

**Members who provided the Diamond Jubilee displays
at the Royal Philatelic Society London**



BULLETIN No. 243 December 2014



Affiliated to the Association of British Philatelic Societies and the American Philatelic Society

ISSN 0953-8720

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

OBJECTIVES

- 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 of BWI interest. The BWISC BULLETIN was presented with the ABPS Specialist Society journal Award in 2004.
- 3 TO encourage, assist or sponsor the authorship and publication of definitive handbooks, monographs or other works of reference appropriate to the aims of the Circle. The BWISC has published over 20 books or Study Papers over the last 12 years, some of which have received prestigious awards.
- 4 TO hold an annual auction for the sale of members' material. Normally, prior to the auction, the BWISC holds its Annual General Meeting.
- 5 TO organise occasional display meetings including a biennial weekend Convention and bourse. This offers further opportunities for members to buy and sell material.
- 6 TO maintain an internet website where information about Circle activities is publicised and where much other relevant information is posted.
- 7 TO maintain a specialised library from which home members can borrow books.

**Opinions expressed in articles in this Bulletin are those of the authors
and not necessarily those of the BWISC, its Editor or its Officers.**

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Printed by Sarsen Press, Winchester

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SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS & INFORMATION

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Thursday 12 February 2015 – David Pitts will be delivering the Sir Daniel Cooper lecture on Bermuda at the Royal Philatelic Society London starting at 5pm.

Saturday 25 April 2015 – AGM & Auction at Grosvenor Auction Rooms, 3rd Floor, 399-401 Strand, London WC2R 0LT. Viewing from 12 noon, AGM at 1.15pm, followed by the Auction at 2.15pm.

The Circle will take a stand to promote ourselves at the following events:

- London 2015 Europhilex 13–16 May 2015
- Midpex, Leamington Spa, Saturday 4 July 2015

Members are encouraged to help staff the table, or to just come along and say 'hello'. For more information, email secretary@bwisc.org. Orders for Circle publications placed sufficient time in advance can be collected at the events, saving on postage.

BWISC Convention 2015

Our weekend convention will once again take place at the Honiley Court Hotel, near Warwick and Kenilworth in the heart of England. It will run from Saturday 3 October, starting late morning, through to Sunday 4 October 2015, finishing late afternoon. Formal displays will be given by Simon Richards, Dominica and possibly more, and Peter Ford, KGV stamps and proofs. There will be a dinner on Saturday evening, with Collett Award presentations.



You can book accommodation at the hotel now by contacting them and quoting '**BWISC allocation**' (phone 01926 484234, website <http://www.honileycourt-hotel.co.uk/>). The hotel has set aside a good number of rooms at special rates, and these will be available to book until the end of August 2015, or until they run out (£55 single; £70 double, members' partners are very welcome). After the end of August 2015, you might still be able to book a room, but may then have to pay a higher rate. To book a room at the special rate, you must contact the hotel early and please quote 'BWISC allocation'.

Lunch, if desired, will be £10 each day, and dinner on Saturday £29.95. There will also be a small conference fee for members (£10; partners free) to help cover Circle costs associated with the

meeting. More details and a booking form for meals will be in the March Bulletin, but you can email enquiries to secretary@bwisc.org.

The BWISC meeting at Stampex on 20 September was well attended with 24 members and guests enjoying the informal displays given by the following:-

David Cordon – Bermuda Dock issue

Steve Jarvis – Jamaica Postal Stationery

George Dunbar – Jamaica impressed revenue stamps and revenue bisects from Spanish Town

Michael Medicott – Barbados De La Rue issues and British Guiana Summary Jurisdiction issues

Charles Freeland – Antigua stamped covers

Richard Watkins – Bermuda postal history



Richard Watkins describes his display

Following our successful debut at Midpex in 2013, BWISC took tables in 2014 at Worpex, May, Swinpx, June, and Scotex, October. We sold a few books, met members, one or two former members who were interested to rejoin, and others interested in West Indies philately. Above all, it was great to meet people in person, and to talk to collectors of all kinds whose interests overlapped with the BWI. Particular thanks to Peter Fernbank, Richard Stupple, and Bruce Walker for their support at the table during different events.



Bruce Walker on the BWISC table at Scotex, October 2014

The Study Circle entered the philatelic literature and electronic media classes at the 2014 International Biennial of Russian Philately and achieved the following results:

Trinidad Red Cross, Ian Jakes - Large Silver

KGV Keyplates, Peter Fernbank - Large Gold

BWISC website, Steve Jarvis - Large Gold

It is pleasing to note that Steve also won a Large Gold for the RPSL website.

Congratulations to all involved.

OBITUARY

Robin Martin, a long standing member and St Vincent collector, died on the 18th September 2014, aged 86. He contributed a brief article to the Bulletin, on censorship markings, as long ago as 1987.

BWI**THE IMPERIUM ESSAYS**

BY MICHAEL OLIVER



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

Background

Essays with an 'IMPERIUM' (Empire) name tablet for the new Universal Key Plate designs were produced by Thomas De La Rue & Co. during the reign of Queen Victoria between 1888 and 1901. Those produced bearing the profile of King Edward VII in 1906 and 1907 were specifically for the Universal Colour Scheme, which I recorded separately in the London Philatelist, July/August 2008.

In 1881 the first unified postage stamp was issued – the British 1d lilac inscribed 'POSTAGE AND INLAND REVENUE.' (Fig. 1). However, in order to dispense with the existing separate RECEIPT and INLAND REVENUE stamps and also to reduce the 34 different fiscal overprints on the unappropriated key plates (Fig. 2), the inscription was changed two years later to 'POSTAGE & REVENUE'. All British stamps up to the 2/6d duty had this unified description, with few exceptions, until 1967. Paradoxically duties 5s to £5 were inscribed 'POSTAGE' only.



Fig. 3.

In 1890 the Crown Agents received a request from the Leeward Islands government for a general issue which denoted the Presidency of usage to replace the almost 40 different stamps then on sale. De La Rue designed a new key and duty type that was to become known later as the General Key Plate. It was first used for four of the Leeward Islands Presidencies later that year. Dominica and St. Christopher retained the 1870 Key Plate design. The General Key Plate had no wording and following the introduction of British unified stamps, colonies were soon also requesting them. De La Rue initially overcame this by various methods as shown in Fig. 3.

In 1884 the government of Ceylon wrote to the Crown Agents requesting a new 5c stamp inscribed 'REVENUE & POSTAGE'. Because of the time delay in engraving, approving the design, printing

and delivery, the existing 5c was overprinted as an interim measure. De La Rue suggested that the new unified stamp would be better inscribed 'POSTAGE & REVENUE' which the Colony accepted (Fig. 4). They realised that the General Key plate would have to be replaced by new designs to accommodate both postage and revenue usage whilst retaining their fugitive inks for economical security printing of small orders.



Fig. 4.

History

In December 1887 De La Rue submitted artist's drawings of Designs A (Postage) and B (Postage & Revenue) to the Crown Agents. They were approved the next day when clearly discussions had taken place beforehand. Design C (Revenue) was submitted in May 1889 and also approved. These Key Plate designs were unique in that the name and duty tablets were in the same position, thereby permitting any one duty plate available to print stamps for all three purposes as illustrated in Fig. 5.



Fig. 5.

The Key Plates in 120 forme were to be provided at no charge. A colony paid £12 for each 60 set Duty Plate plus printing costs as set out in their Schedule of Prices sent to the colonies (Fig. 6). De La Rue clearly anticipated a large demand when they called the new designs the Universal Key Plates. To enable the Crown Agents to promote them they produced samples with the IMPERIUM name tablet and duties of 6d and 2c in both white and tinted tablets as illustrated in the Key under the section headed 'Lists of the Imperium Essays, 1888 to 1901'. Many other colour trial essays were produced between 1890 & 1901 with name tablets of the colony these are a separate subject.

