

# Jamaica Philatelic Society's Quarterly Bulletin

H. COOKE, Editor  
Kingston, Jamaica

G. C. GUNTER Hon. Secty.  
Half-way Tree, Jamaica

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SEPTEMBER, 1941

NUMBER 2

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## Editorial Perfs

**Apology** to our readers is due and humbly we offer it, for the late appearance of this edition. One of the many victims of the recent epidemic of influenza, we had a very bad time for more than two weeks on end, then suffered for several more from an affection of the right hand, that made writing practically impossible, hence the delay to get the copy ready for the printers. We are not yet quite free of the manual trouble, and hope that the material here offered to you, will not have suffered materially in interest.

**Apologia.** We tender to our readers the most abject apology for the mess that was recently published to you our as annual edition. "Mess" is about the only word that describes, the wealth of errors that distinguish that edition from all others. The printers had arranged to despatch copies of the finished magazine to the addresses required, and having the idea that publication was desired very promptly dispensed with submission of proofs or galleys for reading and correction. The result was the "mess" that has been presented to you. They, the printers, have expressed regret, and have endeavoured in ways open to them, to make amends to the Society, but unfortunately those amends do not reach our readers, and therefore do not compensate for some of the harm that has been done. Of the dozens of errors in the edition, we will refer to one only on page 36 col. 1, where in description of the watermark, the word "thickish" on the typewritten copy, has the appearance of being thoughtlessly changed to "thinnish" in the published edition. That change destroys the sense of what was written, and describes what practically is an impossibility. This writer resents strongly, that work for which he is directly responsible, should have been so mutilated.

**Catalogues.** We have seen the 1942 edition of Scott's, but have been able to give it only the most cursory examination, and that has not revealed any changes of importance. The Gibbons edition for the same year, promises a long list of surprises. Prices in general of all B.

C. relative to current and recently obsolete issues, commemoratives and pictorials in particular, will show high upward trend. That comment is particularly applicable to Jubilee issues. The B. W. I., the group in which most local readers are particularly interested, share largely in the increased prices indicated. If you have any purchases to make, and find them offered on the basis of the current edition, do not pass them by. It is reported that the 1942 Gibbons will not be published until the Spring, and the edition will be for the Empire only.

**Barbados.** We referred in a recent edition to the colour changes and new denominations, then scheduled for this Colony. The penny was reported for change in colour to green, but in error red was continued, in the printing for which the change was arranged. We now learn that the change to green is still scheduled, to be effected in the next printing, and that the ½d now appearing in green, will be changed to buff brown.

**Shade Varieties.** It has been reported and we have seen stamps of Great Britain, printed in weaker shades than those we have been accustomed to see; war economy to reduce consumption of dyes. We have no reason to doubt the report, and believe that attention to current Colonials for shades, will be worth while.

**Philately House.** We regret very much to learn that this philatelicly famous building, the business premises of Mr F. Hugh Vallancey, has been completely destroyed by fire through enemy action. The financial loss undoubtedly is high, and even if that be reduced to Mr. Vallancey by insurance, it is very certain that that cannot compensate for loss of the accumulated results of a life time of effort; much of which perhaps has rather more sentimental than intrinsic value, yet for that very reason, has large importance for the owner. The completed study of this or that item; another incomplete, the data for which is still elusive, the subject for search and effort. Can one start all over again?, we wonder. Our enthusiasms and energies wane with increased and increasing years after the period during which with intense effort, they waxed to their zenith. Mr. Vallancey was the reputed possessor of one of the finest, of the many fine, collections of the stamps of Great Britain and Ireland, that existed in England. Housed in 70 or more volumes, it is easy to understand that it was of significant importance, with high measure of completeness. For those reasons its market value cannot have been small, and its destruction is correspondingly large financial loss. Yet another loss suffered by Mr Vallancey, is his philatelic library, reputedly as complete as his collec-

tion of stamps. Said to have been upwards of 10,000 items much of them out of print and irreplaceable. We offer very sincere sympathy and trust that the calamity which has befallen, will not mean loss to us of his ability and knowledge in matters philatelic; we think of his consistent and valuable contributions to the literature of the hobby.

