

The British South Africa Company

1905 Victoria Falls Issue

**To commemorate the Opening of the Victoria Falls Bridge over the
Zambesi River at the Batoka Gorge**

The Specimens

INTRODUCTION

This presentation describes the SPECIMEN copies of the 1905 Victoria Falls stamp issue.

1. Introduction and Overview
2. The Specimen stamps produced by Waterlow and Sons Ltd in London
3. The Variations of the perforated 5d duty
4. The Specimen stamps produced in Salisbury
5. Variation 1, 2 and 3 of the Samuel type 6 Overprint¹
6. Variation 4 and 5 of the Samuel Type 6 Overprint
7. Variation 6 of the Samuel type 6 Overprint
8. 1d Overprints associated with known flaws
9. 2½d Overprints associated with known flaws and plating marks
10. 5d Overprints associated with known flaws and plating marks
11. 1/- Overprints with flaws
12. 2/6d Overprints with flaws
13. 5/- Overprints with flaws
14. 2/6 Overprint cancelled the day prior to issue
15. Other "Specimen" overprinted stamps that are known to exist

Countries who had signed up to the Universal Postal Union (UPU), were required to send five sets of every postage stamp issue to the UPU so that other member countries could have a record for comparison to avoid forged or unofficial labels being used for postage.

Stamps were overprinted "SPECIMEN" before being provided to the UPU to prove the veracity of the issue.

750 sets of the 1905 Victoria Falls stamps were sent to the UPU. Until about 1907, Specimen overprints were produced in Salisbury.

All duties were overprinted in Salisbury, "SPECIMEN", by Samuel type R6 and these have a separate Catalogue number (SG94s to 99s) They were printed in a unique style of block capitals with serifs 28.5mm long by 2mm high. Many were poorly printed with smudges and variable impression.

Waterlow and Sons Ltd were also producing "SPECIMEN" stamps for its stamps during the period 1896 to 1909 and so stamps also exist in the format used by Waterlow, which were perforated "SPECIMEN" (Samuel type R5)

The sample in the British Postal Museum is perforated, proving that a number of the 5d duty were sent to the UPU with perforation rather than being overprinted.

All duties in the 1905 Victoria Falls set of stamps were perforated "SPECIMEN" in Samuel type R5 but it is not known how many sets were submitted by Waterlow to the UPU

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The Perforated Specimens

It is not known how many sets of duties that were produced with the word SPECIMEN perforated. However, it is reasonable to assume that all duties were treated similarly by Waterlow and Sons during the period of production to 1909.

The 5d duty has survived and is regularly seen on commercial auction sites and in small sales. However, the other values, which must surely have been produced as well are rarely seen.

Peetoom² reports that two sets are known, one of which is shown below.



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5d duty perforated SPECIMEN

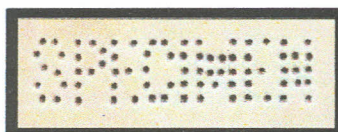
The Perforated SPECIMEN stamps were produced by Waterlow and Sons in London. Between 1896 and 1909, Waterlow used the Samuel type R5 format, which in the Victoria Falls 1905 issue produced the following effect.

The 5d duty is found perforated in four different ways

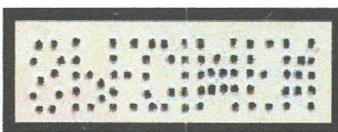
1. Normal
2. Inverted
3. Inverted and Reversed
4. Reversed

A concertina system of perforating the stamps was used, as a vertical strip of five stamps has been reported with the word specimen normal, inverted, normal, inverted, normal. It follows therefore that reversed, and inverted and reversed, were created by the sheets being perforated in the inverted position.

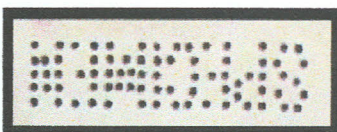
It might be assumed that all four versions would be equally common, but Peetoom reports that the normal state is scarce, that only two copies of inverted and reversed are known. Unusually, inverted is the most common and reversed slightly less common than inverted. However, the author reports a greater number of inverted and reversed are known.



