B·W·I STUDY CIRCLE

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO POSTAGE DUES; SHADES AND FLAWS

SEE EDWARD BARROW'S ARTICLE

BULLETIN No. 250 September 2016

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

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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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SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS & INFORMATION

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Wednesday 14 to Saturday 17 September 2016 – Autumn Stampex, BDC Islington, London, N10 0QH Saturday 17 September, Informal Study Circle meeting & displays at 2pm.
Members are strongly encouraged to come along to this informal meeting. These meetings are always a pleasant and relaxing opportunity to get together. If you can, do bring a few sheets to display.

Thursday 13 October 2016 The President of the Royal Philatelic Society has asked Michael Medlicott to mount a solo display to the Society. He has chosen 'Classic Revenues of the British West Indies' as his subject and would greatly appreciate the support of Circle members able to attend.

Subject to any last minute changes Michael intends to show, Antigua, British Guiana, British Honduras, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Leeward Islands, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Christopher, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Tobago and Trinidad. Two other members are scheduled to show Jamaica jointly in 2017, so Michael will try to avoid overlap with their chosen material.

Saturday 15 October 2016 Circle table at Scotex, Dewars Centre, Glover Street, Perth, 10am–3.30pm. (http://www.spta-scotex.com/)

Wednesday 8 March 2017 Richard Maisel will be presenting his Br. Guiana at the Collectors Club in New York

Saturday 22nd April 2017 AGM and Auction at Grosvenor, 399–401 Strand, 2nd & 3rd floors, WC2R 0LT

Saturday 14 – Sunday 15 October 2017 BWISC Convention at The Abbey Hotel, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 9BE.

BWISC displays to local stamp clubs
BWISC is now receiving regular requests to provide displays to local stamp clubs. This year we have displayed for Loughborough (Peter Fernbank, Ian Jakes, George Dunbar) and Barnet (Dunbar), with forthcoming displays at Telford 12 September (Dunbar), Nottingham 23 September (Fernbank, Jakes, Dunbar), Coventry 11 October (Terry Harrison), Amersham 27 October (Dunbar, Jakes, Harrison) and Banbury 1 November (Harrison).

Those named are handling requests in the Midlands and nearby, but it would be useful to also build up a list of members willing to display on behalf of the circle in other regions. Richard Stupples has kindly offered to do this in the Bristol area. Indeed, Richard and, I know, many other members are already on the ABPS list of available speakers and are actively displaying. If you would be willing to display in this way under the BWISC flag, please let me know (secretary@bwisc.org). An arrangement with two or even three speakers sharing the evening can work well and broaden the interest. Do also let us know if you have recently given a display or have one coming up. Leaflets and membership application forms can be supplied for you to take along.

MICHAEL HELLINGS

We have learned with regret of the death in late May 2016 of Michael Hellings, whose membership of BWISC reached back more than four decades. Yet for most of that time he was content passively to enjoy his Circle membership, and it was only in the last ten years of his life that he began active participation in the annual auction, which he thereafter took up with characteristic enthusiasm.

For it was enthusiasm that Michael brought to his major interests ─ to his pride in his Cornish heritage and background, to his passion for rugby, as a performer of skill and ability in his playing days, although this was to engender a physical disability that found him all but housebound in later life. His collections extended to books, to archival material and other memorabilia of Cornwall, and if movement was restricted his mind was overflowing with activity and memories.

He enjoyed a long and happy marriage, with the unbroken physical care and support for his many interests of his wife, Jenifer, who survives him. Philately, by no means confined to the West Indies, helped to keep him in touch with society and the world. Mobility took a minor place, in a life that was led to the full.

Simon Goldblatt

WORLD STAMP SHOW, NEW YORK, POST-MORTEM **BY CHARLES FREELAND**

The US Stamp Show that is held every ten years took place in New York from 28 May to 4 June. Typically, our US hosts hired an enormous hall (the Javitts Centre that covered four blocks from 34th to 37th Streets). Its sheer scale put the Business Design Centre that London is now using to mount major exhibitions to shame. There were almost 700 competitive exhibits comprising over 4000 frames, more if you include the 200 odd literature exhibits and the 100 or so invited exhibits or Court of Honour, hundreds of dealers and auction houses and dozens of specialist societies with manned booths. Most of these took the opportunity to organise specialist meetings in the downstairs catacombs, and I went down there for several convivial events. The BWISC shared a booth with the BCPSG and the Bermuda Collectors Society (BCS) and used that opportunity to recruit 4 new members and sell around £1000 worth of our books. Activity around the hall seemed pretty lively and all the dealers I spoke to seemed satisfied with the business that they were conducting, which augurs well for the future of our hobby.

Although pre─registration for the show needed a certain amount of time, unregistered persons seemed to find no impediment to entry and the first thing we saw as we entered the hall was a whole pile of free brochures that included in 80 pages an exhaustive list of all the exhibits, events and dealers and where to find them all. There was also a more substantial catalogue at $10.

The exhibits were laid out in long rows in a side hall, excellently lit (remember Washington and London?) and very clearly numbered so finding a particular exhibit was a doddle (although possibly a longish walk). 9 of our distinguished members competed and their awards were as follows, though as always some were disappointed:

Championship (not scored) Boylan St Vincent De La Rue period, already a three times Large Gold winner, was wonderfully presented and had been substantially reinforced since I last saw it in 2010 in London. However, it had no chance in the Grand Prix race against the big hitters from US, UK and China (for the record a Panama exhibit won the overall Grand Prix and Mongolia the Grand Prix International).

Large Golds Darryl Fuller (Leeward Islands Postal Stationery) and Richard Maisel (The early sailing ships of British Guiana). Darryl's award was no surprise as it is the third time he has achieved LG after London in 2010 and Melbourne in 2013 (now into the Championship, Darryl!). But Richard's LG was a massive achievement as it was a first time entry and moreover comprised only 5 frames…its title was intelligent as it allowed Richard to exclude the Cotton-reels but it plainly benefited from the inclusion of a number of prominent rarities ex the Foxley collection.

Golds David Pitts (Bermuda Postal History: Forerunners to the UPU) and Graham Booth (The Postal History of the Cayman Is). There was a frisson of shock that David Pitts (and Art Groten's) exhibit had been downgraded from the LG it won in Rio to G, but we were told it had been docked 5 points for including the five Postmasters which were strictly not Postal History but stamps….gee, where were those judges in Rio ? Our President Graham Booth, however, would have been delighted with another G as it justified his recent decision to sell his stamps and beef up his postal history. Actually, Graham's was a lovely exhibit, strong in Jamaica used in Caymans, with all the marks shown including no less than three nice boxed Cayman Bracs. Not quite in the class of Richard Maisel's Cayman Islands exhibit that won three LGs, but still very classy.

Large Vermeils Our 'team' won 4 large vermeils. David Cordon might have been disappointed that his two Bermuda exhibits (5 frames of large keyplates replete with proofs and flaws and the single frame Docks) were unable to get those couple of extra points needed for G but this was an international where he was up against the 'big boys'. Keith Hanman also earned a LV for his Bahamas Postal Stationery, built up within an amazingly short time and based originally on our late member Graham Hoey's collection.

Others among our members played a prominent role in the exhibition. Peter McCann was Jury President while Bernie Beston, Dan and Pat Walker were among dozens of Jury members, while long-time member Steve Schumann was Commissioner General. Peter Elias had two minor literature exhibits, one in electronic form and Stefan Heijtz won a well deserved LV for his extraordinary collection of Puerto Rico Postal History, as well as showing 3 invited frames of New York's Postmasters Provisionals.

Study Circle President Graham Booth with Ann Wood, President of the Guyana Philatelic Society at the combined BWISC, BCPSG and Bermuda Collectors Society booth during the World Stamp Show.

Photograph courtesy of Paul Ramsaroop.

If there was a surprise omission, it was that Her Majesty the Queen had no invited exhibit, apparently because of an inability of the organisers to accept Curator Sefi's insurance valuation.

So far as the meetings were concerned, there was an interesting one day seminar organised by Colin Fraser and Richard Maisel for the BCPSG, while both the BCPSG and the BCS held their AGMs during the week. Attendance at both was patchy (nothing like the 30 odd attendance at our April AGMs) but there were no auctions to attract members. In fact I found the BCPSG attendance in particular rather disappointing with many prominent members not making the effort to attend the show (but the US is a large country). On the social side, there was a dinner in Central Park organized by the RPS where several of our members including our President and Chairman, Steve Jarvis and Simon Richards wined and dined in grand surroundings, as well as sociable dinners for the BCPSG and BCS.

Finally, the US organisers worked hard to keep the show in the public eye. The inverted Jenny was a big feature with one of the actual Jenny aeroplanes on display in the forecourt and the finest graded example of the stamp on sale at a Siegel auction on the first Sunday when it fetched a staggering price of $1.35mn plus taxes. There was also a presentation to hand over to the APRL a notorious inverted Jenny, one of a block of four stolen from the APS in 1955, which had recently been identified after being consigned for sale to Siegel. The story obviously caught the attention of the media, as several camera crews were there from the likes of Fox and CNBC.

BRITISH WEST INDIES OFFERS FROM STOCK

ANTIGUA. 1882 ½d top marginal Plate '2' block of 18 with 'detached triangle' (R.3/3). Unmounted mint. SG 21a. **£250**

BAHAMAS. 1862 6d lavender-grey. Very fine unused. An extremely rare stamp. RPS Cert. SG 11. **£5500**

BAHAMAS. 1942 5/- on thin, striated paper in block of four. Very fine mint and extremely rare in multiple. SG 155a. **£2750**

BARBADOS. 1852/55 (no value) slate-blue. A complete sheet with full margins. Very fine mint. Exceptional piece. SG 5a. **£1400**

B. GUIANA. 1898 2c Jubilee with watermark reversed. Very fine mint. SG 217x. **£350**

B. HONDURAS. 1888 50c on 1/- grey in block of four. Very fine mint. SG 42. **£150**

CAYMAN ISLANDS. 1905 1/- block of four including the 'slotted frame' (R.1/4). Very fine mint. Ex Cooley. SG 12. **£250**

GRENADA. 1895 1/- strip of four, neatly cancelled by ST GEORGES c.d.s. 'OC 26 95'. Unusual multiple. SG 55. **£170**

JAMAICA. 1949 £1 Tobacco Growing in marginal imprint block of four. Unmounted mint. Scarce. SG 133a. **£200**

NEVIS. 1884 4d grey with 'detached triangle' (R.3/3) Very fine mint and exceptionally fresh. SG 31a. **£650**

ST. VINCENT. 1883 4d ultramarine blue with watermark reversed. Very fine mint and perfectly centred. SG 43x. **£450**

ST. VINCENT. 1898 DLR Die Proof for QV 5d Duty Tablets in black on glazed card dated '25 MAY 98'. **£275**

TURKS ISLANDS. 1881 '½' on 1d vertical pair (T9 and 10). Very fine mint (lower stamp unmounted). SG 17/18. **£100**

TURKS & CAICOS. 1918 3d marginal pair with 'WAR TAX' overprint double. Very fine mint. Rare piece. SG 145a. **£375**

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.

MARK HARVEY

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BOOK REVIEW **BY CHARLES FREELAND**

UPU Specimen stamps 1878–1961 by James Bendon,
published by Oxford Book Projects, Hardback xii + 524 pages + announcements
available from James Bendon at www.jamesbendon.com Price: £85.00 plus p&p

James Bendon has long been the 'go-to' dealer for specialised specimen items, especially in the last 20 odd years for issued specimens that bear receiving authority marks. This sizeable book is an enlarged and considerably extended version of James' 1988 book 'UPU specimen stamps'. The sets of stamps are no longer priced as in the previous book but it has been significantly enhanced by many splendid colour illustrations that probably account for half the extra 300 pages. This makes it far more readable than the previous rather dry listings of all the UPU specimens despite the fact that they provided valuable information on the specimen obliterations that each bears.

