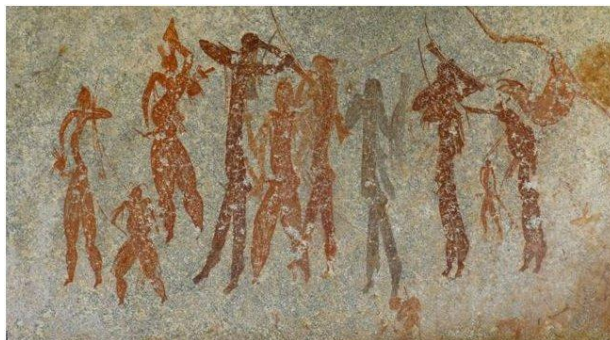


ROCK PAINTINGS

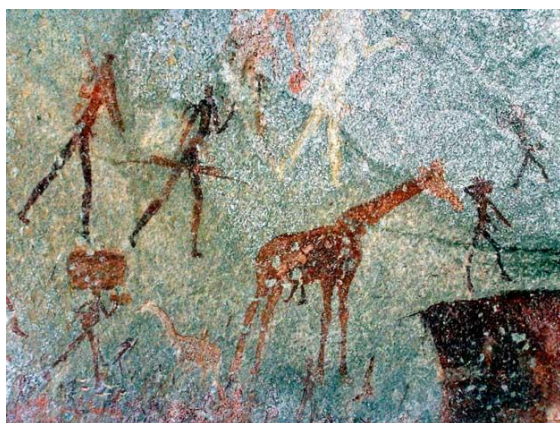
Issues 17th March, 1982

The greater the age of the paintings the less likelihood that they will be sufficiently clear for good photography and because of this, the six selected for this stamp issue are not of the earliest styles. Nevertheless, they give a reasonable cross section of the magnificent rock art which occurs throughout Zimbabwe

The art is one of continuous development from simple wooden-like figures of antelope and filiform humans to quite remarkable paintings full of life and movement. The human figures are rarely detailed at any point in the long development. Some, however, show steatopygia and lordosis of the spine, a physical feature common to both the bushman and the hottentot people. Only in very few paintings are facial characteristics shown.



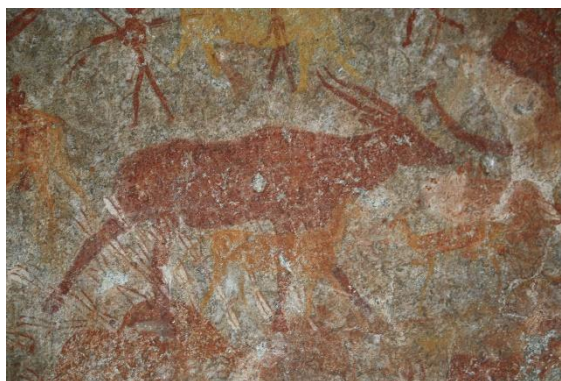
Rock painting near Lake Chivero



Rock paintings in Matobo Hills

No longer are animals drawn entirely sideways but heads are turned backwards, animals are lying down, kneeling or in the act of rising. The drawings in this phase are undoubtedly some of the finest examples of prehistoric rock art in the world. The next major step was the introduction of white pigment and polychrome paintings. This last phase of the truly prehistoric paintings was one of experiment, and often a return to ancestral techniques. Pure outline, and infill, and caricatures of animals and humans are common features.

The technique of painting changes from time to time. Initially, all figures are in pure silhouette viewed from the side and always in monochrome. If an outline was drawn it was in some fugitive pigment, for none can now be seen. The next phase has a clear outline and is filled in with a lighter tone of the same colour. Here the artists were greatly involved with the expression of movement both in animal and human forms. Stress is also placed on the grouping of animals, often shown in a different pose, but still each in one colour only. An experimental phase followed in which both human and animal are drawn in outline. Details of mane, forelock, dewlap and stripes are shown.



