
THE SPRINGBOK



Volume 4, No. 3.

May/June

1956

" THE SPRING BOOK "

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Editor's Chair	Page 43.
One of the Maritime Marks of South Africa by R. D. Allen	44.
London Group Meeting	46.
London Group Meeting	47.
Three Shots (at) a Penny, by Quattordici	48.
South African Experimental Air Mail - The Outward Journey by W. E. Hughes	49.
Sources of the Designs of the Union Animal Series of Postage Stamps by C. Clement	53.
Annual Exhibition - a Reminder	54.
Bantam War Effort - $\frac{1}{2}$ d Values, by Caeculus	55.
Correspondence	57.
Picture Page	59.
Membership Information	60.

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

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" THE SPRINGBOK "

THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Dear Member,

We here in Britain seem to be enjoying an early start to summer for we are having plenty of sunshine whilst our daily newspapers point out the shortage of water in this district and that. Which leads up to that period of the year when the British seem to indulge in mass migration from home to holiday resort. And that thought in turn leads to the request for early advice of holiday dates so that Exchange Packets may be diverted in good time.

A member wrote in the other day asking if we were short of "Life's blood" for the magazine. We had to tell him that blood donors were particularly noticeable by lack of contributions to the magazine and therefore if you can spare "a few drops" to pump into the veins of 'The Springbok' we shall all be most grateful.

In this issue we have two articles pin-pointing the attitude of the Post Office towards publicity and information. The article on the first air mails show that when the Post Office wishes for publicity it cannot give out enough information as evidenced by the accurate details of weights carried, number of pieces involved, times and departures and so on.

The article by Mr Clement, written now some 30 years later, points an exactly opposite view, to quote "...the photos...placed at the disposal of the department... distinct understanding...sources would not be divulged..." How modest can the violet become or what State secrets would be revealed by the simple request for information which, as witness the writer's efforts, can no doubt be ferreted out? There can be few Post Offices which do not recognise and accept collectors of stamps as a source of revenue additional to the income from the normal functions of stamps. Some enlightened post offices actually try to live in harmony with the collectors and do what they can to make life pleasant for the latter, and profitable for themselves. Others show a remarkable likeness to the ostrich - oddly enough native to Africa - and try to ignore the fact that there is such an "animal" as the stamp collector. So please, Mr Publicity Officer, let us have some real Publicity!

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

ONE OF THE MARITIME MARKS OF SOUTH AFRICA

by

R. D. ALLEN

"Maritime Marks of South Africa?" "Nothing of the sort" you may say and to prove it you will produce both volumes of the SAC/H. The answer lies in the fact that it is a Catalogue Handbook and the necessity for the Volume 2 with its amendments to Volume 1.

These Maritime marks fall into four groups with sub-groups:

- Group 1. (a) Cape Colony Ocean Post Offices, from about 1883 to 1900 circa.
 (b) Union of South Africa Ocean Post Offices
 (c) United Kingdom & South African Sea Posts.
 (d) Certain sea posts on Italian and German boats.

Group 2. The subject of this article.

Group 3. Paquebot Marks

Group 4. Island Posts

Group 2. "SHIPPING POSTMASTER" and "ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER"

The marks of this group creep into and only just creep into COCKRILL'S "OCEAN MAILS". He has one reduced drawing and three and a half lines of text.

The marks were used by the Postmaster at Capetown and Durban on board ships in harbour. The office was apparently dual with that of Postmaster. (To clarify this point I have written to the G.P.O. at Pretoria.) Apparently the Postmaster at Cape Town was the busier, he had an ASSISTANT who had his own mark. It is not known for certain if there was an Assistant at Durban.

South Africa is/was rather particular about the method in which she handled mails from the large boats in the two harbours.

