
THE SPRINGBOK



Volume 4, No. 5. September/October 1956

" T H E S P R I N G B O K "

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All communications to be addressed to the Editor who invites correspondence
but does not accept responsibility for any views so published.

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Dear Member,

In our last issue we appealed for more contributions in the form of articles and we acknowledge the receipt of one and one only, from 200 members!

This is hardly enthusiastic support so we must state quite clearly and frankly that unless more ink is caused to flow, we in our turn will not be able to put this magazine to bed as it is expressed in the printing trade which in turn means you will not be able to read this magazine and we think that would be a great disappointment to many readers. So again we ask, please send in those articles, queries, letters and the like so that we may complete the volume with our sixth issue.

At the Meeting this year it was a great pleasure to meet many new faces and it is gratifying to realise that more and more members are making the effort to get to the "high spot" of the year. As many assured us they will be back next year we hope this will encourage yet more to make the first trip because we know they will become then regular visitors. It was to the advantage of all of us that our great friend Mr W. N. Sheffield, from Jo'burg, was able to be present and many member availed themselves of the opportunity to have a few words with one of the Union's stalwarts who we most sincerely hope, will come to see us again in the not too distant future.

We know that every member will be sorry to learn of the recent illness of Dr J. Harvey Pirie, editor of the "South African Philatelist" and will join with us in sending him every good wish for a most speedy and complete recovery.

In answer to queries raised at the Annual General Meeting, copies of the Picture Page are available at 1/-d per copy postage paid. Our main difficulty is the lack of suitable packing. We can make a bargain offer of about 13 or 14 different Picture Pages on hand for 10/-d, or the three different Picture Pages of Varieties issued at the end of each past year, for 2/6d.

Finally we cannot complete our letter without recording that soon Mr and Mrs Sheffield will be sailing back to the Union and on behalf of the Society and its members we wish them both bon voyage and hope that they have enjoyed their visit to the Old Country and will encourage other Union specialists to come to visit us.

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THE TWO (?) DIES OF THE 1d SHIP TYPE.

by

B. Powell.

It may not be generally realised by some of our newer Members, or, even perhaps some of the older, of the distinct differences in appearance in the vignette portion of the first Typo' printed 1d Ship type printed in London and Pretoria, and on sale from 1st January, 1926 onwards. (This date is important).

A glance at the photographs of the two types shown indicate quite clearly, and better than any word description, the characteristics of each. Briefly, in words, it is that in Type A the lines of shading are shorter, broken and lighter towards the edges, giving the vignette an almost convex look (or 3 D?). In Type B the lines are much thicker, unbroken, and generally extend the full distance of the vignette and touch the red frame, having a 'flat' appearance.

One of the snags in this research is the fact that there are many specimens which may be difficult to assign to either A or B - they are the 'Intermediates'; for sake of brevity I will refer to them as Die C. At this point, I can say that as far as can be ascertained, there are NOT separate Dies A & B (& C) as such, but again, for brevity, the terms DIE A,B & C) will be used, and in any case, the research started as a hypothesis that there were two Dies.

Again, I should like to make it clear that I am not the researcher, but am only collating writing which has appeared already, hoping that it may be of some general interest and possibly stimulate some-one to dig a little deeper. There may have been other articles written on the same subject of which I am not aware, if so, I should like to hear of them.

As far as I know the question was first raised by Mr Hilton Sydow of Capetown in the South African Philatelist of November, 1935, in which he suggested that owing to the quite different appearance of several specimens of the Typo printings it was possible that a second Die had been used. Nothing more was heard until a short note appeared in Gibbons Stamp Monthly of November, 1943, in which Mr L.D. Moore said "Two Dies of the ship vignette in the first issue of South Africa have not yet acquired separate catalogue status by Gibbons as separate entities". Mr Sydow returned to the stage in South African Philatelist of May 1944, in which he enlarges on his previous article. He advanced the theory, that, as no major differences are noted in the actual ship portion of the vignette, that an entirely new Die was NOT engraved, that Die B was a subsidiary Die taken from Die A. From a study of several used copies, he found that Die A stamps were postmarked January

