

Jamaica Newsletter No. 5

By Thomas Foster

The colonial definitive issues of King George VI generally present many difficulties and unsolvable problems to the philatelic student, that of Jamaica being no exception. One of the commonest used values, the 6d, S.G.128, shows the 'Exhaust Pipe' flaw, one of the few printing varieties present on the stamps of this issue. This flaw occurs on Vignette Plate 1, which was unnumbered, and can be found throughout the life of that plate whilst it was used in conjunction with Frame Plates 1 (unnumbered), 2 and 3. Before being used with Frame Plate 4 for the printing released by the Crown Agents in London on April 15th, 1946, Vignette Plate 1 was extensively repaired and re-entered and the variety does not exist on that, the final, printing from the plate. Considering that this flaw has been known for a very long time, it is surprising that the sheet position has never been recorded and I would be grateful if any reader can supply this or show me a positional block.

The **decimal surcharged** definitives are beginning to show some interesting features. So far, most of these surcharges have been made on stocks of the unsurcharged stamps on Gum Arabic paper held by the printers, but further sheets of the 2d value for surcharging were needed and had to be printed on PVA paper. Supplies of the **2c/2d** value invoiced to the island consisted almost entirely of stocks on the PVA paper, most of the Gum Arabic sheets being sold through the Crown Agents in London. Of the very small number of Gum Arabic sheets received in the island, one has been found with the watermark inverted, but this variety has not been discovered so far on the PVA paper. The **1c/1d** value shows small variations in shade throughout the four panes, or post office sheets, comprising the printed sheet but the same plates are still being used. There are numerous small flaws in the surcharging on this value but most of these, such as the thin obliterating bars and the broken or damaged letters, are due to the wear of the surcharging plate.

The **Coin Centenary** issue was printed and comb perforated in sheets of 25 stamps delivered vertically and displays an amazing array of sheet markings. Besides the plate numbers 1A(x3) or 1B(x3) under the 24th stamp, there are 'Traffic Lights' below the 25th stamp and colour registration guide crosses in the four corners of the sheet, but the most outstanding feature is the imprint, regally spread above the first four stamps of the top row and reading in two lines PERKINS BACON LIMITED/ PRODUCERS OF THE WORLD'S FIRST ADHESIVE STAMP, accompanied by an illustration of the Penny Black printed in the background colour of the stamps in the sheet.

The **Christmas stamps** were printed and comb perforated in sheets of 100 stamps delivered sideways. The sheet comprised four panes, or post office sheets, of 25 stamps, these panes being numbered 1A(x5), 1B(x5), 1C(x5) and 1D(x5) respectively. Only one printing was made and the only recorded constant variety occurs on pane 1D, where stamp 2/2 has a small brown ring flaw that can be seen quite clearly to the left of the head of the Madonna.

The **1970 stamp programme** so far announced covers the following events: (a) National Heroes Commemoration—five values printed by Enschede; (b) Easter Celebration; (c) Promoting Tourism; (d) The Junior Chamber of Commerce; and (e) Publicising the Banana Industry. In addition, a new decimal definitive series in the present (1964) designs but inscribed in decimal currency will appear in August.

Postal History. New discoveries in this field continue to be reported. **MANCHIONEAL** is the latest office found to have used a previously unrecorded utility date-stamp, this time type P7, and an example dated July 15th, 1859, exists on a wrapper to Kingston bearing two copies of the G.B. 4d rose. This find is most interesting as only one example of its predecessor, type P2a (issued in 1839) dated 1849 is known and the office was little used throughout that double decade, the postmaster receiving only the minimum salary¹ before this was increased to £9 per annum in 1858, when Mr. A. Brown held the appointment. Sometime after 1849, P2a must have been lost and replaced temporarily by P7 until the issue of P11 on September 2nd, 1859.



Other discoveries include the first recorded examples of **MONEAGUE** type T3 on a letter dated April 30th, 1822, and the **MORE-TO-PAY** hand-stamp, type D1, struck in black ink on a letter of January 5th, 1844. Regarding **DRY HARBOUR** type P12², at least nine copies of this mark have now been reported, the range of dates being January 22nd, 1873 – August 1876. What a little publicity will do!

Military mail. The Canadian Field Post Office supporting exercise 'Nimrod Leap' was the same as accompanied 'Nimrod Capet', C.F.P.O. 5003, with the same date-stamp being used. More Canadian troops will be training in the island in the near future.

Finally, it is intended to open a number of new postal agencies during the coming year and the latest to have appeared, all in December 1969 and in the parishes stated, are:

- ST. ANN, Higgin Town (12th);
- KINGSTON, Fletchers Land (11th);
- ST. CATHERINE, Gordon Pen (9th);
- HUNTS TOWN (19th);
- PRESTON HILL (22nd).

The **HIGGIN TOWN** and **HUNTS TOWN** date-stamps differ from the normal Aguilar type TRD37 used, in that the lettering is sans-serif, instead of serified.

¹ £2 per annum instead of the 15% local currency on the total of inland postage sold!

² Newsletter No. 4 in **STAMP COLLECTING**, December 18th, 1969.