE' and since a large number were used fiscally it was essential that he further stated that he required two new denominations, namely Three pence and Ten shillings. After some delay his request was granted... ..*

The Commissioner would then have given his reasons for the issue of the 1d on 5s on 23 November 1907, the ½d on 5s on 26 November 1907 and the 2½d on 4d on 12 February 1908.

The Commissioner would have referred the Colonial Secretary of Jamaica to the Commissioner's letter of 11 June 1907 (set out in full earlier in this article) in which he expressed the opinion that his stock not only of the ½d and 1d but also other denominations would be sold out by the end of the year. He would have pointed out that he had ordered the new POSTAGE and REVENUE designs but that they i.e. the ½d and 1d values did not arrive until 27 December 1907. It was necessary for the convenience of the public for the ½d on 5s and 1d on 5s surcharges to be made.

Aguilar states *'The reason for the creation of these two provisionals were for all practical purposes identical, the chief being the irregular communications between the islands and Jamaica... .. The appearance of the 'One Halfpenny' on 1d already referred to started a demand which in a short while became worldwide... .. (collectors and) Dealers sent in substantial orders and it was not surprising that the issue (i.e. Half-penny on 1d) of which the face value was only £20 (4800 stamps) was soon exhausted... .. Some idea of their extent was given in a letter from the Postmistress (Miss Gwendolyn A. Parsons) in which she pathetically stated that an accumulation of between 3000 and 4000 letters remained unopened....*

The Commissioner would probably have used some or all of the factors mentioned by Aguilar to satisfy his instructions (without the authority of the Colonial Secretary Jamaica) for the ½d on 5s and 1d on 5s overprints to be made.

Aguilar continues: *'The surcharge was carried out by the Postmistress by means of a very crude handstamp..... put together by a local handy-man. The Post Office ink and pad were used for obliterating and it is evident that the Postmistress was not overworked since she placed the provisionals on sale the following day, November 23rd. This stock lasted until December 9th when there was a sudden demand for penny stamps, for use on receipt forms and in order to cope with the situation three more sheets were surcharged... .. A small supply was sent to Cayman Brac but it can only be assumed that it was destroyed since it was not required..... ..*

Queries:

- Was the Postmistress 'not overworked?' Her inability even to open 3000 to 4000 letters suggests that she was grossly overworked. This in turn suggests that the Postmistress regarded surcharging as a priority task.
- Why was it a priority task? Was there a sudden demand for penny stamps for use on receipt forms? Was a small supply sent to Cayman Brac?
- Why do varieties exist, if not to increase the value of the overprinted stamps? Melville observes in respect of the ½d on 5s Surcharge 'In this case the surcharging was not so carefully executed, there being four variations from the normal; inverted; double; double, one inverted; and omitted 'in pair with normal.' Of this latter, we have seen two copies – one the centre stamp of a strip of three, the two others being surcharged; and on an entire sheet, the unsurcharged stamp being the last but two in the bottom row of the right-hand pane of the sheet.'

Varieties! Entire sheet! Was there a scandal?

The Commissioner's explanation for the issue of the ½d on 4d would probably have been the same as that given by Aguilar viz:-

'The arrival of a fresh supply of ½d and 1d stamps of the 'POSTAGE & REVENUE' type on December 27th 1907 filled the void that had rendered necessary the former provisionals and it was hoped by everyone that the period of surcharging had come to an end.

By the end of January 1908, however, these two denominations were running low; the stock of the old 2½d was almost exhausted and the number of 4d stamps remaining was not large. This situation did not give rise to any concern, since it was expected that a replenishment of the low values, at least, would arrive by a steamer due at the end of February so that a supply of the 2½d stamp, in particular, would be available to frank the foreign letters that would be taken by the same steamer when she left. These plans, however, were completely upset by the unexpected arrival of the steam yacht 'Zenaida' at George Town on February 12th 1908. An offer was made immediately by its owner – Sir Frederick Johnson – to convey any foreign mail to Cienfuegos, Cuba which was readily accepted. The acute shortage of 2½d stamps, however, presented a difficulty and whilst the two lower values could have been used to make up the two pence halfpenny foreign rate it was considered too risky to do so, having regard to the slender stock on hand In order to ease the situation, four sheets of the current 4d stamp were handed to the Inspector of Police – Mr. J.H. O'Sullivan – with instructions to surcharge them '2½D' They were placed on sale at once and were sold out on February 14th just two days later.

