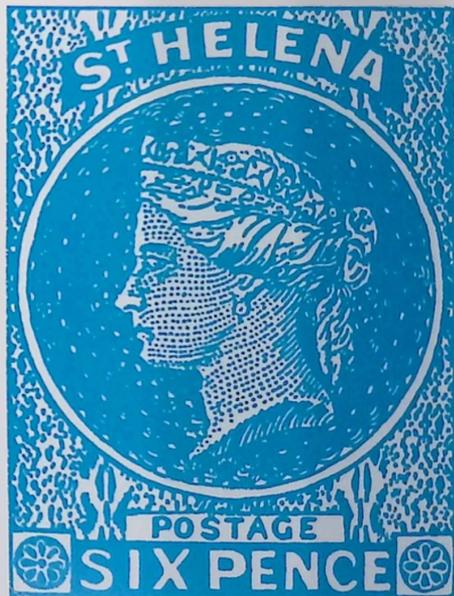


The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 35



The West Africa Study Circle
ST. HELENA AND ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT
Number 35 January 2001

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The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena and Ascension Supplement
Number 35 January 2001

EDITORIAL

Endemic Plants from Diana's Peak National Park.
Sheetlet issued 1997.

See article by Trevor Hearl on page 30.



I am writing this editorial on the Eve of the New Year, and the weather outside is – 5°C with snow lying four inches deep. It is a harsher winter than usual, but the weather this year has been so untypical that nothing is surprising. I hope that none of you suffered too badly in the widespread flooding we experienced here in the U.K. – in North Yorkshire (where I live despite the postal address!) many areas have been under water for several months, and we were lucky that the flood water stopped rising at the Burns residence just one inch below the threshold. I had taken the precaution of putting the stamp collection in the loft just in case!

I would like to thank you for the kind comments regarding the last Supplement, and particularly for the continuing support given in the supply of articles. Unfortunately I have had to delay publication of two articles which I promised; namely those on the 1863 imperforate one penny issue and the 1953 definitives, both of which should appear in the July edition. I have been in discussion with our printers regarding the illustrations, and hopefully you will notice an improvement.

Please note my new e-mail address at the foot of the page. However, contributions and comments are welcome by any means! All that remains is to wish you all a very healthy and successful 2001.

Barry Burns
20 Tanton Road
Stokesley
Middlesbrough
TS9 5HP

☎ 01642 710636
e-mail bmburns@20tanton.freemove.co.uk.

YOUR LETTERS



Your comments on any letters and articles, or on the style and content of the Supplement are most welcome, as also is correspondence on any philatelic subject which may be of interest to our readership. Please respond via the editor, by letter or e-mail. My addresses are on Page 2.

St. Helena Focus Group

Dear Barry,

As a member of this group, I enclose the following notes of a meeting with Post Office International Services which was held on 12 September 2000. The following members of the Service Delivery Department of the Post Office were present:

Mr. Andy Pickering	Head of Operations.
Mr. Ray Lines	Regional Manager, Middle East and Africa.
Mrs. Anna King	Pipeline Manager, Middle East and Africa.

It is desirable to post surface mail about two weeks before the sailing of the *RMS* or the *ESAL* ship, because this is treated as second class mail by the Post Office. It therefore has to be sorted at the local sorting office after collection, passed to Mount Pleasant, and then to the International Distribution Centre in Greenford. There it awaits a carrier sent by the shipping agents who takes it to Cardiff for loading on to the *RMS*, or to Southampton for the *ESAL* ship. This all takes time! I was told that the system is being reviewed to ensure that sailing's are not missed.

As far as Air Mail is concerned this goes via the RAF at Brize Norton to Ascension, where it waits for the *RMS* (or any other ship) to take it to St. Helena. The RAF service is once or twice weekly and it is very unusual for mail not to be taken though occasionally, if the RAF has a lot of its own freight, it might happen. We referred to the possibility of sending air mail via South Africa, but this is not considered viable as it would initially have to go to Johannesburg and then to Cape Town to catch the ship.

For Christmas 2000, the latest safe dates of posting to fit in with the *RMS/ESAL* timetables to arrive on St. Helena before Christmas are 27 October for surface mail and 24 November for air mail. Parcels might well be sent a few days earlier.

We agreed to meet again in the Spring of 2001.

Alan Scrine
Woodside Park
London

Specimen Stamps – 1922 Badge Issue

Dear Barry,

I was most interested to read Roger Morgan's article on Specimen Stamps of the Badge Issue. In it he mentions that he has four values, three being stamp 8 and he suggests that the fourth might be an early version of this stamp before the variety became established.

In my experience of having handled many hundreds of Specimen sets, they are rarely made up of stamps all from the same sheet positions. This has been brought home to me on more than one occasion when one or two values from a set might have the 'Broken M' or the 'Spur on M' variety while the rest of the set are normals. The fact that Roger has three specimen stamps with the same flaw I would suggest is an exception. If sheets were separated together, it is possible that one sheet might be reversed or inverted. When separated, some stamps might be position 8 (the eighth stamp in row 1) while others might be stamp 53 (the eighth stamp back from row 5) or similarly stamp 5 or 56 depending upon the sheet orientation, but that's assuming the sheets were separated together.

On a less academic level, if we worked at UPU Headquarters and had to split up 7 sheets of 5 values into strips of 3 to send to 140 countries, I wonder how many different ways there are of doing this. One solution might be to take one sheet, separate it between rows 3 and 4 and split the upper part into 12 vertical strips of 3. We might then put the strips in a pile and tackle the lower part, perhaps splitting it into horizontal strips, then pairs or singles. Once all the sheets have been divided up, you would then take one strip (or unit of 3) from each of the 5 piles to make up each individual consignment. I feel the chances of all five strips matching up would be fairly slim.

Roger also mentions that higher value specimens attract higher prices despite them being equally scarce. The method I adopt to establish the value of an individual specimen is as follows. If a set of 10 specimens is catalogued at say £200, then the average value is £20 each. I reckon the low values are worth half this figure and the high values about double. I now have a scale whereby any individual value may be interpolated between £10 and £40.

Roger B. West
Avion Thematics
Eastwood, Notts.

Editor's note :

It is usually assumed that Specimen stamps are from the first sheets to be printed. However Dickon Pollard, writing in Stamp Magazine, January 2000, page 51 raises the interesting point that although from the first printing, they may actually be from the last sheets of such, as there is a strong possibility they will have been taken from the top of the 'pile' of printed sheets. If this is the case, any plate varieties on the Specimen stamps may not necessarily have been present on the sheets printed earlier.

FROM THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

News and Views

This section has been compiled from information received from Bernard Mabbett, Jeremy Martin, Everett Parker, James Podger and David Studd.

Obituary

With great regret I record the sudden death of Dr. Russell V. Skavaril of Columbus, Ohio, on the night of 28/29th November 2000. Although I did not know Russell personally, his name has been associated with the St. Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha Philatelic Society since its formation in 1977. Initially the editor of the society journal until 1988, he also issued several important research works on St. Helena culminating in the publication of the 20th Anniversary Anthology in 1997, of which he was the editor. He formed a very respected postal history exhibit of St. Helena, and was an APS accredited judge for both philatelic exhibits and philatelic literature. He had sent me an e-mail message just the day before his passing, asking for contact details of some long standing members of the WASC. Sadly I was unable to reply to him. We offer our sincere condolences to his family and friends in their sad loss.

New Ascension Cachets

James Podger has obtained strikes of some new cachets in use at the Ascension Post Office. They were obtained on September 26 2000, as shown on the c.d.s. (not new) below, but it is believed they have been in use for several months before this date. The actual length is given below each strike. See also page 17 for an example of this new Paquebot cancel used on August 8 2000.

PAQUEBOT

26 mm.



26.5 mm.

GONE AWAY

24 mm.

RETURN TO SENDER

40 mm.

**MISSENT TO
ASCENSION ISLAND**

40 mm.

St. Helena c.d.s. with inverted C slug

David Studd has sent me the illustrated scan of an eightpence stamp of George VI he purchased recently, with the C slug inverted in the date stamp. Unfortunately the year is not shown. Roger West as far back as Supplement 1, page 5, mentioned several such examples but did not list the dates of use apart from an illustrated example of 22 November 1935 which also had the month / day sequence reversed ie 22 NO instead of NO 22. If any reader can supply further such usage I will try to put together a list of known dates.