The Crown Agents, a London Civil Service procurement department for the colonies, were equally keen in promoting the Universal Key Plates to replace requests for individual designs which incurred them in much time and cost. However, by 1936 De La Rue's name for these designs was justified when some 1,400 million stamps for 21 colonies had been printed from the Universal Key Plates. Until 1901 no more than 6 million stamps annually had been printed for the colonies compared with over 1,000 million British 1d stamps alone. With the head of Queen Victoria nine colonies used Design A, five used Design B, two used both designs and none used Design C. Surplus stocks overprinted locally was cheaper than ordering Design C.

In 1974 De La Rue appointed Robson Lowe to dispose of their archive of colonial stamp printing for the Crown Agents. Unbelievably this had been retrieved almost intact from the destruction of 110, Bunhill Row on 29 December 1940, the Sunday evening that the Luftwaffe attempted to create the second great fire of London. A number of books were affected by water and some damaged by fire. Their archivist, Mr. G. L. Newman, collected everything together and over the next 15 years remounted it with typewritten extracts from the Correspondence books into a collection of some 3,500 sheets to produce a comprehensive record of the Company's dealings with the Crown Agents for over 80 years.

Before Mr. Newman's collection was, mostly, cut down into single items or matching pairs for sale, Robson Lowe's staff took 35mm colour photographs of each sheet. The films were stored in tin boxes until developed and digitised by the British Philatelic Museum and Archive in 2007. The quality of colour reproduction was poor after over 30 years storage of the films.

Robson Lowe sold some items and probably sheets which included Imperium Essays by private treaty before publishing a booklet 'The De La Rue Key Plates', in January 1979. This listed the Imperium Essays 1888–1901 and the Universal Colour Scheme of 1907–08. He held an auction in London on 15 November 1979, titled 'The De La Rue Key Plates', which comprised all items and sheets recorded in the booklet. There were 128 lots of Victorian essays but, unfortunately, there were some discrepancies between the booklet listings and auction lots.

Fig. 6.

The Listings

This first attempt to record the Imperium Essays, unlike the Universal Colour Scheme, will almost certainly not be definitive for various reasons given below.

The numbered lists are separated into three groups:

- A – Recorded by Robson Lowe
- B – Recorded from Other sources
- C – Recorded from Named Sales

The majority of A and B are dependent for most items upon written colour descriptions when colour printing was still developing. Accurate colour photographs were available for compiling list C. The earliest essay I have recorded was sold in 1966 – no photograph, '*Imperf 6d in mauve & purple on unwatermarked paper, small mark on face*', estimate £10. No 54 was in Victor Toeg's sale of his Leeward Islands in March 1971. Clearly essays from Bunhill Row had been for sale by dealers since the mid-1960s. So far as is known only two copies of each essay was printed, one for the Crown Agents and one as De La Rue's copy, except for A9. These 51 pairs were produced in sheetlets of 6, plus a file copy, at the Crown Agents request. If this summary is correct there will be no more than two copies of any essay except for A9 when theoretically there could be seven provided none has been cut into singles, which I suspect some have.

The chief problem in correctly assigning the Imperium Essays are their true colour shades and tones compared with earlier variable quality colour photographs and/or written descriptions which are subjective according to the describer's interpretation of them. Not surprisingly, after more than 20 separate printings spread over 13 years, a wide range of colour shades and tones occurred. To minimise possible confusion I have restricted colour descriptions to those intended by De La Rue, e.g. red, blue, green, brown etc. The doubly fugitive purple is given as mauve and black, although invariably grey-black to drab is given as black. The large number of additional essays recorded in B & C suggests that many had been removed before Robson Lowe was appointed in 1974. Many second and third copies of single essays are thought to be from pairs that have been separated.

The Appendix Sheets that I have stated as definitely or most probably still complete refers to July 2011, the date the listings were compiled. I have not yet been able to inspect the Crown Agents' archive held at the Philatelic Collections, British Library which may provide additional information. It does not hold anything to change my record of the Universal Colour Scheme.

I hope that members will check their Imperium Essays to add to or amend these listings and send them to the Editor or me.

Main Sources of Information

- British Philatelic Museum & Archive – The De La Rue archive, 2007
- Easton, J. – British & Foreign - Postage Stamps – RPSL, 1958
- Grosvenor Auctions – including the Sussex, Jones & Oliver sales, 2011
- Oliver M. N. – Leeward Islands – Notes for Philatelists, BWISC, 2011
 - The Universal Colour Scheme – London Philatelist, July-Aug 2008
- Robson Lowe – The De La Rue Key Plates (booklet), January 1979
 - The De La Rue Key Plates (auction), November 1979
- Sotheby's – The Sir Gawaine Baillie sale Vol IX, 2006
- Thomas De La Rue & Co. – Colonial stamp printing collection by Mr. G. L. Newman, 2007

Illustrations in the following lists of Imperium Essays are reproduced by the kind permission of The Royal Philatelic Society London and the copyright holders Spink & Son Ltd.

Lists of the Imperium Essays, 1888 to 1901

KEY

PP – Postage/Postage (Design A)

PR – Postage /Revenue (Design B)

RR – Revenue/Revenue (Design C)

2c/6d – Duty value

I – Imperforate

P – Perforated

(W) – White tablet (coloured duty)

(T) – Tinted tablet (white duty)

(S) – Overprinted SPECIMEN (D5)



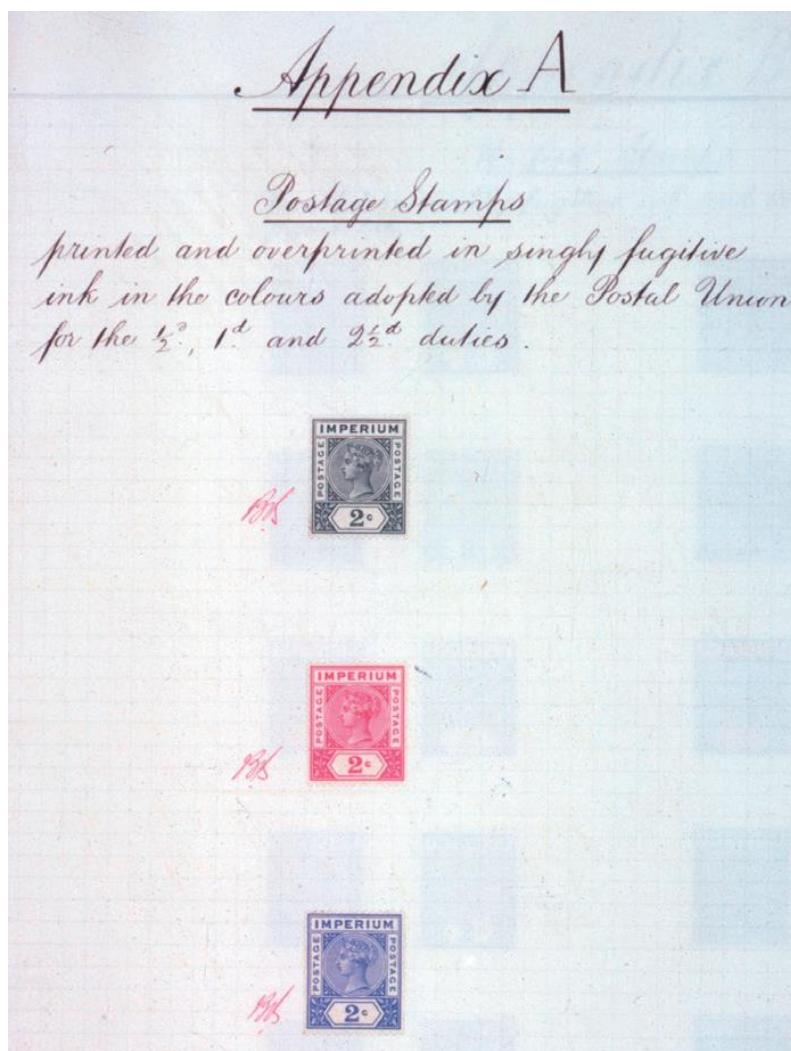
A. Essays recorded by Robson Lowe

A1. 31 August 1888 – Appendix A, “Postage Stamp-printed and overprinted in singly fugitive ink in the colours adopted by the postal Union for the $\frac{1}{2}d$, 1d and $2\frac{1}{2}$ duties”

PP2c P 1 – Green (W)

2 – Red (W)

3 – Blue (W) Each has initials ‘BIS’ in red to the lower left.



