

# THE SPRINGBOK



Volume 1 No. 1. January/February, 1953



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

Closing date for publication will be the last day of the month preceding issue.  
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The Editor's Chair

A word by way of introduction as to the reason for this Magazine. Originally, the Society was started some five years ago with a membership of approximately 12, chiefly as a result of the efforts of my esteemed friend, Mr Edw. Lauder. Then, we circulated articles and news by means of one news folder but with the growth of membership developed the need for two and three news folders until the stage has been reached where, with a membership close on 100, a Magazine is a necessity if members are to be kept up-to-date and fully informed.

I would like to emphasise the fact that this Magazine is not in any way intended to replace that excellent publication the "South African Philatelist", for which we all have the greatest regard, nor even to offer competition, but rather to be complementary to it in order to increase the interest in the collecting of South African stamps outside that country and in particular in the United Kingdom. It should be regarded essentially as a Society Magazine expressing the views and observations of its members. I have tried at some length to ensure there is no misunderstanding with "S.A.P.", and I am happy to acknowledge the fact that every support has been offered from the Union.

The present scope of the Society covers the Boer War Period down to present day issues, but if later there is a general demand to widen activities, then due consideration will be given to the matter.

It is imperative that this venture be supported actively by members by contributions of articles and by letters to the Editor and might I suggest that members intending to take up their pen, advise me before doing so, as to the subject in mind, in case it is being considered already elsewhere? Where possible submission of articles, in duplicate would be of great help, written on quarto paper. Here, perhaps I might say that the Editor does not accept responsibility for any views published but will welcome correspondence for publication.

We are all indebted to Mr Lauder for presenting to the Society, the very handsome die as reproduced on the front cover and furthermore by the gift of the outer covers for this very first issue. Behind the scenes, Mr Lauder has been working tirelessly to ensure the success of "The Springbok", despite ill health and so I hope that having started well we shall be able to continue so. Let us not forget the contributors who, by their articles, have assisted in "putting to bed" this number.

An Exchange Packet will be circulated in two sections, but its frequency will depend on the support rendered in the form of sheets or books from members. Booklets may be purchased from the Editor at 3/- per dozen postage paid. I can promise sales will be good if the material is right and priced reasonably. With the Exchange Packet may be circulated from time to time, books with stamps requesting comments or identification, etc., and here I must note that Mr J. Hodgkinson of Derby has asked me to express his thanks for the help in classifying the stamps shown in such a book recently. He is busy preparing another which will incorporate such information for our general benefit.

The magazine is being issued for your benefit - do make use of it.



THE NARROW PERFORATION VARIETY IN THE UNION STAMPS

by W. N. Sheffield

The following notes may assist in explaining the reason for the "narrow Perf." variety which so often appears in the Union of South Africa stamps.

1) The perforating mechanism forming part of the rotary machine on which the stamps showing this variety are printed, is of the MULTIPLE COMB type, which in this case perforates a group of eleven rows at each beat.

2) The standard size of a sheet of Union stamps is such that two beats of the perforator will complete the perforating of any one sheets which consists of:-

$$1 \text{ Top Margin} + 20 \text{ rows} + 1 \text{ bottom Margin} = 22 \text{ rows}$$

3) The needles in the eleven-row perforating device are mechanically set in a fixed position, therefore in order to ensure that they will always strike in the gutters between the stamps it follows that, without some method of adjustment, the size of the printed sheets should always conform exactly to the fixed spacing of the needles.

4) The full scale photographic production of the design for a sheet of stamps is transferred from the glass diapositive to the highly polished surface of a copper cylinder by means of a sheet of sensitized carbon tissue on which the design has been printed by direct contact with the diapositive. The transfer of this tissue is the most important stage and since the process includes immersion in a mixture of alcohol and water it is necessary to keep any stretching action down to a minimum in order to ensure that the etched design will coincide with the perforator. But because of varying temperature and other technical conditions, it is obviously impossible to avoid some slight changes taking place and in consequence the overall measurements of sheets of stamps of the same denomination, printed from different cylinders, will generally show some slight variation.

That small differences do occur in the linear measurement of the printed portion of sheets of the same denomination, can easily be proved to one's own satisfaction by comparing vertical strips of 20 rows, taken from different sheets known to have been produced from the same diapositive but printed from different cylinders.

5) When the error is such that the measurement from the top to the bottom of the 20 rows on a sheet is say one millimetre shorter than the standard length which two normal beats of the perforator would cover, it follows that the horizontal gutters between the stamps must also be proportionately narrower, though admittedly by very minute amounts. Even so, however, with this point in mind it immediately becomes evident that without some adjustment to its actions, the continuous beats of the perforator could not long remain in synchronism with



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the gutters between the stamps and in consequence each succeeding stroke would cause the group of perforators to travel slowly across the actual design as the roll of the printed stamps passed through the machine. (Note by Ed. Is not the 2d Bantam variety an excellent example of this action?)

6) Therefore to counteract this factor of creepage on non-standard sized sheets it becomes necessary to bring the perforator back into alignment with the gutters at each beat and the action of the mechanism is adjusted so that the second stroke on any one sheet follows the first slightly quicker than would be the case if the gutters were the standard width. In effect, the two groups of eleven rows are brought closer together on the sheets and since this naturally shows up at the row where the one group of perforations joins the other, we get what is known as the "Narrow Perf." or "Narrow Row" variety.