**United States Base Postmarks.** We owe some of the following information to the bulletin of the Philatelic Society of Pittsburgh, sent to us through the courtesy Mr Harry E. Huber. In general the description is a single lined circle 34mm in diameter, from the right of which extend three heavy bars of irregular length 3mm wide spaced 9½mm apart. Within the circle arranged around the upper segment, are words that indicate the ?, and the site; around the lower segment the geographical location. In the center letters and figures arranged in three or four lines record the date (three lines) and time (four lines). Each base has had a number assigned to it, thus;

<b>Newfoundland</b>	APO 801A, Mar-Det. Argentina, Newfoundland 4 lines, date.
<b>Bermuda</b>	APO 802 Marine Det. Bermuda Br. 4 lines, date.
<b>Trinidad</b>	APO 803 " " Trinidad 3 lines, date.
<b>Jamaica</b>	APO 804 Mar-Det. Portland Bight, Jamaica Br. 3 lines, date.
<b>St Lucia</b>	APO 805 Mar-Det. St Lucia Windward Islands 4 lines, date.
<b>Antigua</b>	APO 806 Mar-Det. Island of Antigua Leeward Island 4 lines, date.

The letters "APO" are understood to mean "Army Post Office", but "Mar-Det." are not clear. They seem to mean perhaps "Marine Detachment" but as the "Marines" are understood to be a section of the Naval forces, that does not seem to be the proper construction if the Post Offices are of the Army. Proper construction is made still more perplexing, by report that the US Navy will operate its particular P. O., yet to be opened. The Jamaica Base APO began operation on July 18, 1941, with post mark as described, imposed on US stamps. Each first day cover appears to have been numbered serially, and we have seen 1276, the highest of the serials to have come under observation. We have also seen a copy of the St Lucia postmark, similarly imposed on a US stamp, with date of 26th May, 1941, which we understand also is a first day cover. It is a subject for speculation that, in some of the postmarks the letters "BR.", which seem to mean or to be read "British", are included, but omitted in others where the territory is as British as the others where they are used.

**Auctions.** The following are prices recently realised at London.  
Antigua Tercentenary set, 1932, mint, £7. 5/-  
Caymans Centenary set, 1932, to the 2/- value £2. 15/-  
Barbados 1912 1/-, 2/-, 3/-, all mint £4. 0. 0.  
Jamaica 1938, the current set used on covers £1. 8/-  
Montserrat 1932 Tercentenary to 1/- mint £1. 10/-  
St. Kitts 1923 Tercentenary to 5/- mint £5. 0. 0.

**Bermuda** is scheduled to have a new denomination, 7½d now officially announced as on order. The general description suggests the current "Flamingo" type of Bahamas, in colours of green, blue and black.

**Appreciation.** Our readers may have observed that the name of Astley Clerk, as Editor of this journal, was omitted from its usual place, on the cover of our last edition. That omission signifies retirement of Mr. Clerk from the position, made at his request. He is one of the founders of this Society, and has the distinction of being member No. 1 on its roll. His interest in philately and that of Jamaica in particular, did not begin at that time; we believe that he has been identified with every philatelic club or society that has had existence here. We do not know from what date he may reckon his philatelic career, but we do know that if his Diamond Jubilee, as a stamp collector has not passed, it cannot be far away. Throughout that time, his activity by contributions to the literature of the hobby, his research of the postal history of Jamaica, have been large, and our book "Jamaica" owes much to his work, that anticipated it by many years. This Society is indebted to his perseverance in its interests, especially so over periods when its prospects were not as bright as they might have been, when his encouragement of the young collector, his advice and aid to many and any, were proverbial, while at the same time in the higher stages of the hobby he had and still has a position of esteem, not only in our local philatelic world, but also in the much wider sphere abroad. His interest in the hobby and this Society has not ceased, we know that he is now engaged in yet additional research and on literature as the result, but the veteran seeks rest, alleviation; not of the burden, for obviously it has not been that; but of the pressure to work to schedule as he has done for so long, and we must aid him in that respect. We hope for him the boon of good health with which to enjoy the calm of restful days, and trust that we may continue to hear from him, with contributions to the pages of this journal, renewal of the pleasure that has been ours in the past.