Edward Hibbert Archive

Most readers will be aware that our former member the late Edward Hibbert was the author of the definitive work on the stamps and postal history of St. Helena. His collection was sold through a Christie's Robson Lowe auction on 8th February 1984. However, he also accumulated a large archive of material containing information and cuttings relating to many aspects of the philately of the island. Among the subjects covered in some detail are the plating of early Queen Victoria stamps, the U.P.U. postcards, and the 1922 badge issue including flaws, specimens and plate proofs. Bob Deakin has been the careful custodian since Edward's death in 1992, but it has now passed to Bernard Mabbett. If any members would like to study any of the archive material, they can get in touch with Bernard direct and he will advise accordingly. Bernard's address and telephone number are in the latest List of Members, and also in Supplements 10-33.

St. Helena, Ascension & Tristan da Cunha Philatelic Society Inc.

I have been a member of this American based Society for a number of years, and since taking over the editorship of the Supplement have started an exchange of journals between our two societies. As a result, I should receive future copies of their quarterly production the *South Atlantic Chronicle* which will be retained in the West Africa Study Circle library, and I hope that some of our members will make use of this facility. For details of joining the society, please write initially to their President, Everett L. Parker, HC 76, Box 32, Greenville, ME 04441-9727, USA, or e-mail to eparker@moosehead.net.

Ascension Design and Artwork 1981 – 1999

I mentioned in the last Supplement that James Podger had secured much of this from the Ascension Post Office and that it would be collated in a number of binders for the Study Circle library. This has now been done, but James has been busy again and obtained a further batch of material. When all of this has been put together in an orderly fashion, I will inform members of how to access it! I understand that James will be leaving the island, so would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his efforts on our behalf, as he is not an Ascension collector himself.

ST. HELENA PUBLIC DEPARTMENT HANDSTAMPS

Robert Richardson

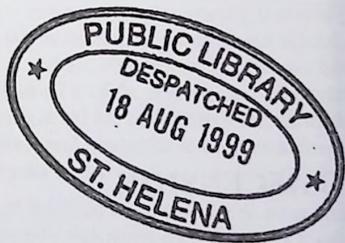
I illustrate on the next two pages some Public Department handstamps which Robert has sent me, and which I believe have not previously been reported in the Supplement. Some of these are not very clear as they have been scanned from manila envelopes; also they are not reproduced to scale, but I have given the actual dimensions of the cachets below each illustration.



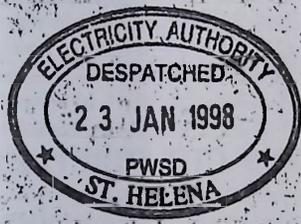
30 mm. Diam.

PUBLIC
LIBRARY
Jamestown St. Helena

39 x 15 mm.



51 x 30 mm.



47 x 32 mm.



47 x 28 mm.



48 x 29 mm.



52 x 29 mm.



49 x 26 mm.

SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE
DESPATCHED.
ST. HELENA

57 x 13 mm.



50 x 32 mm.



MIS-CUT SHEETLET SENT TO ASCENSION ?

James Podger

The letter reproduced on page 9, with permission, from the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau to the Ascension Island Post Office on 27 June 2000 is, I trust, self explanatory. The signatures on the letter are:

Angela Francis
Phyliss Coleman
George Fairhurst

Postmistress
Chief Executive Officer
Administrator

It is apparent that the mis-cut Cayman Islands sheetlets were not found at Ascension. Something to look out for!

Crown Agents Stamp Bureau

Our Ref:- PH1C/ASC 124

Angela R. Francis
Ascension Post Office
Philatelic Bureau
Building Nos 22B
Ascension Island
South Atlantic Ocean



Crown Agents
27 June, 2000
SENT BY FAX

Refer to

29/6

Francis checked PO stocks OK. 28/6
Colman - No errors found
Upetchals 28/6
27/6

Dear Angela

PRINCE WILLIAM'S 18TH BIRTHDAY

I am writing to advise you that it has come to our attention that a small number of errors exist in the sheetlet supplies.

We are aware that the error was caused by the printers (Questa) turning a single printed sheet of the sheetlets around by mistake at the final stages before guillotining them down to single sheets. This occurred after the perforating and examining processes.

The result is that a total quantity of 4 souvenir sheets of Ascension Island, BVI and Cayman Islands exist that are incorrectly trimmed (but perfect in other respects). We have sorted through both our main stocks, promotional stocks, specimens and printed waste, some 90,000 sheetlets in total, (twice) and are able to confirm that we have located 10 of the 12 known errors. You will be pleased to note that all 4 of the Ascension Island errors have been located. Given that we understand how this error occurred we believe that a Cayman Islands error appears in the Ascension supplies. As our supplies (and waste) have been examined we now believe that the missing error could quite possibly be in your stock.

Should the final Cayman Islands error be in your supplies it will be easy to spot as the sheetlet will be completely mis-trimmed and clearly stand out from the other sheetlets as their stamp images are quite different from your own.

In the circumstances may I suggest that you make arrangements for your supplies to be checked and that you inform me of your findings.

I am sorry to have to inform you of this situation but we are pleased to have discovered the error at such an early stage (due to the vigilance of our strong room staff), to have identified the cause and the quantity involved so promptly, to have located 10 of the 12 examples and of course to have located all 4 of the Ascension Island errors.

With best regards

Tim Underwood
For the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau

THE 'NEW' R.M.S. CIRCULAR DATE STAMP, TYPE 2

Barry Burns



Robert Richardson has sent me a copy of the cover reproduced below, and requested information on the RMS date stamp. Mail posted on board the original *RMS St. Helena* had the adhesives cancelled with a circular date stamp with the words RMS ST. HELENA in an arc around the top rim. When this vessel (by now renamed *RMS St. Helena Island*) was replaced by the new, larger ship in 1990, this Type 2 RMS c.d.s. was introduced. To differentiate it from the original Type 1, the wording was split so that RMS appears in the top arc with ST. HELENA around the bottom arc, as shown above. This impression was kindly supplied by Mr. A. Burgin from the date stamps kept at the Jamestown Post Office, and was originally shown in Supplement 20 (p.16).



There does not appear to be much recorded use of the new RMS date stamp. Bernard Mabbett reproduced two covers with this c.d.s., dated November 22 1991 and March 25 1993 in Supplements 19 (p.13) and 20 (p.15) respectively. Also on page 13 of Supplement 19 is part of a letter from Mr. F. P. Constantine, the Assistant Postmaster (Philatelic) on St. Helena, which stated :

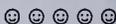
The RMS is a Sub-Office therefore we do have a circular date stamp marked RMS St. Helena as for all other eight sub-offices. When mail is received from a sub-office the procedure is to postmark it with the appropriate c.d.s. In answer to your postcard question, it was posted on the RMS bearing a St. Helena stamp which was franked with the RMS c.d.s. If however it would have had an Ascension Island Stamp, the Paquebot mark would have gone across the stamp and the RMS c.d.s. alongside the stamp.

All well and good. However, a recent price list of Geoffrey Barber, a dealer of ship covers from Sale in Cheshire, states that because the new vessel is registered in London (which indeed it is), it is no longer permissible for the T.P.O. to operate aboard as a branch of the St. Helena Post Office. Perhaps this explains the apparent scarcity of this cancel? It does appear that it was applied at the Jamestown Post Office as mentioned by Mr. Constantine, as the RMS was at the island on the three dates recorded here for the Type 2 cancel. The last recorded date known to the editor is March 27 1993, apart from the specimen strike on page 10.

Turning now to Robert's cover, the eagle eyed will have noticed the date as December 30 1991. This was more than twelve months after the maiden voyage of the new ship, so the cover and cachet are not applicable on this occasion. I have been trying to correlate details of this voyage, and suggest the following possible timetable:-

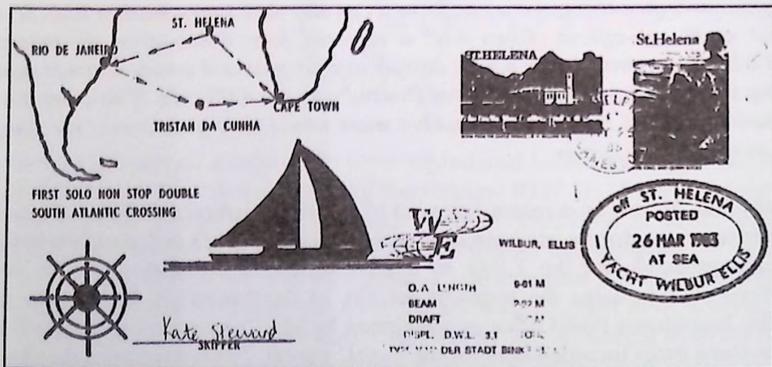
The new vessel made its maiden voyage from Cardiff (not Avonmouth, despite the map on the souvenir sheet) on 16 November 1990, visiting Ascension on 28 November, St. Helena on 30 November and arriving Cape Town 8 December 1990; although mail landed there received the Cape Town paquebot cancellation of 10 December. The return voyage met with serious trouble when a connecting rod in the starboard engine fractured on January 5 1991 after leaving Tenerife. For further details, readers are referred to Supplement 16, pp. 25-26, and also to *St. Helena Lifeline, Ronnie Erikson; Mallett and Bell 1994.*

Robert and I would be interested to hear of further use of this date stamp, particularly of earlier and later dates than those quoted. Confirmation of the dates of the maiden voyage of the new RMS are also sought, as conflicting information has been published both at the time and subsequently. Until such confirmation, the above dates should not be taken as definitive.



