

Jamaica Philatelic Society's Quarterly Bulletin

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MARCH, 1942

NUMBER 4

Editorial Perfs

Gratified to observe that "Stamp Collecting," the weekly English philatelic journal, finds our "Bulletin" and the "J. P." of interest enough to quote and copy. The fortnightly "Philatelic Magazine," from which we frequently quote, occasionally pays us similar compliment.

Perforations. Our readers and members will do well to give attention as was suggested in a recent article on this subject, to perforations and varieties in "1s." Messrs de la Rue, the printers of many Colonial issues, are turning out several varieties of that nature, any and many of which may prove to be quite good. The current 10c of Kenya and Uganda is an addition to several others that have appeared. It has been found measuring $14\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{1}{4}$, instead of the original and normal $13\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}$.

Dr. Diena. We regret to learn, through the medium of "G. S. M.," of his death. The Journal pays deserved tribute, which we desire to endorse. He was a distinguished philatelist, a world renowned authority on the stamps and postmarks of Italy and the old Italian States, a member of the Jury at almost every international philatelic exhibition of past years. Our Society had the pleasure of cordial, if infrequent relations with him. Among the books possessed by the J. P. S., is a copy of his work, "The Engraved Stamps of Sicily," presented by the author, who at the same time offered to expertise free of charge, any of those stamps submitted to him by any member of the Society.

U. S. Base Postmarks. "Bulletin" No 2, September, 1941, listed some of these marks. Mr. C. L. von Pohle under date of 30th January, adds some detail, and the "Philatelic Magazine" of 2nd. January, de-

velops the subject still farther, and illustrates the Antigua mark, different in design from the general type described by us. It is a double lined circle, inner and outer respectively 19 and 29mm in diameter, letters and figures 3mm high arranged in the 5mm space between the rings. Around the upper half are the letters and figures "U. S. A. P. O. 806," in the lower "ANTIGUA B. W. I.," and in the centre in three lines, are the month date year. The "PM." also refers to a lozenge shaped device of heavy bars enclosing a circle that may contain a number. The only one seen is indistinct, not good enough to copy for illustration, but it came from the "Marine Detachment, Portland Bight, Jamaica," and is stamped in blue "Passed by Naval Censor," who signs within a single lined circle that carries those words. Mr. von Pohle does not identify "APO 801D" and assigns "APO 801B" to "Stephenville," Newfoundland. The "P. M." identifies and disagrees with him, gives two lists which we quote, indicating separate Army, Naval and Marine Detachment offices; here they are:

PROVISIONAL POST OFFICES

Location	Name	Earliest known date
Antigua	Marine detachment	25th. March, 1941
Bermuda	do do	14 " "
Bermuda	Naval Operating Base	14 " "
Iceland	1st. Marine Brigade	30 " "
Jamaica	Mar. Dept. Portland Bight	18 " "
Newfoundland	American Forces in N. F.	15 " "
Newfoundland	Mar. Det., Argentia	1 Mar. "
St. Lucia	Marine Detachment	28 April "
Trinidad	Marine Detachment	1 " "

ARMY POST OFFICES

APO No	Location	Date as above
801	Newfoundland	16 April, 1941
801-A	" Argentia	4 June, "
801-B	" Ft. Pepperell	1 Sept. "
801-C	" Stephenland	9 " "
801-D	" Quidi. Vidi	1 Oct. "
802	Bermuda	18 April "
803	Trinidad	18 " "
804	Jamaica	18 July "
805	St. Lucia	26 May "
806	Antigua	15 Sept. "
807	British Guiana	29 July "
808	Bahamas	Not known
809	Greenland	19 June "
810	Iceland	Not known

In the "P.M." list, the Jamaica date was not shown, we have inserted the date known to us, similarly the St. Lucia date was shown as 17th. August, we know of the earlier date stated above. Those of our members who are interested and know of additional detail if they will advise us, we will be glad to bring the list up to date, or correct it where necessary.

Ed. Note. Since writing the foregoing, Mr. von Pehle has submitted a cover, bearing the APO postmark, numbered 801B, and on which is typewritten "Engineer Hospital, Harmon Field, Stephenville, Newfoundland. APO 801B."

Jamaicana

Child Welfare Stamps. We observe that one dealer at least, in England, is offering to buy these stamps at 10/- the set mint. The last sale price named by Gibbons was 20/-. To be able to sell to a dealer at half catalogue, is rather unusual and suggests demand with very limited supply, and seems to indicate a very firm market position for the set.