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to July, 1926, and Die B postmarked from August to December, 1926. He was able to confirm his theory that an entirely new Die was NOT engraved, by correspondence with Mr Clifford of Messrs Waterlow. Mr Clifford did mention that the printers experienced difficulty with the black ink and occasions arose when a single stamp was found to be faulty after electrotyping and was cut out of the block and replaced. It would appear then, that an unknown number of units was cut out of the plate(s) (?) and were replaced by a similar number of cliches. Mr Sydow says "I have examined blocks and a complete sheet of Die A, but have not located any which may be classified as vignettes printed from substituted cliches". I make this point here, as it may dispel any thoughts that Die B could be se-tenant with Die A, and should like to refer anyone interested in 'substituted cliches' 'cracked stereotypes' and the 'twisted head-plates' variety, HB/C 34, Vb,c,d, to an article on that subject by Mr Sydow in a publication issue (I think) at the time of the Van Riebeck Tercentenary Celebrations.

The next article I found on the subject is in the South African Philatelist of March, 1945, written by Mr S. C. W. Wareham. He gives details of the characteristics of Die A and Die B, and also gives an Intermediate stage (my Die C), which perhaps only adds to our difficulties, and shows that there are some stamps which could be Die A or Die B, or neither !! He also gives a check list based on a study of several copies and some corner blocks definitely of Plates 1, 2 or 3. A brief comparison of Mr Sydow's allocations with that of Mr Wareham's is as follows:-

Sydow.

Wareham.

Die A.

London. Plate 1 a.

London Plate 1.

" ditto (inverted wmk)

" Booklet Plate.

" Booklet Plate.

" Plate proofs in black without frames.

Proof, red centre, black frame.

" Plate proofs in red centre, black frame.

" green centre, red "

Pretoria Plate 3.

Pretoria Plate 2.

ditto, inverted wmk.

Pretoria Plate 3.

ditto, inverted wmk.

" booklet Plate.

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Die B.

London Ptg, Plate 1 b.

London (?) Proof, green
centre, orange frame.

Pretoria Ptg, Plate 1.
ditto, Plate 2.

Die C (Intermediate)

Pretoria Plate 1.

Pretoria Plate 3.

This again tends to more complication - as they differ in their allocations as regards the Pretoria Plates. A point I would like to make here is that they are agreed on (a) Die A occurs only on the original London Plate and (b) Mr Wareham shows Die B as (possibly) more common on the first Pretoria printings from the London Plates, though Die B does merge into Die C.

My interest in this matter was first aroused after the war when I chanced upon the South African Philatelist article (of May 1944) reproduced in Gibbons Stamp Monthly of November, 1944. As the Handbook issued in 1946 made no reference to it, and I not then knowing anything of the foregoing, I wrote to Mr Sydow and asked him if he had arrived at any further conclusions. He then informed me that he had a complete sheet which he called Die A, but not a sheet of Die B. He suggested that further information may be obtained from The Royal Mint, London, where the Plates were made.

I wrote to The Royal Mint, and received a most helpful and comprehensive reply. I give it in full, as abbreviation can be dangerous, and in any case some of the information contained therein may be of interest in other direction. The letter reads - "With reference to your enquiry about the Van Riebeck's ship vignette insert die for these stamps, I give below information from our records, which I hope will be useful to you.

1. In July, 1925, this Department was asked to make surface printing Electrottype stamp printing Plates of the above-mentioned type, from steel dies to be supplied by Messrs Waterlow & Sons, Ltd.

Steel working dies were received on the following dates:-

" T H E S P R I N G B O K "

Ship Vignette Insert Die on 12.9.25.
Frame die with Dutch inscription on 14.9.25.
" " " English " on 16.9.25.

The first Frame Printing Plate, with Dutch and English inscriptions, together with Vignette Ship Printing Plate were delivered to Messrs Waterlow on the 23rd October, 1925, and the steel dies were returned to Messrs Waterlow on the 15th December, 1925.

2. In November, 1926, a duplicate set of printing plates (1d denomination) was ordered by the Government of the Union of South Africa, for the Government Printer, Pretoria, South Africa. The Frame and Vignette steel dies were received from the High Commissioner on the 25th November, 1926, and were returned to him on the 19th January, 1927. The duplicate printing plates were ready for despatch to South Africa on the 28th January, 1927.