## Jamaicana

**Child Welfare Stamps.** In our last edition we mentioned the rise in price which had then taken place. Gibbons "Stamp Monthly" edition for August 1941, states their prices as 18/6 mint, 22/- used, per set. Issue of these stamps ceased on 31st. January, 1927, almost fifteen years ago, and the precise figures of quantities printed, sold, remainders destroyed were published in the succeeding edition of this journal, published in the same year. From them we learned that the smallest number of the three stamps sold, was 30,595 of the 2½d., and that figure determines the number of complete sets that became available to the public. The ½d. sold to the quantity of 43,159 and the 1d. 44,401, neither of them large quantities, and all three subject to the unknown factor of damage in the hands of the careless. In effect the number of complete sets available, were subject to some reduction, probably to the figure of 30,000. With that knowledge open since 1927 to all interested and from it the readily deducible fact of comparative rarity, i. e. not nearly enough to go round, it has been a subject for wonder that the price per set, did not materially increase years ago. The only probable reason is, lack of demand. The present rapid rise, together with the, in some instances heavy, increases in prices of BC generally, which we have mentioned elsewhere, seems to suggest that in England at least, under existing conditions imposed by war, lack of foreign supplies, there is strong demand for British Colonials.

**Military Post.** The authorities at Up Park Camp placed in use a distinctive obliterator, employed on mail from that source. The specimen we have shows date of 3rd. May, 1941, but we do not know whether that indicates the time of employment. It is in design a horizontal oval 48½mm long by 32mm wide. The oval is outlined by double lines set closely together. An inner line set irregularly 5mm from the outer two, creates an inner oval. Between the inner and outer lines, in the upper segment are the words "Military Post" in sans serif capitals. Similarly placed in the lower segment in similar type, appears "Up Park Camp," and across the inner oval the date in letters and figures, in thinner sans serif characters.

**2d. Columbus Cove.** We have heard numerous complaints of inability to obtain this, and other higher denominations. We have no official information on the subject, but learn that Post Offices in general have received instructions to discourage, but not absolutely to refuse, sale of higher denominations in the *pence* bracket. The reason is said to be very large existing stocks of ½d and 1d stamps, due

to the rise in the local letter rate from 1d. to 1½d., which reduced demand for the lowest denominations, and increased it for the next higher. The empire rate of 1½d. increased to 2d., stimulated demand for the latter, and for that reason we believe that that denomination genuinely is exhausted. Incidentally, increase of the international post card rate to 2d., suggests official debate and delay on the question whether or not, new printing of that denomination should be made in red, as the UPU rules require, but which as has been indicated in the immediate past and present, our local authorities continue to ignore; the 3d. for instance, which is our international letter rate, still is issued in green; the UPU requires it to be in blue.

**Meetings.** Because of the sustained tropical heat from which all of us have suffered during recent months, it was decided at the meeting in August last, to suspend meeting until Thursday 6th. November, usual time and place.

**Personal.** Mr. Astley Clerk, member No. 1 on our Registry, asks that the member to whom he lent his copy of the book "Jamaica," compiled by seven of our members, will be kind enough to return same to him as it is long overdue. Mr. Clerk prizes this book not because he is one of the compilers, but it is a copy autographed by four of the compilers who reside in England.

Mr. Clerk's address is 2½ Elgin Road, Cross Roads.

**The Current** 1½d. has been reported as issued with plate number 2B in shade as before reported in the No. 1 issue of the "Quarterly Bulletin," March 1941.

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## My Athletic Collection

BY HERBERT H. MACDONALD

It is only natural if you have two hobbies that sooner or later they will merge.

Having spent most of my life either playing or organising some athletic pursuit, when I took up stamp collecting the thought occurred to me of getting together a collection of the few (or so I believed at the time) issues of "Athletic Stamps."

I was under the impression that fifty stamps would cover all the issues—I soon found that at one time or another nearly every country of any size had issued a stamp or stamps commemorating some particular athletic event either in its history or that of some other country.

It is odd that not a single country in the British Empire has ever issued an athletic stamp. Newfoundland's Cabot issue of three stamps, illustrating caribou hunting, ptarmigan shooting and salmon fishing, are "sporting" rather than "athletic."

Twenty-eight countries have issued athletic stamps. There may be others but I have not been able to discover them. These twenty-eight countries have issued nearly sixty sets with Bulgaria and Italy leading with five each, followed by Czechoslovakia, Germany and Jugoslavia with four each.

Greece was the first country to start, issuing fourteen stamps to commemorate the 1st. Olympiad at Athens on April 6th., 1896.

The most recent set issued was that of Costa Rica who printed three stamps in May 1941 to commemorate the holding of the Central-American and Caribbean Football Championships at San Jose. I understand that the issue was withdrawn and if any got on the market they should be gems in time to come.