The duty of the Shipping Postmaster and/or his Assistant, was, to visit ships in harbour, to sell stamps and money orders but not to cash them, to accept for onward transmission, registered letters, cables and telegrams. The other mail is sorted, that bearing stamps foreign to South Africa is sent to one of the offices to be "Paquebot" marked. The "domestic" mail is sent to another office or department and marked with "Capetown Docks" or "Alfred Docks" in Capetown OR

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

"The Point" OR "Duncan Docks Durban" in Durban. So strictly speaking South African stamps should NOT bear South African Paquebot marks. No doubt we all have one or two, they may have slipped through the post by accident or have been cancelled as a favour. What happened during the war - (the last one) - nobody seems to know for certain and this rule, MAY have been altered just to fool the enemy.

The earliest known date of the Shipping Postmaster mark is "18th August 1909" at Capetown and strange to relate was found quite recently in South Africa.

May I refer you to "Springbok" Volume 1, page 64 et seq., for the listing of the known 14 types and 48 pieces (when you have added the addendum to this article).

I wonder how many singles, pairs or even covers you have thrown away in a mistaken belief that they were FISCALS - maybe that accounts for the few copies that are about.

ADDENDUM: Please amend your copy thus -

Type. 5(g) blue; eight pointed star; delete "NO" and add "3".

(o) Lauder; S.P.; Aug 12 1915; C; blue; 40mm; and add "3".

9(f) add 46 x 28; 5 pointed stars.

C(a) date is 4 mm high

D(d) Kingsley; SP; 25 June 1928; C; violet; 58x36; add "3".

J(d) Allen; SP; 1 Apr 1939; C; violet; 40 mm.

Types 5 (g); 9(f); A(b); C(a) are now in my possession.

(For illustrations see "Picture Page"

WANTED: Mr H. J. Entink, 38 Nerissa Street, Burwood, E.13, Victoria,
Australia wants -

"To improve the specialization of my 1st springboks and 1d van Riebecks ship and am interested in proofs, essays, etc., of these items if any reader has any of this material to offer."

Full details with prices etc., direct to Mr Entink, please.

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

LONDON GROUP MEETING

The subject of the March meeting of the London Group held at 246 Stockwell Road, Brixton, on Tuesday, 13th March, embraced the Air Mails, Postal Stationery and "JIPEX" sections of the Handbook.

The meeting, well attended, was entertained to a galaxy of choice items contributed by Messrs. Abell, Allen, Brown, Jonas, Kinsey, Nunneley, Page and Dr Gordon Ward.

Commencing with the 1925 Air Mails produced at the works of the "Cape Times" a number of the varieties were shown which included marginal blocks and a bottom left corner pair of the 9d value showing left margin imperforated. Only two other copies of this item are known.

The second Air Mails of 1929 were shown complete with varieties from each of the two values.

Getting on to the specials flights and covers, a fine selection of the 1925 Government Experimental Air Mails were shown. These flights were carried out by the South African Air Force each week between Cape Town and Durban with stops at Outshoorn, Port Elizabeth and East London.

The Kenilworth-Muizenberg flights of 1911-1912 were represented by the special pictorial post-card to which the air mail was limited.

The first England-South African and return flights of 1932 were well represented and also included the special covers used on the extension of the route to Singapore.

Several examples of the "Make your sixpence fly" post cards were shown. These flights were officially authorised to carry souvenir post cards as part of a campaign to raise funds for wounded soldiers or their dependants.

Various other special flights covers were seen including those of the British Empire Exhibition at Johannesburg and "JIPEX" covers and two or three examples of the special K.L.M. Voortrekker flight in December 1938.

Among the inaugural flights illustrated were those of the first Gweta to Johannesburg and return; the introduction of the flying boat service in June 1937, the "all-up" 1½d air rate on 4/7/1937 and more recently the first "Comet" flight and the Qantas Airways link between Australia and South Africa; the first flight being on 6th September 1952.

" THE SPRING BOOK "

Other items worthy of special mention included a cover salvaged from the flying boat "Challenger", wrecked off Mozambique on 1st May 1949 and a war-time Naval Cover without stamps but bearing a cachet "by hand of pilot" (1944).

