

KING GEORGE VI 1937 DEFINITIVE

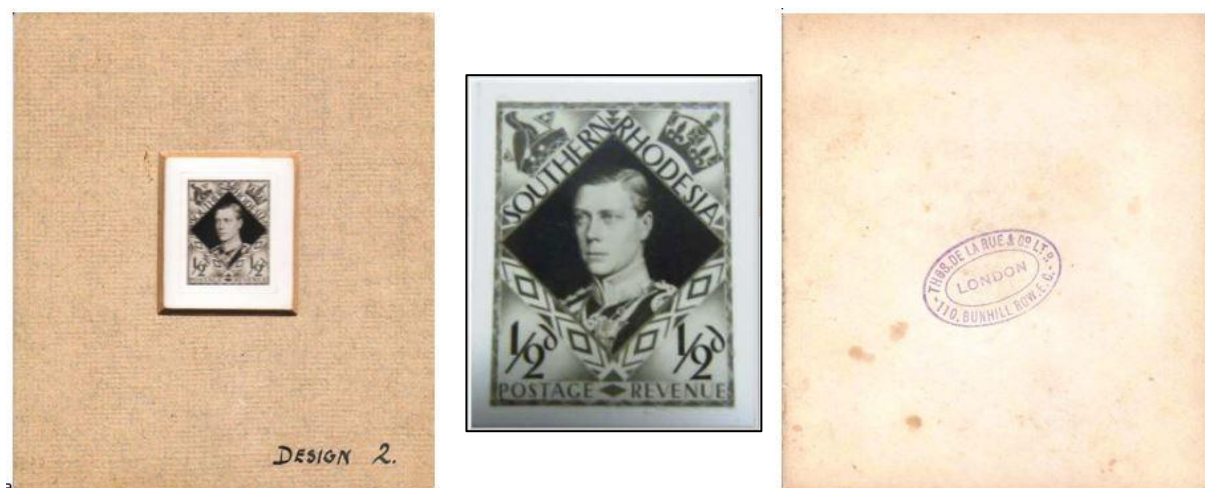
Issued 25th November 1937

An extensive study of this issue was published by the Rhodesian Study Circle in 2012 as part of its Handbook series of memoirs, entitled “Memoir 21 - The KGVI Postage and Revenue Definitives of Southern Rhodesia” by George Stewart and Colin Hoffman. It is not the intention of this section of the KGVI Encyclopaedia to replicate the Memoir but to bring out its principal information and add to it. Within the Acknowledgements the authors indicted that Memoir did not tell the whole story and hoped that it would provide a basis for others to continue with it and to fill in the gaps.¹ Inclusion in the KGVI Encyclopaedia will it is hoped fill in additional information and provide a platform for updating as more becomes available. This section will not, however, deal with the revenue stamps issued at the time.

It is not the intention of the Encyclopaedia to cover the use and issuing of the 1935 Large Falls 2d and 3d duty stamps. These stamps continued to be reprinted until 1952 and were invalidated on 1st July 1955 after the KGVI definitive issue. Due to the continuation of these long running definitive stamps, the KGVI definitive issue did not include the 2d and 3d duties.

New definitive

With the ascension to the throne of King Edward VIII in 20th January 1937, planning commenced for a new definitive issue featuring the new King. In this regard it would appear that a number of sources were contacted to submit possible designs.



De la Rue submitted this card inscribed “Design 2”. The design had a photographic portrait of the King in a diamond shape with symbols of the Zimbabwe Bird and Crown in the top corners and ½d duties in the bottom corners and “Postage – Revenue’ at the base.

The card has a cachet reading THOS.DE LA RUE & CO LT^D / 110, BUNHILL ROW. E.C.” on the reverse.

(Courtesy of Dave Cooper)



The above design appears to also been printed in a light green.
(Courtesy of Patrick Flanagan)

Memoir 21 advises that the design opposite was produced by Edmund Dulac. This design is very similar to that of the de la Rue design, save that there is a six sided frame around the king's portrait.

Given that this design is very similar to that of de la Rue above, it would appear that Edmund Delac may have been engaged by that printer

Could this possibly be the "Design 1"?

(Courtesy of Patrick Flannigan)



The essays below were produced by Hugo Fleury (1893 – 1983), a stamp and banknote designer employed by Waterlow & Sons for over 50 years.⁴

Whilst these are very much sketch designs, it would appear that the same source photograph was been used as that of de la Rue. The designs are simpler



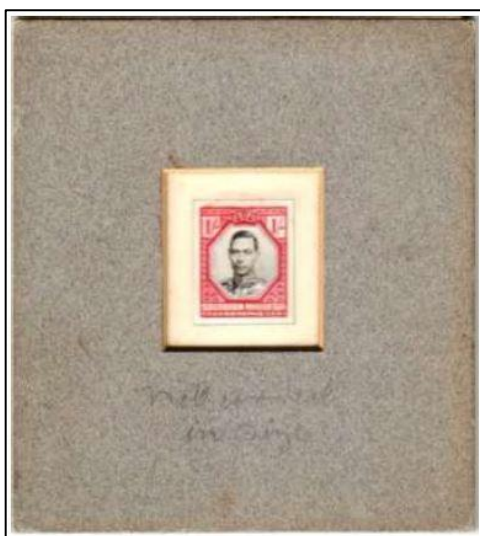
(Courtesy of Patrick Flanagan)

With the abdication of King Edward VIII on 10th December 1937, work had to cease of the new definitive issue depicting this monarch, although the basis of the artwork was to continue with a new portrait of the new king, George VI.

R C Smith in his book “Rhodesia – A Postal History” was not very forthcoming in describing the 1937 KGVI definitive issue even though it was the longest lasting. He merely said

“The accepted design for this issue was submitted by Messrs. Waterlow and Sons of London, and was acclaimed by the ‘Stamp Review’ as ‘undoubtedly the finest stamps issued by any part of the Empire for many years. The design is just about the philatelists’ ideal, and especially the high values could be scarcely improved.’ They were printed by the recess engraved process.

The original design submitted by the printers was amended by the Postmaster-General, Mr. C. J. Swift, by the substitution of the words ‘Postage and Revenue’ at the base of the stamp instead of ‘Postage Issue’ and the Crown, which had been included, was eliminated. The columns on either side were broken in the centre to have the value heavily printed in the intervening space.”²



(Courtesy of Dave Cooper)

Although Waterlow was contracted to produce the 1937 definitive issue, it apparent that de la Rue also produced a single essay for consideration. The presentation card above has the same cachet on the back as the Edward VIII artwork.³



Rough essay of 2sh6d duty hand painted in orange and blue with small portions in Chinese white, executed stamp-size on thing card. Close to final

Probably produced by Hugo Fleury.

(Source Spink archives for December 2016 auction)

Opposite are different hand painted artist essays produced by Waterlow & Sons. It is probable that the artist concerned was Hugo Fleury, as a continuation of his design for the Edward VII proposed stamps.

These could also be the designs mentioned by R C Smith, where he stated that the Postmaster General appeared to require the removal of the crown depicted these designs.

(Source Spinks auction May 2021 – ex collection of Brian Trotter)



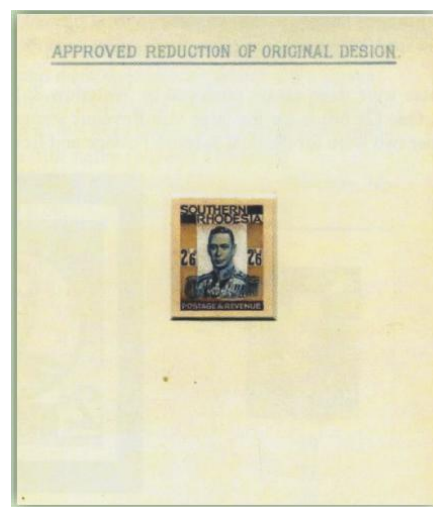
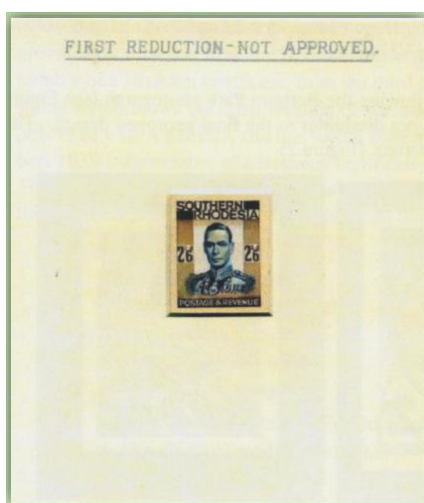
The design opposite is a hand painted essay of the final design. It appears to take the Waterlow designs forward for approval by the “Committee of Designs”. Memoir 21 suggests that the artist is unknown, but this is probably by Hugo Fleury.

Below are hand painted essays approximately the size of the issued stamps. These essays are mounted on sheet noted by The Keeper, 25th Nov 1937, *Issue Artist's Drawing by Messrs*



Waterlow & Sons Ltd.

All images within collection H M The King.^{1,9}



Colour Trials

Below are sheets of colour trial of the different duties from the ½d to 5sh together with revenue stamps, the rejected colours having been crossed out.



(Source Patrick Flanagan's presentation –Collection H M The King)⁹



Set of Imperforate proofs mounted on card, described as a “sheet of hand pulled proofs from the dies of each of the Postage and Revenue stamps in the colours selected”. Sent to the Treasury, Salisbury on 11th October 1937. Within the National Archives of Zimbabwe.¹⁰

Royal Approval

With the approval of the “Committee of Designs”, the office of the High Commissioner for Southern Rhodesia wrote to the Dominions Office on 30th April 1937 –

“I am directed to forward herewith, the enclosed final proof of the new permanent issue of Southern Rhodesia stamp.

This stamp, as designed, has been recommended by the committee of Design, and the High Commissioner would be grateful if the stamp now forwarded be submitted for His Majesty’s approval”¹

The Dominions Office thereupon wrote on 4th May, 1937, to Buckingham Palace –

“I enclose, to be laid before the King, a final proof of the new permanent issue Southern Rhodesia stamp.

The High Commissioner for Southern Rhodesia in forwarding the stamp, states that it has been recommended by the Committee of Designs.

The Secretary of State would be grateful if the proof could be submitted for His Majesty’s approval” (signed by J. J. G. Garney)¹

Buckingham Palace responded on 5th May 1937 -

“In reply to your petter (R177/1) of May 4th, addressed to Lascelles, I am writing to let you know that His Majesty has approved the final proof of the new permanent issue Southern Rhodesia Stamp, which I return herewith.”¹

Full copies of the above letters can be found in Memoir 21.

It is not known which final proof was forwarded to Buckingham Place for approval, but is probably the “Approved Original Design” shown above.

The speed of the approval by the King is quite astonishing given that the impending Coronation that was due to take a few days later on 12th May 1937.

The Head Die



Bertram Park portrait

There is some debate as to the portrait used for the preparation of the Head Die for this issue. Memoir 21 details the use of the Bertram Park portrait¹, while within RSCJ 204 there is the suggestion that a portrait by Vandyk was the source⁵. This is dealt with in more detail in the attached Appendix 1, together with the evolution of the die head



Vandyk Studio portrait

The Stamps



. Catalogue listings

SG ⁶	RSC ⁷	Value	SG colours first/ <i>RSC colours in italics</i> , where different
40	550	½d	Green
41	551	1d	Scarlet/ <i>Red</i>
42	552	1½d	Red-brown
43	553	4d	Red-orange
44	554	6d	Grey-black/ <i>Slate</i>
45	555	8d	Emerald-green/ <i>Blue-green</i>
46	556	9d	Pale blue/ <i>Blue</i>
47	557	10d	Purple/ <i>Dull purple</i>
48	558	1sh	Black & blue-green/ <i>Black & green</i>
a.			Frame double, one albino
49	559	1sh6d	Black & yellow-orange/ <i>black & yellow-brown</i>
50	560	2sh	Black & brown
51	561	2sh6d	Ultramarine & purple/ <i>Deep blue & plum</i>
52	562	5sh	Blue & blue-green/ <i>Deep blue and green</i>

Technical details

Stamp size:	21 x 26 mm																										
Sheet sizes:	1½d, 1d & 1½d - Four panes of 60 stamps: 6 rows of 10 stamps per pane – total of 240 stamps (1½d second and subsequent printings) All other duties, including 1 st printing of 1½d – single pane of 60 stamps: 6 rows of 10 stamps. Late printings of 4d and 6d, 120 stamps sheet, with two panes of 60 stamps: 6 rows of 10 stamps																										
Printing method:	Recess printed by Waterlow & Sons																										
Plates:	½d to 10d single plates 1sh to 5sh, single frame plate for each duty, common vignette plates																										
Plate numbers: ⁴	Below is a summary of the plate numbers used for this issue. In a separate section a comprehensive analysis of the dies and proofs are dealt with in detail. The number of stamps in each printing sheet, in panes of 60, are indicated in brackets. Single plates - ½d to 10d <table><tr><td>½d</td><td>39,621; 40,763; 41,036; 42,002; 43,956; (all 240 stamps)</td></tr><tr><td>1d</td><td>39,622; 36,623; 40,764; 40,941; 40,764; 42,759; 43,629; 43,957; 44,340; 44,646 (all 240 stamps)</td></tr><tr><td>1½d</td><td>39,624 (60 stamps); 40,046 (240 stamps)</td></tr><tr><td>4d</td><td>39,625; (60 stamps) 45,005 (120 stamps)</td></tr><tr><td>6d</td><td>39,627; 39,626; (both 60 stamps) 45,002 (240 stamps)</td></tr><tr><td>8d</td><td>39,628 (60 stamps)</td></tr><tr><td>9d</td><td>39,629 (60 stamps)</td></tr><tr><td>10d</td><td>39,630 (60 stamps)</td></tr></table> Frame plates for 1sh to 5sh (all 60 stamps) <table><tr><td>1sh</td><td>39,631; 45,003</td></tr><tr><td>1sh6d</td><td>39,632</td></tr><tr><td>2sh</td><td>39,633</td></tr><tr><td>2sh6d</td><td>39,634</td></tr><tr><td>5sh</td><td>39,635</td></tr></table> Vignette plates 39,636; 40,932, 43,592 (all bi-coloured duties) 43,958; 45,004 (used in 1sh duty only)	½d	39,621; 40,763; 41,036; 42,002; 43,956; (all 240 stamps)	1d	39,622; 36,623; 40,764; 40,941; 40,764; 42,759; 43,629; 43,957; 44,340; 44,646 (all 240 stamps)	1½d	39,624 (60 stamps); 40,046 (240 stamps)	4d	39,625; (60 stamps) 45,005 (120 stamps)	6d	39,627; 39,626; (both 60 stamps) 45,002 (240 stamps)	8d	39,628 (60 stamps)	9d	39,629 (60 stamps)	10d	39,630 (60 stamps)	1sh	39,631; 45,003	1sh6d	39,632	2sh	39,633	2sh6d	39,634	5sh	39,635
½d	39,621; 40,763; 41,036; 42,002; 43,956; (all 240 stamps)																										
1d	39,622; 36,623; 40,764; 40,941; 40,764; 42,759; 43,629; 43,957; 44,340; 44,646 (all 240 stamps)																										
1½d	39,624 (60 stamps); 40,046 (240 stamps)																										
4d	39,625; (60 stamps) 45,005 (120 stamps)																										
6d	39,627; 39,626; (both 60 stamps) 45,002 (240 stamps)																										
8d	39,628 (60 stamps)																										
9d	39,629 (60 stamps)																										
10d	39,630 (60 stamps)																										
1sh	39,631; 45,003																										
1sh6d	39,632																										
2sh	39,633																										
2sh6d	39,634																										
5sh	39,635																										
Guide marks:	See separate paper on the Guide marks; imprints and plate numbers.																										
Perforations:	Line perforations: Perf 14																										

Margin perforations:	All margins: Fully perforated			
Imprint:	“Waterlow & Sons Limited, London Wall, London E.C.” below R6/C5 & 6 for 60 stamp panes (1½d to 5sh); and at base of interpanneau vertical gutters between panes C & D (240 stamp sheets in 4 panes of 60). See greater details in separate section of imprints and printer’s marks.			
Sheet number:	Sheet numbers are found above the top right hand corner stamps (R1/C10) in 60 stamp panes (1½d to 5sh) and above R1/C10 of Pane B of 240 stamp sheets.			
	Three digit numbers from 001 to 500, sheets placed in batches of 500 for packaging.			
Print numbers: ¹	½d	109,781,440	1d	214,295,000
	1½d.	22,750,000	4d	5,610,000
	6d	8,776,000	8d	2,112,000
	9d	3,642,000	10d	1,266,000
	1sh.	10,156,000	1sh6d	2,181,000
	2sh	3,351,000	2sh6d	2,751,000
	5sh	1,775,000		
Date of issue: ⁸	25 th November 1937 (Postal Notice 52 of 1937)			
Withdrawn from sale: ⁸	1 st July 1954 (Postal Notice 1 of 1954)			
Demonetarised: ⁸	1 st September 1954 (Postal Notice 7 of 1954)			

Stamp colours

With so many printings and printing taking place over a long period of time, including war years, of each of the duties there are bound to have differences in the colour shades. Memoir 21 and the Mashonaland Guide give a range of colours reported by various stamp catalogues and dealers, these are listed in detail in these publications. As Memoir 21 states “*not only is it the case that no two printings of the stamps are likely to be exactly the same colour, but no two people are likely to see exactly the same colour, or to use the words to describe the colours the same way.*” ¹

No definitive guide has been issued that can link the ink colour with any particular printing of the duty concerned.

Papers

The existence of different papers was first reported in the RSC Journal No 14 September 1951 –

It is also obvious, that during their period of use some difference in the texture of the paper would be bound to occur particularly so during the war years of 1939-1955. The stamps as originally issued were on thickish white paper, during the war a thinner paper was introduced and it would

*seem from examples seen that it was semi absorbent since the design has a slightly blurred appearance; in some cases, the design not only shows through the back but a raised impression can be observed as well as felt; this is probably due to incorrect pressure being applied when printing on this thinner paper. The use of this paper, particularly for some values, viz, ½d, 1d, 4d, 8d and 1/-has been continued. On the whole the paper for these values is brittle and fairly easily torn.*¹²

Memoir 21 had this to say about the papers, but did not go into any great depth on this subject

*Two kinds of paper can be easily identified, thick and thin. The thicker or creamier paper was found on the early issues, but as the war progressed paper got thinner and at times the design can be seen on the back. It is interesting that, apart from the paper change, there is no evidence that the war had any effect on stamp production.*¹

The Mashonaland Guide⁸ indicates two types of paper –

- a. Creamy paper with yellowish gum
- b. Thinner paper, design showing through the back

This appears to be in relation to all the duties.

The paper differences are clearly illustrated in a lot for sale in the website of Deverill & Macgregor. This is described as – “1d, three blocks of four showing a striking contrast of papers, from the original thicker paper to later printings on thin very transparent, design clearly showing through to reverse.”



(Source: rhodesia.co.za)

Colours, papers and gums

Otto Peetoom in his publication The Rhodesian Philatelist offered up the following in his October 2017 issue No 42:

Initially by turning the stamps over to show the gummed side, it became apparent that they could be subdivided into three groups ‘Mottled gum’, ‘Smooth gum’ and ‘Smooth gum on thin paper’. Otto then shaded the three groups by duty which provided 37 colour variations to the stamps. When taken with the gum this produced groups with the gum of Mottled (26), Smooth (34) and Thin Paper (30). This he placed into a table reproduced below.

No	Value	1937 Definitive	Mottled	Smooth	Thin
1	½d	Yellow green	Yes	Yes	*
2		Green	*	Yes	Yes
3	1d	Scarlet	Yes	Yes	Yes
4		Vermilion	Yes	Yes	Yes
5		Red	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	1½d	Deep red brown	Yes	Yes	Yes
7		Red brown	Yes	Yes	Yes
8		Chestnut	*	Yes	Yes
9	4d	Deep orange	Yes	Yes	Yes
10		Orange	*	Yes	Yes
11	6d	Greenish slate	Yes	Yes	Yes
12		Bluish grey	Yes	Yes	*
13		Slate	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	8d	Blue green	Yes	Yes	Yes
15		Emerald	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	9d	Greenish blue	Yes	*	Yes
17		New blue	*	Yes	Yes
18		Light blue	Yes	Yes	Yes
19		Pale blue	*	Yes	*
20	10d	Plum	*	Yes	*
21		Purple	*	*	Yes
22		Pale purple	*	*	Yes
23		Red lilac	*	*	Yes
24	1/-	Deep blue green	Yes	Yes	Yes
25		Blue green	Yes	Yes	Yes
26	1/6	Orange yellow	Yes	Yes	Yes
27		Deep orange yellow	Yes	Yes	*
28		Yellow	Yes	Yes	Yes
29	2/-	Deep brown	*	Yes	*
30		Brown	Yes	Yes	Yes
31		Light brown	Yes	Yes	Yes
32	2/6	Deep ultramarine and purple	Yes	Yes	Yes
33		Ultramarine & mauve	Yes	Yes	*
34		Dull ultramarine & deep purple	Yes	Yes	Yes
35	5/-	Blue & deep blue green	Yes	Yes	Yes
36		Blue & blue green	Yes	Yes	Yes
37		Ultramarine & dull blue green	Yes	Yes	Yes

- Indicates examples not seen, thus the shades for the relevant gums may not exist

1/- double print

SG48a is the only variety listed in the Stanley Gibbons Commonwealth Stamp Catalogue for Southern & Central Africa having the description of “Frame double, one albino”, with a footnote of “the frame appears blurred and overinked”. This description has been hotly debated as being totally incorrect, attached as Annexure 2 is a detailed analysis of this variety.



SG48



SG48a

The conclusions of this study are that the variety was probably caused by the paper being damp at the time of printing which caused the ink to spread. The variety is best described in an appeal for information within the RSC Journal of June 1988 (No 142 page 76) and *The Stamp Magazine* December page 48.