Track athletics far outnumber any other design, followed by football. In connection with football it is interesting to note that Uruguay who twice won the Olympic championships on each occasion put out a special issue. I quite agree with what Mr. Stanley Phillips says in his book "Stamp Collecting" about the artist who had probably never seen a football match and drew on his imagination. The goal posts represent trunks of trees. A football is balanced on the cross bar and on the ball sits a bird.

Few errors have appeared—Costa Rica of 1925 issue has a tete beche 20c, and Greece of 1906 has many imperforate.

You would never be able to tell by looking at Czechoslovakia sets that they had anything to do with athletics. The 1925 and 1926 issues are overprints of current stamps—the January 1938 set is that of an eagle in the mountains and the June 1938 set has the head of Jindrich Fugner on it.

The artist who designed the Jugoslavia Rowing Championship 1932 series makes it appear as if the rowing is taking place in a wheat field and the stamps are not particularly good to look at.

As a contrast and by far the most beautiful of all sets is that of Russia to commemorate the Spartacist Games in 1935. The stamps are huge and the designs as perfect as can be. Minature sheets have been issued by only Germany and Panama.

The total number of stamps needed to complete an athletic album as far as I know is just under 300 and the present catalogue value is about £65. The most expensive stamp of all is the fifty Leva of Bulgaria in the 1932 Balkan Olympic Games issue—this is catalogued at £8—and I have not got it.

I would greatly appreciate if any member locates a series,

which they think I might not have, if they would tell me about it as I have had to rely on searching the Word Catalogue page by page to locate those of which I now have knowledge.

Ed. This paper was illustrated with a display of the stamps to which it refers, on the arrangement and mounting of which, we congratulated the author. It was most creditable, showing knowledge of the subject by the marginal annotations; good taste by the arrangement of the stamps; that in turn enhanced by drawings in colour, printed colour reproductions of the national standards, employed for each of the Olympiads. The whole showed and impressed the individual who saw it, with the obvious fact that a deal of enthusiastic effort, had been expended to produce so very attractive result. It was shown to the members of the JFS at the meeting in July last.

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## The Provisional Stamps of Bermuda

The following contributed by Mr. Arthur Pierce, originally appeared in "Stamps," 28th. June, 1941.

Bermuda's "Christmas provisional"—the current 1d pictorial surcharged "Half Penny"—came as a Yuletide surprise to collectors, and is undoubtedly the most interesting philatelic development of the war, as it has affected a country in our Western Hemisphere. Whereas other issues, such as the 3d on the 2½d Bahamas overprint, have been the result of changes in postal rates, the new Bermuda stamp is the consequence of an exhausted supply with replacements held up in transit due to the conflict, and belatedly delivered by Transatlantic Clipper.

This Bermuda provisional may serve to draw the attention of more collectors to the other equally interesting provisional issues of Bermuda, some of them decidedly mysterious in their origin, and at least two of them unique in a philatelic way. The following notes are intended to tell the story of these old provisionals and to condense most of the available information concerning them.

### *The 3d. provisionals 1874*

On March 10, 1873, Bermuda issued its first threepenny stamp for prepayment of letters to the United States, the rate being 3d per half ounce. The initial supply consisted of 9,800 stamps, and the demand for them appears to have been heavy as the supply was exhausted within a year. When replacements failed to arrive, the postal authorities then as now decided on a provisional. Minutes of the Bermuda Legislative Council for February 21, 1874 read:

"The council approve of the issue of a portion of the redundant One Shilling postage stamps in store as Threepenny stamps, with a distinct crossing of 'three' or '3d' if possible of different coloured ink."

With this authority the Colonial Postmaster of Bermuda ordered the provisionals, issue of which is recorded in three batches of 4,500 each—one batch on March 12, another March 20, and the third on May 9, of 1874.

The first mystery arises from the two types of surcharge: (a) a surcharge in Roman Capitals (Scott's No. 8), and (b) a surcharge in fancy italic capitals (Scott's Nos. 11 and 11a). Why two types? No records ever have been found giving an answer. Nor is there information which type overprint appeared first, but since the one in fancy capitals was the first to be noted in the philatelic papers of the time it is generally regarded as the earlier issue.

The second mystery arises over the printing. No record has been found of that, either. In the Royal Philatelic Society's "Postage Stamps of the West Indies," *Major Edward B. Evans*, long editor of *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*, suggested that the printing probably was done by Government clerks, "though there was a tradition that some work of this kind had been done by the Royal Engineers who had a small press in their office."