Rock painting in Matobo Hills



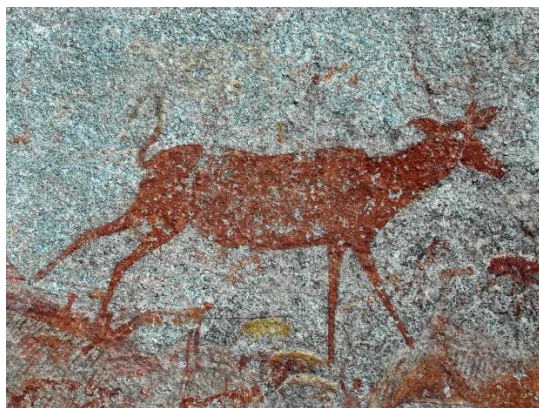
Nswatugi Cave, Matobo Hills

The paintings have the appearance of urgency and whilst the drawing is accurate, it is often sketchy and the infill rough as if applied with something similar to a palette knife. Graduation of colour to give a roundness to the figures is a feature, but unfortunately a rare one, because many of these figures are badly faded. The intermixing of a white pigment with the other colours has made them fugitive. Trees and simple landscapes are not uncommon in a number of paintings.

Tectiform compositions are a very important subject in this final phase. They were obviously of great significance to the artist and observer. So far, no satisfactory explanation as to their meaning or what they represent has been forthcoming.



Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve



Matobo Hills

The final phase of the rock art was probably influenced by the arrival of the immigrant negroids bringing with them strange animals, iron working, pottery and agriculture. The ever-increasing influence of these people may well have caused the urgency shown in the art and, unfortunately, was finally responsible for its termination. We know they saw these immigrants because sheep and cattle are depicted in this final phase.

To what heights this art would have risen, if it had been continued, is difficult to estimate when it is realised that the position of the legs of galloping animals is absolutely correct, whilst the attitude of those painted by European artists, even in Victorian times, is often quite absurd.

The pigments used throughout were obtained from local minerals — mainly oxides of iron, while white may well have been kaolin, limestone, talc, or even bird droppings. Brushes could have been made from fibrous plants, hair or feathers whilst bone may well have been used as palette knives. Blood, gum, egg or water could have been used as a medium for applying the paint.

It is possible that the earliest paintings were executed as long as 10 000 years ago, whilst the latest are comparatively modern.

(Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 1982²)

The Stamps

9 Cents — Gwamgwadza Cave, Mtoko Area

Here are seen three human figures, with steatopygia and lordosis of the spine, features common to the Khoisan people. The position of the figures varies, two carry flywhisks whilst the running figure carries a quiver with an arrow having a lunate head appearing over his shoulder.



(Jono Waters in the Heritage Magazine says that this rock painting is in the Mucheka Cave, Masana Communal Land.³)



11 Cents — Epworth Mission Near Salisbury

A standing kudu bull is seen near a tectiform composition. The human figures appear to have no faces. These were once painted in a white pigment which, being fugitive, has long since disappeared. This type of human is often referred to as hook-headed. The outline and infill method of painting is very clear.

17 Cents -- Diana's Vow Near Rusape

This depicts only a small part of the most complex and interesting friezes of prehistoric art in Africa. Several different techniques can be recognised. The large figure of a buffalo is the earliest, the gourds, baskets and human figures are very late in the sequence. The whippet-like dog next to the large human figure may well be the first evidence we have of domestication. The gourds may represent the introduction of agriculture. Whilst the paintings probably show Iron Age activities there is little doubt that they were painted by Late Stone Age artists.



21 Cents - Gwamgwadza Cave, Mtoko Area

The two giraffe show the reticulated pattern of the skin exceptionally well. Although white pigment can still be seen on the heads, that of the lower legs and hooves has almost entirely disappeared. The fragmentary human figures in the top left hand corner are of an earlier phase.