“The letters of the name tablet at the top, and the figures in the value tablets, are fuzzy - almost as if the ink has got wet and this has caused it to spread slightly, giving the letters and figures a matt appearance with fuzzy edges - the letters particularly have lost their sharp edges.

The wording in the bottom tablet, although in a blue green surround, has also suffered from a spreading of this blue green surround into the white wording, which has been reduced in size and clarity by this action.”

Various studies of this variety have identified that it has appeared in three sheets, which can be distinguished by examining the relationship of the head plate with the bottom panel with the words “Postage & Revenue”. These are summarised as follows

First sheet (sheet no. 199)

Described as “The head is registered noticeably low and slightly to the right and overlaps the words ‘Postage and Revenue’”. It almost touches the right frame line”.

The reference to the head being slightly to the right and almost touches the right frame line, is probably an over description.



The clear characteristic of this sheet is that the Die Head is lower into the ‘Postage & Revenue’ area. The left edge of the epaulette is through the ‘O’ of Postage



(Source: Spink auction archive)

Second Sheet (sheet no. 495)

Described as “The head is also registered low, and it is to the left, and almost touches the left frame line”



The two clear characteristics being the proximity of the Die Head to the left frame line, and its low registration to the wording beneath. The left edge of the Kin's epaulette is approximately above the upright of the letter 'P' below



(Source: Spink auction archive)

Third Sheet (no sheet number identified)

Described as “the head is registered slightly lower than normal ... but not so low that the bottom of the portrait touches the words ‘Postage & Revenue’”.



The clear characteristic of this sheet is that the Die Head does not touch the bottom panel with the words ‘Postage & Revenue’



(Source RSC website PowerPoint presentation of Pat Flanagan)

There a further variety that has emerged from the research, which is anomaly that is evident in three examples of the study material. These were identified by Otto Peetoom within his publication The Rhodesian Philatelist No 40, February 1917.



Between rows 1 & 2, there is the light printing of “RHOD” in the bottom margin of the upper stamps, and some fuzzy marking in the panels above the duty in the second row. It is thought that this may be as a result of a light kiss of the printing plate as the sheet existed the press.

This variety was found in two examples from the 2nd sheet and one from the 1st sheet



(Source Spink auction archive)

Reported constant flaws

Memoir 21 and the RSC Journal report various flaws reportedly being constant

½d – Tagged Ear flaw

First identified by John Tolbutt and reported in June 1987. Appeared in another block in auction by Derek Pollard.

Identified as being on stamp 48 (R4C8), in plate 41036, first used in June 1941, not found in subsequent printings

(Source Memoir 21 page 36)¹



1d. Broken Frame line top left corner

Memoir 21 stated that frame line was either broken or solid, appearing to come from a new 1947 plate, the line became solid and then later printing broken again. The illustrations in Memoir are very fuzzy. The above examples shows this frame line form solid to thin and broken. Likely that the line would have thinned and broken in most printings, particularly with over use. ¹

1½d – additional line under d. of duty

First identified in RSC Journal No 18, page 13 by Dr Hall, identified as from stamp 35 (R3C5) ²³



6d Spot on Chin Flaw

RSC Journal 252 page 111, identified by George Stewart. The spot is at the very tip of the red arrow. Identified as coming from stamp 51. Flaw found on stamp 51 (R6/C1). Note George states that the position is "second from left on the bottom row" – this would make it stamp 51 – R6C2.

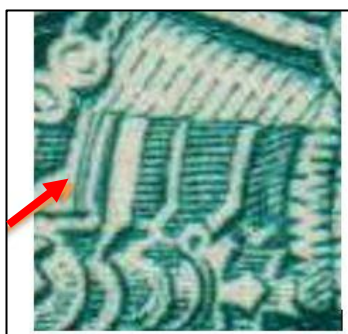
(Source RSC Journal No 252 page 111)²¹



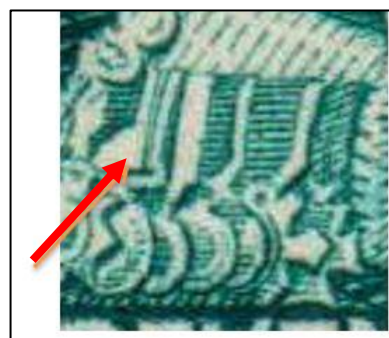
8d Medal Flaw

Identified but not illustrated by Dave Cooper in RSC Journal No 256, page 100. Parallel lines in far left medal changing from being parallel to narrowing to a needle shape. Only visible under magnification.

(Courtesy of Dave Cooper)



Normal, parallel lines

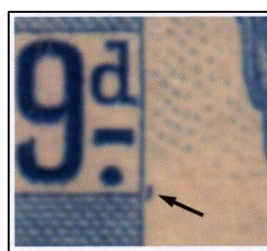


Needle shape

9d Comma Flaw

Shown in Memoir 21, being a dot adjoining the left duty tablet in stamp 34 (R3C4). First report in 2008.

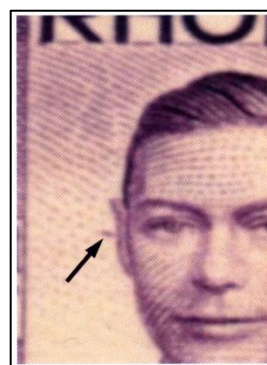
(Source Memoir 21 page 36)¹



10d Dart in Ear Flaw

First mention by Mr Hassell and illustrated in 2008. Found in stamp 40 (R3C10) in plate 39630 printed 15th July 1947 and later printings.

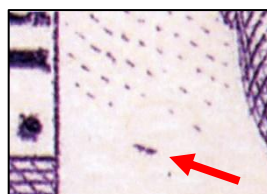
(Source Memoir 21 page 36)¹



10d Dart flaw near left duty tablet

Identified by George Stewart in RSC Journal No 249, on stamp 50 (R4/C10), dash between left duty table and King's check.

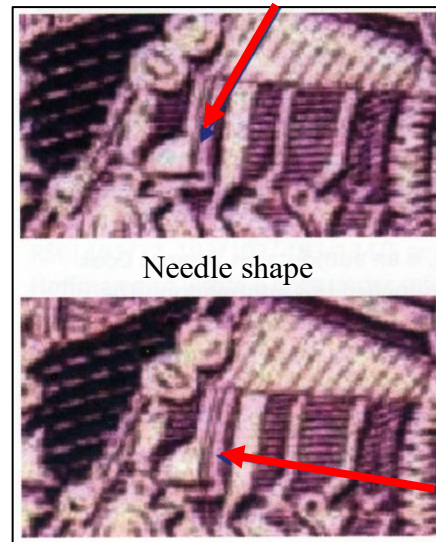
(Source RSC Journal No 249 page 168)²⁰



10d Medal Flaw

Identified and illustrated by Dave Cooper in RSC Journal No 256, page 100. Parallel lines in far left medal changing from being parallel to narrowing to a needle shape. Only visible under magnification.

(Source RSC Journal No 256 page 100)²²

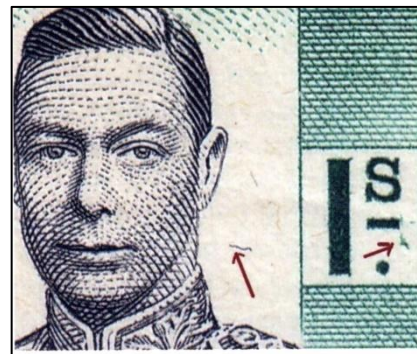


1sh Tide mark and grave accent flaws

Identified by George Steward in RSC Journal No 252. Comprising a dash between the right duty table and king's check, and a grave accent in right duty tablet.

Not this appears on the stamp below the dart flaw.

(Source RSC Journal No 252 page 111)²¹



Vignette movements in bi-coloured duties

The vignette or head plate is displaced from its central position within the frame or casement plate, in some cases significantly. Below are illustrated the moves to left, upwards, to right and downwards (in that order)



Left



Very far left



Upwards



Very high #



Very high & right #



Right



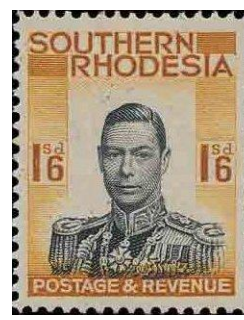
Downwards



Upwards



Very high @



Downwards



Down and to right



Very low #



Left



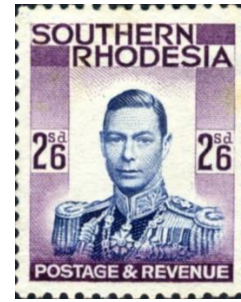
Left and down



Upwards #



Right



Downwards



Right #



Downwards

Sources:

Spink auction sale archive

@ rhodesia.co.za

Others – Geoff Brakspear collection

Non-constant varieties

In this issue many stamps can be found with non-constant dots and specks, many of them only visible under magnification. Minor ink smudges are also regularly found in all the duties. It is not the intention of this section to examine these minor instances, but to show more visible instances occurring during the printing of the stamps.

Halfpenny duty



(Source: Rhodesia.com.za)

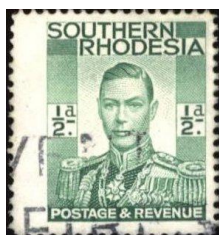
Although not normal, complete printing sheets were released either to post offices or to stamp dealers. As a result, it is possible to acquire interpanneau blocks with the gutter between blocks on either side of the horizontally and vertically, as illustrated above.



(Source Rhodesia.co.za)



There are a number of instances, as shown above, where there is evidence of underinking over parts the face of the stamps. In the top example this strip of four shows some underinking of three of the stamps, whilst the fourth appears normal.



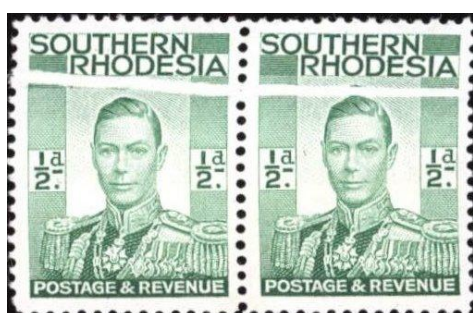
Perforation shift to left, used stamp



Perforation shift left of Column 1
(Both images above courtesy of Tony Banks)



Downward shift of perforations
(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Stamp with paper crease across top part of stamp, with crease only unfolded post printing and perforation.

(Courtesy of Tony Banks)



Smudging of ink across King's face in upper stamp to left side in lower side.

(Source Spink auction archive)



The printing sheet had a crease through the paper which went through both the printing and perforating process, it was later unfolded. Note the displacement of perforations to the top left and bottom right corners. In the top right corner is part of the printing of plate 43956, which was used in the last three printings of this duty from November 1948. This indicates that this was across the top left pane of the printing sheet, Pane A, and probably continued through the adjoining pane B .

(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Printing crease through pane, possibly an extension of the one above.

(Source: RSCJ 301 – Keith Harrop)



Paper fold to corner of sheet during perforation
(Courtesy of Tony Banks)

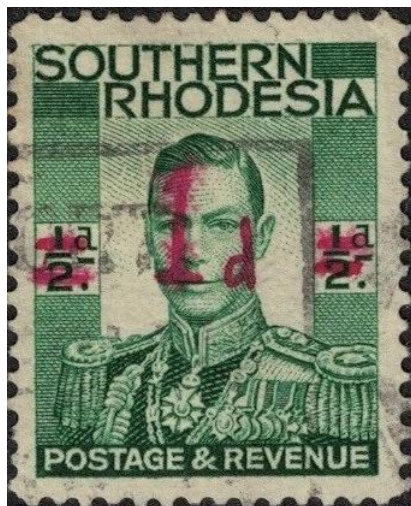


Offset of printing to one stamp of this pair.
(Source: Spink auction archive)



Marginal block of block of 12 stamps with significant offset of printing on gummed side.

(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



1d script surcharge in red
Interesting use of stamps, possibly for revenue purposes.

(Source eBay January 2026)

One penny duty



(Source rhodesia.co.za)

Although not normal, complete printing sheets were released either to post offices or to stamp dealers. As a result, it is possible to acquire interpanneau blocks with the gutter between blocks on either side of the horizontally and vertically, as illustrated above.



Overinking of most of the above block of 14. This is more the case in the central stamps of this block than the stamps on either side



Paper crease over top right corner of pair. Stamp printed and perforated before the crease was straightened out.

(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Paper crease across this block of stamps. Crease in place both during printing and perforation of the stamps.

(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



Almost vertical paper crease through columns 3 and 4 of this 16 stamp block. Printing of stamp and its perforation occurring before the crease was opened.
(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Strip of three, with preprinting paper fold, straightened out.
(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Various paper folds during print, later opened out
(Source: RSCJ 31 – Neville Mitchell)



Missing vertical perforation to the corner block of 4 and single adjoining the gutter between panes.

(Source Spink auction archive)



Perforation shift to left to pane C, with interpanneau gutter above

(Courtesy of Tony Banks)



Movement of vertical perforations to left into pane margin.
(Source Spink auction archive)



Missing bottom horizontal perforations to bottom pane margin.
(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Movement of vertical perforation to left, giving effect of a narrow stamp.
(Source RSCJ 301 – Neville Mitchell)



Offset of “Southern” to pair of stamps



Kiss of part of stamp design into margin. Note date of 1/4/1944, probaly indicting it was eighth printing of this duty

(Courtesy of Keith Brodovsky)



Offset of parts of the design on gum side
(Source rhodesianstamps.net)



Significant smudging to this block of stamps



Significant smudging to stamps in left column
(Source Spink auction archive)



Significant smudging to this block of stamps
(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Large paper intrusion, leaving unprinted section
before falling out
(Source RSCJ 3021 – Neville Mitchell)



Paper intrusion onto printing sheet during printing, later fell out

(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Large paper intrusion, possibly due to printing sheet being folded back.

(Source RSCJ 301 – Neville Mitchell)



Pait with significant colour differences bewteen the stamps.
Right stamp with much darker areas to the King's portrait

(Courtesy of Tony Banks)



Corner block showing a misalignment of the perforations due to the saheet being folded during the perforation process.

From the Claire Birsen Collection held by the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe.

24

Penny Halfpenny duty



(Source of images: rhodesia.co.za)

Although not normal, complete printing sheets were released either to post offices or to stamp dealers. As a result, it is possible to acquire interpanneau blocks with the gutter between blocks on either side of the horizontally and vertically, as illustrated above.



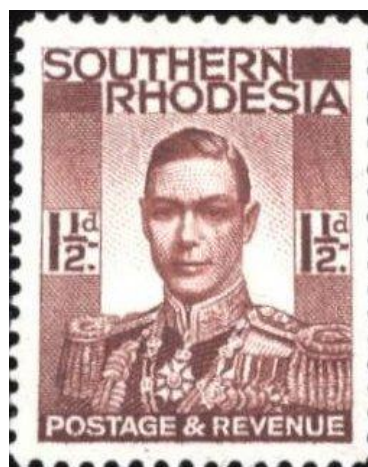
Interpanneau block: showing rows of lower two panes with imprint at base and inter-pane cross to top.

(Source rhodesia.co.za)



Significant smudging of ink, particularly across the King's face.

(Source Rhodesia.co.za)



Significant smudging to stamp

(Courtesy of Tony Banks)

Other duties



9d: Observation by Dave Cooper of an extra line to the left of the epaulette, not present in other duties



9d: Dot next to '9' in right value panel. No proof that this is constant.

(Courtesy of Dave Cooper)



9d: Vertical paper crease dueing printing, unfolded later

(Source Tony Banks)



10d: Offset

(Source rhodesia.co.za)



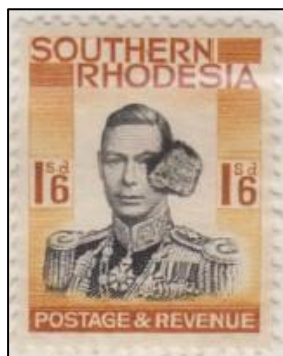
1sh: Green line in right duty panel.

(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



1sh: significant smudge downwards from country name.

(Source Spink auction archives)



1sh6d: large black ink blob

(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



5sh: significant smudging to King's face

(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



5sh: significant smudging to King's face

(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



5sh: significant overinking of blue-green, particularly in centre column

(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)

Sheet Numbering changes

Within a number of the RSC Journals some examples of duties emerged showing the sheet number being above row 1 column 9, rather than the usual position above column 10 where the number had been redacted. This in itself is not a printing error, but more likely, as James Gavin pointed out, due to accounting practices. Examples have been found of the 2sh6d and ½ duties, although the redacted element in the letter is missing.



2sh6d: with normal position if sheet number above column 10, and redacted sheet number with new number above column 9. The redacted number being 249.

(Source RSC Journal No 269 – collection of Pat Flanagan)



2sh6d: As above but with redacted sheet number 234

½d: Renumbered example, unfortunately margin of column 10 missing.

(Source RSC Journal 253 – collection of James Gavin)

(Source RSC Journal No 252 – collection of George Stewart)

Specimens

The following is a letter dated 10 June 1938 from the Controller. Government Stationery Office to the Principal Distributor of Stamps –

“With further reference to your R/37742/&8 of the 2nd March, I shall be glad if this office can be furnished with two complete sets of all the Postage and Revenue Stamps and also Embossed Stationery of the new issue of Southern Rhodesia King George VI. The specimens may be marked "specimen" or "cancelled" and are to be filed in this office for use in connection with reprint orders for Stamps and Embossed Stationery. Recent correspondence has proved that there is a definite need for close supervision and inspection by technical officers of this Department of all Stamps and Embossed Stationery imported from Overseas. Questions of colour of ink, gumming, perforation, quality of paper, packing, etc., are liable to arise at any moment and for these reasons I am asking that the above issue of two specimen sets may be authorised please.” (Thanks to Dave Cooper for supplying a copy of the duplicate letter)

In the National Archive of Zimbabwe is a letter dated 22nd July 1938 from the Principal Distributor of Stamps to the Controller Government Stationery saying

“With reference to you minute of 10th June last, I forward herewith the following postage and Revenue Stamps and Embossed Stationery, all of which are marked ‘specimen’”. The letter contains a list of two each of the revenue stamps, two each of the postage stamps, including the 2d and 3d Large Falls, and two of each item of embossed stationery. ¹⁸



(All images supplied by Dave Cooper)

Above is a complete set of the specimen overprints supplied to the Government Stationery Office, the location of the second set is unknown. Included in the supply of specimen stamps were two each of the 2d and 3d 1935 Large Falls stamps, which are considered part of this definitive issue.

UPU Specimens (extract from Memoir 21)¹

It appears that in 1937 the provision of Specimens for UPU purposes was by means of stamps which were not identified as Specimens. Curiously, reference books on specimen stamps say little about the Southern Rhodesian specimens except to note that at that time the number required was around 400. It appears the UPU had decided in 1928 to require all specimens to be perforated with the word "Specimen". Notwithstanding that instruction it seems that most members supplied stamps in normal unused condition; and this certainly appears to have been the case of the Southern Rhodesian specimens.

UPU specimen stamps therefore can only be identified if they have been cancelled by a receiving office cancel. Only one example of a set with the receiving office cancel "Postal Service Department/ HMB" in the collection of Pat Flanagan has been seen. No other examples cancelled by the receiving office, have been recorded.



Opposite is the only known example of specimen stamps supplied to the UPU, which have been cancelled "Postal Service Department /H.M.B".

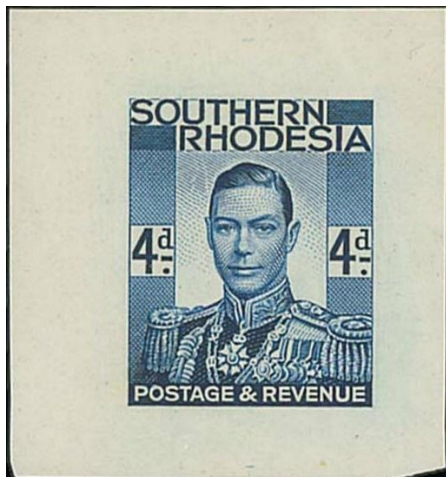


(Source PowerPoint presentation in RSC website by Pat Flanagan)

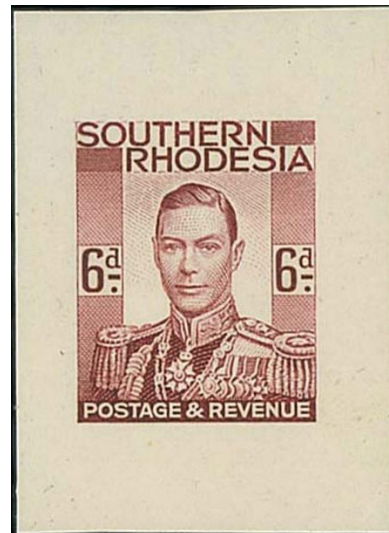
Sample stamps

Waterlow & Sons printed examples of their work for publicity purposes. The 1937 definitive was printed for this purpose in different colours to the issued stamps.

The following examples may not be sample stamps, they were described in the Spink auction of May 2021 as “*die proof*” form, *unoverprinted, unissued colour and believed unique*”.