1/2d. George VI. A story heard from one of our members, points to existence of this stamp "printed on both sides." We asked that the specimen be submitted to us for examination and record, but it has not reached us.

Meetings. That on March 12th. was poorly attended. Obviously the rule relative to gasoline restriction and rationing, was responsible for some absentees. We understand and appreciate that, but trams and busses were available and used by some who did attend. Since then the situation has worsened with suspension of rationing, no supplies are available for private cars. We do not know what if any prospect there may be of improvement, we believe that it is and will remain, uncertain, precarious, while there are enemy submarines operating in the Caribbean. That being the position, we would like to learn from City members, whether they will or will not be able to attend the usual monthly meetings in the immediate future; the next is fixed for 9th April. Definitely we do not wish to encourage development of the depressing effect, there necessarily will be by a series of poorly attended meetings, extended over several months. We believe it is far better to face the facts and learn now, that a large number of members do not, and will not find it convenient to attend, for that reason suspend the meetings, than attempt to carry on with the indicated result. Will you please advise the Hon. Secretary of your ability or not to attend.

Shortage. We hear of shortage in supply of more than one denom-

ination of the current series of stamps, principally in the higher bracket, 6d. and upwards.

Postmarks. Mr. Arthur D. Pierce, one of our members in America, writes enquiring for these, is willing to buy or exchange anything out of the very common items, numerals, Railway, temporary rubber stamps used for new offices, and items of that kind. He will be glad to hear from any member, who has and wishes to dispose of such items.

An Adventure In Postmarks

Arthur D. Pierce

Some thrills really do come once in a lifetime. To some, perhaps there would be no thrill in the opportunity—and the labour—for going through a total of 25,000 copies of the 1d. Jamaica Key Plate, but to me it was an adventure unlike any since I started collecting Jamaica stamps.

The stamps were owned by a dealer whose father had put them away, mostly in neat bundles of 100, many years ago, as near as I could determine about 1898. They had been unpicked for postmarks, and as they were just 25,000 stamps to a dealer, it was not difficult to reach an arrangement for purchase of the postmarked copies which might appeal. After a bit, the deal was closed, and with the bagful of stamps at hand, I set to work.

Since 25,000 copies of one stamp, all of them cancelled in the period from 1892 to 1896, is a fairly good sampling of any average lot of such an item, the results of the search may be worth setting down as some index of the relative scarcity of the various postmarks discovered.

Before setting out on the hunt, I lined up the general possibilities. On the theory that to catch a fish one must go where the fish run, I listed the possible fish one might expect to find among the stamps of that period. There were, of course, number postmarks, excepting those of the post towns which had discarded their obliterators prior to 1892. Then there were the "squared circles," the single-line circles, and temporary date stamps. Finally, there was the outside chance of finding a stamp used in the Cayman Islands, since the 1d. Key Plate was among the Jamaican stamps sent out for use there. Finally, there was the chance of finding some postmark oddity, one of which did turn up.

After sorting through the 25,000 stamps, I culled the following:

(allowing only for clear strikes requiring no imagination to decipher the postmark:)

Obliterators	313
Squared Circles	1240
Single-line circle	1264
Temporary date stamps	15
(3 duplicates)	

The big thrill came when I found one—just one—stamp used in Caymans. It was a clearly cancelled copy, with the early oval type postmark with GRAND CAYMAN at the top, and POST OFFICE at the bottom, and a date. The stamp showed clearly "GRAND" and thanks to a double strike, a fainter but still clear impression of the second strike showing "YMAN." Having only seen one other copy, with copies rarely found in the auctions, this bit alone was, to one collector anyway, worth the long labour of going through 25,000 stamps.

During the search, one's eyes must be kept wide open for such other rarities as the 1d. with the pink duty plate, and the 1d. with the duty tablet in blue, but save for a battered copy of the former, worthless for a collection, there was no success in either direction.

One other item did turn up, a mused-up copy of the scarce JAMAICA EXHIBITION postmark. Only a part of the postmark shows, but it is enough for positive identification, and failing a better copy, it will be parked in my albums "for the duration."

So, thus far, we reach these conclusions:

(a) That the frequency of a "Used in Caymans" is about one in 25,000;

(b) That the frequency of a JAMAICA EXHIBITION is about the same.

(c) That the odds are more than 25,000 to 1 against finding either the pink tablet or the blue one on a 1d. Key Plate, during that period. This may be due to the fact that they occurred before 1892, however, so that the odds are not accurate on the whole, but certainly indicative that these are scarce stamps indeed.

