

Jamaica Newsletter No. 7

By Thomas Foster

King Edward VII Flaw

I have recently examined a number of blocks and strips of the 1905 Arms ½d value, SG37, each of which contained one stamp showing what appeared to be a constant flaw in the value tablet, a 'White Spot' after the Y of PENNY. As only one frame-plate was used in printing this denomination, the variety probably occurs on earlier stamps, i.e., the 1903 Arms ½d, S.G.33. Can anyone produce an example of the flaw on that stamp or locate its sheet position on either issue?

K.G.VI Blocks Wanted

To continue further research on the King George VI definitive issue of 1938-52, I would like to examine any complete panes, sheets, large marginal blocks or strips (especially those from the tops of panes or sheets) and plate blocks of any denomination. There are still a lot of problems concerning the three lower values which could possibly be solved by the examination of certain sheets.

Q.E.II Coils

Turning to a later era, it is not generally known that four coil machines were installed at the Kingston G.P.O. about 1964, dispensing the 1d, 1½d, 3d and 6d values of that year, two 1½d. stamps being delivered on the insertion of a 3d coin. Joined strips of these coil stamps are not common and I would like to establish the size of the coils and the type of leader used, if anyone can help. The exact date of installation of these machines is unknown and information regarding this would be of assistance.

Missing Colours

An outstanding major variety is always an eye-catcher in any collection and the omission of the gold colour on the British Empire and Commonwealth Games miniature sheet of 1966 is no exception, affecting not only the detail of the 3s value but also the names of the competing Commonwealth nations listed around the sides of the sheet. These miniatures were produced by the printers in sheets later guillotined into four miniature items, so that any colour variation of this kind must occur on at least four issued sheets. Two other missing colour varieties are known on these sheets, neither as sensational. The first has the yellow omitted on the 3d value whilst the other has the light brown missing from the 1s value. Various colour shifts can also be found, one of the more prominent being a major displacement of the gold and red colours.

2c. Decimal Provisional

The first reprint requisitioned of any of the current decimal overprints was released on July 16th, when the 2 cent value appeared without the sub-caption 'C DAY/ 8th September 1969'. The reprint is on PVA paper from the plates/panes 1A(x3), 1B(x3), 1C(x3) and 1D(x3) as before, with the three constant plate flaws still occurring.

Postal History

Summing up recent correspondence concerning the MORE-TO-PAY hand-stamp, type D1, use of which had not been recorded at the time of publication of my book, I can now state positively that three copies exist. The first, struck in red ink, is on a letter from Montego Bay to Kingston where it arrived on January 5th, 1844. The other two strikes, both in black ink, were applied to letters on or about July 19th and December 26th, 1859, the latter on a letter to India and sent via London.

On the difficult subject of British stamps used in Jamaica, I can also mention the first recorded pre-oblierator letter from MILE GULLY. Bearing a 6d. lilac cancelled with the P9a-O dater of February 1859 (the earliest known date), this letter becomes item 61 in that listing. I can also report discovery of the same Mile Gully dater with the unrecorded index 'I', dated August 1859, i.e., P9a-I.



The lower sheet shows the missing gold. Note the lack of marginal inscription on sheet and of border wording and crown on the 3s. stamp.

From Canada comes news of two outstanding discoveries, the T3 hand-stamps of HIGHGATE and HOPE BAY occurring on letters dated October 14th and June 4th, 1802, respectively. Neither of these handstrucks had been recorded previously and as a result, our listing of that difficult type comes nearer to completion. Indeed, the Hope Bay item means that the given date of opening for this office will have to be revised. Nearer to home, the 'Glassco' sale contained a cover bearing the first known example of the HIGHGATE (P11) date-stamp on a letter of March 16th, 1860, whilst I can also confirm the existence of three copies of the very rare KINGS (P11) marking, dated December 6th, 1887; March 12th, 1890 and February 6th, 1891.

As a result of my request for information on the 'Express' letter mentioned in News Letter No. 2, I have now seen another cover with this same marking, registered from the G.P.O. in 1895 for London and carrying 7d in postage stamps. The rates at that time were 2½d postage plus 2d registration fee and this could indicate that the express fee was 2½d. As the letter was posted at the G.P.O., the service in this case may have been a form of 'Late Fee' to catch the mail boat in the harbour. Incidentally, the illustration of the mark in that newsletter was incomplete and should have included a full point after the final letter 's'.



Fig. A

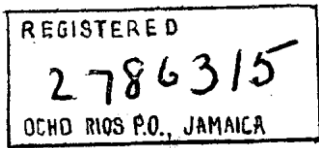


Fig. B

In the more modern field, two interesting items have appeared. The Kingston G.P.O. have put into use at least one new die for the dated portion of their automatic cancelling machines (Fig. A). It will be observed that there is a full point after KINGSTON and, for the first time, the letters W.I. follow JAMAICA at the bottom. The other innovation, as yet seen only from the OCHO RIOS office, is a registration hand-stamp (Fig. B), struck in black and used instead of a label. Markings similar to this have been used by private firms and government departments for some time, but the post office have never employed them.

New Offices and Agencies

The MYRTLE BANK post office reopened¹ on May 26th at 82 Tower Street, Kingston, but mail posted on the first two days of operation was cancelled at the G.P.O., since when a new date-stamp, TRD41², struck in purple, has been used. With the opening of this office, the nearby old-established office of LASCELLES, located in a department store of downtown Kingston, closed permanently at noon on May 22nd.

It now turns out that the KEN JONES agency which opened on February 16th, is an office and not an agency and is situated in Hanover Parish and not Portland! This office, located near Haddington, was named in honour of Ken Jones, a popular politician from the latter parish who recently met an untimely demise. The date-stamp used is TRD36a.

Postal Agencies have been opened on the dates stated in the following parishes:

PARISH	Agency
KINGSTON	— TIVOLI GARDENS (April 20th), TRD41.
MANCHESTER	— BOTTOM ST. TOOLIES (April 17th), TRD36a.
ST. ANDREW	— GUAVA RIDGE (April 21st), TRD36a and TOMS RIVER (May 8th), TRD41d
ST. MARY	— ATHLONE (April 10th), TRD38c.
ST. THOMAS	— BECKFORD TOWN (April 14th), TRD36a and RIVER HEAD (May 12th), TRD41d.

GUAVA RIDGE was the location of a former post office which closed on June 19th, 1894, and the TIVOLI GARDENS agency is the one referred to as Tivoli in my last letter. The ATHLONE agency is to be found at Silver Spring village, but could not use that name as there is a post office policy which prevents new establishments from being given a name already held by another office or agency.

Finally, the postal authorities have been experiencing some difficulty in distinguishing between mails addressed to the DEAN PEN and DEVON PEN agencies in St. Mary Parish. To overcome this situation, Dean Pen agency was renamed KILANCHOLLY on January 20th, using TRD41d.

¹ See News Letter No. 4, Stamp Collecting, December 18th, 1969.

² All TRD types referred to in this and succeeding letters are those of my new listing and not those of the late E. F. Aguilar.