

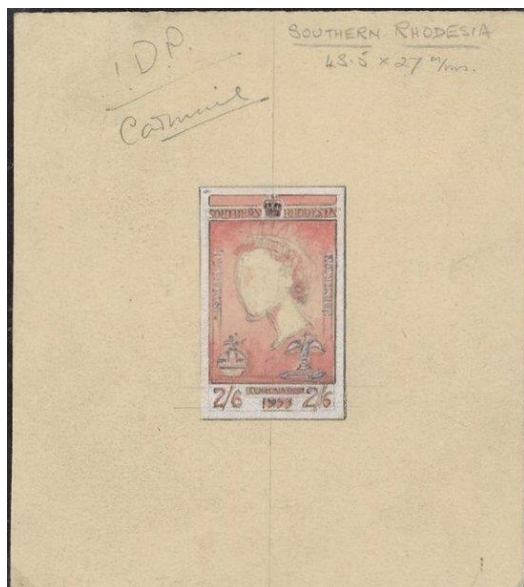
ORONATION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Issued 2nd June 1953

With the accession of Princess Elizabeth to the British throne on the death of her father, King George VI, on 6th February 1952, planning for the issue of a Coronation stamp or stamps started almost immediately. A committee comprising of the Philatelic Societies, interested Government Departments and the Post Office was set up. Initially consideration was given to overprinting of one of the current stamps and rejected.¹ Probably in keeping with the general trend created by the Crown Agents for the other Commonwealth countries, it was agreed that a single stamp would be released. However, unlike other Commonwealth nations which issued low denomination stamps, Southern Rhodesia elected to issue a high value of 2sh6d. It is not known why this high face value was agreed to, the amount did not relate to any basic rate of postage.

The design of the stamp agreed upon, as with the Crown agent stamps, was for a portrait of the Queen wearing a tiara. As the Queen had not been crowned, the use of a crown could be shown in the portrait although a representation of the crown could be included above the Queen's portrait.

Probably from a range of photographs taken by Dorothy Wilding provided by the Palace.



Thomas De La Rue & Sons were commissioned to work up a design.

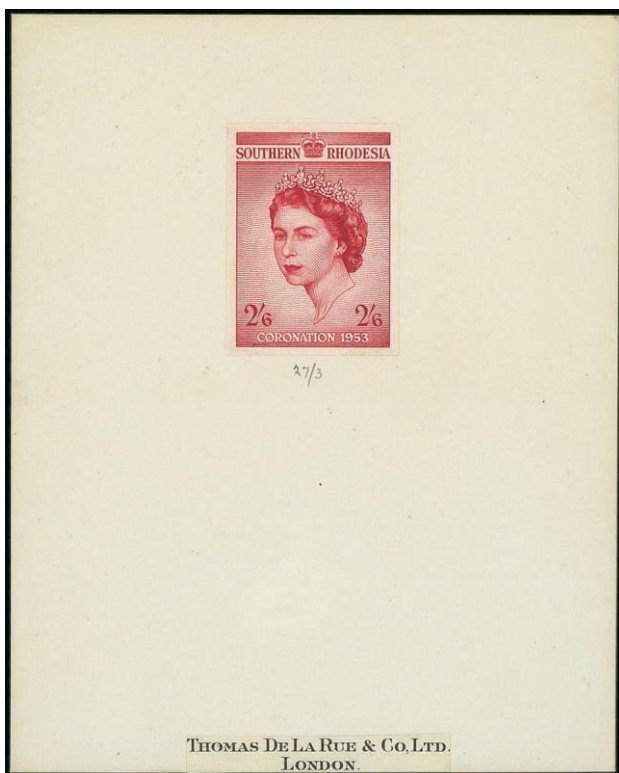
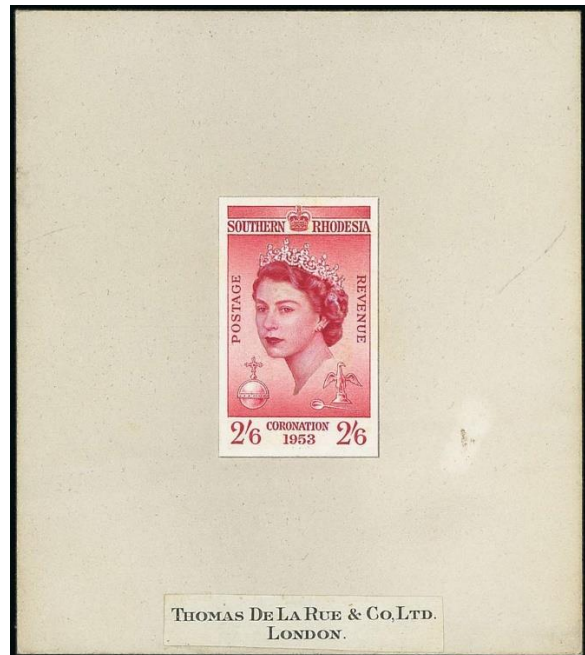
The initial crayon design was undertaken in pencil and carmine with small areas complete in Chinese white. The design on a card was marked up "DP Carmine" and "Southern Rhodesia, 43.5 x 27 mm", the later referring to the stamp size.