3. In February, 1927, we received an order for 1d (Book) stamp plates and the steel dies were again lent by the High Commissioner. They were received on the 8th February, and returned on the 26th April, 1927.

4. In March, 1928, a further order was received for 1d Stamp printing plates and the dies were lent by the High Commissioner again; they were received on the 1st March, and returned on the 11th June, 1928.

In the Mint Records we have black and white proofs of the Van Riebeck's ship insert die taken:-

- (a) on its receipt from Messrs Waterlow on the 12.9.25.
- (b) on its receipt from the High Commr on 25.11.26.
 - ditto 8.2.27.
 - ditto 1.3.28.
- (c) on its return to the High Commr on 19.1.27.
 - ditto 26.4.27.
 - ditto 11.6.28.

Each of these seven proofs resembles illustration A (our Die A) given in Gibbons Stamp Monthly of November, 1944, page 23; none is like illustration B (our Die B). Further it is certain that no die having the differences or variations shown in illustration B, was ever used at The Royal Mint for making stamp printing plates. Unfortunately, this does not provide a complete solution of your problem, because I do not know whether stamp printing plates for this particular stamp were only made by the Royal Mint, although this is highly improbable. If you are able to confirm that only Royal Mint Plates were used for printing these stamps, some explanation must be sought for the existence of stamps as shown in illustration B (our Die B).

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I have consulted our engraver and he is of the opinion that illustration B represents a stamp printed from a worn printing plate. He thinks the white lines between the horizontal surface printing, tint lines, would probably have been formed by engraving the steel die deeply in these places, and that this operation would have been carried out by the engraver at an early stage of the work. The white lines, used to convey the idea of the rays of the sun, might have been formed at a later stage of the work by engraving the die less deeply. Below this depth, the original horizontal tint lines would remain intact. If this were so, when wear occurred on the printing plate, the horizontal surface printing lines would gradually print as continuous lines, and the rays of the sun would disappear. Wear of the plate would certainly account for the thickening of the horizontal lines, which is so marked a feature of illustration B.

This explanation must not be regarded as an official Mint view, but merely as a possible explanation.

I hope the information I have given may help you to solve your problem. In accordance with your letter, I am returning Gibbons Stamp Monthly (1944) and the copy of Mr Sydow's letter."

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) ----

Deputy Superintendent.

This information I passed to Mr Sydow.

In 1949 a fellow member of the S.A.C.S. raised the query again and I sent him all the available information I then had. He replied with a most exhaustive analysis of the subject matter. While conceding that there is only one Die, he maintained that there were two types, (A & B). Important features too are the dates mentioned by The Royal Mint. My correspondent suggests that if Messrs Waterlow only received the electrotypes on 23rd October, 1925, there was very little time left to print, perforate, examine, pack, etc., and ship these stamps to South Africa and distribute them for sale there on 1st January, 1926. He also draws attention to the 'appearance' of the two Dies A & B, having regard to stamps produced from a steel plate compared with an electrotype, the latter producing a rather coarser impression. He summarises by advancing the theory that:-

1. Die A stamps could have been produced from a steel plate (of which we have knowledge or record) which was produced before 23rd October, 1925, and thus could easily have been used to produce stamps for sale in South Africa on 1st January, 1926.

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2. Die B stamps were from the London electro plates made shortly after 23rd October, 1925, and on sale in South Africa from August, 1926 onwards.

3. Further Die B stamps from electrotypes printed in Pretoria.

That appears a fair assumption, but does it quite stand up if Mr Wareham is correct in allocating some stamps of Die A to the Pretoria Plates 2 & 3, and Mr Sydow Die A to Pretoria Plate 3.

Does the reference to difficulties with the ink mean anything? As far as I know, Mr Clifford and Messrs Waterlow were only concerned with the first printing in London, so that ink should not be a material factor in the Pretoria printings.

Is The Royal Mint theory of worn plate correct? I have no printing knowledge, nor any data on numbers of stamps, etc., issued, but would the plates have worn so quickly as to become evident in so short a time.

I would add that I have been unable to obtain any further information from Messrs Waterlow.

Has anyone Die B stamps postmarked previous to August, 1926?