What I found most useful were (a) the extensions to the opening chapters on the UPU and its processes and (b) the five detailed annexes. The first of these reproduces Marcus Samuel's ground-breaking articles in *Stamp Collecting* that record all the uncancelled stamps in the UPU's Bureau Collection. Appendix B lists the numbers of specimens circulated each year by the UPU, similar to the earlier Appendix A but extensively extended and now up to 1961 compared with the previous end date of 1929. So anyone writing a comprehensive handbook or preparing a stamp exhibit containing UPU specimens needs to refer to this list and as an author I frequently do. I referred most often in the previous book to the exact dates of accession of our individual islands to the UPU but this list has now been updated to recognise the dates on which the newly independent countries, including all the BWI countries, acceded to the UPU, while other Appendices present similar useful facts.

I warmly recommend this book to authors and exhibitors, serious philatelic students or those who have a specialised interest in UPU specimens.

BWI

JAMAICA AND TRINIDAD UPDATES

BY DAVID HORRY

Michael Hamilton has discovered a bad 'typo' on a QEII Jamaican postmark. When he sent me a copy, via email, with the simple message, 'OMG': I didn't twig straight away. The offending canceller is the IRWIN TRO*(1) dated 30 Jan 1963 – it reads JAMAIACA at the base! (Fig. 1) This canceller was issued three weeks earlier on 10 January 1963 and as far as is recorded was replaced by TRO*(2) on 19 July 1965. (Fig. 2). That was replaced by TRO*(3) on 22 May 1967 and finally a steel instrument sSC was in use by July 1971.

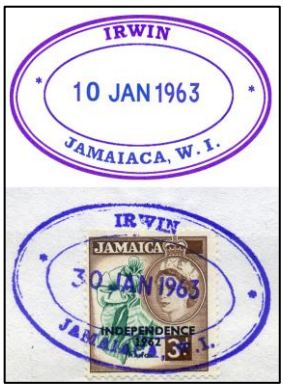


Fig. 1 Irwin TRO*(1) – 10 & 30 January 1963
'JAMAIACA' - misspelt!

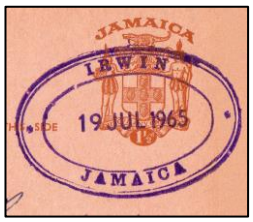


Fig. 2 Irwin TRO*(2) – 19 July 1965
'JAMAICA' - spelt correctly

Typos are fairly rare but, as human beings are involved, do occur. I can think of an unissued Trinidad New Birmingham, incorrectly inscribed, 'CALIFORNIS' (Fig. 3) – it should of course been 'CALIFORNIA' (Fig. 4) but was never used.

Fig. 3 Trinidad – CALIFORNIS NB* - PR.
30 July 1958 – typo

Fig. 4 Trinidad – CALIFORNIA NB* - PR.
21 September 1959, 21 January 1960 - typo corrected

Another offending Jamaican TRO* was From GRANVILLE and issued on 7 November 1949 (Fig. 5) – it reads GLANVILLE! It was replaced by a denticulated tTRO in July 1951 (Fig. 6). Another tTRO which has been noted was for DUMFRIES – misspelt DUMPHRIES and reported by Blackburn in 1946. If you have a copy I would welcome a scan.

Fig. 5 Jamaica – GLANVILLE TRO*
- ERD 7 November 1949 – misspelt

Fig. 6 Jamaica – GRANVILLE tTRO*
- 27 September 1951 – corrected

Fig. 7 Ashley Postal Agency, in Clarendon Parish, 2015 – miles off the beaten track

Fig. 8 Jamaica – ASHLEY TRO*(1) - 9 May 1950

Another scan I am looking for is from ASHLEY a pretty remote and scarce office (Fig. 7). The TRO* in question is unlike TRO* (1a and 1b) issued 14 April 1949 (Fig. 8). It apparently has *ASHLEY* italicised and was thought to be a fake or Aguilar confection. It is dated 27 January 1950.

Ashley was provided with a 'Registered' Oval in April 1950 and was used intermittently until October 1955 (Fig. 9). This is only one of two known Aguilar covers that bear an RO making it very rare.

Fig. 9 Jamaica – Ashley RO* on Everard Aguilar cover - 17 May 1952

I am presently writing a book on the mysterious 'Registered' Ovals of Jamaica and Trinidad which will be published by the BWISC. Last year many of you sent in your dates for the ROs at these 28 offices – a great help. Ian Potter, Tom Foster, Bob Topaz and Clint von Pohle all wrote about these strange devices and the lack of information about their origins. Quite a few covers have come to light and all but Buff Bay, Lucea (Lucy), Tower Isle and Williamsfield are very difficult to find. If anyone has any further examples there is still time to include them in the book.

The 11 ROs, from the early fifties, on Trinidad covers are very hard to come by and again if you have any please let me know - bearing in mind that East Dry River, Les Efforts and Maracas Road are common but less so on early covers. Mucurapo is rare indeed! Any Caratal, Charlieville, Clark Rochard, Cocoyea, Diamond or Point Cumanas in your collection? I'd love to hear from you.

Finally, has anyone got a Trinidad ─ Fishing Pond Skeleton (Sk) June 1952. (Fig. 10) Jim Gordon of Bristol Tennessee had one; however I do not know what happened to his collection after his death three or four years back.

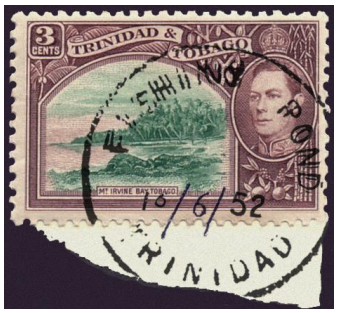
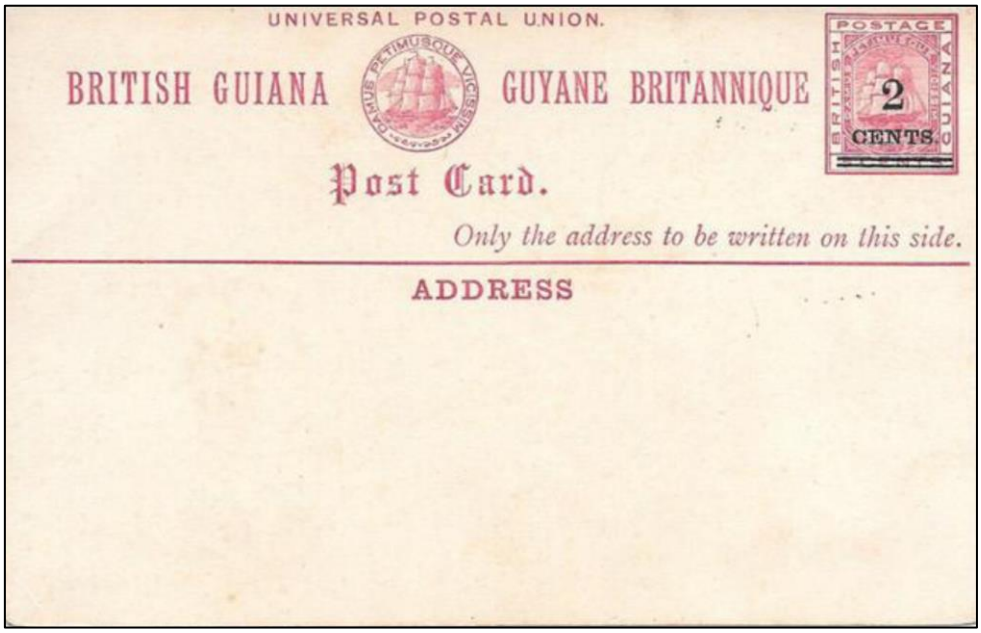


Fig. 10 Trinidad – Fishing Pond Sk *16 June* 1952 – very rare

I can be contacted on horry@talk21.com or through Michael Hamilton.

BRITISH GUIANA

POSTAL STATIONERY CARD **BY TREVOR BUCKELL**



I am looking for any comments or information on the postal stationery card shown above.
As can be seen it is a Higgins & Gage 1 card but overprinted as H & G 6. I have several copies of H & G 6 so am able to confirm measurements are correct as H & G 6. This overprinting on this card is not listed in Townsend & Howe or Higgins & Gage.

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ST VINCENT

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE **BY CHARLES FREELAND**

Roy Bond, Russell Boylan and I are writing an update to the 1971 handbook by Pierce, Messenger & Lowe. We are appealing for assistance from St Vincent specialists, notably for scans of the ex-De La Rue essays for the 1907–11 Arms design or any other important proof and essay material, consignment data and printing numbers for the GVI period definitives and commemoratives and the plate numbers seen on the GVI definitive sets in addition to those listed in the attached table. Please reply to the editor or to charles.freeland@hotmail.com

KING GEORGE V1 PLATE BLOCKS

1938-47

SG No.	Value	Colour	Frame Plate No.	Vignette Plate No.
149	½d	Frame deep blue-green, Vignette deep blue	Blank	Blank
150	1d	Frame lake-brown, Vignette deep blue	2	Blank
	1d	"	2	3
	1d	"	2a	3a
152	2d	Frame Black, Vignette green	Blank	Blank
153	2½d	Frame green, Vignette blue-black	Blank	Blank
153a	2½d	Frame brown, Vignette green	1	Blank
	2½d	"	1a	Blank
154a	3½d	Frame blue-green, Vignette blue-black	1	Blank
	3½d	"	1a	Blank
155	6d	Frame lake, Vignette black	Blank	Blank
156	1s	Frame green, Vignette purple	Blank	Blank
157a	2s6d	Frame blue, Vignette red-brown	1	Blank
	2s6d	"	1a	Blank
158	5s	"	1a	Blank
	5s	"	Blank	Blank
158a	10s	Frame brown, Vignette violet	1	Blank
	10s	"	1a	Blank
159	£1	Frame black, Vignette purple	Blank	Blank

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KING GEORGE V1 PLATE BLOCKS

1949-52

SG No.	Value	Colour	Frame Plate No.	Vignette Plate No.
164	1c	Frame green, Vignette blue	1a	1a
164a	1c	Frame black, Vignette green	1	1
	1c	"	1a	1a
165	2c	Frame black, Vignette green	1	3
	2c	"	1a	3a
	2c	"	1	4
	2c	"	1a	4a
166	3c	Frame scarlet, Vignette green	1	Blank
	3c	"	1a	Blank
166a	3c	Frame purple, Vignette orange	1	1
	3c	"	1a	1a
167	4c	Frame black, Vignette green	1a	1a
167a	4c	Frame green, Vignette blue	1	1
	4c	"	1a	1a
168	5c	Frame purple-brown, Vignette green	1a	Blank
169	6c	Frame purple, Vignette orange	1	1
	6c	"	1a	1a
169a	6c	Frame scarlet, Vignette green	1	Blank
169a	6c	Frame scarlet, Vignette green	1a	Blank
170	7c	Frame blue-green, Vignette blue-black	1	Blank
170a	10c	Frame blue-green, Vignette blue-black	1	Blank
	10c	"	1a	Blank
171	12c	Frame lake, Vignette black	1	1
172	24c	Frame green, Vignette purple	1	Blank
	24c	"	1a	Blank
172	48c	Frame purple, Vignette blue	1	1
173	48c	Frame purple, Vignette blue	1a	1a
173	60c	Frame blue, Vignette red-brown	1	1
174	60c	Frame blue, Vignette red-brown	1a	1a
175	$1.20	Frame deep-green, Vignette scarlet	1	1
176	$2.40	Frame brown, Vignette violet	1a	1a
177	$4.80	Frame black, Vignette purple	1a	1a

1951 NEW CONSTITUTION

184	3c	SG 166 o/ptd	1	Blank
	3c	"	1a	Blank
185	4c	SG 167 o/ptd	1	1
	4c	"	1a	1a
186	5c	SG 168 o/ptd	2	Blank
	5c	"	2a	Blank
187	12c	SG 171 o/ptd	1	Blank
	12c	SG 171 o/ptd	1	1
	12c	"	1a	1a

Articles wanted for future Bulletins

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TRINIDAD

ORINOCO LINE (PART 2) BY MICHAEL REGO

In 1862 the CGT (French Line) made their first Atlantic crossing St. Nazaire to Martinique. Steamship services were gradually opened up in the Caribbean with the aid of Postal Agencies in the French Consular Offices. Venezuela had French Line agencies at Carupano, Porto Cabello and La Guaira.

