
THE SPRINGBOK



Volume 7 No. 2

March/April 1959

" THE SPRINGBOK "

THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Sold in auction by Robson Lowe -

1913-21 GV. overprinted SPECIMEN $\frac{1}{2}$ d to £1 with $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, $1/3$ d, £1 handstamped	£ 3. 5. Od.
1927-28 Recess 2d to 10/-d overprinted SPECIMEN in violet	£ 4. 0. Od.
1926 1d SG.31 mint block, left vert. pair imperforate	£ 4. 15. Od.

during 1950 and now in 1959 what are they worth? Very nearly an extra £1 for each year so obviously it does pay to collect the better items. It would be about that time that we purchased the £1 GV olive shade for £6 and now it is selling in auction around about £14 although catalogued by Gibbons at £22. Mark you it will catch up with Gibbons figure over the years but by that time what will be their price?

Talking of auctions, it is hoped that this year when our Annual Show takes place we may be a little more organised with our auction and to this end, members are invited to submit lots for sale in October by July 1st. so that a list of lots may be compiled and circulated, thus giving those members who cannot be in London the chance to partake in the sale.

Our venue for the A.G.M. and Exhibition has had to be changed this year due to the fact that the hotel which we used last year presumably thought it was on a good thing and increased the charge for the rooms by 110%! So on September 26th we shall be gathering at the Y.M.C.A., Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1., this being the best we could do at rather short notice for invariably rooms etc. are taken up well in advance and to find something central in London can be quite a problem.

On April 11th we shall be at the Allan Water Hotel, Bridge of Allan in Stirlingshire for the Annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies and we are looking forward to seeing as many of our Scottish members as may be possible and to renewing contacts in the most friendly of atmospheres.

Changes in the postal rates in South Africa applicable from April 1st. will bring in its trend more reprintings of values of the present series other than the 1d and 2d stamps and one might almost say the tempo is quickening as news is to hand that the $\frac{1}{2}$ d value has been reprinted from a fresh cylinder and the 2d also again. If, as we suspect, a new watermark is introduced, the interest will be increased quite considerably.

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AUCTION REALISATIONS DURING 1958

by

VOORTREKKER

In an Editorial of "Stamp Collecting" a few weeks ago, the Editor wrote that "if the auction prices realised at recent London Sales are anything to go by, there is plenty of life in the stamp market this season. It has been apparent in recent years that for top-ranking rarities in fine condition the sky's the limit." While there are no stamps of the Union of South Africa which can fairly be described as top-ranking rarities there are certainly quite a number which can be counted among the runners-up.

Pay particular attention however to the words "in fine condition" because the collector who can afford to spend pounds when the rest of us are counting in shillings or pence, is in a position to command the best quality and is obviously willing to pay in order to get it. That stamp which you were saving up a fiver for is now going to cost you considerably more so you had better pay a visit to your Bank Manager right away before the price leaps any further ahead.

So far as the stamps of the Union are concerned the demand seems to have shifted slightly from "Varieties" to "Arrow Blocks" for which some extraordinary high prices have been obtained. When one considers that there are generally four arrow blocks to each sheet as against one example of the variety the price variation seems difficult to understand although one does appreciate the demand for pieces which will establish a particular printing.

The Auction Catalogues consulted for this year's article were:

H. R. Harmer, Ltd., of London

C. E. Sherwood of Manchester

Wicks Stamp Agency of Pietermaritzburg

Wicks obtained £12 for the 1913 set to 10/- overprinted "Specimen" and 35/- for a single copy of the ½d. with Control 1 in top margin. He also sold a block of 32 1½d. showing repaired paper on nine stamps which realised £27 while the good price of £9 was paid for a pair of the 4d. value showing co-extensive Jubilee lines. Die Proofs in black on a white card made £25 each at the same Auction House.

Continuing with the 1913 issue Harmer's gave some lucky collector a bargain when they sold a mint marginal copy of the 2d. without watermark for 85/- while the £1 value made £6 and £7 for S.G. 24 and 24a respectively. Against that the 5/- and 10/- values from the lower right corner of the sheet with Control realised £10 while the 10/- and £1 both in mint blocks of four, the former with Control, sold for £48.