I am grateful for data culled from the articles quoted, and should also like to express thanks to Mr A.J. Brown of London and Mr L.J. Picton of Germiston for valuable assistance.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The fifth Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the Cora Hotel, St Pancras, W.C.1. on Saturday, 29th September, 1956. In conjunction with this meeting the third Annual Exhibition was staged. (See report elsewhere in this issue).

This year the Society was honoured by the presence of Mr W.M. Sheffield from Johannesburg, who many readers will already know as one of the Joint Editors of the Union Handbook/Catalogue, and also of the Union Notes in the South African Philatelist.

On a proposition from the meeting, which was carried without opposition, the formalities of hearing the minutes of the 1955 Annual General Meeting were waived.

Mr C.E. Sherwood, the Society's Honorary Secretary, then gave a report on the year's activities. Speaking on Membership he reported that at that time the members totalled 200, that is three less than at the same time last year. Due to the increase in the subscription the Society was now holding its own financially, but there was still a need for more members.

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The London and Glasgow Groups were still flourishing but in an endeavour to cut down the business to a minimum, and due to the unavoidable absence of Mr E. Lauder from Glasgow detailed reports were not given. These have appeared regularly in the Springbok.

The election of Officers proved a very simple task, as on a proposition from the floor the existing Officers and Committee were elected en-bloc. These are as follows:

Chairman	R. D. Allen, Snr.,
Hon. Sec/Treas. &	
Hon. Editor of "Springbok"	Mr C.E. Sherwood.
Committee	Mr F.C. Abell. Mr E. Lauder.
	Mr W.A. Page.

A proposal on the Agenda designed to aid in the organisation of material for future exhibitions was carried by the meeting after short discussion.

Viz:- Proposal by D.V. Parker, Esq., and seconded by A.J. Brown, Esq.,

"As some difficulty has been experienced by the organisers of our stamp exhibitions in amassing information as to the material held by its members who are willing and able to contribute suitable items for these exhibitions and to surmount this obstacle, this proposal is being put forward. It is thought, that with some active co-operation from members this task, although voluntary could be made easier and in addition as the record would be in duplicate, it would also assist the member. Items should be ticked where appropriate."

PROPOSAL. That Members should receive from time to time - with the Springbok - a form in duplicate as per specimen, which when completed could be sent either to the Hon. Secretary or to the organiser of the exhibition.

SPECIMEN FORM:

Issue

Handbook No:	Arrows.	Blocks.	Varieties Etc.,
33	N. S. E. W.	Imp. Cyl. Other.	Cat No. etc.

Please send this form when complete to:
Editorial matter should not be on the back of the page.

Discussions of the plans for the 1957 exhibition, brought about the agreement to stage, as the main theme, a specialised display of the 2d. definitive value. It was agreed also that the venue should again be at the Cora Hotel. At the time of going to press it has not been possible to fix the date but this will be given either in the next issue of the Springbok or in the Monthly News Letter.

At the close of the business, there was a short break for tea which was served in the members' room. Then the usual auction took place, some 70 lots being offered for sale. A good percentage of these were sold.

To round off the days proceedings a number of members and friends joined together in the evening for an informal dinner party.

W.A.P.

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THE SOUTH AFRICAN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY.
1956 EXHIBITION.

Impressions of a South African Visitor

To those who were unable to attend this year's exhibition of the Union of South Africa stamps, held in London on Saturday, 29th September, let me at once say that they indeed missed a most excellent and outstanding display.

Staged by the members of the South African Collectors' Society in the well lighted and roomy Winter Gardens of the Cora Hotel, it was really a most delightful experience to see so much keenness and enthusiasm in the collecting and study of the Union's stamps and the friendly pleasant atmosphere that prevailed throughout the day seemed to make it a most joyful occasion for everyone.

The specialised section this year was devoted to the Union 1d definitive issue bearing the van Riebeck ship design, a stamp, which like its world renowned sister, the $\frac{1}{2}$ d Springbok, made its appearance on the 1st January, 1926 and continued as one of the pictorial series right up until the introduction of the animal series on the 14th October, 1954 - a period of nearly 29 years.