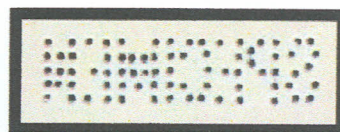
Normal



Inverted



Inverted & Reversed



Reversed



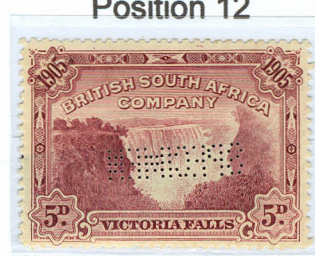
Normal
Perf 14 x 14



Inverted
Perf 14 x 14
Tree Flaw State 2
Position 12



Inverted & Reversed
Perf 14 x 14
Tree Flaw State 3
Position 15



Reversed
Perf 14 x 13½
Tree Flaw State 1
Position 10

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Overprinted SPECIMEN

The complete set of duties
Overprinted "SPECIMEN" Samuel Type 6
Perforated 14x14

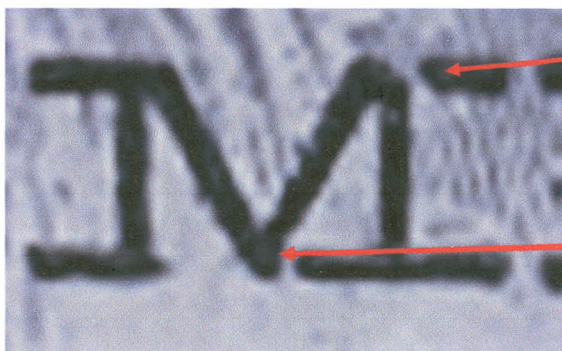


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Specimen Overprints

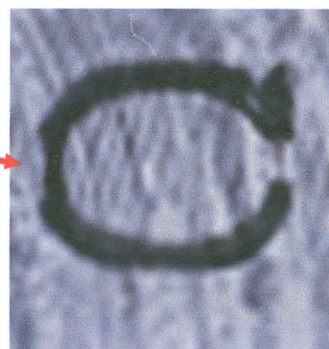
Variations 1, 2 and 3 of the six variants



Variation 2 - Broken serif at top of right side of M

Variation 1 - Lower left part of "V" irregular

Variation 3 - Flattening of the curve of "C"



Perf 14 x14
Carmine Lake



Perf 14½ x14½



Perf 14 x14



Perf 14 x14



Perf 14 x14



Perf 14 x14

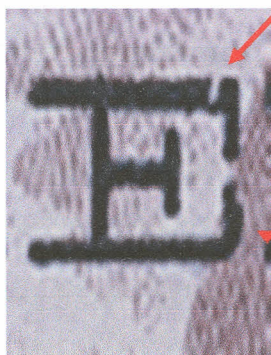
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Specimen Overprint Variants

Variations 4 and 5 of the six variants

Variants 4 and 5
are found on the
second E of the
word Specimen



Broken upper arm of
letter E—Variation 4

Curve upwards of
lower arm of letter E—
Variation 5



Perf $15\frac{1}{2} \times 15$



Perf $14\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{1}{2}$



Perf $15\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{1}{2}$



Perf 14×14



Perf 14×14



Perf $15 \times 14\frac{1}{2}$

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Specimen Overprints

Variation 6 of the six variants



Variation 6 - Circular intrusion into "V" of M at the base



Perf 14 x14



Perf 14 x14



Perf 14 x14



Perf 14 x14

Removed from Postmasters
Specimen Book Ex Ian Kemp



Perf 14 x14

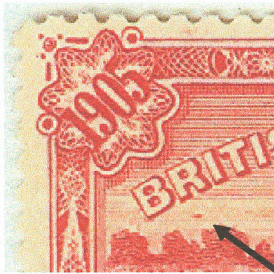


Perf 14 x14

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Specimen Overprints with Flaws and Plating marks