From the foregoing then it is very obvious that the variety is anything but unique in the printing of Union stamps, for it can appear on sheet after sheet throughout the years and is purely an item which has its being in the ROTOGRAVURE production of stamps printed on a machine fitted with a MULTIPLE COMB perforator. However, if only because of this, it will probably always remain an item of interest to Union collectors and the following additional points are worth keeping in mind.

- (a) The "narrow perf." can only occur at every eleventh row and one can often two "narrow rows" on one sheet.
- (b) There are two rotary printing machines in the Pretoria Government Printing Works. The "narrow perf." only appears on those stamps printed on the smaller and faster machine fitted with the eleven row multiple comb perforator. The larger and slower machine is fitted with a SINGLE COMB PERFORATOR.
- (c) When the etched design on the cylinder coincides with the spacing of the needles of the perforator, the "narrow row" should not be evident on the sheets printed on the multiple comb machine. In such cases, however, it is sometimes possible to detect the junction of the two groups of perforations by the slight misalignment at the point of intersection.

For further information on the subject reference should be made to the articles published from time to time in the South African Philatelist, which includes Mr Lichtenstein's notes on the "Union and S.W.A. Large War Issues" - June, 1944 and Mr A. Hilton Sydow's papers "Multiple Comb Perforations of the Rotogravure Issues of the Union of South Africa" - March, 1948, and also the writer's article "The Multiple Comb Perforator" - September, 1948.

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A member has a copy mint and used of the 1910 2½d commemorative in what he himself calls a "Royal Blue" or nearly so. The B.P.A. have expertised it as a blue shade of SG.2. The member would like to know of similar copies.



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CURRENT TOPICS

When receiving recently a supply of the 1952 Christmas Seals, I wrote to the Secretary of the Union of South Africa Christmas Stamp Fund enquiring as to why the value did not appear. A letter received some few days ago tells me, "It was agreed that the denomination of '1d' be omitted from this year's issue as it had been pointed out to us on several occasions that overseas Christmas Seals do not bear any denomination, also, it was thought that the '1d' sign did not add to the appearance of the stamps. I am not sure, at this stage, whether we shall revert to the old method of showing the denomination." C.E.S.

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Copies of this first issue are being distributed widely throughout the world and it is hoped that an international membership may thus develop. Correspondents in some countries, judging by their letters, seem to be unable to make contact with other collectors of Unions and so perhaps our Magazine will help in this direction.

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More members are needed urgently and as personal recommendations are the best references, it is hoped present members will try to introduce at least one more.

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The Editors of the Union Catalogue/Handbook will welcome any suggestions for amendments, corrections, etc.

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News of members' activities such as forthcoming displays will be appreciated and may prove of assistance to other members who may find themselves able to attend.

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Among future articles promised are one on Philatelic Literature, another on Postmarks, one on Boer War Philately, and I hope an article on the Coronation stamps. What are you going to contribute?

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A volunteer is wanted to submit a regular contribution for each issue reviewing any articles which have appeared in other publications, during the preceding two months, on South African Stamps. Only a brief note would be required and then members so desiring could obtain the particular journal for themselves. It would be desirable if this could cover not only U.K. publications but Dominion and U.S.A. too. Alternatively, if one member could not cover all, perhaps an overseas member in various countries would advise me of any such information they may note, or if we have a U.K. volunteer, his name could be published and the overseas members could then contact him direct. Any offers?

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If you have not done so already, do take out that subscription to the "South African Philatelist" today - just 10/- per annum, posted free anywhere in the world. Apply to the Editor for an enrolment form.

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News of new issues, shades, varieties, current printings always welcomed, with specimens if possible.



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THE HA'PENNY SPRINGBOK

A discussion of this stamp from the point of view of the ordinary collector,  
of South African Stamps, by P. D. Haigh.

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These notes are the thoughts which have occurred to the writer during the course of writing up the "Ha'penny Springbok" section of his collection and it is hoped that they will show what it seems possible to achieve, at least to one collector, with the ordinary stamps (i.e., straight singles and pairs) which are what come the way of most of us.

What is not here attempted is a listing of the various printings which have appeared throughout the long life of this stamp. These are dealt with very adequately in the recently published Handbook/Catalogue to which reference will be made from time to time and in numerous previous articles in the philatelic press.

The numbering of the Plates is that adopted in the Handbook/Catalogue for sheet issues and for consistency the same system has been adopted for the Booklet and Coil Plates, although this is not used in the catalogue.

It is assumed throughout that the reader is already fully conversant with the features which separate each main group discussed. If this is not the case, such information can be obtained readily by reference to the Handbook/Catalogue.

Typographed Issues.

Sheets

There are three sub groups of the typographed printings, namely, the London and Pretoria printings of 1926 to 1930 and the much later Pretoria economy printing of 1948, each being readily distinguishable by colour and general appearance.

The London printed stamps are recognisable by the bright colours, the truly black centres, a slight shininess (sometimes more so than at others), and by the general good definition of the whole design. These are the characteristics usually given in catalogues, etc., and in the case of the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d, more so than of the 1d and 6d values, they really do serve positively to identify this group. Side marginal pieces and used specimens with 1926 dated postmarks will confirm identification, but with the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d value are not really necessary.

By contrast, the Pretoria printings of 1927-30 are duller in general appearance, the centres are in shades of grey-black instead of black, the surfaces are completely matt instead of shiny, and the general definition is poor, there being frequently numerous white breaks in the printed lines of the design. There are several minor shades in this issue.