(Jono Waters in the Heritage Magazine says that this rock painting is in the Mucheka Cave, Masana Communal Land.³)

25 Cents — Mucheka Cave, Msana Communal Land

A magnificent portrait of a warthog. Its tail is in the normal and correct upright position adopted when the animal is ready to move. The sideways view of the tusks is unusual but was probably adopted to emphasise their truly massive proportions





30 Cents — Chinzwini Shelter, Chiredzi Area

Depicting a line of running hunters carrying bows and arrows - a hunting scene which is very common to all areas. The bows are simple but the arrow-heads vary in many cases. Some have flat heads for stunning birds, while some are crescentic shaped and others barbed. These are often illustrated in the same quiver thus indicating the different hunting techniques employed by these primitive people.

Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
610	33	9c	Three human figures
611	34	11c	Kudu bull with human figures
612	35	17c	Complex composition of human figures and animals
613	36	21c	Giraffes
614	37	25c	Warthog
615	38	30c	Running hunters

Technical details

Stamp size:	42 x 28 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet
Artist:	
Paper:	ZSC paper type B – HS6, florescent coated paper with PVA gum with a blueish/greenish tinge.
Print colours:	All values – cyan, yellow, magenta & black
Perforations:	SG 14½, ZSC 14¼ Top margin: Perforated through Other margins: Imperforate
Printer:	Mardon Printers (Pvt) Ltd., Salisbury, Zimbabwe
Printer's Imprint:	Bottom margin below columns 2 to 4. Imprint printed in black
Cylinder numbers:	Cyls. 1A & 1B bottom margin above R1/5, colours reading across from left – yellow, cyan, magenta, black
Colour register:	Type TL 4 – round boxed - left margin opposite R1/5, colours reading down – black, magenta, cyan, yellow
Sheet Value:	Bottom margin, above R1/1, all printed in black

Sheet Number:	Type SN 4a with 'PTC' prefix, right margin opposite R1/1, reading upwards.			
Print numbers:	9c	2,000,000	11c	1,000,000
	17c	750,000	21c	750,000
	25c	500,000	30c	300,000
Issue date:	17 th March, 1982 (Postal Notice No 2 of 1982, published 26.02.1982)			
Withdrawal from sale:	16 th June 1982			
Demonetarisaton:	31 st January, 1994			

Use of 5th printing plate

This is a spectacular variety which indicates firstly water on one of the printing plates and secondly the use of two black printing plates.

A close up of part of the block is shown below.



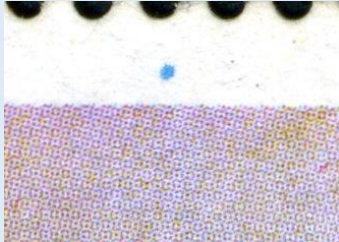
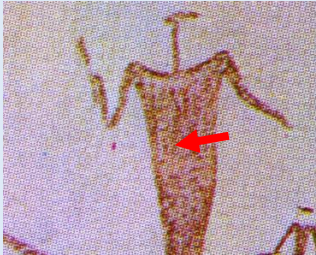
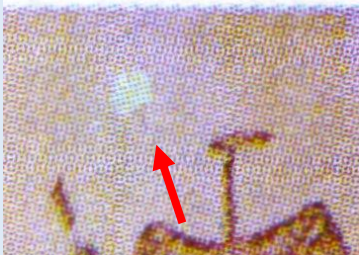
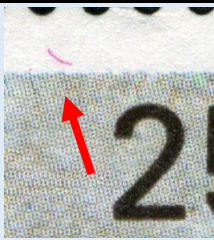
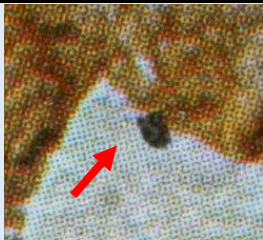
Here is a very clear divide between the left part of the above close up and the right. The missing colour on the right being black. But the text on the right side of the stamps – '11c' and '1982' are still clearly visible. Therefore, there must be a second black plate with the text.

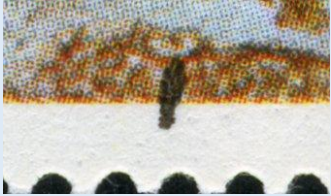


Listed varieties

Published lists of varieties started to appear in the newsletters of the Mashonaland Philatelic Society (MPS) and the Royal Philatelic Society of Bulawayo (newsletter called 'Magnify'). These lists, in some instances, provide varieties of the smallest dots and specks. At the end of this section is a consolidated list compiled from philatelic society newsletters.