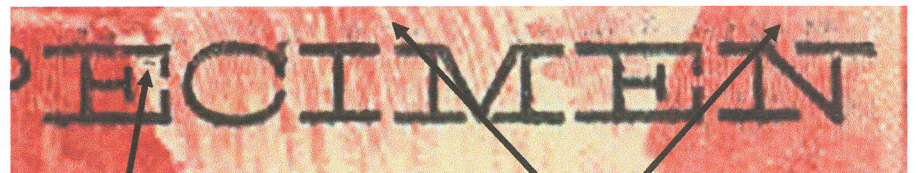
1d duty SPECIMEN
Overprint
with Aeroplane Flaw
Position 18



1d duty SPECIMEN
Overprint
with Boulder Flaw
Position 23



1d duty SPECIMEN
Overprint with Horizontal
Line in first E (a) and double
impression over all letters (b)

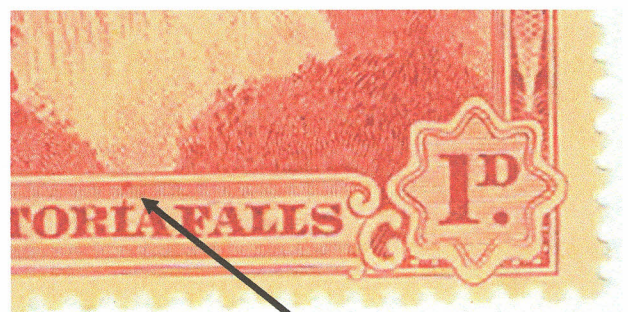


(a)

(b)



Vertical line
and large dot
over second "I"
of Victoria



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2½d Specimen Overprints with Flaws and Plating marks

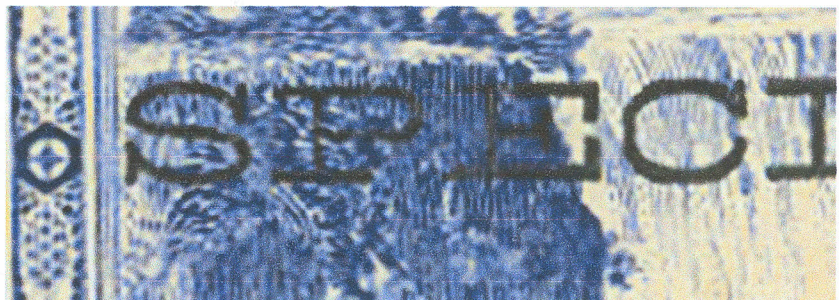
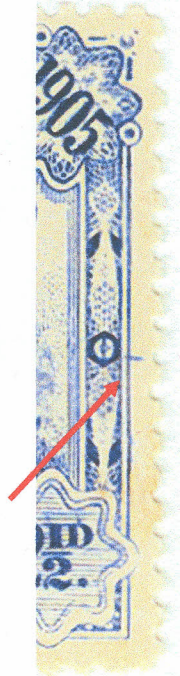


2½d duty SPECIMEN
Overprint with Variation 4
and 5. Plating mark under CT
of Victoria and 2 dots under
R of Africa Position 12



2½d duty SPECIMEN
Overprint with Variation
4 and 5.