A2. 31 August 1888 – Appendix B, “Unified Stamps – printed in doubly fugitive ink and overprinted in singly fugitive ink.” 12 matching pairs with tinted tablet on the left and ‘BIS’ initials in red between each pair. Unwatermarked paper.

PR2c P 4 - Mauve & mauve	10 - Green & green
5 - Mauve & green	11 - Green & mauve
6 - Mauve & red	12 - Green & red
7 - Mauve & blue	13 - Green & blue
8 - Mauve & brown	14 - Green & brown
9 - Mauve & orange-yellow	15 - Green & orange-yellow

The RL Sale on 15 November 1979 had singles (T) only of Nos. 7, 9 & 12.

The Baillie Sale had No.10 as two singles off paper. Nos. 4 & 5 each cut into 2 singles.



A3. 16 October 1890 – Appendix sheet (203x328mm) essays for Selangor.

PP2c P 16 – Green & green (T)	Red & green (T)
Red & purple (W)	Blue & red (W)
Initialled ‘BIS’ in red on left of each	

A4. 13 March 1891 Appendix – British Honduras Colour Scheme (205x318mm) with duty in m/script to left of each and 'BIS' in red on right. Sold complete in 1979 and subsequently cut down. Unwatermarked paper.

- PP2c I 17 – 2c Red (W) & 3c Brown (W),
 18 – Blue (W) 6c on piece 56x36mm.
 19 – Mauve & green (T) 12c
 20 – Yellow & green (T) 24c on piece 56x36mm.
 20a- Yellow & blue (T) 24c/alternative on piece 169x75mm.



A5. 19 March 1897 Appendix A (169x330mm). Colour Scheme for Gold Coast with duty in m/script to left of each. Sheet thought to be still complete.

PR6d I 21 – Mauve & green (T) -½d	Green & black (T) -1s
Mauve & red (T) -1d	Green & red (T) -2s
Mauve & black (T) -2d	Green & orange (T) -2½d
Mauve & blue (T) -2½d	Green & blue (T) -4s
Mauve & orange (W) -3d	Green & violet (T) -5s
Mauve & red (W) 4d	Green & brown (T) -10s
Mauve & black (W) -5d	Mauve & black/red (T) - £1
Mauve & mauve (W) -6d	Mauve & black/red (W) -£5



To be continued.

Stanley Gibbons Auctions

British West Indies usually feature in our regular auctions and we seek consignments of single items of merit or collections for inclusion.

*Our next sale is March 2015,
please see the website for full details.*



Full details for the sale available from Ryan Epps repps@stanleygibbons.com or call 020 7836 8444

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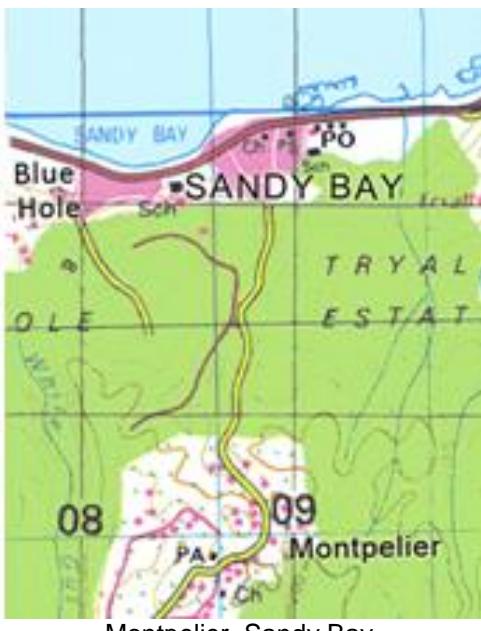
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JAMAICA

MONTPELIER PA HANOVER

BY DAVID HORRY

It is not often that an undiscovered Jamaican Postal Agency comes to the surface – in fact I don't think it has ever happened before. The office in question is Montpelier in the parish of Hanover. This office is just over a mile south of Sandy Bay and is clearly marked on the OS Map. This is not the same Montpelier located in St James parish by the railway line south of Anchovy.



Montpelier, Sandy Bay



Montpelier, Hanover

It came to light as it was clear that the Sandy Bay postal agency was 'out of operation' at several points during the 1950s. There are no strikes for Sandy Bay recorded between March 1951 and January 1953. A recent survey I conducted through BWISC confirmed there are also no Sandy Bay 'Registered' Ovals recorded between late 1953 and July 1956 and then from October 1956 to November 1960! This is supported by several major collections I have checked – Topaz, Foster, Wright, Stanton and Fincham. The Sandy Bay Jamaican Double Circle (JDC3) was meant to be finished with by May 1950 when the RO first appeared. It was used fleetingly in March 1951 and June 1953 when the ROs were apparently suspended from use. The JDC3 re-appears throughout 1957 and then again in October 1960 but there is no sign of any postmarks for Sandy Bay during 1958, 1959 and most of 1960!



Sandy Bay DC3



Sandy Bay RO

Both the 1952 Post Office Guide and the 1952 Jamaica Handbook note that the Sandy Bay PA was indeed open but the latter shows that 17 of the 26 offices using the 'Registered' Oval postmark were not fully completed due to lack of information regarding new offices since around 1947. It is somewhat strange that this Government publication, compiled by one W.A. Cover, lacked information on the RO offices.

Sandy Bay PA is missing from the 1958 Post Office circulation list of Postal Agencies published in June 1958.

Was the Montpelier sSC* used at the Montpelier, Hanover PA 1958-60? I am inclined to think so. In similar circumstances for other RO offices, a relief office was employed: Success PA for Flower Hill PA and Grey Ground PA for Broadleaf PA etc.



Montpelier DC3

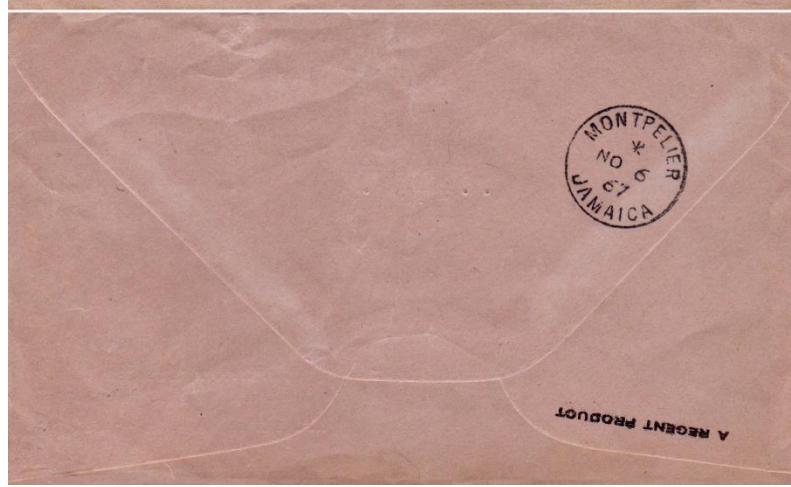
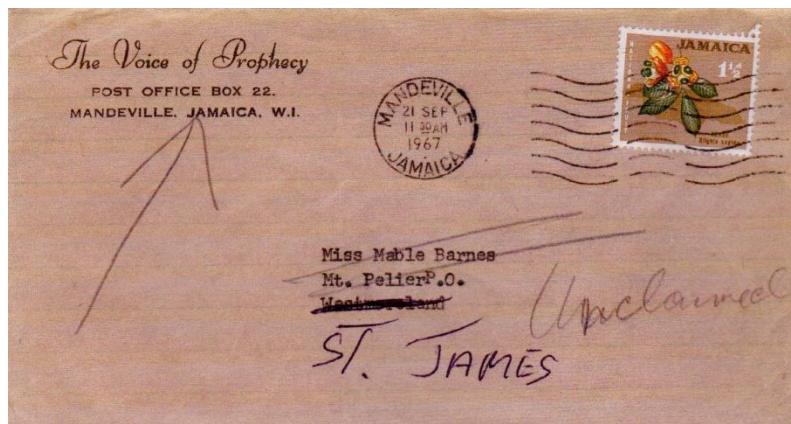