Below are some easy to see varieties, not all of which are shown in the consolidated lists. Care needs to be taken in identifying varieties for this issue. The illustrations are complex, in particular, the 17c, many dots and slashes are seen on the stamps which can be found as part of the main design and on all stamps.

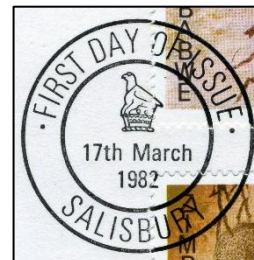
 9c - Magenta dot below wing in running birdman	 9c - Cyan dot to the right of the first 'B' of Zimbabwe, and magenta dot above fee of lying figure	
 11c - Black dot to left of 'M', and elbow of large man	 11c - Cyan dot above kudu	 11c - Cyan dot centre of top margin
 11c - Magenta dot below elbow of large man Cyl 1A R2/2	 11c - 'Blue Moon' above large figure – water on plate following cyan	 21c - Magenta line below large giraffe to left
 25c – dot to left of '2' of value. Cyl 1A R9/3	 25c – Magenta line top margin left of value	 25c - Black ink splash to belly of warthog

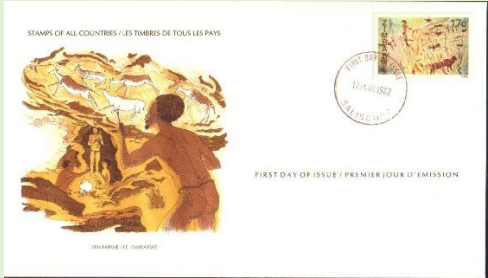
 25c - Black ink slash to centre of picture, bottom margin	 30c – Cyan dot above figure at left. Cyl 1B R1/4	 30c – Cyan dot left of upper figure
 30c - Magenta smudge near top left corner	 30c – Magenta splash above figure to left	

First Day Covers

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear.

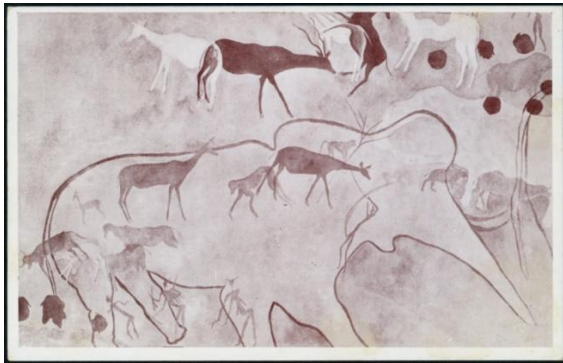
A special first day of issue canceller was produced for this issue and was used by the Philatelic Bureau. Other first day cover cancellers continued to be used at main post offices.



ZW007-1 (PTC)  217 x 134 mm	ZW007-2  International Society of Postmasters 203 x 104 mm
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Related material

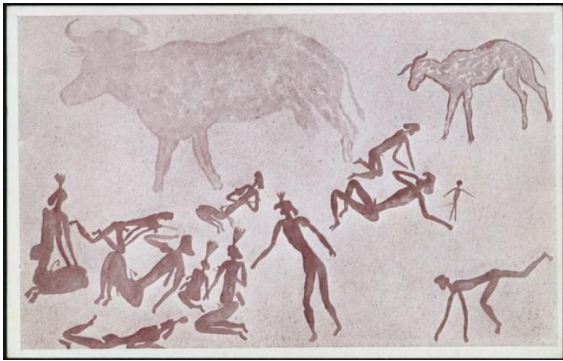
A series of six postcards from an unknown local publisher, of unknown date prior to 1970.



