

Jamaica Newsletter No. 18

By Thomas Foster

MY LAST letter mentioned the existence of King George VI ½d and 1d coil stamps and requested further information regarding them. Mr. V. N. F. Surtees of Hopesay, one of our leading specialists, now assures me that these were quite genuine items put on sale during the late 1950s and at the time, an island correspondent informed him that the machines had been taken out of service because they were found to contain more bits of metal than coins!

Newsletter No. 14 mentioned the existence of the K.G.VI 5s value with a previously unrecorded line perf. 14. Mr. Frank Saunders of the King George VI Collectors' Society, now tells me that two further examples of this stamp have been reported to, and checked by, him. One, in a member's collection, is thinned with climatic staining indicating overseas use whilst the other, in an American dealer's stock is used and probably undateable. This stamp would appear, therefore, to have been an overseas release and due to its high face value any reprinting would have been in relatively small numbers. It almost certainly dates back to the days of the London blitz when, as a result of damage to and destruction of machinery at De La Rue's, certain colonial stamps were produced, either wholly or partially, by a firm in Watford.

A total of seven copies are now known and this is yet another example of a good Jamaica variety which should be accorded full catalogue listing instead of being reinstated in the 1974 Gibbons' as a footnote! Incidentally, the July publication of the K.G.VI Collectors' Society deals in some detail with the interesting subject of altered and strengthened dies used in manufacturing the 1½d value, Plate 5, S.G.123.

A small but unusual variety on the 1965 Girl Guides 1s value has recently come to hand. Sheets of this stamp, printed in black, mustard and green normally have three plate numbers, i.e., one for each colour, 1Ax3, but my example has green plate number 1A completely omitted whilst showing the green intact on all stamps.

With the winter tour of the West Indies Cricket XI in mind, one wonders whether those cricket-loving territories will issue a special stamp(s) to commemorate this event as they did in 1968. Then, three attractive stamps in a common design were issued by Jamaica and Guyana in small sheets of nine subjects, and the original drawings and completed artwork for them formed a tiny part of the B.W.I. display at Kingston-upon-Hull in May. St. Lucia also issued two stamps of a similar nature.

A series of pencilled action sketches by Victor Whitely formed the basis of the series and consisted of fieldsmen, bowlers, batsmen, wicket-keepers, umpires and various pieces of equipment, one sketch even showing that particular grip on the ball used by the 'seamer'. Some of the cricketers depicted are recognisable either by appearance or characteristic pose, although care was taken on the issued stamps not to depict actual players. This was done largely because injury or sudden loss of form could have ruled out leading players from selection but also because it was felt that the stamps should be a tribute to past and present contestants in these matches. The completed artwork in full colour was provided with lettering overlays by which the printers were able to produce the stamps for both Jamaica and Guyana from the same design.

The printed frame or sheet margin was the subject of a separate design and the completed sheet was approved by both governments before Harrison, were commissioned to produce them. One wonders why similar beautiful artwork cannot be put on more permanent display instead of being filed away and unavailable to the student or collector.

Postal History.

One or two interesting new items in the pre-stamp field can be reported. ALEXANDRIA, type T4b, with an earliest known date of March 30th, 1834, is the most important whilst KINGSTON K9, dated June 29th, 1864, has been observed with a 'C' index letter, the first postmark of this type to be seen with any indice except 'A'. New latest known dates of September 30th, 1862, for MAY HILL, type P2a and August 9th, 1841, for SPANISH TOWN, type P2a in blue are also worthy of mention.

Turning to more recent times, ALBION MOUNTAIN postal agency was 'Temporarily Closed' on March 15th, 1973, owing to destruction by fire! The only new office to report is that of NORMAN MANLEY, this being the new name for Palisadoes Air Terminal at Port Royal. As a result, the Palisadoes office has also had its name changed and is using two new T.R.D.s, i.e., NORMAN MANLEY T.R.D.41d e.k.d. January 1973. NORMAN MANLEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT T.R.D.88 e.k.d. December 1972.

A positive spate of T.R.D.s have appeared at established offices during the past year, amongst them being ABOVE ROCKS, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. October 20th, 1972); BAMBOO, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. January 5th, 1972); BYBROOK, T.R.D.38b, (e.k.d. April 12th, 1970); COLONEL'S RIDGE, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. January 30th, 1973); ENFIELD, T.R.D.46f, (e.k.d. August 14th, 1972); FAIRBURN, T.R.D.41, (e.k.d. April 7th, 1973); KINGSTON, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. October 6th, 1972); JONES TOWN, T.R.D.38b, (e.k.d. January 16th, 1973); LAWRENCE TAVERN, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. July 31st, 1972); MEADOWBRIDGE, T.R.D.77, (e.k.d. December 22nd, 1972); OLD HARBOUR, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. December 10th, 1972); ROCK HALL, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. December 8th, 1972); SMITHVILLE, T.R.D.41d, (e.k.d. January 19th, 1973) and WHITFIELD TOWN, T.R.D.38b, (e.k.d. April 16th, 1973).

JERICHO has been using two types of T.R.D.; T.R.D.41 (i) with the word 'JAMAICA' 26 mm. in length being known from October 10th, 1967, whilst T.R.D.41(ii), with 'JAMAICA' 21 mm. long, is known used between July 19th, 1970 and February 23rd, 1971. The ENFIELD item is a reversion to the old 'Slip' type of 1952 whilst the MEADOWBRIDGE dater is inscribed at the top, 'Take Delivery at'. The LAWRENCE TAVERN postmark can be distinguished from that of 1968 by having no stars at the sides.

New MSR /SC1 daters have recently appeared at the following places, replacing either obsolete 'Birmingham' types or T.R.D.s issued at opening. Those marked * are in the new small lettering of 1968:-

ABERDEEN*	COTTERWOOD*	KILANCHOLLY
BARBARY HALL*	CUMBERLAND	KINGS VALE*
BARNEYSIDE	DRESSIKIE*	MILES TOWN
BELLAS GATE*	GOLDEN RUN	RIO HOE
BOWENS*	KEMNAY*	SOHO
CONNORS*		

MONTEGO BAY way recently using an SC1 with the numeral '5' in place of the asterisk and possibly other numbers exist as in the case of similar daters for Port Antonio. Finally, can anyone produce a clear readable date-stamp of any kind from a CAREY PARK agency? There is an unsubstantiated report of a postmark from there dated December 17th, 1962, but Jamaica Post Office records only reveal that though it was proposed to establish an agency there in 1967, no further action was taken.