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Turning to the 1926 Pictorial Issues Sherwood obtained 15/- for the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. with missing fraction bar and 20/- for a Plate 3 Control pair of the 1d. a block of the same realising 30/-. Harmer's sold two pairs of the 6d. Colour Trial, one mint and the other used on part of a registered envelope for £8 while a complete sheet of 100 of the Harrison Springbok Essay in carmine fetched £40 or an average of 8/- per stamp. When one compares this realisation with the catalogue value of £600 it makes one sit up and take notice. Sherwood sold a top right corner pair of the 6d. for 20/- and a mint pair of the 5/- Perf. 14 for £2.

Wicks had some interesting stamps on offer as well. Among them was a set of the Bradbury Wilkinson stamps overprinted "Specimen" which made £19.10/- while the 5/- value Perf.14 + $1\frac{1}{2}$ sold for £6.10/- and a block of four of the Perf.14 in a very deep shade went for £8. Wicks also sold an inscriptional pair of the 10/- Perf.14 for £6 and the same stamp Perf.14 + $1\frac{1}{2}$ from the top left corner of the sheet made £6.10/-. At the other end of the scale he obtained 15/- for a pair of the 2d. value with "Split D" variety.

Several Air Mail stamps were sold by all three Auctioneers. Wicks sold a block of four of the 1925 9d. imperforate at left margin for £25 while single copies of the same stamp showing the varieties "Extra Strut" and "Stroke through 9d." made 55/- and 60/- respectively.

Harmer's obtained £50 for the 1919 Cape Town Peace Celebrations Pigeon Post flown pigeonram with covering envelope while two examples of the 1920 Experimental flight from Cape Town to Johannesburg with Handley Page cachets made £27 each. They also sold the 1925 Air set mounted on Official Souvenir Card and signed by the Postmaster General for £14.10/- while the Souvenir Card issued to the U.P.U. was sold by Sherwood for £10.5/- who obtained 30/- for the same set on Registered cover.

It is difficult to make a selection from among the many Unhyphenated items that were on offer. Particularly interesting however was the vertical mint pair of the 1d. from Plate II/B with B Control and Broken Mast variety which Harmer's sold for £12. Sherwood obtained 20/- for a strip of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. showing the South - South, Suid - Suid variety and 22/6 for the 1d. with D Control and Broken Mast on the English stamp. He also sold a strip of three of the 1/- value showing "Twisted Horn" and half arrow which made 25/- while the 2/6 in green and brown sold for £2.

Several Control pairs and blocks were sold by Wicks. Among the 1d value were B Control block (60/-), D Control with Broken Mast (45/-), E Control block (40/-), Plate III/F in block of six (60/-). The following prices were made for Arrow Blocks, 1d. Plate IV (£5.15/-) Plate VII (£3.10/-) Plate XVII (£4). A right hand Arrow Block of the 2d. in Indigo and Violet (S.G.44b) sold for £11 while a block of six from Plate IIb made 55/- and miniature sheets of four Arrow Blocks from Plate II a realised £7.10/-. Wicks also sold a pair of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. with completely missing centres for £22.10/- while an unrecorded block of six of the 1d. on joined paper went for £10. The standard varieties on the 1/- value were also sold by Wicks realising for the "Twisted Horn" (17/6), "Missing Clouds" (20/-) and "Dart on Back" (30/-) the line under 'F' variety making 20/-.

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Turning to the Hyphenated Issues Sherwood sold a mint pair of the 1/- with Brown Arrow for 35/- and secured £2 for a pair of the ½d. Cross Hatch printing (R 18) while top and bottom arrow and sheet number blocks of the 2d. from Plate V sold for 47/6. Sherwood also obtained 30/- for the 6d. with "Mole Hill" variety. Two interesting Lots were Photo Proofs of the Pretoria Centenary and Covenant issues which both made 22/6.

Wicks sold a mint block of the 6d. with "Extra top to tree" for 42/6 while an Arrow Block of the 2d. from Plate XII showing the variety "Dot in bottom frame" realised 60/-. Most interesting of all however was a MINT block of six large Gold Mine stamps with the "White Mine Dump" variety on three stamps which got £8.10/-.

Harmer's sold a mint strip of the Small War Effort with the variety Roulette omitted for £8.5/- Wicks obtaining £12 for the same variety. Wicks also sold a block of 18 of the 1d. with joined paper for £12.10/- and obtained £12 for a strip of six pairs of the 2d. also with joined paper. Sherwood realised 10/- for a strip of the 1d. with misplaced perforation and corner blocks of the 6d. from Plates I, II and III made 17/6.