One of the covers which caused most comment was shown by Dr Gordon Ward. It was an "unofficial airmail" from Port Elizabeth to Grahamstown on 21st November, 1917. The pilot was Major A. M. Miller, D.S.O., R.F.C., one of the pioneers of South African aviation who, it seems, carried a few letters as personal favours.

The various examples of etiquettes (air mail labels) were shown both unused and on cover.

Dealing next with Postal Stationery, the various air letter cards were shown and included forces letters on the scarcest war-time types. This section of the display also included a representation of airgraphs.

The post cards, letter cards and registered envelopes comprised of a virtually complete collection of the various types. The modern issues included the current 1½d "Leopard" post card with variety "missing stamp".

To round off the evening Mr Jonas displayed his collection of JIPEX sheets annotated with numerous plating flaws, considerably in excess of those listed in the "South African Philatelist". In addition both ½d and 1d values were shown in actual reconstructed sheets, mounted on cards - in fact as they appeared before cutting into panes.

W.A.P.

LONDON GROUP MEETING

The subject of the April meeting of the London Group held at the usual address in Brixton on the 10th was "Officials". Members showed selections from their collections and these included many varieties. Among those of special note were diareases on the 1½d, 2d and 1/-d values and a large block of 1d plate 10 showing dropped overprinted "Official". A complete study of the overprints on the plate 7, 2d value was shown, together with a complete sheet of the 2d value from Plate 7c.

W.A.P.

" THE SPRINGBOOK "

THREE SHOTS (at) a PENNY

by

QUATTORDICI

Just a few thoughts on the 1d Ship type, arising out of a cursory review of the Supplement to the HB/C.

Should other members have similar items or can confirm existence of others, it may perhaps be some basis for amendments to any future edition of the HB/C. It is NOT intended as any sort of criticism of the excellent Handbook or Supplement.

Shot No. 1. Page 102 of the Supplement gives details of the Roll stamps - including those 'From Sheets' R 15, R 15s, R 16 & R 16s. It states that the Sheets have Sheet Numbers in black on right margin. It does not say that these numbers are FIVE figure, which I rather think they are ?. Reference is made to Five Figure Cyclometer numbers in an article by Mr Hilton Sydow in the "South African Philatelist" of August, 1948, dealing with 'sheets printed in the web for coil stamps, but subsequently severed 240 set for sale over the counter'. The article continues 'The five figure cyclometer has been used only in connection with stamps for use in coil or roll arrangement'. Since then, of course, we know that the ½d, 2d, 3d, 6d & 1/- of the well-known second definitive series have been issued with five figure cyclometers.

No. 2. Passing to page 163 of HB/C, in describing the hyphenated Roll stamps - known as the Gutter Margin Sheets - the descriptive paragraph states:- 'sheet numbers in black on left margin'. There does not appear to be any further amendment to this in the Supplement, but I have seen this item (R 13 sa) with black sheet numbers on RIGHT margin.

No. 3. On page 118 of the HB/C, regarding No 45 Cj, it states 'Sheet numbers at left, black, inverted watermark'. I have seen also a block with numbers on left, with upright watermark.

On page 101 of the Supplement, there is also what is an obvious printing error where 1935 is shown as 1953.

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

SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIMENTAL AIR MAIL

The Outward Journey

by W. E. Hughes.

Reprinted, with due acknowledgements, from the "Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly" of 1925. (Through the good offices of member, Mr L. H. Lomax).

The object of the return weekly experimental air mail service started on March 2nd. 1925 between Cape Town and Durban and intended to operate for three months was to gain experience in the working of such a service and the points selected were those which under normal conditions are relatively badly served by the railway.