There Atlantic Line-D in 1892 from Bordeaux sailed for Santander - Port à Prince - Fort de France - Trinidad - Carupano - La Guiana - Porto Cabello - Savanilla - Colon.

Ciudad Bolivar to Barbados

At Trinidad the Post Card was transferred to the RMSP West Indies Inter-Island Service to Barbados.

2 May 1896, 10c UPU Post Card rate, Ciudad Bolivar to Barbados.
Possibly private delivery, as no postmarks are visible.

Ciudad Bolivar, situated on the right bank of the great Orinoco is approximately 230 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, and is the commercial and trading centre of the territory covering more than half the area of Venezuela. The Orinoco delta extends to the boundary of British Guiana on the south to the shore opposite Trinidad on the north. It takes 8 hours by steamer each way to go from Ciudad Bolivar to San Felix its sea port. Port of Spain, Trinidad is the point of trans-shipment in and out, and in 1917 more business was transacted than that of the capital, on account of its greater proximity to rapid sea communications.

Via Trinidad and Barbados

39 days transit

25 May 1897, 10c UPU Post Card rate, Ciudad Bolivar to Danish West Indies
Cd. Bolivar (25 May), St. Thomas (3 Jul), Christiansted (3 Jul).

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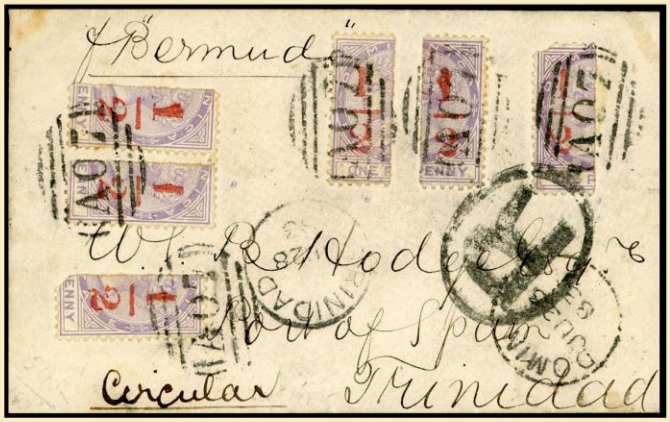

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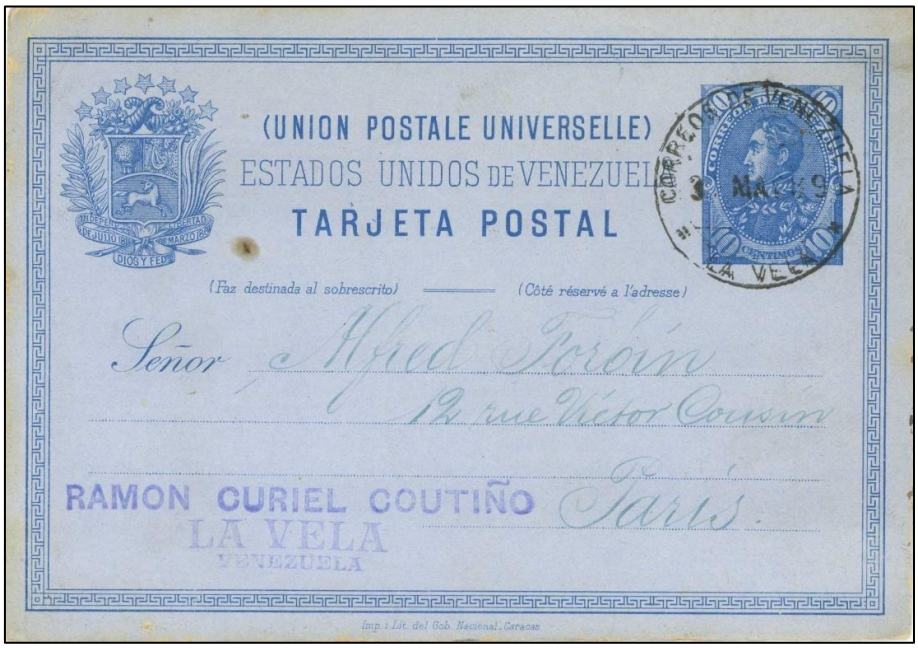
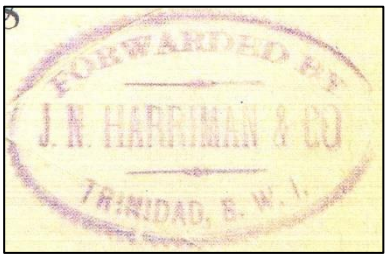
At Trinidad the Post Card was transferred to the RMSP West Indies Inter-Island Service to St. Thomas, then a Danish vessel took it to Christiansted.

Not all the early mails from the River Orinoco ports were destined for the UK, much of the remaining material was for Europe, mainly Germany, France and Italy, and later after WWI for USA.

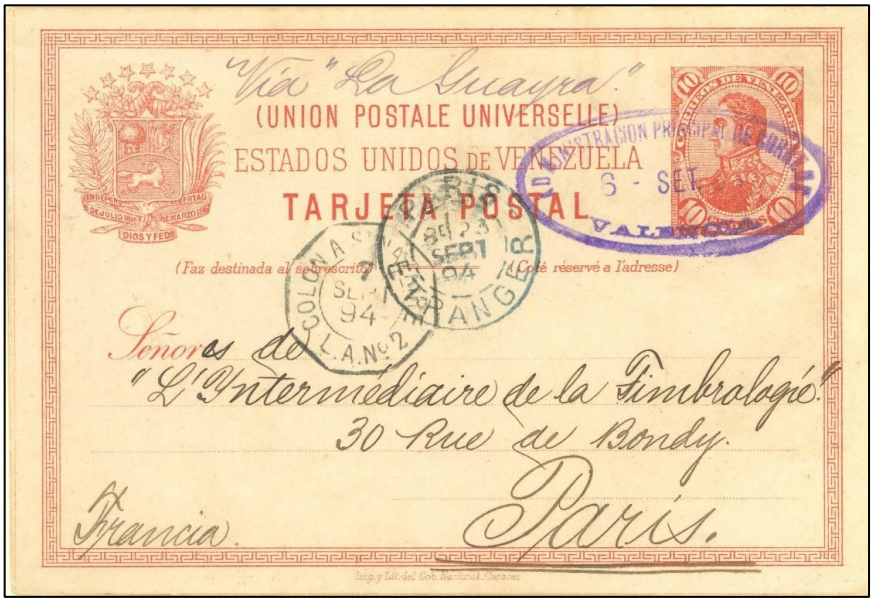


Early Venezuela mail for overseas destinations often transited Trinidad for fast despatch to Europe and North America.

3 June 1889, 10c post card, La Vela, Venezuela to Paris. Le Vela (3 Jun), Caracas (5 Jun).



Cachet of John Neilson Harriman & Company, Port of Spain.
The firm were situated at 2 South Quay
until 1896 when they moved to 61 Marine Square.

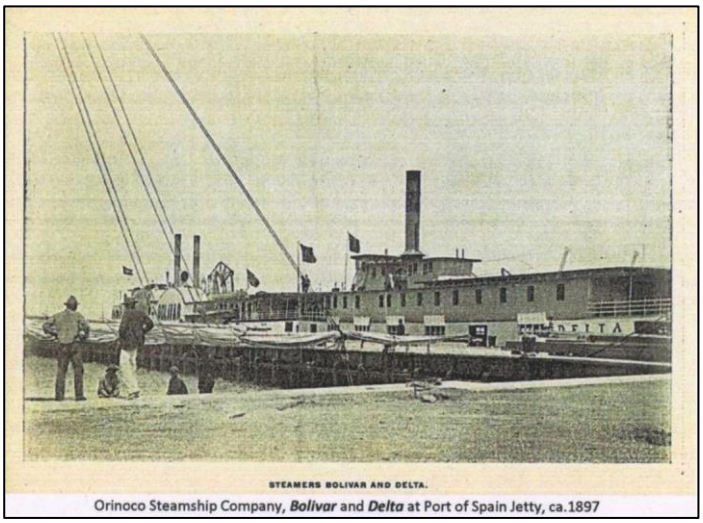


Transit 17 days.

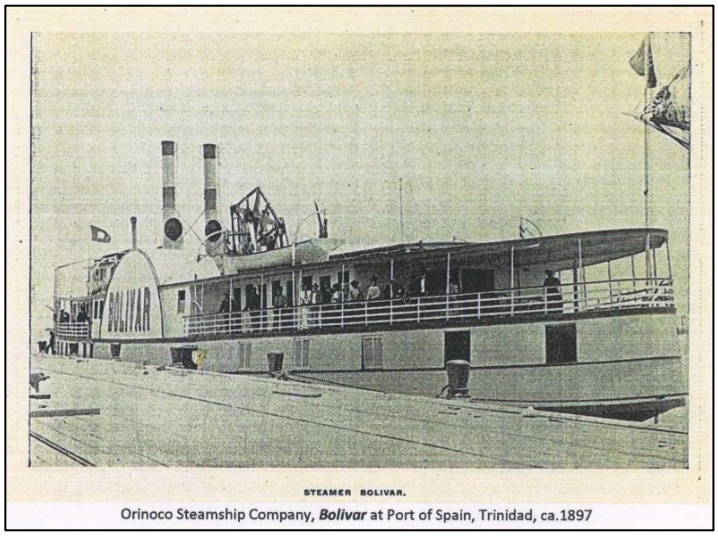
6 Sep. 1894, 10c postcard, Valencia, via La Guaira and Trinidad to Paris.
Valencia (6 Sep), J. N. Harriman cachet, Colon A St. Nazaire Line-A No.2 (7 Sep), Paris (23 Sep).

In 1898 the Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company started a steamship service between Trinidad and Ciudad Bolivar with a regular fortnightly Mail and Passenger service, which at Trinidad connected with the RMSP Company for West Indies Inter-island and Atlantic steamship communications.

However, the service was persistently interfered with by the Venezuela government who changed rules to meet their demands. The final straw was when repeated revolts took place to control the goldfields in the Ciudad Bolivar area, which resulted in bandits taking over control of the steamships.



Orinoco Steamship Company, ***Bolivar*** and ***Delta*** at Port of Spain Jetty, ca.1897



Orinoco Steamship Company, ***Bolivar*** at Port of Spain, Trinidad, ca.1897

The Orinoco route takes in the following towns; Palmar, Moitaco, Maria Luisa, Mapire, Las Bonitas, Caicara and Cabruta.

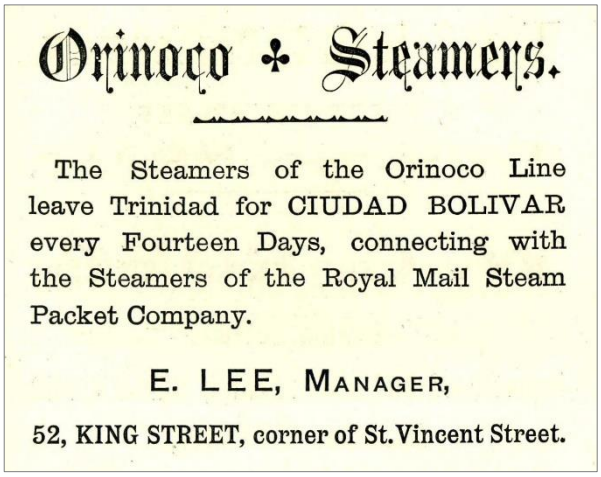
On 22 March 1900, while in service the ***Bolivar*** was taken by force on her regular schedule voyage with mail and cargo, at the mouth of the Macareo River. Under government orders, the vessel was engaged in transporting troops during the days of 22 to 30 March, then later released.