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There appears to be nothing to distinguish the various Plates used for these Pretoria sheet printings, apart from control blocks which the average collector has little hope of acquiring. Those overprinted "Official" with the overprint reading upwards are from Plate I, whereas those with the overprint reading downwards are from Plate II. However, there is insufficient difference between the shades of the basic stamps with these two overprints to assist in allocating unoverprinted specimens to their respective Plates by comparison. If anything, Plate I stamps seem to be slightly the deeper in colour.

The 1948 printing is the most readily identifiable of all by reason of the pale grey centres (no tinge of black in these) and the pale green frames, giving a very "flat" appearance to the whole stamp. There are two identifiable shades in this issue, a very pale printing and a somewhat deeper one.

Stamps with inverted watermarks from sheets are listed for all printings except that of 1948, but seem to be rather elusive. To date the writer has not found a single example in spite of a constant search through all copies passing through his hands. Is this just bad luck or have other members found the same?

### Booklets

Twice in recent months, copies of this stamp have been found with inverted watermark, but in each case further examination showed them to be from the Pretoria booklets with the perforations gauging  $13\frac{3}{4} \times 14$ ! Nothing to grumble at there, of course, but this brings up another point. Are these Pretoria booklet stamps really as scarce in used condition as the present catalogue prices suggest? Of four examples (the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d and 1d with both upright and inverted watermark) in the writer's collection, all good copies in horizontal pairs with no clipped perforations, three were picked up in various exchange packets at prices ranging from 1d to 6d each. The thought occurs that there must be many other copies lying around in unsorted lots and on the catalogue price up to the last two or three years, it has probably not been worth anyone's while to sort them all out from the normal perforations.

By the way, why should the London printed booklet stamps always be listed as having a slightly different gauge of perforation from the sheet printings? Copies in the writer's collection are in exactly the same gauge as the sheets, as in fact they must be. The stamps are the same overall size and have the same number of perforation holes as the sheet printings. As all these stamps are comb perforated, they must all have a perforation hole at each of the four corners and therefore any variation of the gauge must be accompanied by a change in the actual number of holes between the fixed corner holes. As already mentioned, the perforated area of these stamps, in fact of all the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d stamps from 1926 to the present day (with the exception of "small" stamps caused by automatic adjustments of the 11-row multiple comb perforator frequently employed on the rotogravure printings) is the same. Only two different gauges of perforation have been employed on all these stamps, one with fourteen complete holes at top and bottom (not counting the two corner holes) and sixteen at each side, and the other has thirteen at top and bottom and sixteen at each side. The gauges of these are (to the nearest quarter) respectively  $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$  and  $13\frac{3}{4} \times 14$ . The latter gauge has been used only



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for the Pretoria booklets and for the gutter-margin sheets and coils of the first-type hyphenated stamps. Therefore, in the writer's submission, it is misleading, to say the least, to list the London booklets in a different perforation gauge from that used normally for other printings.

Coils

The writer has not come across any copies of the typographed stamps which are identifiable as coils and would like to ask is it possible to identify these, apart from the possession of special pieces such as coil joins, ends of rolls, etc? Were the coils separated into strip by hand or were they guillotined? One suspects the former, from the lack of guillotined copies in circulation (and after all the first rotogravure coils appear to have been hand separated judging by the appearance of the side perforations on strips showing the "South-South-Suid-Suid" variety), in which case presumably coil joins, etc., are necessary for identification.

Rotogravure - Unhyphenated

Sheets

The catalogue lists three different Plates for the sheet printings, with three different states of the second Plate, making five different stamps all together plus one or two extra shades thrown in.

Without the possession of marginal arrow pieces or special flaws to assist identification, however, it seems possible to separate these into three groups only with any degree of certainty, namely:-

- (a) Plates I and II (1st state). These all have black centres with watermark either upright or inverted. Stamps of this classification overprinted "Official" in heavy type with spacings of 9mm to 12½mm between "Official" and "Offisiseel" can be classed as Plate I, while those in a thinner type spaced 12½mm to 13½mm are Plate II but a comparison of the basic stamps does not assist identification of unoverprinted specimens.
- (b) Plate II (2nd state). This is the so-called "splintery horns" issue, this feature consisting of a number of breaks in the outer line defining the horns. The watermark is inverted but this printing is most readily identified by the colour of the vignette, which is a deep grey-black, very distinct, which, once seen, is never confused with any other shade.
- (c) Plates II (3rd state) and III. These stamps have grey to grey-black centres and upright watermark.

Has anyone any method of further separating the different Plates comprised in each of groups (a) and (c) above? Also does anyone recognise this flaw with a view to possible Plate identification (constancy not known):- Thick irregular green line extending from left of "S" in "South" upwards and to left right up to



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the top left corner? The stamp has black centre and inverted watermark, which put it into category (a) above.

Booklets

Stamps from Booklet Plate I, the only booklet plate in the unhyphenated rotogravure design, have black centres and either upright or inverted watermark (due to the tete-beche arrangement of the sheets). They were guillotined into panes of six and can be recognised easily by the straight edges on the perforation teeth on one or two sides. If in any doubt, look at the perforations through a good magnifier, when the difference between the rough edges of hand separated perforation teeth and the clean-cut guillotined edges is very obvious.

A surplus quantity of the 1/2d booklet sheets, divided into blocks of 60 (3 x 20), was issued to post offices for sale over the counter.

Coils

Coil Plate I contained the well-known error of two English inscribed and two Afrikaans inscribed stamps se-tenant vertically in every strip of twenty-two stamps. These stamps were printed in continuous rolls twelve stamps wide and appear to have been separated into single strips by hand, resulting in rough-edged perforation teeth. These stamps are therefore not readily identified unless in a strip containing two like-inscribed stamps se-tenant.

to be continued.