Montpelier SC



Montpelier sSC

The dates for the Montpelier small Single Circle (sSC*) are 1 September 1958 to 18 March 1960 which fit well with the Sandy Bay closure. The Kingston GPO has confirmed that this office did exist. Ray Stanton has a 1967 cover with the Montpelier sSC* addressed to Montpelier, Westmoreland and re-directed to St. James. It is back stamped with the Montpelier sSC which show that this canceller may well have been returned to the St James office. The strike is pretty hard to come by and originally seemed unnecessary as Montpelier St. James had used its JDC continuously since 1938.



Montpelier 'NO 6 67'

Some confirmation of all this emanates from the late Derek Sutcliffe's files – as noted by Steve Jarvis:- "MONTPELIER Hanover GR:360980 Village 1 mile due S of Sandy Bay and 3 miles NE of Cascade, a PA is shown on the OS."

If you have a Montpelier sSC* postmark on cover or indeed a Sandy Bay 1950s cover, I would be most interested to hear from you.

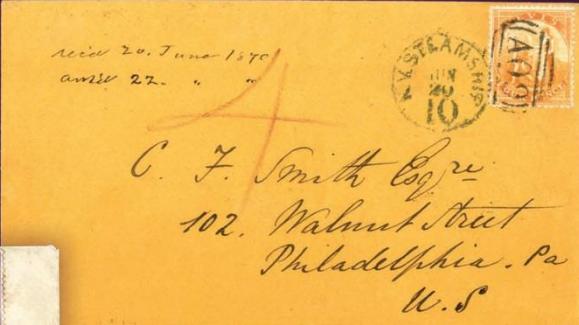
 
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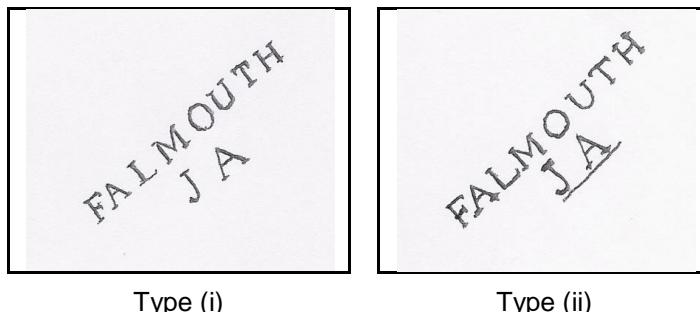
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NEWLY RECORDED MARKS OF FALMOUTH AND SILOAH

BY ANTHONY WILKINSON

I own copies of most of the standard literature on Jamaican postmarks (Foster, Potter, Proud, Horry, Sutcliffe), but none of these distinguishes the distinct types I have observed for Falmouth (Foster Type T3) and Siloah ('Birmingham' Type B1).

FALMOUTH, I illustrate tracings of the two varieties I have:



The first appears on letters dated 6 September 1803 and 17 November 1807, the second on a letter dated 13 April 1816.

Main Distinguishing features:

Type (i) 1803–7	Upright of 'J' under left leg of 'M' Top of 'A' under left side of 'O' 5mm from top of 'A' to top of 'L'
Type (ii) 1816	'J' close to right leg of 'M' 'A' under right side of 'O' 3.5mm from top of 'A' to top of 'L'

There are also small differences in the shapes of some letters, especially the 'A's, 'L' and 'O'.

SILOAH, Two types as illustrated:



Main Distinguishing features:

Type (i)	Circular 'O' 'J' has broad, shallow hook 'C' broad 3.5mm from top of 'A' to top of 'H'
Type (ii)	Upright oval 'O' 'J' has narrower, deeper hook 'C' narrower 2.5mm from top of 'A' to top of 'H'

Potter quotes dates of use as 13 January 1941 to 17 December 1998 for 'Birmingham' Type B1 marks of Siloah. The latest date I have for Type (i) is 12 June 1949 and the earliest for Type (ii) is 23 November 1949. The outer circle above 'SILOAH' is weak or broken in all the examples I have of Type (i), so maybe that was why it was replaced within a comparatively short time.



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DIAMOND JUBILEE EVENTS

Our Diamond Jubilee events opened on Wednesday with an evening reception hosted by Stanley Gibbons at 399-401 Strand. Study Circle members and guests attended and had a most enjoyable evening.



Photographs reproduced by kind permission of Eve Barnes, Bonhams.

The highlight of the celebrations was the comprehensive 52 frame display to the Royal Philatelic Society London at 41 Devonshire Place. Each of the BWI territories was represented with some rare and exotic material exhibited by 32 Study Circle members, including half a dozen large gold medal winners.

The display was viewed by 136 RPSL fellows and members, and 56 guests. This was a record turnout for a meeting at the Royal beating the previous record by 30 people.



Photographs reproduced by kind permission of Michael Pitt-Payne from the RPSL.

The Diamond Jubilee commemoration was brought to a close with a celebration dinner attended by 60 members and guests at the Naval Club, who did the society proud.

It is intended that scans of the exhibits will be available on the website in the meantime the following is just a taster.

THE FIRST DEFINITIVE ISSUE (1865)

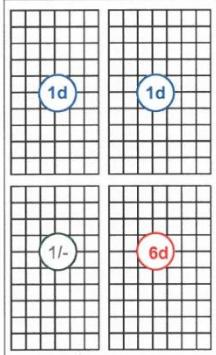
The first printing of British Honduras stamps was the one penny pale blue, sixpence rose and one shilling green, each printed on separate panes within a single sheet (see illustration). 200 sheets (24,000 X 1d, 12,000 X 6d, 12,000 X 1/-) were received in Belize on 28th November 1865 and put on sale on 1 December.

The second and third printings were in sheets of 120 arranged in two horizontal panes of sixty with a central gutter. Only one penny duties were ordered. They were printed in a darker blue than the first printing. The second printing (invoiced 31 May 1869) was for 120,000 stamps and the third printing (invoiced 6 May 1871) was for 24,000 stamps.

1865-71. No watermark. Perf 14.



Pale blue
(1st printing)



Sheet format of
first printing



Darker blue
(2nd & 3rd printings)



Wing margin copies from central gutter. Note that the one penny can have the wing margin on right or left, but the sixpence can only be on left and the one shilling can only be on right.

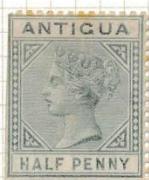
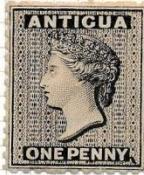
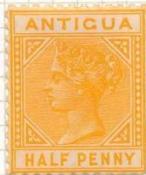


ex Hart (1978)



Strip of six 1865 one shilling definitives, each cancelled with the large "A06" obliterator and showing a wing margin at right. This is the longest possible strip as the pane was only six stamps wide (6 X 10).

