

Jamaica Newsletter No. 32

By Thomas Foster

Evidence of the forward planning and foresight of the Jamaica Post Office can be seen in the four-storied sorting office and administrative building being erected on South Camp Road in Kingston, which will result in quicker and more efficient handling of all mail classes. To make way for this building, the present postal headquarters, formerly the South Camp Hotel, is being demolished. And so passes another landmark of old-time Kingston! How many readers will recall the days when this was one of the first of the modern tourist hotels in the island?

Construction of new post offices at Bridgeport and Waterford in St. Catherine will commence later in the year and provide better facilities around Independence City whilst several others are being rebuilt, including those at Free Hill in St. Mary and Race Course in Clarendon. The new office at Grange Hill in Westmoreland was completed in mid-1976 at a cost of J\$91,000 followed early this year by the completion of the J\$300,000 office at Balaclava in St. Elizabeth. The new office at Mandeville will be finished shortly and will relieve the strain now being experienced by the offices in that town.

There have been numerous references in our philatelic press of late regarding the post bus services introduced in this country with such a fanfare by the British Post Office. It may come as a shock to learn that such vehicles have operated in Jamaica successfully from 1st November, 1881, and that at my last count, in 1964, no less than 47 routes were being operated covering the whole of the island! Since then, these services have greatly extended and are extremely popular and much used, due to the lack of public road transport except around the Lower St. Andrew and Kingston areas.

Routes taken generally connect up the villages in a certain rural area with either the nearest railway station or large town on a main road but to the best of my knowledge, no tickets or stamps are issued. Could it be that the British Post Office actually 'pinched' this idea from Jamaica?

Postal History

The 'Command Paymaster' datestamps mentioned in my last letter brought a number of letters from ex-members of the Royal Army Pay Corps with the necessary information. As surmised, they were not connected with postal service but simply used as authenticating stamps on imprest accounts, controlled documents, etc. They can be found struck on the inside of envelopes as an official endorsement by the officer concerned and all we require now is for someone to turn up an example from Jamaica!

Those who purchased the very successful Censor book published last year¹, may be interested to learn that the second volume of this study is to appear in early November. It will include articles dealing with the Bahamas, Bermuda, British Honduras, French West Indies, Dominica, Montserrat, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, and the Virgin Islands, plus a detailed resume relating to the Jamaican censorship handstamps of both world wars. The previous articles dealing with Barbados, Cayman Islands, Grenada and Antigua have been completely rewritten whilst amendments to the sections dealing with British Guiana, St. Lucia and the Jamaican Censorship Labels are also included. Volume 2, in A4 size, will be larger than the previous one and at the moment, its price cannot be quoted, but readers wishing to order should contact Dr. G. G. Ritchie, 16 Stray Walk, Harrogate, Yorkshire, for details.

Readers interested in Jamaican or West Indian philately who do not belong either the 'Roses' or the British West Indies Study Circle, may like to know that the 2nd Joint Convention of both societies will be held on Saturday, 5th November, at the Lord Leycester Hotel, Warwick. If this is anything like the previous

convention, it will be well worth attending and a card to either secretary will bring further details.

On several occasions of late, enquiries have been received pertaining to various commemorative postmarks and it may be an idea to run quickly through those occurring in my collection. These notes are not complete and the odd item may have been omitted but there is no need to mention how scarce some of these slogans are and how difficult it is to obtain good strikes of many of them. Actual or approximate dates of use are quoted after the given type numbers and all were used at the Kingston G.P.O. unless otherwise stated:

1. 'JAMAICA EXHIBITION 91 /POST OFFICE'. Type KSQC3, 2nd-16th May, 1891. Used at the International Exhibition, Kingston, depicted on the fit adhesive of 1920.
2. 'BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION 1924'. 'Krag' type Slogan, 30th July, 1923-September 1924. Advertising the London Exhibition.
3. 'JAMAICA PHILATELIC EXHIBITION'. Type TRD27, 21st-26th February, 1927. Used at the 2nd J.P.E. held at 85 Barry Street, Kingston.
4. 'JAMAICA WELCOMES (H.R.H. DUKE OF/ GLOUCESTER)'. Slogan, 6th-16th March, 1935. One of the rarest of Jamaican slogan postmarks!
5. 'JAMAICA PHILATELIC EXHIBITION / THIRD STAMP EXHIBITION :AT NATHAN'S STORE'. Type TRD32, 3rd- 10th February, 1938. Used at the exhibition.
6. 'GONE TO /KINGS HOUSE FAIR /JULY 12'. Slogan, May-July 1944. Local event to raise war funds and a scarce slogan. Kings House was in Spanish Town and is shown on the 2d adhesive of 1921.
7. '1ST CARIBBEAN /JAMBOREE / BRIGGS PARK, JAMAICA'. Types TRD53(i) and (ii), 5th- 14th March, 1952. Two daters existed, one being used at the event, the other at the G.P.O.
8. 'FAIRFIELD'. Type TRD41, 24th November-3rd December, 1952. Used at the British West Indies Conference held at the Fairfield Country Club, Montego Bay.
9. 'VISIT /THE JAMAICA TATTOO 1953 / JUNE 2-3-4-5-6'. Slogan, 27th February-6th June, 1953. Advertising the Coronation Tattoo.
10. 'JAMAICA WELCOMES HER MAJESTY'. Slogan, 25th November-1st December, 1953.
11. 'VISIT JAMAICA/1655-L955 / TERCENTENARY YEAR'. Slogan, 26th April-6th December, 1955.
12. 'POST '300' OFFICE'. Type TRD55, 10th-12th May, P155. Tercentenary special handstamp.
13. 'THE BOYS BRIGADE /CARIBBEAN / INTERNATIONAL /CAMP /1958'. Slogan, 9th-25th April, 1958.
14. 'KINGSTON JAMAICA WEST INDIES'. 22nd April, 1958 only? Special handstamp depicting Federation Arms used to cancel f.d.c. of the B.W.I. Federation issue.
15. 'WITH FAITH /AND COURAGE /INTO THE FUTURE /INDEPENDENCE AUGUST 6TH 1962'. Slogan, 28th June-28th September, 1962. Used at Cross Roads, Half Way Tree, Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, St. Anna Bay, Savannah La Mar and Spanish Town only???
16. 'NATIONAL STADIUM'. Type TRD61, 11th-25th August, 1962. Used at the IX Central American and Caribbean Games.
17. 'SHERATON KINGSTON HOTEL / VI INTER-AMERICAN SCOUT / CONFERENCE' Type TRD65, 2nd-29th August, 1964. Used at the conference.
18. 'GIRLS GUIDE GOLDEN JUBILEE / INTERNATIONAL CAMP UP PARK CAMP'. Type TRD69, 30th July-19th August, 1965. Used only at the camp. A type TRD41 dater inscribed only 'UP PARK CAMP' was considered too plain and discarded in favour of this item. Proof strikes exist.
19. 'SUPPORT UNITED NATIONS' Slogan, 1st-21st October, 1965.
20. 'COURTLEIGH MANOR'. Type TRD41, 2nd-4th March, 1966. This hotel was the Press Headquarters for the Royal Visit of that year.
21. 'COMMONWEALTH /GAMES / JAMAICA AUG. 1966'. Slogan 23rd June-11th July, 1966.
22. 'REMEMBER OUR GAMES /AUGUST 1966'. Slogan, 7th-23rd July, 1966. Used at Cross Roads and Montego Bay only?
23. 'B.E. & C.G. NATIONAL STADIUM P.O.'. Type TRD71, 4th-13th August, 1966. Special handstamp of the 8th British Empire & Commonwealth Games. A larger TRD resembling this dater was originally made but considered unsuitable and never used. Proof strikes exist.

¹ West Indian Civil Censorship Devices in World War II, Handbook No. 1, published by the Roses Caribbean Philatelic Society.