Information is sought about the postmark shown on page 20 which is  $2\frac{3}{4}$  times normal size, i.e., the cancellation is 1" diameter. In addition to the date illustrated, it is known used on a single 4d recess "18 JUL A 32" and on cover addressed to the U.K. with 1/2d and 1d hyphenates singles, "12 FEB. B 40."

Do you subscribe to the "South African Philatelist"? If not, you will find it well worth while - only 10/- per annum, postage paid the world. Application forms obtainable from the Editor.

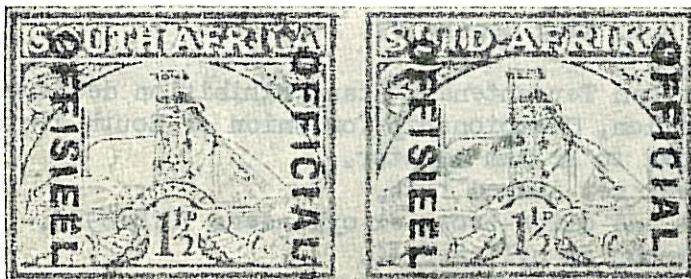
A member asks for confirmation of the dates of issue of the "Sunset" and "Sunrise" issues. According to the Handbook, page 120, the "Sunset" printing first appeared February, 1948 and the "Sunrise" in March, 1948. He possesses a pair of each postmarked "Boksburg 1.1.48" and "B----ulie 30.1.48" respectively. Can any member throw light on this matter?



IT IS NEVER TOO LATE

We are indebted to Messrs Stanley Gibbons, Ltd., for permission to reproduce the following extract from "Through the Magnifying Glass" conducted by C. P. Rang, from the December "Gibbons' Stamp Monthly" and for their great kindness in loaning the necessary die so that the article may be complete.

South Africa 1½d Official, Undiscovered Overprint



"Although this is not a variety but truly a major type, I am including it here because it will have to be searched for among duplicates in the same way as a variety; and perhaps also because I am a little partial to South African stamps which have provided so much material for this column in the past.

It is difficult to think that any South African variety could long escape, discovery, considering how rewarding scrutiny of these stamps has been. But this one has been floating around since at least 1947 and only now comes to light through the observation of a collector in this country, Mr R. H. Read.

The stamp in question is the 1½d value illustrated above. It is overprinted similarly to No.0.26b except that there is a diaeresis over the second "E" of "OFFISIEEL". The only previous occasion where this form of spelling was used was on the ½d issued on 1944 (SG.0.32) but the arrangement of the word differed, "OFFICIAL" being on the left and upwards.

Among the very few pairs found in our publisher's stock only one has a reasonably readable postmark, dated " ... JAN 47".

The most likely place in which to find this stamp is among duplicates of SG.0.26b and I look to collectors in South Africa to unearth the rest of the story, and, of course, to be kind enough to let me have the information for publication."

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**STOP PRESS:** Reference the article on the discovery of the use of a diaeresis on SG.0.26b and 0.27a the "G.S.M." for January reports a Mr D. Addey producing a block of four of the latter showing two stamps with the diaeresis and two without, showing that there is a mixed setting. A marginal arrow proves the basic stamps to be from Plate VI according to the classification of the S.A. Handbook and the pair with diaeresis to be in positions 59 and 60 in the sheet.



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UNION PHILATELIC DIARY FOR 1952

- January: Mr Emil Tamsen, doyen of S.A. Collectors, celebrated his 90th birthday.  
Redrawn 1d value ex cylinders 6925/36 overprinted "Official" in bold type. (Release third week approximately).  
1/- value ex cylinders 6926/6935 on sale in pale brown and milky blue shade.
- February: Death of H.M. King George VI.
- March: South African Tercentenary Stamp Exhibition declared open on the 14th. At Exhibition, Championship for Union of South Africa (Specialised) was awarded to Mr Sam Legator.  
Van Riebeck set issued 14th.  
1/2d claret and olive-brown ex cylinders 7018/6923.  
1d dark green ex cylinder 30.  
2d dark violet ex cylinder 36.  
4 1/2d dark blue ex cylinder 44.  
1/- sepia-brown ex cylinder 27.  
1d overprinted "SATISE".  
2d overprinted "SADIPU".  
Union Catalogue released 14th.  
Federation Congress in Cape Town.
- April: 3d ex cylinder 17 issued with five figure black serial numbers.
- May: First Jetliner Service to Johannesburg on 3rd.  
2/6 bright green and brown issued from cylinders 3/51 (20th).
- June: 1/- value ex cylinders 6926/ 6935 available in black-brown and deep ultramarine shade, with five figure black serial numbers (approx. mid-month).
- August: 4d brown redrawn with hyphen ex cylinder 103 on sale (22nd)
- July: South African Philatelist raised to 10/-!  
First supplement to Union Catalogue issued.
- November: 2d deep slate-blue and plum issued from new cylinders 30/18.  
Christmas Seals without value released 3rd.
- December: 2d deep slate-blue and plum on sale from new cylinders 27/18 (5th)  
2d deep slate-blue and plum on sale from new cylinders 27/46 (5th)



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THE PRODUCTION OF THE "KING'S HEAD" COIL STAMPS OF  
SOUTH AFRICA

by J. A. J. Peters.

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Most of the information given in these notes was obtained from Mr H. E. Lodbell's "The De La Rue Georgians of South Africa", published by the Collectors Club, Inc., of New York, and from correspondence with Mr Lodbell and Mr S. G. Rich, to both of whom I am much indebted for their kind help.