It is worth noting that Harmer's sold 138 miniature sheets of six plus 16 sheets on cover of the ½d. and 1d JIPEX for £28.

A Cylinder block of ten of the 3d. Rhino was sold by Sherwood for 10/- the same Auctioneer obtaining 47/6 for a collection of 150 1d. and 2d. Animal stamps in corner blocks while a collection of Cylinder and sheet number blocks of various values from ½d. to 1/- made 45/- there being 88 stamps all told.

Three Lots of Officials noted were firstly a mint pair of the 2/6 with "Diaeresis" variety which Harmer's sold for £12.10/- while Sherwood obtained 20/- for a used pair of the 1½d. with the same variety on both stamps. Sherwood also sold the 1940 5/- value with "Broken Bucket" variety for 27/6.

Among various miscellaneous items noted were a mint pair of the 2d. Postage Due imperforate which Wicks sold for £10 while Sherwood had a nice Lot of ten Booklets of Xmas Seals covering various years from 1947 - 55 which he sold for 20/- while to complete the picture a bundle of "The Springbok" magazine covering the years 1950-57, mainly complete, went cheaply at 35/-

Mr J. B. Levy writing from Bloemfontein regarding queries in the last issue says of the postmark "Park Avenue" that it was a sub post office in East London very many years ago and which has been closed for very many years. He, in fact, lived not 10 yards away from it.

He also indicates his belief that Three Anchor Bay is a post office in the suburbs of Cape Town still existing. The 1956 Post Office list says "Three Anchor Bay see Drieankerbaai". Refer to Drieankerbaai and all one finds is a note "May be accepted as Station To in telegrams" which to say the least is not very helpful! we are not much further on, are we?

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THE LONDON GROUP MEETING

The January meeting of the London Group held at the 'George' under the heading of "Six sheets or a shilling", brought many more sheets than shillings, and provided those members present with a feast of variety and interest.

In all eleven of those present showed and the following briefly gives the pattern of the individual efforts of the members.

- Mr A. J. Brown. A small selection of Air Covers including the 1925 Government Experimental flights, and various examples of the Red Cross Aerial Posts. Also included were the 1929 first regular Air Service and the first regular flight to London in 1932.
- Mr E. G. Kinsey. The second display, also comprised of covers and again many of them were connected with the Air Posts of the Union, showing the many cachets of the suspended services at the outset of the second world war. Other examples of different Postal Cachets were also shown.
- R. P. Jonas. A short but comprehensive study of the 1935 Silver Jubilee issues, illustrating the various design characteristics together with printings determined by various plate flaws.
- K. Vellenzer. Unions used in S.W.A. A good varied selection including some on piece and also covers.
- R. D. Allen, Snr. The Society Chairman's well known larger sheets lent themselves admirably to the small display of the Natal Settlers issue, with the many varieties displayed in large blocks, together with a number of F. D. Covers.
- Mr R. J. Lawrence. Mr Lawrence's subject was the Large format 1½d pictorial definitive showing examples of a number of varieties at present unlisted in the catalogue, at the same time asking the members for their opinion as to their worth for catalogue status.
- Mr A. J. Childs. Six sheets and not a stamp! An unusual and extremely original display tracing the origin and history of the various Coats of Arms of the Colonies making up the Union, and beautifully illustrated.
- Mr G. M. Whitten. Titled - "A criticism of the design". This was a short study of the origin and merits of many of the designs of Union issues. A controversial subject, about which readers will be able to learn more in these columns.

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Mr S. Dudman.

This display included at least one sheet that was the envy of many other members. A complete strip of the 'Cross Hatch' coils ($\frac{1}{2}$ d). The remainder of the display comprised of Plates 1 & 2 of the Large format $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. pictorial definitive.

Mr F. C. Abell.

As to be expected in an evening of this type some repetition was inevitable, and the London Chairman, followed in the footsteps of the Society Chairman by showing a selection of the Natal Settlers with the various varieties displayed in part sheets.

Mr P. D. Haigh.

To round off the evening the last display consisted of modern Union Commemoratives embracing the various examples of the screen flaws.

