

FIRST FEDERAL DEFINITIVE ISSUE

Issued 1st July, 1954

Additional value (2½d) issued 15th February 1956

Background

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Constitution) Order-in-Council (No 1199 of 1953) was made on 1st August, 1953, which provided for the establishment of the Federation. The Order-in-Council contained as an annexure the Constitution of the Federation and defined, amongst other things, the functions and power of the Governor-General, the Legislature, the Executive, the Judiciary and the African Affairs Board.¹ The Order brought certain provisions of the Constitution into operation. The first Governor-General, Lord Llewellyn, assumed office on 4 September. On 23 October 1953, Llewellyn issued a proclamation bringing the remainder of the provisions of the Constitution into operation.

The Federal Government was granted exclusive legislative powers in regard to matters listed in the second schedule of the constitution. Those powers included matters related to posts, telegraphs and telephones. Colonial S R Tait, the Postmaster-General of Southern Rhodesia was appointed Postmaster-General designate for Federal postal services. A working party, under his chairmanship, was formed to deal with posts and telecommunications services and experts were appointed from various fields of operation to make arrangements to integrate the three territorial services. This ultimately led to the promulgation of the Posts and Telegraphs Act, No 20 of 1954, which came into law on 6th August,¹ 1954. The Ministry of Posts assumed responsibility for postal services on 1st September, 1954.²

First stamp issue

Under the working party, work immediately commenced with the requirement of issuing stamps in the name of "Rhodesia & Nyasaland". As the stamps had to be in place relatively quickly, there was no time for considering a pictorial set of definitive stamps as had been the case with the 1953 Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland pictorial definitive issues. Northern Rhodesia had continued with same stamp design for its Queen Elizabeth definitive issue as used by her predecessors Kings George V & VI.

Whether all the printer's invited to submit designs for the first definitive issue of the Federation were provided with a portrait of the new crowned Queen or not is unknown. But all of them appeared to use the same or very similar portraits. Opposite is a black and white printing of a portrait, no further information at present has been received to confirm whether it was used or not.

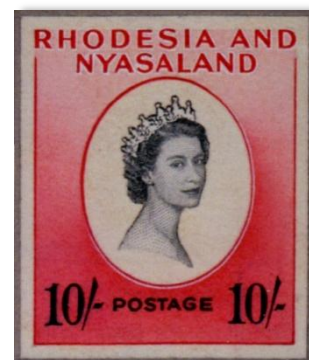


Opposite is a portrait of the Queen from the Waterlow archive. Otto Peetoom suggests that this head proof (number 19690) was copied for the low value stamps. Otto also suggests that there were minor differences in the engraving of the low value master die. He also suggests that this engraving closely resembles the Queen's portrait used in the 1955 Bechuanaland definitive.⁹ The Bechuanaland vignette only has the head and neck of the Queen, and the vignette was found in the Waterlow archive with the number 19703.⁷ Given the proximity of the numbers this could be right.



The 1953 definitive issues by the three territories were printed by three different UK printers – Waterlow & Sons (S Rhodesia), De la Rue (N Rhodesia) and Bradbury, Wilkinson (Nyasaland). Probably in order not to have an initial dispute between the three territories postal administrations, all three printers were invited to submit designs for the first issue. The designs were to be based on a portrait of the Queen by Dorothy Wilding. All three printers submitted suggested designs as painted artwork mounted on single or multiple cards.

The designs for each of the printers below are copied from those presentation cards.



The three designs submitted by T De la Rue & Co Ltd



The four designs submitted by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co Ltd



The three designs submitted by Waterlow & Sons Ltd

(All of the above images were sourced from the RSC Journal No 280 on archival material held by Patrick Flanagan)³



(Source RSC website)

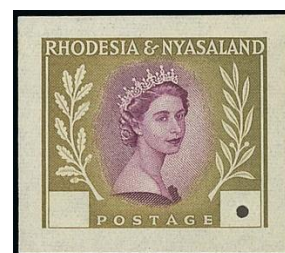
It would appear that Bradbury Wilkinson also submitted the four designs in a single colour of green.

What is most helpful from this archival material is that this gives us a date for when it was submitted – 16th September 1953.

This date gives an insight of how quickly the working party had got to work, and suggests that perhaps they were at work on this issue before the promulgation of the Order-in-Council.

Having considered the designs submitted, the working party decided to award the commissioning and printing of the stamps to Waterlow & Sons. Waterlow was asked to finalise the design of the three stamp designs, with the smaller design to suit nine values from ½d to 1sh, the middle size for four values from 1sh3d to 5sh and the large design for the 10sh and £1 stamps

Waterlow's first task was to finalise the designs of the three bands of stamps through the production of a master dies. These were later printed and placed on presentation cards, the low value stamp by itself and the two higher values together,



(Above images were sourced from the RSC Journal No 280 on archival material held by Patrick Flanagan)³

(Source Spink auction November 2022)

Proofs from master dies of the three value range stamps

The colours of these master prints followed those of their hand painted designs. No evidence of colour trials has been seen. Waterlow presentation cards with imperforate proof stamps in the stamps final colours have been released.

(Source Spink auction November 2022)



More detailed examination of the Waterlow archive dies and proofs is contained in a section at the end of this Encyclopaedia chapter.

The Stamps





Catalogue listings

SG ⁴	RSC ⁵	Value	SG colours first/ <i>RSC colours in italics</i> , where different
1	577	½d	Red-orange (SG perf 13½ x 14)
2	578	1d	Ultramarine/ <i>blue</i>
3	579	2d	Bright green
3a	580	2½d	Ochre/ <i>brown-yellow</i> (issued 15.02.1956)
4	581	3d	Carmine-red
5	582	4d	Red-brown/ <i>chocolate</i>
6	583	4½d	Blue-green/ <i>deep bluish-green</i>
7	584	6d	Bright reddish purple/ <i>bright purple</i>
a.			Bright purple (issued 05.05.1956)
8	585	9d	Violet/ <i>slate lilac</i>
9	586	1sh	Grey-black
10	587	1sh3d	Red-orange & ultramarine/ <i>blue</i>
11	588	2sh	Deep blue/ <i>Prussian blue</i> & yellow-brown
12	589	2sh6d	Black & rose-red
13	590	5sh	Violet & olive-green/ <i>olive</i>
14	591	10sh	Dull blue-green/ <i>slate green</i> & orange
15	592	£1	Olive-green & lake/ <i>pale lake</i>

Technical details

In dealing with the technical details, the sheet values will firstly be examined, followed by coils and booklets. The details of the sheet stamps will be dealt with firstly on the low values (½d to 1sh), followed by middle values (1sh3d to 5sh) and finally high values (10sh & £1). Most of the technical detail have been extracted from “A Guide to the Postage stamps of the Rhodesias & Nyasaland”⁶

Sheet Stamps

Low values (½d to 1sh)

Stamp size: 19 x 22 mm

Sheet sizes: ½d to 3d Sheets of 240 stamps (12 rows by 20)
4d to 1sh Sheets of 60 (6 rows by 10)

Plates: ½d to 3d Individual undivided plates
4s to 1sh Four panes of 60 stamps.⁷

Plate numbers:⁷

½d	46134 & 46781	1d	46133, 46782, 46980 & 47266
2d	46130 & 46131	2½d	46796, 46797# & 46981
3d	46129	4d	46189
4½d	46187	6d	46188
9d	46185	1sh	46186

See notes below under printings and print numbers

Guide marks: Short dashes are found between stamps on all four sides of each pane of stamps, with a cross at the intersection of the mid-point of the pane. Perforation guide dots with crosses through are found in the margins of the printing sheets the guide marks indicated below are shown as been between certain stamps in rows and columns. Guillotine guide marks are found both down and across at the corners of all panes.