A MARITIME MYSTERY

Robert Richardson



The cover illustrated (*reduced to approx. 60% - Ed.*) was received some time ago from a source in South Africa. In an attempt to verify the claim made which is that the skipper, Kate Steward, did make the first non-stop double crossing of the South Atlantic, I paid a visit to the local library and requested a copy of the Guinness Book of Records. A check of every category which might contain proof of such a trip yielded no information.

Following this, and needing information on other maritime matters pertaining to St. Helena, I enclosed a copy of it in my letter to the current archivist, Mrs. Maureen Stevens (now with the title *Curator of Records*), asking if any information had been printed in the local paper regarding the voyage. Her reply was prompt, given the time it takes to send and receive mail from the island, and was as follows:

The voyage, Kate Steward... there is no entry of this arrival in our Newspaper's shipping column. I called the Harbour Master asking him to check his shipping books as these books in the archives end at 1976. He said there was no entry for the yacht Wilbur Ellis among the ships and yachts listed. I can only assume it did not anchor in our harbour.

Since the voyage was termed 'non-stop' this would make sense but why at this point – the end of the first leg – no checkpoint had been previously arranged to prove it actually occurred? At the same time as my letter to St. Helena I wrote to the source of the cover requesting some factual information but it remains unanswered.

The map also shows that the yacht rounded Tristan da Cunha where, given the interest and importance the inhabitants give to all and any shipping in their waters, something should have been reported, but a check of the Anthology [1] index shows no such listing.

The date on the cover's cachet is March 26 1983 but it was not serviced in Jamestown until May 26 1983. If covers exist with Tristan franking the date of the c.d.s. would be much later; most likely the only other covers which might exist are departure and arrivals at Cape Town.

It seems unbelievable that anyone would embark on a voyage like this without ensuring some means of verifying that it actually happened; without it the Guinness book publishers would reject it out of hand.

Note

- 1 Skavaril Russell V., *St. Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha Philatelic Society's 20th Anniversary Anthology*. St. Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha Philatelic Society, Inc. Columbus, Ohio 1997.



THE PAQUEBOT CANCELS OF ASCENSION ISLAND

Robert Richardson

PLAGUETTE	PAQUEBOT	PAQUEBOT
2643	2644	2645
Paquabot	PAQUEBOT	
2646	2647	

Figure 1

2643	27 mm.	1967-73	Mis-spelt.
2644	31 mm.	1974-82	
2645	26.5 mm.	1976	Large 'O'.
2646	24 mm.	1987	Mis-spelt; Short life.
2647	23 mm.	1989-91	

The latest edition of Hosking's *Paquebot Cancellations of the World* [1] lists the five marks shown in Figure 1, together with their dimensions and dates of use. A cover commemorating the inauguration of regular passenger service between the United Kingdom and South Africa is shown in Figure 2.

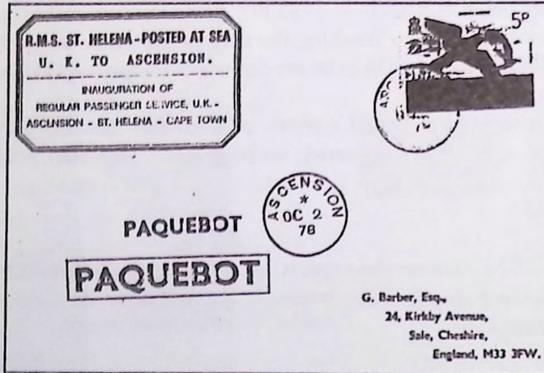


Figure 2

The paquebot cancel H.2644 appears to be solid lettering whereas that on the cover in Figure 2 (enlarged below the actual cancel) has its letters framed by a thin line giving it a hollow or three dimensional appearance. Possibly some difficulty in the reproduction process during the printing of the book could explain the difference; the overall appearance of the letters is otherwise the same on both. In the table the dimension of this cancel is given as 31 mm., when in fact the dimension of both is slightly under 34 mm. Also, the dates listed for H.2644 are 1974 to 1982, but this can be extended to at least 1986 as shown by the example on the cover in Figure 3 which also includes an enlarged insert of the cancel.

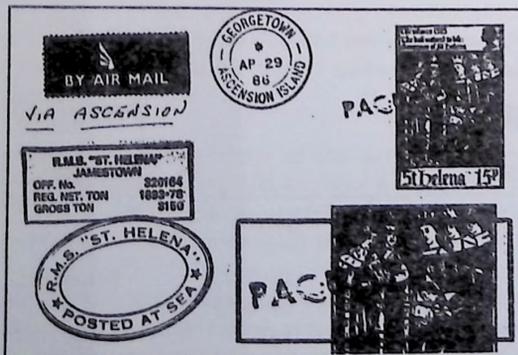


Figure 3

The two cancels shown as H.2645 and H.2646 are probably not 'Official' issues of the Ascension Post Office. The date for H.2645 is given as 1976 which would make it in use with H.2644 concurrently, an unlikely supposition. The cancel shown as H. 2646 is exactly the same as the one listed under St. Helena H.2681. The Postal Administrations of the two islands are separate entities; for them to be using the same mis-spelt paquebot cancel in the same time period is highly improbable. While both islands are somewhat isolated, they are of course educated in the English language so it is reasonable to assume that these two mis-spelled cancels were privately produced by the individual who sent the covers for servicing. If any reader has a cover with the cancel on it a photocopy would be appreciated [2].

That some collectors have used their own creations can be seen in Figure 4, which seems to have a double paquebot cancel. The genuine one is that above the Ascension c.d.s., but the word should have read 'PAQUETTE', the French term for a number of items which can be mailed as Printed Matter as indicated in the upper left corner. I have several Union Castle covers with this private paquebot cancel (as stamped above the address) as well as the legitimate one used by the postal clerk. An interesting side note to this cover is the cachet of the *SOUTHAMPTON CASTLE* which carried the last contract mail between the U.K. and South Africa via the two islands in both directions during September and October 1977.

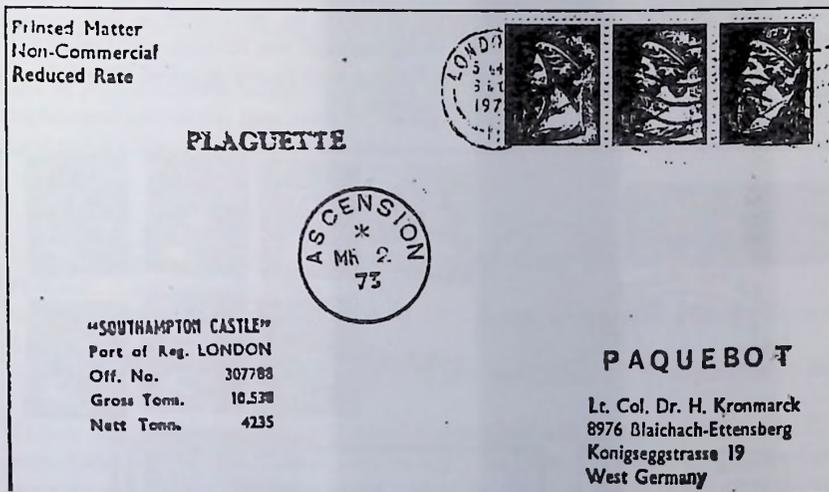


Figure 4

Paquebot cancel H.2647 is dated by Hosking as being introduced in 1989. I do have several covers from this year including the one dated May 31 1989 shown in Figure 5, but it is possible that it came into use some time before that as cancel H.2644 on the cover in Figure 3 was showing evidence of wear as early as 1986.

