

STUDY CIRCLE

ANTIGUA



See John Jordan's article on English Harbour and the Sherring Covers.



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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

Saturday 8 July 2015 (10.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.) Circle table at Midpex, Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, Leamington Spa. Midpex is the prestigious biennial exhibition first held in 1995 and attended by stamp collectors from across the UK. It brings together specialist societies and local, national and international dealers covering all aspects of Philately.

Saturday 14 – Sunday 15 October 2017 BWISC Convention at The Abbey Hotel, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 9BE. www.theabbeyhotel.co.uk Tel: 01527 406 600.

The Abbey is a seasoned venue for specialist society meetings, and provides comfortable modern facilities in a country setting, within two miles of the railway station.

The 2017 convention will have the familiar mix of formal displays, informal presentations by members, and the bourse. There will be two formal displays and the usual mix of Informal Displays, Bourse and Members' Table for Buying & Selling. We will have a pleasant space to ourselves for the meeting. There will be a banquet on Saturday, when Collett Award presentations will be made. Call the hotel to book rooms directly (Single room £99; Double room £109), and mention BWISC to get these rates **[01527 406 600]**. There are many local attractions that might appeal to members' partners and families, from the theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon to the Sealife centre in Birmingham. See inserts and the website for convention fee forms and meal booking. You can come for an afternoon, a day, or come for the weekend.

Charles Freeland FRPSL

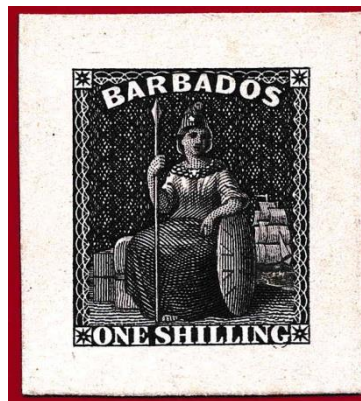
It is with a heavy heart that we have to report that Charles Freeland succumbed to his final illness. He died on Sunday, 9 April 2017. An ex-President of the Study Circle and a long-time member, he will be missed by all. I am sure that all of our members will recall Charles as a giant of BWI philately with a prodigious knowledge of the stamps and Postal History of those colonies he collected. His passing will leave a huge gap in our society. May he Rest in Peace.

A full obituary will appear in the September Bulletin.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**BY GRAHAM BOOTH**

I am very honoured to have been elected Chairman at the AGM on 22 April. I am also very conscious that it is a time of great change for the society with Peter Ford standing down after 15 years as Chairman and the death of Charles Freeland, who has been the Society's most prominent supporter and advocate of West Indies philately for the last 20 years (an obituary will appear in the next issue). Peter's lengthy service has left the society in a very strong position. Without question it is in rude health financially, has a modern web site, a distinguished journal, a thriving auction and a record of book production second to none. We are indeed fortunate that Peter has agreed to continue to head up that programme. We are also fortunate, when my own 'advanced' age is taken into account that a successor has been identified, and Steve Jarvis will take over in April 2019.

At the same time, I am very conscious that of the Society's 350 members we only see plus or minus 10% on a regular basis. Obviously it is difficult for our overseas members, but I would dearly like to see a bigger turnout at our Convention. This is your opportunity to tell us what we are doing right and what could be improved, to learn from others, to buy from specialist West Indian dealers, to get a free expert opinion on your questionable material, but most important of all an opportunity to show some of your own stuff. If you are worried about standing up and talking about it you don't have to, as there will be standing displays throughout the Convention. I urge you to come along either on a residential or a day basis. Booking details are available elsewhere in this issue. To give us a help in planning please email me with the title of your subject, the number of sheets you intend to bring and whether you want a standing display or a slot in one of the talking programmes. Please remember that if your display is about small philatelic varieties it is more suited to a standing display. At this stage, there is no limit on the amount of material you can bring, but depending upon the response we may have to impose some form of rationing.

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BWISC Auction 2017 – Sales of the unexpected

The sensation of this year's auction was that British Guiana's Lot 186, estimated at £1, sold for £210.

The uninitiated might suppose that the auction team made an uncharacteristic blunder and the competing bidders a chance discovery. Not so. Description and estimate were accurate and appropriate. Competing bidders knew exactly what they would be getting by coming out on top.

The key to what happened is that the auction team singled out to sell as a lot by itself a low value stamp cancelled in pen and ink. Description quotes the text and says in effect: 'a manuscript cancellation on this issue at this date ought to be a postal cancel – that is for the potential buyer to investigate. Until this is established the stamp can only be given nominal value'.

The competing bidders were able to read more into the text on the stamp. Crucially 'no. 6' equates to no. 6 village. British Guiana in the 19th century had more than 50 numbered villages, and the disclosure of the significance of no. 6 enables the location to be pin-pointed, for village numbers and their present names can be found gazetted in Guyana. No. 6 village was NIGG and this has to be its rarest form of postal marking.

So the bidders made the necessary link from the citation above, and the date written on the stamp speaks for itself, but why is '2 cents' included in what was written? Here is a suggested answer. At this point of time every post office outside GPO and New Amsterdam (A03 and A04) had a coded reference rather than a name, and the inland letter rate was a uniform 2c for a letter up to ½oz. Thus the message of the full text is this: 'The office in no. 6 village rates this item as a letter weighing no more than ½oz, so as to require a 2c stamp to pay postage'. Simple and effective for the receiving office to check, and how much more could the postal history enthusiast ask of a cancellation on a loose stamp? Description, valuation, and price achieved were all beyond criticism. Plaudits all round.

Meanwhile ordinary sales had been running smoothly enough. With after-sales in contemplation, auction-day sales of about 55% are normally enough to give the Circle its annual 'pass-mark' of 70% sales, with 60% expected to lead to a final total of 75% sold. We can see the 'buzz' effect of Lot 186 from this little table:

Lots	Sales %
1–100	55
101–200	63
201–300	76

Cooled by the two necessary breaks to allow the accounting team of Ray Stanton and Steve Jarvis to catch up, the percentage simmered down from there, but concludes at an impressive 61% sold on the day.

This needs to be set against the fact that this year – despite a surge in membership in the previous 12 months – the number of absent bidders was a few below those who competed probably every year during the present millennium. Add to this that far too many of the bids that did come to hand arrived late. The five working days immediately before Easter contributed a total of exactly one bid by post. One!

What do you as a member hope to achieve by delaying your bid to the last moment? You have nothing to gain from it. You can lose priority – there were two ties on the book this year, where the lot went to the earliest bidder. And you run the risk – a very real one – that your bid may be incurably delayed in the post or swallowed up by a hiccup on the internet. Something of the kind happens year after year. The moral – BID EARLY.

Side by side with this, those who can do so – and most of us can nowadays – should check the Circle website for illustrations or updating for lots in which they are interested. No matter how often we check as a team, there are always odd absurdities in the catalogue (how about Lot 338, 'E 320'? the real estimate was £20) and the website is how we correct them. An early bidder can equally re-check the website and resile, in any case, from misapprehension induced by the catalogue.

There were, indeed, errors to correct, probably the most significant being miscategorisation of postmark in Lots 356 and 357 as Type J rather than Type K. In practice this was rectified by direct liaison between interested parties and the auction team.

The most striking illustration of late (or lazy) bidding came in the band from Lot 115 to 167. A mere 24 hours before the sale there were just two bids on the auction book covering these 55 lots. By conclusion of the sale 25 had sold, so room bidders certainly made their mark well before the Lot 186 buzz. Yet, when the hammer falls there are no second chances. If you've missed it, you've missed it.

Some highflyers were listed in the catalogue this year and the outcome is worthy of record:

Lot 28 (Paid at Bahamas)	R£550	no sale
Lot 171 (super classic with pinhole)	E£200	£300
Lot 251 (Duck Run on piece)	E£250	£350
Lot 316 (per Old Dick)	R£210	£210
Lot 318 (Montserrat sg3) see below		
Lot 446 (Montserrat sg3 – wrong cert.)	E£300	£580 (telephone)
Lot 470 (see illustration, front cover)	E£350	no sale – auction team failed to spot one stamp removed
Lot 474 (Antigua 1d provisional cover)	E£240	£600 (telephone)
Lot 536 (1d compound perf.)	E£280	£440

Lot 318 is a continuing saga. By the time of the sale a certificate had arrived with a no-watermark opinion, but the auction team continues to believe that it has seen one. There are ongoing discussions with possible purchasers, and certification to be reviewed.

Turning to sales by country, Jamaica contributed 75 lots. It was still offering more lots than any other, yet for about 8 years, if not longer, the tally probably exceeded 100 each time. The lower input reflects that supplies from the estates of Derek Sutcliffe and David Atkinson were all tailing off, so that a sale of 45 lots (60%) was entirely creditable at this stage.

If one takes two-thirds plus as an indicator of popular esteem, this was achieved by every country from Barbados to Dominica, but afterwards only by St. Vincent (25 sold out of 32) and the miscellaneous section (17 out of 23). Given the buzz from lot 186, it is no surprise that British Guiana (40 out of 53) vied almost neck and neck with St. Vincent for top place.

Leewards claimed only 12 sales out of 28, which slightly misleads, by not taking account of Leeward stamps selling under other-country categories because of their postmarks.

Of the countries with 10 or more lots on offer, Virgin Is. was, as so often, the back marker with 6 sales out of 16. This is attributable to two factors: first that our auctioneer, Simon, persists in keeping the country right down in the alphabet, but primarily supply against price is limited enough to discourage other collectors. The quality of the items on offer is usually high, but unless some of us learn to love the country, the sale of his own collection when the Circle markets — presently programmed for 2022, when Simon's successor-designate takes over the annual sale — will flop, and the contents may be largely dispersed through other outlets. Simon announced that as long as our Circle members get the first go, he doesn't mind how it is dispersed.

Although the arithmetic has yet to be finalised, a significant proportion of the lots that were sold went to a single opening bid, so that the total of realisations compared with estimate might have been expected to work out below rather than slightly above the estimates. That is not what happened. A rough calculation shows that right up to the middle 400s realisations and estimates were almost level-pegging, indeed, at four points along the way they appeared exactly to correspond.

It was not until Lot 446 whose generously low estimate of £240 allowed for a tainting effect from a bad certificate that realisations broke free of the restraint of estimates with the surplus of £360.

One can add in the effect of Lot 536, the St. Vincent compound perf. which was parted from its previous certificate. Again there was an historic reason for a generously low estimate. The team had not forgotten that this very stamp had been offered in our own auction a number of years earlier and had failed to sell alongside another example with certificate present.