During this long time, interest in the stamp gradually developed among collectors until today, when with its many printings, shades and varieties, it has become firmly established in the hearts of many as one of the most fascinating and collectable of the Union issues.

That this is true was only too evident in the 24 frames set aside for the combined members' display of the many phases through which the 1d stamps passed. Firstly we saw it in its typographical form in the London and Pretoria printings and then through the Darmstadt Trial Printings of 1929 to the unhyphenated roto-gravure stamp first issued in rolls during April 1930 and finally in its many different printings of the hyphenated series.

Die Proofs, colour trials, control blocks, corner blocks, arrow blocks, and most of the listed varieties were all there in their sheet, roll or booklet form and as a Union collector who many years ago found his first love in the van Riebeck ship stamp and has continued to experience endless enjoyment from its study, I can assure members that I was most impressed with the many fine items on show and also the vast field they had covered in their research work on this attractive little black and carmine coloured stamp.

In the general section of the exhibition the organisers had arranged an overall and well balanced picture of Union stamps and here again the same high standard as that shown in the specialized display had been fully maintained. Each of the frames in this second group covered a particular phase in Union philately

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ranging from a selection of Interprovincials through the typographed and roto-gravure issues to the Air Mails, Commemoratives, Postage Dues, Officials, Used Abroad, Christmas Seals, Meter Franks and an excellent display from a collection of Shipping Postmasters, Island Postmarks and Paquebots.

All together a most instructive and successful show, the staging of which every member concerned can feel justifiably proud of and for which the organizers deserve the whole-hearted congratulations of everyone, who, like myself, had the great pleasure of being present.

W. N. S.

THIRD ANNUAL EXHIBITION.

The third all Union Exhibition, organised by the London Group of the South African Collectors Society, in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting, was held at the Cora Hotel, St Pancras, London, W.C.1 on Saturday, 29th September, 1956. This exhibition comprising of close on 500 sheets, was surely the largest single display of Union stamps yet seen at any one time in this country. A large number of members and visitors attended the Cora Hotel during the day and by the time the doors of the exhibition were closed the numbers had topped the 150 mark.

This year the Society was honoured by having as its guest Mr W.N. Sheffield from Johannesburg, one of the Union's leading Philatelists. Mr Sheffield will already be known to many readers, as Editor of Union notes in the "South African Philatelist", and one of the joint Editors of the Union Handbook/Catalogue.

Although the exhibition was opened to the public from 10 a.m. the 'official' opening ceremony was performed shortly after two o'clock by Mr W.N. Sheffield. He first expressed his great pleasure in being able to be in England and also being asked to the Exhibition. He then went on to tell something of his connections with the Union and his interest in Union Philately. After giving praise to the fine work of the Society in this Country and also of the excellent exhibition, which it was said would compare equally with anything seen in the Union, he went on to extend wishes for the continued progress of the Society. In closing he said that he hoped that a branch of the S.A.C.S. would soon grow up in South Africa, which at present had no similar Society for the study of its own stamps.

Among the other visitors present at the opening, it was pleasing to see Mr F. Thomashoff, the Administrative Secretary to South Africa House, representing the High Commissioner, Mr & Mrs F. Owen of the South African Tourist Organisation (SATOUR), Miss E.J. Evans, the Public Relations Officer of the British Philatelic Association and Editor of 'Philately' and Mrs Kenneth F. Chapman, Editor of 'Stamp Collecting'. Other visitors during the day included Mr L.N. Williams of the well-known Williams Bros., Due to another engagement the Editor of "Stamp Magazine"

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Mr L.W. Haydon was unable to be present on the day but was able to pay a brief visit during the Friday evening.

The added facility of having a members' room brought members into closer contact and one noticed several little private sales and discussions going on throughout the day. The bourse also proved quite popular although there was a shortage of material. Many out of town members were seen for the first time and they were able to meet other members who, hitherto had merely been names in the list of members of the Society.

The Centre-piece of the exhibition, the 1d definitive depicting Van Riebeck's ship, from the point of view of research these stamps are second only to the $\frac{1}{2}$ d Springbok so profusely illustrated last year. Many major and minor changes have taken place in the 29 years of their life and these were fully illustrated in the first 24 frames of the exhibition.