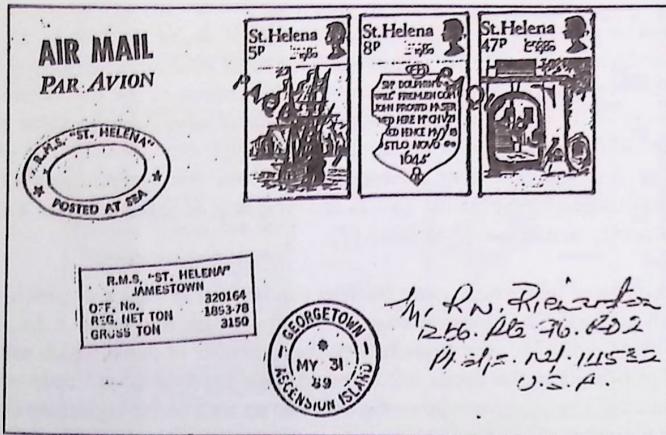


Figure 5

Another example of H.2647 is shown in Figure 6. While the letters in Figure 5 are clear and sharp, by August 29 1999 (the date of the cover in Figure 6), the cancel is showing signs of breaking down as shown in the enlarged insert. A replacement was necessary and this new mark, not yet recorded by Hosking, is shown in Figure 7 along with an enlargement. The letters of the new cancel are in block capitals, and it measures 25 mm. [3].

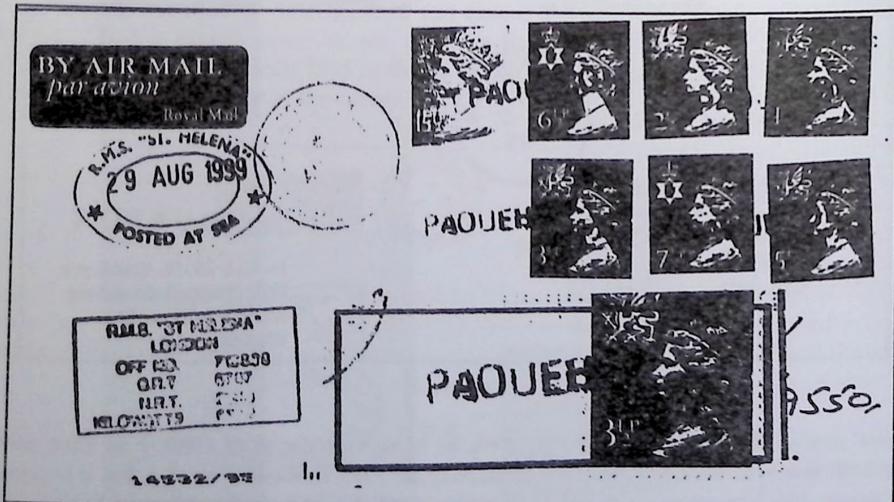


Figure 6

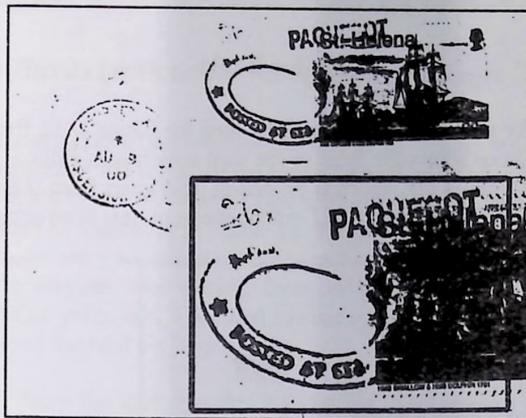


Figure 7

This is the first time I have seen the ship's oval used to cancel the postage stamp; additionally on this and a number of other covers the registration rectangle of the vessel has been omitted, leading one to think a subordinate and not the Purser was delegated to service them [4].

An article in a recent South Atlantic Chronicle intimates that the life of the RMS as St. Helena's sole cargo-passenger carrier may soon be ending. Collectors interested in obtaining covers from her should put the idea on the front burner.

Notes

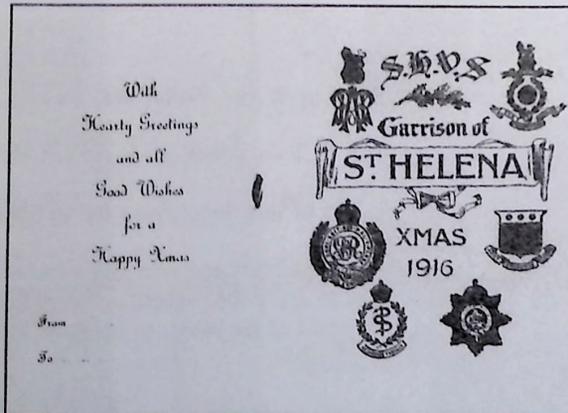
- 1 Hosking Roger, *Paquebot Cancellations of the World. 3rd. Edition.* Derby: Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd., 2000.
- 2 Bernard Mabbett has a cover with H.2646 struck at Ascension. It was illustrated in Supplement 13, page 25.
- 3 See 'From the South Atlantic', page 5 of this Supplement for an impression of this new cancel.
- 4 This is indeed the case. When Bernard Mabbett and your editor travelled on the RMS we were handed both of the handstamps to apply the cachets to our mail. It is therefore quite possible they could be applied to any part of the cover, or in fact to any other philatelic or other item!

The illustrations in this article are not to scale, apart from Figure 1 which is as accurate as possible to the published work.

GARRISON OF ST. HELENA - XMAS 1916

Philip Beale

I thank Philip Beale for sending me this greetings card for Xmas 1916 from the Garrison of St. Helena. The top illustration shows the front of the card which is in full colour and the lower one shows the inside sheet, opened out, which is printed in gold apart from the central loop of ribbon which is in colour. Measuring 178 mm x 127 mm opened out, this is an attractive item.



PLATING GUIDE TO THE PERKINS BACON PLATE

Barry Burns (with acknowledgements to Roger B. West)

For the last couple of years I have been carrying around in my 'stamp' briefcase some grubby bits of paper showing diagrams of the layout of the Perkins Bacon plate of 1856. They were based on Appendix 10 of Hibbert's book, on which I had scribbled some of the more important details from other publications – particularly those by Roger West which appeared in the early Supplements. These notes were sometimes referred to when visiting auctions and stamp fairs, but because they were incomplete and untidy, their value was questionable. When I became computerised a couple of years ago, I decided to start again and put together a plating guide – which is reproduced over the next six pages.

I should make it clear from the start that this information is not original – all I have done is to incorporate it within the sheet layout as an aid to plating strips and blocks. It should be noted that some of the varieties listed, although believed to be constant, are very minor or weak and the use of a good 10x magnifier and strong light are advised.

The following example explains the mode of presentation. I have tried to avoid the use of abbreviations as much as possible, but the use of L./l. and R./r. for left and right respectively was necessary to avoid too much clutter.

20/5 233 5 LR <i>Broken frame line in upper r. corner. Vertical line in l. square.</i>	20/5 233 5 LR <i>Broken frame, etc. Vertical line, etc.</i>	Row 20 / Column 5 Stamp No. 233. Defect Stage 5, Horizontal Guide Lines L and R. Major Variety. Minor Variety.
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Comments, corrections, additions and suggestions for improvement are welcome! If WASC members find the guide useful, it may be photocopied for their personal use.

The most complete and detailed description of the transfer roller flaws, re-entries and constant varieties have been researched and presented by Roger West in the following Supplements, to which everyone with an interest in the subject is well advised to study:-

Supplement No. 3	Pages 1-5	The Transfer Roller Flaws.
Supplement No. 3	Pages 11-14	Plating using the CA Watermark.
Supplement No. 5	Page 2	The Additional Transfer Roller Flaw.
Supplement No. 5	Pages 3-6	Varieties and Markings on the Perkins Bacon Plate – I.
Supplement No. 6	Pages 3-6	Varieties and Markings on the Perkins Bacon Plate – II.
Supplement No. 8	Pages 3-10	The Fingerprint Method of Plating.
Supplement No. 9	Page 22	Varieties and Markings on the Perkins Bacon Plate – Update.