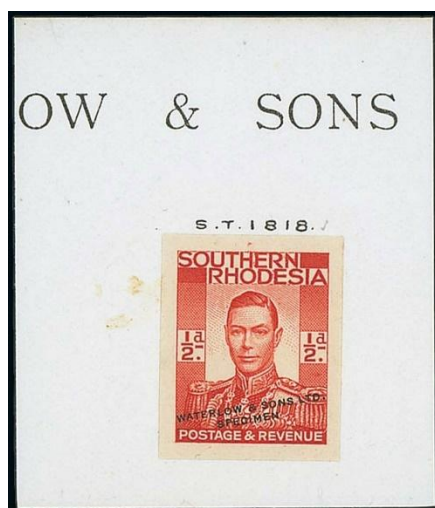
4d: Blue



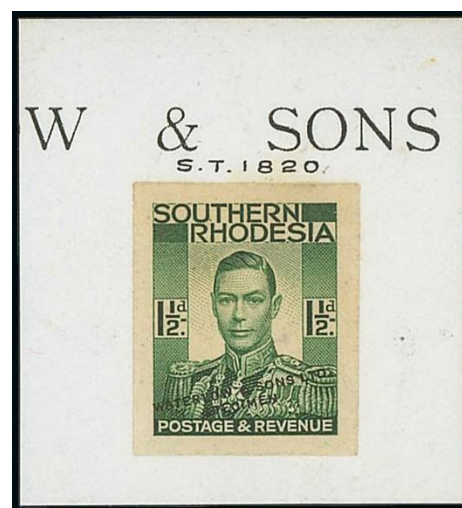
6d: Lilac

(Source Spink auction archive)

Two examples of the sample stamps are also known that were contained in the Waterlow sample book. The stamps are imperforate with the words “Waterlow & Sons Ltd/Specimen” overprinted at an angle above the words “Postage & Revenue”, and without punch holes.



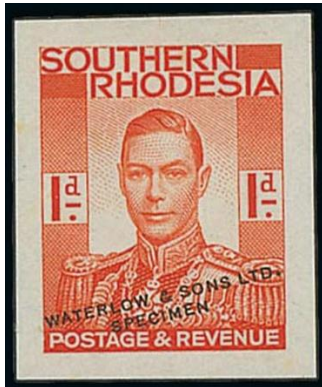
1/2d: Red - No S.T. 1818



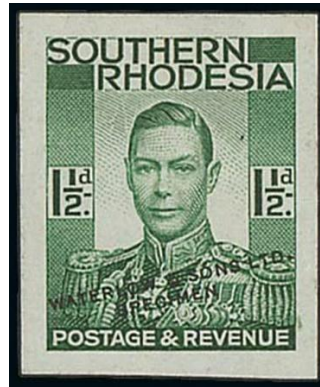
1 1/2d: Green – No S.T. 1820

(Source: Spink Auction Archive)

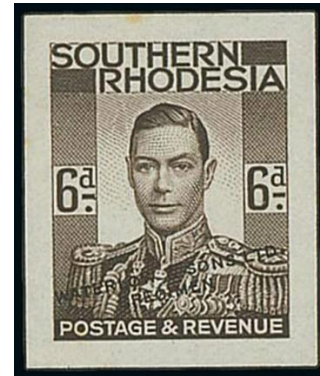
Examples of three of the duties are known, 1d, 1½ and 6d, all in unissued colours, imperforate and without punch holes. It is assumed that all three were intended for the Waterlow sample book and may or may not have been used in them. All these are single stamps. Interestingly the ½d red, shown above, is not known as a single stamp.



1d: Orange



1½d: Green

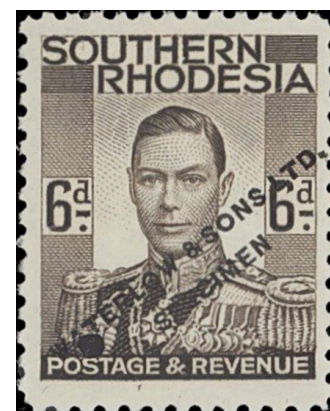


6d: Deep brown
(Otto Peetoom suggests that there are only three known examples of this)

(Source Spink auction archive)

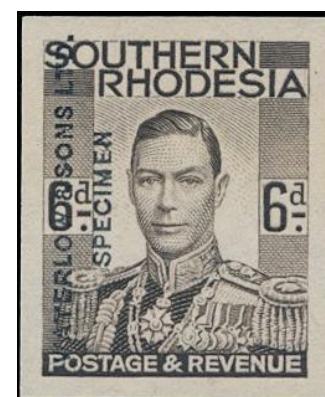
There are two further examples of these sample/specimen stamps

6d: Printed in blackish brown, perforated 12½ (issued stamps were perf 14), overprinted “Waterlow & Sons Ltd/Specimen). This specimen overprint is in a larger font than the unperforated sample stamps above, and is at an angle upward from bottom left corner to above the right duty tablet. An example of this stamp has been noted with a printer’s mark. Stamp has small punch hole in the bottom right corner.



(Source Spink auction archive)

6d: Printed in blackish brown, imperforate with overprint “Waterlow & Sons Ltd/Specimen” in same sized font as above. This stamp also differs with the overprint being vertical on left side of the King’s portrait. Ungummed paper.



(Source: rhodesia.co.za)

Coils - ½d & 1d duties

Memoir 21 dealt very brief with coils –

While we do not know when these came into use, they were in circulation by December 1938 when they caused jamming in the vending machines. As they were produced by gluing vertical strips of six, the joins caused the problem. They were withdrawn from use. One way of proving a stamp is a coil and issued from a vending machine, apart from the glued join, are the gripper holes from drum pins that drove the stamp out.

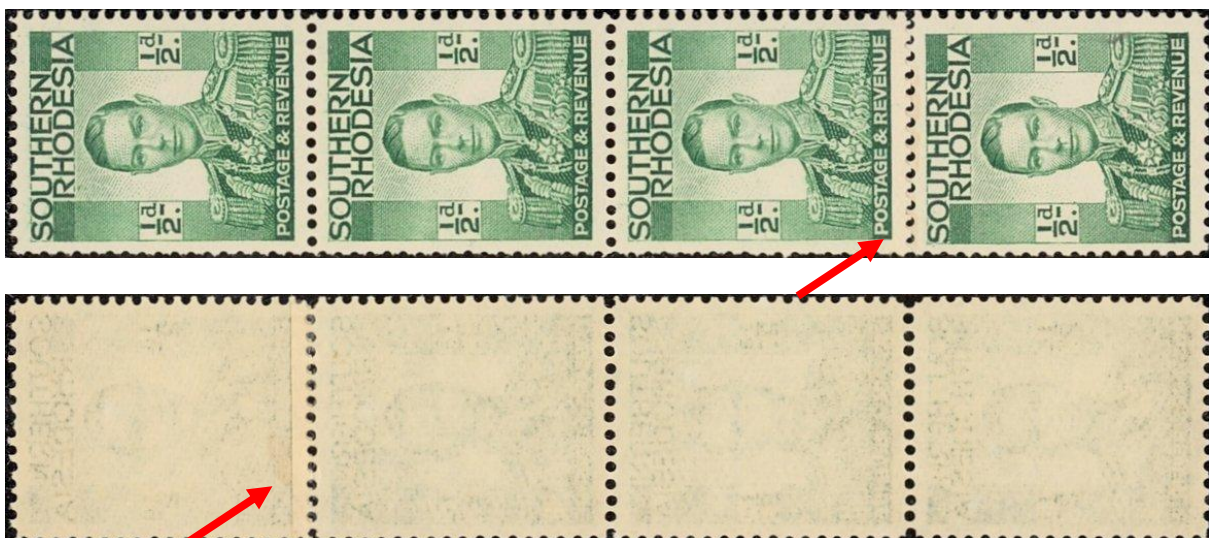


The gripper holes from the drum pins

(Source RSC Journal No 279 June 2020, page 176)

It is possible that coils usually sold in a joined strip of five by dealers, were from counter coils and not vending machines, nevertheless still coils.

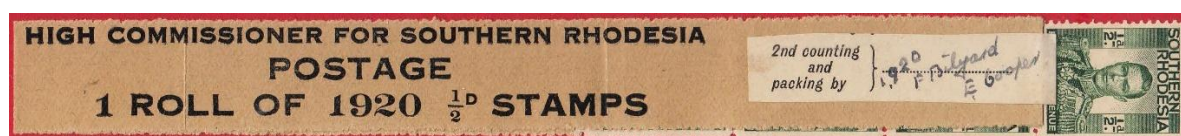
The Stanley Gibbons catalogue refers to the coil stamps as existing, having been made up from normal sheets. Illustrated below are the fronts and backs of coil sheets, which can only really be validated by the appearance of the joins between strips occurring with each sixth stamp. In addition, coils can be identified by the clipped perforations, as can be seen in the examples below.





(Source: Spink auction archive January 2022)

There is very little information on the size of the coil rolls save for the leader shown below for the ½d duty. This indicates that the rolls were the order was placed by the High Commissioner for Southern Rhodesia and contained 1,920 stamps (total £4.00 of stamps). This is twice the size of any other coil roll used in S. Rhodesia.



(Courtesy of Keith Brodovsky)

In the extract above from Memoir 21, there is a reference to an article written by George Stewart in the RSC Journal No 134 of June 1986.¹³ In the article there are various references to correspondence between various post office officials in December 1938 - January 1939. In a letter dated 29th December 1938, Mr G French, the District Postmaster, Bulawayo, wrote to the Secretary of Posts saying that due to repeated mechanical faults the 1d automatic stamp delivery machine had been removed for overhaul. "It will be out of use for some time. It is considered the fault lies with the manufacture of the rolls."

The letter was passed to the Acting District Postmaster, Salisbury, who on 3rd January 1939 replied that his office was having the same difficulties. He continued to say "The difficulty appears to be caused by the joints in the rolls. These recur about every sixth stamps. The only other faults here have been caused by spurious coins." On 6th January the Acting Secretary at Ministry wrote to the Chief Engineer, Salisbury, who, in turn, passed the query to the Bulawayo Divisional Engineer. He, in turn, passed the matter to Mr B Britton, who appears to be the only person to have actually examined the coils and vending machines.

On 11th January 1939, Mr Britton reported "It has been found that the stamp perforations do not engage correctly with the spikes on the rollers causing creeping. I am of the opinion that variations in the lengths of the stamps or strips is the main cause of the trouble." This was followed up the Engineer, Mr W Grey, to the Divisional engineer with "Unless the length of the stamps can be

guaranteed not to alter with different orders, I am afraid that the stamp machines will not give satisfactory service.”

The rest of George Stewart’s article does not appear to have identified, or corrected, the fault in the stamps and it is questioned whether the stamp vending machines were in use during the period of this KGVI 1937 definitive issue.

The answer may lie in the initial instruction of the stamp vending machines in 1929, the hint for which is contained in an article by Margaret Harris in her RSC Journal No 130, June 1985, article entitled “The Coil stamps of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland”.¹⁴

The introduction of the first coils in Southern Rhodesia was during the time of the SR Admiral issue of 1924. “The 1d coil was the current 1d stamps specially perforated $12\frac{1}{2}$ to fit the teeth of the vending machines”. Our catalogues all indicate that the Waterlow printing of the SR Admirals was at the perforation gauge 14, with only the 1d at perf $12\frac{1}{2}$ (SG2c).

“The rolls of 960 stamps were reeled for endways delivery from sheets of four panes of sixty”¹⁴ The coils being made up of the vertical columns of six stamps (the panes being 6 rows of 10 stamps), joined together. The join therefore being every sixth stamp in the coil. The complete coil roll of 960 stamps were thus made up of 16 panes from the 240 stamp printed sheet.

The stamps opposite illustrate that the columns of stamps were split and join together. This part of the coil is from column 6, with the printer’s marks on the left of row 6, with row 1 below.



(Courtesy of Keith Brodovsky)



The following definitive issue in 1931, known as the “Field Marshalls” were printed by Bradbury Wilkinson, at a perf gauge 12, initially, which changed to $11\frac{1}{2}$ in 1933 and 14 in 1935 for the $\frac{1}{2}$ d and 1d duties. Margaret Harris is unclear whether these stamps were every issued as coils, but given the teeth of the vending machines were set at a gauge of $12\frac{1}{2}$ there would have also been problems with stamp delivery. Although the perforation gauges of 12 and 11 may have been enough to enable the vending machines to operate.

The definitive issues following the 1937 KGVI, indicates that coils were produced for the Federation stamps of 1953 and 1959, which had perforation gauges of $12\frac{1}{2}$ x 14. These could, therefore, be delivered from the vending machines.

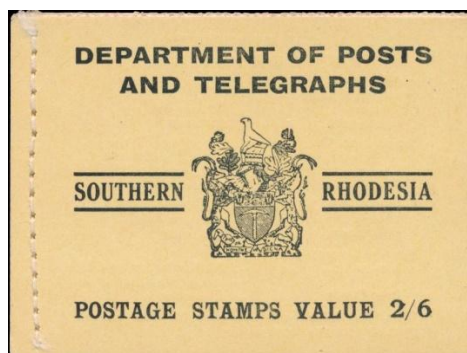
Mr W Grey's view appears therefore to be correct, that unless there is an alteration to the stamps, the vending machines would continue to malfunction. It is unfortunate that Mr Grey did not know enough about the stamps perforations to have identified the fault being the incorrect gauge.

There is also the possibility that the rolls of 1,920 stamps were too large to fit into the vending machines. The first coils of the SR Admirals in rolls of 960 stamps, half the size of the KGV rolls, so it is questionable whether the rolls could be fitted into the vending machines. The Federal issues both had rolls of 480 stamps. Whether the original vending machines were replaced is not known.

There could, therefore, be a possibility that the KGV rolls of coils were not dispensed from vending machines as the perforation were incorrect and the rolls were too large to fit into them.

Finally, the presence of "gripper holes" should be challenged. The only person to identify this variety has been George Stewart. This variety has not been reported in respect of any of the coils of post 1938 coil stamp releases, but there is a need to confirm whether they appear in the 1924 Admiral issue. If they do not appear on subsequent coil stamp releases, the gripper holes may have been produced in the assembly of the coil rolls by Waterlow. Further research is needed here.

Booklets



Catalogue listings

SG⁶ RSC⁷

2/6 Booklet stitched yellow (*buff*) cover

Booklet containing 4 x 6 panes of ½d, and 3 x 6 panes of 1d

SB4 B5
BP6
BP7

With postage rates on inside front cover

½d booklet pane of 6

1d booklet pane of 6

- a. Label with new rates affixed to inside front cover, issued 1945
- b. Inside front cover blank (issued between 1945 & 1949)

Stanley Gibbons lists three types of the KGVII booklet, these being with postage rates on the inside cover (SB3); with new postage rates on a label issued in 1945 (SB4a); and inside cover being blank without the postage rates issued between 1945 & 1949 (SB4b). In the 2014 Southern & Central Africa Catalogue the booklets are priced at £325 for SB4; £375 for SB4a and £350 for SB4b. Thus, giving an indication of the booklets' scarcity.

The Rhodesia Stamp Catalogue 1983/84 does not differentiate between the booklet types.

Study of KGVI booklets by Otto Peetoom

Otto Peetoom provided an in-depth study of these booklets in his publications *The Rhodesian Philatelist*, No 8 of June 1995 and No 20 of October 2000. His conclusion was that there were six versions of the booklet over the period from 1938 to 1949. In No 8 Otto refers to there being six printings, he later in No 20 he changed this to six versions for a number of reasons. This section draws extensively on these two articles in his publications and refers to the being six versions rather than printings.

Printer

The booklets were produced by Waterlow & Sons. As there are no imperforate proof or perforated file sheets were found in the Waterlow archives, there is no information on the format how the printing plates of the two duties were laid out.

In the 1928 Admirals issue booklet was printed in a printing plate comprising two blocks of 60 stamps, in 10 rows of six stamps, with a thin vertical margin between the blocks. In row of each block consisted of three stamps correctly upright and three stamps inverted. In total 20 booklet panes would be produced.¹⁶ There is no evidence that KGVI booklet panes were produced in this way, but there is a strong likelihood that Waterlow follow this method. There is however a significant difference between the production of the 1928 booklet and the KGVI booklet, where the 1928 booklet was guillotined. The perforations on the KGVI booklet panes suggest that they were separated by hand. Stamps originating from the KGVI booklets do not have trimmed outer edges and can therefore not be identified as originating from booklets.

Date of release of booklets

The Stanley Gibbons Catalogue only provides a release date of October 1938, whilst the Rhodesia Colour Catalogue gives a date of 31st March 1938. R C Smith in "Rhodesia – A Postal History" suggests that the booklets for the Field Marshall issue were withdrawn from sale on 31 March 1938, and "at the same time the new KGVI booklets were made available".²

However, there is copy of a letter in the Zimbabwe National Archive dated 26th October 1938 to the Under Secretary advising that "3000 books had been received by parcel post" and that the balance of the order was expected to arrive shortly via Beira. In another letter dated 29th October the Principal Revenue Examiner wrote that "the 3000 books of stamps.... are required by the Postmaster General for immediate distribution to postmasters".¹⁸

The coil stamps and booklets were not contained in a list of KGVI definitive stamps and stationery dated 22nd July 1938 that had been overprinted "Specimen", so one could presume that they had not, as yet, arrived.

On the basis that the 3000 booklets were required by the Postmaster General on 29th October for immediate distribution, one can reasonably assume that the first printing of the booklet was issued to postmasters for immediate use on or immediately after 29th October 1938.

There is no further reference to the arrival and distribution of subsequent orders of the booklets. But there is a presumption that further orders of the booklets were made in 1939 in anticipation of the impending war, but this cannot be confirmed. What is certain that the labels with new postal rates were added to existing booklet stocks just after 7th November 1945 (SG SB4a). The booklets

without the postage rates were probably produced when indicated by Stanley Gibbons as between 1945 and 1949 (SAG SB4b)

Booklet Composition

The booklet comprises the following components, all stitched together on the left side

1. The front cover, printed in black, with “Department of Posts and Telegraphs” at the top, the S Rhodesian coat of arms with “Southern Rhodesia” printed on either side; and “Postage Stamps Value 2/6” at the bottom
2. Inside front over in the first printings there was list of postage rates; this was subsequently covered with a printed label bearing new postage rates, later printings this page of left blank
3. Three panes of 1d booklet panes of 6 stamps (2 rows of 3 stamps)
4. Four panes of ½d booklet panes of 6 stamps (2 rows of 3 stamps)
5. Seven pages of advertising printed on both sides publicising various activities, see page below with copies of those advertisements. These are undispersed between the stamp panes
6. In the later printings waxed paper has been placed between the stamp pane and the advertisement.
7. The inside back cover is blank
8. The back cover advertises the availability of Rhodesian Loan Certificates.

Printer's marks

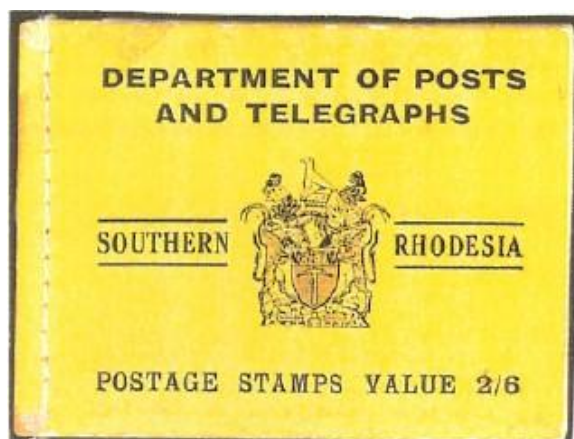
A printer's mark is often present on the ½d and 1d booklet panes of six. It consists of a short horizontal line situated between the upper and lower stamps on the vertical row adjacent to the binding margin on the left. In general, should the first 1d or ½d pane in a booklet show the printers mark then all 3 x 1d or 4 x ½d panes show the mark as well. Thus, several booklets either have the printers mark on all 1d panes but not on the ½d panes or vice versa. Otto Peetoom has only encountered one booklet where all seven panes have the printers mark.¹⁵



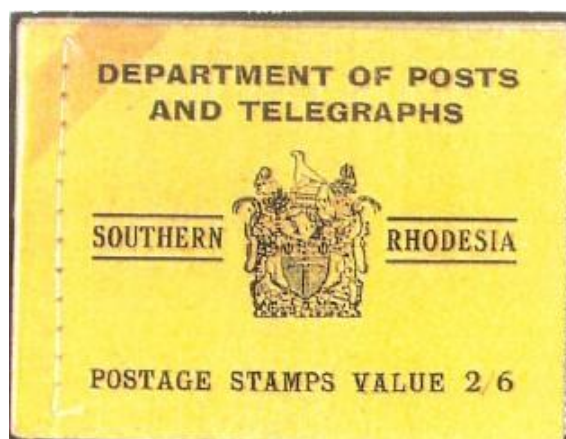
The Front Cover

There are two distinguishable covers of the booklet, the first in respect of the first two versions and the second for the remaining versions, although the printing detail of the S Rhodesia coat of arms deteriorates over time.

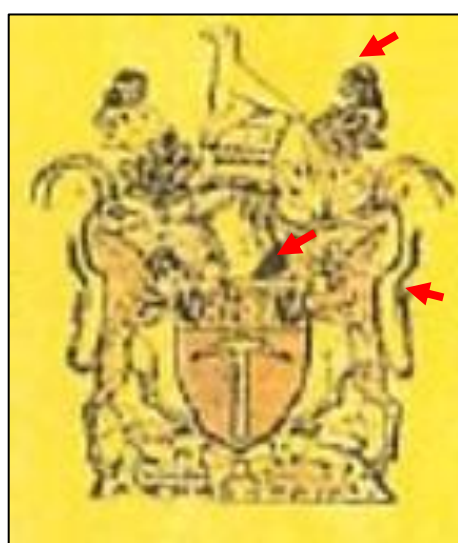
The outer covers of the various versions show a difference in the type of card used. The first three versions had a smooth glossy card, with the later versions being a thicker coarse buff card. Otto thought that the 3rd and 4th printings may have been part of a single order. However, such a difference is not apparent between the 3rd and 4th versions of the booklet which makes it difficult to identify the two from each other. To this end it is suspected they may be from the same printing (order). The card used for the outer covers on version three is similar to the type used for the first two versions with a glossy waxy surface. The outer covers on the 4th version are a thicker coarse card that is more buff than yellow in colour. A logical explanation is that the printer used up old stock of card before switching over to a new supply. This is the reason why Otto changed from calling them printings to versions, although the first two are clearly different printings.