(d) That the frequency of good obliterations are about 1 in 800 stamps;

(e) That the frequency of good squared-circles, and single-line circles is about 1 in every 200 stamps.

(f) That the frequency of the Temporary Date Stamps of that period is about 1 in every 1650 stamps.

The figures on obliterations and squared and single line circles are meaningless, however, until they are broken down. For some of

the postmarks were as rare as the Caymans, others relatively common.

So, let the "Squared Circles" be dealt with first.

The lot yielded a complete set of these, that is, the 35 listed in the Jamaica Handbook, plus the small type of the Kingston mark, really thirty-six in all—but not including of course, any copies of the large-type Squared Circles which were not put into use until close to the turn of the century.

Nine of the towns, however, were found to appear on less than six copies of each. Since the others were relatively plentiful I did not bother to tabulate them. But the nine towns on the scarce side break down as follows:

York Castle	6 copies
St. Margaret's Bay	5 copies
Croft's Hill	4 copies
Hagly Gap	3 copies
Anchovy	3 copies
Salt River	2 copies
Christiana	2 copies
Hampstead	1 copy
Darliston	1 copy

From these figures it would appear that Hampstead and Darliston are relatively as rare as the "Used in Caymans," at least during the period in question. I have both, however, on several copies of other stamps. But any or all of these town postmarks cannot be called common if we accept, as seems fair enough, that 25,000 stamps are a fair sampling of the average postal usage.

It might be mentioned, too, that while there were some very poor copies of some of the above, no poor copies were found of either Hampstead, Darliston or Anchovy.

Because the single-line circle postmarks were about evenly distributed, or at least with all the listed towns in fair quantity, I have not tabulated them. Worth mention, however, is the fact that Half Way Tree, either in its numerical obliterator or single-lined circle was quite scarce, yielding only two copies of each.

Most fascinating of all, in many respects, was the distribution of the obl iterators, from which any reader may calculate their relative scarcity—keeping in mind that the odds hold only for the years in question, i. e. 1892 to 1896. Because they will be of interest to the many who collect the obl iterators, I list the findings herewith:

A 27, 6 copies;
 A 32, 9 copies; A 35, 4 copies; A 36, 3 copies;
 A 40, 11 copies; A 41, 2 copies in black, 2 in blue;
 A 44, 1 copy; A 45, 1 copy; A 46, 4
 copies; A 47, 7 copies;
 A 50, 5 copies; A 53, 2 copies; A 55, 6 copies;
 A 57, 3 copies; A 58, 4 copies.
 A 63, 7 copies; A 64, 20 copies; A 62, 31 copies;
 A 66, 1 copy; A 67, 1 copy; A 68, 2 copies;
 A 70, 6 copies; A 71, 35 copies; A 72, 1 copy;
 A 73, 6 copies; A 74, 2 copies; A 75, 5
 copies; A 76, 15 copies; A 78, 8 copies;
 A 79 Type J, 1 copy; A 79 Type K, 1 copy.
 A 81, 1 copy (faint); A 83, 2 copies;
 E 06, 1 copy; E 58 1 copy;
 F 95, 20 copies; F 98, 1 copy; F 81, 4 copies
 G 13, 2 copies (1 poor); G 14, 4 copies; G 15, 3
 copies; G 16, 1 copy.
 199, 6 copies; 201 12 copies;
 615, 1 copy; 617, 7 copies; 640, 8 copies;
 647. 6 copies.
 Letter "B," 6 copies,

It would, of course, be rash to say that these figures represent the frequency of these obliterated stamps on all CA watermarked stamps. In some cases they vary sharply from the relative estimates of scarcity given in the chapter on postmarks in the handbook. But as obliterator specialists have found, some numbers which are not scarce on other stamps are hard to find on the Key Plates, and the reverse, of course, is also distressingly true. And there are a few numbers, such as 598 and 631 which seem to elude, or at least have eluded me on any stamp, at least in clear struck copies,

These results are not put forward as conclusive, but only as indicative. But whatever else they are, they are the booty from many hours of fun—and not a few dreary stretches during which one gave up all hopes that the little bundles of 1d. Key Plates would yield anything but the commonest Kingston or some indiscipherable smudge.

Finally I turn to that most esoteric of the postmarks, the Temporary Date Stamps, which turned up in a total of 15—copies excluding three copies which were impossible to identify.

Of the T. R. D.'s, the prizes were a beautiful copy of the oval Alligator Pond, a lovely oval Cedar Valley, and a clear Pratville, in the double-lined circle.