W.A.P.

SOUTH AFRICAN P.O. Bulletin No. 33.

This announces a commemorative 3d stamp on May 1st, 1959 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns (South African Academy of Science and Art). The stamp will be on sale for three months at all post offices in the Union.

The design embodies the crest of the Akademie on a blue background, the stamps will be printed in sheets of 120 in horizontal format 40.5 m.m. x 24.2 m.m. and the wording will be in English and Afrikaans on each stamp.

It is NOT the intention to provide a special date-stamp for use on the first day of issue.

The Academy has been responsible for the amazing development of the Afrikaans language and is also interested in literature, science and art. Information is available from the Secretary at the Academy in Pretoria, according to the Bulletin.

Note, that the value 3d reflects the increased postage rate and this stamp is the first commemorative to meet the occasion.

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LONDON GROUP MEETING

The February meeting of the London Group saw a somewhat smaller attendance than usual, no doubt due to the murky outlook on the Metropolis. An even later arrival by the London Hon. Sec. - delayed by weather and the earlier train crash did not prevent a nevertheless interesting evening on one of the less popular aspects of Union Philately - the Commemoratives.

Four members present contributed to the displays, Messrs Abell, Haigh, Jonas and Parker and covered most of the Modern Issues in various manners. First of all members saw a selection of first day covers, followed by a study of the 1937 Coronation issues. Various commemoratives were made all the more interesting by the inclusion of examples of the Official Photographs.

On Thursday, 19th February, a team from the London Group journeyed to Plumstead (London S.E.) to entertain the Woolwich and District Philatelic Society. The team consisted of Messrs Abell, Allen, Kinsy, Parker and G. M. Whitten, with the London Hon. Sec. acting as both visitor and member of the host Society.

As is usual on these visits the team gave a very good account of themselves and did a lot to spread the interest of the Society.

The displays were designed to be of an unusual nature and started with a fine selection of the Interprovincial Period from Mr F. C. Abell.

Mr R. D. Allen, Snr., followed with something completely new to the Woolwich members - 'Shipping Postmasters', now bearing a completely new look in write up and arrangement!

The Aerial Postal History of the Union was very capably handled with selections from the now well known collection of Mr E. G. Kinsey.

To end the evening, Mr D. V. Parker showed Christmas Seals and a Few Easter Seals for good measure and Mr G. M. Whitten displayed his 'Story of the Pictorial Definitives', which by now must be well known throughout the country.

W. A. P.

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THE 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. MINES - PLATES II and III

by

R. J. LAWRENCE

Reference articles by "Vexatus", Vol. 6, No. 5, and Mr R. D. Allen, Vol. 6, No. 6.

The latter's contribution has shed a little more light onto the subject and (having personally studied some hundreds of these stamps) by an appraisal of his quotations, it is hoped to confirm most of "Vexatus's" listings. Mr Allen, intentionally one thinks at first, added to the confusion, but he has made ample amends by ferreting out these additional records of deliveries to the G.P.O.:-

Item 7

SAP Vol. 17/61, June, 1941.. Job 11187. 355400 sheets of 120
26th November 1940 to 30th January 41. Cyls 6930/66.
(Query - see Item 4)

Item 8

SAP Vol. 17/97, September, 1941.. Job 13910, 368700 sheets of 120.
27th February 1941 to 29th April 1941. Cyls. 6930/15.

Item 9

SAP Vol. 17/97.. Job 16782 - sheets of 240 delivered 24th June 1941
(These being the first of the reduced format)

For ease of further reference, these have been headed "Item 7", etc., those of the original article being henceforth "Item 1-6".

Item 1

September 1940... Obviously the scarce metallic centre issue referred to in H/C preamble (page 126). Vexatus, Pl. II, A and B.

Item 2

November 1940... To be absorbed within Item 3. No comment, except that there is glitter in the Dull or Old Gold centres. Vexatus Pl. II, C.