All markings are in the colour of the value/duty

½d to 3d: Guide marks between

R1/C10 & 11	top
R10 & 11/C12	right
R12/C10 & 11	bottom
R10 & 11/C1	left

Cross Guide mark

At intersection of R6 & 7/C10 & 11

Perforation dots #

Above	R1/C11	top
Opposite	R6/C20	right
Below	R12/C11	bottom
Opposite	R6/C1	left

2d – above R1/C10 - plate 46131 & R1/11 - plate 46130

2½d – above R1/C10 - plate 46796 & R1/11 - plate 46797

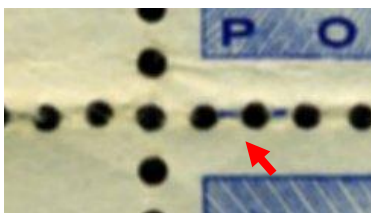
4d to 1sh Guide marks between

R1/C5 & 6	top
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R3 & 4/C10	right
R6/C5 & 6	bottom
R3 & 4/C1	left

Cross guide mark
At intersection of R4 & 5/C5 & 6

Perforation holes		
Above	R1/C5	top
Opposite	R3/C10	right
Below	R6/C5	bottom
Opposite	R3/C1	left



Guide line between
R6 & 7/C1
Perforation dot opposite
R6/C1

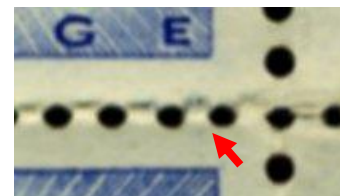
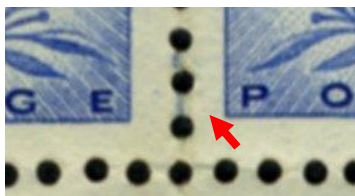
Guide line between
R1/C10 & 11.
Perforation dot above R1/C11
With plate 46980



Guide line between
R12/C10 & 11.
Perforation dot below
R12/C11
Printer's imprint



Guide line between
R6 & 7/C20
Perforation dot opposite
R6/C20





Central cross guide mark



Guillotine guide lines top right corner
With sheet number above R1/20

The perforation pinholes may with new plates change position. Illustrated below is the changed position of the pinhole in the bottom margin below the imprint. Probable that the pinhole in the top margin will also above the column under which these present themselves.



Below column 11



Below Column 10

Perforations:	Comb perforations. Gauge 13½ x 14 (SG & RSC)	
Margin perforations:	Bottom margin:	Imperforate
	Other margins:	Fully perforated
Imprint:	“Waterlow & Sons, London Wall, London E.C.”	
	½d to 3d:	Below R20/C10 & 11
	4½ to 1sh	Below R6/C5 & 6
Sheet number:	Post office sheet numbers are found above the top right hand corner stamps (½d to 3d above R1/20 & 4d to 1sh above R1/10).	

Middle values (1sh3d to 5sh)

Stamp size: 26 x 22 mm

Sheet size: Two panes of 60 stamps (6 rows of 10 stamps)

Plates: Two panes of 60 stamps

Plate numbers:⁷ Vignette plates for all values: 46220 & 47102

Duty plates:

1sh3d	46238	2sh	46218
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2sh6d	46217	5sh	46219
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Duty plate guide marks: Short dashes are found between stamps on all four sides of each pane of stamps, with a cross at the intersection of the mid-point of the pane. Perforation guide dots with crosses through are found in the margins of the printing sheets, on the opposite side to the stamps are small 'T' marks. The perforation guide dots and associated 'T' marks may not show in the cut down sheet.

The guide marks indicated below are shown as been between certain stamps in rows and columns. Guillotine guide marks are found both down and across at the corners of all the panes. All markings are in the colour of the duty plate.

Guide marks between in colour of casement/duty plate

R1/C5 & 6	top
R3 & 4/C10	right
R6/C5 & 6	bottom
R3 & 4/C1	left

Cross guide mark in colour of casement/duty plate

At intersection of R4 & 5/C5 & 6

Perforation holes in colour of casement/duty plate

Above	R1/C5	top – 1sh3s, 2sh & 5sh
	R1/C6	top – 2sh6d
Opposite	R3/C10	right
Below	R6/C5	bottom – 1sh3d, 2sh & 5sh
	R6/C6	bottom – 2sh6d
Opposite	R3/C1	left

Vignette plate guide marks: Guide marks exist on the vignette plates, printed in the colour of the vignette. These marks consist of a dash and dot, the order that they are placed indicates the position on the plate.

Dash followed by dot – between R4 & 5/ C2 right of centre

Dot followed by dash – between R4 & 5/C9 left of centre

(See section below on “Secret Marks”)

Perforations:	Comb perforations: Gauge 13½ x 13 (SG & RSC)
Margin perforations:	Bottom margin: Imperforate Other margins: Fully perforated
Imprint:	“Waterlow & Sons, London Wall, London E.C.” below R6/C5 & 6
Sheet number:	Post office sheet numbers are found above the top right hand corner stamps (R1/10)

High values (10sh & £1)

Stamp size:	35 x 30 mm
Sheet size:	Sheets 60 stamps (6 rows of 10 stamps)
Plates:	One pane of 60 stamps
Plate numbers: ⁷	Vignette plates for both values: 46222 Duty plates: 10sh 46221 £1 46223
Duty plate guide marks:	Short dashes are found between stamps on all four sides of each pane of stamps, with a cross at the intersection of the mid-point of the pane. Perforation guide dots with crosses through are found in the margins of the printing sheets, on the opposite side to the stamps are small ‘T’ marks. The perforation guide dots and associated ‘T’ marks may not show in the cut down sheet.

The guide marks indicated below are shown as been between certain stamps in rows and columns. Guillotine guide marks are found both down and across at the corners of all the panes. All markings are in the colour of the duty plate.

Guide marks between in colour of casement/duty plate

R1/C5 & 6	top
R3 & 4/C10	right
R6/C5 & 6	bottom
R3 & 4/C1	left

Cross guide mark in colour of casement/duty plate

At intersection of R4 & 5/C5 & 6

Perforation holes in colour of casement/duty plate

Above	R1/C6	top – 10sh
	R1/C5	top - £1
Opposite	R3/C10	right
Below	R6/C6	bottom – 10sh
	R6/C5	bottom - £1
Opposite	R3/C1	left

Vignette plate guide marks: Guide marks exist on the vignette plates, printed in the colour of the vignette. These marks consist of a dash and dot, the order that they are placed indicates the position on the plate.