In the ordinary way, the weekly overseas mail is landed at Cape Town from the Union Castle steamers at daybreak on Monday morning and it is not until Wednesday mid-day that such letters are delivered at Durban. As the return mail to Europe leaves Cape Town on the Friday afternoon, and closes at Durban on Wednesday forenoon, it is obvious that Durban business people are unable to reply to European letters by the same mail.

The proposal of the Union authorities to inaugurate air mail services in connection with the Union Castle mail steamer services showed that they had grasped the needs of the community inasmuch as they were able to offer postal users a quicker service and one which would remove a definite handicap.

The air fees additional to the ordinary postage were fixed as follows:-

Postcards,	Inland	1d	Overseas	3d
Letters,	Inland	3d	Overseas	6d per oz.
Parcels,	Inland	6d	Overseas	9d per lb.

The air mail service was announced to commence on March 2nd 1925 to coincide with the arrival of the "Windsor Castle" in Cape Town with the European mails. The actual carrying was put into the hands of the South African Air Force using DH9 machines and it was arranged that the relay system should be used, the machines flying in pairs. This meant that two machines would fly from Cape Town to the next stopping place where the mails for that point would be handed over to the officials in the waiting postal vans and any mails for destinations further on would be transferred to two other planes. When this was done and the local airmails picked up, the waiting planes with fresh pilots would be flown off to the next stopping place, where the process would be repeated.

" THE SPRINGBOK "

The route was tentatively fixed as Cape Town, Mossel Bay, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, a distance of about 900 miles. During the week preceding the 2nd March, intensive flying with full loads and dummy mails took place over the whole route. There were one or two forced landings which might have turned out seriously, but luckily did not do so, but they showed that there was much more fog on certain parts of the coast than had been realised, so a day or two before the service was due to open officially, those responsible decided to cut out Mossel Bay on the coast and substitute Oudtshoorn, fifty miles away and some twenty miles inland on the other side of the coastal range, as the distributing centre of the South Western district of the Cape Province. As most growing towns in the same district are jealous of each other, the decision caused much disappointment at Mossel Bay, the residents of which centre had spent a good deal of trouble in bringing the aerodrome into a fit state and there were protests from the official bodies there. The Air Department being responsible for the lives of the pilots were not to be moved but a compromise was arranged. The main service of the air line would be continued Cape Town, Oudtshoorn, P.E., etc., but on the first day at any rate a special plane would convey air mails between Oudtshoorn and Mossel Bay. Neither Oudtshoorn nor Mossel Bay has a large population and the surrounding district is mainly of an agricultural character so that the commercial advantage of an air mail service to either point cannot be great. At the same time, the railway takes about 24 hours to travel from Cape Town to Mossel Bay and the air mail does it in just over two hours.

The newspapers played their parts well and in the Union, considerable publicity was given to the project. The postal authorities (about the 25th January) issued a set of four air mail adhesives perforation 12 - 1d red, 3d blue, 6d violet, 9d green. These were printed locally and their arrival helped to maintain interest in the new service. Although it was not then generally known the authorities had also proposed adhesive air mail labels in black on salmon-yellow with the words

BY AIR MAIL PER LUGPOS

evidently based on the British adhesive stickers and had also distributed to the head office in each of the air mail centres a similar obliterating stamp with the words "S.A.AIR MAIL/DATE/S.A.LUGPOS".

They do not seem to have sent one to Mossel Bay at first as the few airborne letters received at that town on 2nd March do not bear the air mail cachet but only the ordinary Mossel Bay postmark of 2nd March. Letters sent from Mossel Bay by the return air mail do bear the circular air mail cachet.

" THE SPRINGBOK "

To make the service a success in regard to having letters from overseas properly marked and the air mail fees prepaid, it was necessary to enlist the co-operation of the British P.O. and correspondents in this country, as unless this was done, the S.A. addressees would not get their letters earlier. Arrangements were made in good time, mainly by cable, so that anyone who studied the usual daily post office notices would learn of the facilities provided. By putting on an extra 6d per ounce and routing letters as usual for air mail service, British users had the same opportunities as those in South Africa. Unfortunately the publicity given on this side (U.K.) could only be described as poor and the response meagre so that as will be seen later, only 22 lbs of mail for the first trip were sent out from this country which is certainly not what might have been expected from an adequate system of publicity in regard to air mail facilities.