Queries:

1. Who purchased these overprinted stamps, bearing in mind that the unused stamp is considerably more numerous than the used stamp?
2. Why was the offer by the yacht's owner accepted? Why could not the foreign mail wait for the correct steamer carrying the stamps for use on foreign mail, especially since the correct steamer would have travelled to the correct destination?
3. Was this yet another engineered surcharge made for the personal gain of a few individuals?
4. Why do varieties exist, if not to increase the value of the overprinted stamps? Melville observes 'copies are known skewing a double surcharge; a copy is shown with two surcharges, one of which is inverted.'

The Commissioner would then have dealt with the specific allegations and replied as follows-

1. It was not possible to purchase withdrawn stamps at face value
– shortly after the issue of the bi-coloured stamps the Colonial Secretary gave instructions for withdrawal of the old issues and these old issues were sent by the Commissioner to the Governor of Jamaica in January 1908.
Queries:
(1) Did the return of the withdrawn issues to the Governor of Jamaica take place immediately after the allegations of 'The Scandal' in the magazine 'Truth' appeared, possibly even on 29 January 1908, the day that the Commissioner wrote to Whitfield King & Co. (see earlier)?
(2) Why were they not returned earlier?
2. Situation engineered to issue provisional stamps – Already answered above
3. No stamp dealer could purchase surcharge stamps at face value – The Colonial Secretary's letter dated 26 July 1907 to the Commissioner forbade the supply to dealers unless there was a good stock, which there was not. Notwithstanding this, the Postmistress Gwendolyn Parsons supplied the complainant, Whitfield King & Co. with surcharged stamps at face value on 12 November 1907 contrary to instructions.
4. Stamps withdrawn by the Commissioner were not destroyed or placed on sale again at the Post Office at face value. – see answer No. 1 above.
5. W.M. Cochran was the agent of the Commissioner – he most definitely was not.
- The Commissioner would have provided no explanation for the similarity in the stock of withdrawn stamps offered by W.M. Cochran to Whitfield King & Co. by letter dated 9th December 1907 and of the stock returned by the Commissioner to the Colonial Secretary Jamaica and described in the Commissioner's letter to Whitfield King & Co. dated 29 January 1908.
6. Orders for stamps at face value were purposely delayed until new issues were available – not by me.

Cayman Islands Post Office Actions Following the Investigations:-

The Post Office was clearly shaken by 'The Scandal' and eventually attempted to clean up its act.

The return by the Commissioner to the Governor of Jamaica of all withdrawn stamps led to a real shortage of stamps.

Aguilar reports: *'At the beginning of May 1908 the stock of ½d and 1d stamps was completely exhausted and strict instructions were issued that mail which called for either of these denominations was to be handed with the necessary cash across the Post Office counter to be marked by the Postmistress – Miss G.A. Parsons -- to the effect that postage had been paid initialled by her and hand-stamped'.*

Observation: Here is a real opportunity to act dishonestly .

Aguilar continues: *'The cover illustrated...is most interesting. The postage rate to the USA was 2½d and there were ample stocks of this value at the time. It can only be assumed that it was in a bundle of letters and was franked by Miss Parsons in error.*

Query:

Was this a one-off oversight or was Miss Parsons incompetent or dishonest?

Aguilar commenting on the 1d on Four-pence overprint states 'During this shortage an American inhabitant applied for a sheet of 1d stamps which he required for receipt purposes. On being informed that none were available he lodged a complaint and as a result the Commissioner gave instructions for a small quantity of 4d stamps to be surcharged '1d' on the strict understanding that they were to be used solely for fiscal and not postal use.