The other nine towns (with three duplicates making the total of fifteen) were as follows:

Davis Town, Lamb's River, Mocho, Lime Hall, Clonmel, Deeside, Walderston, Castleton and Lawrence Tavern.

And allowing for the duplicates of Lime Hall, Walderston and Castleton, the reader may calculate for himself the scarcity of these postmarks. The odds here, incidentally, hold pretty well for any of the TRD's mentioned (and those used in that period but unmentioned) because they were not in use save during the years in question, i. e., 1892 to 1896.

Consider Our Needs

Usually when we adopt some occupation for our spare time, it is a hobby of one kind or another, and usually we recognise that in order to follow it intelligently, to obtain reasonable good and satisfactory results, there is knowledge of the subject to be acquired. We try to learn something of the theory of reading, we endeavour to acquire the tools or implements necessary, and by practice with them, guided by the theory, develop such skill as we may possess. Anyone who, for instance has dabbled in 'photography' knows what hopeless damage can be done, by use of the hypo bath in the wrong sequence, and that the same bath correctly applied, can and does create great pleasure in the making of both fine negatives and prints.

To many stamp collecting does not seem in that sense to appeal, it is merely a matter of accumulating as many different designs in stamps, as conveniently may be acquired, sticking them in a book or album of some kind, and there it ends. It is rather too much like work to bother overmuch about the things, a stamp is just a stamp, and that's that. Such semi-indifference is not wholly the collector's fault, but it is contributed to by him, because of his lack of effort to search, find and correct. It is also influenced very largely by the type of album used, and it is that particular need we propose to consider, paying some attention to progressive stages of stamp collecting, from the needs of the tyro to those of the advanced collector. We will not trouble about the specialist and dot collector, he alone knows just what he is doing, or should, and can or should be able, to take care of himself.

Every novice realizes sooner or later that he needs an album, to house and display his collection, but he does not know that it is not

merely the question of an album, but the right kind of one. Inexperienced, he is caught by the idea to provide that housing for the collection he hopes to make, and for the moment sees that provision for for the stamps that already exist, gives no thought to the stamps yet to be issued, and which for that very reason, will be more readily obtainable by him, than those which have been issued and become obsolete. He goes in for a large, perhaps expensive bound volume, a hefty tome. The captions, illustrations, provision and arrangement of spaces for the stamps, listing of the specimens, and perhaps some literature, all have strong appeal, they seem like labour saving devices, just the things necessary for his convenience and he is captured. He does not realise that stamp collecting does not stand still, that it has a very insistent future, that he has made provision for its past, none for that future.

Such printed albums usually are obsolete, before they leave the printing press, and very early our collector friend finds that the stamps he has, and can mount in the nicely arranged and printed spaces, are lost in a wilderness of paper, blank pages on many of which he cannot hope to mount any stamps, they are quite beyond his reach and purse. He also finds that he has a number of new issues, and keeps acquiring more, for which there are no pages or spaces in his large and imposing album. To mount them at all, he must use pages for which they were not intended, add a page of quite different paper, and create an untidy, sloven looking thing, that is an eyesore to himself and to those who may see it.

Somewhat later, perhaps too late, he learns how the error of judgement could have been avoided, probably is discouraged by the waste of time, effort and money with which he is faced, and may drop stamp collecting altogether, but the fault is not that of stamp collecting; it is, was, or has been due wholly to his lack of experience, and failure to learn the ropes, to creep before he tried to walk alone. It is to avoid difficulty of that nature, and some others probable, that the subject is worthy of serious thought.

If we have discarded idea of the printed, fast bound album, what other types are there? For those who may like and still desire, the printed page with its nice arrangement of spaces, "one for each issued stamp," it can be obtained singly to meet one's requirements as they may arise, as and when you may need them. The printing and arrangement of the spaces synchronises, with the lists of stamps published in some well know catalogue; Gibbons for instance; and additional sheets similarly printed are made ready for sale, to take care of new issues. The method certainly removes the boredom of wading

through a large number of unused pages, and provides for new and old issues as they may be acquired, but the ambit of the collector's activity remains tied and fettered, to the vagaries of the particular catalogue concerned. He may not, except in untidy fashion, include items not listed in the catalogue; though he may know them to be of authentic worth, as no space is provided for any such item, and if the album page is to have appearance of completeness, he must not exclude any of the trivialities and absurdities, the compilers of the catalogue may have elected to list. In other words, and as in the fast bound album, the printed page does not permit exercise of original thought and arrangement of the stamps, addition of variety that is of interest, philatelic worth, authentic importance. This type of loose leaf album, is made into a book by means of a binder, which by means of a spring in the back holds the leaves together; and here we pass on to the several kinds of binders for loose leaves.