On 12 December 1898, all the shares of the Compania General Venezolana de Navegacion were acquired by the Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company.

In 1888 the *Guide to Trinidad* lists two firms operating from Port of Spain to Ciudad Bolivar.

(1) Orinoco Line; Trinidad Agent, E. Lee, King Street, Port of Spain. The steamer ***Bolivar*** leaves Trinidad twice a month, going up the Orinoco as far as Ciudad Bolivar, connecting both as regards arrival and departure, with the RMSP Company.

(2) Ciudad Bolivar Line; Trinidad Agent, E. P. Masson, South Quay, Port of Spain. A steamer travels to and from Carupano, Ciudad Bolivar, Cumana, La Guaira, etc. monthly.


Orinoco ✣ Steamers.

The Steamers of the Orinoco Line leave Trinidad for CIUDAD BOLIVAR every Fourteen Days, connecting with the Steamers of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.

E. LEE, MANAGER,

52, KING STREET, corner of St. Vincent Street.

Advertisement in Guide to Trinidad, 1888

Ellis Grell in 1880 founded the business as general commission agents, exporting and importing goods of many descriptions. They then became specialists in meat and ice controlling the ice supplies across Port of Spain with 5 depots, and had 2 depots for meat, one being in St. Vincent Street. The meat business was established on firm commercial basis with the government of Venezuela.

In 1896 the firm became Ellis Grell & Company, a brother, George, being added to the business. In 1908 the firm became Grell & Company Limited.

Ellis Grell influenced the idea of a Trinidad Float Dock, and at one time he was the owner of the Trinidad Foundry and Engineering works.

On 17 January 1894, Ellis Grell obtained exclusive rights to navigate the Orinoco River in steam vessels between Trinidad and Ciudad Bolivar. Grell then formed the Orinoco Shipping and Trading Company, a British corporation, the majority of the stock and bonds of which were held by American citizens. The government of Venezuela became indebted to this Company for approximately half a million dollars for services rendered and damages sustained to its business. An adjustment was effected on 10 May 1900, by which the concession was extended for a period of 6 years and the Venezuelan government agreed to pay the Company 100,000 bolivars (US$19,200) in cash and a second sum of the same amount at a later date. The first payment of the 100,000 bolivars was duly made, but the second was not.

On 5 October 1900, Venezuela opened the navigation of the Orinoco River to the commerce of all nations, thus destroying the monopoly claimed by the company as assignee of the Grell concession. This was done by repealing a decree promulgated on 1 July 1893 a few months before the original concession was granted, which closed the Orinoco to foreign trade. On 14 December 1901, the Venezuelan government further cancelled the extension of the concession granted in accordance with the contract of settlement of 10 May 1900. When the Company's efforts to obtain relief from the government of Venezuela was unsuccessful, the matter was brought to the attention of both the USA and British governments.

Following several years of negotiations about the claims, a protocol was signed on 13 February 1909, and the case went to the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, Netherlands, and the decision given on 25 October 1910.

Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company
Steamships travelling from Trinidad to Ciudad Bolivar, 1900

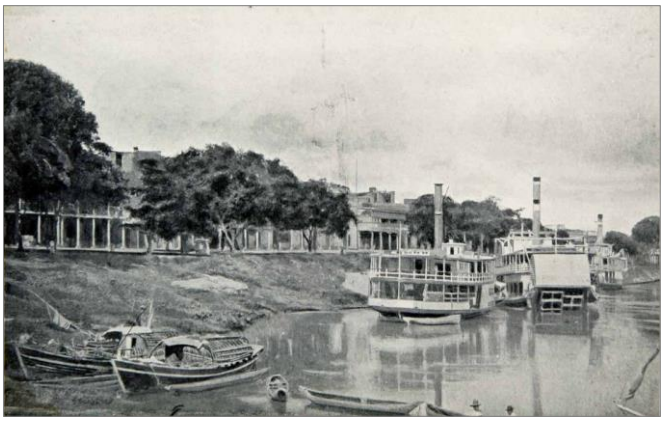
Sailing date	Steamship	Passengers	Cargo	Sailing date	Steamship	Passengers	Cargo
3 May	Bolivar	38	packets	1 Oct	Bolivar	67	general cargo
7 May	Bolivar	44	-	5 Oct	"	55	"
31 May	Bolivar	32	general cargo	13 Oct	"	4	"
31 May	Socorro	-	general cargo	18 Oct	"	15	"
5 June	Apure	-	packets	24 Oct	Delta	5	"
13 June	Bolivar	14	general cargo	3 Nov	Bolivar	22	"
28 June	"	26	general cargo	3 Nov	Heroe	1	"
7 July	"	-	-	13 Nov	Delta	8	208 tons
13 July	"	8	-	15 Nov	Bolivar	29	-
26 July	"	22	general cargo	21 Nov	Delta	3	-
9 Aug	"	47	"	29 Nov	Delta	45	196 tons
23 Aug	"	42	"	14 Dec	Bolivar	40	250 tons
7 Sept	"	37	"	17 Dec	Delta	36	general cargo
15 Sept	"	13	"	28 Dec	Bolivar	31	217 tons
21 Sept	"	12	"	-			

Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company
Steamships travelling from Trinidad to Ciudad Bolivar, 1902

Sailing date	Steamship	Passengers	Cargo	Sailing date	Steamship	Passengers	Cargo
9 Jan	Bolivar	8	256 tons	14 May	Bolivar	16	174 tons
25 Jan	"	47	187 tons	28 May	"	22	-
6 Feb	"	28	72 tons	15 Dec	Alianza	16	-
20 Feb	"	26	206 tons	16 Dec	Guanare	-	6 tons
28 Feb	"	15	90 tons	16 Dec	Apure	-	20 tons
6 Mar	"	13	2651 tons	16 Dec	Masparro	-	-
20 Mar	"	16	merchant pkts.	16 Dec	Manzanares	-	521 tons
3 April	"	12	68 tons	16 Dec	Bolivar	25	76 tons
17 April	"	19	244 tons	22 Dec	Bolivar	17	59 tons
1 May	"	18	158 tons	-			

Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company
Steamships travelling from Trinidad to Ciudad Bolivar, 1903

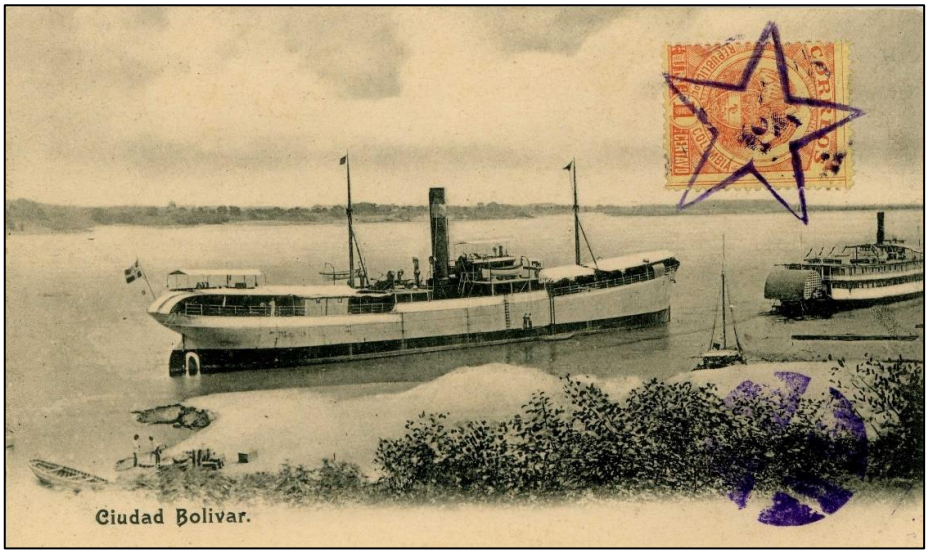
Sailing date	Steamship	Passengers	Cargo	Sailing date	Steamship	Passengers	Cargo
19 Feb	Alianza	-	packets	7 May	Alianza	8	26 tons
20 Feb	Bolivar	18	110 tons	13 May	Guanare	1	52 tons
4 Mar	Apure	12	159 tons	18 May	Apure	7	10 tons
9 Mar	Alianza	7	150 tons	18 May	Alianza	12	packets
23 Mar	Alianza	8	packets	26 May	Apure	12	111 tons
3 April	Apure	13	48 tons	30 May	Manzanares	-	-
7 April	Alianza	1	packets	30 May	Alianza	13	general cargo
11 April	Guanare	3	18 tons	15 Oct	Socorro	-	25 tons
21 April	Apure	11	98 tons	15 Oct	Masparro	-	-
22 April	Alianza	6	packets	22 Oct	Manzanares	8	-
30 April	Guanare	9	75 tons	16 Nov	Delta	-	2 tons
4 May	Apure	4	80 tons	-			

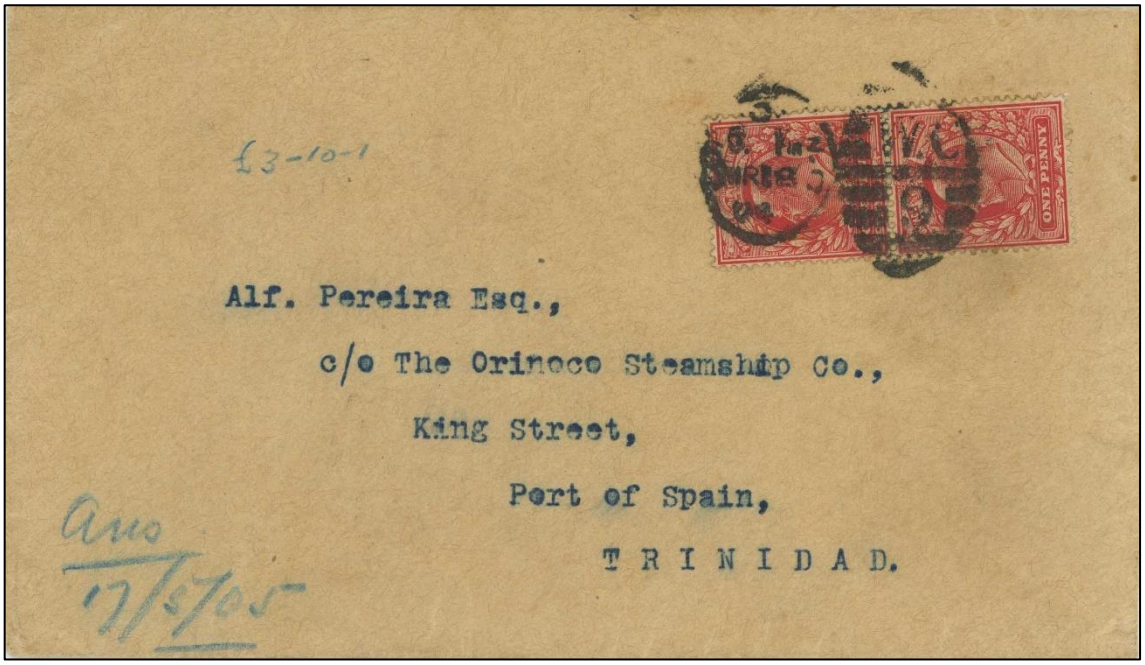


The picture shows three shallow draft steamers at Ciudad Bolivar water front, 1904

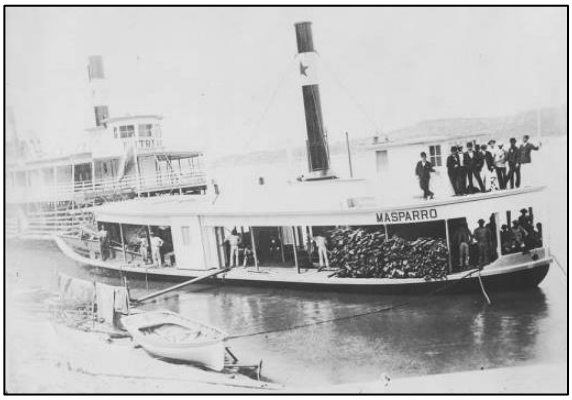
Much of the trade at this time came from the German merchants based in Trinidad and Venezuela.