Queries:

- Who was this American person? Was he known to any of the 'Accused' in 'The Scandal'?
- Did the American need stamps for receipt purposes or is this a ruse to enable yet another overprinted stamp to be issued?
- Why are there so many of these 1d/4d overprints in unused condition available to collectors? One such stamp bearing an apparently genuine postmark sold in the April 2002 B.W.I. Study Circle Auction. Aguilar makes reference to another attempt foiled by the new postmaster Mr W.G. McCausland, to pass one of these surcharge stamps through the post. How does a 1d/4d 'fiscal' variety double surcharge both inverted come to exist? (Lot 19 in the BWISC Golden Jubilee Sale.)
- How many fiscally used 1d on 4d stamps exist?
- How many readers have seen a fiscally used 1d on 4d stamp?
- Is 'The Scandal' continuing? Am I neurotic?

The message undoubtedly despatched by the Colonial Secretary Jamaica that the Postal Authorities in the Cayman Islands must be seen to be acting above suspicion, appears to have struck home in July 1908. This is perhaps best illustrated by a Post Office Notice dated 10 July 1908 issued by Miss Parsons and sent to all applicants for supplies of the new farthing stamp received from abroad, which reads *'Notice is hereby given that farthing stamps and farthing postcards, being provided solely for internal postage in the Cayman Islands Dependency, will only be sold across the counter at a Post Office in the Cayman Islands.'*

The Result of the Inquiry:

This is not in the public domain. Craton states that George J.J. Hirst died still holding the office of Commissioner on 16 June 1912 at the age of forty. Melville states the 'whitewashing' extended in this instance was certainly a surprise to philatelists in general. This was the Edwardian era where any scandal by a pillar of society was swept under the carpet. However, there was the sacrificial lamb – Miss G. A. Parsons.

Aguilar states: *'It is known that Miss Parsons gave up her appointment in June 1908 and was succeeded by Mr W. G. McCausland but she continued to assist until she retired in 1910.'*

The date of June 1908 cannot be correct because Miss Parsons issued the Notice dated 10 July 1908 referred to above as Postmistress. She probably knew of her proposed demotion in June 1908. I suspect that she was demoted by reason of her being unable to cope properly with the job, rather than for dishonesty.

It is noteworthy that following the appointment of Mr W.G. McCausland as Postmaster, according to Melville on 1 October 1908, there was only one new issue of stamps (except for war tax overprints) in the ensuing thirteen years. This was the 1912 key-plate issue following the accession of King George V to the throne. Even then there was clearly great interest in closet philatelic circles when the 1d and 6d Edward VII Plate 2 varieties were issued, probably in 1911. (See Cayman Islands: The King Edward VII Plate 2 Postage Revenue 1d and 6d Denominations by James Podger and Kevin Darcy – B.W.I.S.C. Study Circle Bulletin No.202 September 2004.) Postmaster McCausland is to be congratulated on ensuring that there was no further 'Scandal.'

Conclusion

There is damning evidence in my opinion that there was a scandal, involving W.M. Cochran and the Commissioner. This is contained in the letter from W.M. Cochran to Whitfield King & Co. dated 9 December 1907 whereby withdrawn stamps were offered for sale at a premium. These are substantially the same stamps as were returned by the Commissioner to the Governor of Jamaica, as is evidenced by the letter from the Commissioner to Whitfield King & Co. dated 29 January 1908. These withdrawn stamps should have been in the possession of the Governor of Jamaica long before 9 December 1907 if they had been withdrawn rather than under the control of Cochran and the Commissioner. These identical stamps were sold by the Crown Agents in 1908 as surplus stock 'available for prepayment of postal charges' (Melville). If the Crown Agents' statement is true there were many thousands of each of the ½d, 1d and 2½d stamps available for postal use making the need for provisional issues of these values unnecessary.

I suspect that 'The Scandal' did extend to embrace the other Accused persons and probably other conspirators not named, but on the evidence so far available, there is no proof beyond all reasonable doubt that this is so. Some would say that on the balance of probabilities there was a conspiracy involving the Accused to obtain a pecuniary advantage.