Dash followed by dot – between R4 & 5/ C2 right of centre

Dot followed by dash – between R4 & 5/C8 right of centre

(See section below on “Secret Marks”)

Perforations: Comb perforations: Gauge $14\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ (SG)⁴; $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ (RSC)⁵

Margin perforations:	Bottom margin:	Imperforate
	Top margin:	Fully perforated
	Side margins:	One extension hole

Imprint: “Waterlow & Sons, London Wall, London E.C.” below R6/C5 & 6

Sheet number: Post office sheet numbers are found above the top right hand corner stamps (R1/10)

All values

Paper and gums: First printing on slight yellowish toned paper; subsequent printings on white paper. ⁶

Postal notice: Postal Notice No 1 of 1954 (postal notice for $2\frac{1}{2}$ d - unknown)

Date of issue:	All values save $2\frac{1}{2}$ d	1 st July 1954
	$2\frac{1}{2}$ d	15 th February, 1956

Withdrawn from sale: 28th February, 1962

Demonetarised: 1st September, 1964 (S Rhodesia Postal Notice No 3 of 1964)

“Secret Marks”

The Mashonaland Guide had a further section relating to what it referred to as “Secret Marks”. The description given in the guide is rather tortuous and difficult to understand.⁶

“There are four secret marks to a Post Office sheet, and two sets of these have been found for each value, each set being identical throughout thus demonstrating that the plate has two panes. The individual frame plates also have two panes, the guide lines in the margin of which will eventually show which is the upper pane. The two marks on the left in each case are ‘dash followed by dot’ while those on the right are ‘dot dash dot’. It is by the relative position of these marks that the two panes can be identified. The marks lie in the gutters between the second and third and the fourth and fifth horizontal rows of ten stamps, and at the right edge of the second and left edge of the ninth columns.

Two sets of marks can also be detected for the 10s and £1 values.”

Following research, stamps were found with dash/dot markings, examples of stamps with these markings were found on the middle and high value stamps.



1sh3d: Dash followed by dot marking in red-orange, lower right corner



2sh6d: Dot followed by dash marking in black in top left corner



£1: Dot followed by dash marking in olive-green in top left corner.

Having established what the vignette markings looked like, it was important to establish the positioning of these markings. Fortunately, the extensive collection of Waterlow archive matter photocopy provided by Pat Flannigan proved very useful.

The Mashonaland Guide suggested that the marks were in the “gutters between the second and third and the fourth and fifth horizontal rows”. With a photocopy of a complete sheet of the 2sh, it was established that the marks were only on the perforation line between the 2nd and 3rd rows and between the 4th and 5th rows.

These marks have been seen on the Waterlow proof material for the middle and high values. The first of these marks is a *dash followed by a dot* in the 2nd column right of centre, and the second was a *dot followed by a dash* in the 9th column left of centre. Of course, as the marks were along the perforation line, they can be seen at the bottom or top of the of single stamps the rows. The positioning of the mark, in cases where part of dash/dot is missing gives an indication of which column it is from.

With a complete bottom double row of a proof vignette of the 5sh, the marks can be seen without the presence of perforations. The following are close ups of that proof.



Column 2 – dash followed by dot



Column 9 – dot followed by dash

It has however, also, been noted that the dot-dash printer's marks on the two high value stamps appear further left than the middle values between rows 3 & 4 columns 8 & 9. This can be seen on the proof material available for the two high values. However, from a block provided by Andrew Wilson, the line-dot marking is clearly in the same position as the middle values, ie on the right side of column 2. (Also see the £1 example illustrated above. The dot-dash is in the top left corner of the stamp, indicating column 8. If it had been in column 9 then it would have been in top left corner.)



10sh: Top right corner of R3/2
(Source *rhodesia.co.za*)



£1: Top right corner of R3/2
(Courtesy of Andrew Wilson)

This research has research and conclusions has unravelled the rather complex explanation provided by the Mashonaland Guide. But to be fair to the Guide's editors, they did not have access to the proof material.

Printings and print numbers

In 1978 Robson Lowe had the opportunity to examine the progressive plate proofs and file sheets of the Waterlow archive. With this information he published, in both *The Philatelist* and *RSC Journal*, the number of times each value was printed with which plates, date of printing, and the print volumes.⁷ This is reproduced below, with some notes.

Low values - ½d to 1sh

Value	Plate No	Printing Dates	Quantity	Sheets
½d	46134	22/04/1954	8,009,760	33,374
	46789	15/07/1954	n/a	
	46134	17/06/1955	20,000,160	83,334
	46134	09/02/1956	12,000,000	50,000
	46781	20/09/1956	20,000,160	83,334
	46781	26/04/1957	12,000,000	50,000
1d	46133	24/03/1954	corrected	
	46133	06/08/1954	50,072,160	208,634
	46782	07/12/1955	48,000,000	200,000

Value	Plate No	Printing Dates	Quantity	Sheets
	46980	18/07/1956		
	46980	21/11/1956	19,000,000	79,167
	46980	15/05/1957	14,400,000	60,000
	47266	16/07/1957	n/a	
	47266	20/02/1958	colour revised	
	47266	27/02/1958	16,000,000	66,667
2d	46130	24/03/1954	70,072,080	291,967
	46131	05/08/1954		
	46131	03/05/1956	60,000	250
	46131	24/05/1956	12,000,000	50,000
	46131	20/11/1956	8,000,160	33,334
2½d	46796	09/04/1955⁸	96,000,000	400,000
	47697	22/05/1956		
	46981	21/11/1956	28,000,000	116,667
	46981	29/05/1957	19,200,000	80,000
3d	46129	07/04/1954	plate no added	
	46129	12/07/1954	3,066,000	12,775
	46129	14/12/1954	4,000,000	16,667
	46129	13/09/1955	7,200,000	30,000
	46129	30/11/1956	4,000,080	16,667
	46129	14/02/1957	8,000,160	33,334
	46129	7-10/02/1958	21,600,000	90,000
4d	46189	06/04/1954	4,036,800	67,280
	46189	04/08/1954		
	46189	21/06/1956	960,000	16,000
	46189	05/12/1956	1,002,480	16,708
	46189	05/04/1957	1,500,000	25,000
4½d	46187	15/04/1954	n/a	
	46187	15/07/1954	1,036,080	17,268
	46187	17/04/1956	960,000	16,000
	46187	5-6/12/1956	270,000	4,500
	46187	22/02/1957	64,080	1,068
	46187	26/02/1958	84,000	1,400

Value	Plate No	Printing Dates	Quantity	Sheets
6d	46188	03/03/1954	n/a	
	46188	16/07/1954	8,036,160	133,936
	46188	11/04/1956	4,800,000	80,000
	46188	06/12/1956	150,000	2,500
	46188	28/02/1958	4,200,000	70,000
9d	46185	24/04/1954	2,036,160	33,936
	46185	13/07/1954		
	43185	06/12/1956	760,080	12,668
	43185	08/04/1957	800,160	13,336
	43185	06/03/1985	300,000	5,000
1sh	46186	12/04/1954	n/a	
	46186	15/07/1954	4,036,080	67,268
	46186	23/06/1955	1,800,000	30,000
	46186	21/12/1956	1,200,000	20,000
	46186	10/04/1957	1,400,160	23,336
	46186	07/03/1958	840,000	14,000

Notes

1. The first printing of each value has been shown in bold, and the number of sheets printed
2. Examination of the Waterlow material has shown that, with all the values up to 1sh, the original order was printed in two batches under the first order number - 69423.
3. There are a number of instances where Robson Lowe records the number of stamps printed as “none” or “corrected”, or the numbers for the first and second printings were combined. It would appear that the numbers given for the first two printings were combined to make up the number of stamps ordered in the first instance.
4. There were two plates produced for the 2d at the time of the first printing. The article by C D Twynam stated that the Federal High Commissioner had been informed by Waterlow that each of the low value stamps had a single printing plate, save for the 2d where there were two.⁸
5. Evidence has emerged that two plates were produced for the first printing of 2½d, as with the 2d, there were two consecutive sheet numbers 46796 & 46796. The later can be view below. (Thanks to Andrew Wilson)
6. Examination of the Waterlow archive has shown that there were additional printings of the 4d and 9d not recorded by Robson Lowe.
7. For more information on the number of printings and number of stamps printed see separate chapter on the 1954 definitive Waterlow archives.
8. The date provided by Robson Lowe for the 2½d was 9/11/1955, which would have been too late for the release date. Examination of the proofs should this to be 09/04/1954, a year before release



1d

Plate number 46980
Used in the 3rd to 5th printings



2d

Plate number 46130
Used in the 1st printing



2½d

Plate number 46796
Used in 1st printings
(Courtesy of Andrew Wilson)

The plate numbers would normally be guillotined from the final sheets of stamps, but occasionally the guidelines are missed.