Two types of steamer at the Ciudad Bolivar water front, sea going vessel and river paddle steamer.

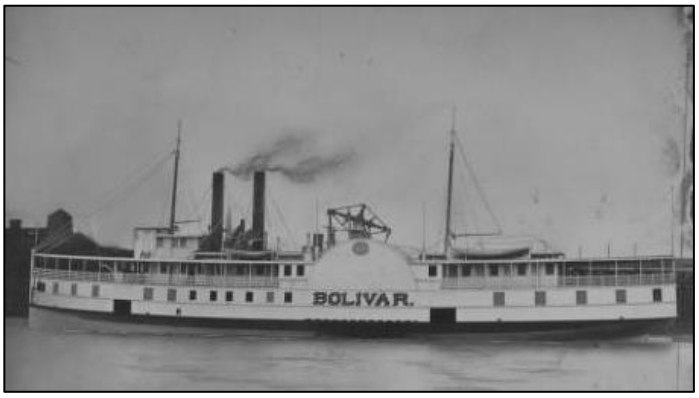




Trinidad was the regional headquarters for the Orinoco Steamship Co.
18 March 1904, GB 2d letter to Trinidad. London (18 Mar), Trinidad (- Apr), Ans'd (17 May 1905?)

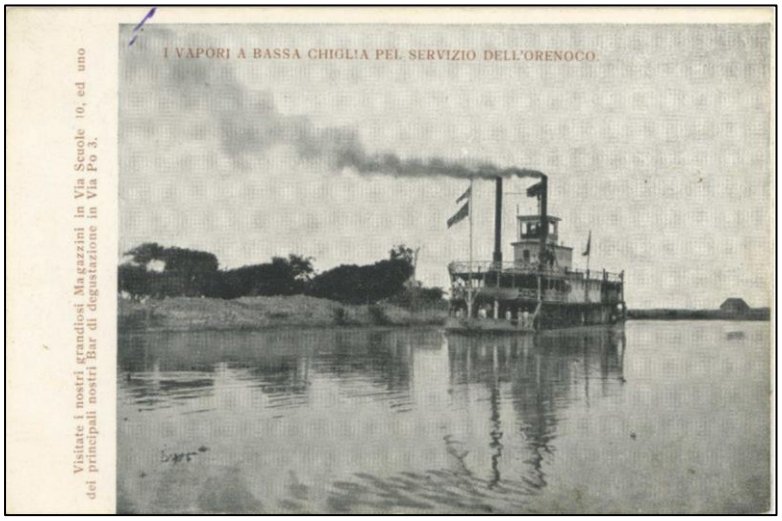


Masparro built 1891 by Pusey & Jones Co.



Bolivar built 1880 by Pusey & Jones Co.

The flat-bottom steamboats were built in the USA for river service on the Orinoco and its several tributaries.



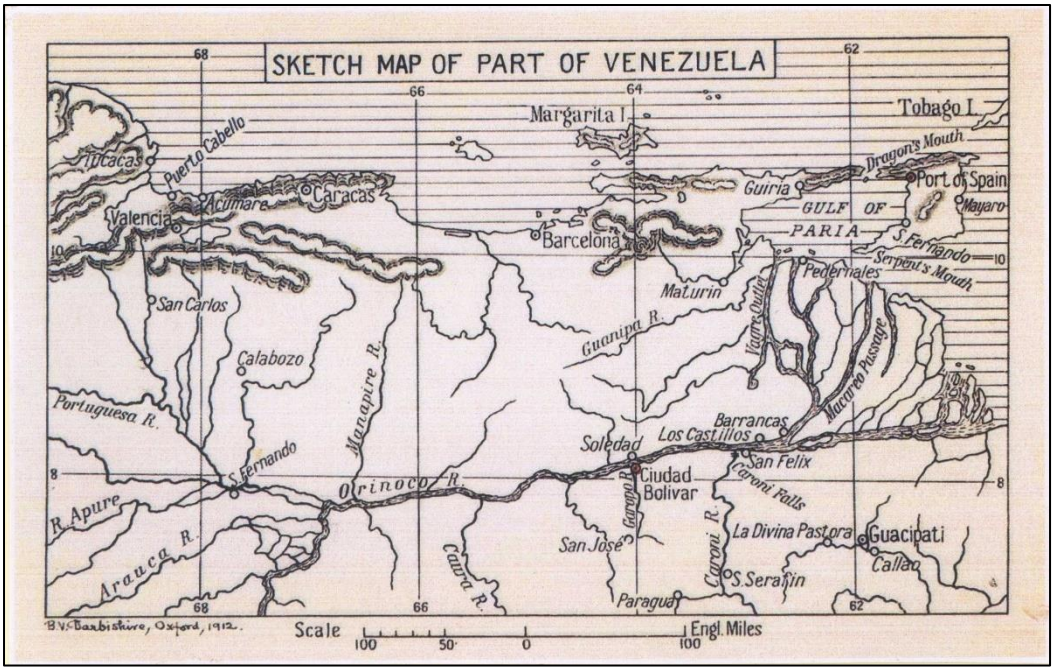
Via Trinidad
And New York

8 February 1912, 50c letter, Ciudad Bolivar, Venezuela to Leipzig, Germany
Ciudad Bolivar (8 Feb), Port of Spain (10 Feb).

The trade with Venezuela was of great importance to Trinidad. While the imports from Venezuela had not varied greatly, the exports to Venezuela for the three years immediately preceding the imposition of a 30 per cent differential duty on Trinidad goods, and the latter three years shown below, speak for themselves.

Exports to Venezuela			
Year	**Value**	**Year**	**Value**
1879	£218, 983	1896	£93,097
1880	£214,671	1897	£69,318
1881	£252,686	1898	£81,031

The disturbed state of Venezuela in 1899 was responsible for a decrease in imports to Trinidad, while the goods exported to Venezuela increased by £30,000 on the previous year. Currently the Caracas route to the Orinoco lies through Port of Spain, where much retail shopping in the stores of Trinidad was carried out.



Map of the Orinoco River and Delta which feeds into the Caribbean Sea

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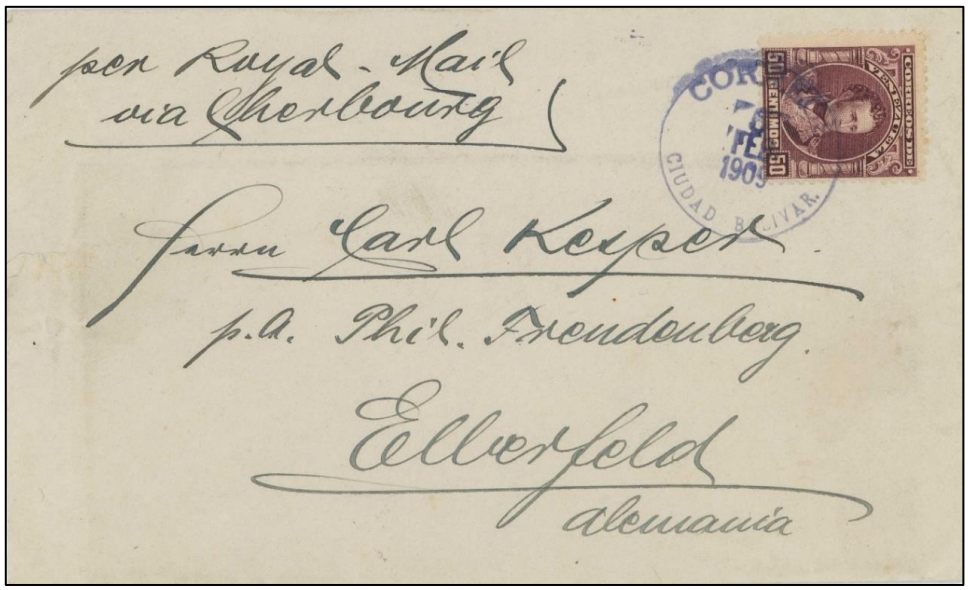
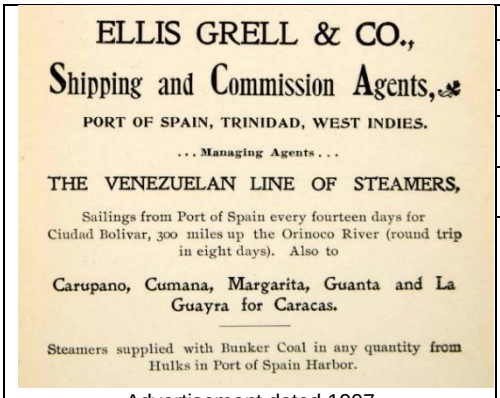
Two steamships ***Heroe*** and ***Apure*** at Ciudad Bolivar

Via RMSP its West Indies homeward calls to Cherbourg Commenced on 14 May 1869



5 Feb. 1909, 50c letter, Ciudad Bolivar, Venezuela to Elberfeld, Germany. Ciudad Bolivar (5 Feb), Elberfeld (23 Feb).

The Annual Colonial Report of 1900 for Trinidad referred to the Venezuela trade, where three quarters is transit trade. Not only are goods and mail transhipped at Port of Spain in transit between Venezuela and Europe and USA, but often between one part of Venezuela to another. The Gulf of Paria, in which not only Port of Spain but four out of five small ports of entry of Trinidad are situated, is a vast natural harbour into which one of the mouths of the Orinoco River flows, and all communications between Caracas and that great highway lies through it. The imposition by Venezuela about ten years ago of an additional duty of 30 per cent on imports from Trinidad crippled the trade with the mainland. Open boats were constantly coming and going between Venezuela and Trinidad, and the large stores of Port of Spain depended for much of their retail custom on buyers from the Venezuelan capital.


ELLIS GRELL & CO.,
Shipping and Commission Agents,
PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD, WEST INDIES.
... Managing Agents ...
THE VENEZUELAN LINE OF STEAMERS,
Sailings from Port of Spain every fourteen days for Ciudad Bolivar, 300 miles up the Orinoco River (round trip in eight days). Also to
Carupano, Cumana, Margarita, Guanta and La Guayra for Caracas.
Steamers supplied with Bunker Coal in any quantity from Hulks in Port of Spain Harbor.

Advertisement dated 1907

Trinidad mail contracts in 1899

Service	Steamer Line	Number of Mails	Trinidad share of subsidy
UK	RMSP	52	£2900
New York	Trinidad Shipping & Trading Co. (Turnbull)	26	£100
Ciudad Bolivar	Orinoco Shipping & Trading Co. (E. Grell)	26	£100
Around Trinidad & Tobago	Orinoco Shipping & Trading Co. (E. Grell)	42	£4200

In the late-1890s the Trinidad press wrote a brief description of a tour from Port of Spain to Ciudad Bolivar: 'The time occupied by the journey is two days and nights each way, and three days at Bolivar. As there are no accommodation for travellers, arrangements should be made with the steamboat company for staying aboard while at Ciudad Bolivar. The steamer makes two trips per month, and before embarking it is necessary to procure a passport and produce a list of the baggage, signed by the Venezuelan consul. The steamer leaves Port-of-Spain at 6.00 pm and crosses the Gulf of Paria, and arrives at the bar at the mouth of the Macareo River at daybreak. The first thing that will strike the traveller after leaving British waters will be the sudden transforming of the deck hands into Venezuelan soldiers, all armed with repeating rifles. They accompany the steamer on every trip to prevent her from being seized by revolutionists, and robbed of the gold which she takes aboard at the town of Las Tablas as the day goes by, the steamer passes through miles and miles of this beautiful tropical scenery, every succeeding bend opening up new beauties.'

In January 1902 the Orinoco Steamship Company was organised in New York to take over the Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company. On 1 April 1902, R. Morgan Olcott, a US citizen, transferred the assets of the old company to the new one at the request of American stockholders, who believed that Washington would be more vigorous in defending their claims.