Therefore, although the end product showing an excess of roughly £1 per lot (producing estimate +3% across the board) runs above the target of realisations within 2% of estimates up or down, it was really only the special circumstances of these two lots that prevented them from being, in effect, spot on.

There was, of course, one other lot (already referred to) which went well above its estimate, or the realisation that might have been predicted for it. The description in no way casts doubt on Lot 474, but hints at the reason for a low estimate. There was this known shortage of 1d stamps; yet if 6d was to be paid for postage, there was no shortage of 6d stamps at the time. Your auction team therefore infers a philatelic purpose and down-sized the estimate accordingly. Unfair? Perhaps. Based on content, no one could argue too much was paid for the cover, and philatelic covers have been rising towards their commercial rivals of late. The team may consider a change of policy here.

Just a few more lots deserve special mention. Jamaica Lot 346 (1½d pictorial re-entry) is another item that had been in our auction before – decades ago, in fact – when it failed to sell. This time it attracted bids from 5 absent members, in that respect star of the sales.

The very unusual format of the Dominica specimens in the 290s made them stand out, and the re-offer of Lots 295–7 as a combined trio became a charade, because they had each been bought by a lady member at a combined total of £335 and nobody would be punting to £350 to beat her.

Finally as to two lots that had proved reclusive, Barbados bootheels, Lot 99, had disappeared some 2 or 3 years ago and emerged only for this year. They realised a creditable £150. Lot 688, the RMSP sheet, had also gone missing and was still missing when put up for sale in the hope that it would be discovered. Who knows whether it would have fetched more than the leading book bid of £240, had it been present for inspection? There was a happy ending anyway. The lot came to light after the sale stuffed in a packet fronted by a disconnected lot.

The sale projected to last for 3 hours 40 minutes maximum, with a promised end by 5.55pm, concluded with 3 minutes to spare (British Rail and Franchise holders please take note). There was applause, ostensibly for the auctioneer but, in reality, for the entire auction team which actively involves nine of our members (and if we include Charles Freeland, now no longer with us, and much to be missed, ten). Simon's view is that we have never had a smoother auction, conducted for the first time without a flat spot anywhere. May we return the applause to our members?

BWISC Auction Deadline

The deadline for receiving material for auction in any one year is 10 January (or the first weekday thereafter). Material is received and welcomed at any time during the preceding year, and those submitting items for sale close to the deadline may in some cases learn that similar items already processed for sale preclude the acceptance of competing items for the forthcoming sale.

BWI**REFLECTIONS ON THE BWI COLLECTORS MARKET****BY CHARLES FREELAND**

The following article was written by Charles some months before his death and I felt it only right and proper that it be published, notwithstanding the fact that his name should now be added to the list of great collectors who have gone before.

Editor

Over the last few years we have lost many wealthy and ambitious BWI collectors, mostly by death (Baillie, Jaffé, Lord Steinberg etc), others through withdrawal such as Lord Vestey. Fortunately others have come out of the woodwork but not of equivalent clout or status, and I am not sure any are collecting across the whole BWI field. There is also the lower part of the iceberg to consider, the hidden backwoodsmen who collect our beloved islands (it always amazes me how great collections come to market from names I have never heard before).

At the moment the top of the pops of our collecting area is clearly British Guiana, closely followed by several smaller islands such as Montserrat and Tobago. Barbados, Cayman Islands and St. Vincent remain popular, but are each highly competitive. For any BWI island apart from Jamaica and Trinidad it is hard to achieve critical mass, especially for the Postal History. The clear dog is the Virgin Islands: I only know two serious collectors, including our esteemed Vice-President who is hardly an active bidder these days. Bahamas and Bermuda remain a little bombed out after massive sales round 2000, but still have several active enthusiasts. Others such as Jamaica have many keen collectors but the market sounds quite dormant.

Another aspect is what turns our specialists on...many collect aspects of postal history, others revenues, stationery or cancels across our different islands. Depending on their expertise, these areas have proved more stable markets than 'straight' stamps or covers, especially if you try to acquire them on e-bay.

A particular popularity at present are De La Rue plate numbers. First set off by Peter Fernbank in his superb key plates book, it is amazing to see some of the prices achieved on ebay. I have never been enthused by simple Plate 1s, but when you find four plates as in the British Guiana 1889–1910 sets the plates are integral to identifying the printings.

More generally, we have seen major changes in general interest in stamps versus covers. When I started serious collecting in the early 1970s, stamps were paramount and one could find decent stamped covers at fair prices. After the crash of the late 1970s covers began to become more appreciated. By the early 2000s however it seemed that balance had been restored and rare stamps came back in again. I would judge there to be good demand now for significant pieces, but what is significant? The good news is that we seem to have shed many of the dreaded 'investment' bidders.

That takes us to the Gibbons situation which is depressing for all of us and even more so for their staff. Bringing in a non-stamp collector, who was keen to diversify into other collectibles, again proved a disaster similar to the Flowers buy-in around 1980. Second-grade purchases proved badly-timed and overpriced. Gibbons compounded this with a guaranteed investment scheme which is hard to cost. In the short run it brought indecent sales but the auditors have had a hard time assessing the financial exposure...and only signed off the audit very late, insisting on major write-downs of the firm's capital. Shades of Shanahan here, although there has been no other funny business as in Dublin. Then we had Afinsa where the principal fraudsters have been jailed for 8 to 12 years.

Do not underestimate the importance of Gibbons to our hobby...it remains the talisman/most recognised name in philately with high profile presence in the Strand and we should pray it survives and continues to prosper. Gibbons is apparent in the auction rooms where they were previously back-stopping prices. One problem is that their current stock contains dozens of ridiculously high priced (six figure) unissued GB proofs/reminders. One assumes that at some date they will need to re-price realistically. The good news is that top management has been replaced and the new Chairman is a stamp collector.

After a brutal audit report the value of the capital was sharply marked down and new capital has been raised at very cheap prices. But the share price is still below 10p having been 350p a couple of years ago.

Some members have congratulated me on the success of my sale of Grenada and previous sales of my collections. I assured them that this does not happen in the absence of hard work! The first effort is to assemble the information needed to form a fine collection. I have done this mostly by assembling and then studying an enormous collection of auction catalogues. But of course membership of the Study Circle and careful reading of our Bulletin has been of added value. Longevity, financial resources and a little luck also help one to build a fine collection, but knowledge is the real key. I have never knowingly overpaid (and when I have I have always managed to recoup my investment). Occasionally one has to say this is the last chance I will ever have to acquire a particular item, so grab it even if it blows your budget! Build a collection not a portfolio. Always try to upgrade by weeding out weak items and sell them, duplication puts buyers off when you come to sell.

Critical mass is significant. Rarity and philatelic importance are keys to a fine collection. The first is basically a statistical exercise, study auction catalogues, the great collections and the like for answers. Buy and study the literature in your field; the BWISC has produced several superb research books over the past few years, all good value for the information they offer.

Philatelic importance is more subtle...overall instinct and broad knowledge is required, look at the great exhibits and see what has been presented.

Selling is harder than buying but not so much if you have the 'right' material. What is right, well that is the secret...what is philatelically important is a good start, but again how does one define 'importance'. Again, no substitute for knowledge. Read our Bulletins, visit exhibitions, attend our 'show and tell' meetings and buy our books, of which there have been a flood in recent years under Peter's superb leadership as our Publications supremo.



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ANTIGUA

ENGLISH HARBOUR AND THE SHERRING COVERS

BY JOHN JORDAN

In November 2015, Grosvenor auctioned an iconic 1885 English Harbour cover franked with eight Antigua 1d stamps. It was addressed to a Mrs Sherring at Hallatrow, near Bristol. The cover came from the Pearce Collection (former BWISC members), and had a long pedigree (RPS certificate 1960, ex. Toeg and Wynstra). Despite this, it sold below estimate, barely above its realisation at Christie's Toeg sale 25 years earlier. Why?

It was, in fact, the second known Sherring cover from English Harbour. The first one received a BPA certificate in 1951. Three more have since surfaced. These five covers are the only ones known from English Harbour after the 1870s. During drafting of the Antigua book, several reviewers reminded us of some troubling anomalies. In 1885, the English Harbour PO was no more than a receiving office at the end of an inland mail route from St. John's. The mail packet no longer called. Yet, the Sherring covers implied that English Harbour was cancelling and posting overseas mail without reference to St. John's GPO. It was also using postmarks and stamps not otherwise known there. We included a health warning in the book about the covers but lacked time to do more.

The internet has expanded our research capabilities far beyond that available to the BPA and RPS more than half a century ago. Critical questions about the Sherring covers can now be answered. As will be evident in this article, I am deeply indebted to Michael Hamilton for his suggestions and willingness to share his extensive knowledge and research.

English Harbour and its PO

Under pressure from the Antigua Assembly for better naval protection, the Royal Navy began to construct a naval base at English Harbour in 1725. By 1842, as Antigua's only coaling station, it was the obvious port of call for the new Royal Mail Steam Packet (RMSP) service. The harbour, however, had never been an ideal location for a naval base; it was disease-ridden, difficult to enter, and too shallow for ships of the line. The Royal Navy gradually reduced its operations. In May 1878, the last RMSP ship called and in 1879, the Admiralty announced plans to abandon the few remaining dockyard facilities. Governor Berkeley forced a 10-year delay, but the handwriting was on the wall.

In 1850, the GPO London established a Branch Post Office at English Harbour. Ten years later, on 1 May 1860, London transferred control of Antigua's postal service to the local government. The local Act, dated 24 April 1860, opened as follows:

1. *The Governor may appoint a Post Master for the city of St. John's and a Deputy Post Master for the town of English Harbour.*

This meant that any future changes in the Deputy Postmaster at English Harbour (EH) would require the Governor's approval and appear in the Leeward Island Gazette (LIG). The EH post office could not remain immune to the decline in naval activity, nor to the end of RMSP calls. Overseas mail now had to be forwarded to St. John's to meet the Packet. The EH Branch Post Office was duly closed on 1 January 1879 by Antigua Act No. 12 of 1878. It was succeeded by a receiving office opened at the EH police station in the same year.

The subsequent history is less clear. As a receiving office, EH received little official attention. We rely upon snippets in the LIG and the evidence of loose stamps used there from 1879 to 1885 for local rate post. The function of a receiving office was to handle local post and to sell stamps for it. It was not expected to handle overseas mail. This would normally be forwarded to the St. John's GPO where the stamps would be cancelled with the 'A02' obliterator or a cds, dated near the sailing. The Sherring covers have no St. John's postmarks at all.