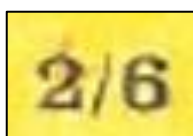
Cover 1 - 1st version



Cover 2 - 3rd version



Cover 1 - 1st & 2nd versions



Versions 1 & 2



Later versions



Cover 2 - 3rd & 4th versions

The differences between these two versions are

- The shade area between the helmet aobe the sheild in verions 1 and 2 is solif, whilst with later verions this area is hatched
- The right hand sable supporter has a break in its tail in the later versions
- The thistle flow in the top right has split in the later versions
- There appears to be a change of typeset for the bookley value of 2/6, in partular with the number 6



Cover 2 - 5th version

The coats of arms for the 5th and 6th versions of the coat of arms appear to have deteriorated from the 3rd and 4th versions. This unfotunately is difficult to discern from these images. Only close examination of a number of booklets can this difference be identified.



Cover 2 - 6th Version

(All images in this section are either from *The Philatelist* No 6 or from Otto Peetoom's website www.rhodesianstamps.net.)

Inside Cover Postage Rates

SOUTHERN RHODESIA RATES OF POSTAGE		
For delivery in—		
Southern Rhodesia—		
Letters ...	...	1d. per oz.
Post Cards ...	...	1½d. each
Union of South Africa, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Portuguese East Africa—		
Letters ...	...	1½d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards ...	...	1½d. each
Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Irish Free State—		
Letters ...	...	1½d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards ...	...	1½d. each
Foreign Countries—		
Letters ...	...	3d. for first oz. and 2d. for each additional oz.
Post Cards ...	...	1½d. each
Rates to other countries may be obtained on application at any Post Office.		

During the course of this issue postage rates were to change. From the outset the display of postage rates in the booklets appears to have been misleading for the general public and a constant source of irritation to any conscientious postmaster. The rates of postage printed on the inside front page of the KGV booklets (versions 1 to 4) had their first change ten months after the first delivery was made in late October 1938. It is believed that the quantity ordered for version 4 was large.

The result being that it remained in stock well after WWII ended. As a result of the postage rate changes, several postmasters applied a variety of manuscript alterations to the postage rates printed in the KGV booklets.

On 7th September 1939, the British empire Airmail Scheme was terminated due to the outbreak of World War II.

This resulted in an increased in postal rates to Great Britain, Northern Ireland & the Irish Free State from 1½d to 2d per ounce.

There was also an increase in the post card rate to foreign countries from 1st July 1940.

The inside cover reflects these changes.

**SOUTHERN RHODESIA
RATES OF POSTAGE**

For delivery in—

Southern Rhodesia—	
Letters	1d. per oz.
Post Cards	½d. each
Union of South Africa, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Portuguese East Africa—	
Letters	1½d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards	1½d. each
Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Irish Free State—	
Letters	2d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards	1½d. each
Foreign Countries—	
Letters	3d. for first oz. and 2d. for each additional oz.
Post Cards	1½d. each

Rates to other countries may be obtained on application at any Post Office.



A large number of crossing out this this postmaster, that deleted all postal rates apart of the local rate, even though there had been changes to some of the rates

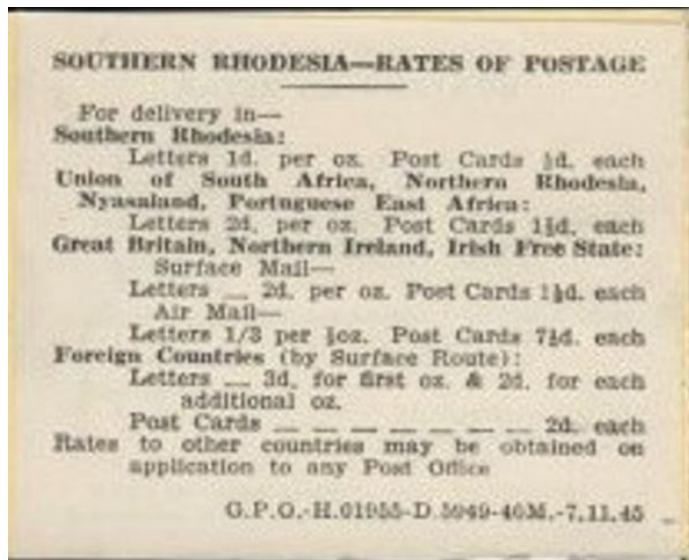
On 1 May 1943, local postage increasæd from 1d to 2d and African rates from 1½d to 2d. These together with the changes to the earlier rates changes are reflected in the inside cover opposite

**SOUTHERN RHODESIA
RATES OF POSTAGE**

For delivery in—

Southern Rhodesia—	
Letters	2d. per oz.
Post Cards	1d. each
Union of South Africa, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Portuguese East Africa—	
Letters	2d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards	1½d. each
Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Irish Free State—	
Letters	2d. per ½ oz.
Post Cards	1½d. each
Foreign Countries—	
Letters	3d. for first oz. and 2d. for each additional oz.
Post Cards	1½d. each

Rates to other countries may be obtained on application at any Post Office.



The inside page was later to be covered over with a label showing the rates applicable at that time. There is printing of order date in the bottom right corner at 7th Novmber 1945. This label was probably applied to the inside covers of the 3rd and 4th versions of the booklet.

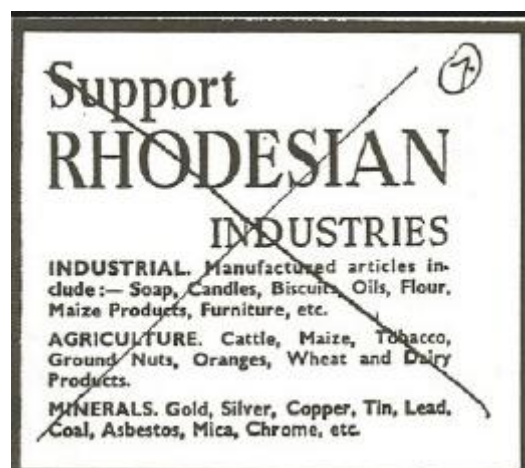
With the introduction of the 5th and 6th versions of the booklet, the inside front cover was purposely left blank.

Internal Advertising

All booklets carried promotional advertising from the Government as illustrated below.

However, the original booklet, version 1, had blank pages 2 and 14. The 1928 Admiral booklet had within it commercial advertising, and this may have been the reason for the blank pages.

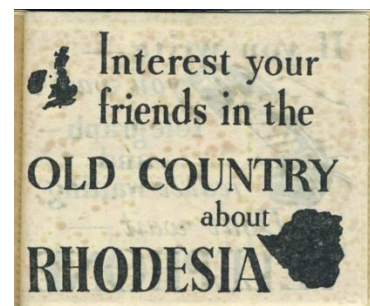
The Government Stationery Controller was evidently unhappy about this, and he deleted page 7 of the original booklet, and proposed using pages 2, 7 and 14 to expand on the themes opposite of industry and agriculture.



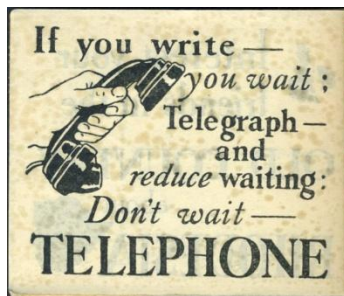
Page 1



Page 2



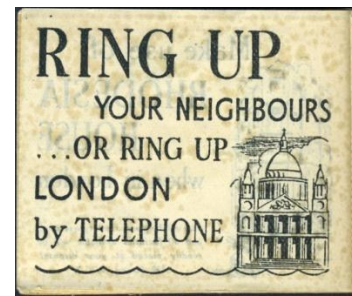
Page 3



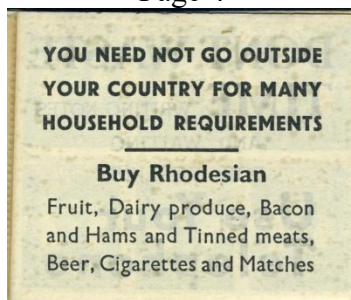
Page 4



Page 5



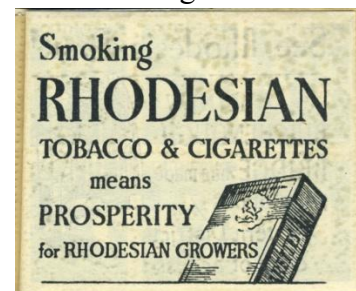
Page 6



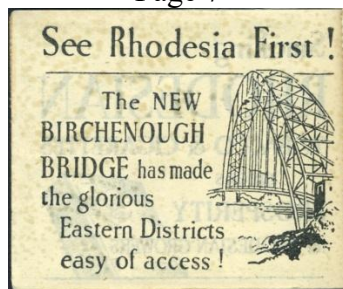
Page 7



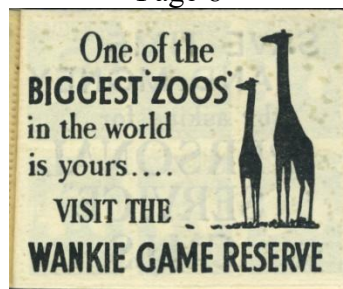
Page 8



Page 9



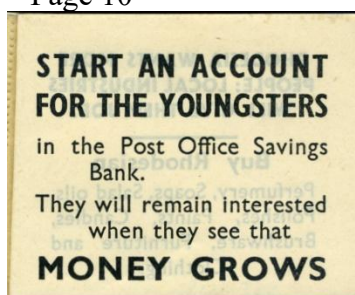
Page 10



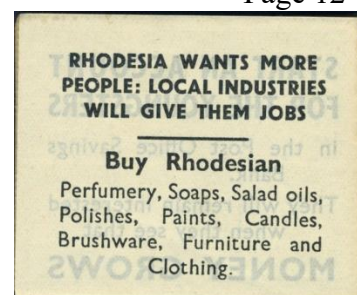
Page 11



Page 12



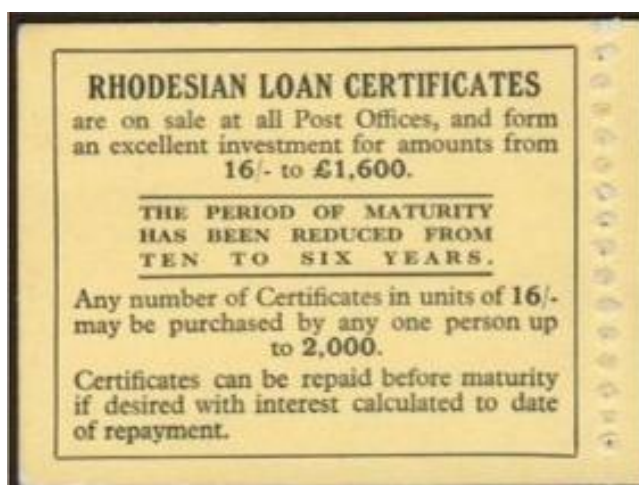
Page 13



Page 14

Outside Back Cover Advertising

All printings carry a Rhodesian Loan Certificates advertisement on the back cover. Loan certificates, on sale since 1924, were replaced with 'Rhodesian Saving Certificates' from 18th March, 1949. As there were no further orders for booklets were placed after this date the advertise was not replaced.



The Rhodesian Loan Certificates advertising on the back of the booklets was in the examples above deleted by the post master, probably after 18th March 1949.

Summary of versions/printings

The following is a summary of the principal elements of the six versions/printings of the KGVI booklet

- First
- Smooth glossy card
 - Cover type 1 – without breaks in sable tail and thistle
 - '6' of 2/6 with serif
 - No waxed paper insertions
 - Pages 2 and 14 of advertising insert black, and "Support Rhodesian Industries" advert on page 7.
 - Postage rates on inside front cover
 - Otto Peetoom in The Rhodesian Philatelist Mo 20 stated "The first and second printings are exceptional rarities with only one complete booklet of each recorded. Three part booklets of the second printing are known" ¹⁷

- Second
- Smooth glossy card
 - Cover type 1 – without breaks in sable tail and thistle
 - ‘6’ of 2/6 with serif
 - No waxed paper insertions
 - Advertising on all insert pages, with changed advert to page 2
 - Postage rates on inside front cover
 - Otto Peetoom in The Rhodesian Philatelist Mo 20 stated “The first and second printings are exceptional rarities with only one complete booklet of each recorded. Three part booklets of the second printing are known” ¹⁷
- Third
- Smooth glossy card
 - Cover type 2 with breaks in sable tail and thistle
 - ‘6’ of 2/6 without serif
 - No waxed paper insertions
 - Advertising on all insert pages.
 - Postage rates on inside front cover, may have manual amendment or postage rate label from November 1945
- Fourth
- Thicker course buff card
 - Cover type 2 with breaks in sable tail and thistle
 - ‘6’ of 2/6 without serif
 - No waxed paper insertions
 - Advertising on all insert pages.
 - Postage rates on inside front cover, may have manual amendment or postage rate label from November 1945
- Fifth
- Thicker course buff card
 - Cover type 2 with breaks in sable tail and thistle, detail of coat of arms reduced
 - ‘6’ of 2/6 without serif
 - Waxed tissue paper insertions
 - Advertising on all insert pages.
 - No postage rates on inside front cover
- Sixth
- Thicker course buff card
 - Cover type 2 with breaks in sable tail and thistle, greater loss detail to coat of arms reduced
 - ‘6’ of 2/6 without serif
 - Waxed tissue paper insertions
 - Advertising on all insert pages.
 - No postage rates on inside front cover

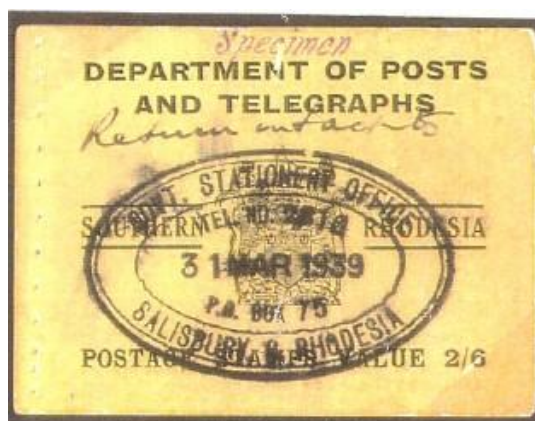
Specimens

The story of booklets and booklet panes being rubberstamped with the word 'Specimen' starts in a letter dated 22nd July 1938 from the Principal Distributor of Stamps to the Controller of Government Stationery office. That letter refers to "Postage and Revenue Stamps and Embossed Stationery, all of which are marked 'specimen'".¹⁸ This letter makes no mention of either coil or booklet stamps.

There follows correspondence at the end of October 1938 relating to 3,000 booklets arriving by parcel post, which were immediately issued to the Postmaster General for distribution. The balance of the order of 10,000 booklets was expected to arrive via Biera 'shortly', when two booklets were required to be sent to the Controller of Printing & Stationery.¹⁸

The Controller of Printing and Stationery finally received his two promised 'Specimen' booklets on 25th March 1939 from the Principal Revenue Examiner.¹⁵ The receipt of the booklets was acknowledged by the Controller, Government Stationery Office on 28 March 1938.

The cover of the specimen booklet has the wording "Return intact to" followed by the date stamp of the Govt Stationery Office. The date stamp giving the date of 31 Mar 1939.¹⁸



KGVI booklet marked 'Specimen'
(Source *The Rhodesian Philatelist*, No 8¹⁵)

One of these booklets was sold by auction during 1978. This booklet had the 'Specimen' handstamp 'Samuel type R4', applied in violet to the front cover and to all seven panes of stamps. Some of the panes had each individual stamp handstamped, others received two handstamps per strip of three and another version was one handstamp between the first two stamps and the third stamp individually struck. The specimen booklet was exploded and each pane of stamps given a Brandon Certificate dated 21-11-1978, on the reverse of each certificate is a photograph of the front cover and the relevant pane of stamps. The certificates issued are numbers 2846-2848 for the 1d panes and 2849-2852 for the ½d panes.



These are two examples of the complete panes with the 'Specimen' hand stamp. The 1/2d pane having each stamp individually hand stamped, whilst the 1d pane have two handstamps per row.

(Source *The Rhodesian Philatelist* No 8 ¹⁵)

None of the specimen panes of stamps remain intact, they were split into either singles, pairs or strips of 3 depending on the position of the 'Specimen' handstamp. ¹⁵



Examples of the split panes in strips of three and singles
(Source *archives of Spink & Sons*)

The fate or whereabouts of the second 'Specimen' booklet is not known

First day covers

Unlike the 1937 coronation issues, this definitive issue had few first day covers that were specifically printed for that purpose, of which only two were produced locally. No first day covers were produced by the Post Office. The numbering below is from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear. All these covers are relatively scarce.

Cover 2.1



Printed address to Gagby Stamp Co, Chattanooga, Tennessee, USA.
Only seen with duties 1/2d to 4d with the 2d & 3d Large Falls issue. Registered in Salisbury

Cover 2.2



Printed address to Victor Clark, Victoria Falls.
Seen with 1/2d to 6d on one cover and 8d to 1sh on another. Registered in Victoria Falls

Cover 2.3



Only cover with wording of "First Day cover/Southern Rhodesia/Twenty-fifth November 1937".

This cover postmarked Salisbury, contains the 1/2d, 1d & 4d duties together with the 1/2d 1931 Field Marshall definitive. Another cover seen with 1/2d to 4d duties machine cancelled in Salisbury

Cover 2.4



Cover printed address to G W Morris (Pty) Ltd. Simonstown, South Africa.

Three registered covers at Victoria Falls seen with duties 8d to 1sh; 1sh6d to 2sh6d; and 5sh.

(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)

Memoir 21 suggested that first day covers with the "first issued colours and paper" are scarce. Below are examples of plain first day covers with the full set of stamps.



Bulawayo – collection of Keith Harrop



Macheke – collection of George Stewart



Norton – sourced from RSC website



Umtali – collection of Pat Flannigan



Wankie – collection of Keith Harrop

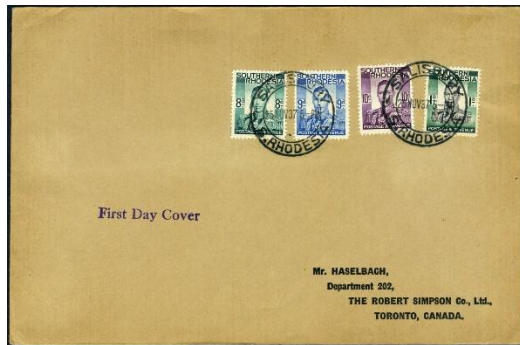


Salisbury – Source eBay February 2026



Salisbury – Source eBay March 2026

Other first day covers with some of the duties have been found with rubberstamped First Day Cover cachets. In addition, there are covers with the correct first day of issue postmarks.



Cover addressed to Mr Haselbach, Toronto, Canada. Posted Salisbury



Cover to unusual destination of Java in Dutch East Indies. Posted Bulawayo Station

Two covers seen with ½d to 6d duties and one with 8d to 1sh duties

(Source RSC website)



Cover to Enfield England, posted Umtali

(Source eBay December 2024)

Cigarette Surtax and Excise Duties on Tobacco

There have been numerous articles in the RSC Journal and is included in Memoir 21, this section is an attempt to consolidate all this information together. The majority of the section below was provided by Adrian de Bourbon in his RSC Journal article “Cigarette Surtax 1937-1953 and the ‘Excise’ Overprints” (RSC Journal 241, December 2011, pages 164 to 169).²⁷

The taxing of the sale of cigarettes and tobacco has been in Southern Rhodesia a source of income for the Government for many years prior to the reign of George VI. The Customs and Excise Tariff Act 1937 was introduced that replaced all pre-existing legislation on the issue of customs and excise duties. The new Act came into force on 18 May 1937.

In 1937 there were two types of fiscal measures relevant to cigarettes. In terms of the Second Schedule to the Customs and Excise Tariff Act 1937 an excise duty was imposed on cigarettes manufactured in Southern Rhodesia. In 1937 the rate for such duty was set at 6d per pound. In terms of section 14 of the Act the rate of customs duty on imported cigarettes was the same rate as the excise duty stipulated in the Second Schedule.²⁷

The second measure was a surtax on cigarettes specified in the then Fourth Schedule of the Customs and Excise Tariff Act 1937 - it became the Third Schedule in the 1939 Revised Edition of the Statutes, and the Act became the Customs and Excise Tariff Act [*Chapter 127*].²⁷

This Schedule was amended or repealed and substituted in 1938, 1940, 1942, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1952, on each occasion as a result of fiscal measures announced by the Minister of Finance in the Budget Speech for that year.²⁷

In the Government Gazette of 2 June 1939, the Customs and Excise Regulations 1939 were published in General Notice 228 of 1939. Section 102 of the Regulations required the surtax on cigarettes to be paid by means of stamps affixed by paste, glue or gum to the container of the cigarettes in such a manner as would necessitate the destruction of the stamp when the container was opened. In terms of section 106 the stamps required to be fixed to the containers on cigarettes could be purchased at any Customs house.²⁷

George Stewart unearthed at the National Archives of Zimbabwe two letters dated 10 January and 14 March 1940, which dealt with the printing of “Cigarette Surtax Stamps”. In the first letter there was a quote for the printing of 11,550,000 stamps with denominations of ½d, 1d, 2d, 4d, and 5d at a cost of £433.2.6d. The quote was accepted was accepted in the second letter.²⁵ The description of “Stamp” in both the legislation and the above quote may have led to a misunderstanding by philatelists as to what they were. In reality the “stamps” were strips of gummed labels such as the one illustrated below.



Label on a box of cigarettes circa 1930, from a sale item in rhodesia.co.za.
Showing 6¼d Cigarette Tax paid.

The 1939 Regulations were repealed by the Tobacco Excise and Surtax Management Regulations 1950, published in the Government Gazette of 19 April 1950 (being Budget Day) in General Notice 387 of 1950. The significant change made in the new Regulations was that instead of referring to the use of 'stamps', the terminology used became 'stamp label'. These stamp labels were to be purchased at any Customs house.²⁷

It was considered necessary to explain the above in order to be aware of the background before dealing with the overprints of KGVI definitive duties, which is the concern of this chapter.