Commencing with Die Proofs of the London Typographed printings, the issued stamps were shown with minor printing flaws, in booklet form and also from coils. Then came the colour trials for the Pretoria Typographed printings with corner blocks from the three plates. Again many printing flaws were shown and also a complete booklet pane Perf. 14 (SG 31a).

The unhyphenated Rotogravure Issues started with a representative selection of the Darmstadt Trials of 1929 which it will be remembered have now been included in the Handbook Supplement following much discussion. The selection on view was taken from almost certainly the largest and most comprehensive collection of these in existence.

We next had the actual stamps from Die I Plates I - VII consisting of various blocks showing Control Letters, Arrows and many varieties, among which were the broken mast, and the "dragon" flaw showing several stages of its development. An outstanding item in this section was a block of 66 stamps from Plate Ib.

A plating study, profusely illustrated with enlarged drawings attracted a good deal of attention from members and visitors alike and the contributor is to be congratulated on the immense amount of work and original research put into this study, which it is understood is by no means complete yet.

Die II was shown with most of its plating characteristics and the hyphenated series, plates X - XXIV were virtually complete in every aspect. The plating exercise for Plate XXI from a member of the Scottish Group also drew considerable interest - in fact at one stage one noticed one member actually seated in front of the frames complete with magnifier!

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Booklets and Coils were well represented and among this section one noticed complete plated studies of the Advertisement/Jipex booklet panes and also the 3/- Slogan booklets.

The remainder of the Exhibition housed in seventeen somewhat larger frames, each taking up to 20 standard album sheets, was designed to present an overall yet balanced picture of the Stamps of the Union, by showing selections of the three main definitive issues, Commemoratives, Postage Dues, Officials and four frames of those other items so rarely seen. Two omissions were the War Effort series including the Bantams and the Silver Jubilees which were fully shown last year.

The first frame in this part of the Exhibition showed a small selection of Interprovincials with some unusual combination pieces, an entire set of Cape of Good Hope used in the Cape, and a Cape Town "Shipping Postmaster" strike on an Orange Free State Stamp.

Also in this frame were the De La Rue Georgians embracing the 2½d Commemorative - represented by two first day covers and a handsome block of 24 showing the left hand guide line. The definitives were shown complete mint to £1 and as plate No. blocks and an unofficial bisect of the 1d value on cover.

Next we saw the Typographed Pictorials (both London and Pretoria). Although only the ½d & 6d values were shown here, many varieties and Control Blocks were included. The selection of Harrison Essays which started this frame were of particular interest being so rarely seen.

The Recess printed stamps by Bradbury Wilkinson & Co., Ltd., were very well displayed, practically all plates being represented by inscriptional pairs. These should have helped to clear up the problem of the perforation hole.

The Unhyphenated Rotogravure pictorials were covered by a selection of all values, showing several arrow blocks etc., and it was notable for examples of the ½d and 2d roll strips, the latter value being extremely scarce. Amongst the 2d's were examples of "Joined Paper" and "Misplaced Perforations" varieties.

Hyphenated Rotogravure pictorials consisted of a small selection from the most interesting (?) and most certainly the largest group of definitive printings. Many of the more recent Cylinder Numbers, and examples of screened and unscreened printings were on view. A special item was a pair of 5/- Plate I, with inverted watermark.

A complete mint collection of the Animal series - the Third Definitives, including many corner and arrow blocks, together with items showing various sheet

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and cylinder numbers made up another frame. Also in this frame was a cover showing the special post-mark from the Kruger National Park.

There were two frames covering the history of flying in South Africa from 1911 to 1956, mainly by means of flown covers, such as Imperial Airways first flights and Government Experimental Flights. Several sheets dealing with the wreck of the flying boat "Challenger" merit special mention. Lack of space prevented the showing of the various examples of Air letters, etc.,

Commemoratives of recent years made up a really worth while display from the Glasgow Group of the Society, including several items which had not been seen before.

All the normal issues of the Postage Dues were shown together with a few shades. An interesting item was a 1920 cover with a 3D Kings Head type serving as a Postage Due. The 1914/5 series and the 1922 issues were extensively shown, including varieties and several complete panes of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d and 1d values.

The Officials, also an exhibit from the Scottish Group comprised of representative selections of all issues.