After the 1880s, a long philatelic silence ensued as the old dockyard became derelict. The post-war recovery apparently led to a brief revival; the rare Type E5 cds is known from a few examples all dated 17 August 1921. It adopted American spelling and reversed the positions of 'ANTIGUA' and 'ENGLISH HARBOR', a more conventional layout. A further philatelic void lasted until the final closure of the EH post office in 1932.

'A18' Obliterator, Type E2



Fig. 1. The originally impressed 'A18'. Fig. 2. GB 6d lilac used in English Harbour.

The British GPO allocated an 'A18' obliterator to EH. It was impressed on 1 June 1858 (Fig. 1) and initially used to cancel GB stamps current from May 1858 until 30 April 1860. It appears on GB 1d, 2d, 4d, 6d and 1s stamps (Fig. 2). Covers are unknown. Use of the 'A18' temporarily ceased when GB stamps were withdrawn on 1 May 1860.

The 'A18' resumed service when Antigua's stamps were introduced in 1862 but disappears by 1879. Michael Hamilton records an EKD of 12 December 1864. During this period, EH covers are rare. On loose Antigua stamps, it is found on all issues from 1863 to 1876. It is unknown on the 1862 6d.

It is important to note that the only 'A18' known in this period is the type impressed in 1858. It last appears on the 1876 1d and 6d (Crown CC, perf 14) and it is unknown on any surface-printed issues. Its disappearance coincides with the closure of the Branch PO at the end of 1878; it was presumably considered redundant and returned to the St. John's GPO.

EH never received the type of vertical obliterator introduced at St. John's in 1880.

English Harbour Single Ring cds, 'ANTIGUA' at top, Type E4

After 1878, the Type E4 cds supplanted the 'A18' as a stamp cancellation. The practice was common at St. John's GPO, which used its Type 6 cds (also introduced in 1879) interchangeably with its 'A02' obliterator to cancel stamps. The EH cds has an EKD of 3 September 1879, the year that the receiving office opened, suggesting that it was given to the police station as its cancellation device.

Except for the Sherring covers, the cds is found only on loose stamps of the 1876 1d issue. These reflect local rate usage. Michael Hamilton has recorded eight examples, to which two more can be added. They range in date from 3 September 1879 to 26 December 1885. Four examples are shown on Fig. 3. There is no reason to suspect the cds on loose stamps.



Fig. 3. Type 4 cds on loose stamps.

The Sherring Covers 1885 – 86

In 1951, the B.P.A. expertised the first-known Sherring cover. The timing coincided with the start of a well-publicised, 10-year restoration of 'Nelson's Dockyard' at the harbour. The cover is addressed by hand to Mrs Sherring at Hallatrow Court. It bears the current ½d, 1d, and 2½d stamps of Antigua, making up the 4d letter rate. They are cancelled by three 'A18' obliterations and tied by one of two Type E4 cds's dated 17 December 1885. It became known as the 'Urwick' cover after its residence in the distinguished Dr. R. H. Urwick collection and was later sold in Christie's Toeg sale, December 1990, for £2,090. The stamps were catalogued as 1882 Crown CA, perf.14. (Fig. 4).

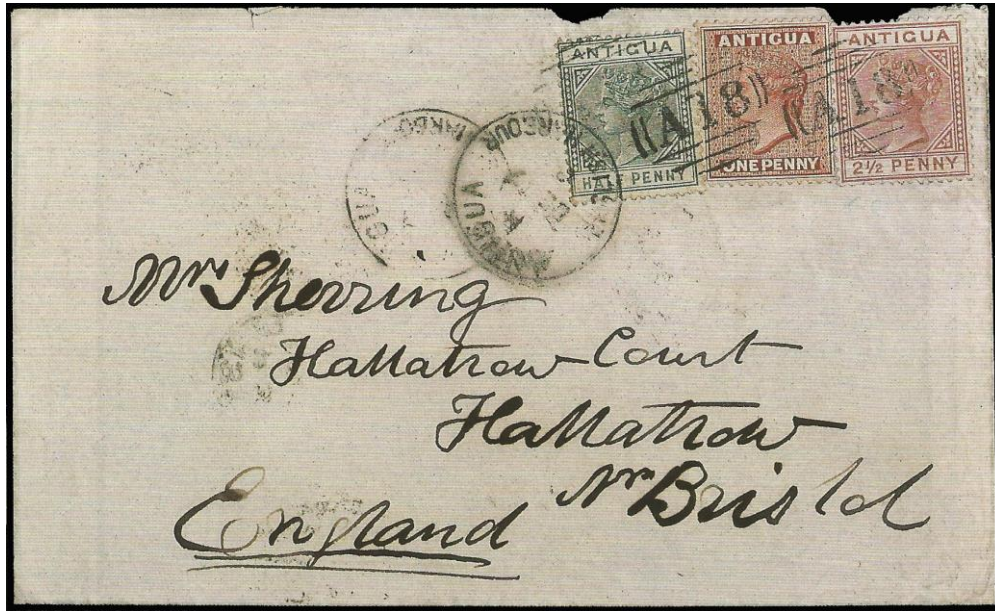


Fig. 4. The 'Urwick' cover.

The second-known Sherring cover, the 'Toeg' cover, received an RPS certificate in 1960, when the dockyard restoration was nearing completion. It was likewise addressed by hand to Mrs Sherring at Hallatrow Court. It is plastered with eight copies of the 1d lake (double letter rate). They share seven strikes of an 'A18' obliterator and are partly tied by a single Type E4 cds dated 14 December 1885. It sold for £3,850 in Christie's 1990 'Toeg' auction and for £4,000 in Grosvenor's November 2015 auction. Although it preceded the 'Urwick' cover, the stamps are described as 1876 Crown CC, perf.14. the handwriting is similar to the first, but the lettering inconsistencies between the covers are disconcerting. (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. The 'Toeg' cover.

The other three Sherring covers are in private hands. As far as I know, they have neither been expertised nor auctioned. Two are from the same stable as the Urwick and Toeg covers, with similar postmarks and dates, namely 4 and 11 December 1885. They bear pre-printed addresses to Mrs Sherring at Hallatrow (Figs. 6, 7) and routing instructions written in different hands, one with 'via Saint Thomas', the other with 'Via New York/per Andies'.



Fig. 6. Pre-printed cover 1.



Fig. 7. Pre-printed cover 2.

The last cover, with a handwritten 'p Royal Mail 10/11/86', is hand-addressed in an entirely new style to R. V. Sherring at Hallatrow Court. It is franked with four 1d carmine-red stamps described as SG 25, cancelled with five 'A18' obliterations. (Fig. 8). A single 'fair' EH cds is applied to the reverse.



Fig. 8. The 1886 cover.

The Sherring Antigua Postmarks



Fig. 9. The original 'A18' as struck.



Fig. 10. The Sherring 'A18' as struck.

The 'A18' on the Sherring covers is not the type used until 1879. The two types are shown side by side in Figs. 9 and 10. Note that the top loop of the Sherring '8' has a squashed appearance compared with the rounded top loop on the original 'A18'. Since this type only appears on the Sherring covers, it is an area of concern.

The EH cds on the Sherring covers is never clearly struck. The orientation of the code letter 'A' differs from that on loose stamps. On stamps it points to the 'I' of 'ANTIGUA', whereas on the Sherring covers it points to the 'T' and is distinctly wobbly. This is another worry.

None of the Sherring covers bear any postmarks of St. John's GPO.

Who was Sherring?

Richard Vowell Sherring listed his occupation as 'Scientific Gentleman' in the 1901 Census. He was an accomplished botanist, with a particular passion for collecting ferns in the south of England as well as in the West Indies. He visited Jamaica repeatedly to collect specimens between 1873 and 1887. His first daughter, in fact, was born there in 1878. In late 1890, he was appointed by the Royal Society and the British Association 'to make collections in Botany in the island of Grenada', which he completed by June of 1891. His fern specimens reside in the Natural History Museum, the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. and in the New York Botanical Garden. In 1887 he was elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society. Born in Bristol in 1847, he was part of the Somerset landed gentry, acquiring nearby Hallatrow Court as a residence c.1870. He never sold the property.

By 1901, he lived in Bournemouth where he became a founder member of the Bournemouth Natural Science Society in 1903. He died in Bournemouth in 1931.

Michael Hamilton's quick census of Sherring covers from the BWI (other than Antigua) shows Grenada (21), nearby St. Vincent (5), and Jamaica (15). This conforms well to the locations of his botanical work.

Was Sherring in Antigua?

Sherring was not in Antigua on any of the dates of these covers.

In December 1885, he was, in fact, in Jamaica. On 7 December 1885, he is documented in the north of the island collecting an Isotype fern specimen for the Smithsonian Herbarium. Corroboration is provided by The Directors Correspondence at Kew Archives, Kew Botanic Gardens. It contains Sherring's original 9 December 1885 letter from Park Lodge, Kingston to Mr. Baker at Kew complaining about being laid up after a bad voyage to Jamaica. The *Jamaica Daily Gleaner* newspaper, which reported Society's arrivals and departures, shows that Sherring did not, in fact, sail from Jamaica until 18 March 1886, bound for Southampton on the RMSP *Don*. He was unaccompanied.

Sherring had reason to return to the UK. His second daughter was born at Hallatrow Court on 23 June 1886. His wife became gravely ill, dying later that year. Although a number of specimens collected by Sherring in Jamaica are dated November 1886, the '*Gleaner*' does not confirm his presence there. In any event, the death of his wife and birth of his second daughter make it unlikely that he was in Antigua in November or the sender of the fifth cover.

I have inspected seven of Sherring's original letters and postcards held at Kew Archives. It appears to my (admittedly untrained) eye that the Toeg and Urwick covers are attempts to mimic his handwriting. Since we know that he was not in Antigua, we are faced with the less plausible scenario that somebody else was writing to Mrs. Sherring from Antigua, occasionally using her pre-printed envelopes. Their daughter, Eva, was only 8, so is not a candidate.

Consistency with Sailing Dates

On 2 July 1885, a new 24-month West Indies mail contract became effective between the GPO London and the RMSP. It included two important changes. First, the frequency of sailings between the UK and West Indies became fortnightly instead of twice per month. Second, Barbados was made the initial port of call for all transatlantic sailings; they would no longer alternate between Barbados and St. Thomas. St. Thomas had fallen out of favour because of its incidence of hurricanes and deadly outbreaks of yellow fever. The St. Thomas mail transfer facilities were moved to Barbados. The Leeward and Windward island mail would henceforth be carried by local RMSP packets operating out of Barbados on timetables designed to coincide with the new fortnightly service with the UK.