Most evidence points strongly to the first of these choices, i.e., government clerks, inasmuch as these stamps were not over printed on a press, as H. R. Holmes had pointed out, but were *handstamped one at a time*, a fact which would account for the blurry and faulty impression of many of the overprints and also their varying register. The first suspicion of forgery in these stamps is invited by perfection of overprinting; the forgeries smell at once of the press, and most of the forgeries the writer has seen also are a trifle smaller in size.

An alternate printing possibility is suggested by *John J. Bushell*, who thinks the stamps may have been surcharged by the Kings printer; and if so, were either done singly, or a very few at a time, since each surcharge contains four of the letter "e," whereas an entire font in those days probably had no more than a dozen or so of the "e," and it is unlikely the printer had more than one of this fancy "job font."

In any event, at least three handstamps were used: one in Roman Capitals and two in italics. One of the italic handstamps has a plain italic "P," in "Pence," the top of the letter being flat, whereas in the much rarer variety, Scotts 11a, the "P" of "Pence" is rounded with what some call a "forelock," similar in the "R" in "Three." These letters with the "forelock" were not, of course, of a different type font, but were initial letters, intended for use at the beginning of words or sentences, though not always confined to that use where printers were careless.

Another interesting point as to the use of a handstamp is found in a pair of the No. 11a in the writer's collection, both stamps having

the "P" the same as the "R." This indicates that the variety was not just a single "error" in a large setting, but that it probably occurred over a part or full sheet, depending on how many overprints were turned out by the person employing that particular handstamp.

Use of the handstamp is probably responsible also for the variety in the Roman Capitals overprint which is listed in the Robson Lowe Regent catalog as a "partial double surcharge." While I have one of these, there is no evidence it was constant and probably was due to an unsteady hand.

Most fascinating mystery of all in the 1874 provisionals surrounds the fancy italic surcharge "Three Penny" on the One Penny rose (Scott's No. 9.)

This stamp is the most disputed in Bermuda's history, many experts insisting that it is not a stamp at all. As far back as 1887 Major Evans pronounced it an essay, but others, including *Sir Edward Denny Bacon*, declined to agree, although Sir Edward admitted it might be impossible ever to obtain positive proof one way or the other.

Experts aside, here is the evidence which the writer has gathered to date. In favor of listing the "Three Penny" on one penny as a stamp are these factors; (a) its existence; (b) agreement of even the Royal Philatelic Society that genuine copies of the Fancy Italic surcharge have been found on the 1d stamp; (c) the fact that most of the known specimens were found, according to Major Evans, in the Receiver General's office, indicating an official connection; (d) the opinion of the then Receiver General that the stamps had been *purchased* by his predecessor; (e) the statement of *Sir Reginald Grey*, (president of the Legislative Council, a collector, and the man into whose hands most of the specimens passed after the part sheet was found) that he knew at least one sheet of 1d stamps had been overprinted and that some were *used*.

Against listing the stamp and in favour of the essay theory, are (a) the complete lack of evidence that the overprinting of 1d stamps was authorised; (b) absence of any mention of the stamp in the Receiver General's records for the postoffice; (c) traditional insistence of the *Royal Philatelic Society* that no genuine used copy exists (although both *Sir Reginald Grey* and *Sir Edward Denny Bacon* disputed this;) (d) the fact that Major Evan's contention is plausible, that it was unlikely a single sheet or even two sheets of the 1d would have been overprinted except for trial purposes.

To my own astonishment, it never seems to have occurred to any of the debaters that this stamp is probably an *error*; that the only explanation which fits *all* the facts on both sides of the argument is the explanation that a sheet or two of the 1d value was mixed among the sheets of shilling stamps sent to the printer for overprinting. It

is unlikely that the printer would have noticed the mistake, but it is apparent that the Receiver General did, since he removed the 1d. stamps which were left and put them in the drawer of his office desk where they subsequently were found.

A whole article could be written around this stamp alone, but my belief that this stamp is—let us say an “error of color”—is confirmed to some extent after correspondence with *W. E. Hawkins*, who once possessed a block of six and two blocks of four of this “Three Penny on one penny,” all of which he purchased from *Sir Reginald Grey* in Bermuda. Moreover, the writer is convinced that the stamp does exist in genuine *used* condition, since *Sir Reginald Grey* said definitely that he had received a copy of the stamp on a letter, and a man in his position almost certainly would have known if essays were being used for postage. There is evidence also that some of these stamps were used some years later, possibly for philatelic purposes, possibly because they had lain around in someone’s desk.