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Item 3

December 1940.... Being from the same cylinders, can only be Pl. II.
Greyish-slate and dull gold (or a firm "Buff" as Vexatus)
344,000 sheets of this printing, compared with 31,000 of the previous, give a
ratio almost identical with that obtained from practical research,
i.e. roughly 10 - 1.
August 27th is earlier than at present seen, but completion date,
October 15th, solves the problem of a distinctive shade over which both Vexatus
and I have pondered. Pale bluish-slate and pale buff, it was first thought to be
H/C 46B, and thus pl. III, until a clearly postmarked pair was discovered,
dated 30th September 1940 (other dates in October).
As elusive as the first Pl. II printing, the dates now prove it to be Pl. II and
probably the first of the H/C Supplement No. 46Aa (shades)
A collectable item and the one amendment to Vexatus's list.
(Possible origin? - The Printers' decision to improve definition of the vignette
by introducing "orange" into the ink, started with this issue. After printing
some 35,000 sheets of the "trial", results not being up to expectations, the con-
tract was completed in the stronger colours we recognise as Greyish-slate, etc.)

Item 4

March 1941... An error of cylinder nos! 6930/66 has already been deleted from
the records (Supplement, page 59). It is almost certain that this is the first
printing of Pl. III. Vice cyls. 6930/15. Date would confirm belief that Pl. III
was issued prior to 1941.

Item 5

August 1949... A definite "Red Herring"! Someone happened upon an obscure shade
which probably emanated from Pl. I.

Item 6

See later.

Item 7

June 1941... Completion of contract first mentioned in Item 4. Amend cyls. to
6930/15.

AND

Item 8

September 1941... Both Pl. III contracts and assessed together.

Now that Vexatus's first ptg. of Pl. III has been established as Pl. II, we find
that both he and H/C list the same predominant shades. HC/46B and 46Ba, by valu-
ation, rightly indicate their respective abundance, but Vexatus is correct in
placing the pale greenish-slate before the blue-slate shade.

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Calculations indicate these two combined are about equal in quantity to the final ptg. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to allocate the former to Item 7, particularly as the vignettes are fairly consistent throughout, and the latter, 46Bb, with its completely different vignette colour, to Item 8 - which makes non-sense of the cat. valuation for this stamp.

Commencing with the Bluish-slate ptg, (incidentally, this cannot be confused with the pale Pl. II shade) we find the frame cyl. has acquired a number of random scratches (not doctor blade flaws). In particular, one which starts in 3/6, curves downwards into 4/5, and thence across the sheet via 4/4 and 4/3 to the bottom left corner of 4/2 - see sketch. Definitely not on the pale greenish-slate ptg. but constant thereafter to the cylinder's end; proof of Vexatus's order of omissions. That his final ptg. is in its correct position, has been established by further acquired cyl. flaws.

Item 9

Deliveries of reduced format ptgs., 24th June 1941, and thus, unless SAP missed a recording of deliveries, Plates II and III have been covered.

Item 6

Not easy to comment upon, as there is no indication of the ptgs. dealt with. 20th December, 1941, would suggest some references must apply to the medium size issues, however:-

All the large mines, except booklet panes, show varying degrees of "glitter". It is true that the final ptgs. require a good glass, and the inclination of the stamp to strong light to catch the odd spots of lustre, but - they do exist. As for the booklets, although H/C describes them as dark green and gold, they show no glitter at all. (Why dark green? The shade is very similar to the final sheet issue).

I would suggest that Mr Allen sticks to frame colours as being far less baffling than a diminishing "gold" content. Vexatus has, to my mind, the better approach to this problem, listing metallic-gold where obvious to the naked eye, i.e. Pl. I and first Pl. II, and colour when more clear than glitter.