From Antigua, the local packet left St John's on alternate Saturdays at 10:00 a.m. and arrived in Barbados at 7:00 a.m. the following Monday. The transatlantic packet left Barbados at 5:00 p.m. on Monday and landed the mail at Plymouth 12 days later, at 10 p.m. on Saturday. The GPO notice stated that 'the mails may be expected to be delivered throughout the country early on Monday morning.' I projected the transatlantic timetables through 1886 and checked them against the Jamaica arrival dates shown in the '*Gleaner*'. There is a perfect match. The sailings relevant to the Sherring covers follow.

Sailing Dates	1885	1885/86	1886
Local Packet			
Depart St John's Saturday 10 a.m.	12 Dec	26 Dec	13 Nov
Arrive Barbados Monday, 7 a.m.	14 Dec	28 Dec	15 Nov
Transatlantic Packet			
Depart Barbados Monday, 5 p.m.	14 Dec	28 Dec	15 Nov
Arrive Plymouth Saturday, 10 p.m.	26 Dec	9 Jan 1886	27 Nov
Delivery Bristol Monday, early a.m.	28 Dec	11 Jan	29 Nov

Overseas letters received at EH would be sent to St. John's to meet the Packet. The police station would normally apply only a datestamp. At St. John's, the stamps would be cancelled and the letter again datestamped. It would be backstamped at any subsequent transfer points and upon arrival in England.

Dates on Sherring Covers	Pre-printed No. 1	Pre-printed No. 2	'Toeg'	'Urwick'	1986
English Harbour cds	4 Dec	11 Dec	14 Dec	17 Dec	10 Nov
Bristol cds	21 Dec	1 Jan	11 Jan 86	?	29 Nov
Valid Arrival Date?	No	No	Yes	?	Yes

The two earliest covers are on pre-printed envelopes. Both have spurious, handwritten routing instructions and arrival backstamps with invalid dates.

The 4 December 1885 cover bears a (reinstated) handwritten routing instruction 'via Saint Thomas', which Michael Hamilton believes is probably not contemporary. The fact that St. Thomas ceased to be a transfer point for RMSP mail in July casts additional doubt. Furthermore, there is no St. Thomas backstamp. The letter could only have caught the 12 December sailing and been delivered to Bristol on 28 December. Arrival on 21 December, per the backstamps, is not possible.

The 11 December cover bears a handwritten routing instruction 'via New York/per Andies'. Michael Hamilton questions whether it is contemporary. The ship could not be the RMS *Andes*, which was not built until 1913. Furthermore, there is no New York backstamp. This letter could also only have met the 12 December sailing and arrived in Bristol on 28 December. The next sailing, on 26 December, would mean a Bristol arrival on 11 January 1886. The Bristol backstamp of 1 January 1886 is not a valid arrival date.

The Toeg cover bears an EH cds of 14 December 1885. There is no indication of alternative routing so it could only have met the 26 December sailing from St John's and been delivered to Bristol on 11 January 1886. The Bristol backstamp does, in fact, show this very delivery date.

Michael Hamilton has pointed out a worrying feature on the EH cds on each of these first three covers; their day slugs required only combinations of the numerals '1' and '4'.

The Urwick cover has an EH cds of 17 December. No alternative routing is indicated. As with the Toeg cover, it could only have met the 26 December sailing from St. John's and been delivered to Bristol on 11 January 1886. I have, unfortunately, been unable to determine the dates of the Bristol and Hallatrow backstamps. Does any BWISC member know?

The 1886 cover is described as having a 'fair only' EH backstamp (unspecified date) and a handwritten instruction 'p Royal Mail 10/11/86'. There was no such sailing. The Packet sailed from St. John's on Saturday, 13 November. The PO would know that Packets sailed on Saturdays, so this is a damning error. The cover's creator, however, almost got it right; if it had caught the 13 November Packet, the Bristol arrival cds of 29 November would be spot on.

In conclusion, the five Sherring covers show two invalid arrival dates, one valid one, one unknown, and one invalid sailing date. The weight of evidence against these covers seems overwhelming. They look like fabrications. It is possible that I have my facts, or my interpretation of them, wrong. I would very much appreciate comments from other members.

Who created them?

I don't have the answer, but an intriguing story appears in the online 'Encyclopaedia of Jamaican Philately' which will be familiar to some members. On the page about the late Robert Vincent Swarbrick, a long-time Jamaica collector, he writes about how he got started:

'As a very young man, some 50 years ago, I attended a Stamp Fair in Manchester. Having raided the family Tea caddy, and with some knowledge and much enthusiasm, I threw myself on the mercy of the assembled dealers. I well remember meeting one, A W. Morley. . . 'Specialize', he murmured, 'Specialize'. He then went on to explain that he had recently bought a collection of Jamaica stamps both loose and stuck into an old ledger. It was, he explained, a life time's collection of a Missionary who had worked in Jamaica . . . We concluded a deal. . What a feast! Thousands of 1d keyplates, hundreds of ½d CA's, envelopes and wrappers and all sorts of goodies to sort minor disappointment was the fact that the 'Missionary', a man called Sherring, wasn't a man of the church at all.'

This entry is dated 20 August 1995, so the Morley encounter took place c.1945.

Now, Alan Morley was a man who knew a thing or two about defunct Antigua post offices and their cds's. Covers addressed to him in Rochdale bear the extremely rare marks of Bethesda, Barnes Hill and Newfield. They were dated 1939, long after the SPOs had closed. A further Bethesda cover was sent to F. G. Marshall at Morley's address in 1951, the year the BPA issued a certificate for first Sherring cover. In the Antigua book, we note that 'It seems likely that Mr. Morley connived with an Antiguan post office worker to resuscitate three obsolete cds's still held at the St. John's GPO or possibly at Falmouth.' Did Mr. Morley find something else there? Perhaps the Sherring collection gave him ideas and the odd useful envelope?

Sherring, as a stamp collector, is also under suspicion. Given that neither of the EH postmarks look quite right, Bristol and Hallatrow might have been the difficult ones to obtain. Sherring's long dealings with the local postal staff could explain it. Mitigating circumstances, however, are his stature as a botanist and his death in 1931, long before the rebirth of Nelson's Dockyard.

The jury is still out on the perpetrator. Can any BWISC members come up with other Morley covers?

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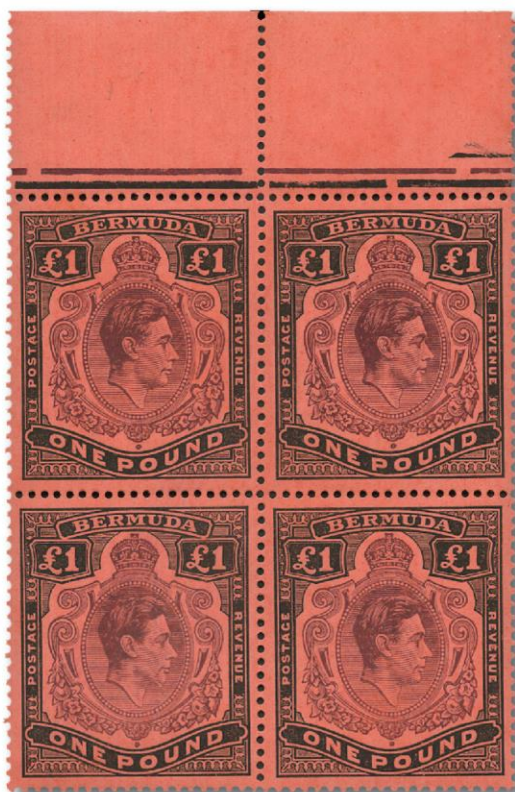
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BARBADOS

UNRECORDED CENSOR MARK

BY RICHARD STUPPLES

A previously unrecorded censor mark for Currency Control from Barbados referenced against Chris Millar's book on the Civil Censorship Devices of WWII.

Barbados was one of the countries targeted for conversion of Canadian Dollars to US Dollars as well as other currencies. It is for this reason that the Stevenson Committee requested that the Caribbean and Canada had a separate civil currency control from the normal civil censorship Unrecorded Mark.



This mark is similar in dimension to type CC3 but the text on the unrecorded version is 2mm high rather than the 1.5mm on the copy I own, though I would argue that the outer ring is thicker than the inner ring on the unrecorded mark. This is evident in the image from the book as it also has a thicker outer ring which may be down to the moistness of the inking pad.

My copy of C.M.'s book is dated 2006, and I understand that the book has now been produced in smaller parts but I've not seen a more recent copy to know what the updates were but the book gives CC3 with an earliest known date of 1 March 1941, whilst the stamps are cancelled with a date of 25 April 1940.



Looking at these side by side the dimension between the text and the inner ring are different with the CC3 mark having a space of 2mm whilst the unrecorded mark is spaced at 1.5mm. I also think that the spacing between the words needs comparison and the apostrophe between Import and Export has gone on both my copy and the image of CC3

THE TRANSITION FROM FLAT-BED TO CURVED RECESS PLATES DURING THE 1925–35 DEFINITIVE PERIOD

BY PATRICIA CAPILL

I found Peter Fernbank's article in the June 2014 BWISC Bulletin on De La Rue's introduction of curved recess printing plates most fascinating. This was of particular relevance to my collecting interest – the Barbados recess printed 'Badge' definitive issues – with the 1925–35 issue being of key importance.

Peter stated that DLR started introducing the much more efficient rotary presses from the mid 1920s. As existing recess plates were flat, they had to be curved to fit the new presses. This was done by rolling the flat plates between shaping rollers to impart the required curvature. This process caused the plate to stretch resulting in printed stamps with an increased dimension of about 1mm in 20mm.



I have been able to use my specialised collection of the 1925–35 definitives, which identifies over half of the printings as detailed in Bayley's handbook and ascertain which were printed from curved plates. Using dividers, a fine mm rule and magnifying glass, I found that in all cases the curving resulted in the width of stamps from curved plates increasing to 21mm, whereas those from the flat-bed plates ranged from 20.1mm to 20.4mm – this variation probably being due to the uneven paper shrinkage resulting from the need to dampen sheets before flat-bed printing. The dates shown below are the despatch dates to Barbados, as recorded by Bayley.