It should be mentioned that the philatelic press, in 1875, reported specimens of the 2d. blue, with fancy italic surcharge. These have been found definitely bogus. Likewise, the double overprints and inverted overprints of any of these 1874 surcharges.

#### *The Provisionals of 1875*

By comparison the Bermuda provisional stamps of 1875 are gems of philatelic propriety, and the records concerning them are quite clear.

New supplies of the 3d stamps had arrived in July of 1874, but at the beginning of 1875 the supply of one penny stamps was exhausted and more overprints were ordered.

This time it was decided to overprint three values—2d, 3d and shilling stamps—inasmuch as the stocks of all values were none too plentiful. The “One Penny” overprint, in plain 10-point pica type, was done at the office of the Royal Gazette in Hamilton, and it seems likely that 60 stamps—one pane of a full sheet of 240—were overprinted at a time. The records show one overprinting of the 2d blue—4800 copies on March 31, 1875; one printing on the 3d yellow—12,000 copies in April of 1875; and three overprintings on the shilling value, as follows: 14,400 copies on March 11; 6,270 copies on March 31, and 2,380 copies on April 16, of 1875.

The major error in these stamps is the inverted overprint on the shilling value. Varieties with the period missing after the word “Penny” have been recorded from time to time, but their authenticity is extremely doubtful. These varieties have popped in and out of the catalogue for years. At present Gibbons lists two “period missing” varieties on the 2d and shilling values; at one time the same

catalog listed the variety on all three stamps, yet only ten years ago recognized it on the shilling value only. Scott lists the "period missing" on the 2d (No. 12a) but no others. *Robson Lowe's Regent Catalog* declares all three are bogus.

At one time, the *Rev. Earee*, who wrote the famous "Album Weeds," distinguished genuine copies of these surcharges from forgeries by stating that in the genuine the "O" of "One" was directly over the "e" of "Penny," whereas in the fakes the "O" was a bit to the right. Blocks of these surcharges and copies on cover show this to be wholly incorrect. Indeed the new 1940 Bermuda provisional warns against just such hasty generalizations, since the settings vary in it, and whereas on most stamps the "H" of "HALF" is well to the left of the "E" of "Penny," on three stamps of the sheet the "H" of "HALF" is directly over the "E" of "PENNY."

#### *The Postcard Provisional of 1893.*

Why both the Scott and Gibbons catalogs ignore the Bermuda "Postcard Provisional" of 1893 is beyond the writer's ken. Here is one of the most unusual items in philately, and while it is technically classified as postal stationery, the surcharge here is not on a postcard but on *stamps*—stamps affixed to a postcard. Surely a surcharge on stamps deserves to be classified as a *surcharge on stamps*.

In 1884 the rate on postcards to points outside Bermuda was 1½d. The Bermuda postal authorities had the Royal Gazette print a postcard, with two ruled spaces for stamps; after which postoffice clerks were given the task of pasting two stamps on each card: a copy of the ½d stone of 1880 in the left hand space, and a copy of Bermuda No. 1 (the 1d rose with CC watermark) in the right hand space.

Bear in mind that the postcards had no franking value in themselves; they were invalid until stamps had been pasted upon them. Hence, these were not postcards in the normal sense of postal stationery, but more akin to an ordinary commercial postcard which is also labeled "Post Card" but which is not mailable until stamps have been attached. The sole difference here is that the cards were printed by the Postoffice authorities, and the stamps pasted on by clerks instead of by customers.

A considerable batch of these 1884 postcards, with the ½d and 1d stamps affixed, were evidently placed in stock. At any rate, in 1893 the rate for postcards was reduced to 1d, and a surcharge,— "One Penny"—in two lines of a bold, extended type, was applied to the normal "Queen's Head" postcards then in issue (and valid for postage in themselves) and the same overprint also applied to 87 remaining copies of the 1884 postcards with the stamps attached. The overprint was *across the two stamps*.

Since the records show that only 87 copies exist, this item is

rare indeed. In his pamphlet on Bermuda, *H. R. Holmes*, mentions a story that "all of the specimens were purchased by a clerk in the postoffice." That this is only partially correct, if true at all is indicated by the fact that Holmes says he has seen copies on correspondence to England and Germany, and I have seen a copy used on a card to Italy.