Multiple plates used on low values

According to Robson Lowe, the plates could only be used for between 70 and 80 million stamps (with the ½d to 2½d about 290,000 to 335,000 sheets). Only the ½d to 2½d values required replacing during the currency of this issue. All other values only required a single printing plate.

- ½d Two 46734, 46781
(The second plate was first used for the second printing and then for fifth and sixth printings)
- 1d Four 46133, 46782, 46980, 47266
- 2d Two 46130, 46131
(Both plates used for the first printing, with the latter for all subsequent printings)
- 2½d three 46796, 46797, 46981

Middle values – 1sh3d to 5sh

With the printing of the middle values, the vignette plate was used for all the values, and although only about 9.85 million stamps had been printed from this plate it was replaced in late 1956. All values used only one casement or duty plate. Each sheet of stamps was printed over two days, the vignette being printed first (the first date shown below), followed by the duty or casement plate a few days later. Some of the information provided Robson Lowe has been amended following examination of the Waterlow archive material – see separate section

Plate		Plate No Duty	Printing Dates	Quantity	Sheets/ panes
Value	No Vignette				
1sh3d	46220	46238	21/04 - 20/5 1954	2,018,040	33,634
			03/10 - 6/10/1955	540,000	9,000
			07/12 - 12/06 1956	960,000	16,000
			19/12 - 21/12 1956	1,200,000	20,000
	47102		15/04 - 26/8 1957	1,440,000	24,000
			14/02 - 1/03 1958	900,000	15,000
2sh	46220	46218	27/04 - 30/04 1954	1,018,080	16,968
			04/10 - 07/10 1955	480,000	8,000
			25/06 - 05/07 1956	600,000	10,000
	47102		28/12/1956 -01/01/1957	620,000	10,333
			15/04 -26/04 1957	1,440,000	24,000
			14/02 - 12/03 1958	240,000	4,000
2sh6d	46220	46217	29/04 - 03/05 1954	768,000	12,800
			05/10 - 14/10 1955	480,000	8,000
			26/06 - 27/04/ 1956	960,000	16,000
	47102		unknown – 01/12/1956	510,000	8,500
			unknown - 05/07 1957	570,000	9,500
5sh	46220	46219	03/05 - 05/05 1954	518,040	8,634
			11-06 - 14/06 1956	300,000	5,000
	47102		21/12 - 31/12 1956	200,000	3,333
			25/04 - 08/05 1957	180,000	3,000
			21/02 - 13/03 1958	90,000	1,500

High values – 10sh & £1

One vignette was used for both values, and each value used one duty or casement plate.

Value	Plate No Vignette	Plate No Duty	Printing Dates	Quantity	Sheets/ panes
10sh	46222	46221	16/04 - 20/04 1954	312,000	5,200
			06/07 - 09/07 1956	300,000	5,000
			13-11 - 14/11 1956	370,000	6,167
£1	46222	46223	03/05 - 05/05 1954	212,000	3,533
			15/11 - 19/11 1956	30,000	500
			24/12 - 11/03 1958	60,000	1,000

Note: the dates for the first printing of the 10sh was recorded by Robson Lowe as 16th and 20th July, which must be wrong as the issue was released, with the 10sh, on 1st July 1954.⁷ The corrected dates are confirmed from the study of the proofs.



The plate numbers would normally be guillotined from the final sheets of stamps, but occasionally the guidelines are missed.

In this instance the duty plate 46221 is partially showing.

(Courtesy of Andrew Wilson)

Coils



Catalogue listings

SG ⁴	RSC ⁵	Value	SG colours first
1a	577a	½d	Coil stamps, reddish orange (issued 6.2.1956)
	ab.		Missing Perforation hole (pair)
2a	578a	1d	Coil stamps, deep blue (issued 9.1955)
	ab.		Coil stamps, ultramarine (issued 01.10.1955)

Technical details

Stamp Size:	19 x 22 mm
Stamp roll size	Stamp roll of 480 stamps total value of £1 for ½d and £2 for 1d
Leaders:	See below
Printers	Imprimerie Belge de Sécurité
Perforations	Coil perforations 12½ x 14 (SG & RSC)

Stamp roll leaders



Above are the leaders attached to the front of the start of the roll of stamps
(Source eBay January 2023)



Above are the strips attached to the end of the roll which are then attached to the core
(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)

Margaret Harris in her RSC Journal article states – “The 481st stamp was cut across about a third of the way from the top on examples seen and attached to the leader which is about 11½ inches long The coil ends are about three inches long and attached in the same way as the leaders”¹¹

Below is illustrated the ends of two leaders where they are attached to the end of the coil. The first perfectly illustrates what was stated above. The second, however, is clearly attached to a margin from the printed sheet. This leads to suggest that the number of rows of stamps printed in a single printing sheet is far more than the 480/481 stamps. and the printed roll could be of some considerable length.



½d coil leader

Attachment to the leader clearly shows about a third of the 481st stamp cut at attached



½d coil leader

The attachment to the leader in this example clearly shows a sheet margin rather than a bisected stamp.



½d coil leader

Attachment to the leader clearly shows about a third of the 481st stamp cut at an angle and attached

(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



1d coil leader

Attachment to the leader clearly shows about a third of the 481st stamp cut at an angle and attached

(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)

Coil distribution and release

Stanley Gibbons and the Mashonaland Guide⁶ provide two dates for the release of the 1d coil, both give September 1955 for the deep blue (SG2a) and 1st October 1955 for the ultramarine (also deep blue on Mash Guide) (SG2ab). This appears to indicate that these are two separate printings, but with release for both colours less than a month apart this does not seem plausible. Whilst, indeed, there are two distinct colours it is unlikely that they were printed at different times. Possibly, the printing was for two large printing rolls which could have been printed at different times but still within the same print order.

The ½d coil was issued on 6th February 1956, which date appears to be clear. It has been suggested that the reason for this coil was to facilitate the increase in local postage from 2d to 2½d.¹¹ The additional value 2½d stamp was issued on 15th February 1956.

The dates for the release of the ½d and 1d coils appear to relate to Salisbury and/or Southern Rhodesia. C D Wynham stated that the 1d was put on sale about 27th December 1955 and the ½d on 25th June 1956 in Nyasaland.¹² C D Wynham also stated “As there are no vending machines here their use will be very small and the G.P.O. is reluctant to sell less than a complete roll”. The coil stamps for the 1953 Nyasaland issue, were made up from sheets and were larger in a different format to the Federal issues. It is unlikely that the vending machines could be adapted for the Federal stamps. With the first Nyasaland stamps post Federation coils continued to be made up for the ½d and 1d values, using larger format stamps.

