

# Jamaica Newsletter No. 23

By Thomas Foster

The most important mention made in this letter must be the deletion of S.G.123a, the K.G.VI 1½d light red-brown, from the Gibbons 1975 British Commonwealth Catalogue listing. For years, now, Jamaican specialists have been dubious as to its right to hold a place in the catalogue although there was no doubt of its authenticity. However, it is now recognised that it no longer deserves catalogue status any more than do a dozen other shades of the basic 1½d stamp, most of which are stronger candidates for listing and, often, far scarcer than it. Countless examples of stamps purporting to be SG123a have been offered and sold to collectors over the years and there is little doubt that lots of fingers have been burned. No certificate of expertisation has been given for this item in recent years and the old adage of never paying high prices for minor shades has again proved correct. It is surprising how collectors can be gullible enough to pay hard cash for used examples of minor shades whose colour can be affected in so many ways!

In Newsletters 14 and 18<sup>1</sup>, the K.G.VI 5s definitive, line perf. 14 all round, was discussed. A further used copy of this rare stamp has now been found, this time with a Kingston postmark of May 16th, 1942, which would appear to confirm the theory that this was one of the 'blitz' perforations. Keep on checking and see if you can find one dated earlier!

Recently, whilst mounting up some panes and plate blocks of the 1964 1s Scouts' conference issue, it was noted that all identifiable marginal blocks of this value in my collection have the watermark inverted in relation to the sheet and not to the stamp. This is, of course, a triangular stamp with the sheet format ensuring that the watermark runs diagonally across the stamp in a semi-vertical or semi-inverted direction on alternate stamps. Can anyone show me a sheet, or plate block, with the watermark upright in relation to the sheet? If they can, we have yet another watermark variety on Jamaican stamps.

Forthcoming issues announced by the Jamaican Post Office will be for the 25th Anniversary of the University of the West Indies in January; the Heads of Commonwealth Conference in April; indigenous Butterflies in August and Belasario Prints depicting 'John Canoe Dancers' as a Christmas issue in October 1975.

## Military Mail

In Newsletters 4 and 5<sup>2</sup> mention was made of exercises carried out in the Cockpit Country by the Canadian Army and I can now add a little to this story. The first exercise, 'Nimrod Caper', was held in March 1969 and covers are known between the 7th and 16th of that month. Canadian adhesives were used and these were cancelled by the CFPO-5003 date-stamp, illustrated in Newsletter 4, either with or without the year plug.

The next exercise was 'Nimrod Leap I' held between November 3rd and 28th, 1969, the same date-stamp being used but with the time code and the year plug omitted. A further exercise, 'Nimrod Leap II', was held in the Cockpits between February 1st and 17th, 1970, when the main unit participating was the Royal 22nd Regiment. Once again, the same date-stamp was used as in March 1969 but with the year plug expressed in only two figures, i.e. '70'. I understand that there has been a further exercise since and any information regarding it will be reported as obtained.

## Special Event Covers

In Newsletter 20<sup>3</sup>, I mentioned the Scientific Exploration Society expedition which had been carrying out work in the Blue Mountains. This expedition was financed in various ways, one of them being the production of covers posted from the headquarters of the expedition, on site at old Nanny Town, the legendary home of the Windward Maroons, which was totally destroyed during the First Maroon War. The covers are quite colourful and bear the Society crest and the title of the expedition, plus the three hand-

stamps of the expedition in either red or purple, before being posted at Moore Town in Portland Parish (the nearest post office to the old Kingdom of the Windward Maroons) on December 7th, 1973. In addition, a number of covers carry the signature of the expedition leader, Harley Nott.

Readers will recall that I mentioned receiving a letter carrying a red Trelawney Town cachet, posted at the Retirement postal agency in St. Elizabeth, near the old Maroon town of Accompong. Apparently, after the exhibition had completed its work, a few of its members visited this place where they met the present Maroon leader, a rather elderly gentleman called Mann O. Rowe, styled as the 'State Secretary of the Leeward Maroons'. The red Trelawney Town cachet is applied by Mr. Rowe to all letters written by him on 'State' business and it was thus applied to the cover sent to me. The dates refer to the years covering the negotiations for a treaty between the British Government and the Trelawney Maroons under their leader, Cudjoe, the 'Mountain Lion', who established old Trelawney Town in what is now St. James Parish. His brother, Accompong, broke away from the Trelawney Maroons and founded Accompong Town in northern St. Elizabeth. One word of warning. Requests to Mr. Rose for covers with this hand-stamp will not, repeat—not, be entertained!

## Postal History

There are several interesting pre-stamp items to report. The fleuron, type Fla, has now an earliest known date of May 19th, 1811, whilst two new sub-types of the fleuron F4, have been discovered, F4c is obviously a damaged state of the normal date-stamp in which the right-hand 'day' plug has been completely taken out with the 'month' plug moved over into its place: this is known used between November 12th, 1814 and December 20th, 1823—rarity rating, 'VR3' F4d is again the normal date-stamp with the figures '18' missing from the year plug and is, possibly, unique.

The beautiful 'Paid' hand-stamp, PD1, is now known as late as April 25th, 1813 (with a rating of 'VR5'), whilst the 'Too Late' marking, TL1, used at Falmouth in England, is now known as early as December 23rd, 1812 with a rating of 'S'. In addition, I can report a new index combination of 'B3' for the Kingston date-stamp type K12.

Turning to more modern times, I have been shown an airmail cover to the United Kingdom, posted at Kingston and hand-stamped on the obverse with a red marking reading 'FLAG OFFICER /ROYAL YACHTS' of March 1st, 1966. This is obviously, a letter landed at Kingston from the Royal Yacht for further transmission at the start of the Royal Tour of that year. The commemorative stamps, of course, were not issued until two days later. Has anyone any further examples?

The recent spate of new offices appears to have died down and the only change of late has been the upgrading of BEACON HILL in St. Catherine Parish, a former postal subagency, to postal agency status and with a postmark for the first time. Details of this in my next letter. I can also report two new c.d.s., type SC1, for HOPETON, c. August 6th, 1974 in purple and PENNINGTON, c. 1974, in black.

The commemorative TRD reported used at the Pegasus Hotel in Kingston was used at the 6th Commonwealth Education Conference between June 10th and 17th, and is inscribed '6th C.E. CONFERENCE 1974', type TRD41g. Another conference was held at the same hotel in July but its name is as yet unknown to me. It used a type TRD41 inscribed 'ACE-EEC CONFERENCE' and is known between July 22nd and 24th.

Finally, during the last year or so, a new type of registration has been brought into use at chief offices in the Kingston Corporate Area. These show the different Postal District numbers, i.e. ., KINGSTON 10= Halfway Tree.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> STAMP COLLECTING, October 5th, 1972 and September 13th, 1973.

<sup>2</sup> STAMP COLLECTING, December 18th, 1969 and March 26th, 1970.

<sup>3</sup> STAMP COLLECTING, March 14th, 1974.

STAMP COLLECTING, December 19th, 1974

<sup>4</sup> STAMP COLLECTING, February 15th, 1973.