2nd March 1925. First air mail flight, Cape Town, Oudtshoorn, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban.

Two DH9 machines piloted by Captain Daniels and Lieut. Tasker, left Wynbyerg aerodrome, Cape Town, at 7.38 a.m. and arrived at Oudtshoorn at 9.40 a.m. At 9.52 a.m. relay machines under Capt. Hammon and Lieut. Berger left for Port Elizabeth. P.E. was reached at 11.53 a.m. Here the forward mails were put aboard two other machines under Lieut. Hiscocks and Lieut. Casperuthas which left at 11.58 a.m. for East London. These two planes reach E.L. at 1.15 p.m. Capt. Meredith took over the mails for Durban accompanied by another plane (which carried a passenger but no mail), left E.L. at 1.20 p.m. arriving at Durban the terminal point at 3.55 p.m. nearly three hours ahead of schedule. The whole thing worked without a hitch and reflects great credit on all concerned.

2nd March 1925. First air mail flight, Oudtshoorn - Mossel Bay.

The mails from overseas and Cape Town consisting almost entirely of newspapers were put on a special plane which at 10.25 a.m. was flown by Lieut. Schoeman (himself a native of Oudtshoorn) from Oudtshoorn to Mossel Bay, the journey taking about 30 minutes. He arrived back at Oudtshoorn before noon the same day.

What was Carried.

The mail from overseas, specially marked for transit by the first experimental air mail and carried to Cape Town by the "Windsor Castle" weighed only 22 lbs and included 145 registered letters. The postings at Cape Town to all destinations consisted of 2680 ordinary letters and postcards, 24 registered letters and 78 parcels.

" THE SPRINGBOK "

The total weight put on the machines at Cape Town was 496½ lbs but by far the greater part comprised newspapers, the proprietors of the Cape Town dailies having arranged to send considerable numbers as souvenirs of the occasion, either as parcels or separately addressed. There were also packages of print. Additional mails, mostly small, were picked up at Oudtshoorn, Port Elizabeth and East London. According to newspaper reports, the mail which arrived at Durban consisted of 105 registered and 600 ordinary letters, no mention is made of postcards of which there must have been some. Only a few letters were delivered at Oudtshoorn and Mossel Bay and not a large number at East London. At Port Elizabeth 17 registered letters and 190 ordinary letters were delivered from overseas and 200 from Cape Town and Oudtshoorn, again there is no mention of postcards.

Some of the bags must have been diminutive. The 22 lbs of overseas mail were in five bags, one each for Mossel Bay, P.E., and E.L. with two for Durban.

The 35 bags which were put on the planes at Cape Town were labelled Oudtshoorn 5, East London 6, Mossel Bay 2, Durban 5, Port Elizabeth 17.

It would appear as if neither letters nor cards by the first flight Cape Town - Durban will be very common but apparently covers are about half as plentiful as cards. Probably covers and cards to Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn will be difficult to get with the March 2nd date on them. We may get more information later as to East London which will help to place East London and Port Elizabeth in the proper order of scarcity.

(to be continued in the next issue)

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

SOURCES OF THE DESIGNS OF THE UNION

ANIMAL SERIES OF POSTAGE STAMPS

by C. Clement.

Unlike most other countries, the Union is apparently loath to divulge the source of the designs of its postage stamps. Recently I wrote to the Publicity Section of the G.P.O. asking for the names of the designers of the recent animal series only to get the following polite but firm refusal.

"I have to inform you that the photographs on which the designs of the present definitive series of postage stamps are based were placed at the disposal of the department on the distinct understanding that their sources would not be divulged. In the circumstances I regret that it is not possible to furnish the information you require".