Craton states: *'George Hirst's regime had its comic and ultimately tragic aspects but, as (the Governor of Jamaica) acknowledged, the commissioner's energy and commitment to modernisation bore fruit. In spite of persistent local opposition and the lack of any financial aid from either Jamaica or Britain, Hirst increased and deployed the islands' meagre finances, and his improvements and achievements outlasted him.'* One cannot help wondering whether, if Hirst and his Co-Accused deliberately manipulated new issues and surcharges of stamps, it was to raise funds for these good reasons, rather than for personal gain. Some would say that the Accused were not manipulators at all and that they acted strictly upon the Governor of Jamaica's express instructions.

MARYLAND FORGERIES**AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW****BY ROGER B WEST (AVION THEMATICS)**

I would like to comment on Charles Freeland's rather inaccurate note on Maryland Forgeries. Despite buying one which was accompanied by full historical notes, he incorrectly stated that they were scanned in from auction catalogue illustrations. This is NOT the case as they are accurate copies of the original stamps. Mr Freeland is getting confused with Hialeah forgeries which are very different animals indeed.

I was also surprised that he should take it on himself to advise serious Study Circle members what they should and should not collect. Having said that, in my experience such advice normally has the opposite effect and persuades people to go out and buy what he would prefer they didn't – so thank you for that. Incidentally, similar items to the one he paid £2.99 for and which are currently on my price list at £4.50 each are being offered in one auction (Principality) with estimates as high as £35.

Editor's note:

This seems to be a contentious issue, we would welcome other opinions on this matter and it would be useful to know what methods have been used for reproduction.

DOMINICA**BY ROGER B WEST**

On a completely different subject, I am amazed at the lack of research articles for Dominica. I am currently involved in studies on the following:

- 1886 surcharge varieties
- 1923 Badge Issue plate varieties
- and to a lesser extent, varieties on the 1938-47 issue.

If any member shares my interests, I'd be delighted to hear from them with a view to exchanging information or producing a combined paper. I can be contacted at PO Box 99, Notts, NG16 5QN, or telephone 01773 608899.

JAMAICA**WAR TAX DOUBLE OVERPRINT****By JOHN DAVIS**

I bought from the Gawaine Baillie sale the small lot of the research in to the War Tax double overprint on the first overprinting in one line.

The notes (and stamps) start with the thick impression on the 4th row of the lower two panes, and finish with the "separation almost complete" on the 8th row.

Does anyone know if this was as far as it got, or were the impressions on the 9th and 10th rows even more double than that of the 8th row?

(Replies through the Editor).

GB USED A01 TYPE 03 (OR C)**By KENNETH GORDON**

I obtained the following interesting cover, which appears to be previously unrecorded –



Cover of 1859 sent locally from Montego Bay to Kingston bearing a pair of GB 1857 4d. rose paying the single letter rate (8d. per ½oz) for inland letters to/from addresses more than 100 miles from Kingston.

The GB stamps have been cancelled on arrival at Kingston with the double A01 obliterator which had been sent out to Jamaica on 30 April 1859. This obliterator was very rarely used since, unlike the A01 duplex sent out at the same time, it required the use of a separate datestamp. Consequently, very few examples are known (Topaz only records 7 on GBU stamps and Jarvis only records 3 others on cover).

On the reverse is the MONTEGO BAY despatch c.d.s. (Foster Type P2a) for 27 June 1859, and the KINGSTON receipt cds. is dated 29 June 1859.

It is most unusual for the G.B. adhesives to be left uncanceled until arrival at Kingston, as the District Offices had already begun using their own numeral obliterators (Montego Bay was allocated A57) on 1 March 1859.

AUCTION UPDATE**BY CHARLES FREELAND****Sothebys 16-18 February**

As I had forecast, bargains were hard to come by at the well-publicised Baillie sale and few steals were to be had (one was Mark Harvey's purchase of a Br Honduras block with undescribed malformed S in Postage - well done Mark!). In most areas prices were high to ludicrous, though among some of the more recently acquired material, where the reserves were set high, there were some unsolds that may be offered in a round-up sale at cheaper reserves. Spreading the sale of 1400 BWI lots over three days dissuaded me from making the trip and a wise move it proved because I am told by my spies that the "suits" held sway and many of our members must have left disappointed.