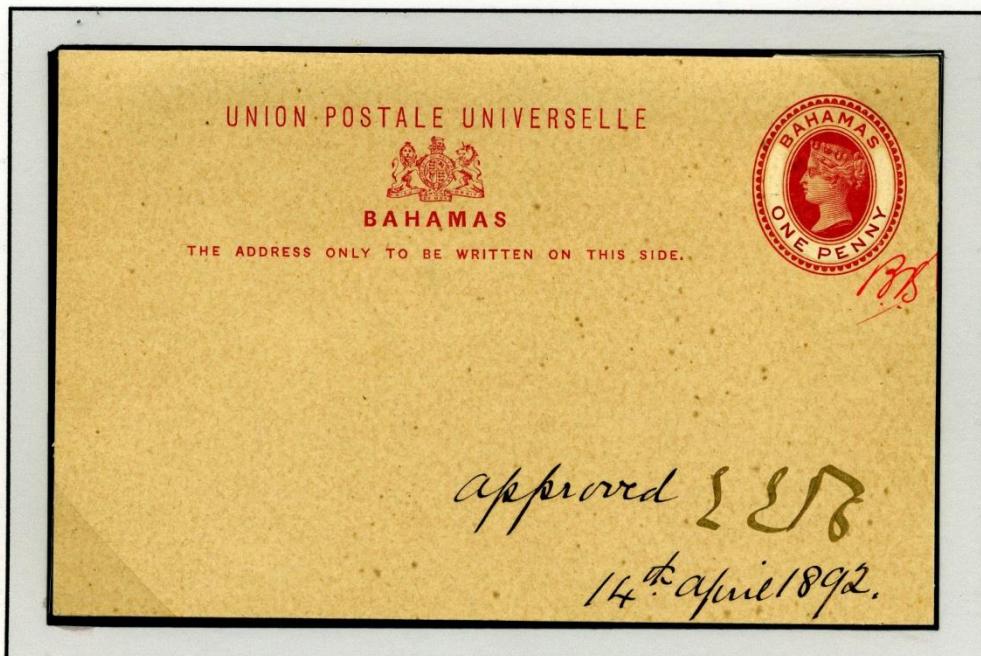
A page of British Honduras from the collection of Ian Matheson.

A NTIGUA.1882COLOUR TRIALSExperimental Perforation 12Watermark Crown CA.Issued ColoursColours not used for this Colony

A page of Antigua from the collection of John Taylor.

Queen Victoria 1d Postal Card 1892 Hand-Painted Essay

In style very similar to the 1883 reply-paid postal card except this De La Rue essay in carmine on buff card has the value tablet *hand-painted in Chinese White*. Endorsed 'Approved' and dated 14th April 1892 and initialled E E B (E.E. Blake, Chief Crown Agent). There is also a red manuscript initial to the right side of the value tablet. Size is 141 x 90mms. The printing plate was invoiced on 2nd July 1892.



Three printings are known: 7th July 1892, 10,200 including 400PSD1 Specimens; 3rd June 1896, 10,320 and 8th June 1900, 3,132.

A page from Keith Hanman's Bahamas Postal Stationery collection.

ST. VINCENT

DISCOVERY BY WOLFGANG FUCHS OF RED INK GB/40c USED AT BIABOU

BY MICHAEL HAMILTON

I have records of probably in excess of 4,000 abbreviated and extended postmarks on St. Vincent stamps but it is impossible to keep text records for the non-dated village instruments such as vertical 'A10' killers used at the villages.

With this in mind I recently contacted a few keen St. Vincent collectors to see whether they would provide me with scans of any red GB/40c with the small 'c' (PML.74, village use) so that I could build a research file and establish frequency on the various SG. issues.



Response came and I was delighted to receive a scan of a Perkins Bacon QV 1d drab showing combination red GB/40c (village use) and very worn late use black GB/40c (PML.73 used Kingstown).



The ultimate response came from Study Circle member Wolfgang Fuchs in Munich, Germany who referred me to the black & white illustrated Lot 549 in the Bobbie Messenger sale (Robson Lowe 11 January 1983) asking whether I had noticed the 'JA' date slug on the '1872 1s deep rose-red with double GB/40c in red ink'.

As the village offices opened on 2 December 1872 the expectation was that 'JA' on 1872 1s would infer a JA 1873 use, and in that year there was much overstamping of village mail at Kingstown with horizontal black 'A10'. My immediate and incorrect thought was that it was a red ST. VINCENT cds also being employed at Kingstown.

More logical thinking decided that the 'JA' in combination with village GB/40c could only result from three possibilities – that it was also applied at point of despatch, that it was a village abbreviate transit cancel, or that it was an overseas arrival mark. Being a 1s denomination the cover must have been overseas bound, and knowledge from other cancels showed that there was no precedent for a high value adhesive to have been cancelled between village of despatch and Head Office.

Only examination of the actual stamp would hopefully provide answers but how many years would it be before the stamp re-surfaced?

4s JAFFE	549	<input type="radio"/> 1872 perf. 11 to 12½, 1/- deep rose-red with double ** strike in red. Photo	£60	
		<input type="radio"/> — ditto, in red overstruck by "A10" in black. Photo	£60	

Fortunately luck was in, and in bucket loads! Australian based Peter Jaffé had not only put bids on the book for the Messenger sale, and also with commission agents, but knowing I would be in the sale room had given me extra bids on his behalf and one was Lot 549 - which was secured for him.

Lot 549 had passed from Messenger to Jaffé, and the luck continued as I also had bid on the Jaffé GB/40c holding (lot 707, Spink, London 2 March 2006) for American based member Bruce Aitken. On making contact with Bruce immediate confirmation came that the year was '76' and the 1s was the 1875 claret and not the earlier 1872 deep rose-red. Bruce also confirmed it was a village abbreviate starting with 'B' but could not be sure of the second letter.

His coloured scan arrived showing that the abbreviate and the GB/40c were in matching coloured reddish ink, and was immediately sent to Shanghai based member David Horry, with additional

scans Biabou 'BI' and GB/40c, for use of his technical expertise. Within hours David's excellent contribution was back and the 'I' of 'BI' was seen to have an unexpected distinctive base curl.



Thoughts now turned briefly from the larger mail using Biabou 'BI' to the smaller Buccament 'BU' office, and the technical skills of Michael Louka in Norway were now eagerly sought to clarify.

Michael made many tests and verified that the abbreviate was in fact 'BI', as illustrated.

Thanks to David & Michael's work and Wolfgang's initial observation it is now fairly certain that the matching coloured inks of the 'BI' dated JA 8 1876 with the red GB/40c's show that the small 'c' red GB/40c was used at Biabou. Quite an achievement - as proof of use has taken some 142 years!



Having established that the red GB/40c was used at Biabou as late as 1882 on 1d drab (SG.37) we can now consider whether the black ink strikes found on the early printings 1885 QV 1d rose-red and 1886 QV 1d rose were also applied at Biabou.

The case is less certain. No strikes in red ink of the GB/40c have been reported on the De La Rue 1883 QV 1d drab (SG.39) creating a break of two years before the rather plentiful black strikes appear on QV 1d reds (SG.48, 48a). Can you close this gap by showing strikes of the small 'c' GB/40c in either red or black ink on QV 1d drab (SG.39)?

A terrible cyclone struck St. Vincent on 16 August 1886, and was the Biabou GB/40c needed elsewhere?

The strongest case for the black GB/40c to have had continued its use at Biabou comes in two parts:

First, it was already at Biabou.

Second, the black strikes small 'c' GB/40c abruptly end on examples 1886 QV 1d rose which may be a consequence of the closure of the Biabou office on 31 December 1887.

There are four dated copies of the black GB/40c on QV 1d rose. These are recorded in combination with MESOPOTAMIA C/JA 15 87 cds, COLONARIE C/SP 29 87 cds, and two with BIABOU C/JU 1 87 and C/SP 7 87 cds. Whether the latter two are arrival cancels or same office 'overlap' cancels is impossible to know.