SEVEN denominations were ONLY printed from FLAT-BED plates:

¼d	7 printings	2.1925 to 4.1931
2d	1 printing	2.1925
3d	9 printings	1.1925 to 11.1935
4d	5 printings	2.1925 to 9.1934
1s	8 printings	2.1925 to 11.1935
2s	3 printings	2.1925 to 4.1931
3s	2 printings	2.1925 and 3.1930

FOUR denominations had LATE printings from CURVED plates:

½d	Of the 14 printings, the last 5 were from curved plates. A new plate was made for these 5 printings comprising 120 stamps and numbered '2'	10th 11th – 14th	7.1932 (perf. 13½x12½) 8.1933 to 7.1936 (perf. 14)
1d	Of the 12 printings, the last 4 were from curved plates. A new plate was made for these 4 printings comprising 120 stamps and numbered '2'	9th 10th – 12th	7.1932 (perf. 13½x12½) 8.1933 to 7.1936 (perf. 14)
2½d	Of the 8 printings, the last 2 were from curved plates. A new plate was made for these 2 printings comprising 60 stamps	7th & 8th	9.1933 and 9.1934 (perf. 14)
6d	Of the 7 printings, the last 3 were from curved plates. The same plate of 80 stamps was used for all seven printings	5th – 7th	7.1932 to 6.1936 (perf. 14)

TWO new denominations, added later, were ONLY printed from curved plates:

1½d	3 printings	1st 2nd & 3rd	7.1932 (perf 13½x12½) 9.1933 and 9.1934 (perf. 14)
2s6d	1 printing		7.1932 (perf. 14)

So what can be deduced from all this?

- Most importantly, the curving of plates for printing Barbados stamps commenced with stocks printed immediately prior to the July 1932 despatch date.
- Not all denominations with printings despatched on or after July 1932 were from curved plates, viz. 3d, 4d and 1s. Perhaps this was, as Peter Fernbank surmised, because the quantities and demand affected the decision as to whether to curve or not. These three denominations had only moderate printing numbers with no late surge in demand.
- Of the four denominations that had later printings from curved plates, viz. ½d, 1d, 2½d, and 6d, the first three were needed in large quantities but the 6d is somewhat of an anomaly, with consistently low printing numbers over the years.
- Even though plates of three different sheet sizes were curved — 60, 80 and 120 stamps — these plates all consisted of ten stamps horizontally, so the length of the plates that were curved and the degree of curvature would have been similar for them all.
- Comb perforating was a faster method than line perforating. Curving the plates would have sped up the printing process, but the line 14 machines were still used for most of these curved plate printings. Only one printing of each of the ½d, 1d and 1½d from curved plates, required in very large quantities, were comb perforated 13½x12½. The ½d, 1d and 2½d denominations each had a printing from a flat-bed plate that was also comb perforated 13½x12½.
- Establishing whether stamps are from curved or flat-bed plates can be one useful tool in identifying earlier from later printings.

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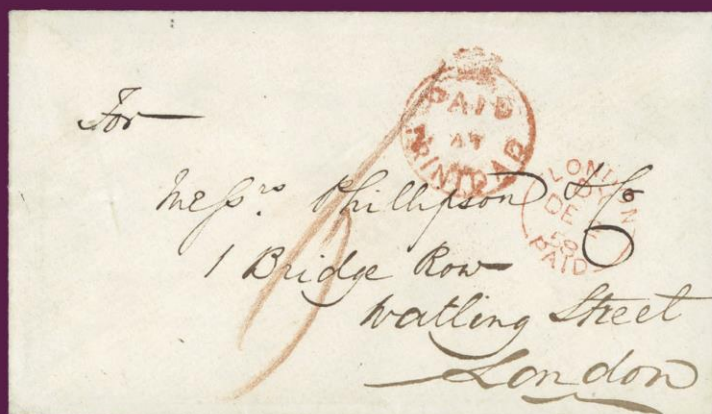
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JAMAICA

KGVI ½D (SG121) FLAW

BY PETER FORD



Normal



Flaw

I have been approached by a member of the King George VI Collectors Society to see if I can find any new information regarding a flaw on the KGVI ½d (SG121). The flaw is illustrated together with the normal here but we were wondering if there were other examples around and perhaps it was possible to position it on the sheet. Paul Wright says it is not present on his sheets of Plates 1C-1D, 2A or 2C-2D. Perhaps it is on sheet with other plate numbers. It may well have had a very short life and been retouched and again this retouch might show up under careful examination.

It was originally noticed by C. P. Rang writing in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* in April 1950. He stated that the flawed example was used and had a year date of 1946 which would limit its occurrence to Plates 1 or 2 as Plate 3 did not appear until October 1948.

Any help would be very much appreciated, either with the plate number, plate position or the existence of a possible retouch.

HECTORS RIVER DOCKET

BY DAVID HORRY

DESIGNER: G. MINOTT, HECTORS RIVER.

DOCKET, SEC. 2 — FILE NO. _____

(TO BE FILLED IN BY RECEIVER)

WHEN RECEIVED _____ 194

INSIDE DATE _____ 194

BRIEF CONTENTS _____

REPLY? _____ WHEN? _____ 194

NATURE OF REPLY _____

FOR COPY OF REPLY TO THIS LETTER:-

REFER: LETTER BOOK:-

No. _____ PAGE _____

DOCKET SEC. 1.

FROM : _____

_____ P.O.

To : _____

CHURCHILL

I recently picked up this docket on eBay. It emanates from Hectors River in Jamaica and was designed by G. Minott sometime in the forties. It bears a large V (for Victory presumably) and the word CHURCHILL to the right. I believe it to be associated with the Post Office but in reality have absolutely no idea of its purpose. Have you seen anything like it before or know what its purpose was? If you do, please contact me horry@talk21.com



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ST. VINCENT

MOTOR CAR MAIL AND PASSENGER SERVICE

BY MICHAEL REGO

On 2 December 1913 at the Legislature Council meeting, the Acting Attorney General introduced a Bill for 'An Ordinance to regulate the use of Motor Cars'. The motion was seconded by the Treasurer. Prior to this in the 1912 PO Report, it was stated 'The mails of the colony have been conveyed for a number of years on the Leeward Coast in an open canoe, which carries a limited number of passengers. The need for a better and more comfortable service on this route is manifesting itself more and more, and it will be a boon to the inhabitants of the island when a steamer service in conjunction with the Grenadines route is established. However, it was decided to improve, at the close of the year, the conveyance on the Windward Route, as this was found insufficient for the growth of the mails.'

So in a later Legislative Meeting of 1913 on the subject, a proposal for the establishment of a Government Motor Car Mail and Passenger Service on the Windward Route between Kingstown and Georgetown was formally laid before the Council. The Administrator, Gideon Murray, referred to the difficulties of the mail service on the Windward side of the Island and pointed out that a sea-borne service was impossible, whereas horses (for this purpose) were slow, and that more modern means had become necessary. Alluding to the proposals before the Council there were, he went on, two alternative methods (a) a contract service (b) a government service, which the latter he favoured on the grounds of economy and efficiency if it were to be conducted as proposed by a Motor Car Service. According to this scheme there would be a service each way between Kingstown and Georgetown on five days of the week instead of on three as at present, and in addition: there would be a passenger service. He proposed that the present cost of fares of 12s single fare in covered conveyance, and 10s in an open one, and of 24s and 20s return fares, should be reduced in future per motor to 6s single and 10s return, and he also had in his mind that Government Officials should be allowed to travel at $\frac{3}{4}$ fare.

Referring to the estimates of expenditure on motor cars he pointed out that, in order to avoid the necessity of carrying spare tyres of different sizes the wheels were to be made uniform in size, and this would entail an additional cost of £4. He also informed the Council that the Ford Car Company had reduced the price of their five-seater cars to £122 with free on board delivery from New York, since the estimate in the Legislative Council paper was being prepared. He then formally moved the following resolution 'Be it resolved that this Council being of opinion that the time has now arrived when the mail and passenger service between Kingstown and Georgetown should be conducted by a Motor Car Service in preference to the present mode of conveyance by horse and trap, thus enabling an increase of transport facilities for both mails and, passengers on the Windward Coast, and being of the opinion also that such mail service should be inaugurated and operated by the Government at the expense of the Colony'.

'Now therefore this Council agrees to vote a sum not exceeding £400 for the capital expenditure in the establishment of such a service and to provide from year to year, commencing with the financial year 1914–15, such funds for its maintenance as may be found necessary'. In seconding the resolution the Acting Attorney-General pointed out that it would seem that for a small additional amount beyond the present subsidy this service could be inaugurated, and that there would be this further advantage, that the car could be let out for hire at 9d a mile, but it was especially in anticipation of the progress that would ensue that he supported the proposal.

Mr. Hazell and others spoke in favour of the proposal, and stressed that considerable improvement in the roads ought to follow. The Resolution was then unanimously adopted, and on 15 August 1913, the Administrator, Gideon Murray, wrote a letter to His Excellency the Governor residing at Grenada and to the UK Government seeking approval.

In his letter, he pointed out that during the past few years the subsidy payable for the mail service from Kingstown to Georgetown, a distance of 48 miles there and back, had risen from £89 per annum in 1908–09 to £250 for the last nine months of the year. During the past three years, he had demands by petition and otherwise for a daily service to Georgetown instead of a three day service one way and

a four day service the other way, which now exists, and for a service that would provide more accommodation for passengers than currently available.



It is found that an estimated cost of £325 for two Ford cars, one a two-seater (£135) and the other a five-seater (£150) may be purchased capable of performing the mail work as required. The sundries total (£20), and shipping (£20).

It is obvious that two cars will be necessary for such a service in case one goes wrong at any time. The second car could be hired out when not required for mail service purposes under certain specified Regulations. It is further estimated that for a yearly expenditure of £346 the mails may be run to Georgetown and back the same day, five days a week, and in addition it must not be overlooked that passengers can be accommodated.

The main reasons however, why Ford cars have been selected as best for our purpose are (a) they are much in use in the neighbouring colonies of Trinidad and Barbados and so spare parts and tyres are easily obtainable also chauffeurs who know how to drive them, (b) they are very light on tyres, are good hill climbers, and, being light in weight consume less petrol than the heavier types of car.

The Works Department pointed out that the principal rivers on the road to Georgetown will be nearly bridged, and the new road out of Kingstown will be very near completion so that there should be no difficulty in running a Motor Car Mail service commencing on 1 April 1914, the date upon which the present horse mail service contract terminates.

It is extremely unlikely that anyone here will tender for a Motor Car Mail service to Windward except at a rate very much in excess of that at which the Government could run it.

Certain simple legislation will be necessary controlling the running of motor cars and licensing of drivers &c., but there will be plenty of time to prepare and pass this by March of next year.

If Your Excellency and the Secretary of State for the Colonies approve the scheme the Legislative Council might be invited to vote the necessary capital outlay from surplus assets and the amount for upkeep would be provided on next year's Estimates. The two cars should be ordered from the Ford works in Manchester, UK and shipped to St. Vincent in February so as to give experience of them running before the Mail service commences.