Following a hostile meeting with President Cipriano Castro and the Company, a decree prohibited the free navigation of the Orinoco and other rivers, which destroyed the monopoly of the Company. This resulted in the establishing of a new firm the Orinoco Steamship Company, which was incorporated into the laws of New Jersey on 7 February 1902, acquiring all the assets of the Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company, a British registered firm, but mostly American owned.

The Orinoco steamers were again pressed by the Venezuelan government to carry troops. The details covered the hire of ***Delta*** (44 days), ***Socorro*** (229 days), ***Masparro*** (141 days), ***Guanare***, ***Heroe*** and ***Bolivar*** over a period from June to October 1900. And a similar loss of service took place during April to November 1902, making a total claim for the Company of US $147,639. However, none of the claim was ever paid.

On 31 May 1902, President Castro of Venezuela ordered the Orinoco Shipping & Trading Company to cease its operations because of revolutionary disturbances in the east of Venezuela. In 1904 the Company sold its vessels to Dalton & Company of Ciudad Bolivar, who founded the Compañia de Vapores del Orinoco, the ships in the predecessors' fleet were; ***Delta*** (309 tons), on a fortnightly mail and passenger service Trinidad to Ciudad Bolivar. The Upper Orinoco tributaries were served by ***Apure*** (191 tons), ***Heroe***, ***Guanare***, ***Masparro***, ***Socorro*** and ***Orinoco***. The Macareo Line was served by ***Manzanares*** and ***Delta***. The other river steamers were ***Alianza*** (147 tons), ***Arauca (***71 tons), ***Amparo*** (41 tons), ***Boyacá*** (31 tons), ***Forzosa***, ***Morganito*** and ***La Verdad***. Additionally a bi-monthly mail passenger service ran between Trinidad and La Guaira, employing ***Manzanares***. Dalton & Company, founded in 1846 by John Dalton, had extensive business and banking interests in Ciudad Bolivar. The Line had an agency at 4 St. Vincent Street, Trinidad.

COMPAÑIA DE VAPORES
DEL ORINOCO. DALTON & CO., Directores.

STEAMERS.

MACAREO LINE–

S.S. Manzanares. | S.S. Delta.

UP RIVER STEAMERS.

S.S. Apure. S.S. Masparro.
S.S. Heroe. S.S. Socorro.
S.S. Guanare. S.S. Orinoco.

REGULAR FORTNIGHTLY SERVICE BY THE S.S. DELTA.

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or at the Head Office–
Ciudad Bolivar.

Telegrams: DALTON, TRINIDAD. Code Used: A. B. C., 4th and 5th Edition. Telephone: No. 121.

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Sociedad Anonima
Capital Bs 3,000,000
Under contract with the Venezuelan Government for the conveyance of mails.

Dalton & Co.
General Agents
Ciudad Bolivar, Venezula, and Trinidad

The s.s. MANZANARES sails FORTNIGHTLY to La Guayra from Ciudad Bolivar and vice versa. The s.s. DELTA sails Fortnightly from Ciudad Bolivar to Port-of-Spain and connects with the Steamers of the Royal Mail Company.

THE UP RIVER STEAMERS
Apure, Alianza, Guanare, Arauca, Heroe, Orinoco, Socorro, Masparro, Forzosa, Morganito, La Verdad

And the sloop ALLVA navigate on the Orinoco and its Tributaries, the "Apure," "Portuguesa," "Masparro" and "Arauca" and also by the "Meta" to Columbia, where transhipments via Ciudad Bolivar are effected to and from all parts of the world. Tourists arriving at Trinidad may spend a delightful week viewing the grandeur of the Orinoco, on a trip to Ciudad Bolivar by our spacious and comfortable steamer
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Good Hotel Accommodation
At Ciudad Bolivar on the American plan at $2.00 per day

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From December 1902 to February 1903 British, German and Italian warships surrounded the Venezuelan coastal ports and the Orinoco delta to put a block on trade and increased pressure on President Castro to pay foreign debts. Eventually the Venezuelan government promised to pay 30% of its future customs duties to settle claims. However by now over 10 nations including the USA, were seeking preferential treatment for the debt claims, but all were rejected by Venezuela. This dispute eventually went to The Hague for settlement, and had an inconclusive finding.

Other ships that regularly called at Ciudad Bolivar from Trinidad, included ***Manzanares*** (1200 tons), ***Guarico*** (900 tons) and ***Whitney***. The latter capsized on 27 June 1904 in Rio Grande en route to Trinidad, after hitting the warship ***Zumbador***. The Whitney crew and passengers survived and were taken ashore by the national warship itself. A month later the steamer ***La Verdad*** became a loss in the region of Isla Conejo. It had sailed on 27 July from Angostura to the port of San Felix. Again there was no loss of life.

In 1908 the RMSP West India Line steamers left Southampton for the West Indies every fortnight, calling at Cherbourg then direct to Barbados, Jamaica and Colon, where they proceeded to Savanilla and other South American ports. From Barbados, Trinidad and La Guaira, branch lines ran to Demerara and the West Indies.

As seen above much of the mail from the 'Orinoco Line' terminated in Trinidad, and with it business mail to Germany. At the start of World War One in 1914, all people of German descent in Trinidad had a very difficult time as they had to register their names with the police. Some were interned in St. James Detention Camp on the outskirts of Port of Spain, others were deported, and several were wrongly accused of being German spies. Virtually overnight nearly all German companies either ceased trading or changed their names. As a consequence of the turmoil several German businesses moved from Trinidad to Venezuela.

Passengers to and from Ciudad Bolivar normally made the connection at Port of Spain and boarded the variety of foreign steamer lines that ran along the Caribbean between Trinidad and Colon and Panama.

To be continued

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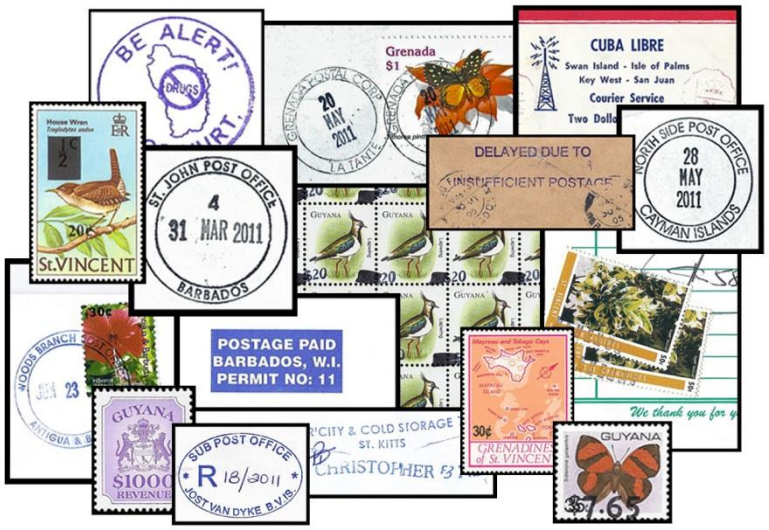

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TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

POSTAGE DUES; SHADES AND FLAWS

BY EDWARD BARROW

In 1885 Trinidad became the first British colony to issue postage due stamps. The basic design remained the same for many years, the only major change being a change in currency from Sterling pence and shillings to Decimal cents in 1947. While doing the rounds of Trinidad post offices in 1995 I came across what must have been the last of the decimal versions of these stamps in use at Cunupia Post Office.
This means the simple design had a record breaking 110 year run.

Fig. 1 Late use of Decimal Postage Dues on 1995 Philatelic Cover

Any stamp type with such a life span should have enough facets to satisfy even the most demanding collector. There are not only watermark varieties; there are also shades and plate flaws. Where plate flaws are concerned, it should come as no surprise that plates used for such a long period of time should be subject to damage and repair. I was lucky enough to recently acquire full sheets of the entire issue from the last sterling printings (1d to 1s circa 1945). Being full sheets these proved invaluable in plating flaws, and since this was the last printing it revealed much of the accumulated wear and tear of previous years.

This article focuses on the shades and plate flaws. Judgements are made as to whether plate flaws are major or minor; these are of course subjective but I have attempted to be conservative. Trinidad's Postage Due stamps were printed by a key type process with the duty plates being used by other colonies that followed the simple design (Barbados, British Guiana, Grenada and Tristan Da Cunha to name a few).
As a result some of the duty flaws may be found on postage due stamps of other colonies.

Printings and Shades

Such a simple monochrome design is not susceptible to striking shade variation. That said there are a few easily recognisable shades. With the Crown CA and Multiple Crown CA issues some printings exhibit a variance in shade between the value and the frame, with the frame being a grey shade and the value jet-black. With the Multiple Script CA printings there are shades of the 1d, 2d, 3d and 4d that would be best described as grey-black. Here both the frame and the value are uniform in shade. In contrast, values of this series which were printed in the early to mid 1940s have a strong over inked appearance. This might have been a deliberate ploy on the part of the printers to hide flaws and get a clean print from worn plates. The over-inking did have the effect of hiding some plate flaws and making the 'd's of the duty plate appear shorter.

Fig. 2 Shades of the Wmk CA and MCA printings

Fig. 3 Shades of the Wmk MSCA printings

At this point we should discuss the final printing of the Sterling issue. Gibbons lists them as being released in 1944 and 1945 but the Crown Agents records tell a different story. The last printing of the 1d and 3d was done in 1941 and the 1s in 1943. In passing it is worth commenting on a theory that the last printing was done at the behest of Sir Harry Luke. In some ways he has become a philatelic bogeyman, accused of pursuing his collecting interests in unorthodox ways wherever his colonial appointments took him. And he exhibited a fondness for postage dues. In this case, the theory goes, upon arrival in Trinidad circa 1944 he was disappointed at the selection of postage dues available and so 'suggested' the post office order more stocks of the high values (5d to 1s). But careful study of used copies of the wmk. Multi Crown CA postage dues shows that there were high values in use as late as 1944, thus these were not out of stock. And further, the printing records show that postage dues were ordered piecemeal, probably as needed, and likely without a hidden Machiavellian hand guiding the process.

Table of the last Printing of the Sterling Issues

Date	Requisition Reference	Values
17 June 1941	794/1	1d, 3d (smooth paper)
17 August 1943	1385/1	2d, 5d, 1s (rough paper)
26 April to 19 July 1944	1710/1	2d, 4d, 5d, 6d, 8d (rough paper)

The Decimal Issues

There were 5 printings of the Decimal issues and it is possible to separate them by studying their appearance and paper types.

4 February 1947	2467/1	2c, 4c, 6c, 8c, 10c, 12c, 16c, 24c

This, the first decimal printing, resembles the previous one in that it is on ordinary rough paper and somewhat heavily printed. By contrast the later printings are all on chalky paper and the first three of these (1952, 1955 and 1958) are distinctively clear and sharp.

27 November 1952	6593/1	2c, 6c, 12c

This 1952 printing boasts the much sought after missing crown and St. Edward's Crown errors; the former being much rarer than the latter. Without getting into the whole issue of how the paper was made, it is worth noting that not every sheet of this printing contains an error. In fact there is an abundance of full sheets seen on the market, which I believe were speculatively purchased with the intention of looking for the errors. This is reflected in the low catalogue value of these three issues as mint stamps. This printing can be separated from the others by its thicker paper.

20 May 1955	8459/1	2c, 4c, 6c, 10c, 24c

The 1955 printing was done on thinner paper, with the design showing through clearly on the reverse.

21 July 1958	1305/1	4c, 8c

The 1958 printing was on thicker paper than before.