The initial artwork was then transferred to a handpainted essay in a vertical format in shades of carmine, with portions touched up with Chinese white.

The design included the wording “Postage” and “Revenue”; and items from the Coronation Regalia (the Sovereign’s Orb, Eagle Shaped Ampulla & Coronation Spoon). All these were removed from the final design.

The size of the stamp appears to follow that of the original pencil drawing.

The essay was placed on light grey card (95 x 107 mm) with the design sealed in galassine, on which is endorsed “A” and “n/a”, meaning not accepted. On the bottom is a “Thomas De La Rue & Co” label.



The final design is shown as an impeforate proof affixed to card (103 x 123 mm), with the printer’s name at the on the bottom.

The final design of the stamp included the reduction in the size of the stamp to 30 x 39 mm. With the removal of the Coronation Regalia, this meant that the word “Coronation” and the stamp duty could move upwards closer to the Queen’s portrait.

With the approval of the design, De La Rue went to press.

The Southern Rhodesia 1953 Coronation stamp is without shadow of doubt the most impressive of all the Commonwealth and Great Britain stamps issued for this event.

(All images sourced from Spink archive of sales in 2021)

The Stamp



Catalogue listings

SG ²	RSC ³	Value	
77	C39	2sh6d	Carmine

Technical details

Stamp size:	30 x 39 mm		
Sheet sizes:	Pane of 6 rows of 10 stamps		
Printing method:	Recess printed by Thomas De La Rue, London		
Plates:	No information available of the number of plates used		
Plate number:	Plate ‘1’ bottom margin below R6/C10		
Guide marks: ⁶	Vertical guide ‘T’ marks in bottom margin at the centre pint of the sheet		
	Horizontal guide ‘T’ marks in left and right margins at the centre points of the sheet.		
Perforations:	Comb perforations: Perf 12 x 12½ (SG) and 12¼ x 12 (RSC)		
Margin perforations:	Right margin:	Imperforate	
	Other margins:	Fully perforated	
Imprint:	“Thomas De La Rue & Company Limited, London” below R6/C4 to 7		
Sheet number:	Above the top right hand corner stamp (R1/10)		
Print numbers:	ordered 240,000 ¹ . Pencil note found for sales of 290,658 ⁴		
Date of issue:	1 st June 1953 (Postal Notice 15 of 1953) ⁴		
Withdrawn from sale:	31 st July 1953 (Postal Notice 15 of 1953) ⁴ R C Smith states that it was originally intended that the stamp would be withdrawn from sale on 6 th June, but the postal notice for the later date is the same notice as for its release. ¹		
Demonetarised:	1 st September 1954 (Postal Notice 7 of 1954) ⁴		

Listed Varieties

No listed varieties have been recorded.