THE PERKINS BACON PLATE - TOP LEFT SECTION

Column Row	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1/1 1 7 L Line in l. square. Guide dot above upper l. hand corner.	1/2 2 7 L Base concave.	1/3 3 5 LR Base concave.	1/4 4 5 L Curved line in l. square.	1/5 5 5 LR Vertical guide line in l. margin. Extended r. frame line at bottom. Base concave.	1/6 6 5 Base concave.
2	2/1 13 7 Guide dot at 9 o'clock.	2/2 14 7 Diagonal line at top r. extending into stamp 15.	2/3 15 5 Diagonal line at top l. from stamp 14.	2/4 16 5 Vertical guide line at 3 o'clock. Line in l. square. Vertical line in pattern at l.	2/5 17 5 L Vertical line outside r. hand margin.	2/6 18 5
3	3/1 25 7 Vertical line in l. hand margin. Small line in l. square.	3/2 26 7 L	3/3 27 5 L	3/4 28 5 R Spot on nose.	3/5 29 5 R	3/6 30 5 L Small vertical line on queen's throat. L. square broken.
4	4/1 37 7 LR	4/2 38 7 L	4/3 39 5	4/4 40 5 LR L. square open. Weak upper frame line.	4/5 41 5 Vertical guide line in l. margin.	4/6 42 5 L L. square broken.
5	5/1 49 7 L	5/2 50 7 LR	5/3 51 5 L	5/4 52 5 LR L. square broken.	5/5 53 5 L	5/6 54 5 R
6	6/1 61 7 R	6/2 62 7 2 vertical lines in circle at 4 o'clock. Vertical line in l. margin.	6/3 63 6 L	6/4 64 5 L	6/5 65 5 L Vertical guide line in circle at 3 o'clock. Blur in bottom l. of l. square.	6/6 66 5 L Stamp is approx. 1mm lower than 65.
7	7/1 73 7 R Weak upper frame line.	7/2 74 7 R R. frame line weakened at centre.	7/3 75 6 LR	7/4 76 5 R Weak upper frame line.	7/5 77 5 LR Stamp is approx. 1mm lower than 76.	7/6 78 5 L Thin curved line from diadem to cheek.

THE PERKINS BACON PLATE - TOP RIGHT SECTION

Column Row	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	1/7 7 5 L. square broken. Frame line doubled at l.	1/8 8 1	1/9 9 1 L Base concave.	1/10 10 1 LR	1/11 11 1 LR	1/12 12 1 L
2	2/7 19 5 Line in circle at 2 o'clock.	2/8 20 1 Vertical line in l. square.	2/9 21 1 LR	2/10 22 1 L	2/11 23 1	2/12 24 1
3	3/7 31 5 LR Weak top frame line. Retouch over 'L'. L. square broken. Horizontal line in l. square.	3/8 32 1 L	3/9 33 1 LR	3/10 34 1 LR	3/11 35 1 LR	3/12 36 1 LR Guide dot at 3 o'clock.
4	4/7 43 5 LR	4/8 44 1 R	4/9 45 1 LR Blurred 'A' of Helena (later printings).	4/10 46 1 LR Vertical guide line outside l. margin. Line through 'P' of sixpence and into circle at 6 o'clock.	4/11 47 1 LR Vertical line in l. of 'Postage' box. Vertical line in r. square.	4/12 48 1 LR
5	5/7 55 5D L	5/8 56 1 L	5/9 57 1	5/10 58 1 L	5/11 59 1	5/12 60 1 L Guide dot at 3 o'clock.
6	6/7 67 5C L Weak upper frame line. Thick horizontal line in circle at 8 o'clock.	6/8 68 1 L	6/9 69 1 R	6/10 70 1 L <i>Spot on nose.</i> Re-entry to letters of St. Helena.	6/11 71 1 LR Small dot in circle at 8 o'clock. Retouch to letters 'ST'.	6/12 72 1 LR
7	7/7 79 5C LR	7/8 80 2 LR	7/9 81 1 LR	7/10 82 1 LR	7/11 83 1 LR	7/12 84 1 LR

THE PERKINS BACON PLATE - MIDDLE LEFT SECTION

Column Row	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	8/1 85 7 R L. frame doubled and very weak. Marks in circle at 4 o'clock. Mark in l. square.	8/2 86 7 L. frame line doubled. Re-entry to l. hand side.	8/3 87 6 	8/4 88 5 Vertical guide line through r. of circle. Thin vertical line through r. square.	8/5 89 5 R 	8/6 90 5
9	9/1 97 7 Vertical lines in l. square. Weak upper frame line.	9/2 98 7 LR Horizontal line in lower l. of l. square.	9/3 99 6 Vertical guide line in circle at 9 o'clock.	9/4 100 5 	9/5 101 5 Double vertical line outside r. margin.	9/6 102 5
10	10/1 109 7 L <i>Minor Re-entry.</i>	10/2 110 7 LR 	10/3 111 6 	10/4 112 5 LR Vertical guide lines in circle at 3 o'clock and in r. square.	10/5 113 5 LR 	10/6 114 5 R
11	11/1 121 7 <i>1st Re-entry.</i>	11/2 122 7 Mark in l. square and horizontal line in bottom l. margin.	11/3 123 6 Guide dot in circle at 9 o'clock. R. frame line thickened and extended at bottom.	11/4 124 5 R 	11/5 125 5 LR 	11/6 126 5 L
12	12/1 133 7 L 	12/2 134 7 LR 	12/3 135 6 L 	12/4 136 5 LR 	12/5 137 5 LR 	12/6 138 5 LR L. square open.
13	13/1 145 7 Guide dot outside l. hand margin.	13/2 146 7 	13/3 147 7 	13/4 148 5 R L. square weak.	13/5 149 5 L Vertical guide line in circle at 3 o'clock.	13/6 150 5

THE PERKINS BACON PLATE - MIDDLE RIGHT SECTION

Column Row	7	8	9	10	11	12
8	8/7 91 5C L Weak upper frame line above 'HELENA'.	8/8 92 2 L	8/9 93 1 L 2 mm break in r. frame line at centre.	8/10 94 1 L	8/11 95 1 Bare patch below circle at 8 o'clock. Fleck in r. square.	8/12 96 1 LR
9	9/7 103 5C Line through circle at 10 o'clock.	9/8 104 2	9/9 105 1 R	9/10 106 1	9/11 107 1	9/12 108 1 L
10	10/7 115 5C	10/8 116 2 Marks in circle at 9 o'clock and in l. square.	10/9 117 1 R Mark on rosette in l. square.	10/10 118 1 R	10/11 119 1	10/12 120 1
11	11/7 127 5C R Marks in circle at 3 o'clock.	11/8 128 2	11/9 129 1	11/10 130 1	11/11 131 1	11/12 132 1 Vertical lines outside r. margin.
12	12/7 139 5B LR Spot in white circle at 2 o'clock.	12/8 140 2 LR Vertical line in pattern in top l. corner. Blur in l. square.	12/9 141 1 LR	12/10 142 1 LR	12/11 143 1 LR	12/12 144 1 LR
13	13/7 151 4B Line in circle at 10 o'clock.	13/8 152 2 Horizontal line in bottom of r. square.	13/9 153 1 LR	13/10 154 1 R	13/11 155 1 R	13/12 156 1 Mark outside r. margin at bottom.

THE PERKINS BACON PLATE - BOTTOM LEFT SECTION

Column Row	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	14/1 157 7 Guide dot in l. margin.	14/2 158 7 Guide dot in l. margin at top.	14/3 159 7	14/4 160 5 Diagonal line through 'X' of sixpence from stamp 172	14/5 161 5	14/6 162 5
15	15/1 169 7	15/2 170 7	15/3 171 7	15/4 172 5 Diagonal line in circle at 11 o'clock from stamp 160.	15/5 173 5 Vertical guide line in pattern at l. Thin horizontal line through 'S' of sixpence.	15/6 174 5
16	16/1 181 7 L	16/2 182 7 L Vertical line in l. square.	16/3 183 7 Line in circle at 3 o'clock. Line through pattern and l. square (later printings).	16/4 184 5 LR L. square broken. Horizontal line in bottom margin. Upper frame line thinned.	16/5 185 5 L	16/6 186 5 LR Stamp set particularly high.
17	17/1 193 7 L Guide dot in l. margin.	17/2 194 7 L Line through 'S' of Sixpence.	17/3 195 7 L Diagonal line in circle at about 4 o'clock. Vertical guide line in circle at 3 o'clock	17/4 196 5 L	17/5 197 5 LR L. frame line weak at top. R. frame line extended at bottom.	17/6 198 5 LR Line in background below 'A' of Helena. Dot in circle at 10 o'clock. L. square weak top l.
18	18/1 205 7 L	18/2 206 7 R Weak printing in upper l. hand corner (generally known as 'worn plate').	18/3 207 7 L Vertical lines in circle at 3 o'clock continuing into pattern below.	18/4 208 5 LR Weak upper frame line. Thin line at r. of r. square.	18/5 209 5 L	18/6 210 5 LR L. square broken at top l. Horizontal line to r. of 'A' of Helena.
19	19/1 217 7 Guide dots in l. margin.	19/2 218 7 Inner ring of circle weak at 3 o'clock.	19/3 219 7	19/4 220 5 L L. square broken at top l.	19/5 221 5 L	19/6 222 5
20	20/1 229 7 L Vertical mark in l. square.	20/2 230 7 LR	20/3 231 7 LR Vertical line through pattern at l.	20/4 232 5 L Weak printing above 'LE' of Helena.	20/5 233 5 LR Broken frame line in upper r. corner. Vertical line in l. square.	20/6 234 5