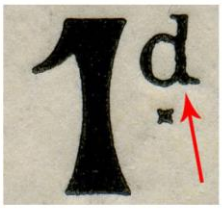
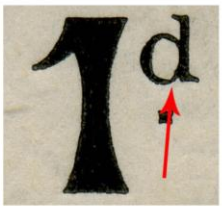
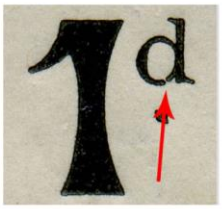
20 July – 15 September 1961	4027/1	2c, 4c, 6c, 8c, 10c, 16c

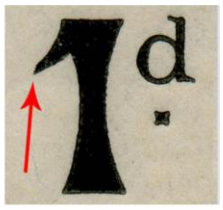
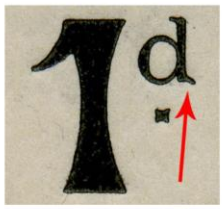
This, the final printing, is distinctive for its almost brown black appearance which is different from that of the other chalky paper issues. The paper is also thin and the design shows through clearly on the reverse. Also by this point the outer frame plate was over 75 years old, so some impressions are smudgy.

Fig. 4 6c Sliced C variety on incoming cover from Germany

Plate Flaws

1d

Minor R1/1 Nick in the top of 1. Visible in the some of the multi script CA printings but not the last one.	
Major R1/5 Malformed d, visible across printings	
Minor R2/1 Malformed loop of d, visible across printings	
Major R3/4 Broken loop of d, visible across printings	

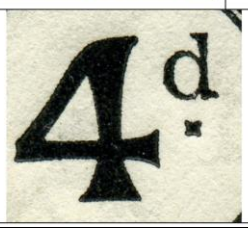
Minor R3/5 Short tail on d, visible on last printing	
Major R4/1 Shaved serif in 1, visible on last printing.	
Minor R6/3 Bent tail in d, visible on last printing	
Minor R9/6 Blunted corner on d, visible on earlier multi script CA printings but not on last printing	

3d

Minor R1/1 Minor damage to top of 3	
Minor R1/6 Missing tail on d	

Major R9/1 Shaved serif on 3, short tail on d, visible across printings, (including the inverted watermark variety D12w). It is interesting to note that Stanley Gibbons lists a similar flaw on the Tristan Da Cunha 3d at the same position. But in that case it's the lower serif that is missing.	
Minor R10/6 Short tail on d	

4d

Major Broken d's, Col 5 Not visible in last printing because of ink and paper used.		 Close up of Col 5 d from last printing.
Major R3/1 Large loop in d		

5d

Minor R7/5 Tip of 5 looks reworked	
Minor R9/1 5 is heavily mottled	
Minor R10/1 5 mottled	

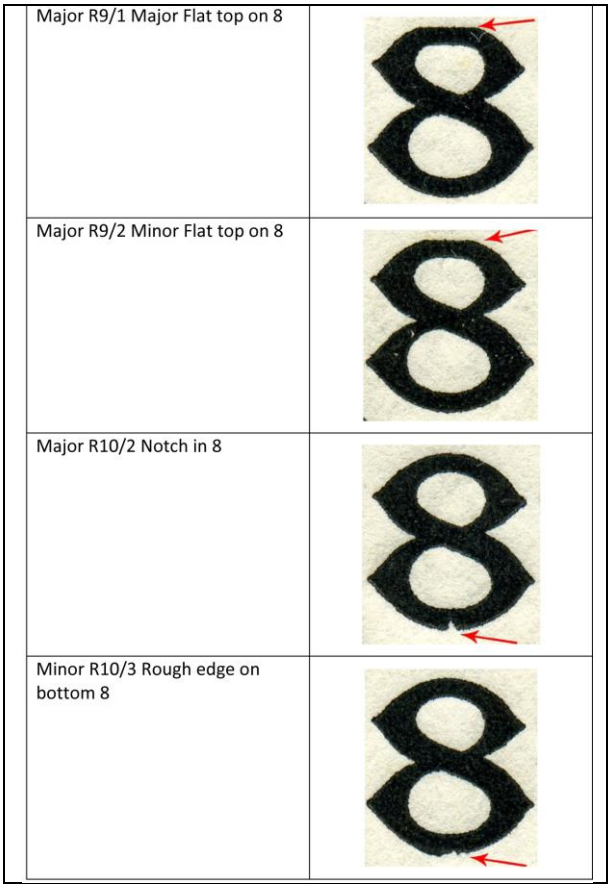
Minor R4/4 Loop in D almost seperated	
Minor R4/6 Notch in loop in D	

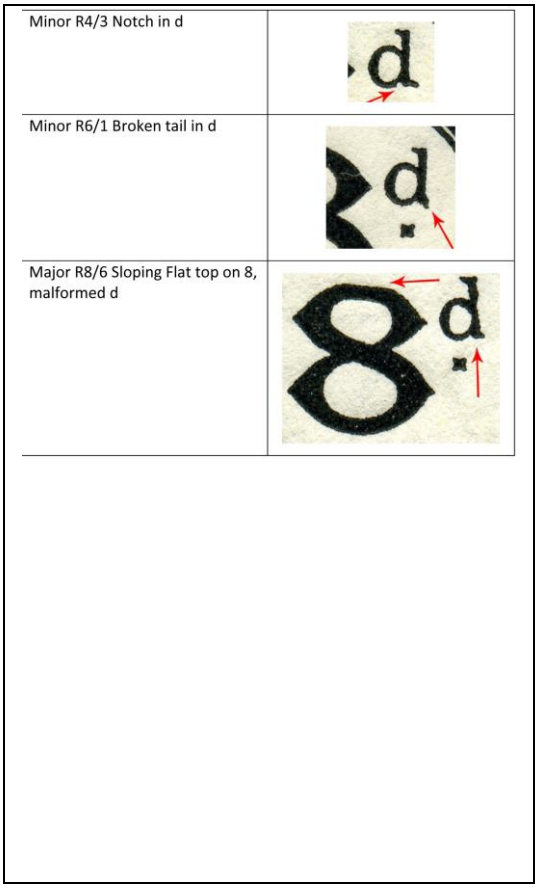
8d

The 8d duty plate is perhaps the most interesting of the lot. Michael Medlicott reported an example that shows the upright of the ‘d’ severely damaged. The sloping flat top of the ‘8’ indicates that this was from position R8/6. There are two likely possibilities; either the damage occurred at the start of the print run, it was then noticed, the print run stopped while the plate was repaired and then the print run completed with the d now in its malformed state.

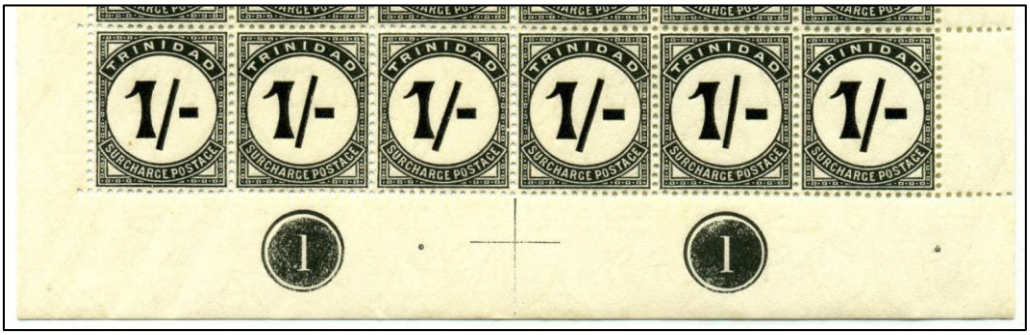
The other possibility is that the damage occurred at the end of the print run. My belief is that it was the former case as the tail of the ‘d’ still looks in a better state in the Medlicott example, indicating that it is an earlier state than the repaired one. The needed repair would also explain why this requisition took almost 3 months to complete and why only one example of the Medlicott flaw has been reported while those in the other state are relatively common.

Fig. 5 Medlicott flaw (reproduced by kind permission)





1s



Major, Col 5 upright ‘/’ in ‘1/-‘

2c

Major R9, 1-3 R10, 1-3 2c shifted	

6c

Major R4/1 Sliced top of C	

24c

Major Dot in 4 at 3/3	

10c

Minor R2/1 C malformed Visible on last printing	
Minor R2/2 0 edge rough Visible on last printing	
Minor Unknown Location Malformed Serif	
Major R2/6 Dot on C	

Flaws in outer frame plate

R10/3 Frame Break	Visible on the last sterling printings and the first decimal printings (2c and 4c so far). This flaw was first noted by Hap Pattiz.	
R9/6 Frame Break	Visible on the first 2 printings of the chalky paper issues (1952 and 1955). 2c 4c 6c 10c 12c 24c (10c has not been confirmed)	

There are undoubtedly more flaws to be found so start looking.

References

British Colonial post World War II High Values (part 1), by David Horry
BCPSG Vol. 55, No 3 – September 2015, Whole No. 256

Trinidad: The Birthplace of the British Colonial Postage Due, by David Herendeen
BCPSG Vol. 38, No 3 – September 1998, Whole No. 188

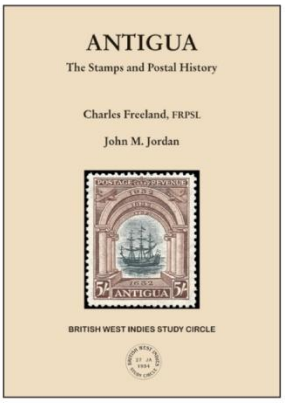
Crown Agents Archives, British Library

Thanks to Michael Medlicott and Hap Pattiz for sharing information

NEW BOOKS FROM BWISC PUBLICATIONS!

'ANTIGUA – THE STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY'

by Charles Freeland, FRPSL and John Jordan



Coming so early in the alphabet Antigua has always been one of the most popular of the small Caribbean islands. It has an interesting mix of early stamps printed by Perkins Bacon and De La Rue including a number of rarities. On the postal history front Antigua is especially well endowed, with the Codrington and Tudway estate correspondences. There is also a rich variety of early postal markings, including some unique marks. The original inspiration for this book was the Antigua Monograph published in successive issues of the British Caribbean Philatelic Journal over a 15 year period between 1973 and 1988. This book collates all this information, updates it and presents it in a most readable form.

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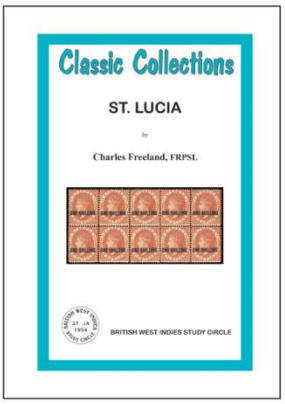
'CLASSIC COLLECTIONS – ST. LUCIA'

by Charles Freeland, FRPSL.



This book is a continuation of the series highlighting the finest BWI collections. Freeland's St. Lucia is the definitive collection with much material from the pre-stamp era, the St. Lucia Steam Conveyance Company, the early Perkins Bacon issues through to the De La Rue keyplate issues. More modern stamps are not neglected and there are sections on the Postal Fiscals as well as the Postal Stationery. Illustrated in full colour throughout, this is a worthy successor to the previous Classic Collections publications.

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AUCTION UPDATE BY CHARLES FREELAND

A bit of a muddle in the last Bulletin caused by untimely absences around our AGM and auction meant that my last report was a repeat of the March version. So the report below covers a 6 month period.

Spink 27–8 January (BP 20%)
In my last report I failed to mention the unique Bermuda Paid at Ireland Isle cover that sold for £14k, partly because I was waiting to learn where it had ended up. I did not have long to wait as it appeared in the David Pitts collection of Bermuda postal history exhibited at Aripex in February and we also saw it at the RPS on 27 April and in the grand New York exhibition.

Spink 23 February (BP 20%)
The Britannia collection was the most comprehensive since the Deakin sale 6 years ago (could it be that long?) and a good marker of where the BWI market stands. In summary, it confirmed recent trends of good demand for serious stamp and postal history material, but a crisis of confidence in the essay and proof area which has been so strong for much of the past decade. One could in fact interpret the results as completely topsy-turvy. It also confirmed the reemergence of one of the really big hitters in Barbados philately, Joseph Hackmey, who bought the majority of the fine range of Britannia covers and some of the large blocks. We cannot be certain he had not been bidding at some recent high profile Barbados auctions but, if so, his footprint was not evident.