The tacit admission that the stamps were based on photographs set me searching through dozens of periodicals and books for the originals. Hundreds of animal photos have, with the exception of two, proved barren. No. 3 below may explain this in part.

1. 4½d hippopotamus. The design is obviously based on the same original photo as the design of the purple publicity label issued by the National Parks Board in '36. This label shows only the head of the hippo. I am still trying to trace the designer of the labels (E. Ullman) and the original photograph.

2. 4d elephant. An excellent reproduction of a superb shot of an elephant by Dick Wolff, the well-known animal photographer. I have a 7½" x 9½" colour print of the original photo taken from the magazine "Lantern" for June 1951. The elephant has been exactly redrawn on the stamp but the background has been changed. The original shows the elephant coming towards the camera across a clearing covered with short grass while the background scrub shows leafless trees.

3. 2/6d Inyala Ram. This again is an exact reproduction of a photograph of a photograph by P.W. Willis taken in the Kruger National Park. The original shows a ram and eleven ewes drinking at the Pafuri River. The ram occupies only a small part of the original negative with the result that I at first passed over this photograph not looking closely enough at each buck in turn. I suspect that this is the case with some of the other stamp designs too, so prospective searchers should scrutinise pictures of groups of animals with care.

The pose of the buck on the stamp certainly does not do justice to the grace and beauty of the Inyala. I have studied the stuffed Inyalas in the Port Elizabeth museum and was impressed by their slender poise. It must be remembered, however,

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

that the stamp ram is drinking with straddled legs, a pose common to long-legged animals. His half-raised head suggests unease - after all, he is guarding his harem - caused perhaps by the click of the camera shutter?

Mr C. J. P. Ionides, Senior Game Ranger, Tanganyika Territory, says of the Inyalas; "Daylight hours are mostly spent in dense forest, the males seeming much shyer than the females". This may explain why so unflattering a photograph of this "most beautiful antelope I have ever seen" (Mr Ionides), was used; good photos of the ram appear to be as rare as the buck itself.

Reproductions of the original photograph were presented to all members of the Wild Life Protection Society and can be seen also, in colour, in the United Tobacco Company's production "Our South African National Parks" and in black and white in "African Wild Life" for September 1955. The ram appears also in the Ford Motor Company's production "What Animal is That?" compiled by Dr S. H. Skeife.

Naturally my search is not yet concluded with such scanty information so if any reader should have found any other originals, would he be so kind as to drop me a line at 19 Glen Street, Port Elizabeth, South Africa?

ANNUAL EXHIBITION - a Reminder

This takes place on September 29th. 1956 at the Cora Hotel, St Pancras, London, W.C.1. together with the Annual General Meeting and an Auction.

The theme for the Exhibition will be the 1d van Riebeck ships in all its plates and printings and to ensure that this was as complete as possible an appeal was made to members for information to be passed to Mr A. J. Brown, 17 Wimbledon Park Road, London, S.W.19, for information about any stamps, blocks, sheets, etc. of this series which may be owned and which it was felt could help to make the "picture" a complete one. It is disappointing to learn that not one single response has yet been received. We refuse to believe that none of our 200 members can help in this connection - it is too absurd for words - so please drop a line to Mr Brown right now - you might have just the "one missing piece".

" THE SPRING BOOK "

BANTAM WAR EFFORTS

1/2d VALUES

"Heretic" is correct in his surmise that two different cylinders were used for the 1/2d value, one for printing I, II and III and the other for printings IV and V. This was reported on the "S.A.P." for July 1955 by the writer over the signature "Argus". I should explain that, finding there was another "Argus" in the philatelic field I have subsequently adopted the more appropriate pen name of "Caeculus". For those who do not subscribe to the "S.A.P." I would say that the crucial point is that the screening shows clearly on the retouched portions of printings IV and V. Therefore the retouching was done to the glass positive (multipositive) and therefore there must have been a second cylinder.