If you have further combinations of GB/40c and village cds on QV 1d reds, or have small 'c' red or black strikes on QV 1d drab (SG.39) please forward scans or details to your Editor.



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TRINIDAD

THE 1914 RED CROSS LABEL (AN ADDENDUM)

BY ED BARROW

The story of the stamp has been extensively and thoroughly covered by, among others, Ron Wike, Ben Ramkissoon, W.H. Mathews and most recently and in great depth by Ian Jakes. Those looking for the full treatment should read Ian Jakes' Study Paper "The Trinidad Red Cross Label" published by the BWISC and this article references that work at many points. However, my purpose is not to repeat what has been said but to add some missing details about the stamp and the fund raising activities that it was part of.

Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914 and within a month the local branch of the Red Cross Society was founded. This was not the only patriotic effort underway in Trinidad & Tobago at the time; the Chamber of Commerce had a separate fund, as did the town of San Fernando, to name just two. But the memory of the Trinidad Red Cross Fund has endured largely because of this patriotic label and its novelty of being used as a stamp for one day.

First Day of Issue

An advert in the Trinidad Daily Mirror of 17 September 1914 announced that the Red Cross Stamps were on sale at the Port of Spain Department Store, Richardson and Selway Ltd. It is possible that they were available the day before as the notice was probably paid for and set the night before. Interestingly they were sold at 24c (1 Shilling) per 100 or about 1s 8d, this is at odds with the ½d that is given in the literature as the accepted price. This error probably was the result of philatelists assuming that since the label used on the circular envelopes represented the ½d local unsealed letter rate, then the labels were thus sold for ½d each.



Fig. 1. Advert from the Trinidad Daily Mirror



Fig. 2.

Use on Other Red Cross Mail

I think one area not fully treated in the literature is that of internal Red Cross Society mail. We can imagine that in the course of running the Society there would have been letters between committee members and local representatives, and there would have been funds collected, presumably sent by registered mail. Now, mail concerning society business would have been eligible for free transmission but would need to bear the signature of one of the secretaries or the treasurer as per instructions of the Postmaster-General (see Jakes). It is my belief that pre-endorsed envelopes were provided to committee members for communication. Fig. 2 shows one such cover; this is endorsed by E. M. Phillips but is addressed in a different hand and ink to Mrs. S. W. Knaggs, and judging from the transit cancels, it was sent from Arima to Port of Spain. Fig. 3 shows a Registered Envelope sent to Mrs. Burslem, whose Red Cross label has no purpose other than as a label, but has inadvertently been clipped by a date stamp, and it seems likely that this contained a cash donation.

Finally Fig. 4 shows another example of Red Cross Fund mail, this time from Mrs. Burslem to Mrs. Jardine, the committee member for Princes Town. Here the Red Cross label was again inadvertently cancelled.



Fig. 3.

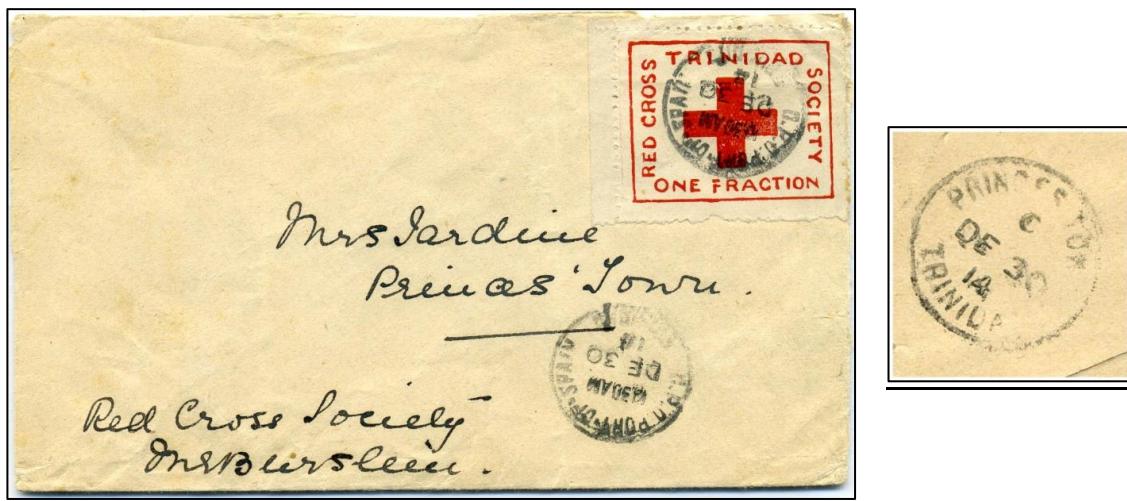


Fig. 4.

Perforation Varieties

The production of these labels was not exacting and given the laborious task of perforating each row by hand, it is not surprising that the operator's concentration sometimes slipped and perforation errors resulted. Two examples are shown below; labels horizontally imperforate and a label with a double line of horizontal perforations.



Fig. 5. Imperf examples



Fig. 6. Double perfed example

The Tête-bêche printings

Not many of these have survived and they are difficult to explain. Using the established plating format from Jakes which has sheets being printed using a plate made up of 3 pairs of distinctive dies numbered 1 to 6; the tête-bêche block shown in Fig. 7 follows the pattern laid out in Fig. 8. Extrapolating from this, the full plate must have followed the format as shown in Fig. 9. But how and why were they printed?



Fig. 7. tête-bêche block

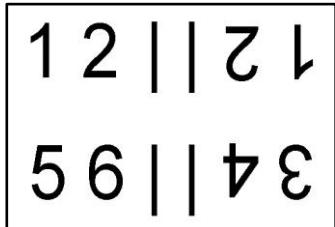


Fig. 8. Plate positions in the tête-bêche Block above.

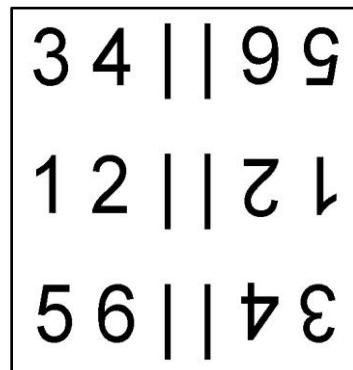


Fig. 9. Plate positions in a full tête-bêche sheet, the double lines represent perforations.

It has been suggested that perhaps sheets were printed in 2 panes of 24 with a separate plate used to print the right hand panes; and that this plate was inverted. Thus the tête-bêche blocks would be the result of incorrect separation of the 2 sheets. But if this was the case, surely at some time during its life the dies of the second plate would have developed distinctive marks and/or wear. However, when we look closely at the block shown in Fig. 7, it appears that both left and right impressions came from the same dies. Also the central gap between the 2 blocks of 4 is 12mm; this gap would need to be 20mm or so to account for the normal sheet margins if this was two sheets side by side. Finally the lack of perforations on the right and left margins suggest that these were the edges of the sheet and not part of larger sheets; if they were part of larger sheets they would have perforated edges.

So if we adhere to the likely view that all sheets of 24 stamps were printed using the same 6 dies that made up a singular plate, this would mean that for each tête-bêche sheet, 2 left hand blocks of 6 were first printed. Then either the plate was inverted or the paper fed in backwards and the 2 right hand blocks of 6 then printed. It is interesting to note that this tête-bêche block is not as wide as a regular sheet, but is 16cm instead of 16.5cm. In my opinion this was necessary in order to create the necessary space in the middle of the sheet for the wide central gutter.

To create this space the printer would need to offset the paper between printing the left hand and right hand blocks. One way to do this would be to cut the paper down to create the necessary space to move the paper within the guides (which were presumably set at 16.5cm). By moving the paper to the left and right when printing the left hand and right hand blocks you can get the desired effect of a wider gap in the middle of the sheet. But all these unnecessary steps would have had to be repeated for every sheet and I believe this suggests a philatelic hand and/or motive.