Double Dash in right
gutter half way down
Position 7



2½d duty SPECIMEN with the letters "S,
P and E" partially obscured by
"undergrowth" and giving the impression
of a break in the top of the first E and the
lower curve of the P. Presumably due to
a poor impression of the overprint

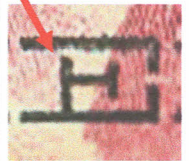
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5d Specimen Overprints with Flaws and Plating marks



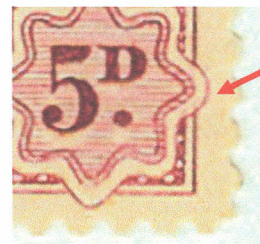
5d duty: Perf 14 Overprint
"Body in Falls" under M
Row 4 Col 3



5d duty: Perf 14 Overprint with
break in vertical of 2nd E
Plating dot Lt margin below
centre Row 4 Col 5



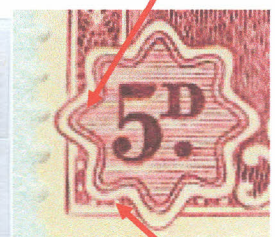
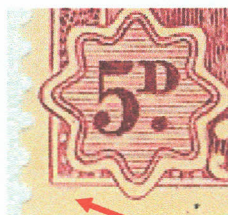
5d duty with perforated
SPECIMEN inverted and
Reversed with Tree Flaw
Position 11 (Dot in top margin
over H of South)



5d duty with perforated
SPECIMEN reversed and
re-entry in Right Value Tablet
Position 6



5d duty with perforated
SPECIMEN inverted and tree
flaw with re-entry to frame
below Left Value Tablet
Position 12

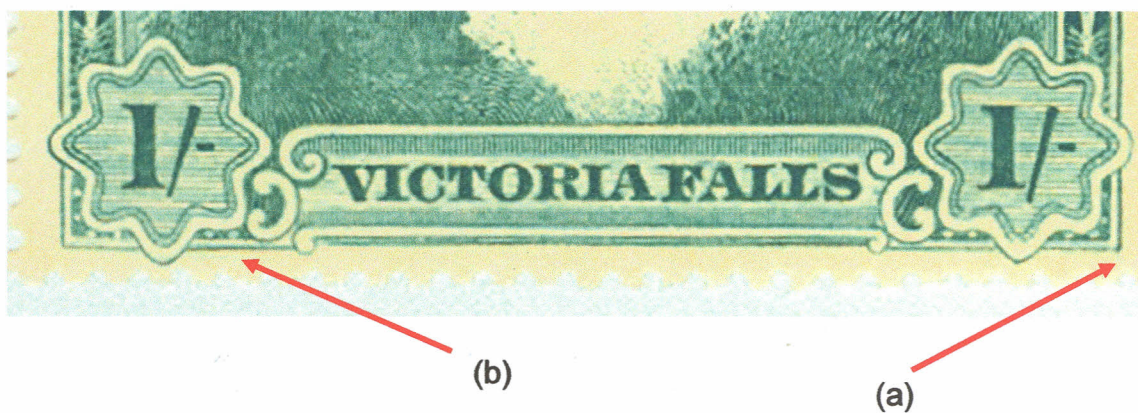


5d duty with perforated
SPECIMEN inverted and
reversed with tree flaw with
re-entry to frame of
Left Value Tablet Position 14

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 1905 Victoria Falls Issue
 1/- Specimen Overprints with flaws



1/- duty SPECIMEN: Variations 1, 2 and 3 with the letters "S, P and E" partially obscured by "undergrowth" Presumably due to a poor impression of the overprint



1/- duty removed from Postmaster's Specimen book (Ex Ian Kemp), with extension of right border below the bottom margin (a) and long "guideline" below bottom margin

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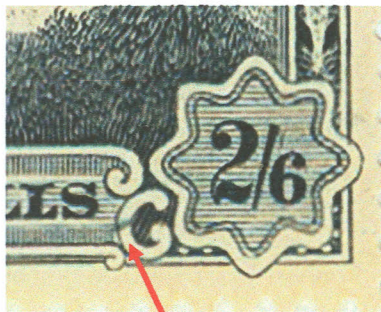
1905 Victoria Falls Issue

2/6d Specimen Overprints with flaws



2/6d duty SPECIMEN
overprint with lines through
the M of Company

Position 20



2/6d duty with SPECIMEN
overprint and long guideline
in right margin



2/6d duty with
SPECIMEN overprint
with variation 4 and 5
Poor impression stamp
and slice through right
scroll