Having considered the disadvantages of the album with the printed page, we may have reached the conclusion, that the album to have is one of blank pages, i. e. unprinted for spaces, but the useful and perhaps most convenient page, is one that is faintly printed in small squares, really quadrille ruled, as that ruling enables one, when mounting the stamps, to neatly align and space them, leaving room where that may be necessary, for any specimen of a set that may yet be missing. Each such set may be arranged to a single page, a single stamp may be placed on a page, and the unused space be used to write up the set or specimen. There need be no unused pages, and arrangement of the specimens may be made in accord with your particular ideas, there is room for your original ideas, to be expressed as you may wish them.

If we decide for the blank page, the question still to be answered, is the kind of binder to hold them; the whole making the album and housing of the collection. There is little doubt that the blank page, with spring back binder, is the type most in use, perhaps the most popular, yet the spring backed binder has not a few disadvantages. Note a few of them. To remove or insert a page, the binder must be forced open against the tension of the spring, and all the leaves removed. To replace them, it must again be forced open. That manipulation in course of time, weakens the spring and as the number of leaves increases, the weakened spring fails to hold them firmly in place, they tend to drop away and out of the binder, the edges of the leaves not protected by the edges of the binder, become soiled, perhaps ragged and frayed, and if they fall out, some of the stamps mounted on them may be damaged. The spring may break, if

it is not built into the binder with very good material, it may tear away, is loosened, the binder is made useless, a new one becomes necessary. Some other binders are fitted with a slotted device, which in one way or another, connect with leaves specially cut to fit, but leaves are made of paper, and friction which the leaves cannot stand, is developed at the point of contact, each time the page is turned, so that wear rapidly takes place, and the leaf or leaves no longer are securely held, they droop away from the binder, are apt to fall out, and the prospect of remounting the page looms, it becomes a necessity that probably arises far too often.

Considered from all angles, the post binder is believed to be the most reliable, but even in this there are more than one type. The type that appeals to us is one that consists of two boards, in the lower of which two or more metal posts made in sections of about one inch, each section having one end with a screw thread, the other tapped to take the screw, the first section built into the binder. The upper board or cover has holes in it which coincide with the positions of the posts, and a locking device which holds it to the posts. With all post binders, when it is desired to remove or insert a leaf, it is necessary to lift only those leaves above the point it is desired to reach; the leaves are holed to fit the posts, they are securely held, there is no friction and less chance of rubbing that injures and damages the stamps. The type we have suggested, permits of large expansion, by extending the posts, as has been indicated, to allow more leaves to be introduced as they may be required. There is no spring to break, only one mechanical device that may in the course of protracted time, wear and thereby create need for a new binder, but no one expects a binder of any kind to last indefinitely.

Having made decision of the kind of binder and leaf we propose to use, there is still another factor of importance to be considered, viz., the kind of paper from which the leaf should be made. Most experienced collectors will affirm that it is a very, very important item indeed, especially so to those whom, like ourselves, live in the tropics where that bane to stamp collectors and lovers of books, the brown mould, exists. It attacks all sized paper, spreads over and destroys it, stamps printed on chalky paper are particularly susceptible. There have been several articles in past editions of the "J. P.," that deal with this subject, so we will not elaborate it here.

The paper known to this writer that seems to be most resistant of attack, is any that has but little sizing, with little or as little as may be possible of "chalk" body; "linen" paper if it be possible to obtain that. It is far better to obtain blank leaves of that kind of paper, rule

in the margins yourself, if you wish to give reasonably good protection to your stamps, than accept a heavily loaded "chalk" body paper, nicely margined and quadrille ruled leaf, which in advance one knows will promptly yield to ravages of the mould.

The album of any kind that may be used, should be kept in a perfectly dry place, there should be no moisture or damp; if in a cupboard, that should be against an inside wall, never against the outer wall of the room. That will help where the mould is concerned, but there is yet another enemy to ward against, the worm that bores through and through the best of leather bindings, as it does through cheap varnished cloth, for which it seems to have particular liking. The protection suggested is a casing made of canvas in two layers, blotting paper between which should be saturated with a solution of thymol, or any mild poison such as some bookbinders use in the gum or paste they employ. In any event, thymol should be used, it is excellent to keep vermin away, and is not deadly poisonous.