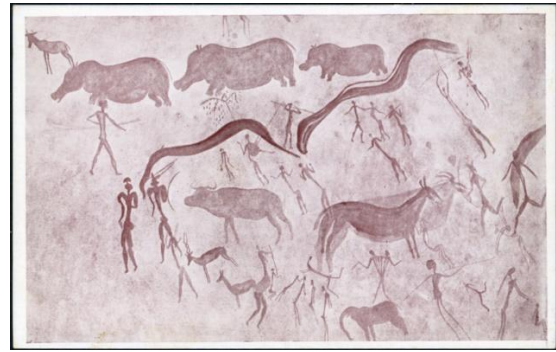
No 1: Mukumbe Cave, 32 miles north of Salisbury



No 2: 16 miles west of Salisbury, Elladale Farm close to Hunyani River

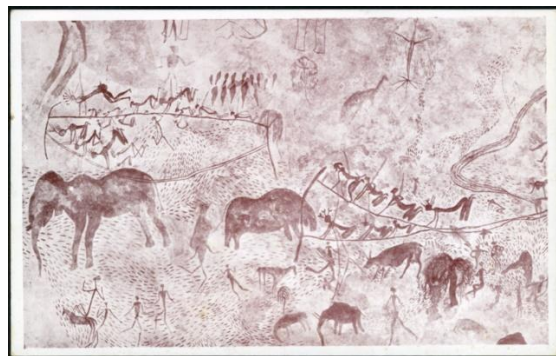


No 3: Mrewa Cave, 55 miles north-east of Salisbury



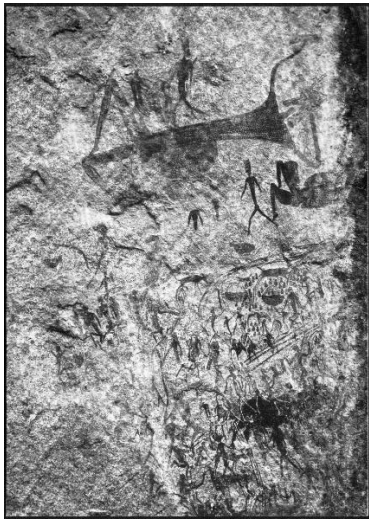
No 4: 18 miles west of Salisbury, Somerby Farm on Gatooma Road

No 5: required

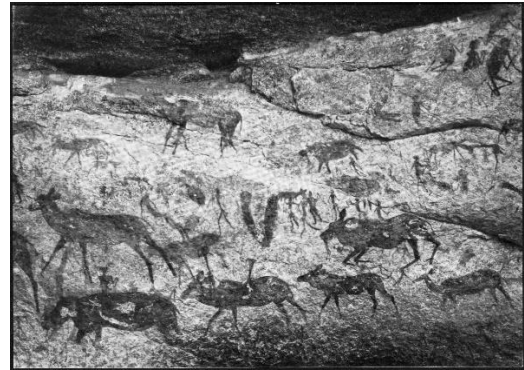


No 6: Glen Norah Farm, Beatrice Road, south of Salisbury

Below are two postcards from a pack of cards produced by a German publisher based in Ludwigsburg