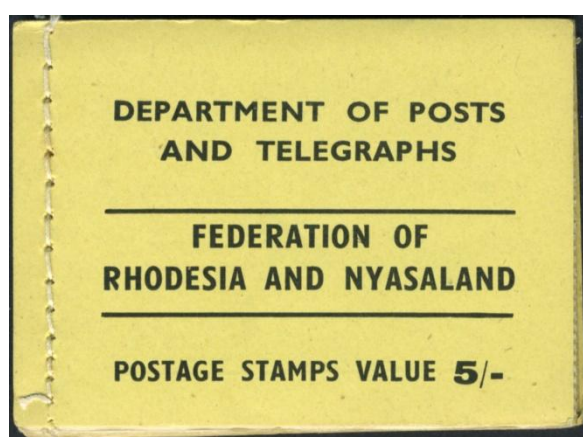
No information has been found as to when they were first introduced into Northern Rhodesia. This territory certainly issued coils for the King George VI definitive, but there was to be a delay in issuing coils for the Queen Elizabeth II definitive due to printing pressures at the printers.¹¹

Paper types

The Mashonaland Guide reports that the 1d coil released in September 1955 has three shades of paper – blue, white and cream. Opposite are examples found for the possible white and cream coloured papers. As yet an example of the blue coloured paper has not been identified. It may be possible that there is a different explanation for the blue paper, given the colour of the stamp.



Booklet



Catalogue listings (Released 1st January 1955)

SG ⁴	RSC ⁵	Value	SG colours first
SB1	B8	5sh	Stitched yellow fronted booklet, contain 2 x 1/2d, 3 x 1d & 3 x 2d
	BP10		1/2d booklet pane of six x 2
	BP11		1d booklet pane of six x 3
	BP12		2d booklet pane of six x 3

Technical details

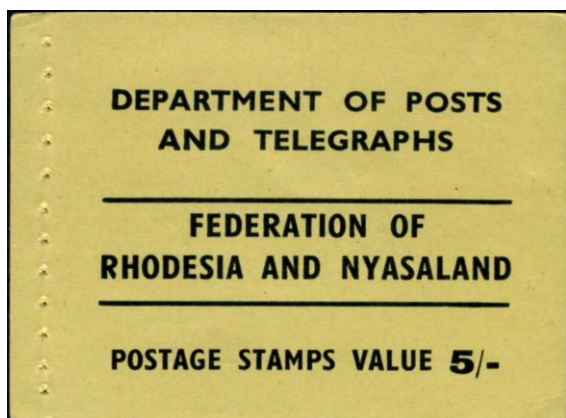
Stamp Size: 19 x 22 mm

Printers: Waterlow & Sons

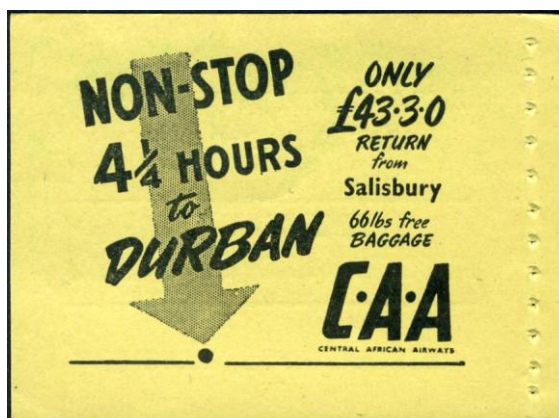
Perforations: Comb perms 13½ x 14 (SG & RSC)

Booklet cover Front
 “Department of Posts and Telegraphs/ Federation of/Rhodesia and Nyasaland/Postage Stamps Value 5/- “
 Back
 “Fly C.A.A. still only £115 to London from Salisbury. Central African Airways”

Contents: 8 panes of stamps with interleaf pages having advertisements for Central African Airways, together with glassine pages facing gummed sides of panes.



Front cover



Inside front cover



Opposite 1st 2d pane



Opposite 2nd 2d pane



Opposite 3rd 2d pane



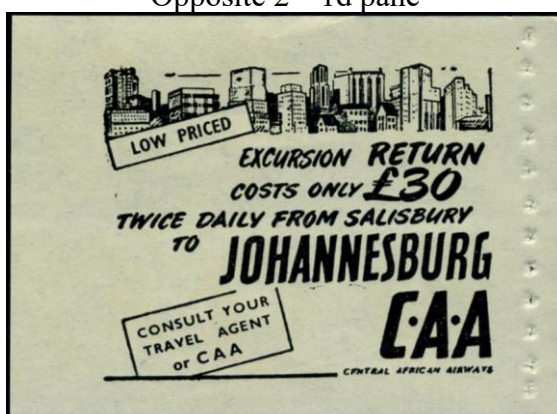
Opposite 1st 1d pane



Opposite 2nd 1d pane



Opposite 3rd 1d pane



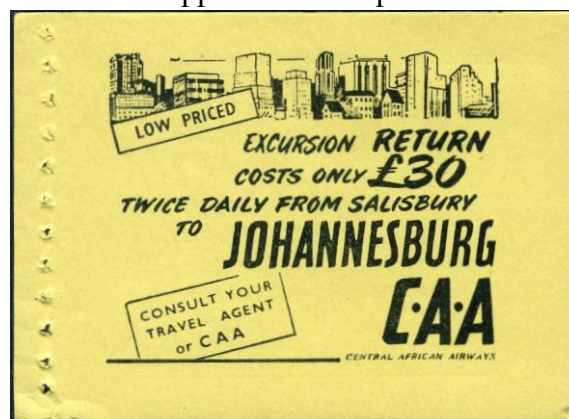
Opposite 1st 1/2d pane



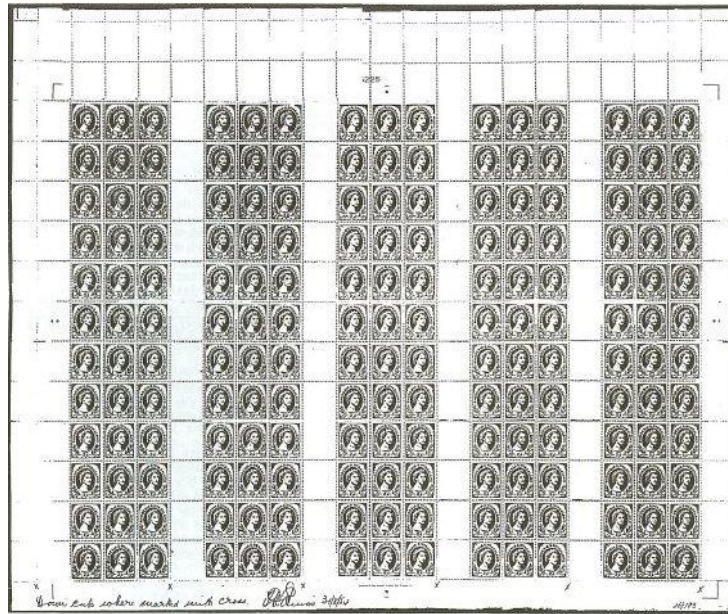
Opposite 2nd 1/2d pane



Inside back cover



Back cover



Complete perforated booklet sheet.

Only surviving example from Waterlow archives.

Annotation "Down cuts where marked with cross" 31.8.54

(Source: *The Rhodesian Philatelist* Number 10 December 1995¹⁰)

Colours

There are within most of the values differences in shades and colours. This is illustrated in the different colours recorded by both Stanley Gibbons and the Rhodesian Stamp Catalogue. It is also noted that within the Mashonaland Guide different colour descriptions are recorded.

Stanley Gibbons records two different colours for the 6d - bright reddish purple (SG7) and bright purple (SG7a); and the 1d coil – deep blue (SG2a) and ultramarine (SG2ab).