In conclusion:-

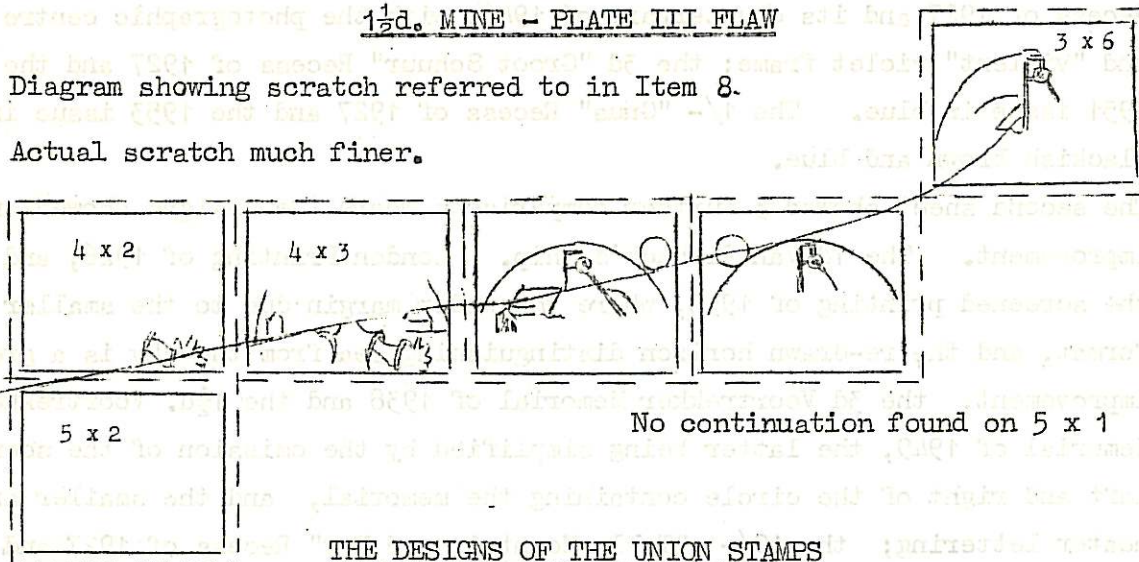
Approximately 1,000 relevant stamps have been examined, which, although a reasonable cross section of the ptgs., represent such a minute fraction of a million sheets that mistaken deductions are more than likely. Comment or criticism will be very welcome.

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1½d. MINE - PLATE III FLAW

Diagram showing scratch referred to in Item 8.

Actual scratch much finer.



THE DESIGNS OF THE UNION STAMPS

A Criticism by "CUPOLA"

At the February meeting of the London Group, when members were asked to bring 6 sheets or pay a shilling, one of the 6-sheet displays was somewhat unusual, inasmuch as it was an illustrated criticism of some of the South African Stamps. It was only possible in the limited space to make short observations on the examples shown, and it was suggested that these might be elaborated for the benefit of other members. Before considering what makes for a good design on a stamp, it should be remembered that the primary object of a Postage Stamp is to denote to the Postal Authorities that a letter or parcel has been prepaid for the Postal Service being performed. It is essential therefore that the stamp design should convey two things clearly, i.e. the Value and the country of Origin. The colour of the stamp may be an additional means of identification. Anything more than this in the design, such as Portraits, Scenes of Beauty-spots or places of interest etc. is usually some form of publicity, and strictly unnecessary. As nearly all stamps now come into this category, it does not mean that the essentials must necessarily be spoiled by the remainder of the design.

The first sheet of the 6-sheet display mentioned above contained 3 comparisons, wherein doubt was expressed as to whether the later stamp was any improvement on the original. The examples chosen were: the 2d "Union Buildings"

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Recess of 1927 and its counterpart of 1946, with the photographic centre and "violent" violet frame; the 3d "Groot Schuur" Recess of 1927 and the 1951 issue in blue. The 1/- "Gnus" Recess of 1927 and the 1953 issue in blackish brown and blue.

The second sheet showed 3 further comparisons where the designs showed an improvement. The 1d Van Riebeck's Ship. London Printing of 1926, and the screened printing of 1953, where the wider margin due to the smaller format, and the re-drawn horizon distinguishing sea from the sky is a great improvement, the 3d Voortrekker Memorial of 1938 and the 1½d. Voortrekker Memorial of 1949, the latter being simplified by the omission of the scenes left and right of the circle containing the memorial, and the smaller and neater lettering; the 10/- "Table Mountain and Bay" Recess of 1927 and the 10/- "Groot Constantia" screened centre of 1944. Whilst the frame of the later design tends to be over-ornamental, there is little doubt that the centre plate is a great improvement on the very indistinct reproduction of Table Mountain on the earlier stamp.

Sheets No. 3 and 4 contained examples which, for various reasons, did not make for well-designed stamps

- (a) 1/- King George V in orange-yellow, or buff; in this case a well designed stamp is somewhat spoilt by a badly chosen colour.
- (b) 1925 Air Mails: the design is not a striking one and the printing, paper and perforations are poor. Very obviously they were not produced by a regular firm of stamp printers.
- (c) 2d Sailor Boy. Large War Effort; the white line round the head produces a peculiar 'halo' effect and is bad artistically. The vertical lettering on each side does not make for simplicity.