The collection was formed by a rich man who had business in Barbados and evidently built a serious collection of Britannias over an extended period. When the Deakin sale came along at Harmers with its spectacular 20th century material, the coverage was extended with the help of David Parsons and much important proof and essay material was added, to the benefit of the Deakin estate and to the frustration of a number of BWISC members. This proved too short a time for the market to appreciate the Deakin material and nearly all of it was sold at a loss, in many cases sizeable. There were also several Perkins Bacon die proofs ex Peter Jaffé and these proved an even poorer investment. Taken as a whole, however, the results were satisfactory, with high prices in particular for the fine range of early covers. The total 'take' for the sale was about £220k, and Spink would only have been disappointed that a number of heavily reserved lots went unsold.

In the room at the outset were our members Graham Booth, Michael Hamilton and Simon Richards, though they drifted away after the Britannias had finished. Notable absences were the major dealers John Taylor and Stanley Gibbons, and it is now clear, if not before, that the financial troubles that have engulfed the Gibbons empire and its collapsing share price (down from 350p to 17p at the time of writing) has had a negative impact on its ability to buy in stock. Gibbons have recently sold shares at 10p to a number of investors, including current shareholders, with the intention of raising £13mn, but I have not seen any more numbers. Members who have bought the shares will heed the wise words about not putting all your eggs in one basket. For sellers, Gibbons' absence is a serious loss as Philip Kinns was almost always there to back-stop the prices.

Grosvenor 16–7 March (BP 19%)
The strong book bidder for the Pearse Antigua (see last Bulletin) apparently came back for a couple of big-hitting blocks, the largest known block of ten of SG1 at £8.2k and a lovely block of 24 of the later 1d rosy mauve SG 5 (£2.6k)...was that shade correctly described? It looked more rose to me. Elsewhere a sizeable collection of Bermuda key plates including about 30 covers set off no fireworks with about 40% unsold. Recent more lively interest in Grenada was confirmed by the £1.2k paid for a 1888 1d on 2s strip of 5 on cover but in Jamaica a multi-franked Kent cover to India was unsold on a £1k lower estimate.

Stanley Gibbons 22–23 March (BP18%)
Around 400 lots of Bermuda postal history aroused keen interest among our members. The source is not too difficult to establish but I have been sworn to secrecy. This first offering mostly consisted of censored covers and Geosix keyplates, which proved rather indigestible following the Grosvenor offering, but the range of censors was far richer and the rarer of these were keenly competed for.

Spink 26–8 April (BP 20%)
Irrespective of the identity of the consignor (Foxley), the sale of the 120-lot specialised St Christopher collection went well, not quite a bloodbath as our President was heard to describe it, but certainly a well-contested auction with strong prices across the spectrum. The total of the hammer prices was over £46k with around £4k unsold, compared with low estimates of c£31k. This was especially gratifying as it was one of our least prominent and accordingly least popular BWI collecting areas. The collection was probably the most comprehensive ever to be offered in public auction and although not a patch on the Brookes St Christopher did contain at least 30 desirable items. There were six items that exceeded £1k and 25 above £500.

As the sale was in the same week as our AGM, I attended as a silent partner and can report on a pretty lively event. In the room were Michael Hamilton, Simon Richards and Mark Harvey among our members and Graham Booth would have been there if his train from the South Coast had been working. Philip Kinns sidled in just before the start but was plainly only bottom-fishing. The main buyer was a phone bidder who was plainly also acting for a number of clients including Brian Brookes. He spent around £10k and the next big hitter bidding on the internet was just below that, while a client of Mark Harvey spent some £7k. Altogether I counted 22 successful bidding numbers.

The sale started strongly with good prices for all the preadhesives, especially the fleurons. The top price here was £1.4k for a strong PS14 in lot 1170. I thought the neat set of circular paid marks offered some bargains, especially the newspaper lot 1183 at £580. In the section on the issued stamps some rare watermark varieties looked good buys if you ignored Gibbons prices, while blocks sold well with Mark Harvey's client to the fore. GB used went well. The two biggest prices were for the 1d on 6d invert on the front cover at £2.9k and the 1d on 6d double used with village ms cancel at £1.6k. The next section included many unusual stamped covers, again well bid for, with the top price of £1.4k for an 1872 1s rate to the UK. Hamilton sneaked a rare 1876 6d rate to Antigua for what appeared to be a bargain £500. Unsurprisingly, the revenues and village ms cancels were the subject of strong competition, the 5s revenue sheet fetching £580 and the ms Dieppe Bay on stamp £450.

Elsewhere, there were several great GVI rarities in this sale. A Bahamas 2s with stop after Columbus in a UR block was a mere £2.4 and an 8d Columbus sheet with I for L flaw £3k. The Bermuda KGVI 2s reprint in a LR plate block of four cost one of our alert members £1.5k and the same bidder bought a top left corner block of 12 (6x2) of the 1943 10s, including the #17 chin flaw, for a bargain £1.1k. A St Christopher imperf Coronation set perf specimen was £2.3k while a St Lucia Silver Wedding £1 perf specimen was a strong £2.6k and a St Vincent Victory 1½d with perf specimen double £450.

Spink New York 11 May (BP 20%)
The Betty Rhoads Wright collection of Cayman Islands contained 44 specialised lots, highlighted by Jamaica used in Caymans and a good range of the rural posts. The best lot was a fine example of the boxed Cayman Brac on cover ex Watkins at $11.5k, a used 1907 1d/5s double overprint was $5.5k and a neat West Bay rural on a ¼d postcard $3.75k.

Grosvenor 24 May (BP 19%)
Another collection from the Foxley stable, this time from St Kitts, would have been members' principal interest in this auction. This was a relatively minor offering as the best items are in the Brian Brookes' collection…but interest held up OK with realistic estimates. The best of the GV period were the uncleared die proofs which mostly went around estimate for c£300 per item. A strong range of 1903 colour trials ex our former member John Tyacke mostly sold for their reserve prices of £160 each. I felt the rare mint block of the GV £1 was a good buy at £550, and the GV set handstamped specimen in block capitals was also cheap at £300. The only real competition was for the £1.4k achieved for a mixed lot of covers including several rare WW2 censor marks and cancellations…it may be a zero was left off the printed estimate of £120–150. Amazingly, this never seems to make much difference.

Feldman 8 June (20% BP)
This heavily advertised rarities sale with a strong section of British Guiana was a good bellwether of market confidence following the Dupont shenanigans. The 22 cotton-reels cost their buyers 29k2 euros, with emphasis as always on quality. So the highest prices of 50k, 37k and 12K euros were for lovely cut-squared 4c on pale yellow, 8c green and 12c blue.

The later stamps were less in demand, selling for 163 euros in all, but the 1856 4c blue was 47k euros and a lovely example of the 4c magenta ex Ferrary 16k Euros. One outlier was a block of 16 of the medicine duty 8 plus 32c that fetched 400 euros. I would judge the jury is still out on market confidence, but Feldman would have been satisfied to see nearly all the lots sold even if the prices were below Dupont's.

Cavendish 15–16 June (19% BP)

The 'longtail' collection of Bermuda postal history could be judged a bridge too far, especially following Spink's announcement that the Pitts' collections of Bermuda and many other BWI countries, notably Trinidad was to be sold in the new year. Though there were many choice items that fetched their price, there were also far more unsolds than Cavendish or the seller would have hoped. Many of the latter were in the modern era and the mid-19th century covers went pretty well. The lovely Ireland Island PM4 to Freemason White was £3k, while the Ireland Island Crowned Circle on the front cover showing the red handstamp 6 was £2.4k. I thought the only bargain was the St Georges Crowned Circle (the rarest of the three) to Cuba (with its image misnumbered), at £2.2k. In the adhesive period the 1s with the 1865 red P5 H abbreviated datestamp (thought to be the only red strike in the stamped period) seemed good value at £3.4k while the 1867 registered cover franked 1s 4d rate and cancelled with the same P5 H code in black was £2.6k. The highest price of the sale was for a pair of the 1874 3d on 1s to Cardiff at £4.2k. There were a few nice covers with rare cancellations; the nicest I thought was the beautiful K4 '5' to the US at £900, but this fetched less than a duplex 14 at £1.2k on a local cover.

Stanley Gibbons

With some concern, I have to report that the Stanley Gibbons group has been going through hard times financially after imprudent diversification into other collector markets in recent years. The common shares have fallen sharply in value from 350p to, at the time of writing, around 14p having recovered from below 10p post-Brexit. Those collectors caught up in this disaster would have done well to follow the old adage of not putting all their eggs in one basket. The impact on our collector market is significant as Gibbons was always acting as a 'backstop' as a regular bidder at all the major auctions. Although they have recently raised £13mn at 10p share, it must have diluted their equity massively. Now they are effectively under a non-buying order (Philip Kinns attends some of the auctions but only bottom-fishes) and it is hard to see how that will change soon as they have a massive philatelic stock. We all have an interest in a strong Gibbons as it remains the market leader in the eyes of the public.

Ebay

Serious buyers have become rather disillusioned with ebay of late because the listing charges are now too low and all sorts of junk gets posted on the auction site, up to 99% for some of our countries, while sellers see greedy ebay's charges on sales continuously mounting. For most buyers, time spent searching is now excessive unless their interests are easy to search for. However, in early March there was an outstanding offering of Barbados watermark varieties with some 40 varieties from the GV period, both mint and used, offered from the US but actually mailed from Sharjah in the Gulf. These all sold (well, the starting price was 1 cent!) at prices of between one sixth and half the Gibbons prices, while a mint 'Penny Half' variety on the farthing overprint fetched $146. The same week a lovely upper left mint block of ½d SG21a (the blue-green shade) appeared, ex Lickfold. This sold for a fair price for the block, even fairer as the seller (and it appears other bidders) had not noticed the block was imperf at left margin.

Coming events

On 6 September **Gibbons** will offer the second tranche of the **Bermuda postal history** collection reported on above. This will be closely followed by a general **Grosvenor** sale on 21 September with a fine specialised collection of the **1935 Silver Jubilees**. On 26 October **Spink**'s Collectors sale will include a substantive collection of **Grenada** formed by the now notorious 'Foxley', who is hoping for good results from probably the best middle period Grenada collection that can exist. In February, **Victoria Stamp Co** will be offering the **Dominica** collection of BWISC Dominica Group Leader Roger West as well as my **Antigua**; some of the highlights of the latter are illustrated in our new Antigua handbook. We also now know that the amazing used collections formed by member David Pitts will be offered by **Spink** in the New Year, the first BWI sale, in January, comprising his general collections that will include spectacular **Trinidad** from the Marriott sale. Later we will see his used **Bermuda** offered in two sales, one for the main Bermuda collection in April and finally in October the Large Gold exhibit collection that was presented at the RPS earlier this year and displayed in New York.

peter singer

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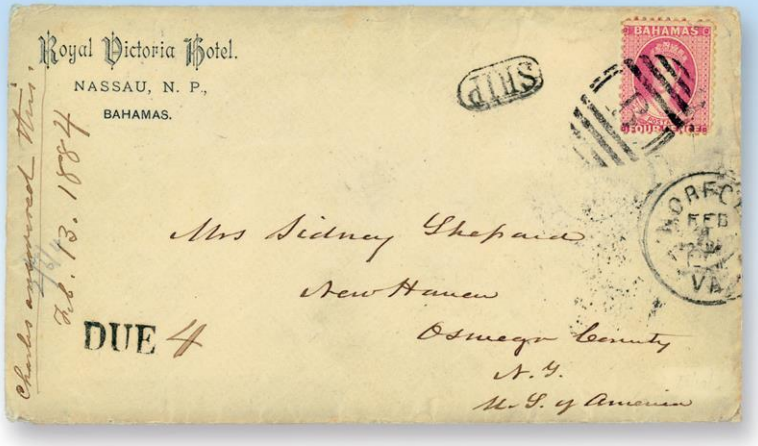

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