As is well known, all values of the 1913-1922 issues of South Africa were printed in sheets of 240 (four panes each of ten horizontal rows of six stamps), with broken "jubilee" lines round each pane, and plate numbers above stamps 2 and 5 in the top left and right panes respectively and below stamps 56 and 59 in the bottom left and right panes respectively. Printing took place after the paper had been gummed, but before perforating.

When coil stamps were required, for use in slot machines, ( $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 1d and 2d values), or in the case of the  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d value, for sale over Post Office counters, the following modification of the normal production methods took place.

Straight line perforators, producing perforations between horizontal rows of stamps were employed and the other marginal rows of stamps in each pane were also perforated with an extra hole normally near the left or right bottom of a stamp, 4 mm. centre to centre above and on an axis with a hole of the regular perforations thus forming the "isolated perf." variety sometimes seen on these coil stamps.

These sheets were then trimmed on a circular trimming table. The usual long knife descended as in all ordinary paper-cutting machines, but instead of the usual fixed table with adjustable stops against which a pile of sheets was butted, a revolving iron bed was provided. Each sheet of the pile was held in position by four protruding pins which passed through two pairs of these extra perforation holes. By revolving the table the operator by successive strokes of the knife was enabled to remove unwanted portions of the side sheet margins, and the vertical gutter, and all the top and bottom margins and horizontal gutter except such portions as were required for the paste-up joins.

The panes were next joined to make a web of perhaps two or three thousand panes of stamps, the top margin of each pane being pasted beneath the bottom row of stamps of the pane adjacent to it in the web. This web was then slit into actual endwise coils on a machine using rotating circular knives - rather like a multiple bacon-slicing machine. Each stamp in either the left or right vertical row of each pane in the web had one "isolated perf." at its left or right side respectively. The slitting operation ordinarily cut through these holes, but maladjustments sometimes permitted the knife to miss them thus accounting for the cases in which the isolated perf. appears as a complete hole.



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Finally, the long coils were divided into lengths of 500 or 1,200 (the lengths of the Post Office coils) and the paper was attached for fixing in the mechanism of the slot machines.

This process is straight-forward enough. It may be asked, if the multiple rotary slitting machine was used for making the strips, why the horizontal measurement between margins of stamps from different strips varies. The explanation is the paper is slightly hygroscopic and varies in dimensions with atmospheric conditions. The spacing of the cylinder knives has therefore to be adjusted for each run. If this is not done, or done incorrectly, stamps cut too close will occur.

It will be seen from the above account that strips, even when they contain joins, will normally have their vertically trimmed edges accurately aligned with and in exact prolongation of their fellows. Some time ago I obtained a specimen (see page 20), and being unable to account for it by the normal manufacturing process, I wrote to Mr Lobdell; and he, besides giving me one possible explanation, put me into contact with Mr Rich, who suggested an alternative. These suggestions are:-

- (a) the specimen was caused by the repairing of a damaged coil by hand joining two strips of unequal width, or (b) this piece comes from the point at the end of a long ribbon, in coiling the stamps, where the next length was joined on. It is suggested that (b) is the more likely explanation, but in either event the strip is certainly not a normal or regular piece from normal production, and I know of only one other specimen, showing the characteristic break in the margin to a much less marked degree than in the photograph; this second specimen was found by Mr Rich in his own collection after I had written to him.

I should be very glad to hear of any alternative explanation for this variety, or to hear of any similar specimen in the collection of another member.

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From a News Folder returned recently two queries of possible varieties were noted by Mr R. J. Clayton. One was a break in bottom of frame line on the 1<sup>d</sup> van Riebeck between "F" and "R" which according to the "S.A.P." for July is on row 19 stamp 6. The other concerns the 1d value of the same issue "along the bottom of the stamp between the inscription and the edge is a strip of noticeably lighter printing. It extends from about the "U" of "Suid" to about the "IC" of Africa" and has a sharp edge coincident with the bottom of the letters.

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1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d roto metallic gold and slate-green Union Catalogue 46 inverted watermark, variety "ladder" in right bottom corner - not catalogued. An omission or a non-constant variety?  
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RESUME OF AUCTION REALISATIONS DURING 1952

by Voortrekker.

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Collectors of South African stamps have no cause for complaint about the lack of material which passed through the Auction Rooms during 1952. On the whole there was a tendency towards a fall in prices as compared with the previous year, especially among the more expensive material. No doubt another indication of the increase in the cost of living and the general lack of spare cash.

Some thirty lots of Interprovincials came up for auction at Harmer's on 25th March and made about 50% of valuation. Among these lots we had the 1908/09 5/- (two), 10/- and £1 Natal used in Transvaal which made £10 and a set of the same issue from 6d to £1 (15 values) but used in Natal itself realised the same amount. Various 6d, 1/- and 5/- (4) values (16 in all) of Orange River Colony used in the Cape and in Transvaal made £4 while thirty-eight combination pieces, i.e., two different provinces used together realised £4. 5. 0.