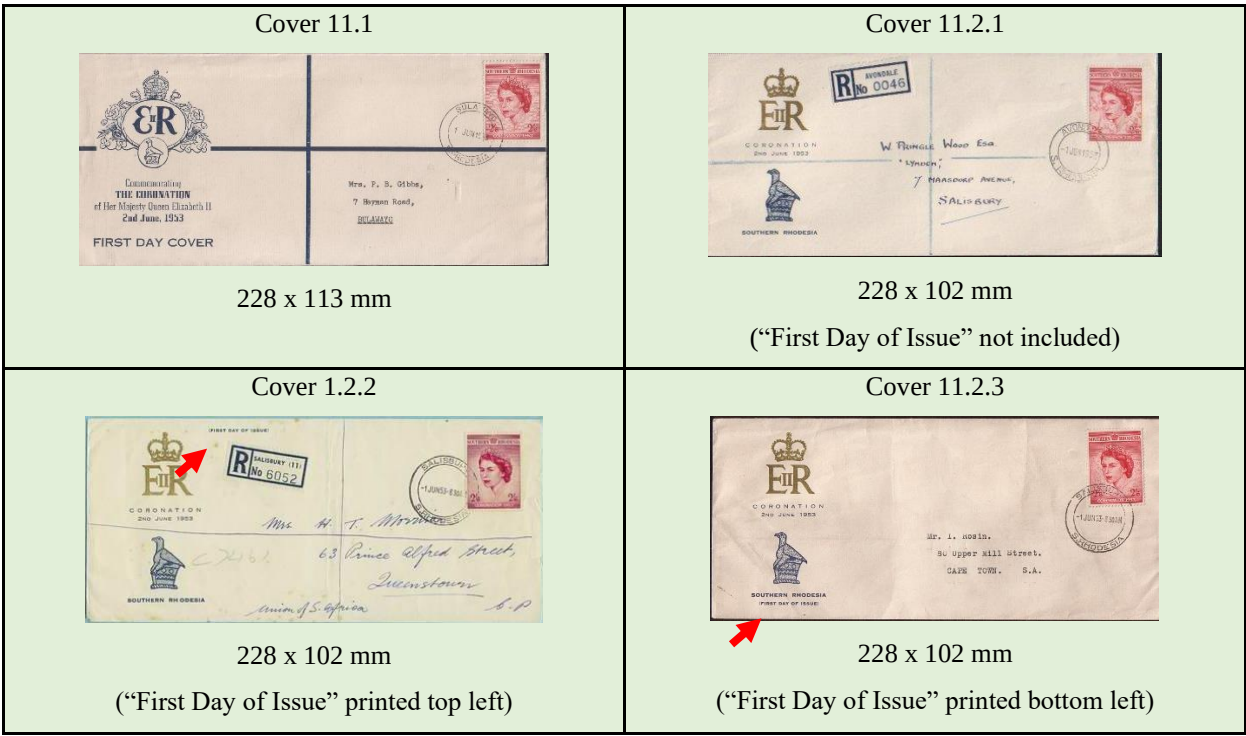
Unlisted Varieties

Numerous small dots and dashes have been noted with this issue, these are probably not constant.



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 11.3



167 x 103 mm

Cover 11.4 (Art Craft, USA)



165 x 93 mm

Cover 11.5



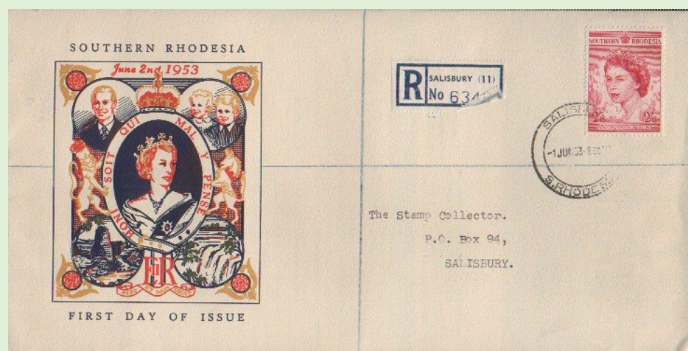
163 x 96 mm

Cover 11.6
(Issued by the Authority of the British Philatelic Association & the Philatelic Traders' Society)