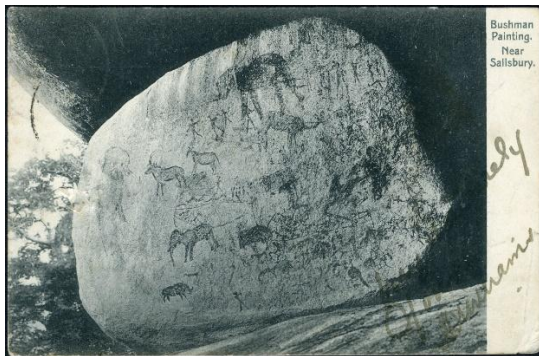


Diana's Vow cave, Near Headlands

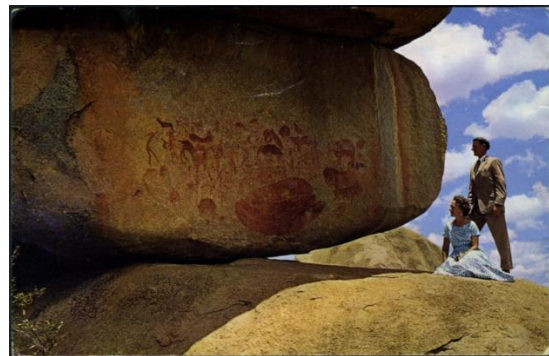


Markwe Cave, near Marandellas

Other postcards with rock paintings, include



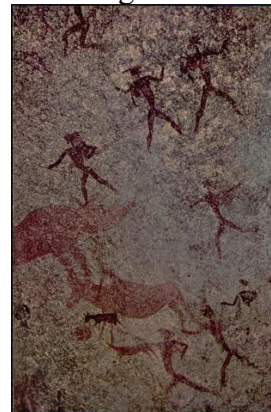
Card from the 1910/20s, produced by Strachan & Co, Salisbury.
"Bushman Paintings near Salisbury"



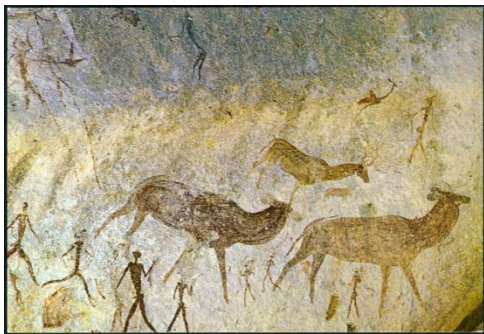
Card from the 1950/60s, produced by PPI (Pvt)Ltd.
"Bushmen's Paintings on Balancing Rocks"



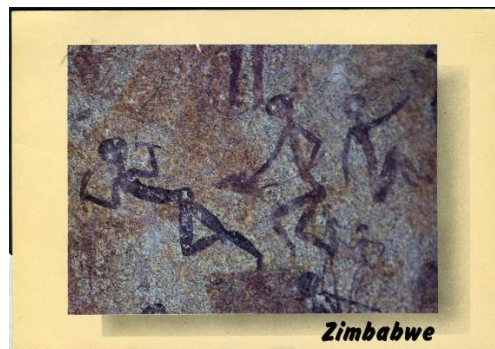
The lengths some people dress up, even to view bushman paintings in a dirty and dusty kopje!



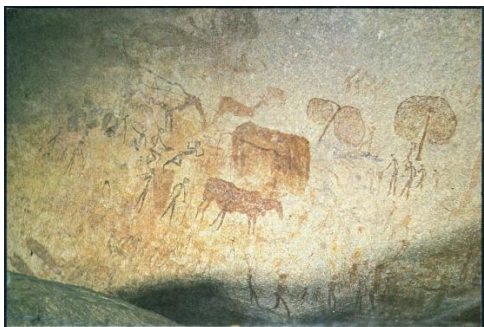
Card from Federal period (as is the card to the left) promoting the Federation



Card produced by P.P.I Spicers (Pvt) Ltd
“Rock Paintings” - Unknown location



Card produced by PhotoSafari
Photo by A Allan. “Bushman Paintings”



Card distributed by Nationwide
Newsagents, unknown location.

Additions/Changes since December 2020	
8/2026	Additional postcard

Bibliography:

1. “The Zimbabwean Concise Postage Stamp Catalogue”, published by Harare Stamp Company, edited by Ken Allanson, Mike Amos and Geoff Brakspear. The catalogue continues to be updated and expanded by Geoff Brakspear
2. PTC Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 1982.
3. “The Philatelic Uniqueness of Zimbabwe’s Hyperinflation Period”, Jonathan Walters, Heritage of Zimbabwe, Publication No 31, 2012, published by the History Society of Zimbabwe.

Reported by Mashonaland Philatelic Society newsletter and Magnify, and checked with M Amos' sheets.