In conclusion I venture to express the hope that Your Excellency and the Secretary of State for the Colonies will consider favourably this solution of the Windward mail service problem which has mused much trouble and vexation in the past and which owing to lack of competition here will I believe never be satisfactorily and economically performed until undertaken by the Government. Signed, C. Gideon Murray, Administrator.

Downing Street, acknowledged the letter on 4 November 1913, and generally approved of the Administrator's proposal, but suggested substituting one motor car for a motor cycle with or without sidecar.

On 22 November 1913, the Administrator at St. Vincent, responded to the UK Government's letter, acknowledging general approval for the motor mail and passenger service. The colony had considered the comments made to run a motor cycle; but finally decided the car is better suited in a rainy colony, with 60 inches of rain being recorded since 1 August, and it would not be fair on the chauffeur to expose him to the weather in the degree that would happen if the mails were carried by motor cycle. Since the Administrator's letter of 15 August, he was able to have delivered from Ford the five-seater for £121 17s 6d and the two-seater at £141 9s 2d, with freight and handling for both vehicles from New York to St. Vincent £17 11s 9d, reducing the full purchase to £291, from its original estimate of £325.

On 4 March 1914, regulations made by the Governor in Council to govern and control the Motor Mail Service between Kingstown and Georgetown to commence on 1 April 1914, and to regulate the hire of cars for private use when not employed on Government service:

1. The motor cars shall be under the complete control of the Colonial Postmaster who will be responsible that they are kept in order and that the mail service is, so far as he can influence circumstances, run efficiently and up to time.
2. A mail passenger service will be run on each of the following days both ways between Kingstown and Georgetown, namely on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.
3. The car will leave the Post Office, Kingstown, at 10.45 a.m. arrive at Georgetown nominally at 12.45 p.m., and leave the Revenue Office, Georgetown, again at 3.15 p.m. to return to Kingstown.
4. The following fares will be payable by each passenger travelling on the mail car. Tickets will be obtainable only at the various Post Offices along the line of route. Return tickets will be available for 14 days. No reductions will be made for shorter journeys than those on the table of fares. The number of passengers will be limited to four.

From	Kingstown		Calliaqua		Stubbs		Peruvian Vale		Bridgetown		Colonarie		Georgetown	
To	Single	Return	Single	Return	Single	Return	Single	Return	Single	Return	Single	Return	Single	Return
Kingstown	-	-	7d	1s1d	1s8d	3s0d	2s1d	3s9d	2s6d	4s6d	3s9d	6s9d	5s0d	9s0d
Calliaqua	7d	1s1d	-	-	1s0d	1s10d	1s5d	2s7d	1s10d	3s4d	3s1d	5s7d	4s4d	7s10d
Stubbs	1s8d	3s0d	1s0d	1s10d	-	-	5d	9d	10d	1s6d	2s1d	3s9d	2s11d	5s3d
Peruvian Vale	2s1d	3s9d	1s5d	2s7d	5d	9d	-	-	4d	7d	1s8d	3s0d	2s6d	4s6d
Bridgetown	2s6d	4s6d	1s10d	3s4d	10d	1s6d	4d	7d	-	-	1s3d	2s3d	2s1d	3s9d
Colonarie	3s9d	6s9d	3s1d	5s7d	2s1d	3s9d	1s8d	3s0d	1s3d	2s3d	-	-	10d	1s6d
Georgetown	5s0d	9s0d	4s4d	7s10d	2s11d	5s3d	2s6d	4s6d	2s1d	3s9d	10d	1s6d	-	-

Passengers from Mesopotamia meet the car on the Windward highway at Peruvian Vale but book seats at Mesopotamia Post Office.

5. Government Officials when travelling on duty will take priority of ordinary travellers; otherwise all applications for seats will be dealt with in sequence of receipt by the Colonial Postmaster.

6. Seats may be pre-booked with the Colonial Postmaster but persons desirous of travelling between Kingstown and Georgetown or vice versa shall have priority in pre-booking over persons desirous of making any of the other journeys.

Other regulations were listed, including a scale of charges for hiring the Government motor car for private use.

On 16 April 1914, the Public Works department confirmed it had already completed four reinforced concrete bridges on the Windward Road. The uncompleted works include a small bridge over the New Adelphi River on the Windward Road, this should be finished by 31 March.

However, in order to render the Windward Road more suitable for the new Motor Car Mail service the Legislature will need to sanction a loan for £1500 to complete the chain of bridges along that road including a bridge over the Mount Bentinck River, a necessity of long standing, and also two foot bridges, one over Dickson's River and one over South-Rivers.

The Government has on several occasions called for tenders for a motor boat mail and passenger service on the Leeward coast but without response. For the present this service will as hitherto, continue to be conducted by canoe.

During 'The Motor Car Ordinance, 1914' Mr Simmons considered that inasmuch as the roads did more harm to the wheels than the wheels to the road, the Governor ought to do away with the registration fee and reduce the licence on cars.

Debate then took place at the Legislature meeting on the speed limit on the roads, whereby the Administrator said he was prepared to go higher from a proposed 16 mph to 20 mph but no further, a speed adopted in the English Act, while Trinidad had opted for 15 mph. Finally 20 mph was agreed for the island speed limit.

A Post Office Notice dated 26 February 1915, confirmed that from and after 1 March, the fare for children of the age of 10 years and under travelling on the Government Motor Cars will be half of these now payable by adults.

On 22 December 1914 Legislature Council meeting, detailed the Motor Car Mail and Passenger service for a period of seven months, April to October 1914. Gasoline cost £46 13s 4d, Oil £7 12s 4d, Tyres £49 11s 0d, Spares and Tools £52 11s 10d, Repairs £15 15s 7d, uniforms £3 8s 0d, salaries £83 18s 10d, contingencies £14 4s 0d, and the depreciation fund £75 0s 0d, totalling £350 14s 11d, while Income from Fares £130 2s 9d, Private Hire £22 13s 3d, Transfers £1 13s 9d, totalling £154 9s 9d, making almost a £200 deficit. And owing to difficulties in connection with the chauffeurs and the unevenness of the road surface the cost of the operation was greater than anticipated.

Further, there were no chauffeurs to be had in the colony and those imported had not all been successes. In the management of the service the Colonial Postmaster had done some good work under difficult circumstances, with no proper supervision over the cars when they left Kingstown. This issue was taken from the Postmaster and placed under the control of the Windward Warden, who made frequent visits to Georgetown enabling him to supervise more closely the chauffeurs, who were thought to be badly handling the cars.

The frequent trips from the capital to Georgetown and the Windward District was found to be a great boon to the district, and representations were made to government that on no account should the mail and passenger service cease.

On 26 April 1915, the Governor increased the fares on the Motor Mail service, Kingstown to Georgetown, explaining that the increases were unavoidable due to the necessary wear and tear imposed on the cars by the roughness of the roads and the heavy cost of tyres and repairs caused thereby.

However the service has now been improved, in that a motor car will run every week-day instead of 5 days a week and in addition from Georgetown to Kingstown and back one day a week. The motor cars are now under the complete control of the Windward Warden who will be responsible for the service and that of the mail, ensuring they run efficiently and on time.

Motor Car Mail Service, Kingston - Georgetown - Kingstown, 1 May 1915						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Kingstown	10.15 am	10.15 am	10.15 am	1.00 pm	-	-
Georgetown	12.15 pm	12.15 pm	12.15 pm	3.00 pm	-	-
Georgetown	2.00 pm	2.00 pm	2.00 pm	-	8.00 am	1.00 pm
Kingstown	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	-	10.00 am	3.00 pm
Kingstown	-	-	-	-	3.00 pm	-
Georgetown	-	-	-	-	5.00 pm	-

To coincide with the above table, Mr P. L. Hutchinson, Colonial Postmaster put out a Post Office Notice 'From and after 1 May, mails for Georgetown and the intermediate post offices will be closed at the General Post Office, Kingstown at 9.45 am on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays; at 12.30 pm on Thursdays, and at 2.30 pm on Fridays. Mails will not be despatched from the GPO Kingstown to the Windward Districts on Saturdays. Mails for Kingstown and intermediate post offices will be closed at the post office at Georgetown at 1.30 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays; at 7.30 am on Fridays, and at 12.30 pm on Saturdays.'

Lieutenant-Colonel Gideon Murray, left Kingstown Jetty on board a Royal Mail Canadian steamer, for a new appointment as Administrator for St. Lucia, on 20 May 1915 with a Guard of Honour composed of Volunteers and Police. Since 1909, he had served the community very well, not only the towns but also the parishes, and an 'Address from the Small Towns' of St. Vincent, confirmed their appreciation he had achieved in his service. Among the lasting benefits listed included, the bridges along the Windward highway and over the Mesopotamia Rivers making it possible for the Motor Car Mail and Passenger service to the second important town in the country. The Jetties at Georgetown and along the Leeward coast and at Bequia and Union Island benefitted the shippers to export their local produces.

TRINIDAD

TWO INTRIGUING TRINIDAD MYSTERIES

BY EDWARD BARROW

In the March 2017 journal David Watson raised 'Two Intriguing Trinidad Mysteries'. I hope I can shed some light on both. The first deals with the *SS West Indian*. I found a reference that indicated the service started in 1953 to fill the regional gap left by the ending of the Canadian Lady Boat service in 1952. As the ship name suggests, it was tied politically with the Federation project. The service ended in 1957 due to financial losses.

With regard to the censorship of mail from the French Antilles: the last two examples of Trinidad transit censorship recorded by Wike, are for Martinique covers addressed to French Guiana in August of 1945. This suggests the Allied authorities were still keeping an eye on correspondence between French territories right up to the end of the war. I suspect it may have to do with preventing the Nazis from using back doors to get money out of Europe towards the end of the war.

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AUCTION UPDATE**BY GRAHAM BOOTH**

Murray Payne held the Foxley Bermuda sale on 14 March 2017 covering KGV and KGV1 material. While only about 70% sold by value (60% by number) during the auction, another 10% (20% by number) have sold since with Murray Payne generally keeping to 80% of their fair estimates. Total estimates were almost £220,000 over 488 lots with an even number of lots for both Kings; but by value £142,000 KG5 vs. £75,000 for the KG6 and about £1,000 in 7 lots of QEII at the end.