THE PERKINS BACON PLATE - BOTTOM RIGHT SECTION

Column Row	7	8	9	10	11	12
14	14/7 163 4B Slightly weak upper frame line.	14/8 164 3 Vertical line in r. margin.	14/9 165 1 L	14/10 166 1 R	14/11 167 1 R	14/12 168 1 R Marks in r. square.
15	15/7 175 4(B?) R Weak upper frame line.	15/8 176 3A R <i>2nd Re-entry.</i>	15/9 177 1	15/10 178 1 R	15/11 179 1	15/12 180 1 R
16	16/7 187 4(A?) LR	16/8 188 3A L <i>3rd Re-entry.</i>	16/9 189 1 L	16/10 190 1 R	16/11 191 1 L Blur in white circle between 3 and 5 o'clock.	16/12 192 1 Vertical marks in r. square. Guide dot in r. margin.
17	17/7 199 4(A?) L	17/8 200 3A Mark above top margin.	17/9 201 1	17/10 202 1	17/11 203 1 Mark in r. square.	17/12 204 1
18	18/7 211 4A	18/8 212 3A <i>Spot on throat.</i>	18/9 213 1 R Thick line from hair to front of ear.	18/10 214 1 LR Large blur in top margin at l.	18/11 215 1 L	18/12 216 1 Guide dot at 3 o'clock in margin.
19	19/7 223 3A	19/8 224 3A <i>Spot on throat. (not as prominent as stamp 212).</i>	19/9 225 1 Stamp set particularly high.	19/10 226 1 R Vertical mark in l. square. Thin vertical line through nose.	19/11 227 1 Vertical mark in l. square.	19/12 228 1 L Guide dot at 3 o'clock in margin. L. square partially broken.
20	20/7 235 3A L	20/8 236 3A	20/9 237 1 L	20/10 238 1 R	20/11 239 1 White flaw under 2nd 'E' of Pence. Lower l. corner weak.	20/12 240 1 <i>HFL flaw.</i> Weakness in bottom of l. square. Vertical line through circle at 5 o'clock.

1884 – 94 SURCHARGE VARIETIES

Roger B. West

One Penny on Sixpence

I am currently in possession of three quarter sheets of the 1884 – 94 CA 1d on 6d which represent the first fifteen rows of the sheet. The surcharging for this issue was carried out in four operations (5 rows at a time) and the varieties shown on page 27 have been noted as constant on all three blocks. I draw the conclusion that the same varieties would appear in the same relative positions on the fourth quarter of the sheet. The raised 'Y' would be as a result of poor make-ready and all the other flaws except one are broken or damaged letters. The exception (3/12 on the forme) although appearing on all three of my blocks may not be constant over the whole printing. None of these varieties are major but are significant enough to enable single copies showing any of these flaws to be plated.

Two Pence on Sixpence

I have just two quarter sheets of the 1884 – 94 CA 2d on 6d which represent the first ten rows of the sheet. Because of the contrast between the surcharge and the basic colour of the stamp, this value is ideal for study, yet in many ways it has proven to be the most difficult. There are many apparent varieties but only the five illustrated on page 28 appear on both blocks in the same positions. I am reluctant to claim any of these are constant and further research is called for.

Editor's note: I have been checking my blocks with the following observations:-

One Penny

- 1 Red. Block of 15 (5x3) positions 28-32, 40-44 and 52-56. No varieties on stamps 31, 43 or 55.
- 2 Red. Block of 72 (12x6) positions 121-192. No varieties on stamps 133, 140, 151, 156, 157, 163, 166 or 175. However stamp 143 shows the letter 'O' dented at left as described.
- 3 Pale red. Block of 9 (3x3) positions 94-96, 106-108 and 118-120. No varieties on stamps 96 or 106.
- 4 Pale red. Complete sheet shows none of the varieties. However position 2/12 on the forme has a variety "Letter 'O' dented on the inside at left". This is similar to 2/11 except the dent is on the inside of the left hand upright of the letter 'O', and appears on stamps 24, 84, 144 and 204.

It has been suggested there were two settings of the One Penny surcharge, and these findings tend to support this view.

Continued on page 28.

ONE PENNY ON SIXPENCE – SURCHARGE VARIETIES

PENNY

Position on forme - 2/1
Stamps - 13, 73, 133, 193
Right hand stroke of 'Y'
sliced

PENNY

Position on forme - 2/8
Stamps - 20, 80, 140, 200
Letter 'Y' slightly raised

ONE

Position on forme - 2/11
Stamps - 23, 83, 143, 203
Letter 'O' dented at left

PENNY

Position on forme - 3/7
Stamps - 31, 91, 151, 211
Right hand stroke of 'Y' cut
short

ONE

Position on forme - 3/12
Stamps - 36, 96, 156, 216
Small projection on leg of 'N'
of One

ONE

Position on forme - 4/1
Stamps - 37, 97, 157, 217
Chip out of leg of 'N' of One

PENNY

Position on forme - 4/7
Stamps - 43, 103, 163, 223
Top of first 'N' of Penny
sliced

PENNY

Position on forme - 4/10
Stamps - 46, 106, 166, 226
Slight dent to leg of first 'N' of
Penny

PENNY

Position on forme - 5/7
Stamps - 55, 115, 175, 235
Right hand stroke of 'Y' cut
short

TWO PENCE ON SIXPENCE – SURCHARGE VARIETIES

TWO

Position on forme - 1/6
Stamps - 6, 66, 126, 186
Corner broken top left of 'T'

PENCE

Position on forme - 2/11
Stamps - 23, 83, 143, 203
Damage to bottom right of 'N'

PENCE

Position on forme - 4/7
Stamps - 43, 103, 163, 223
Chip out of right leg of 'N'

PENCE

Position on forme - 4/9
Stamps - 45, 105, 165, 225
Upright of 'P' rounded at base

TWO

Position on forme - 5/12
Stamps - 60, 120, 180, 240
Flaw on 'W'

Editor's note: Continued from page 26.

Two Pence

- 1 Block of 36 (6x6) bottom right corner. Varieties as listed on stamps 223, 225 and 240. Stamp 203 shows a similar flaw to 2/11 above, but not as prominent.
- 2 Block of 60 (12x5) positions 121-180. Varieties as listed on stamps 126, 143, 163, 165 and 180.
- 3 Block of 60 (12x5) positions 181-240 – probably from the same sheet as 2. Varieties as listed on stamps 186, 223, 225 and 240. Stamp 203 shows a similar flaw to 2/11 above, but not as prominent. This is similar to that on block 1, and could be an early stage of the flaw or simply over-inking.

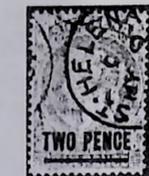


FORGED CIRCULAR DATE STAMP – MAY 6 1890

Bernard Mabbett



Forged May c.d.s.



Genuine May c.d.s.

While browsing through a dealers stock recently I came across a copy of SG 40, the 2½d. ultramarine with a circular date stamp that was quite obviously forged. There were traces of the violet grille obliteration that had been partially cleaned off, but the thing that struck me most was the date stamp itself. The c.d.s. measures 22 mm. and has 'ST. HELENA' in tall thin type with a code letter 'C'. The date was MY 6 90. As the 2½d. ultramarine was not issued until 1893, and the code letter 'C' date stamp did not come into use until April 1901, this was obviously a forged c.d.s. Two things to note are the tall thin type of the lettering, and the fact that the tops of the 'M' are flat whereas in the normal c.d.s. they are quite sharp.

I have since found a second copy, also dated MY 6 90, of this forged c.d.s. on SG 43cx, the 4d. sepia with reversed watermark. This is illustrated above left, with a genuine May dated c.d.s. above right.