24. 'B.C.P.S.G.'. Type TRD55, 23rd-24th November, 1967. Used at the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group meeting held in Kingston.
25. 'M.C.C. W.I. TOUR'. Type TRD73, 8th-17th February, 1968. On the occasion of the Test Match and visit to the island.
26. 'HUMAN RIGHTS /YEAR 1968'. Slogan, 20th January-28th October, 1968. Used at Kingston and Spanish Town only?
27. 'THE RIGHTS OR ALL / THE DUTY OF EACH' Slogan, 18th February 1968-6th July, 1971. Human Rights Year. Used at Half Way Tree, Mandeville and Montego Bay only?
28. 'THE RIGHTS OF ALL / TO EQUALITY' Slogan, 10th May 1968-23rd November, 1971. Human Rights Year. Used at Half Way Tree only?
29. 'MENTAL HEALTH /WEEK'. Slogan, 5th-24th April, 1969.
30. 'INTERNATIONAL /CONSUMERS SEMINAR'. Slogan, 10th April-1st September, 1969. Location of seminary unknown. Used at Cross Roads and Kingston only?
31. 'NATIONAL HERITAGE /WEEK / OCTOBER 19- 26'. Slogan, 19th October-27th November, 1969. Used at Half Way Tree, Kingston, Mandeville and Montego Bay only?
32. 'POPULATION CENSUS /APRS. 1970'. Slogan, 17th March-2nd July, 1970. Used at Cross Roads and Kingston only?
33. 'DENTAL HEALTH /WEEK', Slogan, 3rd-8th May, 1971.
34. '3RD PAN-AMERICAN WHEELCHAIR GAMES'. Type TRD41, 17th-22nd July, 1970. A special cover was also produced for this event.
35. 'JAMAICA / 300 YEARS / OF SERVICE' Special handstamp, 30th October, 1971 only? Used at special post office to cancel Tercentenary, f.d.c.
36. 'BARNEYSIDE'. Type TRD73a, 30th October, 1975. Used at the special post office to cancel covers franked only with the 10c. value of the Tercentenary issue. This postmark was never used at the Barneyside agency, which used a dater as illustrated on that stamp.
37. 'DISCOVERY BAY'. Type B1, 30th October, 1971. Withdrawn temporarily from Discovery Bay post office and used at the special post office to cancel covers franked only with the 5c adhesive. Covers bearing items 36 and 37 are often additionally franked with an undated embossed marking similar to item 35 but bearing the name 'JAMAICA /PHILATELIC /SOCIETY'.
38. 'K.S.A.C. / FIRE DEPARTMENT / CENTENARY'. Slogan, 10th December-6th January, 1972. Centenary of the Kingston & St. Andrew Corporation Fire Department. Used at Half Way Tree and Kingston only?
39. 'XXV ANNIVERSARY / O.A.S. 1948-1973'. Slogan, 5th October, 1973-20th June 1974. 25th Anniversary of the Organisation of American States.
40. 'C.I.A.T. 8TH 1974'. Type TRD41, 27th May-1st June, 1974. Special post office in the Pegasus Hotel for the 8th General Assembly of the Inter-American Centre of Tax Administrators!
41. '6TH. C.E. CONFERENCE 1974'. Type TRD41g, 10th-17th June, 1974. As previous item but for the Commonwealth Education Conference.
42. 'ACP-EEC CONFERENCE'. Type TRD41, 22nd-24th July, 1974. Does anyone know what these initials represent or where the conference was held? [Ed note: African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP), European Economic Community (EEC)]
43. 'COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVT. MEETING'. Types TRD80(i)-(iv), 29th April-1st May, 1975. Two daters were used at the G.P.O., whilst the other two were used respectively in the special post offices in the Pegasus and Sheraton hotels. Differences are detailed in Newsletter 25

Two dies exist of several of the Kingston slogans mentioned and most can be found used with more than one type of dating unit. Nothing is known of any later commemorative postmarks but it is possible that one was used at the recent 'Young Commonwealth' conference at Ocho Rios. Finally, there are several instances of postmarks being produced but never used. Commemorative envelopes were produced for many events not covered by either special adhesives or postmarks and many of these are quite rare although they are not within the scope of these notes.