Of the King's Head issues of 1913-21, the most interesting realisations were £3. 2. 6. for a strip of six  $\frac{1}{2}$ d showing Plate 1 (Sherwood's sale of 15th March). At the same sale mint strips of four of the Coils ( $\frac{1}{2}$ d - 2d) realised £3. 5. 0., but pairs of the same only made 16/-. The 6d with missing "Z" made 21/6 against a valuation of 15/-, while £1 SG.24 fine used realised £3. 5. 0. This latter stamp mint made £10. 10. 0 at Harmer's on 11th November, but only £9 at the same sales the following week when it was centred to top. A copy of SG.24a on the other hand realised £12. An interesting and unusual piece was offered at Western Auctions on 30th May. This was a mint block of six of the rare Plate I or II 1d from the top right corner of the sheet and showing the variety reversed perforation. Catalogued at £15 a pair the block realised £6. 10. 0. The only other reversed perforation which I have seen offered was the 2d plate I at Sherwood's auction of 24th May. This made 25/- for a block of six against a catalogue valuation of 30/-. Incidentally, the 1911 D. Mackay essays for the King's Head set realised £5 for the set of five singles in different colours at Western Auctions' sale of 30th May.

Turning to the 1926 set the well known 6d colour trial in grey and red on thin card made £4. 10. 0. at Harmer's on 25th March, while the same perforated and on watermarked paper realised £7. 10. 0. at the same rooms on 25th November. The  $\frac{1}{2}$ d black and green in a block of four imperforate between stamps and margin made £12 at the same auction. A pair of this error was offered by Mr Sherwood at his May auction but failed to reach the reserve. An original gum pair of the 1d, the left stamp being wholly imperforate realised £15. 10. 0. at Harmer's on 25th November and a perf.14 booklet pane of the 1d (imperf. at bottom) brought 9 guineas. Western Auctions offered the Harrison essays for the 1926 issue at their 30th May sale. Six blocks of four of the 1d perf.11 $\frac{1}{2}$  showing the Springbok design and all in different colour combinations realised £18 while the 1d, 3d and 4d essays showing van Riebeck's ship, Table Mountain and Wildbeeste, all in various colour combinations only made £15. 15. 0., surely a bargain.



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Many Rotogravure items were offered including the Hunter Penrose essay in brown which made £6 at Harmer's sale on 25th March. A mint pair of the 1d with trefoil watermark realised £4 at Harmer's on the first day of the year while the no watermark variety (SG.43a) in a block of sixteen fetched £9 at Harmer's 25th November sale, a block of eight of the same stamp making £4 at Hadfield Craven's sale on 8th November and a pair without gum 50/- at Sherwood's May sale. A similar pair but with centre omitted realised £7 at Harmer's on New Year's Day. Varieties are always popular and among many offered was the ½d SG.42a "Suid-Suid-South-South" which realised 30/- at Sherwood's March sale and 42/6 at his May sale. An original gum strip of four ½d showing two stamps tete-beche with interval margin between (SG.42b) realised £15. 10. 0. at Harmer's on 25th November, a similar strip of the 1d was withdrawn but the same in a block of ten showing two tete-beche pairs, some perfs. split, only made £29 against a catalogue valuation of £120. A block of six 1d black and scarlet (Die II) printed on joined paper realised 3 guineas at the same sale. A brave and perhaps far-seeing buyer bid 37/6 for a mint pair of ½d cross-hatch printing of 1947 at Sherwood's March sale and £7. 12. 6 was paid for a mint pair of the 2d blue and violet (SG.44b), the same stamp making £8 at the May Sale; against this the hyphenated 2d (SG.58) only brought 27/6. Other interesting items at Sherwood's May sale were a double strip of 1d plate 20 with left and right arrows (18 stamps) showing retouched sky which realised the good price of 20/- while a mint pair of the 1½d (SG.57) bright gold and green with the variety "uneven vertical green line in lower left corner" made 42/6 and an arrow block of the 2d Royal Visit with joined paper brought £8. 10. 0. The good price of 52/6 was realised for a mint cylinder block of the screened 5/- showing "rain" variety and the 1925 air set brought £2. 10. 0.

Three plate proofs of the frame of the 1927 Postage Due in green, rose and slate, all in original gum pairs realised £9 at Harmer's 25th November sale and a single mint copy of the 3d in blue brought £3. The 1914/22 1/- was offered in used condition at Sherwood's March sale and made the satisfactory figure of 57/6.

the only "official" worth recording was a mint bottom left corner block of the London recess printed 1/- (SG.0.21a) with stop after "A" which realised £5 at Sherwood's March sale.

While not strictly a "Union" item I think it worth putting on record, because it is so seldom offered, that a lightly cancelled copy of the famous 1d Transvaal of 1905/09 with the error Anchor watermark made £14. 10. 0. at Harmer's 11th November sale.

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4d Large War Effort, variety but how constant? Union Cat. 85Va - "Double A above second "A" of "Africa" - does it appear on both shades or only the chestnut? Union Cat. 85Vb - "Additional "A" above "U" of "Suid" - does this appear on both shades or only the red-brown? And should it not read simply "A" above "U" the word additional tending towards confusion?



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O. A. T. by H. A. S.

Mr H. A. Stewart writes from Bearsden, Glasgow, as follows:--


"In view of some recent correspondence in the philatelic press regarding the cachet "O.A.T.", the following notes may be of interest.

The initials "O.A.T." for "ONWARD AIR TRANSMISSION" were used occasionally on airmail letters which were sent by ordinary mail or over a subsidiary air line to some convenient point on the route of Imperial Airways for conveyance by air to the point of destination.

The cachet is comparatively rare and was apparently considered so "hush-hush" during the war that no official information regarding its use has been made available. The tracing shown is from a letter sent from Port Elizabeth to Port of Spain, Trinidad. It is back-stamped showing date of arrival as 29 JAN. 46, while the posting date was 11.1.46. N.B., The "O.A.T." Mark is in red.