I described the collection itself in the last bulletin but seeing the whole calls for additional comment. It was essentially a nearly complete mint assembly but supplemented here and there by choice multiples. It appears that the addition of proof material was something of an afterthought as most of the proofs (particularly those of Bahamas and Bermuda) could be traced back to sales in 1999 or later. The quality was not quite as outstanding as I had first surmised. There were many gorgeous stamps, particularly the 20th century rarities, but there were a few scruffy or simply faked lots and many of the single classic stamps were not of the first quality. This may be partly explained by the fact that Baillie would not buy ungummed stamps, but it will prevent the ex-Baillie tag having the same guarantee of quality as ex-Charlton-Henry. Another feature was that there was quite a lot of duplication, all the more strange considering that there were some important stamps missing.

So far as the results were concerned, prices for straight mint sets and specimens were way above the norm. The exceptional condition of the 20th century rarities ensured some outstanding results, with many hammer prices close to or above full Gibbons. The Cayman Islands varieties were one highlight, the Glover flaw on the 5/- fetching £3,000 (all prices plus 15%) and the ½d double overprint in pair with normal £10,000. The highest BWI price, unsurprisingly, was £19,000 for the Jamaica inverted frame but this was run close by the 6d Jamaica slavery at £16,500 and £15,000 for the Cayman Islands 1d double overprint. The British Honduras rarities also sold well. The Tobago block of 2½d / 4d with four doubles at £7,000 showed a good profit on the Forsyth price of £1,450, although this was cheap compared to the strip with only one double overprint at £3,800. Among the many choice multiples those in greatest demand were the Barbados 1875-8 blocks (many ex Messenger) but all the Britannias of Barbados and Trinidad were keenly contested. A big buyer for the blocks was Paul Barton, an occasional but obviously powerful player. Finally, the prices for proofs were mostly in the ballpark, with several of those being reoffered too soon not finding buyers. The two most important items were the Barbados Britannia 6d die proof in rose that went for £2,400 and the Bermuda QV 2 ½d drawing at £2,500.

All in all Sothebys and the estate should be extremely pleased and there will be dozens of buyers happy to have acquired some splendid material. Whether that is still so is a moot point, as there was widespread frustration at Sothebys' post-sale inability to ship purchases at a reasonable cost. In my case, it took two hours to collect my purchases and shipping documents, even though I had given them warning in writing. Then their accountants denied receiving my electronic bank transfer and only after I had obtained proof of transfer after numerous phone conversations with gentlemen in India was I told that they had found it and neglected to inform me.

Spink 9-10 March

When David Parsons told me he had a strong sale of GB and Commonwealth, I had no idea it would achieve over £3 million, a record for a single UK stamp auction. One of many highlights were the superb interpanneau blocks of the 1866 British Honduras, the block of the 12 1d and 1/- fetching £105,000 (plus 15%), the highest price in the sale, and the block of 6d and 1/- £48,000. Three or four other beautiful items in the small Br Honduras section brought one phone bidder's take to almost £200,000. The highlight among the Crowned Circles was the smudged 1863 Virgin Is at £6,500 but the very weak English Harbor at £2,200 was well below its £3,250 purchase price at David Druett's live sale in 1998. The other Crowned Circle prices were mostly high with the Belize and the smudged Montserrat both at £2,400. The other strong BWI section was the Turks provisionals that went reasonably with the small 2½ on 6d the highlight at £5,000. The quality was reflected in some of the prices for mint rarities, for example £10,000 for the Barbados 1/- error of

colour, £13,000 for the Bermuda 3d on 1d and £2,600 for the St Vincent 1861 6d. Interestingly, there was relatively little duplication between this and Baillie collection, showing the different tastes of two rich men.