Overprinted KGVI definitive duties in respect of tobacco taxation.

These are the ½d, 1d and 4d of the George VI 1937 definitive issue and the 2d Large Falls (Postage and Revenue) first introduced in 1935. He identifies the use of a number of rubber handstamps, some with the word 'EXCISE' in capital letters, others with a capital 'E' in either a circle or a square, as being the form of the overprint. The size of the lettering of the word 'EXCISE' varies. Finally, the overprinting was done in either violet or red ink. All the overprints were done with the use of a rubber stamp; no examples are known where the overprint was actually printed onto the stamp.²⁷

In his Budget Speech on 28 April 1942, Max Danziger, the Minister of Finance, announced an increase in the excise duty on cigarettes as well as an increase in the surtax from 1½d to 2d for every one-half ounce. The excise duty on tobacco in cigarettes was increased from 6d per pound to 1s per pound. The increase in excise duty was brought into effect immediately, but the Minister stated that in order to allow manufacturers and retailers time 'to affix the new stamps' to the packets of cigarettes in stock, the increased surtax would only take effect on 5 May 1942. To give statutory effect to this, General Notice 227 of 1942 was published on 1 May 1942, and the increase was subsequently confirmed by the Customs and Excise Tariff Amendment Act 1942 (Act 5 of 1942). But the Minister did not explain what he meant by 'the new stamps'. The obligation to show the surtax by a 'stamp' did not fall solely on vendors, but on the manufacturers primarily, and on vendors for existing unsold stocks only.²⁷

As a generalisation, a packet of 10 cigarettes weighed less than ½d an ounce, a packet of 20 between a ½ and 1 ounce, and a packet of 50 would be 2 ounces. Packets of 30 only came on the market at a much later date. So, the increased surtax on 5 May 1942 on the various packets would have been ½d, 1d and 2d respectively. So far as a packet of 50 cigarettes was priced, the total 8d surtax per packet was confirmed by the changes in 1945.²⁷



Opposite is a rare example of the overprinted stamps on a box of 50 cigarettes. At the bottom of the box is the end of a Cigarette Tax label, the colour of grey indicating that the tax paid was 6d.²⁷ With the increased tax 2d for a packet of 50. This paid with 4 x ½d overprinted stamps.

(Source PowerPoint presentation in RSC website by Pat Flanagan)

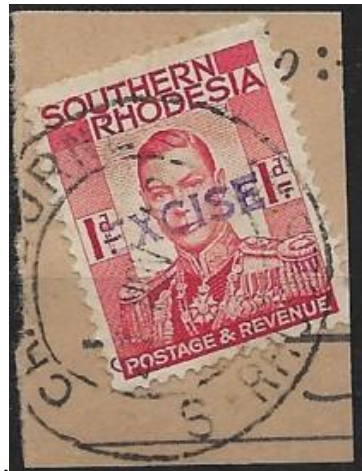
The quotation for printing the Cigarette Tax labels of 1940, was for labels of ½d, 1d, 2d, 4d and 5d. There is no mention of the 6d label, so one could assume that the 5d label was for a packet of 50 cigarettes. The acceptance of the quotation was in March 1940, was before the 1940 Budget announced by the Minister of Finance. The emergence of the 6d label, is therefore likely to have been printed after that.

The question arises is - was the increase in the excise duty accounted for before the printing of the new labels by placing overprinted stamps on already taxed boxes? There is a possible indication of this from the above example of the overprinted stamp on a packet of 50. There are two types of overprint with two stamps have 'Excise' and two with 'E' in a circle, where it is possible that the handstamps were produced at different times. It should be noted that the payment was in respect of surtax not excise duty, but a layman may struggle to appreciate the difference

The only other indication of when these overprinted stamps were used are three examples of the 1d overprinted 'Excise' that were postally used at Cranbourne post office. Example to right is postmarked 21st November 1942, centre 6th December 1942 and left 3rd January 1940.



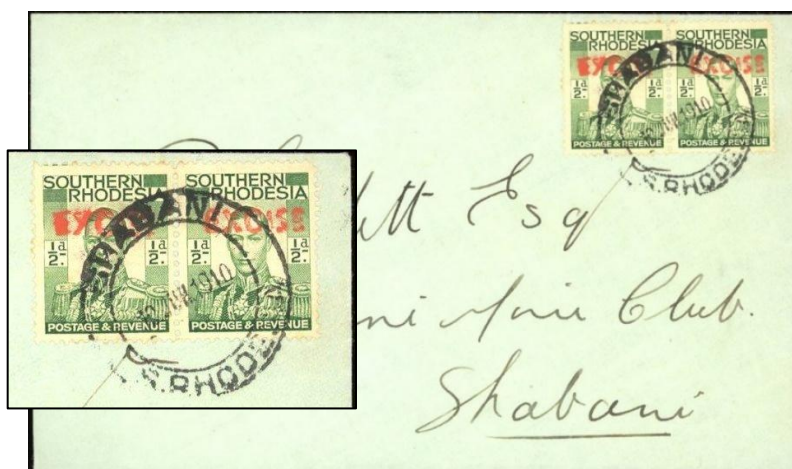
(Source PowerPoint presentation in RSC website by Pat Flanagan)



(Courtesy of Ian Johnstone)



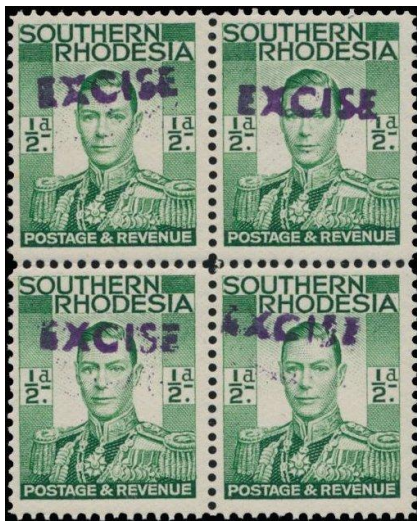
(Courtesy of Tony Banks)



Complete cover with two ½d stamps over printed "Excise" in red. Postmarked in Shabani, with postmark reading 12 JUN 1910, probably should be 1940.

(Courtesy Tony Banks)

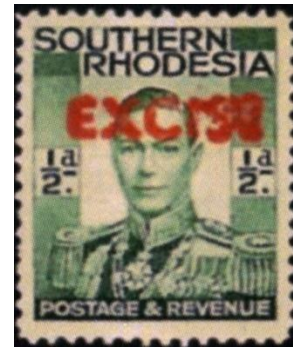
The overprinted stamps



Overprinted 'Excise' on 1/2d in purple, unused
(Source: *rhodesia.co.za*)



Overprinted 'E' in circle on 1/2d in black.
From the packet of 50 shown above.
(Source PowerPoint presentation in RSC website by
Pat Flanagan)



Overprinted 'Excise' on 1/2d in red
(Source: *Memoir 21*)



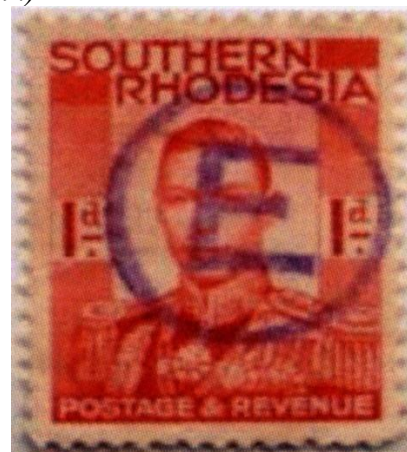
Overprinted 'Excise' on 1d in purple,
unused
(Source: *rhodesia.co.za*)



Overprinted 'Excise' on 1d in purple, in differing strengths
(Courtesy of Pat Flanagan)



Overprinted 'E' in circle on 1d in purple
(Source RSC Journal No 241)



Overprint 'E' on 1d in purple
(Source Memoir 21)



Overprinted 'E' in square on 1d
Appears to be on piece.
(Source: *Memoir 21*)



Overprinted 'E' in circle on 4d
(Source *Memoir 21*)

The stamps overprinted 'Excise' a lot more common than those overprinted 'E' in either a circle or square. Indeed, the examples of the 1d 'E' in a square and the 4d overprint are the only known examples in research to date.

Who was responsible for producing the overprints?

Adrian de Bourbon in his RSC Journal article examines the possibility of the Government overprinting the stamps. This is an interesting article, well presented and worth reading if more information is required.

Adrian's conclusions were that there is no evidence within the Government Gazette or the National Archives of Zimbabwe suggesting any Government Department ordered the overprinting of the stamps. If a Government Department was to contemplate the possibility, it would not have overprinted the stamps 'Excise' or with an 'E' indicating the same as the increase in taxation was a Surtax.

In addition, the 1937 KGVI definitive duties in all had the words "Postage & Revenue", so the placement of unoverprinted stamps onto the packets of cigarettes would have met the requirements to pay the increased taxation. Which Government account benefits from the revenue payment would not have been a concern of the taxpayers. However, no examples have come to light of the use of unoverprinted stamps on cigarette packets.

In conclusion Adrian suggested that the overprinting of the stamps were precancels, probably as an internal security measure, rather like perfinned stamps, to stop them being used for other purposes or preventing employees using them. Clearly the examples cancelled at Cranborne and Shabani illustrate some loss of control.

"Cigarette Tax" overprints



(Source: ½d & 1½d – RSC Journal No 281: 1d – Memoir 21)

The three stamps shown above first surfaced in 2010 according to George Stewart. Dave Cooper reported that Roger West of Avion Philatelics received 49 of these stamps (20 x ½d, 17 x 1d & 12 x 1½d) which he sold between 2008 and 2016.²⁹

In Memoir 21 it was suggested that "Studies reveals these could be computer generated". Someone else suggested that the overprints were printed with a jet print. The overprint certainly has a feel of precision about it. If they were inkjet printed, then they must have been done fairly recently, as this technique only really got going generally with the advent of personal computers in the 1990s. Prior to that most computer generated print was dot matrix. If the stamps were overprinted by this method, then they are most certainly fakes or forgeries.

However, Dave Cooper took the problem to the South African representatives of Foster & Freeman, a company specialising in document forensics equipment, Mustek Security Technologies, Forensics Division. The stamps were examined by Suzette Le Roux, who has twenty six years' experience in graphic design and document security in the Security Print Environment. She took a series of 22 photographs under a number of different variations, three of which are shown above. Suzette comments, the overprint TOBACCO TAX is definitely a litho printing process and most probably direct litho. The rest of the Southern Rhodesia stamp is an unmistakable Intaglio print with the tactile lines and "feathers on the edges" clearly visible.²⁹

Tass Antipass noted in 1992 that Ken Allanson, of The Zimbabwe Stamp Company, explained that a few sheets had been overprinted by the Government Printer, but were discarded as being too small. All sheets were purported to have been destroyed but that a few stamps had found their way into collectors' hands.²⁹ No evidence is that this happened has been offered.²⁹

The increased taxation on tobacco and the use of overprinted stamps appears to have occurred during the war years between 1940 and 1942, so it is unlikely that Waterlow and Sons were involved in any overprinting. So, given that the overprints were litho printed, would the Government Printers be capable of undertaking a print run using this method? The Department of Printing and Stationery would certainly have been capable of lithographic printing.

The question remains given the long period between the need for such stamps and their first emergence in the stamp market, are the overprints genuine or fake? Adrian de Bourbon argued that "Whoever may have been involved and despite the lack of official sanction there is a strong case that the "Tobacco Tax" stamps were overprinted by Government printers, and are indeed genuine," (The mention of Waterlow & Sons in this quote is due to the unlikeliness of this occurring during the war years).²⁹

Perfin KGVI definitive stamps.

Perfins are stamps that have letters and/or numerals perforated into the. The philatelic term “perfin” is derive from the expression’ Perforated Initials”. In the USA they are referred to as SPIFS (Stamps Perforated by Initial of Firms and Societies).

Perforations are punched into stamps using a device similar to a paper punch with a plate in the downward pressure plate. In some cases, the perfins are changeable, for example if the perforations indicate a specific date. More generally the striking plate has fixed lettering as required by the user. Stamps are struck individually, with revenue documents the tamps are laced on the document and both the stamp and document are perforated together. Otherwise. the stamps are individually struck, although there are examples where multiple stamps are placed into the perforator. As the stamps are perforated individually the placement of the perforations is not precise, and indeed examples are found where the lettering can be found inverted and mirrored on the stamp’s face.

Perfins were used mainly Government and are tied to revenue documents, this use by Government largely died out during the British South Africa Company administration and into the early 1920s. In tying the revenue stamp to the taxed document, the stamp and document were perforated together. The only Government perfin stamps found in the KGVI era has been with the perfin “S.R./G.” The department/s issuing perfin stamps has not been identified

The private use of perfin stamps in Southern Rhodesia was very limited, examples found for the KGVI era have then those of the Umtali Municipality, Haddon & Sly and Lemon Limited, all illustrated below. Perfin stamps from these sources perforated the stamps prior to use.

The final perfin stamps can be found with cheques. In some cheques, an additional 1d stamp duty has been applied to a cheque in addition to the 1d embossed stamp duty. Some branch banks have perforated the cheque with “PAID” and beneath the date. It is uncertain whether the cheque was perforated by the using bank or the receiving bank, most likely to be the former to indicate the cheque has been paid. The perforation of the cheque does in some instances perforate the Postal/Revenue stamp. Although examples such perforated stamps have not been identified off paper, examples have been found with KGV Admiral and Field Marshall issues.

Southern Rhodesia Government perfin “S.R./G” used on official documents. Examples have also been identified on KGVI revenue stamps. The use of this perforation large died out during this reign. Stamp cancelled with purple government Department cachet.



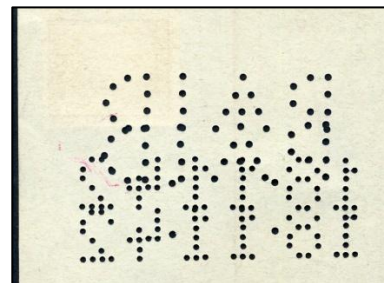
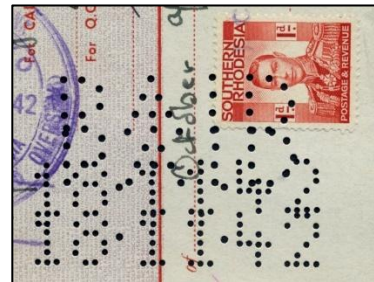
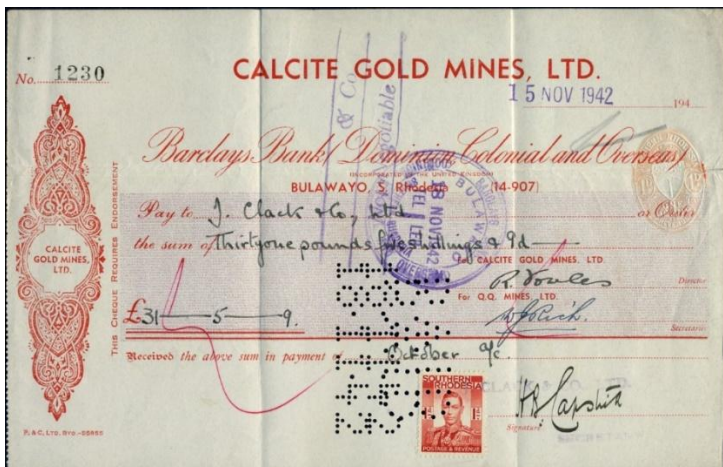
Haddon & Sly perfin “H&S”. This company was a department store headquartered in Bulawayo. Perfin stamps of this company have identified from the 1920s to 1950s



Umtali Municipality “U.M”, which can also be read as “M.U.”. Umtali was administered by a town council, it referred to a Municipality until it gained city status in 1971. Unusual for a public body to have its own stamps perforated. Examples of this perf only appear during the reign of KGVI and cease being used in the 1950s.



Lennon Limited “L.L.”. The company was found in Bulawayo in 1984 as a chemist/pharmacist and later into photography. It had a branch in Salisbury. Company well known for its series of post cards, mainly depicting Bulawayo and Victoria Falls. Uncertain whether perfin stamps used in one or both branches



Use of perforator in bank cheques, in this case the perforation said “PAID. 18.11.42” (In this case the cheque is double perforated). The perforation has gone through the 1d revenue stamp applied by Calcite Gold Mines Limited.

Related Material

Air letters

In October 1941, “Active Service Letter Cards” were introduced for use by those on Active Service or for letters to members of military service. The letter card being a single sheet of paper that required folding three times, the two side folds first and then folded in half again. These letter cards are distinguished by an imprinted 3d Large Falls stamp, a replica of the 1935 definitive stamp. It is not the intention of this section to comment on these letter cards as they did not bear an image of any stamps within the 1937 KGVI definitive issue.

The Government recognised the need for similar letter cards for civilian use, in Postal Notice No 31, dated 23rd October 1945, with effect from 25th October “a civilian ‘Air Letter’ service would become available”. This was the first time that these forms recognised by the term “Air Letter”.³¹

The first air letter was printed by the Government Lithographic Press, Salisbury on watermarked paper. Due to the popularity of the air letter, the Government placed an order with McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Wolverton (now a suburb Milton Keynes). In December 1946, due to a shortage of air letters at post office and the delay in receiving the order, an emergency overprinting was undertaken of a supply of British unstamped (formula) air mail letter sheets. Thereafter, three different air letters, with variations, of the KGVI period were produced regularly until 1953, All these air letters are shown in more detail below.

Watermarks

Papers sourced from Wiggins Teape & Company Ltd, contained the watermark KENT VALE PARCHMENT in two lines with a reference to the year of manufacture. There were two types of watermarks with the difference being in the placement of the year code.



Type 1
Dates of manufacture
Code W2 – 1942
Code 6 – 1946?
Code 7 – 1947?



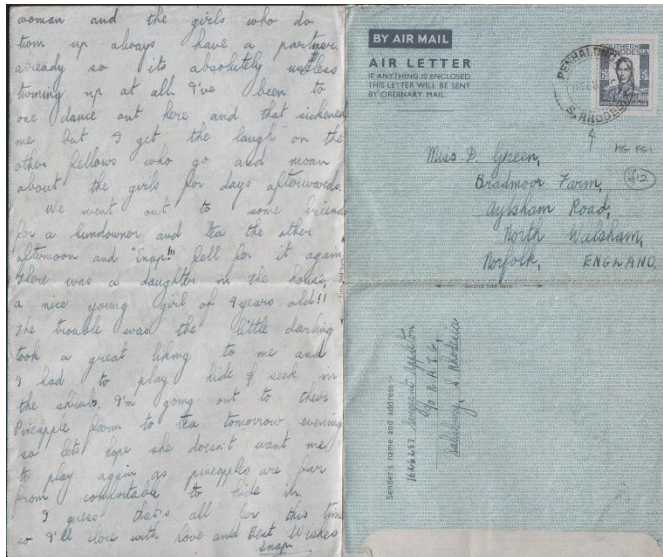
Type 2 (print similar to type 1)
Dates of Manufacture
Code A – 1948
Code B – 1949
Code E – 1952
Code F - 1953

References

The listing of the various air letters during the KGVI period include

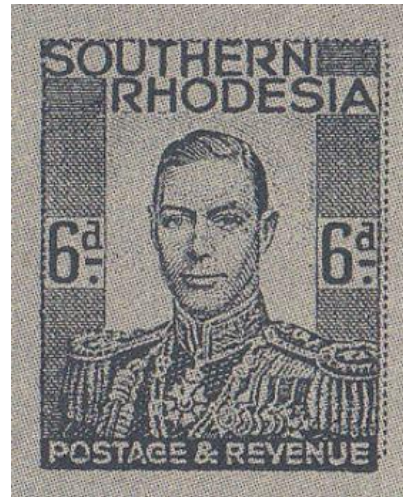
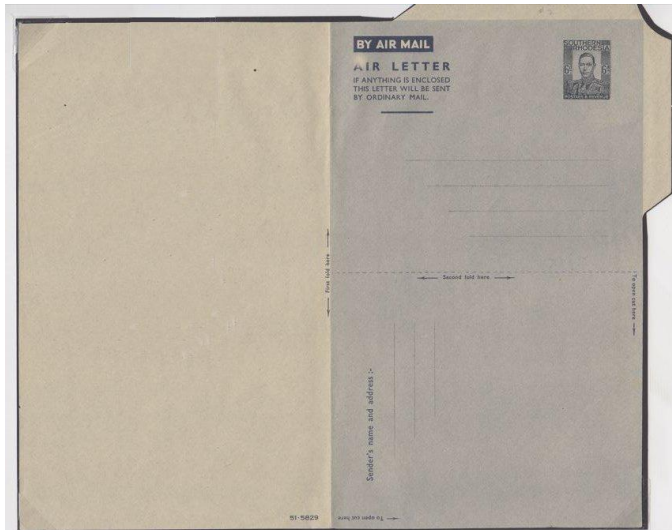
- Adrian de Bourbon’s “Aerogrammes of British Central Africa – Chapter 3”³¹
- Keith Harrop’s “Air Letter Cards” – RSCJ 127, September 1984³³
- Higgins & Gage “World Postal Stationery” download from website³⁴

1st issue – released 25th October 1944



- Sheet Size – 248 x 204 mm, folded 124 x 102 mm
- Design: Printed on light grey paper, with light blue-green overlay to two outer layers consisting of a micro print of the words “SOUTHERN RHODESIA GOVERNMENT”
- Air Mail etiquette overprinting the micro print, in dark blue ink. The etiquettes of AIR MAIL with white lettering
- Imprint of 6d KGVI 6d stamp in white box with simulated perforations
- Paper – supplied by Wiggins Teape & Company Ltd, England
- Watermark – type 1 reading KENT VALE/W2/PARCHMENT
- Printer – Government Lithographic Press, Salisbury in three litho plates – micro print, text and imprint
- Sender’s name and address – vertical with three dotted lines below
- Folding – left half folded backwards, the lower half folded backwards, sealed with flap to top of form.