There was a total of 51 buyers, with 55% of the sale by value and 43% by number accounted for by the top 3 bidders. The main purchaser took 55 lots for approx. £37,000 including the unique 12s6d plate proofs and the Revenue Revenue specimen all of which had been acquired cheaply in the Rubin sale. This bidder also took the KGV 2s and the Tercentenary essays and the strips of 3 specimens from the Madagascar archives. The second highest bidder accounted for 49 lots and spent £24,000 with primary focus on the KGV1 material including the last die proof of the KGV1 head in private hands for £3,900 vs £3,200 in the Apollonia sale. They also picked up the KGV 5s and 12s6d die proofs (one of 2 known) for £1,250 and the block of Revenue-Revenue for £1,400 vs £650 in Saul. This bidder was closely followed by a BWISC member spending £23,500 on 61 lots with a prime focus on the Caravel and Tercentenary watermark varieties. Many of these are rarely seen. SG45 (½d green with reversed watermark) fetched £850 vs. a catalogue £800. He also picked up most of the KGV die proofs with a good buy of the 1912 KGV head at £1,200 when not too long ago these were selling for £3,500 each.

The next bidder spent almost £11,000 on a very high quality 13 lots – KGV 2s reversed watermark with 54 flaw for £1,000 and a couple of other GV, then in KGV1 the 2s November 1937 top left plate block for £400, a block of the October 1940 for £450, a block of the October 1940 reprint for £800 (there are 3 blocks known). They also acquired line perf plate blocks of the 2s (one of 3 known) for £3,300, the slightly more common 2s6d for £1,850.

Overall a good sale, some of the unsold lots had slight condition issues although it was surprising that the extremely rare KGV 5s with reversed and inverted watermark, even with the flaws, was unsold at £2,000 when a similar copy had fetched over double that. Foxley appeared to have bought the Dickgiesser 2s6d group for \$14k which was divided into printings for the sale. Some of these didn't sell due to high estimates for fiscally used examples or CTO cancels.

The last two weeks in April were a veritable feast if one collects across the West Indies – The 'Foxley' Barbados, the first part of David Pitts Bermuda, a substantial Cayman collection, all at Spink, our own auction at Grosvenor on the Saturday when the grand total sold of £22,000 exceeded last year's total by £3,000, and the following week the Donald Napier Jamaica. In contrast at Spink the sale room was almost deserted, apart from the auctioneer's staff and the agents. Even the dealers have gone on line. So that for most of the Barbados there was just myself and Richard Stupples in the room, for the Bermuda, Dennis Mitton and myself and for the Cayman just me, although to be accurate, as it was part of a general sale, there were collectors of other speciality areas present.

The Barbados sale would have been somewhat disappointing to Charles. It was 23% unsold and would have been much worse but for Spink's willingness to accept bids at 60% of low estimate. The early postal history marks sold well (PS 2 for £700 (hammer price) against a top estimate of £500, PS 3 for its top estimate of £700 and PS 5 for £1,300 against a top estimate of £1,000) and the two short paid covers to Canada franked with two grey blue pennies both sold to John Taylor for £500 and £650 respectively, against a top estimate of £200. The early proofs, colour trials and particularly the specimen stamps were very weak. The blocks of four of the Keyplate issue made £2,400, but the star of this section was the 4d grey with value tablet doubled which was eventually knocked down for £3,500 against an estimate of £250. Things began to improve for the proofs once we got into the 20th Century. The KG5 imperf plate proofs in horizontal pairs sold for £2,500; but well below the low estimate and well below what they were bought for. The die proofs of the Tercentenary issue sold for £1,700 against a top estimate of £1,000 and the imperforate proofs of the Victory issue for £1,500, its top estimate. Indeed, the Victory issue was fiercely fought over between an internet bidder and a phone bidder, being almost completely sold, although probably at lower prices than last time out. All the postal stationery was sold to the same telephone bidder.

In the maritime mail a poor strike of the straight line Ship Letter went for £750 against a top estimate of £800 and the oval framed version for £750 against a top estimate of £200.

The Bermuda sale consisted of the first part of David Pitts collection. The main bulk of his international gold medal collection, including the Perots and the Moncrieff cover is due up in September, so it is likely that the big spenders were marking time. The postal history was largely incoming rather than outgoing; but nevertheless, sold quite well, mainly to a strong book bidder. The more expensive items, like the tatty cover with an S5 Ship Letter in blue did not sell. Again, proofs were not very popular but varieties of the 1865 issue sold very well, with the same bidder dominating. The used 1d rose-red achieved £13,000 (hammer price) against catalogue of £27,000, and £12,500 when sold in Ludington, the 1s green vertical pair imperforate between also reached £15,000 versus £9,000 in Ludington and £14,000 in Saul, whilst the used surcharge inverted topped it at £20,000 (£25,000 in the Gilbert sale). The used 3d on 1d rose-red in fancy type with 'P' in plain sold for £9,500. As expected with the amount of material that has come onto the market recently the KG5 and KG6 key plates were patchy. The star was probably the used block of 4 12s6d revenue stamps used postally in 1937 which was knocked down for £7,500, versus £5,000 four years ago in Saul. The Boer War section was extremely strong in contrast to the sale at Gibbons last year; but censor marks from the 1st and 2nd wars were extremely soft. Finally, in the maritime section the cover to Ontario with the 'H.M.S. Terror, Bermuda, H. Thomas' cachet went for £900 against a top estimate of £700.

The Cayman sale was evidence that the bubble is well and truly burst. There were 123 lots of postal history of reasonable quality and reasonably estimated. Nevertheless 43% of the lots were unsold. I was the only member of the Society in the room — James Podger and Kevin Darcy were on the phone. There appeared to be very little interest from the other side of the Atlantic except for Charlie Adams from Grand Cayman on the net. Between the four of us we were responsible for most of what was sold. Only 13 lots reached or exceeded their top estimate. The only positive thing one can say about the sale was that 15 different buyers bought something.

Don Napier's Jamaica, consisting of 187 lots, largely of postal history, was sold by Grosvenor on 26 April. Five members attended the auction (Andrew Faulds, Steve Jarvis, Michael Hamilton, Simon Richards and Paul Wright) but events were dominated by a telephone bidder who spent £26,000 (before premium) on 80 of the 160 postal history lots. Book bidders gained 27 lots, the internet 20, agents 13 and room bidders 36. The total realised was £73,000 (plus premium) and the top price was for the Dummer Packet Letter which fetched £4,000 against a high estimate of £2,000. The very fine 'keyhole' Kingston datestamp fetched £780 against an estimate of £250–300 and the Crowned Circle Paid at Havana was another surprise fetching £720 against a £150–200 guide. The Kingston to New York cover with Commercial Rooms (CR4) and the scarce 'Too Late' (CR 5) achieved £1,750. Very little of the postal history was unsold. Fourteen bidders secured some of the stamp lots. There was very little crossover between those who bought postal history and the stamp buyers. One buyer spent £3k, three £2k and eleven £1k.

Elsewhere Grenada included the Foxley unsolds, reoffered at only slightly lower estimates. Perhaps half found new homes, though there was little competition. David Watson's collection of maritime mail was unsold but went for £8,000 after the auction. There was one very strong, anonymous bidder for the postal history lots in each of the Barbados, Bermuda and Jamaica sales. Was it the same person? Who knows; but without their bids total realisations would have been much, much lower, though the number of lots sold probably would have been about the same.

We still have Charles's Antigua and St. Lucia Postage Dues to come at Victoria on 19 and 20 May, and subsequent to that his Montserrat and Bermuda postal history, and probably more.

(David Cordon, Simon Richards and Steve Jarvis all contributed to this report)



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MINUTES OF THE 63RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BWISC HELD AT 1:15PM SATURDAY 22ND APRIL 2017

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting was opened by Peter Ford who welcomed the 32 BWISC members present. He thanked Grosvenor for their hospitality in allowing BWISC to hold our AGM on their premises. The Chairman noted that Charles Freeland, past President of the Circle, had died on 9 April after a long illness. A full obituary will appear in a later edition of the Bulletin.

Charles was a giant of BWI philately, possessing a keen intellect and prodigious knowledge. His joining the BWISC was announced in the March 1971 Bulletin, which already contained three brief articles written by him on his favourite colonies: Antigua, Bahamas and British Guiana. He has written very many other articles since, including articles for the London Philatelist, the Collectors Club Philatelist and the BCPSG journal. Although initially reluctant, he was persuaded to write books, too, and completed titles on *Tobago*, *Nevis*, *Antigua*, and *St. Vincent*.

The Chairman asked members to stand in silence for a minute to reflect on Charles' life and contribution.

He then invited each person to introduce themselves and their collecting interests.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Ron Cronin, Chris Harman, David Horry, Simon Kelly, Alister Kinnon, James Podger, and John Riggall.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting on 23 April 2016, as published in Bulletin No. 249, June 2016, pages 18 to 21, were accepted by the attendees.

4. Report by the General Secretary (George Dunbar)

(i) The Circle had taken a table at Worpex, Swinpex and Scotex, as planned. Nigel Chandler and Simon Goldblatt had represented the Circle at Essen. Peter Ford and others had taken a table and participated at New York 2016. There was a meeting at Autumn Stampex, with members giving informal displays.

(ii) Circle members had given displays (under the banner of the Circle) at local philatelic societies including Telford, Amersham, Nottingham and Barnet. We gain from this also through indirect publicity when these societies publicise their events.

(iii) The Editor of GSM had contacted the Secretary seeking an article on Barbados, and Charles Freeland had provided an article, published in the November 2016 issue. A further article for GSM is being prepared by Alister Kinnon, on St Lucia.

(iv) The cycle of events in alternate years seems to work well. However, the Secretary would welcome suggestions for additional events where it would be useful for us to be represented.

(v) The Secretary receives occasional requests for help with philatelic questions and tries to forward them to members with relevant expertise.

(vi) Arrangements for the Convention have been completed and the programme will be announced in the next Bulletin.

(vii) The Membership Secretary had kindly provided the following information.

Membership Stats as at end of 2016:

	Members	UK	EUR	RoW
End 2015	312 (63)	200	19	93
Joined 2016	30			
Rejoined	5			
Deceased	2			
Lapsed/Resigned	5			
End 2016	340 (83)	208 (43)	25 (5)	107 (35)

Figures in brackets are paperless

These figures show an encouraging increase. It is noticeable that a large part of the increase has occurred among overseas members, which is excellent. This must reflect the efforts of those who have attended overseas events on behalf of the Circle.

(viii) The next event would be our table at Midpex 8 July 2017, 10am–5pm, Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, Leamington Spa, CV31 1XN

The Chairman noted that a new events banner had been produced, designed by David Horry, and was on display at the entrance to the room.

5. Report by the Editor (Terry Harrison)

The past year has been another good year for content in the Bulletin and it has been a pleasure to receive articles from more new contributors. Long may this continue.