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- (d) 2d Voortrekker Covenant Celebrations 1955; blue and magenta. This design is badly balanced, the right half of the stamp being taken up with the head of A. Pretorius, whilst the left side shows a fluttering red, white and blue flag, superimposed on a ghostly outline of the Church of the Vow. The choice of colours hardly befits the occasion.
- (e) The 3d and 6d Centenary of Pretoria; here the portraits of Kruger and Pretorius and, in each case, too large for the format. As they were originally reproduced from old photographs, a reduced image would have improved both the portraits and the finished stamp.
- (f) The 1d, 2d and 3d Victory Stamps; those poor designs, not well-balanced and not improved by the choice of colours. The subject of "Victory" is treated with sickly sentiment, rather than with dignity.
- (g) The $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 1d and $1\frac{1}{2}$ d Voortrekkers 1938; most of the stamps in the 1st and 2nd Voortrekker sets have over-elaborate designs, every possible space being filled in with symbols or ornamentation which give the stamps a crowded appearance, and detracts from their main feature. Similar remarks can be applied to the Huguenot issue.

The last two sheets of the exhibit were devoted to examples of Union Stamps which have reached a higher standard of design.

- (a) The First Stamp of the Union; $2\frac{1}{2}$ d blue. Although this is rather more ornate than necessary by present day standards, it was nevertheless a good design with which to commemorate a great occasion in the history of South Africa.

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- (b) The King George V Heads, 2½d, 4d, 6d and 1/3d. A sound design for a set of definitives and nearly all the stamps have been produced in well-chosen colours.
- (c) The 5/- definitive Pictorial: a well-balanced design, in good colours - black and green - with the main theme of the out-spanned ex-wagon standing out clearly.
- (d) The ½d Voortrekker 1933: this stamp is the simplest of the Voortrekker designs, well-balanced, not over ornate produced in a pleasant combination of black and pale green.
- (e) The 4d Large War Effort: a fine, bold design, eminently suited to the occasion and conveying all that is required in a postage stamp without superfluous adornment.
- (f) The 1/- Van Riebeeck Tercentenary: this stamp shows good treatment of a difficult subject - an assembly of persons. In a pleasant shade of brown and without any ornamental frame, it might easily have been spoiled by being produced in a violent colour.
- (g) The Animal Series: 4d Elephant, 4½d Hippopotamus, 1/3d Springbok and the 10/- Sable Antelope. This series is generally an attractive one, especially to collectors of "Thematics" but several stand out as being well designed and in well-chosen colours.

A pleasant and instructive time can be spent comparing and analysing the designs of the stamps of the Union. The tastes of the individual will no doubt vary considerably, but this is not altogether a question of personal likes and dislikes. Bearing in mind that Postage Stamps are primarily designed for the use of the Post Office and not collectors, our criticisms should centre round the old question - 'What makes for a well-designed stamp?'

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Extracts from Press News issued by Netherlands Aeronautical
Museum, Rusthoskstr.21, The Hague, Holland.

"Delivery of mail in tree tops of South Africa.

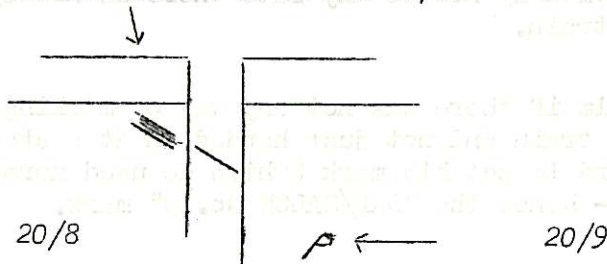
Great excitement was caused by the big Dutch balloon Oxygenium when she descended in the trees of a South African forest, belonging to the in movie business well known family Goodman at Norwood. The Hague Ballooncommander, John Boesman took off from sports ground in Johannesburg accompanied by one passenger, a South African photographer. Their trip was very uneasy by the height of Johannesburg and a severe thermic, making the basket swing quite a bit. Soon the ballast had gone and a decision was made to execute a forced landing, leaving balloon, passengers and mail in high tree tops. A group of natives discovered the balloon and to their great astonishment they could not find an engine whatsoever in the basket. They then decided a "strange bird from heaven" came down."