A comprehensive display of Shipping Postmasters, Island Postmarks, Paquebots by that acknowledged expert, the Chairman of the Society, included also a small selection of unusually interesting items such as covers from Marion Island and Tristan Da Cunha. A wreck cover is worthy of special mention.

A display of covers used in South West Africa during World War I showed various types of cancellations some of them being the captured German marks having been altered. World War II was represented by various items used in Egypt and elsewhere.

The Christmas Seals and Meter Franks are seldom seen in any quantity or on show but both can make a very interesting sideline to a collection. The seals, practically complete were an attractive show and well worth studying with the special booklet issues, etc.,

One frame suitably anotated 'Bits and Pieces' was appropriate enough but nevertheless contained many unusual and by no means common items. These included Railway letters, Mobile Post Office marks, a few queries, - the De La Rue $\frac{1}{2}$ d value showing doubling of the right hand frame. The current $1\frac{1}{2}$ d Pictorial Post Card was shown with the variety 'Missing Stamp' - so far the only known example in this country - one other example has been reported in the Union.

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Any South African Collectors Society exhibition would be incomplete without the inclusion of the really comprehensive and profusely illustrated display designed to elucidate the various changes over the long period of issue of the pictorial definitive stamps, which aroused so much comment at the National Stamp Exhibition of 1955. These sheets completed the last frame of the exhibition.

To add a little local flavour to the show a series of coloured photos and posters, some of them showing views similar to those on the stamps were on view. These were kindly loaned by the South African Tourist Office. Most appropriate, was the 'out-out' enlarged photograph some five feet high of the African Elephant in almost identical stance to that on the current 4d stamp.

W.A.P.

DOCTOR BLADE SCRATCHES

Members will agree that there are few issues which are free from these blemishes. They occur only once or twice or a few times on the same stamp - sometimes they are fairly constant. They are caused by a little piece of grit or something similar getting caught by the doctor blade while scraping the surplus ink from the cylinder. When the printer notices it he just lifts the blade and rubs his finger along the edge.

Surely these should be considered blemishes as opposed to flaws? That is to say if one has two stamps, with and without the scratch, only the latter can be worth while mounting, the other being regarded as a duplicate stamp for exchange purposes? On the other hand, by some strange coincidence, the blemish may well fit in with the design in which case it may be considered worthy of album status - here a case in point would be possibly Union Handbook 45E.Vu.

Anyone who has taken notice of the doctor blade scratches will know that the length can vary considerably sometimes being quite short and alternatively passing through a whole vertical row. They occur through the frame only and again through the vignette only and yet again through both, depending of course on which cylinder the frame or the vignette is first printed.

And yet another point is that they can occur in either the shade of the frame or the shade of the vignette whilst there can be, as in the 2d Bantams, white scratches which can be from no other cause.

What do you think? Should they be catalogued? Should they be reported? Or should they be ignored completely?

THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN 1d STAMP

"TREFOIL" WATERMARK

by

Capt. J. A. B. Van Wyk.

(An article reproduced from the November 1948 issue of the "South African Philatelist" to whom due acknowledgement is made).

In 1928 orders for a machine and cylinders to print stamps were placed in London by the South African Government. The machine "The Goebel Rotary Stamp Printing Machine", was actually made by Messrs Goebel Ltd., of Darmstadt, Germany.

The design of the then current 1d postage stamp was completed in Holland, where the positives were made and the cylinders etched and these were then despatched to Darmstadt so that they could be fitted to the machine.

These cylinders were proved on the two colour stamp machine, which had just been built. The proofs, showed that the etching had not been too even and the cylinders were taken to the Technical College, Frankfurt where they were fine etched and proved with satisfactory results.

The next step was the testing of various gummed papers in order to select a suitable paper for South African conditions. Four or five grades of paper, including some with the "Trefoil" watermark, were sent from London to Darmstadt, so that the proofs were duly made and forwarded to London.

It is known that most of the proofs were burnt, but some evidently escaped destruction whether by accident or design. Stamps with "Trefoil" watermark were sold in 1940, while others have recently appeared on the market (end 1947 and beginning 1948). Enquiries have shown that there are from 200 to 300 of the "Trefoil" specimens in existence. These are evidently some of the proofs which escaped destruction. Enquiries have also shown that none of these proofs were kept in Germany and no blame is to be attached to Messrs Goebel Ltd.