So, if you ever come across a Bermuda  $\frac{1}{2}$ d or 1d stamp bearing half a surcharge (which is admittedly unlikely,) don't toss it away as a fake. It may have been soaked off one of these cards, years ago, before most collectors bothered with them.

Catalogs or no, these certainly are surcharged stamps and as such belong in any list of Bermuda postal issues. It should be noted that these "Postcard Provisionals" are listed in the Regent catalog, which prices them at 6 pounds mint, 10 pounds used.

#### *The Farthing Surcharge of 1901.*

In 1901, Bermuda issued yet another unusual stamp with a story attached—the "One Farthing" on "One Shilling." This stamp is not really a provisional but is included here because many collectors have been led to so regard it.

In 1900 the Legislative Assembly levied a rate of one farthing per two ounces on newspapers, which previously had gone through the mails gratis. The act was to become effective January 1, 1901, and plans were made for issuance of a new farthing stamp. Several designs were submitted, but apparently they were unsatisfactory for the postal authorities devised the makeshift stamps we now know as Scott's No. 25.

A cable was sent Messrs. De La Rue, printers of all Bermuda stamps up to that time, calling upon them to use the regular plate for Bermuda shilling stamps but to print new stamps in *grey* (the normal shilling stamps then were brown)—these grey stamps to be overprinted "One Farthing," with a black bar obliterating the words "One Shilling."

As it was, this curious production arrived in Bermuda ten days late—and then the entire supply was bought up on the first day of issue by speculators. It was an issue which lent itself to such a venture. All indications were that it would be temporary, as usual with provisionals. Besides, the face value was very low and the entire supply of 192,000 stamps could be purchased for less than a thousand dollars.

So, on its day of issue, this stamp, according to *Gibbons Monthly Journal*, was being sold in Bermuda, for as much as a shilling a copy. The postal authorities acted promptly, however, ordered a new supply, and in a few weeks had broken the back of the boom.

Thenceforth this stamp became the longest-lived "provisional" of philatelic history, remaining in use from 1901 to 1908, when it was

supplanted late in the latter year by the Farthing "dock type" stamp.

There is one constant variety in this surcharge, a "G" of "Farthing" which looks like a "C." The stamp also appears in several shades, two of which are distinct and which are listed by Gibbons as "dull grey" and "bluish grey." My copy of the stamp overprinted "Specimen," which was of the first printing, is in the dull grey shade.

### *The 'Christmas Provisional' of 1940*

Finally, a few notes on the most recent provisional, the "Christmas provisional" of 1940.

Due to exhaustion of supplies of the pictorial Half Penny, the current pictorial 1d. was overprinted "HALF PENNY" in two lines, at the lower corners of the stamp two "X" marks to obliterate the 1d tablets. Total printing of this stamp was 348,000. It was issued December 20, 1940, and withdrawn on January 21, 1941.

The surcharging was done by the Government printers, set on the linotype, in sheets of sixty stamps. There are no errors, but examination of full sheets reveals some extremely interesting setting varieties.

First, the spacing between the bottom of the word "Penny" and the top of the "X" marks varies in different rows of the sheet. This spacing is 13.5 mm. in rows 1, 3 and 4; 13 mm. in rows 8 and 10, and a scant 14.5 mm. in rows 2, 5, 6, 7, and 9.

Second, there is the interesting variety in which the "H" of "Half" appears *directly* over the "E" of "Penny." This variety does not appear at all in the first printing of the surcharge. In the second printing it does appear, on each of three right hand stamps on the third row from the bottom, i. e., stamps 46, 47, and 48 of the sheet. In a third printing, this variety appears on the three left hand stamps of the third row from the bottom, i. e. stamps 43, 44 and 45. I have heard of a fourth printing in which the "H over E" variety appears but once in the sheet, but I have not yet seen it. A further variety, in the second printing only, is a broken "X," the right hand "X" on stamp No. 54. In the same printing there is a constant break in the "L" of "Half" in stamp No. 36.

Material for this study has come from *Postage Stamps of the West Indies*, published by the *Royal Philatelic Society*; *Bermuda*, by B. W. H. Poole, *Bermuda*, by H. R. Holmes; *The London Philatelist*, *Stanly Gibbons Monthly Journal*, the *Gibbons and Regent catalogues*, and, individually, *W. F. Hawkins*, *E. F. Hurt*, *John J. Bushell*, *Miss Ethel Harper*—plus, of course, personal research.