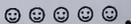
Editor's note:

This is another of those articles which sent me scurrying through my collection. Apart from the well documented forged c.d.s. of April 4 1901 mentioned in Gibbons, I have 4 which have May dates and another which appears not to be May. Until I received this article I had assumed my four examples to be of MY 6 1896—of which year the one illustrated right clearly is – but on more careful examination it is apparent that two of them are of MY 6 1890, but the other is not identifiable as the year slug is off the stamp edge although the month begins with 'M'.



Forged MY 6 1896 c.d.s.

Confirmation of these dates, and additions to them, are welcome.



A STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

The Story Behind St. Helena's Botanic Miracle

Trevor Hearl

The dramatic rediscovery of the St. Helena Ebony by Quentin Cronk and George Benjamin twenty years ago seems to have triggered a welcome revolution in Island sentiment towards its natural resources in general and its unique endemic flora and fauna in particular. Whereas hitherto conservation-conscious Governors and visiting experts had conspicuously failed to overcome Islanders' indifference to the 'desertification' of this once "tropical island Eden", today this suicidal scenario is, hopefully, a matter of history and the wastelands are in retreat. In 1993 Islanders formed a Nature Conservation Group to rally informed support for the rehabilitation of their natural environment; other 'extinct' endemics have been rescued from beyond the brink, and an adventurous project launched to create a 'Millenium Forest' of ancient woodland.

This "struggle for survival" was first publicised in 1986 in a Government booklet celebrating the early successes of its endemic rescue programme. It was supplemented by a weekly 'Endemic Bulletin' reporting the progress of its bold Sustainable Environmental Development Strategy (SEDS), courting vital public support through the schools and the media. While the SEDS programme earned international acclaim in the wake of the Rio Earth Summit, it was the fight to save its 'extinct' flora and fauna – like 'Operation Hercules' to find the world's largest surviving earwig – that fired press and public interest overseas. Soon, not only naturalists and botanists, but tourists, philatelists and many others with an eye on the South Atlantic, found themselves following the Island's courageous campaign. For example, the attractive 'Endemic Plants' stamp issue (illustrated on page 2) of 17 January 1997, celebrating the founding of Diana's Peak National Park, set the scene for collectors of First Day Covers:

St Helena has harboured 45 special plant species for millions of years... from prehistoric forests which have long disappeared ... fragments from the wreck of an ancient world. Our endemic fragments now live on the verge of extinction in real fragments of vegetation from the wreck of St. Helena's demolished forests... (on) the peaks where tree fern thickets and cabbage tree woodland struggles for survival. ... (A) programme has been set in place to restore the native habitat.

In *The endemic flora of St. Helena* Dr. Cronk now tells the story behind these botanic miracles. Plants inevitably hold centre stage in this ecological drama, but people are not forgotten. Among the pioneers of Island endemic rescue, the assiduous J. C. Melliss is shown clutching a copy of what appears to be his *magnum opus* in 1875, and Norman Kerr receives due recognition for his inspiring and diligent discoveries from the 1950's onwards. But the hero of the story is George Benjamin, St. Helena's plant-hunter extraordinary, fittingly photographed here in his search for elusive endemics at the end of a rope "botanizing the cliffs" where even goats dare not trespass.

Saving a species from extinction may depend on propagating from literally the last living specimen, a perilous process in every sense. Readers are taken through the Island's centuries of despoilation by Man and his goats, when food for fuel and timber was taken without thought for the morrow, though, as Dr. Cronk explains in one of his interesting sub-themes, Islanders selected indigenous woods skilfully enough for house-building.

Visitors have always been intrigued by St. Helena's unique plant life, whether from curiosity or the more serious concerns of the natural scientist. Long before Victorian tourists panted along the paths to the Peaks, passengers from the old East Indiamen had been carried up to the 'Cabbage-tree lands' in tonjons by slaves to admire the endemic flora of the Ridges. But Islanders, with a few notable exceptions, never held their habitat in such veneration and as imported timber came into general use the endemics lost all local value. As recently as 1937, within living memory, Philip Gosse was shocked to see how "rapacious flax growers hacked down and grubbed up wild olive, tree ferns, cabbage trees, lobelia and everything else which God planted there". Today, guided by Dr. Cronk's Oxford protégé, Dr. Rebecca Cairns-Wicks, visitors can see the reverse process in action. The invasive flax is being grubbed up to allow Nature to re-establish her ancient groves, an act of reincarnation which, in former times and other climes, would have been invested with almost religious significance. But this eleventh hour reprieve has left the endemic habitat very fragile and Dr. Cronk suggests that casual visitors "inspect the endemic plants in gardens and arboreta", though not, I hope, before they, and the many new 'St. Helena-watchers' caught on the world-wide web, have first enjoyed exploring the pages of his book.

This is an essential, as well as fascinating, contribution to Island literature, both for its authoritative text and its inspiring message of success against the odds, with all the makings of a future folk-legend. It covers botanical exploration and Island ecology, followed by a close look at the endemics, enhanced by 25 colourful portraits, meticulously painted from life by Lesley Ninnes during her three-year residence in the 1980's. Experts interested in "remarkable plants and the evolution and conservation of island floras" will find all the data they need, in discreet footnotes, bibliography, index and glossary, including a succinct comparison with Ascension Island where, incidentally, the author's forebear, Hedley Cronk, wrought a remarkable transformation on Green Mountain during his 26-year stint (1896-1922) at the Island's incredible farm. But this elegant volume, a worthy product from the specialist South Atlantic publisher Anthony Nelson, is not only for experts. It should grace the bookshelves of every serious follower of St. Helena's fortunes for, in the coming century, the botanical miracles which it describes will surely emerge as St. Helena's future claim to fame.

Cronk, Q.C.B: *The endemic flora of St. Helena*, with colour plates painted by Lesley Ninnes (2000), pp.119, hardback with pictorial dust-wrapper, 25 full-page colour plates, numerous other illustrations. £30. Anthony Nelson, PO Box 9, Oswestry SY11 9BY, UK. ISBN 0 904614 35 2.



REVIEWS

The Commonwealth King George VI Catalogue

18th Edition. Edited by Dickon Pollard. 285 pages 8¼ x 5¾ in. (21 x 14.5 cm.) Hardbound. ISBN 1 901624 015. Published and available from Murray Payne Ltd. PO Box 1135, Axbridge, Somerset, BS26 2EW, U.K. Price £30. Postage & Packing £2.25 UK, £3.50 Europe, £7.50 Rest of World airmail or £3.50 surface mail.

It is three years since the seventeenth edition of this useful catalogue was published, and a quick perusal identifies a number of significant improvements. The volume is noticeably thicker with over 50 pages added, and gone is the old style pricing in which values of £1 and upwards were shown as whole figures, but without the pound symbol. This made it difficult to tell if an item was catalogued at, say, 10 pence or 10 pounds! This edition thankfully has the pound symbol reinstated. A particularly useful feature is the introduction of flow charts for some of the more difficult George VI issues, for example the Bermuda and Grenada high values. Pricing is realistic, and it should be noted that mint stamps are taken to be mounted, unlike Gibbons which prices mint stamps from this reign as unmounted. Another point worth mentioning is that certain issues are not listed, notably the Indian Feudatory States and the various Japanese Occupation issues. A number of mistakes in the printing of a few of the varieties has resulted in an 'image errata' sheet which should be included in the catalogue.

Turning to the listings for our two countries, I notice several new varieties added for Ascension, including the torpedo, jibstay and mountaineer flaws which are listed for the first time on the 1938 definitives. These, and the ever popular davit flaw are priced both mint and used, whereas Gibbons generally only price the mint varieties. The cheapest davit flaw is now priced at £40 mint by Commonwealth, on either perforation of the 1½d. rose-carmine. By contrast, Gibbons price the perf. 14 at £80 and the perf. 13 at £75, although these are for unmounted. For the newcomer to the Commonwealth catalogue it may be surprising to find the definitives listed in perforation groups; for Ascension there are three groups for the perf. 13½ (C), 13 x 12¾ (C) and 14 (L). This however is the standard Commonwealth style. No varieties are listed for St. Helena, although there are a number of shades listed for the 1938 definitives. The one to look for here is the 1d. deep yellow of 1945, priced mint or used at £10 compared to 10p. mint and 20p. used for the orange-yellow. This is a distinctive shade, and can be spotted quite easily if compared to the 'normal'.