It is in London that the leakage occurred.

It is, of course, quite legitimate for proofs to be made to test the efficiency of the cylinders. It is unfortunate, however, that proofs should eventually find their way on the market.

It is true that proofs of stamps of different countries often come on the

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market and they seem to be legitimate objects of collection.

The fact that proofs are often eagerly sought after by collectors and that these "Trefoil" watermarked stamps are legitimate objects of collection as proofs does not alter the fact that the issue of such stamps was not authorised by the Union Postal Authorities. It is a great pity that the countries of the Postal Union do not agree to pass uniform laws, making it essential that all proofs be clearly stamped across with the word "Proof". If laws were also passed making the possession of such proofs without a permit a criminal offence, it would not be detrimental to the hobby of philately.

(S.A.P. Ed. - Capt van Wyk informs us that he knows the name of the individual and his firm, responsible for the marketing of these stamps but it is considered inadvisable to publish the names.)

Although the marketing of these stamps without making it known that they were proofs, may be - and is - considered philatelically as morally indefensible, no action could be taken on the grounds that it was legally a wrongful procedure.

Capt. van Wyk is a police officer and he ought to know!)

AN AIR CRASH -
OR WAS IT A WRECK -
OR NEITHER ?

A cover addressed from Durban dated 23.11.50 to somewhere in Kent. It is much stained with a fluid that looks as if it must have been weak tea but this staining does not reach to the centre of the envelope on the front.

There is a single 1d Union stamp and towards the lower part of the envelope appears the usual cachet, in a long box "DAMAGED BY SEA WATER". What happened? I have a horrible thought that somewhere someone dropped a mail bag into a harbour and fished it out at once!

DIE A



They are not common and quite difficult to get "definite" 'A's and postmarked.

DIE B



I wont chance attempting to define any "intermediates"

" T H E S P R I N G B O K "

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322. Irving Hirsch, 1647 Summerfield St., Brooklyn 27, N.Y., U.S.A.,
323. P.A. Bowditch, 39 Ambler Road, London, N.4.
324. M.A.P. Tuckey, 28 The Avenue, St Margarets, Twickenham, M'sex.

Member Rejoining:

124. H.E. Tester, 373 Whitten Dene, Isleworth, M'sex.

Changes of Addresses:

13. F.P.N. Dyer, Hydehurst, Dial Post, Horsham, Sussex.
238. C.J. Hardy, 119 Berrow Road, Burnham-on-Sea, Som.
286. Major C.C. Seaford M.C., Imperial College of Science and Technology,
South Kensington, London, S.W.7.
294. R.G. Hubbard, 68 Queen's Road, Devizes, Wilts.
299. J. Clarke, 71 West Mill Road, Hitchin, Herts., (Correction).

Resignations:

100. Wm. F. Charlton, 18 Furnivall Road, Balby, Doncaster.
186. Mrs M.S. Webber, High Street, Cuckfield, Sussex.

Membership Lapsed:

73. A. Hilton Sydow, A.S.A.A., G.A. (S.A.), Cape Town, S. Africa.
305. A.J. Batson, 239 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield, Vict., Australia.

BY HAND OF PILOT

This is a cover of strongly official format headed by "ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE" and having printed instructions about War Economy and re-using envelopes. It evidently originated in South Africa for we have three separate cachets (i) NAVAL STORE OFFICE/9 NOV 44/CAP...RD (this is not Capetown) (ii) ON NAVAL SERVICE/OFFICIAL FREE/AFRICA STATION (iii) SUPG. NAVAL STORE OFFICER/28 NOV 1944/DURBAN. It is directed to an Admiralty Official at Avadi, Madras, India. There is nothing to show whether it go there but much to tell us that the sender was anxious about its arrival. He gave written instructions BY AIR IN CHARGE OF PILOT and added two reddish cachets, BY HAND OF PILOT and BY AIR MAIL.

What is all this business about the hand of the pilot? He can hardly carry such letters on his person for the one here described is by no means unique. Surely the pilot at least might be spared the duties of a postman?