The reprint of Dr Gordon Ward's note may bring to light some similar cachet belonging to a member of the South African Collectors' Society and if so, I should be very glad to pass on any information to Dr Ward.

The cover which I have is franked, with a 2/6 stamp and one of 1/3 and the tracing of the cachet is fairly accurate.

<p>Postmarked Port Elizabeth 11-1-46 6PM</p>	<p>2/6</p>	<p>1/3</p>
	<p>2/6</p>	
<p>Addressed to:--</p>		
<p>Nº ---</p>		
<p>P.O. Box 519</p>		
<p>Port of Spain</p>		
<p>TRINIDAD B.W.I</p>		
		



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ONWARD AIR TRANSPORT, by Gordon Ward, M.D., reprinted from "Philatelic Adviser", August, 1948, Volume XI, No. 8.

The letters O.A.T. enclosed in an oval or a rectangle in various sizes and colours, may be found hand-stamped on the covers of various countries. In my own (quite small) collection there are covers from Norway to Hong Kong, Grenade - London, Sweden - New Zealand, Belgium - Papua, Tunis - New Zealand, Canada - France and Tetuan - New Zealand. One of these hand-stamps is mentioned and illustrated in F. J. Field's "Bridging the Atlantic" on page 82 and in this case it was applied to mail collected in Eire and held to await passage by the Foynes-New York route to the U.S.A.

So what? Why is this mark used - it's quite a modern idea - and where was it applied? Mr F. J. Field says that he is not sure about the places of application of different types of mark and no official information seems to be forthcoming. There remains only the study of the covers to enlighten us.

All my own covers happen to be going from west to east and they formed part mail going from Europe as far eastward as Hong Kong, Papua, and New Zealand or from America to Europe. Since the initials O.A.T. are authoritatively stated by Mr Field to mean "Onward Air Transport" it is reasonable to suppose that these marks are used in connection with some British Air Service or Services. Further suppositions but not unreasonable suppositions, are that the service must be that of the British Overseas Airways Corporation and that mail is collected at various points for further onward transport by their flying boats. For the moment, let us concentrate on the eastward service of the B.O.A.C. This now extends to Japan and there is doubtless a certain degree of variation in its places of touching down, particularly when Cairo has Cholera, Bangkok is unfriendly, etc. In W. G. V. Balchin's "Air Transport and Geography" there is a map of World Air Routes "from information supplied by B.O.A.C." and this suggest some of the following places as likely to be in need of O.A.T. handstamps, viz: London, Marseilles, Athens, Cairo, Karachi, Rangoon, Singapore and then, by various branches, the routes might run Saigon-Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tokyo; Darwin, Sydney, Auckland; Darwin, Bowen, Rabaul, etc. It is possible that someone may be troubled to enquire where this pamphlet of Prof. Balchin is to be obtained and I therefore record that the publisher is John Murray, 50 Albermarle Street, W.1. My own copy was purchased at last year's exhibition of the Royal Geographical Society, at the price of one shilling but I cannot say whether copies are still obtainable.

We can now make some attempt to get to grips with the different types of mark. Type 1, which is the type also used in Ireland, appears on a cover from Paris to New Zealand. This bears a special cachet which reads "Paris P.L.M. Etranger/Courrier Official Taxes Percues/Par Avion" from which one may deduce that it was sent by rail to Marseilles and also, with a little less certainty, that it was there held to await the next B.O.A.C. flying boat and stamped O.A.T. A precisely similar O.A.T. occurs on each of two covers from Canada to persons interned in France and dated in 1941. It seems unlikely that B.O.A.C. was operating in France at this period and one is obliged to believe that this particular



type was used not only in Ireland and at Marseilles, but also in America. The conclusion is that there was not one type of O.A.T. mark for each airport, but a certain number of types used, perhaps, in different sub-divisions of B.O.A.C's sphere of influence, if there are any such.

Just to make things more perplexing it may be noted that Type 1, although in a smaller size, appears on a Tunis-New Zealand cover of 8.12.43, while another cover, from much the same part of the world, Tetuan-New Zealand, has the quite different Type 2. This last is dated 28.10.47.

Type 3 appears on some of the Norway - Hong Kong covers all post-war in date and on a Brussels - Papua cover. One of the former has two indications of ports of call in the shape of back-stamps of Chungking, dated 30.11.45 and Canton, with a date in Chinese which is beyond my capacity.

Type 4 is very similar to the last but the "O" is oval instead of circular. It appears on several Norway - Hong Kong covers and something very similar occurs on my only Grenada - London example.

Finally we have Type 5. This appears to have been home-made from a piece of lino or the like. It appears on two Norway - Hong Kong covers and both are dated 21. 9. 45. There are no route markings on either of them.

Any reader who has endured so far will have discovered that I know nothing at all about these O.A.T. markings, except the existence and shapes of a few of them. (For illustrations, see page 20.)



TYPE I.

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Be Warned! Recently the Editor came into possession of a used block of the 1d roto with Control E showing "Broken mast" on the English stamp opposite the control. On examination, the "broken mast" through the magnifying glass it could be seen that the variety was "home made". So look before you leap or examine before you buy!

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If you have views as to what you would like to see in the magazine, do not forget to tell the Editor - otherwise, he won't know, will he?



"THE INSPIRING BOOK"

PICTURE PAGE



TYPE 2.

See Page 13



TYPE 3.



TYPE 4.



TYPE 5.