2nd issue – December 1946



(Source Adrian de Bourbon's Melbourne display) ³²

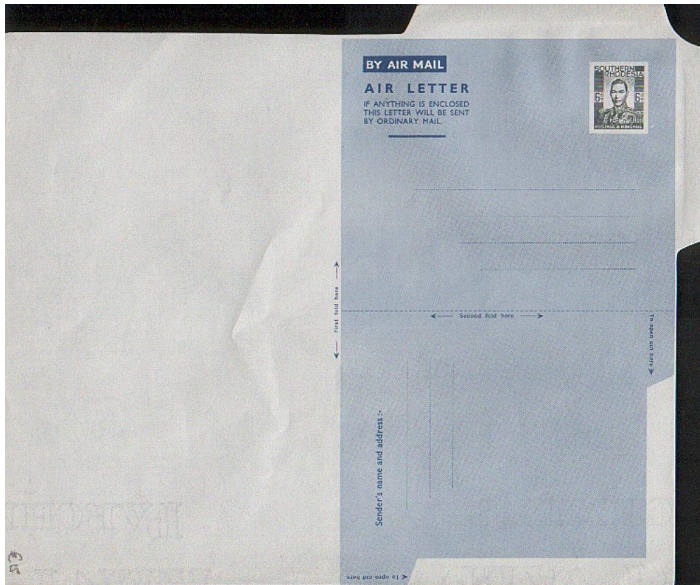
The Government had placed an order for a replacement air letter with McCorquodale & Co. Ltd. Due to a delay in the arrival of the new air letters, the Government ordered the Government Printer to produce an aerogramme as an interim measure. An existing supply of Great Britain unstamped (formula) air letter with the control number 51-5829 were at the time in use with many colonies, including Southern Rhodesia. Southern Rhodesia was the only colony to have overprinted an imprint of its air letter rate stamp, in this case the 6d KGVI definitive.

The GB formula air letter had a space on the air letter to place a stamp, this was the shade of stamp with a dotted border. The scan of the imprint above indicates on the right side this dotted frame.

The limited supply of this printing was only on sale for three months and in limited supply. Mint copies are rare and recorded copies scarce.

- Sheet Size – 246 x 201 mm, folder 123 x 100 mm
- Design: Printed on light grey paper with greyish blue microdot overlay to two outer layers.
- Text printing in dark blue with the AIR MAIL etiquette with white lettering
- Imprint overprint of 6d KGVI 6d stamp in simulated box
- Watermark – None
- Printer – overprinted imprint by Government Printer, Salisbury
- Sender's name and address – vertical with three dotted lines below
- Folding – left half folded backwards, the lower half folded backwards, sealed with flaps to top left sides of form.

3rd issue – 25 March 1947

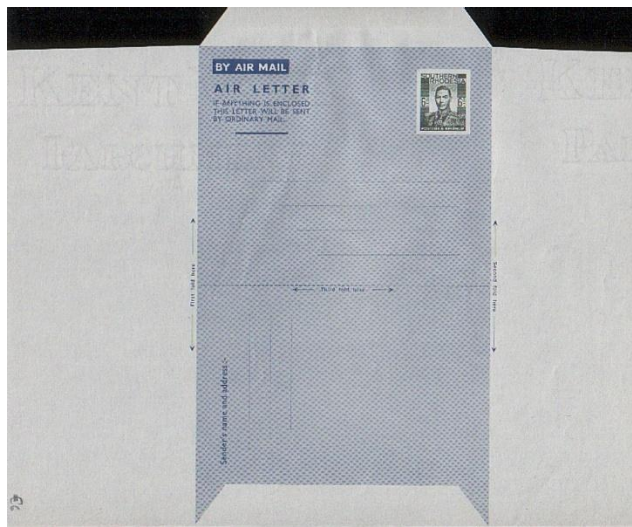


- Sheet Size – 248 x 204 mm, folded 124 x 102 mm
- Design: Printed on cream mottled paper with blue microdot overlay to two outer layers.
- Text printing in blue with the AIR MAIL etiquette with white lettering
- Imprint of 6d KGVI 6d stamp in white box no simulated perforations
- Paper – supplied by Wiggins Teape & Company Ltd, England
- Watermark – type 1 reading KENT VALE/PARCHMENT/7
- Printer – McCorquodale & Co Ltd on two litho plates – overlay and text, with imprint
- Sender's name and address – vertical with three dotted lines below
- Folding – left half folded backwards, the lower half folded backwards, sealed with two flaps to top left sides of form.

Variations.

1. Watermark – type 1 reading KENT VALE/PARCHMENT/6
2. No watermark – watermark widely dispersed on paper, making it possible for air letter not to have a watermark

4th issue – April 1948



f



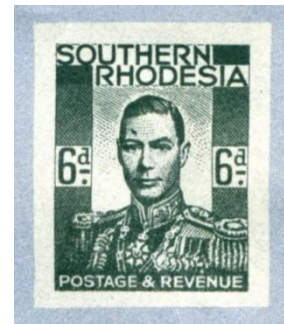
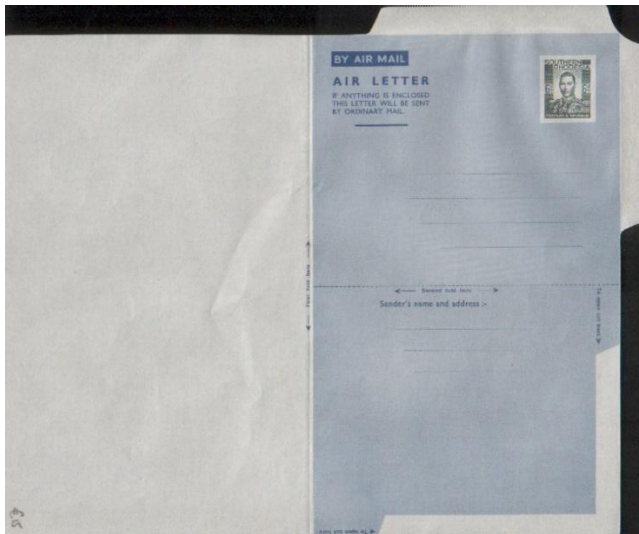
1

- Sheet Size – 258 x 197 mm, folded 122 x 100 mm
- Design: Printed on cream paper with blue microdot overlay to two outer layers.
- Text printing in blue with the AIR MAIL etiquette with white lettering
- Imprint of 6d KGVI 6d stamp in white box, no simulated perforations
- Paper – supplied by Wiggins Teape & Company Ltd, England
- Watermark – type 2 reading KENT VALE/PARCHMENT/A
- Printer – McCorquodale & Co Ltd on two litho plates – overlay and text, with imprint
- Sender's name and address – vertical with three dotted lines below
- Folding – Left and right panels folded backwards behind two central panels, and central panels folded, single gummed seal above central panel

Variation.

1. No watermark – watermark widely dispersed on paper, making it possible for air letter not to have a watermark

5th issue – 1950



- Sheet Size – 244 x 200 mm, folded 122 x 100 mm
- Design: Printed on cream mottled paper with blue microdot overlay to two outer layers.
- Text printing in blue with the AIR MAIL etiquette with blue microdots
- Imprint of 6d KGVI 6d stamp in white box, no simulated perforations
- Paper – supplied by Wiggins Teape & Company Ltd, England
- Watermark – type 2 reading KENT VALE/PARCHMENT/B
- Printer – McCorquodale & Co Ltd on two litho plates – overlay and text, with imprint
- Sender's name and address – horizontal with three dotted lines below
- Folding – left half folded backwards, the lower half folded backwards, sealed with two flaps to top left sides of form.

Variation.

1. Watermark – type 2 reading KENT VALE/PARCHMENT/E
2. Watermark – type 2 reading KENT VALE/PARCHMENT (no detectable letter)
3. No watermark – watermark widely dispersed on paper, making it possible for air letter not to have a watermark

Postal stationery (with stamp imprints)

To items of postal stationery have the KGVI definitive issue imprinted, both of which show the bottom line as “Postage” without the “& Revenue”. This makes sense as the postal stationery items could not be used for revenue purposes.

Postal Notice No 8 of 1938, dated 9th February 1938, announced that with effect from 1st March 1938 various items of postal stationery would become available. Included in those items were a ½d Post Card and a 1d Letter Card. Whilst there were other items of postal stationery – ½d newspaper wrappers, 1d envelopes and registration envelopes – none of these bore an imprint of the KGVI definitive stamps.

½d Post Card

This white 140 x 89 mm post card is printed in green with imprinted ½d stamp, the same colour as the stamp, with an elaborate “Southern Rhodesia” on the address side. There are various shades in the printing and there are differences in the paper stock.¹ There were two easily recognised dies of the post card, much of the difference centring around the curls of the letters ‘R’.

A full view of a postcard design for Die 1. It features a green ink stamp on the right side showing a profile of King George VI. To the left of the stamp is a large, ornate, stylized 'SOUTHERN RHODESIA' in a decorative font. Below this, the words 'POST CARD' are printed in a simpler font. At the bottom, there is a line of small text: 'THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE.'

Die 1

A close-up view of the 'SOUTHERN RHODESIA' text from Die 1. Three red arrows point to specific features: the top curve of the first 'R', the middle curve of the second 'R', and the bottom curve of the third 'R'. These curves are distinct and well-defined.

A full view of a postcard design for Die 2. It is identical to Die 1, featuring a green ink stamp of King George VI, the 'SOUTHERN RHODESIA' text, 'POST CARD', and the address line at the bottom.

Die 2

A close-up view of the 'SOUTHERN RHODESIA' text from Die 2. Three red arrows point to the same features as in the Die 1 close-up: the top curve of the first 'R', the middle curve of the second 'R', and the bottom curve of the third 'R'. In this die, these curves appear slightly different in shape and definition compared to Die 1.

(Source of images RSC website PowerPoint presentation by Pat Flanagan)

1d Letter Card

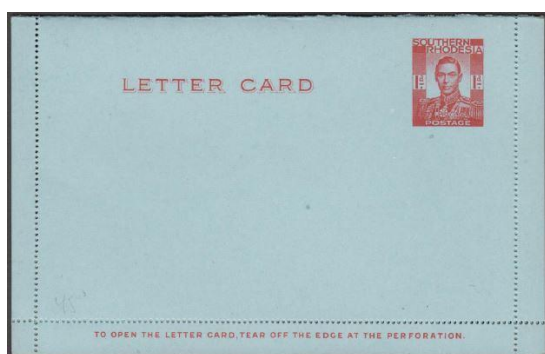
This was for posting internally at the letter rate. The 1d letter rate was soon changed to 2d when war broke out. None of the postal stationery was ever overprinted for rate increases, as happened

76

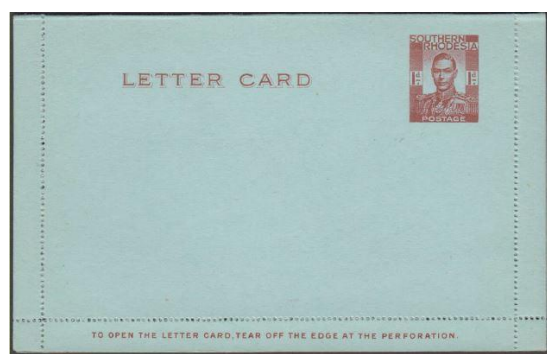
in many countries. However, the post office did sell them uprated with additional stamps on them as they are frequently found in mint condition uprated. The letter card is on blue card that comes in a whole range of shades from the printing stock. The printing included the stamp image, with *postage* only, in a dull brown reddish colour. The card doubles over with gum and perforations around the edge for opening. There are also examples where the die has been re-engraved with much heavier lines.¹

In Higgins & Gage's postal stationery catalogue, the KGVI Letter Card show three varieties:

- 3 1d red on bluish paper
- a. 1d brown red on green-blue paper
- b. 1d chocolate on bluish paper.

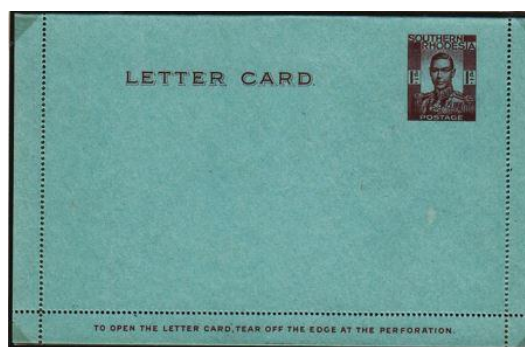


Pale blue smooth bluish card



Grey blue coarse card

(Source of images RSC website PowerPoint presentation by Pat Flanagan)



Red brown on green-blue paper

(Courtesy of Keith Brodovcky)

Presentation booklets at UPU conferences

The Universal Postal Union hold congresses on a four yearly basis, although this was interrupted during both world wars. During the reign of King George VI three congresses were held in

1937 11th Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina

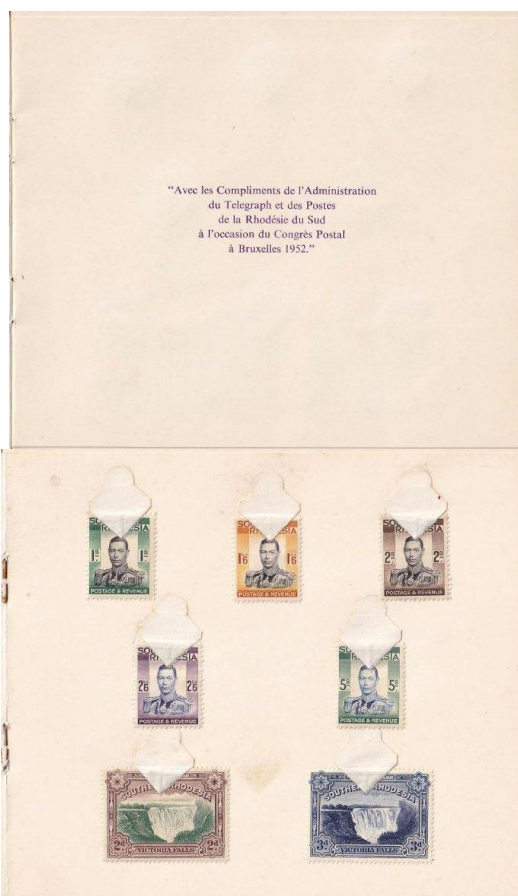
1947 12th Congress in Paris, France

1952 13th Congress in Brussels, Belgium

Delegates are usually presented with special albums of stamps by the other participating countries, this was most certainly the case by Southern Rhodesia for the 1947 and 1952 Congress. The country may well have participated in the 1937 Congress but there no evidence that a booklet was produced. Below copies of pages from the booklets taken to the two Congresses.

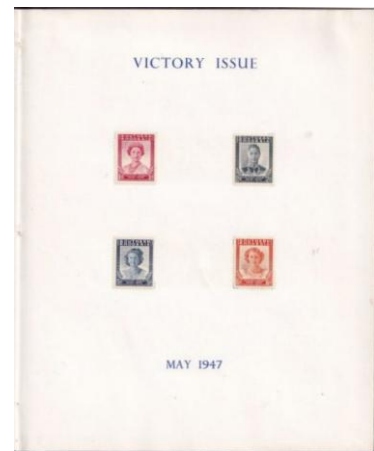
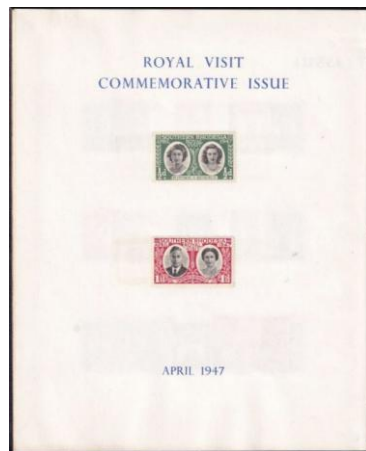
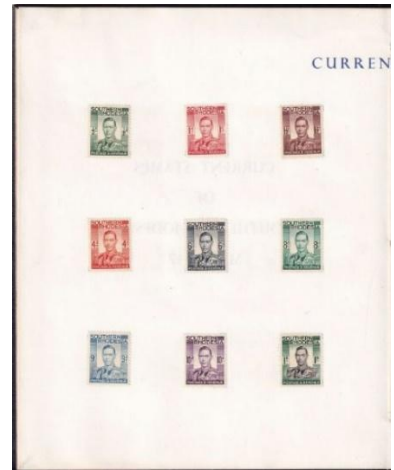
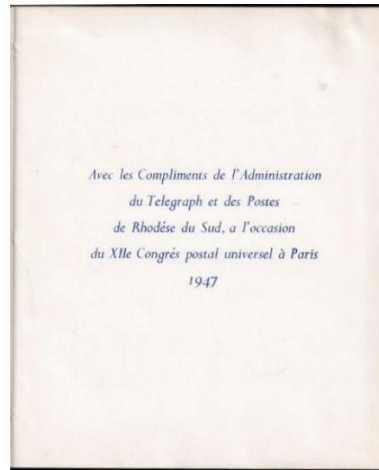
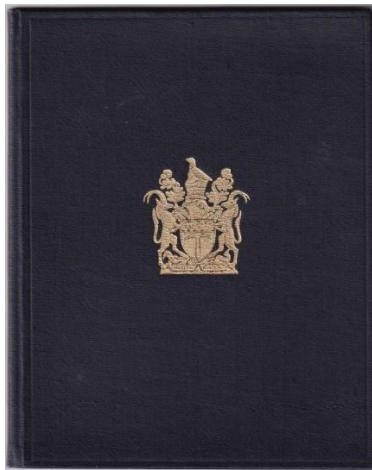
1947 Congress

Booklet with black un-embossed cover.
Contains two pages of the definitive stamps
available at the time, includes the Large Falls
and KGVI definitive



1952 Congress

Booklet with black board cover, front embossed with Southern Rhodesia coat of arms. Stamps include the 1935 Large Falls, 1937 KGVI definitive, 1947 Royal Visit and 1947 Victory issues. The latter two issues had been invalidated prior to the congress

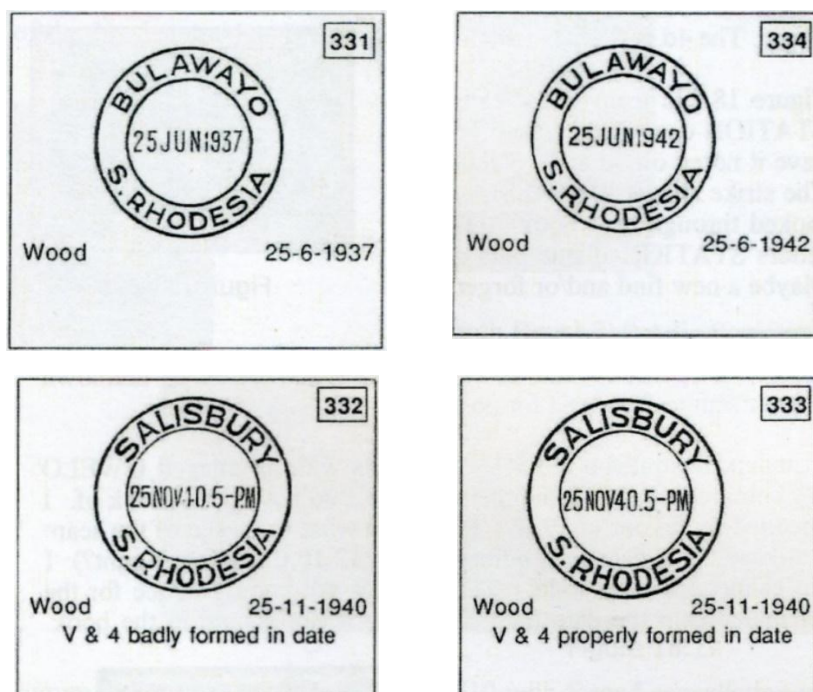


(All images courtesy of Keith Harrop)

Madame Joseph forged postmarks

Madame Joseph was a stamp dealer in London and specialised in the repairing of stamps and the production of postmarks. A service Madame Joseph did offer to members of the trade, was the 'hire' of her 'equipment' for members to convert their own stamps into 'fine used' examples. This service may account for the perfect 100% strikes on some stamps, whilst others have only a faint part strike of one of her implements. She is believed to have operated from the 1920s through to the late 60s.⁸

There are four Southern Rhodesia cancellers and one registered canceller for Bulawayo. These 4 known cancellers span the dates 25th June 1937 & 25th June 1942 for Bulawayo and the two cancellers for Salisbury are dated 25th November 1940. The forged cancellers all give very good quality impressions, however one saving grace is that there do not appear to be any with moveable date slugs and so the specific dates make identification fairly easy. Part cancels are going to more difficult to confirm.⁸



*(Source Memoir 22 ex "Madame Joseph Revisited" 2005 publication⁸
It is assumed that the number shown with each strike refers to the catalogue number)*

The story is continued by Roger West of Avion stamps, a small note entitled "Madam Joseph – The story behind the fine used on piece" which accompanies examples of the forged overprints sold by him.

"When Derek Worboys purchased the hoard of Madame Joseph cancellers in 1993, his intention was simply to remove them from the gang of London dealers who were putting them to fraudulent use. Once it was decided to illustrate them all in a handbook, Derek wrote to the major postal history dealers requesting some financial help towards this project. Very little was forthcoming until the British Philatelic Trust reimbursed Derek and the Royal Philatelic Society published the book.

“Some time ago, probably in the late 1980s, a large accumulation of mint Commonwealth stamps became damaged through flooding. The owner laboriously separated the stamps and mounted each on a small square piece of paper. These eventually received the appropriate Madame Joseph cancellation. Thus these ‘worthless’ flood-damaged stamps became quite valuable as ‘fine used’.