165 x 92 mm

Cover 11.7



254 x 126 mm

Cover 11.8



164 x 108 mm

Cover 11.9



151 x 89 mm

Cover 11.10 (Apsley Air Letter)



Cover 11.11 (J Sanders, Southampton, UK)



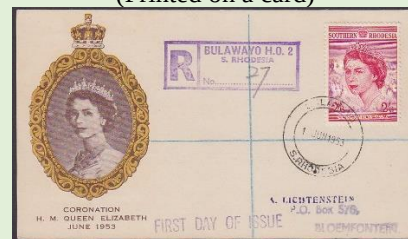
152 x 88 mm

Cover 11.12.1 (The Stamp Shop, Johannesburg)



Printed in gold & brown
178 x 95 mm
(Larger cover)

Cover 11.12.2
(Printed on a card)



Back of card reads “Souvenir of the Coronation of/
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth/Posted on the first day of
Issue”

153 x 88 mm

Cover 11.12.3



Printed in gold and brown
152 x 92 mm

Cover 11.12.4



Printed in gold and purple
178 x 95 mm

Cover 11.12.5



153 x 90 mm

Cover 11.13



230 x 101 mm

Cover 11.14 (W A White Stourbridge UK)



152 x 89 mm

Cover 11.15



155 x 108 mm

Cover 11.16



166 x 94 mm

Cover 11.17



160 x 94 mm

Cover 11.18.1 (Robstampco)



152 x 89 mm

(Silver ornate frame)

Cover 11.18.2 (Robstampco)



152 x 89 mm

(Olive-green ornate frame)

Cover 11.18.3 (Robstampco)



152 x 89 mm

(Olive-bistre ornate frame)

Cover 11.18.4 (Robstampco)



152 x 89 mm

(Gold ornate frame)

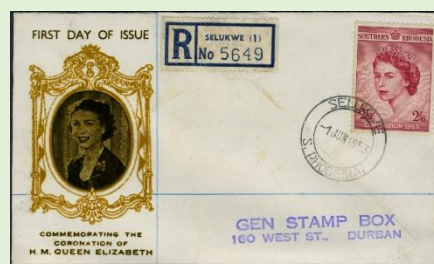
Cover 11.18.5 (Robstampco)



152 x 89 mm

(Deep violet ornate frame)

Cover 11.18.6 (Robstampco)



152 x 89 mm

(Gold ornate frame and orange-black portrait)

Cover 11.18.7 (Robstampco)



193 x 122 mm

(Brown ornate frame)

Cover 11.18.8 (Robstampco)



193 x 122 mm

(Silver ornate frame)

Cover 11.18.9 (Robstampco)



193 x 122 mm

(Old gold ornate frame with orange black portrait)

Cover 11.19



228 x 103 mm

Cover 11.20 (J Mackenzie) 152 x 89 mm	Cover 11.21 (Valentine & Sons Letter card) 154 x 102 mm
Cover 11.22 230 x 101 mm	Cover 11.23 165 x 92 mm
Cover 11.24 225 x 103 mm	Cover 11.25 165 x 92 mm
Cover 11.26 153x 90 mm	

Bibliography

- 1 "Rhodesia – A Postal History". R C Smith, published 1967 pages 388-89
- 2 Stanley Gibbons Commonwealth Stamp Catalogue – Southern & Central Africa, 2nd Edition 2014

- 3 The Rhodesia Stamp Catalogue, 1983/84 published by Salisbury Stamp Company, Zimbabwe (last edition)
- 4 “A Guide to the Postage Stamps of the Rhodesias & Nyasaland” published by the Mashonaland Philatelic Society in 1965.

Additions/Changes since August 2022	
3/2023	New fdc – 11.25
12-2023	New fdc – 11.26
4-2024	Replace image fdc 11.25