Grosvenor 10 March

The “Apollonia” collection of Bermuda GVI keyplates was the most comprehensive since the Dickgiesser collection was sold in 1999 and in some areas contained rare items that Bob Dickgiesser lacked. However, the sheer scale of the offering and the fact that much of the material was quite recently acquired meant that the results will have disappointed the owner at about £175,000 hammer (plus 15%) with about a quarter of the value unsold. I summarized the contents in the last bulletin and would only add that the collection looked a little unbalanced, being extremely strong in the 5/-s and 10/-s where the seller had subsumed the rich Dickgiesser collections of these values, but relatively weak in the modest 2/-. There was extensive duplication, for example no less than five “white island” flaws, and an extremely fine selection of postal history, but does anyone need three Prague covers?

I was not present in the sale room but was told it was sparsely populated. There was strong competition for rarely seen items but less interest in the major positional flaws that have been offered quite frequently since the great series of sales that commenced with Ludington in June 1999. The unsolds included all the Prague covers, some of the complete sheets and many of the more bland singles. The positional blocks, especially those with plate plugs whose states confirm the printings, were well bid but the upper left blocks of the first printings showing the plate plugs above pos 2 were not as expensive as in recent years, with the values from 5/- to £1 fetching £500, £1,350, £2,200 and £850 respectively. An expected highlight was the outstanding selection of “bronze-green” 5/-s; all 18 lots were easily absorbed with the chin flaw bid to £4,200 and the scroll block, missing its selvages, £3,800. The rare proofs were in demand with the head and laurel leaves fetching £3,200, and the uncleared head £1,650. Among the covers, the highlights were the usage of the bronze-green 5/- on commercial covers to Egypt, which went for £380, £500 and £1,500 for the corner example with 60 flaw.

The prices of Bermuda GVI have bucked the trend for 25 years or more. The entry of new collectors in the late 1970s kept the prices rising when many others fell off and this strong demand has continued since. Do the Apollonia results mean the bubble has burst? I would judge not yet, rather that the owner has obviously been a strong support for this eclectic collection area for ten years. His absence as a buyer means the prices of the top pieces are showing signs of coming back to earth, although strong competition remains for the most elusive pieces.

Coming events

A glance at the proof for the Spink catalogue of the Edward M Gilbert collection to be sold by Spink on 15-16 June reveals yet another strong sale of BWI rarities. If you did not get either of the “Missing Virgins” in 2003-4, here is your third chance...or what about yet another Cayman Is ½d on 5/- double overprint or Jamaica inverted frame? This collection covers the whole empire so it is inevitably uneven in the BWI countries but I spotted a strong runs of Bahamas (including special delivery missing overprint in pair with normal on piece), lots of good Bermuda (with three Perots), Br Guiana (seven cotton-reels), Dominica 1d/6d thin bar on cover ex Dale and Turks Is 1d imperf between pair. Assuming your tastes are more modest there is a good range of mint singles and collections, but virtually no covers or proof material. Provenances ex Staircase Ludington, Frazer etc reveal that much of the material was acquired quite recently (and often at huge prices) so there may again be some indigestion here and there.

Another sale of interest will be the first London Stamp Exchange auction of postal history under its new ownership. The sale on 19 May in Salisbury will be over by the time you read this but there are some intriguing items from Tobago in particular and lots of useful commercial mail from Grenada and Jamaica that are remainders from the Ted Proud collection. The catalogue contains arrangements for London viewing.

Grosvenor's next auction planned for 8 July will feature some important Br Guiana, mostly ex Derek Nathan including his cancellation collection which I have been told will be offered in a single lot estimated of £25,000.....sadly that cuts out all but one of our members.

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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**

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

If any member has a book which is not already in the library and which is surplus to requirements, perhaps that member will consider donating it to the library.

EDITOR & WEB-MASTER'S REPORT**STEVE JARVIS**

Peter Fernbank has continued scanning early editions of the Bulletin. He has now reached edition 79, which are all now on our web site. Peter has also brought the Index of Bulletins up-to-date (Bulletin #202). An updated listing is now available for download from the web site or printed copy by application to the Hon. Editor at £2.00 or \$US4.00.

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