Fig. 10. 1915 Annual Report

As a side note; it should not be surprising that there are multiple settings of the plate of 6 as it would be likely that after each printing the dies would be removed, cleaned and the equipment used from other purposes. And when needed, the plate would be reset and loaded into the press. With 3 stereos this gives a maximum of 6 different plate arrangements. The one shown in Fig. 9 is just one.

What became of the money raised?

The question of how much money was raised and what use it was put to has also not been answered in the literature. One year on, the report of October 1915 gives a total of \$33,908.37 raised with this money being used to procure two ambulances, with one already in service at the front (see Fig. 10).

Two patriotic cards are known, which show Trinidad Red Cross ambulances. The earliest, shown in Fig. 11, was first noted by Ron Wike in BCPJ (Dec 1998, Vol 38, No 4). It was postmarked 29 July 1915 and so must be the first ambulance purchased with the raised funds. The second card shown in Fig. 12 is dated 24 June 1917 and shows a similar ambulance but it is emblazoned with 'From the Trinidad Branch' on the side.

I have seen one Red Cross Label cancelled with a handstamp of the Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Middlesex. This large WWI hospital treated in excess of 10,000 troops in 1917 and operated 7 ambulances. It is my belief that one or more of the Trinidad Ambulances operated at this hospital and this stamp was a philatelic memento to commemorate this fact (see Fig. 13).



Fig. 11. Card showing the first ambulance



Fig. 12. Card showing later ambulance



Fig. 13. Label cancelled with hospital handstamp.

Fakes and Forgeries



Fig. 14. Faked cover with D47 cancel.

Those most commonly seen are fakes made using genuine Port of Spain cancels issued in the 1920s and 1930s, with the dates wound back to 18 SP 1914, the most common being the D47. Of the 12 or so I have seen, the cancel varies in crispness and the hour codes also vary between 12.30pm, 2.30pm and 4pm. This leads me to believe that they were made over time perhaps as a favour to a local dealer. (A few covers have \$4.50 written at the top which may have been a price; see Fig. 14). Similarly D54 is another commonly seen cancel with a spread of hour codes and varying wear and tear. Some village CDS were also used to cancel labels: at least one sheet seems to have been cancelled to order with a St Mary's CDS dated B MR 29 1916. Two blocks of 4 have been seen and one single stamp was posthumously applied to a cover to enhance its value. That cover, shown in Fig. 17, didn't really need much enhancing. It was sent from the Five Islands to St. Joseph on 3 Dec 1919 and would not have transited St. Mary's, and certainly not on 29 MR 1916! It is conjecture, but might these St. Mary's cancelled to order labels have been the work of Paul Connely; a fake cover is known addressed to him with a St. Mary's CDS with its date wound back to 18 SP 1914 (see Fig. 18).



Fig. 15. D54 and D52 faked cancels.



Fig. 16. Cancelled to order at St. Mary's.



Fig. 17. Cover from Five Islands with fake cancelled label applied later.



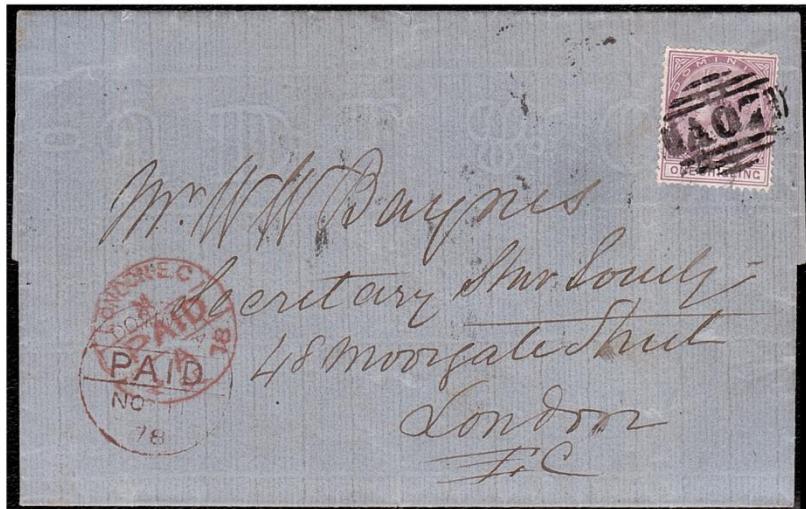
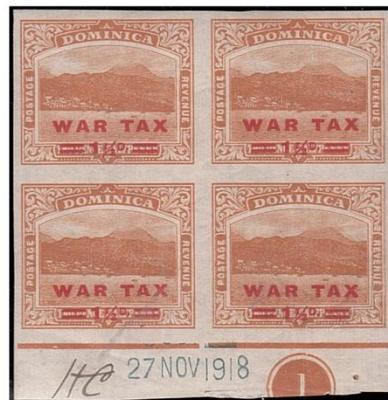
Fig. 18. Faked cover addressed to Paul Connely at St. Mary's (Tacarigua).

The author would like to thank Ian Jakes for his help and input on the tête-bêche printings.

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Very fine mint. Rare multiple. SG 1 (Sc 1). £550

TRINIDAD. 1858 (4th issue) 1d very deep greenish blue with
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TURKS ISLANDS. 1881 '2½' on 1/- vertical pair (T23/24).
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The above is a selection from my extensive British Commonwealth stock. All items available on approval (subject unsold). Major credit cards accepted. Illustrated lists on request (please advise collecting interests). Wants lists invited.

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TURKS ISLANDS

AUCTION 43 – A SNEAK PREVIEW

SIMON GOLDBLATT

It is no secret that before the current year's auction is even held, preparation has begun for the following year's event. So there is never a close season, never a time when the auction team is not on the watch for fresh material, and hoping to include something at least that has not found its way into our auction offerings before.

Now and then this objective is attained early in the cycle of preparation and we can share it with our members in advance. This year it is the turn of Turks Islands.

The theme is forgeries, and the topic is '2½ on ...' There are three items to discuss.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

The first is 2½ on 1d – see Fig. 1 – and, yes, the exhibit is simple fantasy. There was never a 2½ surcharge like the manifestation here, and our faker has even used completely the wrong stamp, a DLR 1d of anything but the right character or shade. Still, we have moved away from Spiro, and this could prove attractive to some member who wants to include in a collection an item from the classic period (we think the forged surcharge is an old one) that may turn out to be one-off. There is more than one way to form a Disneyland collection of the B.W.I.

Strangely, our 2½ on 6d arrived in the same batch, and the composition is more familiar; for every now and then every student of Turks surcharges will meet one that started life as genuine, but has been 'enhanced' – see Fig. 2. There is nothing wrong with the stamp; there is nothing wrong with the ½ surcharge and all that our faker has done has been to create and add a 2. This, after all, was exactly what happened to original surcharges, except that this 2 is not an original 2; and the sin is not a sin of unquity; there will be others about, if not by the same hand, at least of the same character. One can term this as a respectable forgery. It has a point to make in any Turks Islands collection that does not seek to pass it off as anything but ersatz in the result.

And so to Fig. 3, 2½ on 1s lilac. I have a confession to make. When it arrived (in the same batch as our previous two) it never occurred to me to question that the 2½ was a forgery through and through. Suddenly a thought struck me – 'but where would a faker find a genuine 1s lilac on which to exercise his talents?' This could cost a fortune. This must surely be a further example of a genuine ½ on 1s, cat. not yet perhaps quite into 3 figures, also with the 2 as an embellishment. At the time of writing the jury is still out on this one. At least one of our members has expressed the view that the ½ surcharge, albeit quite closely resembling the original article, is not one of the listed ½'s. In which case we are back where I started – looking at a quite genuine 1s lilac that was not surcharged in 1881, and received the mark of Cain after that year, not necessarily all that long afterwards.