2/6d duty with
SPECIMEN overprint
and dot over I of
AFRICA, filled square
block over FA of FALLS
and line in M of
COMPANY. Removed
from Postmaster's
Specimen Book
(Ex Ian Kemp)

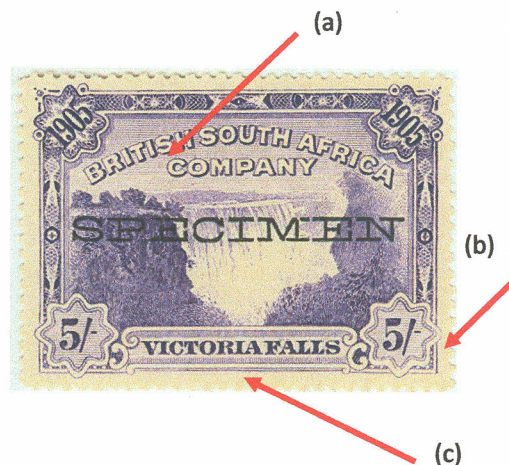


The British South Africa Company

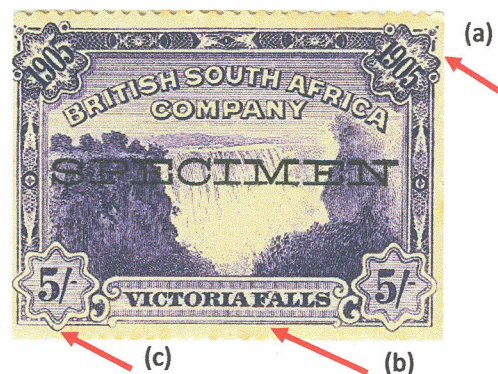
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5/- Specimen Overprints with flaws

5/- duty with SPECIMEN overprint. Shadow "C" to left of COMPANY (a), extra frame line in right margin (b) and in lower margin (c)



5/- duty with SPECIMEN overprint. Extra frame line in right margin (a), in lower margin (b) and flaw in LVT (c)



5/- duty with SPECIMEN overprint. Extra frame line in right margin (a) and flaw in RVT (b)



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2/6d Duty overprinted SPECIMEN and cancelled 12 JUL 05



Was the Postmaster practicing?

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Other known "Specimens"

In his Essay, Cordes³ discusses other SPECIMEN stamps produced by Waterlow and Sons Ltd and locally in Rhodesia.

Printers Proofs were produced in deep Olive Green, in sheetlets of nine (3x3), imperforate, and overprinted "Waterlow & Sons Ltd" on one line and underneath "SPECIMEN", diagonally across each stamp.

The values were in line order:

Line 1: 1/- 2/6d 5/-

Line 2 1d 2½d 5d

Line 3 1d 2½d 5d

Mention of this is only included because the sheetlets were overprinted with the word Specimen. However, they were not sent to the UPU. Copies of this sheetlet exist as do some individual items that were cut up and not overprinted. Both of these have appeared recently in auction houses.

The 1/-, 2/6d and 5/- values were overprinted locally in Rhodesia after September 1907 for Gabon, which had recently become an independent French colony. These were overprinted in triplicate using an italic script and again, impressed diagonally across each stamp. The only duties generally in use at the time were the three top values. Only a single image of a 1/- duty appears in the Essay produced by Cordes.

References:

1. M. Samuel: Specimen stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857-1948

2. O. Peetoom: Victoria Falls

3. C. Cordes: An Essay on The 1905 Victoria Falls Issue of the British South Africa Company

The below illustrations do not form part of my submission for The Livermore Competition,
but I have been asked to add the following images by a senior member of Council

Composite Sheet—Printers Proof—Unknown date of Production



Subsequent (after September 1907) Specimen produced for Gabon