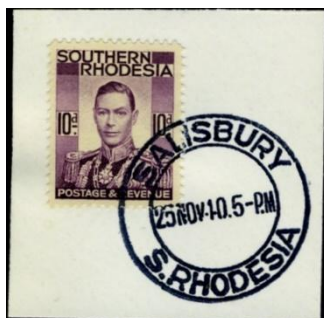
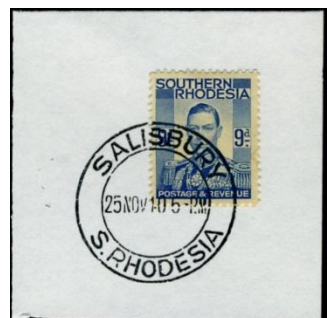
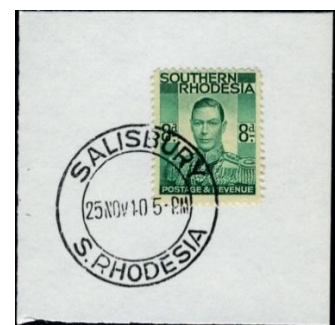
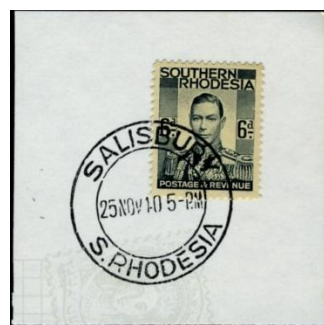
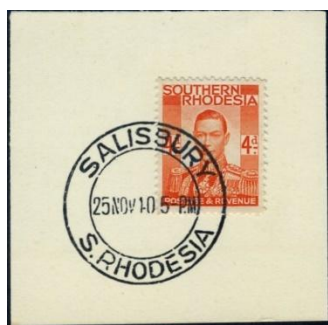
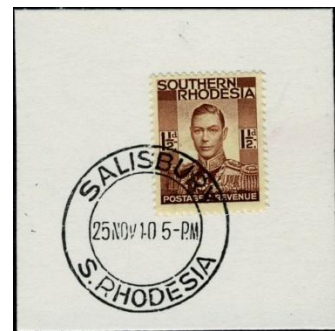
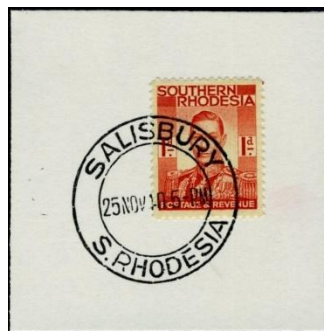
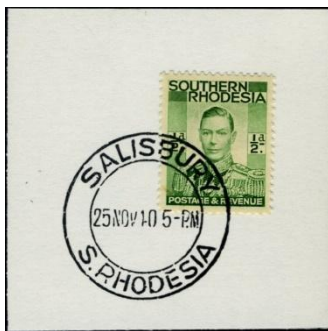
“Derek remained disappointed with his fellow dealers right up until his death in 1995. As a means to promoting the book, he threatened to ‘name and shame’ several dealers who we knew had been involved in using the cancellers.

“The owner of the ‘fine used on pieces’ sent me his stock declaring that he no longer wanted anything to do with them.

Following the success of the book, and the reprint, I felt the time was right to release these items to interested collectors.

Roger West - joint editor - Madame Joseph Forged Postmarks
Codnor Park July 2020”

In Avion Stamps stock are Madam Joseph postmarks on all duties of the King George VI definitive issues. The examples below are all type 332, with the badly formed V & 4 in date.

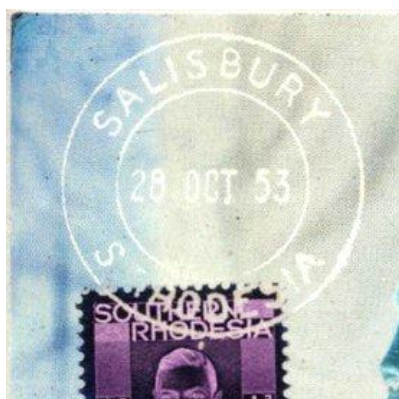




Other forgery

Postcard published by Finlay Colour (London) Ltd of King George VI in uniform as an Admiral of the Fleet.

Salisbury postmark dated 28 OCT 1953. The postmark is difficult to see save as a negative image. Postmark not of a known type at the time.



References:

1. Rhodesian Study Circle Handbook series of Memoirs. "Memoir 21 – The KG VI Postage and Revenue Definitives of Southern Rhodesia" by George Stewart & Colin Hoffman. Published 2012.
2. "Rhodesia – A Postal History", by R C Smith. Pages 379-80. Published by the author in 1967.
3. "The Thomas de la Rue Southern Rhodesia Essays" by Dave Cooper, article in the RSC Journal No 274, June 2019, pages 193-94
4. <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Fleury-1099> - short biography of Hugo Fleury
5. "The Genesis of the KGVII Design", by George Stewart, published in the RSC Journal No 204, December 2002, pages 149-151
6. Stanley Gibbons Commonwealth Stamp Catalogue – Southern & Central Africa, 2nd Edition
7. The Rhodesian Stamp Catalogue 1983/84, published by Salisbury Stamp Co.
8. "A Guide to the Postage Stamps of the Rhodesias & Nyasaland 1888 – 1963", published by the Mashonaland Philatelic Society
9. PowerPoint presentation "The King George VI Definitive Issue", Patrick Flanagan, March 2018
10. "The Philatelic & Postal History Treasures of the National Archives of Zimbabwe", by J A Landau, I J Johnstone & C M Hoffman, published by the National Archives of Zimbabwe 2004
11. "Making Sense of the KGVII Definitive" - The Rhodesian Philatelist, No 42, page 756 October 2017.
12. "Some notes on the current issue of S Rhodesia", Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 14 September 1951 by unknown author, possibly the editor Wilf Modder.
13. "Southern Rhodesia 1937 Definitives – Defective Coils and Vending Machines", by George Stewart. Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 134, June 1986, pages 134-35
14. "The Coil Stamps of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland" by Margaret Harris. Rhodesian Study Circle Journal, No 130, June 1985, pages 79-81
15. "The KGVII 2/6 Booklets – Printed by Waterlow & Son", The Rhodesian Philatelist No 8 June 1995
16. "Information Update: the 1927 ½d and 1d Admiral perforated file copies ex Waterlow archives" The Rhodesian Philatelist No 8 of June 1995
17. "The KGVII Booklets", The Rhodesian Philatelist No 20, October 2000
18. "S.R, KG VI Booklet 'overprinted' – Why?", article by George Stewart, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 139, September 1987, pages 96-7.
19. "S.R. KG VI Booklet overprinted 'Specimen' – another look", article by George Stewart, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 151, March 1990, pages 71-72.
20. "The dash near the 10d dot flaw", George Stewart, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 249 December 2013 page 168
21. "Two New Southern Rhodesia King George VI Flaws", George Stewart. Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 252 September 2014 page 111
22. "A Southern Rhodesia GVI Medal Flaw". Dave Cooper, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 256 September 2015 page 100
23. Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 18, September 1952, pages 8 & 25
24. "Claire Birsén Collection", Janet Duff and Jerry Godfrey. National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe booklet of Birsén collection at the National History Museum.
25. "Excise Overprints on 1937 SR Definitives", George Stewart, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 226, March 2008, pages 27-30

26. "Excise Tax stamps Part II", George Stewart, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 228, September 2008, pages 105-107
27. "Cigarette Surtax 1937-1953 and the 'Excise' Overprints", Adrian de Bourbon, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 241, December 2011, pages 164-69.
28. "Another look at Southern Rhodesia George VI Tobacco Tax", Dave Cooper, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 281, September 2020, pages 373-75.
29. "Southern Rhodesia George VI Overprinted Tobacco Tax: startling revelations, forensic analysis", Dave Cooper, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal 394. December 2022, pages 424-25
30. "The Story of Southern Rhodesia KGVI 1/- Double Print", Otto Peetoom The Rhodesian Philatelist No 40, February 2017 pages 714-17.
31. "Aerogrammes of British Central Africa", "Chapter 3- Air Letters of Southern Rhodesia up to the Federation", Adrian de Bourbon, RSC website.
32. "The Air Letter Forms of Southern Rhodesia and the Federation 1941 to 1963" Display by Adrian de Bourbon, Melbourne 2017.
33. "Air Letter Cards", Keith Harrop, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 127, September 1984, pages 132-34
34. Higgins & Gage "World Postal Stationery" download from website
35. "King George VI Coronation Stamps", by Brian Livingstone, London Philatelist, May 2009.

Additions/Changes since August 2024	
12-2024	Various varieties to ½d and 1d ex RSCJ 301 pages 197-8
	Appendix 1 – Die Head additional points of difference between mono & bi coloured duties – thanks to Dave Cooper
	9d – observation of extra line to left epaulette
	9d – dot next to 9d in right value panel
	Letter in respect of the specimen stamps and images of those stamps
	½d - new examples of perforation shift to left
	½d – corner of paper fold during perforation
	½d – paper crease in pair
	1d – Perforation shift to left into left margin
	1d – Significant colour difference to pair
	9d – vertical paper crease
	1d "Excise" further example of stamp postmarked Cranborne
	Cover with 2 x ½d stamps over printed 'Excise' in red, from Shabani
	Plain fdc with stamps ½d to 1s posted Umtali
	Extensive revision of appendix 1 – sources of the King's Portrait following new information and discussion
12-2025	1s – vignette very far left
	10d – Offset
4-2026	2 x First Day Covers – Salisbury ex eBay
8-2026	½d surcharged 1d in red script
	1½d block from lower two panes of 240 stamp printing

APPENDIX 1 – SOURCES OF THE KING’S PORTRAIT

There has been debate as to the origins of the portrait or portraits used for the face of King George VI for this definitive issue.

The principal sources of information for this debate are

1. Memoir 21 “The KGVII Postage and Revenue Definitives of Southern Rhodesia”, by George Stewart FRPSL and Colin Hoffman RDPSA FRPSL, Published by the Rhodesian Study Circle in 2012
2. “The Genesis of the KGVII Design”, by George Stewart RSC Journal 204, December 2002, pages 149-151.
3. Various information, illustrations and photographs found in many websites on the internet.

Memoir 21 commences with the following description of the Head Die

“The Head Die

Waterlow's chief engraver J A C Harrison used a picture by Bertram Park, of the King in a lounge suit, (Figure 7) now in the British Postal Museum Archives. In order to add the naval uniform, it appears that a photo of Edward VIII in the uniform of an Admiral was used, and the head changed to that of King George VI based on the Park picture.”

Figure 7 (opposite). The Bertram Park Portrait, also used for New Zealand coronation stamps but printed by Bradbury Wilkinson.
©Royal Mail Group Ltd 2010, courtesy of the British Postal Museum & Archive



Memoir 21 then concentrated on two elements of the portrait relating to the naval uniform ‘worn’ by the King – the badge around the King’s neck and the shoulder board

The Insignia around the King's neck



Figure 11 The badges of the Order of St Michael and St George. The Grand Cross is on the left and Master badge centre. The stamp's badge right, taken from a revenue only stamp, has the features of the Master's badge. This also appears on some Empire stamps

Order of St George and St Michael

When the Ionian Islands, now part of Greece, had been placed under British protection, the Prince Regent (later George IV) instituted the Order in 1818 to recognise distinguished citizens of the islands, and of Malta. The islands were of importance to Britain as they made strategic locations for military bases. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the Order was expanded to reward distinguished service in British territories, as well as more generally in foreign affairs.

The Order now consists of the Sovereign, the Grand Master (currently The Duke of Kent), 125 Knights and Dames Grand Cross, 375 Knights and Dames Commander, and 1750 Companions. The Badge of the Order depicts St George fighting the dragon on one side, and the archangel St Michael trampling Satan on the other.

(Source www.Royal.uk)



The Order of St Michael & St George which is worn around the neck by Companions. (CMG)



This is what is awarded to a Knight/Dame Commander, consisting of a badge around the neck and the star worn on the left breast (KCMG)



The Grand Cross, where the order is hung from an elaborate chain. The chain consisting of enamelled Maltese Cross, the cyphers of "SM" (St Michael) and "SG" (St George) on either side of two winged lions, each holding a book and seven arrows. (GCMG)



Duke of Kent with badge of the Grand Master of the Order

Grand Masters are chosen by the Sovereign, the holders have been

- * 1818-1825 Sir Thomas Maitland
- * 1825-1850 Prince Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge
- * 1850-1904 Prince George. Duke of Cambridge
- * 1905-1910 George, Prince of Wales
- * 1910-1917 None
- * **1917-1936 Edward, Prince of Wales**
- * 1936-1957 Alexander Cambridge, 1st Earl of Athlone
- * 1957-1959 Edward Wood, 1st Earl of Halifax
- * 1959-1967 Harold Alexander 1st Earl Alexander of Tunis
- * **1967- present Prince Edward, Duke of Kent**



Portrait of Edward, Prince of Wales in 1936 clearly wearing the badge of the Grand Master of the Order. The lower badge of His Majesty's left side is also that of this order
(Photo – National Portrait Gallery)

Close up of the 3/- Revenue stamp. Clearly the neck badge is that of the Grand Master. King George VI was never the Grand Master of the Order of St Michael and St George. So, depicting this order around his neck is totally incorrect.



Similarities to the King George VI Coronation issue of New Zealand are sited in Memoir 21 as being similar to this Southern Rhodesian issue. Indeed, the neck medal also appears to be that of the Grand Master.



The same cannot be said to be true of the British Post Office Coronation issue. The neck medal shown is that of the Order of Bath.

At this stage it may be worthwhile also examining the 1947 Coronation stamps issued through the Crown Agents for other countries or dependencies of the Empire. The Crown Agents were responsible for stamp production of those countries being administered by the Colonial Office. Southern Rhodesia was not, at that time, administered by the Dominions Office, along with Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and South Africa. All of these dominions designed and issued their own Coronation stamps, as well as to countries that they, administered – Fiji, Nauru, New Guinea, Niue, Papua and South West Africa.

The Colonial Office and the Crown Agency invited four British printers to submit designs for a Coronation stamp, which was to be printed by the recess method. Of these four, only De La Rue and Waterlows submitted essays. The King chose the design by De La Rue, who were requested to make further adjustments which became the design finally used for all Colonial Office dependencies.



Northern Rhodesian Coronation issue, printed by Bradbury Wilkinson.

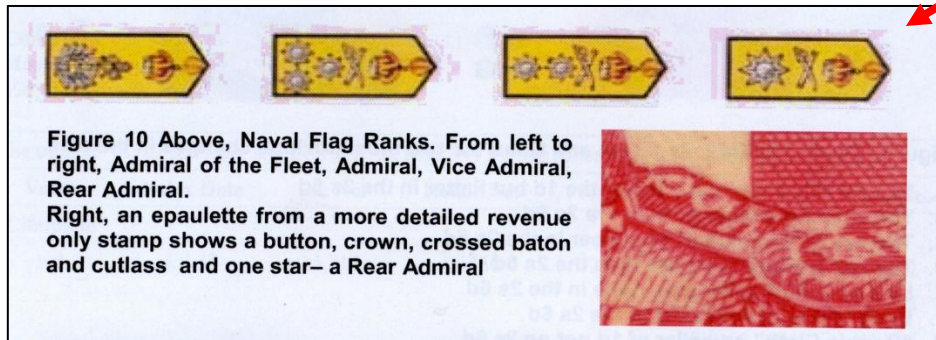
The printing of the colonial dependences stamps was split between De La Rue and Bradbury Wilkinson who each printed the stamps for 23 countries.

What is clear from the enlargement of the above stamp is that the order of St Michael and St George is hanging around the neck of the King. In a letter from the Alan Lascalles, from the King's office at Sandringham, he advised that the GCMG should be used as shown. De la Rue adjusted the master die by eliminating the intervening elements of the badge that were for the Grand Master's insignia.

If the GCMG is examined for Southern Rhodesia Coronation definitive issues it is apparent that Waterlow got the message that the order should continue to be used for these dies. But it is equally apparent that Waterlow did not appreciate the difference in the order's insignia between that worn by the Grand Master and other holders of the order.

Thanks go to Brian Livingstone of the KGVI Study Circle for providing his article from the London Gazette of May 2009 entitled "King George VI Coronation Stamps". This article provides an in depth analysis and history of the design of the Coronation Stamps.

Rear Admiral of the Royal Navy



Extract from Memoir 21

The shoulder insignia shown in the head die is clearly correct for the rank of Rear Admiral, consisting from the top, the button, crown, crossed baton & cutlass and large star (arrowed). As can be seen below, King Edward VIII never held the rank of Rear Admiral, a rank held by King George VI from 1932 to 1936, before his rapid promotion during the course of 1936.

Naval ranks of Edward VIII

21 June 1911 – Midshipman
17 March 1913 – Lieutenant
8 July 1919– Captain
1 September 1930 – Vice Admiral
1 January 1935 – Admiral
21 January 1936 - Admiral of the Fleet

Naval ranks of George VI

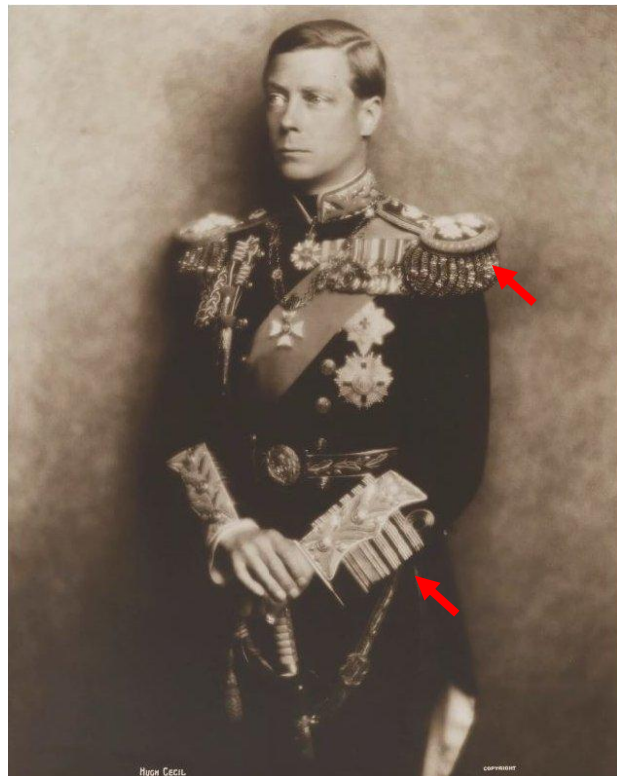
15 May 1916 to 1918 – Sub-Lieutenant
31 December 1920 to 1925 – Commander
3 June 1932 - Rear Admiral
1 January 1936 – Vice Admiral
21 January 1936 – Admiral
11 December 1936 – Admiral of the Fleet

This portrait of King Edward VIII, as Prince of Wales, was taken in 1935 by Hugh Cecil

It shows the King in the naval ceremonial uniform, the sleeve markings clearly denote the rank of Admiral, a rank he held in 1935.

It is uncertain whether this photo was used as a basis for the head die of KGVI, but another photo of the King Edward in Admiral uniform has not been identified.

In this portrait the King was wearing the Grand Master of the Order of St Michael and St George badge, together with the chest star.





In RSC Journal No. 205, December 2002, George Stewart included the postcard opposite a possible source for the head die.

From the sleeve of the dress uniform, it clearly shows the King in the uniform of a Rear Admiral

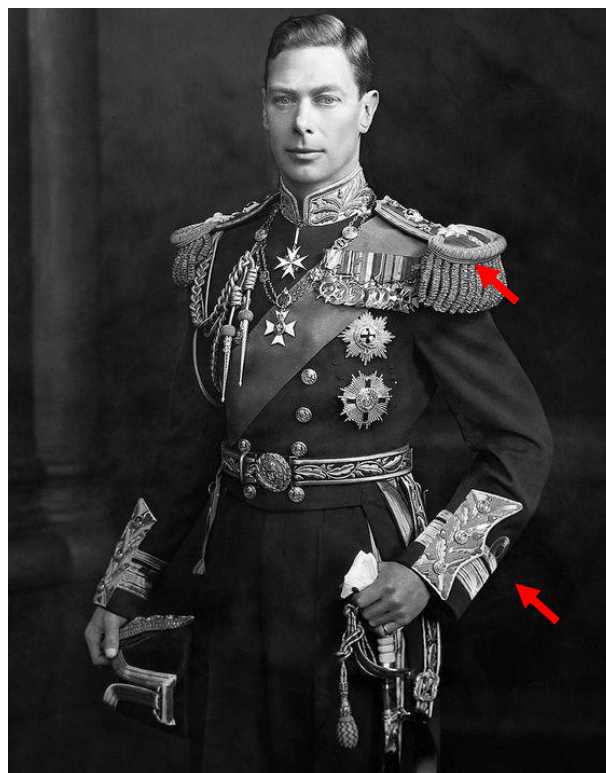
“The engraver presumably had a series of Vandyk photographs from which to work, but my suspicion is the Fig. 2 or similar was used for the head. If a stamp is enlarged 300% and positioned over the postcard on a light table, part from the king’s right shoulder, the two blended almost perfectly. As John Easton states it was a proper portrait and very faithfully copied.” Source - “British Postage Stamp Design” by John Eaton, published 1943 by Faber & Faber.

Opposite is a better quality of appears to be the same Vandyk photograph.

The rank of the ceremonial dress uniform in this photo is that of a Rear Admiral – as can be seen from the sleeve and shoulder board. This ceremonial rank was held by Albert, Duke of York, from 3 June 1932 to 1 January 1936.



The lower badge on the Duke’s left side is that of the Order of St Michael and St George. So, he was clearly a Knight of the Order.



Analysis of the King's head die.



Pat Flanagan had within his exhibit at Marpex 2024 the die proof of the King opposite. In which he stated "Die proof of the head plate for the George VI issue of 1937. This head plate is close to that used for the issued stamp. It differs in that the impression on the die shows the full face of the King, whereas the issued stamps show the left side of the King's face."