Illustrated below are the various values showing the colour differences. All stamps were scanned by the same machine at the same time to ensure that the colour differences are consistent. No attempt has been made to distinguish the different printings.







Coils



Listed varieties

Value	Row	Col	Description	
½d coil			Missing perforation hole (RSC 577ab) ⁵	
1d	2	5	“Map of India” – large ‘V’ shaped blemish which starts at the bottom of the value, progresses downwards between ‘S’ and ‘T’ of Postage and ends just below the perforation of the next stamp. (Mash Guide) ⁶	
1d			Broad diagonal white line splitting a strip of three 1d stamps caused by a paper fold, which failed to open when passing through the press and perforator (Mash Guide) ⁶ Also see below	
1d coil			Dark Blue on i. On blued paper ii. On white paper iii. On cream paper (Mash Guide) ⁶	See commentary above
1d coil			Short vertical line connecting two coil stamps, from the ‘A’ of Postage on the upper stamps to the frame of the lower stamp above the ‘Y’ of Nyasaland. Occurs at intervals of eleven stamps. (Mash Guide) ⁶	
4½d	3	6	One of the fruits on the right-hand olive branch is connected to a leaf at two points. (Mash Guide) ⁶	
5sh			Olive coloured dot to left of ‘T’ of Postage (Mash Guide) ⁶	

Value	Row	Col	Description	
10sh			Faint vertical orange-coloured lines through both values, in both side margins and from the bottom frame line to top margin of stamp below. (Mash Guide) ⁶	

1d paper creases

There are a number of examples of vertical paper creases with this printing, some of which are narrow and others wide.



(Source eBay Feb 2020)



(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



(Images supplied by James Gavin)



(Source: Spink's auction April 2018)



Block of ten used stamps showing widening paper crease.
(Image supplied by James Gavin)

Unlisted varieties



1/2d

Various examples of pre-printing paper creases, of different widths and directions.

(Centre example – courtesy of Keith Harrop)

Single stamp top – Spink Auction April 2021

Single stamp middle – image supplied by James Gavin

Single stamp bottom – Courtesy of Otto Peetoom)



(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



1/2d: Widening vertical paper crease, opened up after printing
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



1/2d: Vertical orange line, possibly caused by wrinkle in paper
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



1/2d coil: 'Extra berry' above 'A'
of Postage
(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



1/2d: White vertical line
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



1/2d: Orange vertical line
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



1/2d: Significant smudging of ink
(Source Spink auction
November 2022)



1/2d: Imperfect perforations to sheet corner, due to corner of sheet
being folded over during perforation.
(Source Spink auction November 2022)



1/2d coil: Offset printing in reverse of strip.
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



1/2d & 1d coils: Numerous examples of these coils having a serrated cut off.
It is assumed that this occurred in vending machines, which had not been correctly calibrated



½d & 1d coil stamps.

Coil stamps apparently miscut when rolls separated from printing sheet. These have been through the post, no further information of this. The ½d coil has an additional feature with the miscutting of the coil strip – full perforations on the left and imperf on the right.

(Source RSC Journal No 131, page 110)



1d: R H A Farquharson reported in The South African Philatelist (April 1957), his find of a 1d strip of three with a diagonal fold across the paper when the printing sheet passed through the press. The fold must have also continued through to perforation before being opening up



1d: On piece example of large diagonal paper fold across centre of stamp, with thinner horizontal paper crease across top of stamp. Used in Umtali on 5 March 1956

(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



1d: Three examples of a large ink flaw on the Queen's portrait.
All have a different shape, probably come from consecutive sheets.

(Centre & right examples courtesy of Otto Peetoom)



1d: Movement of perforations down and to left.

(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



1d

Dot between 'ES' of Rhodesia
and dash above 1st 'A' of
Nyasaland



1d

Spot above 'S' of Rhodesia



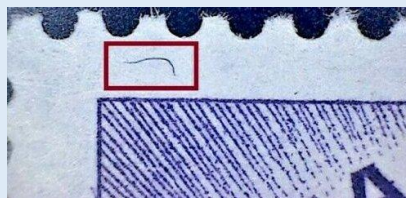
1d

Clear offset printing on gummed
side.



1d coil

Break in left frame
(Source eBay March 2022)



1d coil

Hairline top left corner
(Source eBay March 2022)



1d coil

Smudge to top left corner
(Source rhodesia.co.za)



1d coil: Thin blue line from 'A' of Postage in upper stamp to 'Y' of Nyasaland on lower. (With blind perfs)
(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



1d: fold straightened out in corner



1d: Plate number appearing in top margin, 4th to 6th printing
(Source rhodesia.co.za)



2d: White area above Queen's left eye, probably a paper intrusion that fell off after printing



2d: Vertical paper creases
(Images supplied by James Gavin)



2d: Smudging of ink vertically through strip



2d: Significant ink smudging to left stamp.
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



2d: significant smudging to left used stamp.
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



2d: Smudged printing to left stamp
(Source Spink auction November 2021)



2d: Smudging to stamps
(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



2d: Additional ink smudged over block of 4 (Image supplied by James Gavin)



2d: Plate number 46130 used in the trial and first printing.
(Source rhodesia.co.za)



2d: Movement of perforations downwards into design below.
(Source rhodesia.co.uk)



2d: Movement of perforations down and to left
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



2d: Perforation movement down touching top of design.
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



2d: Perforation movement both down and to the right

(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



2½d: Block of 12 with a thick white line running through top three stamps in the centre column. Line looks handdrawn, with loop over stamps in rows 1 and 2. Unknown cause, Spink suggested “presumably as a result of foreign body on the printing plate”.

(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



2½d: Large ink blot in top left corner of stamps



3d: Additional bud to laurel leaf to right



3d: Reverse offset to front of stamps
(Courtesy of Otto Peetoom)



4d: Small confetti flaw.
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



2½d: Multiple reverse offsets to the printed side of sheet. There is a paper crease above the offset. Which when folded back produced the offset from the printed sheet below



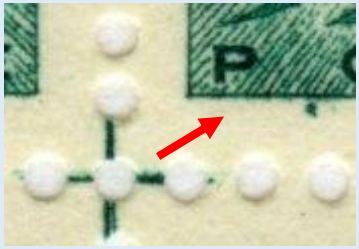
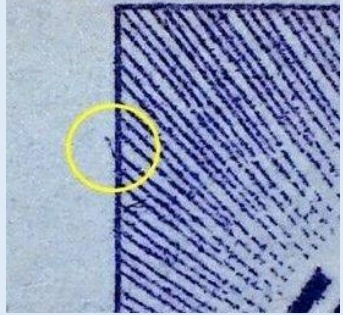
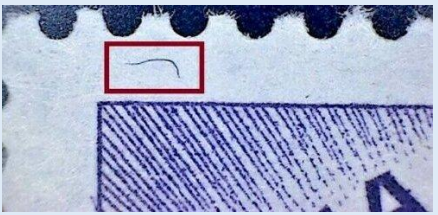
2½d Magnificent offset to gummed side
(Source: Spink auction May 2015)



3d: Lack of printing to bottom right of stamp, resulting in the loss of 'AGE' of Postage. Also. large ink dot on 'd' pf value.
(Courtesy of Otto Peetoom)



3d: Carmine red ink marks to top left margin

 4d: Lack of printing to centre left opposite 'HOD' of Rhodesia	 4½d: Spot in bottom margin, below 'PO' of Postage (Courtesy of Andrew Wilson)	 4½d: Vertical ink smudges across stamps (Source eBay)
 4½d: Ink smudges across stamp. (Source eBay)	 4½d: Confetti flaw, ex block of 12 stamps (Image supplied by James Gavin)	 6d: Scar across Queen's right cheek
 6d: Bright purple ink splashes to top margin centre. (black line part of postmark)	 9d: Line out of left frame (Source eBay March 2022)	 9d: Hairline to top right margin (Source eBay March 2022)



1sh: Paper fold, opened up, through bottom left corner.
(Image supplied by James Gavin)



1sh: Lettering “ESIA & NY” thicker than rest of country’s name, and slightly smudged



2sh: Mis-perforation of bottom left corner of pane. Perforation occurred when corner was folded over during perforation.