If your interest in King George VI is limited to Ascension and St. Helena, there is probably little point in laying out over £30 for a listing which is only a little deeper than Gibbons. The local or philatelic library could probably provide a copy to enable a few notes to be taken. However, for the ever increasing number of collectors who are attracted to the reign generally, chiefly because of the classic designs and philatelic interest, this volume can be fully recommended. I purchased my copy at The Stamp Show 2000 and have no regrets whatsoever. This edition is expected to last for three years.

The St. Helena George VI Definitives

By David Studd B.Ed (Hons), Dip HE, PerfCert LTCL. 33 A4 pages plus 4 colour plates. Card covers in clip file. No ISBN number. Published and available from David Studd, 6 Rose Mount, Bradford, BD2 4JJ, U.K. Price £6. Postage and Packing £1 UK, £1.50 Europe, £2.50 Rest of World.



This is the third monograph published by David Studd on the St. Helena George VI definitives. The first, *George VI Definitives St Helena 1938-52* was initially published in 1998 and updated in 1999 when it was reviewed by Bernard Mabbett in Supplement 31, page 9. This new work is a development on that, and covers the subject in greater depth resulting in a much more useful and attractive publication.

Following the introduction and a few details on St. Helena and her two Dependencies, the general details of the issue are discussed, which includes the sheet layout, plate and control numbers etc. Postage rates for 1937 – 1952 are listed in a useful table before David provides an in-depth review of the printing history of each duty which he researched in the British Library. This is the strong point of the study. A brief review of the few varieties (Waterlow were renowned for the quality of their work, hence very few varieties exist) is followed by a series of tables listing the various requisitions, duties, and numbers printed and despatched. A brief section on the overprints for Tristan da Cunha rounds off the work. There is a contents page, list of acknowledgements, bibliography and index.

The colour plates illustrate the 1937 and 1949 (two colour) die proofs; a selection of postmarks including the Madame Joseph Forgery of 18 December 1941, and plate numbers and varieties. These colour illustrations are well executed and add greatly to the pleasure in reading the work.

As a keen collector of George VI stamps, I naturally found the monograph extremely useful. All the information is clearly presented which makes it easy to read. My only disappointment is that David has not dealt more fully with the many shades found on these stamps. These are minor in comparison with some other George VI issues (Gibbons only list the two shades of the eightpence, although Commonwealth include shades on eight other values, in addition to three for the eightpence), but perhaps he thought the subject has been comprehensively covered elsewhere (Potter and Shelton; Frank Saunders). Nevertheless, it would have been useful to have them discussed here, particularly as the various printings are so detailed.

In spite of this reservation, I wholeheartedly recommend this monograph to all those interested in this issue.

FROM THE AUCTIONS

I list below some of the recent interesting auction lots of St. Helena, with the pre-sale estimate followed by the price realised (including any buyer's premium) in italics. Due to lack of space, I have not included the Harmer's London auctions of 15 June and 26 July which were strong in die proofs and varieties on the George V series, but I am sure many of you have access to these catalogues.

Stanley Gibbons – London. 14 September 2000

Lot 696 1961 Tristan Relief Fund 2½c + 3d to 10c + 1s (SG 172-175) fine u/m; top two values with light pencil signature on reverse, only 434 sets were sold and scarce so fine.
£2,000-2,200 £2,990

Shreves – 'Gibraltar' Sale – New York. 16 September 2000

Lot 2055 SG 18b, 1868 "ONE SHILLING" surcharge Type B on 6d deep yellow green, imperforate, a brilliantly fresh mint example of this incredibly rare stamp, gorgeous sumptuously rich color and a crisp detailed impression on bright paper, three large margins, fourth at right just along frame line, o.g., fine; reportedly only ten imperforate examples are known, two of which are in the Royal Collection and one in the British Museum, leaving only seven copies available to collectors; an important showpiece for a great collection or exhibit of St. Helena; 1973 BPA certificate (Scott 23 var.).
SG Cat £12,000 \$5,775

Lot 2057 SG 45a, 1894 "ONE SHILLING" surcharge on 1/- yellow green, watermarked Crown CA, surcharge double, a spectacular quality mint example of this rare surcharge error, being a right sheet-margin single in the most pristine state possible for a stamp of this vintage, absolutely gorgeous vibrant color and impression on brilliantly fresh and crisp paper, quite well centered, pristine o.g. that appears to be never hinged (l.h. in selvage), very fine and quite choice; undoubtedly the finest available of the very few copies in existence; 1999 BPA certificate (Scott 39a; \$4,500.00).
SG Cat £4,250 \$6,050

Lot 2060 SG 95b, 1922 5/- Grey and green on yellow, torn flag variety, well centered, strong colors, o.g., very fine and scarce (Scott 98 var.).
SG Cat £475 \$935

Lot 2061 SG 96b, 1922 £1 Grey and purple on red, torn flag variety, an exceptionally fresh and choice mint example of this rare variety, strikingly intense colors, well centered, o.g., lightly hinged, very fine (Scott 99 var.).
SG Cat £1,500 \$2,420

Lot 2063 SG 111b, 1922 7/6 Grey and yellow orange, torn flag variety, choice mint example of this scarce variety, intense colors on bright paper, outstanding centering, o.g., l.h., extremely fine (Scott 92 var.).
SG Cat £600 \$1,100

Lot 2064 SG 112b, 1922 10/- Grey and olive green, torn flag variety, top stamp in a bottom sheet – margin vertical pair, incredibly bright and fresh, well centered, rich colors, unblemished o.g., never hinged, very fine; an especially choice example of this very scarce and highly collectable variety, particularly desirable for exhibition being in a pair with a normal stamp (Scott 93 var.).
SG Cat £1,010 \$1,265

Lot 2067 SG 113a, 1922 15/- Grey and purple on blue, torn flag variety, the top stamp in a fabulous quality bottom sheet-margin vertical pair, incredibly fresh and crisp, near perfect centering, deep luxuriant colors, immaculate o.g., never hinged, extremely fine; an incomparable example of the rarest of all the highly collectable constant plate flaws found on the "Badge of St. Helena" issues; the perfect exhibition mate to lot 2064 (Scott 94 var.).
SG Cat £3,800 \$3,575

Lot 2068 SG 172-75, 1961 Tristan Relief surcharges complete, a choice set of these rare surcharges, each well centered and with bright colors and paper, o.g., n.h., except 6p + 5c lightly hinged, very fine; only 434 sets were sold before being withdrawn from sale, and many of these were apparently used (Scott B1-4; \$5,000.00).
SG Cat £4,000 \$4,950



Lot 2055



Lot 2057

Stefan Heijtz – Stockholm. 9 October 2000

Lot 1057 1819 ST HELENA PACKET LETTER 2.AP.2.1819 datestamp on entire letter dated 17 March, addressed to Geo Dunlop, Scotland, charged 4s.8d. and with arrival cds of 10.6.1819. The letter mentions *Everything goes on here as usual, Napoleon making many complaints*. Very rare. Number 11 of the 13 examples recorded of this handstamp.
£1,500 \$1,000

Colonial Stamp Co. – Los Angeles. 12 October 2000

Lot 1254 1856 6d blue Q. Victoria die proof, printed on thin card and mounted on card board, one of only six impressions originally taken, a great rarity, the perfect frontispiece for a major St. Helena collection, extremely rare, with RSPL certificate. SUPERB.
\$3,500 \$4,675

Lot 1260 1913 4d-6d George V (SG 85a, 86a) a matched set of bottom marginal control number 1 blocks of 18, each containing the variety split 'A' in POSTAGE; these are reliably thought to be the largest multiples, a remarkable specialist item. VF-S.
\$1,500 \$1,320

NEW ISSUES

Just enough space to list the latest Christmas releases from Ascension and St. Helena, courtesy of the Crown Agents.

	Ascension	St. Helena
Subject	Christmas Carols	Pantomimes
Release Date	16 October 2000	10 October 2000
Designer	Ross Watton	G L Vasarhelyi
Printer	Walsall	Cartor
Watermark	CA Spiral	CA Spiral
Perforation	14.1	13
Sheet	50 (2x25)	Strip of 5 x 20p
Stamp Size	28.4x 42.58 mm.	30.56 x 38.00 mm.
Values / Designs	15p I saw three ships 25p Silent Night 40p Away in a Manger 90p Hark the Herald Angel Sings	Beauty and the Beast Puss in Boots Little Red Riding Hood Jack and the Beanstalk Snow White & the 7 Dwarfs



And Finally

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And if you thought the split masts and torn flags were good varieties then what about this – courtesy of David Horry – from his book *The Unissued Stamps of King George VI* – for details contact Murray Payne Ltd, address on page 32.