Cyl	Row	Col	
9 Cents			
1A	3	4	a short vertical line to right of 'W' of Zimbabwe
	4	1	black dot in top margin below 8 th perforation hole
	4	4	- a blue dot to the right of the first 'B' of Zimbabwe - magenta dot over left leg of figure lying down
1B	2	5	blue vertical line to right of navel of tallest figure
	5	5	red dash below left hand of tallest figure
	10	2	blue dot left of neck of tallest figure
11 Cents			
	Common		- a smudge to the left of 'W' of Zimbabwe - a yellow dash and blue dot over 'c' of value (note this may be obscured if there is a shift in black plate)
1A	2	2	brown dot under elbow of large figure
	3	4	- black dot left of 'M' of Zimbabwe, - black dot at left of elbow
	3	5	blue dot over antelope at left
	6	1	red dot 5 mm right of 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	8	5	dark dot at left edge of design opposite 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	9	2	two tiny vertical dashes in and below top margin over the large figure
	9	5	black dot in top margin over c of value
1B	5	4	arrow on buck's back - a small vertical brown dash
	9	2	brown dot to right of chest of large figure
	9	4	small vertical dash and two dots to right of 'Z' of Zimbabwe
17 Cents			
1A	2	3	- dot to right of buttocks of third figure from left, opposite first 'B' of Zimbabwe - tiny blue dot under the bird (?) or cooking pot at top
1B	1	1	dot on junction of front legs of dog in upper centre
21 Cents			
1A	2	4	fair sized dot in left margin opposite 'M' of Zimbabwe
	3	2	brown dot in margin, left of 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	5	3	brown dot in margin at top right hand corner of design
1B			Nil
25 Cents			
1A	3	1	tiny dot in left margin opposite 'WE' of Zimbabwe
	3	3	tiny dot in left margin opposite 'BA' of Zimbabwe
	4	5	blue dot over left ear
	5	3	brown dot in top margin over left ear
	5	4	oval spot under '5' of value
	7	1	brown dot above warthog's back opposite 'M' of Zimbabwe

Cyl	Row	Col	
	8	1	red dash in top margin left of 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	8	3	red spot on border, right of 'E' of Zimbabwe
	9	3	oval spot in front of '2' of value
1B	1	3	small dot in top margin over hindquarters
	1	5	small dot at edge of design to top right of 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	2	1	faint oblique dash in left margin opposite 'BW' of Zimbabwe
	4	1	dot in left margin opposite second 'B' of Zimbabwe
	4	2(?3)	dot left of 'I' of Zimbabwe
	4	4	dot in top margin near left corner
	6	4	dot in top margin over hump
	8	1	dot in bottom margin left of '1982'
	8	4	blue dot under jaw
	9	4	brown dot in right margin opposite tusks
30 Cents			
1A	2	3	blue dot under the arm on left of upper figure and a 'wand' flaw which is a vertical dash to the left of the head of the right hand figure. This one is interesting because it looks to be like part of the original
	3	4	• dot left of 'I' of Zimbabwe • blue dot above 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	4	1	blue dash to right of 'W' of Zimbabwe
	4	2	blue dash to right of 'M' of Zimbabwe
	4	4	• brown dot in margin, right of 'Z' of Zimbabwe. • red dot below left side of '3' of value
	4	5	• brown dot left of 'hillside', opposite 'M' of Zimbabwe. • red dot in top margin below 10th perforation hole. • red dot 6 mm right of 'M' of Zimbabwe
	5	2	• dot in left margin opposite first 'B' of Zimbabwe. • blue dot in top margin below 6th perforation hole
	6	3	blue dots, in bottom margin above 9 th perforation hole, 5 mm left of '1982'
	7	2	red dot in top margin above 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	8	1	blue smudge (hoof print!) 5 mm left of '1982'
1B	1	4	dot left of 'hillside' opposite 'BA' of Zimbabwe
	3	2	'blood spoor' left of 'hillside' opposite 'MB' of Zimbabwe
	4	1	vertical dash over head of upper figure
	5	2	three black dots across the upper centre
	6	1	• brown dot behind head of 2nd left figure, • dot in top margin over 'c' of value
	7	4	• three dots diagonally from MB of Zimbabwe downwards to right
	7	5	• dot before knee of 2 nd left figure and one under right hand figure
	8	4	• blue dot right of 'Z' of Zimbabwe
	9	2	• dot right of 'M' of Zimbabwe