On another note the recent passing of Charles Freeland, my go-to man when contemplating publishing articles received for the Bulletin, and my hospitalisation just before last year's AGM makes it obvious that there is a need to strengthen the editorial team. To this end I would be pleased to hear from anyone who would be interested in helping with the preparation of the Bulletin.

Peter Ford and Steve Jarvis have, as always, helped maintain the Bulletin's high standard by proof reading each edition and liaising with the printers.

6. Report by the Treasurer (Ray Stanton)

There was a surplus of £390 in 2016. This was lower than 2015 for various reasons: the Auction had made an exceptionally high contribution in 2015; production costs for the Antigua book had been incurred in 2016, though there had been a grant from the BPA towards this; the Circle had bought back the remaining stock of the Marriott Trinidad book from BCPSG. The accumulated fund nevertheless rose to £13,650. The Treasurer thanked John Davis for auditing the accounts and for all the advice and help he had given.

There was discussion of issues related to potential taxation. It was confirmed that the Circle did not engage in commercial trading. A number of members with relevant experience indicated that, while it was worth keeping in mind as it could conceivably be relevant to aspects of our activity in the future, charitable status was not something the Circle should seek at this time.

7. Report by the Librarian (Ian Jakes)

There has been a loan of three books to one member during the year. The library is, however, still being used to provide information which cannot be found on the internet.

I have corresponded with seven members during the year about shipping lines and routes, airmail rates and routes, Barbados forged postmarks, a Windward Islands Governor, Belize antiquities and British Honduras plantations. Some of the queries are quite challenging and on one occasion I placed a request for information in BWISC Bulletin which resulted in very helpful information being received from two members, thank-you.

Please feel free to contact me on any British Caribbean philatelic, historical or geographic topic. I cannot guarantee to know the answer personally. Frequently the answer is somewhere in the library, but if it is not, I know a man who can provide the information required.

8. Report by the Publications Officer (Peter Ford)

In 2016, we only published one book, 'The Colonial Bank in the West Indies' by Mike Rego. This was a book in our Study Paper series and dealt with a subject on the edge of philately but interesting nevertheless. Only publishing one book however did not mean that I was slacking in any way. Work was ongoing on the projected Bahamas book by Peter Fernbank. We came to an agreement with the Royal Philatelic Society that this was to be a joint project with each society paying half the cost and reaping half the income. The book is, for all intents and purposes, complete. We are just waiting for a slot in the Royal's publishing programme. I have been advised that it will be out well in time for our Convention in October. Those wishing to obtain a copy then should let me know in good time so that we bring sufficient copies for sale. We have also been working on a book on St. Vincent; this will carry on from where the Pierce, Messenger and Lowe book left off. Co-authored by Charles Freeland, Roy Bond and Russell Boylan, this should be ready in the very near future. The book is complete now and will stand as a memorial to Charles, whose philatelic writings have kept us busy for several years.

Sales have been good as well. We have sold 195 books this last year, the top seller was the Antigua with 36 copies sold and second was the St. Lucia Classic Collections with 17 sold. The total sales came

to £4,724 which after David Druett's commission realised just under £4,000. We took as many books to the 2016 NEW YORK show in June as we could carry. I have to thank all of our members who helped carry them over. Had we been able to carry more, I'm sure we would have sold them all. To show the diversity of our publications, I took my own personal copies of the Study Papers and Classic Collections; I ended up selling them all at the show!

I was finding lately that producing a large book, such as the Bahamas with over 350 pages meant that I was being overloaded, not only typesetting the book but also processing the images that had been sent. To this end, I recruited Mike Rego to doing the donkey work on the images and in order that he can do this, we are renting a suitable program for him to use. He has been working very hard and no sooner do I send him images that they come back in a perfect form.

Future projects include one by David Horry on the Temporary Registered Ovals of Jamaica and Trinidad. Several others are in embryo at this time.

Chris Southgate enquired as to the scope of the St. Vincent book being prepared, and it was explained that it would cover the period from 1898 to 1965, and a wide range of topics including postal stationery, censor marks, and inland mails.

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

I am pleased to report on another successful year for the Study Circle. Our events have been well attended. We had our AGM and auction at Spink auction rooms and it was pleasing to find that, despite hard economic times, realisations, although down on previous years, were still very healthy. We had a lively attendance at Stampex where, in a room booked by our ever efficient Secretary, the informal displays generated a lot of discussion on many diverse subjects. One of our members who had attended a meeting of another specialist society at Stampex said, compared to ours, theirs was a bit like a funeral! It is heartening for those of us who organise such events to see that we are a vigorous society with members always willing to participate.

We have seen our quarterly Bulletin coming out punctually with interesting articles; our Editor is to be congratulated on this. The number of advertisers helps us keep the cost of its production down to manageable levels. Our finances are, as always, in a healthy condition enabling us to be able to pursue our ambitious aims with confidence. We are able to hold our Convention every two years with a sizeable financial input from our coffers. This is all the result of our Treasurer's guardianship of our finances. Also our financial position has enabled us to continue an active publications programme.

Two of our members were awarded Fellowship of the Royal Philatelic Society in November last. They are Michael Medlicott and Simon Richards; congratulations to them both! We were delighted to be able early in the season to have a display of Barbados and British Guiana from the Royal Philatelic Collection at the Royal. A feast in anyone's eyes! Later, in October, Michael Medlicott displayed his Classic Revenues of the British West Indies at the Royal, an event much praised.

This is the fifteenth time I have stood up here to give the Chairman's Report and I have decided that enough is enough. In consultation with the President and the Committee, we have decided that, subject to approval of this Meeting, Graham Booth will take over the reins with Steve Jarvis acceding to the Chairmanship in 2019. I feel that this is a sensible succession plan which I hope all members present will agree.

Before I finish, I want to thank my Committee members, past and present. No society can be run by one person and any President/Chairman needs the support of his Committee members and I have been lucky in my tenure that I have received such support. Thank you, gentlemen. On this subject, very briefly, the Committee decided that we needed more younger (less old?) members to serve on the Committee and we recommend John Jordan and Geoff Richards who have volunteered, for you to vote on in a few minutes.

10. Election of the Chairman of the Committee

The election of Graham Booth was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Simon Goldblatt. Graham Booth was elected as Chairman of the Committee.

11. Election of Officers and elections of John Jordan and Geoff Richards to the Committee

The existing Officers and Committee Members were re-elected.

The elections of John Jordan and Geoff Richards were proposed by the Chairman, and seconded by Nigel Chandler and Graham Booth. They were duly elected.

12. Election of the Auditor

John Davis was re-elected as auditor.

13. Other Business

Michael Medlicott proposed a vote of thanks to the Auction Team for another excellent catalogue and auction.

Nigel Chandler announced that he and others would be taking a table on behalf of the Circle at Essen Internationale Briefmarken-Messe, 3–5 May 2018. He encouraged members to come along as helpers on the Circle's stand. They could contact him for information and even a lift, Essen being just four hours from Dunkirk.

Graham Booth stood to thank Peter Ford for his work and leadership over 15 years as Chairman: He had put his personal stamp on the Circle, which is one of the strongest in the country. Even as many other societies, particularly local stamp clubs, are going the other way, the Circle has been strong. It was excellent that he would continue to run the very successful publications activity. Peter had served beyond the call of duty. The members present applauded loudly.

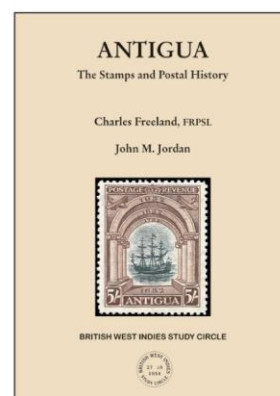
All business having been covered, the Chairman closed the meeting.

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BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE
INCOME STATEMENT : YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2016

	£'s	2016	2015
INCOME :			
Subscriptions		4,510	4,316
Publications - Sales less commissions		3,782	4,479
Articles for publication		-	723
Auction donation (net of costs)		1,704	2,674
Other donations		-	26
Interest received		7	7
TOTAL INCOME		10,003	12,225
EXPENDITURE :			
Bulletin - Costs less advertising receipts	416		(234)
Distribution and editorial expenses	2,666	3,082	2,474
Publications :			
Printing costs	6,500		
Purchase Trinidad books	2,099		
Less : BPA Grant	(3,000)	5,599	5,217
Honiley convention costs net of recovery	-		400
Other room hire & meeting costs	248		380
ABPS affiliation fee	250		213
Officers administration - Stationery, postage, telephone etc	71		487
Bank charges	102		93
Exhibition entry fees	150		-
Website	111		113
		9,613	9,143
SURPLUS INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	£'s	390	£'s 3,082

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2016

ACCUMULATED FUND :			
Balance at 1st January 2015		13,052	9,852
Add : Surplus for the year		390	3,082
Exchange conversion profit		208	118
	£'s	13,650	£'s 13,052
REPRESENTED BY :			
Cash at banks		12,668	11,743
Debtors - amounts due to us		5,594	3,993
Prepaid expenses		700	-
		18,962	15,736
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(2,851)		(2,664)
Other creditors - Amounts due by us	(2,461)	(5,312)	(20)
	£'s	13,650	£'s 13,052

AUDITORS REPORT

I hereby certify that the income statement for the year ended 31st December 2016 is in accordance with the books, vouchers and explanations given to me; and that the Balance Sheet at the 31st December 2016 shows the financial state of the British West Indies Study Circle as at that date.

J G M Davis FCA

John Davis 10th April 2017

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LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**IAN JAKES**

Library lists can be supplied upon application to the Librarian accompanied by an S.A.E. (9" x 6½") – 2nd Class postage for 150 gm rate required. If any member has a book which is not already in the library and which is surplus to requirements, please consider donating it to the library.

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Please view the regular updates to the Auction Alert under 'Auction/Dealers'.

EDITOR'S REPORT**TERRY HARRISON**

The proposed publication schedule is as follows:

Edition	September 2017	December 2017	March 2018	June 2018
Distribute	Mon 28 Aug	Mon 27 Nov	Mon 12 Mar	Mon 11 Jun
From Printer	Tue 22 Aug	Tue 21 Nov	Tue 6 Mar	Tue 5 Jun
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Final Bulletin Revisions	Sun 30 Jul	Sun 29 Oct	Sun 11 Feb	Sun 20 May
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Advert final copy	Sat 15 Jul	Sat 7 Oct	Sat 13 Jan	Sat 28 Apr
Advert book space	Sat 8 Jul	Sat 30 Sep	Sat 6 Jan	Sat 21 Apr

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One quarter page b/w	£19	The back page (only colour)	£75

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