This head plate is also different from the issued stamps as the neck badge is that of the Order of the Bath, an order he was entitled to wear.

There is the query that this head plate die was ever intended for the Southern Rhodesian issues

The evolution of the King's head die should go back to the 1937 Coronation issue, where the first head die for Southern Rhodesia was produced and approved by the King in late December 1936/early January 1937.

Opposite is a printout of die number 15520, that was printed for approval by the King.

The question as to whether the contention that J A C Harrison, used a portrait of King Edward VIII for the body and the Bertram Park Portrait for the head for the definitive issue could have commenced with the Coronation issue. As will be seen below, the row of medals on the King's chest is that from the portrait of his brother and not the Vandyk photograph.

It is clear from this die, that Harrison did use both the Park portrait for the head and the Cecil portrait of King Edward for the body





Opposite is the cropped National Portrait Gallery photo showing the area shown in the die head above.

There is the suggestion this photo may well have been used for the engraving. The insignia on the shoulder boards are not of any assistance, as the distinguishing feature as to rank of Admiral on the uniform's epilettes and sleeves.

But if the area of the medal and medals are examined, the King George VI head die does appear to be a close similarity with those in this photo. Here is the chain to the insignia below the Grand Master passes over the row of medals, leaving a medal clearly seen to its left.

It is clear for the King George VI head die, Harrison did use both the Park portrait for the head and the Cecil portrait of King Edward for the body

Analysis of the photographs with issued stamp

Shoulder board and epaulettes



The top photo is a closeup of the King Edward VIII photo showing the uniform of an Admiral. The area of the epaulette shows three stars.



The centre photo shows King George V from his photo in the uniform of a Rear Admiral with one large star on the epaulette.



The area above the epaulette in the printed stamp, contains the large single star of a Rear Admiral and not that of an Admiral. The engraver has moved the large star slightly to the right and does show the elements in a flatter profile. "Engraver's licence".

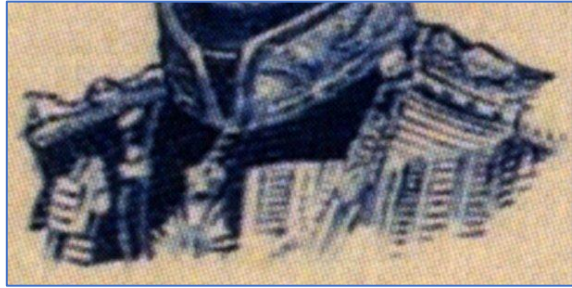
Clearly the head plate for this definitive issue is correct in the naval rank held by the King in this portrait

Medals

Opposite is a close up of the King Edward VIII photograph showing the line of medal across his left breast, The medals continue beneath the chain and is close to the Grand Master badge.



Opposite is close up die number 15520, approved by the King in January 1947. It is clear from this that the row of medals and their positioning is similar to that of the King Edward photograph. This, with the Grand Master badge, is clear proof that the King Edward photograph was used as the basis for the Head die of George VI.



Opposite is a close up of the row of medals from the Vandyk photograph of George VI. The row of medal ends up on the left side just under the chain.



Opposite is a close up of the King George VI Head die for the Southern Rhodesia 3/- revenue stamp. The row of medals across the chest is almost the same on the stamp as in the photograph above, with a little engravers licence of simplification



Conclusions

It is accepted that for the King George VI die number 15520 uses both the Park portrait for the King's head and the Cecil portrait of King Edward for the body. In this respect, George Stewart and other advocates are absolutely correct and without argument.

However, the head dies for the 1937 Southern Rhodesia definitive and revenue stamps, it is clear from the shoulder board, epaulets and row of medals that the Vandyk portrait was used as the basis. The issue that arose was the use of the Grand Master's badge for the Order of St Michael and St George, and it is this that probably caused the confusion. But it is clear from Alan Lascelles of the King's Office at Sandringham to the colonial Office that the "he thinks that in the circs. The

insignia of a GCMG should be as shown.”³⁵ Although, there was a minor correction to the GCMG by De La Rue for the omnibus stamps, J A C Harrison of Waterlow did not appreciate the difference in the insignia between that of the Grand Master and the GCMG. In keeping with Lascelles instruction, Harrison used the Cecil photograph of King Edward for the insignia only, it does not appear that he used this photo for the rest of the die for George VI.

Which portrait was used for the King's head?

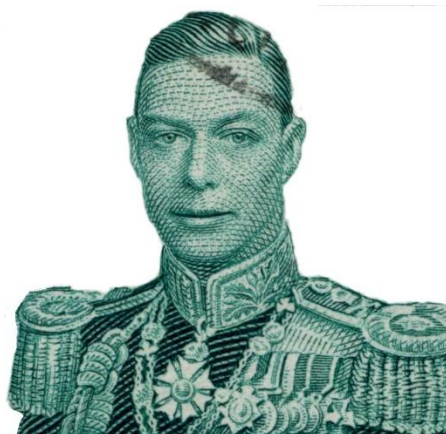
What has been established above is that the King's body in the dies were the Bertram Park portrait was used for the Coronation head die and stamps, but the question is whether this continued for the 1937 definitive and revenue stamps.



The neck badge worn in the photo is that of a Knight of the Order of Bath.

George Stewart stated that he was able to position the head used in the issue on a light table and the two blended together the enlarged stamp and the Vandyk photo almost perfectly.

Utilising an enlargement of 3/- Revenue die head, a similar exercise has been carried out on both the Vandyk photo and the Bertram Park portrait, with the following results. In





In superimposing the die head over the Vandyk photograph, the King's eyes have been used as the focal point. As can be seen the head almost lines up with that the head, and is a close match with uniform and medals.



Again using the eyes as a focal point, the King's head in the Park portrait and the die proof are a very close match

Conclusion

With both the portraits there are similarities between the portraits and the die proof. It is possible, therefore, that J A C Harrison of Waterlow used both these portraits or ones very similar to them, to undertake the engraving of the head die of the King George VI definitive issue. However, the question arises why use the Park portrait for the definitive use when for the King's body the Vandyk photograph was used? It is, therefore likely that the Vandyk photograph was used for the whole of the definitive head die, with just the adjust of the GCMG insignia to fulfill Lescalles' instruction.

Evolution of the Die Head

Memoir 21 suggests that the origins of the King's die head is from the J. A. C. Harrison die impression 15520, which is associated with the King's portrait in the Coronation issue.



Die head 15520 associated with the
Coronation issue
(Source RSC website)

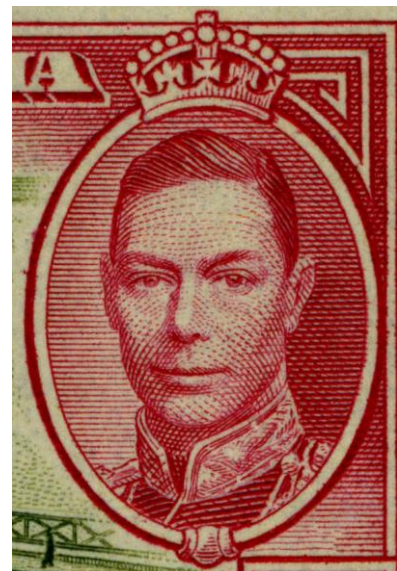


Printout of die head
(Source British Library –
Harrison collection)

The question arises is whether this die was used in the production of the master die for the Coronation issue. With the King's head there has been a reduction in the extent of the portrait eliminating most of the detail below the King's collar. Below are enlargements so the King's die head and his portrait within the stamp. There are a number of differences between the two, including more lines and detail to the face; the gap between the collars being more 'V' shaped in the stamp than the die; and the head appears to sit higher above the collar.

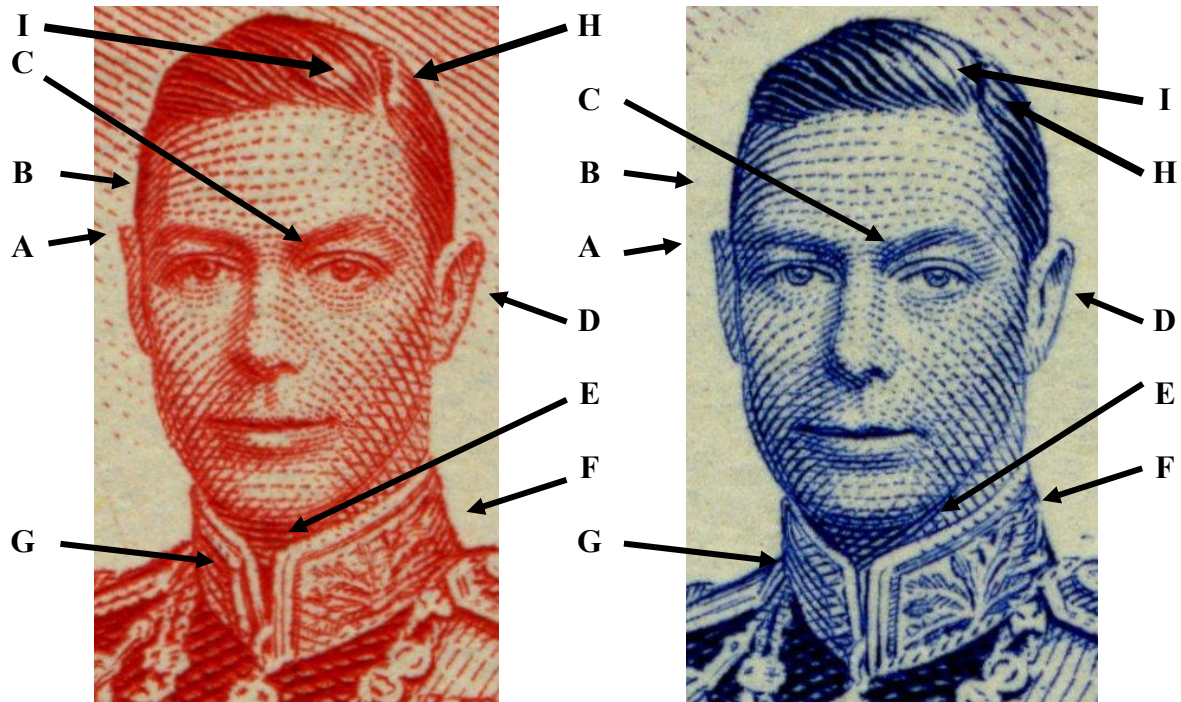


It is probable that Harrison re-engraved the King's portraits in the production of the master die for the casement/frame plate of the Coronation issue. This was based on die 15520 which was approved by the King.



But can the same be said of the master dies for the mono-coloured and bi-coloured master dies of the definitive issue? From the discussion above, it is probable that the king's head for the definitive issue was based using the Vandyk portrait, however the portrait had to be reengraved three times for the mono-coloured and bi-coloured master dies and well as the revenue master die. With these three engravings it is highly likely that there will be minor differences.

Memoir 21, George Stewart, undertook a comparison of both the 1d and 2/6 duties, as follows:



The most obvious changes are:

- A. The ear turns out at the top in the 1d but flatter in the 2sh6d
- B. The shading to the left hand side of the 1d is heavier than in the 2sh6d
- C. Above the shading above the eye is heavier in 1d than the 2sh6d
- D. The ear of the 1d is engraved more than the 2sh6d
- E. Line at the top of the collar gap, not present in the 2sh6d
- F. Detail of the collar better in the 2sh6d
- G. "Double Cloth" on collar of 1d, not present in 2sh6d
- H. Additional strand of hair over parting in 2sh6d #
- I. Less strands of hair left of parting in 2sh6d #

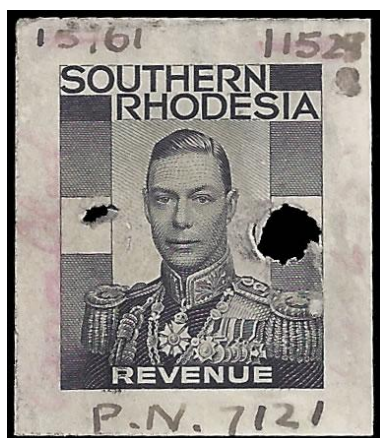
Items H and I are additional variations as observed by Dave Cooper.

These portraits were engraved into the master die for the mono-coloured duties, and the vignette die for the bi-coloured duties.



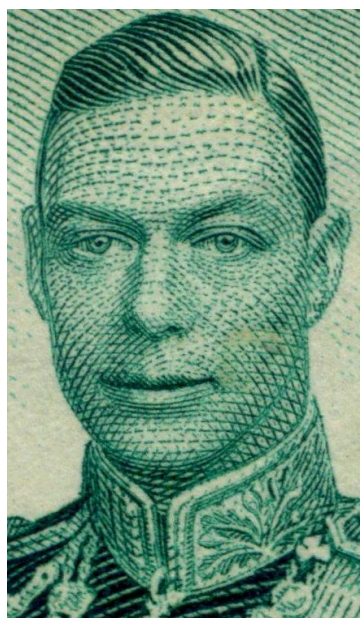
The visual appearance of the mono-coloured duties is that the King's head is larger than in the bi-coloured duties, thus reinforcing the contention that these were separate engravings. There was, of course, a further re-engraving of the head due for the master die of the Revenue stamps, where the King's head for these larger stamps is larger than that for the mono-coloured duties.

A comparison of the revenue head plate throws up many differences with the definitive issue duties.



Master die

(Source Filat AG)



These differences include

- More shading to left ear
- Clearer eyes
- Different detailing to right collar

The size of the stamp and as a consequence the die head would also have required the re-engraving of the King's head

In conclusion, J A C, Harrison engraved this particular die head for the Southern Rhodesian stamps a total of five times. Firstly, the original engraving, then once for the Coronation issue, twice for the definitive issue and the last one for the revenue stamps.

APPENDIX 2: THE KGVII 1937 DEFINITIVE SG 48a



SG48



SG48a

An item with an interesting history.

SG48a first appeared in the 1968 SG Part 1 British Commonwealth Catalogue as “double print of frame”. This description caused a fair amount of debate, with requests for information being sent out in 1988 with the RSC Journal and The Stamp Magazine.

The SG description for this variety changed in the 2002/03 SG Part 1 catalogue to “frame double, one albino”, with a note below “the frame appears blurred and over inked”.

The 1980 Commonwealth Five Reigns Catalogue produced by Bridger & Kay listed this item a “double print of frame”, and its successor, the 2010 Murray Payne Catalogue amended it to read “double print of frame, once albino”.

Request for information in 1988

In 1988 June RSC Journal no. 142, page 76 the following request for information was published, the request also appeared in *The Stamp Magazine* December 1988 page 48. (Italics used for emphasis of the description of this variety.

“One of the intriguing varieties of the S.R. 1937 KG VI definitive issue is the 1s SG48a. It is described as “double print of frame”, but one copy seen is better described as “blurred frame”. *The letters of the name tablet at the top, and the figures in the value tablets, are fuzzy - almost as if the ink has got wet and this has caused it to spread slightly, giving the letters and figures a matt appearance with fuzzy edges - the letters particularly have lost their sharp edges.*

The wording in the bottom tablet, although in a blue green surround, has also suffered from a spreading of this blue green surround into the white wording, which has been reduced in size and clarity by this action. If “double print of frame” is intended to describe a clear duplication of the frame lines - as, for example, is found with the clear duplication of lines in the S.R. 1947 Victory 1d (not catalogued, but illustrated at p.81 West-End Philatelist July-Aug. 1947) there may be two different varieties: double lines and smudged lines. Or is the smudged version the one which is catalogued as “double print of frame”?

There is no evidence for the variety in the S.R. Waterlow Archives. What is SG48a? Can any member provide details, and have there been any copies sold at auction? Please report what you know about this stamp.

Sources of information

The two principal sources for this study are:

RSC Memoir 21 by George Stewart & Colin Hoffman (2012), which includes an appendix by Colin Hoffman and Keith Harrop entitled “The 1s Double Frame Flaw (SG48a)”. It should be noted that the illustrations included in the appendix were not of the greatest quality, a fact acknowledge by the authors.

Otto Peetoom’s The Rhodesian Philatelist No 40 dated February 2017, entitled “The Story of Southern Rhodesia KGVI 1/- Double Print”. (RP 40)

In the study 22 examples, comprising 45 stamps, were studied. Images were sourced from Memoir 21; The Rhodesian Philatelist no 40; Spink auction achieve; RSC website PowerPoint presentation of Pat Flanagan; collection of Keith Harrop; Stanley Gibbons website in 2021; Filat AG website; and website of Deverill & MacGregor.

Identification of three sheets including this variety.

Both Memoir 21 and RP 40, describe that there have been three sheets containing this variety, but the original study source for the identification has not been identified. Memoir 21 contains the identifying descriptions of the these three sheet. Below are the descriptions of the three sheets from Memoir 21, together with the illustrations used. Also included below is a closeup of the bottom of the stamp, without any further analysis.

First Sheet:

The head is registered noticeably low and slightly to the right and overlaps the words "Postage and Revenue". It almost touches the right frame line.

This is a top left marginal copy. It was a lot in S.G. South Africa Auction in April 1988 and it has been subsequently certified by P.F.S.A. as genuine: Certificate No. 9000 21 May 1988.



(Source – Rhodesian Philatelist No 40)

Second Sheet:

The head is also registered noticeably low, but it is to the left, and almost touches the left frame line. This is a top block of four showing sheet No. 495. This is probably a top right corner block.



(Source Spink auction May 2021)

Third Sheet:

The head is registered slightly lower than normal but not so low that the bottom of the portrait touches the words "Postage & Revenue".



(Source Spink auction May 2021)

It is clear from the descriptions of the three sheets, that the example shown for the first sheet did not match up to the example provided in Memoir 21. There was another element of this description, namely that it was "slightly right and "almost touches the right frame line" was a n issue. In none of the study material was this description applicable.

The examples shown in Memoir 21, showed those for the first and third sheets were almost identical, as can be seen below.



Example for first sheet



Example for third sheet

Detailed allocation of examples into the three sheets

The description of the second sheet, with the sheet number 495, was probably the most accurate, so this sheet was dealt with first.



Second sheet

There are two clear characteristics of this sheet being the proximity of the die head of the left frame line, and its low registration to the wording beneath. Note the left side of the King's epaulette is approximately above the upright of the letter 'P' below.

Examples



Rows 1 & 2 Columns 9 & 10
(Source Spinks auction May 2021)



Rows 1 & 3 columns 3 & 4 (R P 40)
(Source: RSC website PowerPoint presentation by Pat Flanagan)



Row 1 columns 1 & 2
(source Rhodesia.co.za)



(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



Third Sheet

The Clear characteristic of this sheet is that the die head does not touch the bottom panel with the words 'Postage & Revenue' Leaving a clear gap.

Examples



Rows 5 & 6 Columns 1 & 2
(Source Spink auction May 2021)



Rows 5 & 6
(Source: RSC website PowerPoint presentation by Pat Flanagan)



Row 1 Column 1
This was the example cited for the first sheet.
(Source: Rhodesian Philatelist No 40)



Row 6 Column 5
(Source Filat AG website)



First Sheet, sheet number 199

Having allocated research examples to the other sheets, this left remaining stamps allocated to the first printing,

The clear characteristic of this sheet is that the die head is lower into the 'Postage & Revenue' area. The left edge of the King's epaulette is above the 'O' of Postage.

Examples



Rows 3 to 6 Columns 1 to 4

This is the largest block of SG48a known. It was noticed by Otto Peetoom at the Islopex International in 1998, but he didn't get details. This block was sourced from the classic stamps for sale in Stanley Gibbons in January 2022 at a price of £60,000.



Rows 1 & 2 Columns 9 & 10
(Courtesy of Keith Harrop)



Rows 1 & 2 Columns 1 & 2
(Source Spink auction December 2016)

Other material was studied in the research but it is not considered necessary for them all to be illustrated above.

The Stanley Gibbons description of SG 48a

All source material is consistent is disagreeing with the descriptions included in the catalogue as being “Frame double, one albino”.

An albino printing is one where a sheet is printed without ink being applied to the rollers of the printing press, before the final printing. As Otto Peetoom points out in RP 40, there should be a clear impression of the albino print, which was not evident in the stamps. In addition, it is not clear how with a dry print run this would have caused the fuzziness in the stamps.

A double print should have seen a clear doubling of the print throughout the printing of the frame plate. This not evident in the lines of the two duties panels on the left and right sides of the stamps, nor in some of the shading immediately below the upper panel of ‘Southern Rhodesia’.

The requestion for information in 1988 is probably the closest description of the printing, in which it was suggested that “almost as if the ink had got wet and has caused it to spread out”. The ink would probably have got wet due to the probable dampness in the paper. This is the explanation that has been accepted by philatelists in this field.

This raises the question, if SG 48a was not described as being a double print or an albino print, would Stanley Gibbons have listed it in its catalogue or sought the price of £60,000 for the block of 16?

Consistency and extent of the dampness in the paper

Having a block of 16 stamps has also proved use in gauging the extent of the paper. This block of 16 is from the position of rows 3 to 6 and columns 1 to 4. A simple examination of rows 3 and 6, shows that the upper part of the sheet contains the moisture, as the stamps in the lower rows are more consistent with the normal stamp (save for the ink smudge n row 6 column 1). If the strip of four stamps from row 6 were to be detached, it is suggested that the description of SG 48a would not be applicable.



Row 3



Row 6

Further variations

Otto pointed out in The Rhodesian Philatelist No 40 that there are three examples where there appears to be light kiss of the printing plates with “RHOD” appearing below stamps in row 1. Three examples have been identified, two from the second sheet and the one from the first sheet.

In addition, there are vertical marks that appear in the side panels above the duty. All are in row 2 of the examples. If this was taken together with the “RHOD” above, it could be these are light kisses from the duty below. These vertical marks appear stronger closer to the “RHOD” above. These variations could not be considered as a double print, so far these only appear in these examples.



Two of the examples come the send sheet and, the one above, from the fist sheet. All the blocks are shown above.