2s6d: Partial offset of vignette on gummed side
(Source eBay March 2021)



2sh: Vertical strip of four stamps with paper crease from ‘NY’ of Nyasaland in R4, to value tablet in R1. Left close up from R1 & 2, and right from R3 & 4.



2sh: Movement of vignette down



2sh 6d: Movement of vignette down



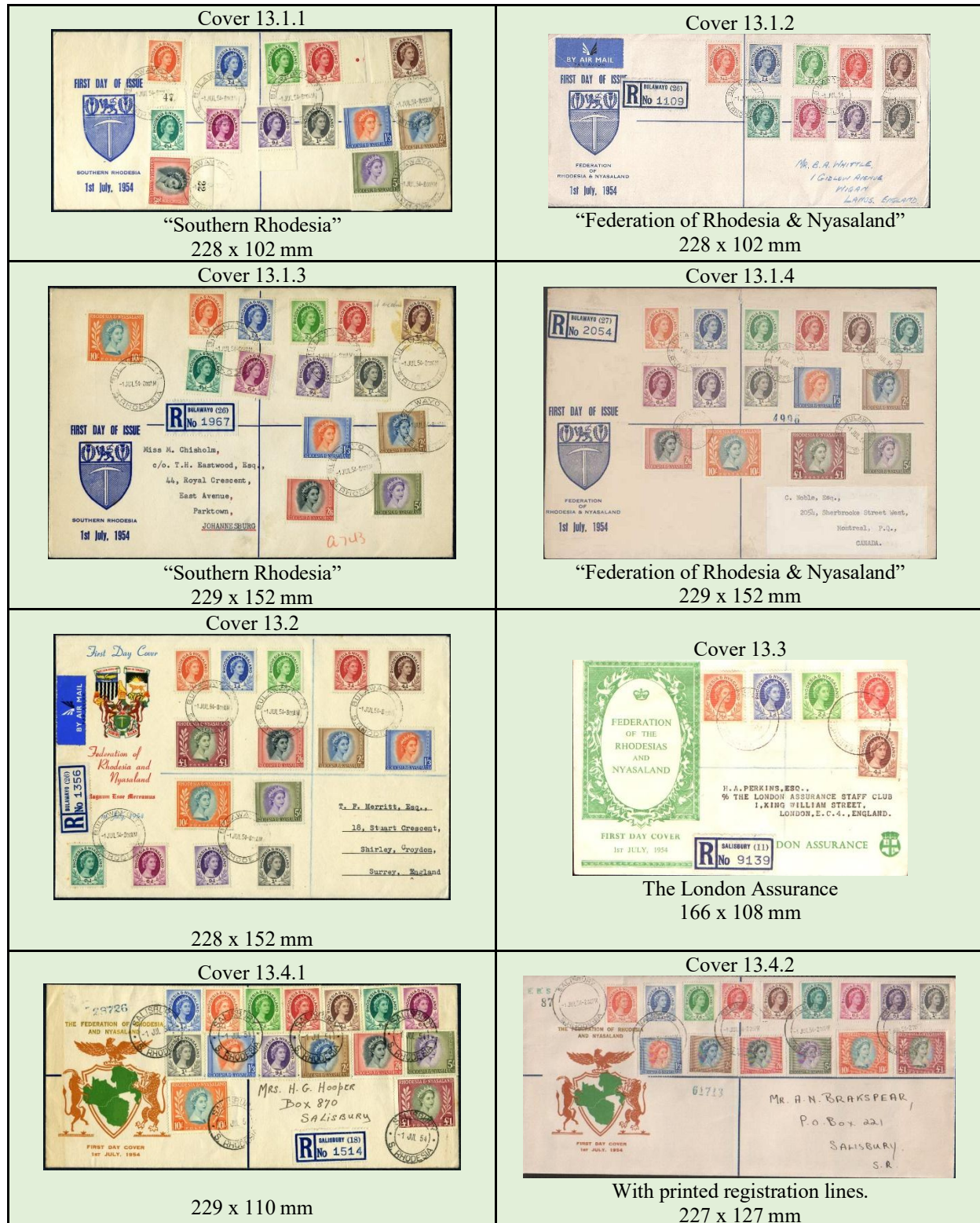
2sd 6d: Significant movement of vignette left and down



5sh: Movement of Vignette up

First Day Covers

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear. No first day covers were produced by the Post Office.



Cover 13.4.3



As 13.4.2 without printed registration lines
227 x 127 mm

Cover 13.5



228 x 101 mm

Cover 13.6



229 x 101 mm

Cover 13.7 @



Can be found as set of 5 covers with 3 stamps on each,
with set have all 15 issues values.

150 x 90mm

Cover 13.8 #



229 x 101 mm

Cover 13.9



230 x 102 mm

Cover 13.10 #



228 x 102 mm

Cover 13.11



228 x 102 mm

Cover 13.12



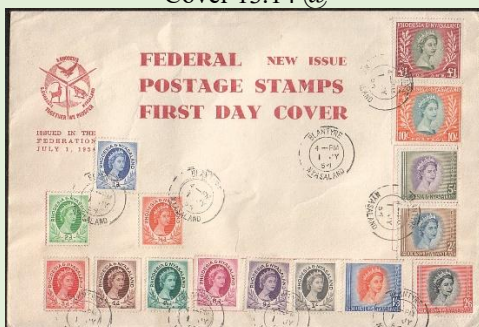
165 x 93 mm

Cover 13.13 @



228 x 102 mm

Cover 13.14 @



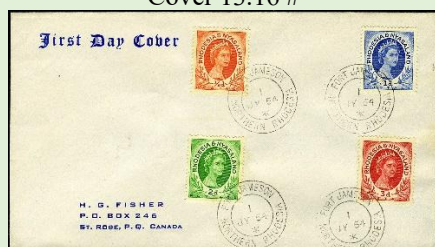
229 x 153 mm

Cover 13.15 #



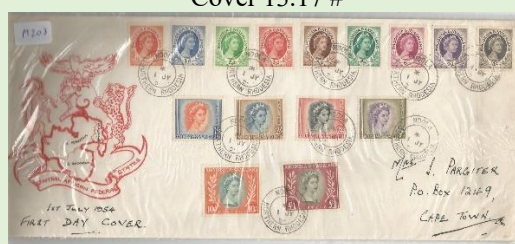
152 x 90 mm

Cover 13.16 #



Produced by H G Fisher, Canada
165 x 90 mm

Cover 13.17 #



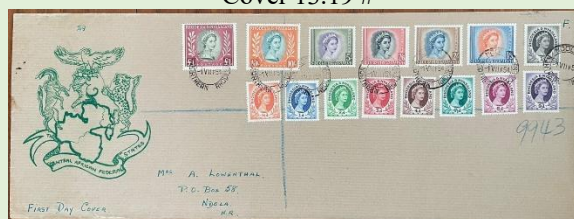
Seen on eBay

Cover 13.18 @



152 x 90 mm

Cover 13.19 #

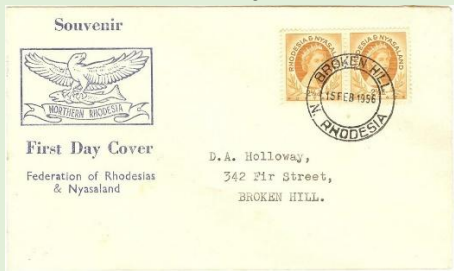


Unknown size, sourced on eBay May 2022

First day of issue of 1/2d coil (6th February 1956)



Release of 1/2d coil coincided with the 4th anniversary
of the Queen's ascension to the throne

First Day covers of additional value (dated 15 th February 1956)	
Cover 15.1  135 x 108 mm	Cover 15.2#  151 x 89 mm

Territories producing these first day covers, or at least where they appear to have been postmarked.