Page 10

See Page 17

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NEW MEMBERS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, RESIGNATIONS

New Members:

- No. 115. S.H.Urlwin, 10 Blenheim Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.
- 116. R.D.Allen, Snr, 82c Hackford Road, London, S.W.19.
- 117. F.H.Dann, 28 Grimwood Road, Twickenham, Middlesex.
- 118. F.E.Metcalf, c/o Commonwealth Stamp Co., 7 Leather Lane,  
Liverpool, 2.
- 119. K.A.Green, 99 Coleford Bridge Road, Mytchett, Nr Aldershott, Hants.
- 120. H.C.Runnals, 68 Bellingham Road, Catford, London, S.E.6.
- 121. R.Mcdonald Palmer, 32 South Market St, Johnstown, N.Y., U.S.A.
- 122. D.V.Parker, 24 Arandora Crescent, Chadwell Heath, Essex.

Changes of Address:

- I.Parker, 34 Parkside, Wimbledon Common, London, S.W.19.
- Dr A.N.Pearson, 5 Green Avenue, Porthcawl, Glam.
- P.Wilkie, 3 Church Hill, Edinburgh, 10.

Resignations:

- A.S.C.Paterson, Chadwell Heath.
- Mrs D.Stewart, Edinburgh.
- Major E.D.Graham Brown, Rochester.

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BOOKS, ETC., AVAILABLE FROM THE LIBRARY

One of the original intentions when the Society was formed was to get together a library of books, catalogues, etc., all relevant to the Union of South Africa Philately. So far the following have been acquired and are available for free loan to members on receipt of Postage.

- Standard Catalogue 1930 Edition.
- Standard Catalogue 1946 Edition with Supplement.
- Handbook/Catalogue 1952 Edition.
- British Empire Encyclopaedia, Part II - Africa. by Robson Lowe.
- The De La Rue Georgians of South Africa. by H.E.Lobdell.
- Philately of the Anglo-Boer War. by S.G.Rich.
- The Airposts of South Africa by L.A.Wyndham.
- The S.A.Provisional War Stamps. by B.W.H.Poole.
- The 1949 Post Office Guide.
- The 1950 List of Post Offices in the Union of S.A.
- S.A.Tercentenary International Stamp Exhibition Mag.Parts 1 and 2.
- " " " " " Catalogue.
- South African Philatelist from 1948 onwards.

Suggestions for further additions will be welcomed, along with information, particularly as to source of supply, price, etc.



S T O P P R E S S

SOCIETY MEETING: At Allan Water Hotel, Bridge of Allan, Scotland, week end 6/8th February - special terms offered, viz, 50/- inclusive dinner Friday to lunch Sunday. Similar meeting last year in March brought about 70% members resident in Scotland - can we make it 100%? The Editor will be there - will you?

HIGH PRICES FOR SOUTH AFRICAN COLLECTORS' STAMPS: Messrs H. R. Harmer, Ltd, 41 New Bond Street, London, W.1., advise that at two-day sale January 26th/27th, of British Commonwealth stamps - the total realisation being £4,780 - a collection formed by the late Mr W. J. Giovanetti of Pretoria brought £2,480 whilst a collection formed by the late Mr W. D. Harris of Cape Town made £1,880.

Keen competition "on the floor" combined with heavy postal bidding from collectors at home and overseas - particularly South Africa - resulted in prices well above estimations for the stamps of the Union. The second day was given over entirely to the stamps of South Africa and South West Africa, most of these being from the estates of Mr Giovanetti and Mr Harris. The South African section totalled £1,640 and the South West Africa £800. Quite a number of the more important pieces have now been "repatriated".

Individual prices included £90 for a block of four South Africa 1d of 1930-45 with six pairs partially printed (S.A.H. 37Vc(4) and 38Vd(2) ) against S.A.H. Cat. 253; for a strip of six 2d of the same issue with four stamps similarly imperfect (S.A.H. 38Vk(2) and 38Vj(2) ) £75 was paid - well over three times S.A.H. Cat. price of £21. 10. 0.

Other prices included £90 for a complete set of Coronation Die Proofs of South West Africa and (on first day), £160 for a collection of Transvaal sold "en bloc".

A resume of prices realised will be included in the next Number, but meanwhile, the usual detailed list of prices may be obtained from Messrs H. R. Harmer, Limited, 1/- Post Free.

NEW POSTAGE DUE: Dr T. B. Berry, Johannesburg, points out that there has been a new printing of the current 2d due from the same cylinders but a coarser screen has been used. The previous flaws recur and the "Double D" or "Double Image" shows up extremely well due to the coarser screen.

2d RECENT PRINTINGS: Dr Berry also advises that the cylinders 27/18 appear to be plentiful as against the 27/46 printing which seems to be scarce.

Dr Berry informs us that the current 6d stamp printings show signs of wear on the cylinders. Fresh cylinders soon?

MEMBERSHIP: We are pleased to welcome Mr F. E. Metcalfe, who, as most are aware, is the Editor of the Commonwealth Catalogue. He is, I know, particularly interested in the Union stamps which should add strength to the Society.

1½d OFFICIAL with DIARESIS: Mr P. D. Haigh, Boston, reports finding a used horizontal pair cancelled with wavy line postmark, but no trace of date. There is no diagonal line of dots across the upper gusset plate on the Afrikaans specimen which indicates Group 2, per the Union catalogue. The size of the screening indicates Plate VI; the stamps have non-metallic centres and deep coloured frames which indicate the 1947 release. (Present evidence seems to point to this variety as occurring on 0.71 Plate 6 overprinted on Union 46D - Ed.)