I approach the difficult question of screening with considerable trepidation.

Not having practical experience myself I put forward the following views as merely those arrived at by reading articles by those who do know and by discussion with a Master Printer of considerable experience.

Here they are for what they are worth -

AXIOMS

1. All stamps printed by Roto are screened.
2. All screen plates consist of an evenly patterned mesh of small dots.
3. Screen plates only differ in the distance apart of the small dots forming the mesh.

The terms "unscreened" and "irregular screening" are therefore inaccurate BUT

When the dots are very close together no screening effect is seen on the stamp. These are called unscreened "A".

When the dots are somewhat further apart the screening effect can be faintly seen. These are variously called irregular, close mesh, etc. "B".

When the dots are still further apart the screening can be seen clearly. These are called regular, diagonal, wide mesh etc., "C".

" THE SPRINGBOK "

It would appear that the Government printer has used three different screens. The stamps in each case present three quite different appearances and each is worthy of catalogue status. The names given to each are satisfactory but it would be a good thing if the authorities settled on one name for each and stuck to it - either unscreened, ir-regular, regular or the more accurate unscreened, narrow mesh, wide mesh.

Trouble arises when various intermediate states are found to perplex one. When the cylinder becomes worn the screening which is not apparent on early copies of "B" can now be seen and looks very like "A". Again the more powerful the glass, the more screening is revealed.

It is possible (I advance this with diffidence) that the depth of the etch (i.e. the strength of the acid used), the consistency of the ink or the length of the expose given to the carbon tissue may produce the same effect. In spite of these little perplexities it is nearly always possible to say which screen has been used.

The acid test (no joke intended) is to count the number of corrugations on the screening on a measured portion of the stamp.

So go to it "Heretic". If the Editor will send me your address I will be glad to lend you marginal blocks of the different printings.

But do not ask me to do it otherwise I might have to sign future letters "Caecus" instead of the customary

"Caeculus".

P.S. Let me add that the Government Printing Department in late 1953 have apparently purchased a new screen which differs slightly from the three enumerated above. It has been accurately designated "fine mesh" in the Handbook Supplement, and in appearance, comes between "B" and "C" of the old definitives. The last printings of the 4½d, 7d, 1/6d and 5/-d derive from this screen.

URGENT: The postman has dropped through our letter-box a sheet of enlarged photographed stamps - corner block of 1½d, strip of 2d (five) etc., but unfortunately we have not the slightest clue as to where this "manna from heaven" originated. If we should know please accept our apologies in advance but do enlighten us!

" THE SPRINGBOOK "

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor.

Dear Sir,

I refer to the article on the "Gelatine Shift" in your magazine, Volume 3, No. 6, by "Caeculus".

According to the Handbook/Catalogue there is a multi-positive flaw which appears on Plates I and II of the 5/-d value (52A.vd) but the broken yoke-pin variety does not occur on plate II and is therefore not a multipositive flaw. Its status therefore is the same as that of 38vd (presumably). Unfortunately my copy of the broken yoke-pin is not a good one. The postmark is so placed that it actually covers the broken pin which can only be seen through it. Moreover, the centre of the stamp is so far towards the top of the stamp as almost to amount to a collectable variety in itself and the broken piece is quite invisible under an ordinary magnifier though I can see it (or perhaps imagine it) with my microscope.

I have no specimen of the 2d flaw.

I mention these facts because it may be that on inspection of first class specimens my theory can be refuted or confirmed.

"Caeculus" assumes that the shift has been caused by the removal of a fragment of gelatine emulsion or what not from the yoke to a position above the left-hand 5/-d. Why? It seems to me neither more nor less possible for the shift to have been in the opposite direction, i.e. from above the 5/-d to the yoke.

May I suggest that "Caeculus" should examine his specimens again with this possibility in mind. It is noticeable that the yoke pin has a very light background and it may be that in a good specimen it may be possible to see that this background is affected in such a way as to establish my theory.