Northern Rhodesia	Cover numbers 13.8, 13.10, 13.15, 13.16, 13.17 & 15.2 (marked #)
Nyasaland:	Cover numbers 13.7, 13.13 & 13.14 (marked @)
Southern Rhodesia	All remaining covers

Related Material

Post Office Training stamps

According to Otto Peetoom, after the definitive was withdrawn an unknown quantity of sheets of stamps were overprinted with horizontal tramline bars for use as “Training School stamps”. The purpose of the overprint is to deface the stamps making them unsuitable for postage. On the low and medium values, a pair of lines 12½ mm apart, which fits the row of stamps perfectly, and between the rows they are 10mm apart. The same overprint was used on the high values, and as it is in a different format they do not fit perfectly.⁹

Whether the stamps were used prior to the stamps being withdraw or not is debateable, in the Rhodesia period similar “training stamps” have been found used but not mint. So far, no used training stamps of this definitive have come to light. Not all the stamps of this definitive have, so far, been reported.



(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



(Source: Spink auction November 2022)





(Source: Spink auction November 2022)



(Source: Spink auction November 2022)

(Source of above single examples (6d, 1s, 2s & 2s6d ex RSC Journal No. 302 – Dave Cooper)

Air Letters

The Federal Post Office issued three airletters that featured the 6d definitive stamp printed as pre-paid postage to the most popular destinations of UK and Europe. Insertion into this section is to illustrate other printings of the definitive stamps. More details on these air letters can be found on the RSC website.

Illustrated below is the front of the folded air letter



Air letter issued 1st October 1955

Printed by Wiggins Teape & Co on watermarked plain paper, with blue printing to front and back of the folder air-letter. The 6d stamp is printed separately in mauve.



Air letter issued December 1956

Printed by McCorquodale & Co on blue paper, main text in blue. Information box placed to left of imprinted stamp advising that additional postage is payable to various destinations. The 6d stamp is printed separately in purple.

Air letter issued 27th September 1957.



(This Air Letter was reprinted in blue, but without the imprinted stamp or information box)

First of the air letters promoting tourism. Similar to the previous airletter save for a tourism promotion in the bottom left corner. Eight different promotional illustrations were produced all starting “Visit Rhodesia & Nyasaland”

- “Visit the Game Reserves” (lion)
- “Visit the Game Reserves” (elephant)
- “Visit the Game Reserves” (giraffes)
- “Victoria Falls”
- “Fishing in the Eastern Districts”
- “Zimbabwe Ruins”
- “The Famous Balancing Rocks”
- “Lake Nyasa”

First Day Cover signed



First Day cover signed by Roy Welenski, at that time the Minister of Transport in the Federal Legislative. In November 1956 became the Federal Prime Minister

Black & white postcard of Queen Elizabeth II with 2d stamp, postmarked Salisbury

(Image supplied by James Gavin)



Fake stamp

Design of this definitive issue lower duties,
with cameo of Queen Victoria



Bibliography

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3. "Rhodesia & Nyasaland Archival Material", Patrick Flanagan, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal, No 280 August 2020, pages 258 to 263.
4. Stanley Gibbons Commonwealth Stamp Catalogue – Southern & Central Africa, 2nd Edition 2014
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6. "A Guide to the Postage Stamps of the Rhodesias & Nyasaland" published by the Mashonaland Philatelic Society in 1965.
7. "Rhodesia & Nyasaland: The Queen Elizabeth II Definitives – 1954 -58" by Robson Lowe, published in the Rhodesian study Circle Journal No 104, December 1978 pages 201-207. (first appeared in "The Philatelist" Vol 44 No 8 May 1978)
8. "Plates of the Rhodesia/Nyasaland Federal Issue" – C D Twynam. Stamp collection, May 15th 1955, page 281
9. "The Rhodesian Philatelist", Otto Peetoom newsletter, No 30 January 2011, pages 520-526
10. "The Rhodesian Philatelist", Otto Peetoom newsletter, No 10 December 1995, pages 16 – 195
11. "The Coil Stamps of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland" Margaret Harris. Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 130, June 1985, pages 79 to 88, and No 131 pages 126 to 131
12. Comments made by C D Twynam in Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 24, June 1956, page 5 and No 25, September 1956, page 3.
13. "The Rhodesian Philatelist", Otto Peetoom publication, No 18 December 1998, pages 276-278
14. "The Die Proofs of Waterlow & Sons – Part 1: Great Britain and the Empire to 1960" by Colin Frazer and Robson Lowe, published 1985

Additions/Changes since August 2021	
12/2021	Page 6 missing plate number for 1d added
	Scan of 2½d with partial plate number 46797 in issued sheet
	Amended comment on the use of coil vending machines in Nyasaland
	Various other minor typographical corrections
	2sh, strip of 4 with paper crease through four stamps
	Description changes of “Printer’s marks” to “Duty plate printer’s marks” for middle and high values
	Additional of central cross printer’s mark to all values.
	“Secret Marks” or vignette printer’s marks to middle & high values.
	Improved illustrations to the lower value guide marks
	4½d variety – spot in bottom margin
	Additional examples of coil leader attachments
	Additional varieties of ½d and 1d coils.
	New first day cover – 13.18
	2sh6d significant movement of vignette
	Duty plate number showing on 10sh imprint block
03/2022	Change in date of 1 st printing of 2½d, and additional footnote
	10sh & £1 training stamps – better images.
	½d – additional examples of paper creases and lines
	½d coil - with printing offset
	1d – additional examples of paper creases
	2d – paper creases
	2d – blocks showing movement of perforations
	2d – number of examples of significant ink smudges
	4½d – confetti flaw
	4d – confetti flaw
	1sh – paper crease
	FDC signed by Roy Welenski
08/2022	FDC – new cover 13.19
	1d, 3d, 6d & 1sh additional unlisted varieties
12/2022	Replacement of high value mater die print (better image)
	Waterlow presentation cards, replacement and additional card with master die
	Improved images to training stamps, addition of 4d
	½d: two additional paper fold example, large smudge and misperf sheet corner
	1d: replacement of block of 6 with paper fold
	1d: on piece diagonal paper fold, with horizontal fold
	2d: two further examples of ink smudges
	2d: block of 9 perf shift down and to right
	2½d: block of 12 with white line through central column
03/2023	QEII postcard with 2d stamp
	Replacement of coil leaders
12/2024	Scans of back and front, and adverts to booklet
	Additional Training stamp images
12/2025	Fake stamp with Queen Victoria cameo
4-2026	1d coil, smudge top left corner

	1d with plate 46980 showing top margin
	2d with plate 46130 showing bottom margin
	Positioning of perforation pinhole in bottom margin