Between you and us (membership and auction team) how do we describe and how do we value? We have a problem! If this really is an unsurcharged 1s with a wholly forged surcharge, how many others could ever have been similarly treated? May it perhaps be a further instance of the possibly unique? Should the collector who does not possess a 1s lilac go for this item without downgrading heavily, because of the unsuccessful attempt to fool the philatelic world with a surcharge-that-never-was?

Ultimately the market represented by the membership must decide, and perhaps by auction day 2015 we shall have a definitive answer on status for the prospective buyer. Yet it is not often that one can offer two items of the classic period from a single one of our territories and say of each, 'possible unique'.

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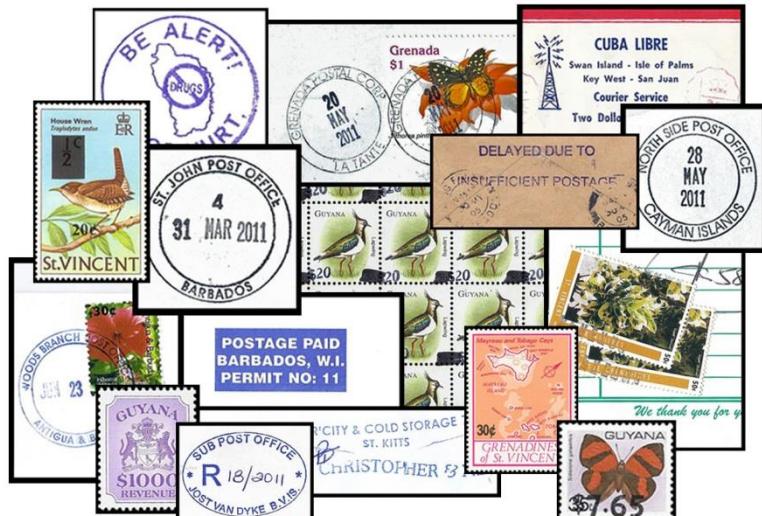
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AUCTION UPDATE**BY CHARLES FREELAND****Stanley Gibbons 30-31 July (BP 15%)**

This sale's standout section was John Perkins' WW2 Nazi Propaganda forgeries, containing many items I had never seen before. The 'regular' sets of 6 for the Barbados, Bermuda etc were all around the £160 mark, but the far scarcer Grenada and St Vincent sets were a very healthy £600 each, the same price as a spectacular block of 6 the 1d alone from both of these countries plus Rabaul (2), Borneo and Bougainville. Mark my words, these are scarce.

Cherrystone 9 September (BP 15%)

There were three interesting covers in this sale. The first was a Bahamas 8 May 1936 cover to England with the handstamp of the Hindenburg Zeppelin airship. I do not recall seeing this on a cover from Bahamas before and it fetched \$1.9k. The second was an 1868 Br Honduras cover to Virginia franked with a strip of three 1d blue, so underfranked 1d for the US rate. The last time I noted this cover was in a 1943 sale catalogue. Although difficult to be certain, it looked as if a stamp was missing (why?) but it nevertheless fetched \$2.1k. Also in Br Honduras a 4 January 1930 First Flight to San Salvador with a San Lorenzo, Honduras transit CDS, recorded by Muller as the only one known, fetched \$1.1k.

Cavendish 10 & 11 September (BP 17%)

As I expected, the second portion of member Derek Seaton's postal history collection was far more substantial than the first, achieving over £1/4 million. The 90 Jamaica lots were the main BWI interest, with numeral cancellations and GB used figuring prominently. Overall realisations for this section were close to £40k, an average 80% above estimate, on lots sold. The highest realisation was £2k for the 1859 GB Used Money Letter (Lot 312) but Lot 329, the lovely Salt Gut GB used cover matched that price, achieving 5 times estimate. One other GB used cover, from St Davids (Lot 327) hit 6 times estimate at £1.2k, this is only one of 3 known. Bidding was not for the faint-hearted. Most of the usual Jamaica gang were in attendance but went home with meagre winnings. In the room Hugh Wood and others plus some persistent telephone bidders soaked up the best of this superb collection as seen by several of us at the BWISC meeting in 2006.

Elsewhere, there were several decent Crowned Circle covers (Bahamas at £750, Hamilton Bermuda at £1.4k, Nevis at £850 and double ring Tobago at £400). However, to my taste the choicest covers were the Br Guiana GB 6d cancelled A04 (snaffled by one of our members with a damaged local cover at £1.7k) and an 1810 cover from Montserrat bearing a St Thomas large fleuron at £1.5k.

Grosvenor 24 & 25 September (BP 19%)

This sale contained several decent offerings of BWI. Among 11 Barbados Britannia covers, a pair of 1d grey used in 1878 to New York with superb Bootheel '7' cancels fetched £820 and a less dramatic '10' bootheel on an 1875 1s aniline cover was £300. 37 lots of Bermuda keyplates were more sprightly than of late with nearly all selling (is that market turning?). A good run of Br Guiana and Br Honduras will have been identified by those on the ball as unsolds from the March Foxley sale at Spink. Most of the lots sold went at around estimate but the three £25 KE revenue essays fetched £5.6k, with one reaching £2.3k and another £1.45k...such a difference is hard to fathom but it does show how hit and miss auctions can be. The set of 13 1888 revenue essays on tracing paper from the De La Rue archives was £1,050. An unmarked duty die proof for the Br Honduras 1922 \$5 was a healthy £350, more than for any other BWI die proof in the sale. However, the most intriguing BWI lot was hidden in the Fiji section, namely an 1844 Tobago missionary cover, returned for Postage to Tobago, and then after eventual prepayment forwarded via Sydney and Auckland to Fiji...full of character at £1.25k.

Coming events

Just in time if you act fast is the next Victoria Stamp Company sale to be held in New York on 6 December. There is plenty of interest for us here, highlighted by a comprehensive offering of Dominica complemented by specialized postal history material from Br. Guiana and Br. Honduras, such as censors and postal markings of all kinds. The Feldman sale on 3 December will include the late Richard Pearmund's collections of Crowned Circles and GB used abroad.

If you have any savings left after that you are welcome to try your luck at the first Vestey sale of BWI at Spink on 11 December, where there are unlikely to be many bargains. Elsewhere in these pages you will read of Spink's sale of the Borromeo Nevis on 27 January and the Piat Jamaica at Cavendish in December.

Postscript

In my last column I speculated on how Gibbons were going to reflect the astonishing prices achieved at the Du Pont sale of Br Guiana in their next catalogue...the answer is now to hand with the issue of their 2015 edition. They have raised the great classic issues by between some 20 and 100%, with the 1856 typeset stamps the biggest "winners" and the relatively common imperfs of 1873–9 used at the lower end...but you will have to buy their catalogue to find out the details.

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The proposed publication schedule is as follows:

Edition	March 2015	June 2015	September 2015	December 2015
Distribute	Mon 16 Mar	Mon 15 Jun	Mon 31 Aug	Mon 30 Nov
From Printer	Tue 10 Mar	Tue 9 Jun	Tue 25 Aug	Tue 24 Nov
To Printer	Mon 16 Feb	Mon 25 May	Mon 3 Aug	Mon 2 Nov
Final Bulletin Revisions	Sun 15 Feb	Sun 24 May	Sun 2 Aug	Sun 1 Nov
Article copy deadline	Sat 24 Jan	Sat 9 May	Sat 25 Jul	Sat 17 Oct
Advert final copy	Sat 17 Jan	Sat 2 May	Sat 18 Jul	Sat 10 Oct
Advert book space	Sat 10 Jan	Sat 25 Apr	Sat 11 Jul	Sat 3 Oct

CURRENT RATES FOR ADVERTISING PER BULLETIN:

One full page b/w	£45
One half page b/w	£28
One quarter page b/w	£19

Full page colour	£75
Half page colour	£38
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