You have invited comments on the Pretoria and Covenant stamps. The 3d Kruger stamp is in my opinion the best of a bad lot. With a face like that President Kruger is not a suitable subject for a stamp at all. If you have to have him on a stamp I do not know that one could expect anything better.

The same remarks apply with even more force to the 6d Pretorius stamp but here surely something could have been done to improve matters. Surely Pretorius cannot really have looked such a "drip" if I may use a term of reproach in favour at my school? He looks as if he was on the verge of tears and is he or is he not wearing spectacles? What is more, he looks impenetrably stupid. The effect produced on me is that his appearance is of a not very bright but honest witness being cross-examined in court by a clever and overbearing Counsel. The colour of

" THE SPRINGBOK "

this stamp is, in my opinion, the worst yet with the possible exception of the Voortrekker 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d - I mean the one of the family doing "P.T." in front of a lunar rainbow!

Certainly I do not admire the Reaffirmation of the Vow stamp. To me Andries Pretorius looks like George Robey pretending to be a member of the Gestapo. Perhaps however, he really did look like that. The rest of the stamp I feel needs foot-notes to explain the symbolism. These are provided for philatelists but for the general public ----- . The colours I do not like but I wonder if it is prejudice. Are they any worse than the 3d and 1/6d animals?

Above all why return to the alternate languages? I thought this was dead. I am inclined to be glad of the change as a philatelist but there seems no point in it from an ordinary person's view.

Newcastle.

R. J. Clayton.

We must commend to the "Most Highest Order of the Springbok" the activities of member Mr W. A. Page, our very worthy London Group secretary, who time and again, is responsible for introducing new members to the Society, thus bringing in new blood to replace that lost in those who fall by the wayside. Although in any Society there are always resignations, it is the ones who just do not renew and in so doing do not offer any explanation which baffle us. Do they change their interests, is the Society not satisfactory, do they cease collecting altogether, can they not afford the subscriptions? We never get to know the answer - we do lose the member - and so we do need every present member to introduce just one more to the Society this year - and next year - and the year after!!!!

FROM COPIES IN MY POSSESSION OR LOANED.



Lower segment of personal copy missing.

R.J.L.

" THE SPRING BOOK "

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

New Members:

315. Dr M. M. Risueno, Av.Roque Saenz Pena 547, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
316. Miss M. I. Watson, Westwood, Monkton, Ayrshire, Scotland.
317. R. J. Gilbert, Home View, St. Erth, Hayle, Cornwall.
318. Mrs H. S. Nel, 41 Marconi St., P.O.Vanderbylpark, Tvl., S.A.

Changes of Address.

2. E. Lauder, 1 Caimhill Road, Bearsden, Glasgow, Scotland
110. Dr J. McD.Simpson, 96 Liberton Drive, Edinburgh, 9, Scotland
169. R. B. Keusch, P.O.Box 111, Mt. Healthy Station, Cincinnati 31, Ohio, U.S.A.

Resignation:

143. Dr W. Hosie, Blackpool.

Membership Lapsed:

198. H. W. Bond, S.A.
240. P. de Villiers, S.A.
243. R. A. Brykozynski, S.A.

It is not often that we poor mortals are privileged to comprehend history in the making but within our own little world we can record the fact that in the election of member Mr R. H. Merson to the Presidency of the Guildford & District Philatelic Society for the forthcoming season, he becomes their youngest ever to occupy this position.

Heartiest Congratulations, Son!

For the second year running member, Mr W. A. Matthews, has hit the jack-pot by winning the open class competition of the Ashford (Middlesex) Philatelic Society with a display of six sheets of used 2/6d and 5/-d values showing the different issues and shades. In modestly submitting this information Mr Matthews is kind enough to point out that his successes are in no small measure due to the help and information received via the Society. Thank you, Mr M. for these kind words and here's hoping you will make it three in a row to complete the hat-trick!