Doctor Gordon Ward comes to our aid with information about one or two queries raised in recent issues as follows -

Issue No. 6, Vol. 6, page 111. "Starboard light". Electro III.
I have this as illustrated in a block which proves the position as row 12/5. It is also noted as an early stage of the calabash flaw - which is also noted as row 12/5 in the Union Handbook.

Issue No. 1, Vol. 7. Page II.
The original photo-die is a block of four and not a pair as the article says. The persistent block of four pattern of flaws repeated throughout the sheet seems to prove this.

Same issue. Page 9. Question (d).
This is the brush mark referred to on row 20/8



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THE BLUE TRAIN

by Dr. J. H. Harvey Pirie.

The Train De Luxe, operating, I think, twice a week between Johannesburg and Cape Town, later became known as "The Blue Train". I do not know just when it started but I suppose this could be found out from the Railway Authorities. My earliest cover from it is dated October 1938. At this period "Train letters" with 3d in stamps (i.e. 2d in addition to the ordinary 1d) could be handed to the conductor of the train and he cancelled the stamps with an oval postmark reading "conductor/Train De Luxe" between the double ovals and "S.A.R. & H/6 Oct 1938" in the centre. S.A.R. & H. - South African Railways and Harbours. He handed over to the Postal Authorities at first stop which in this case was Kimberley, their ordinary postmark, not over the stamps, was of date 7 Oct 38 6 A.M. On the back of the envelope, which was one supplied by the Train, is a little printed statement in 5 lines "Aboard South African Railways De Luxe Express Bound For" which I see I have filled in "Johannesburg/6 Oct 1938". That I fancy is the only way of telling which direction one was taking.

My next specimen is in 1939. Again a charge of 3d, the same as for "Rail Letters" i.e. Letters handed in at a Railway Station just before a train is due to leave with cancellation by the Station authorities. Again, however, the stamps have been cancelled by the Train Conductor but a different type of rubber stamp - rectangular with 3 compartments; top "Conductor", centre "S.A.R. & H - S.A.S. & H/7-8-1939/TRAIN/TREIN DE LUXE", bottom "Kontrollleur". Bilingualism had come in! The true postal cancellation is Johannesburg 8-VIII-39 17.15 so I presume this had been posted on a train from Cape Town to Johannesburg but although again on a train envelope, there was not the little story as on the previous specimen.

My next and last specimen is as described in the "T.P.O." note reproduced in the magazine.

This was written by me on the journey down from Johannesburg but there is no way of telling this from the cover. When I gave it to the Conductor and asked him to cancel it he replied I have no longer any "stamp" and am not allowed to cancel stamps - that is done at the station where I hand over letters, hence the S.A.R. etc. cancellation Kimberley. These were posted on train from Johannesburg to Cape Town but obviously now at any rate there is no way of telling whether it is from an up or down train.

When I asked him if there was not any way of marking the cover to show it was definitely from the train and not just handed in at a station he told me he could get the Chief Steward to put his mark (which he used normally for putting on receipts for stores) - hence the "CAR/SALON No.29" mark.

" THE SPRINGBOK "

Incidentally the postage was 6d not 7d, i.e., the ordinary 2d rate plus 4d for "train letter" service, this extra fee had just recently been raised to that amount.

I think there is a sort of train de luxe service between Durban and Johannesburg sometimes called the "Orange Train" but I have never travelled by it.

In any case such "train letters" are now not of such interest as they were when they actually received cancellations on the train. They are now merely on a par with ordinary train letters that can be obtained by handing in letters with the extra fee at any station.

(We are very much indebted to the Editor of the "South African Philatelist" for this interesting information obtained first-hand - does any member have similar knowledge of the "Orange Train"? If so, we should like to hear about it.)

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

Reference Vol. 7, No. 1, Page 6 - flaws on hyphenated 1d by Mr Brown, I am able to record another copy of flaw from plate XVI "line under AF of Africa" - I described this flaw in volume 2 page 12 but unfortunately was unable to provide an illustration.

Peterborough. K. H. GILES.

Dear Sir,

Whilst seeking information about the Mobile Post Offices I could not find any as to dates of opening of Offices 3, 5, 6 and 7.

I wrote to the genial Publicity Officer, Pretoria and received the information -

- | | | |
|--------|----------------|---|
| No. 1. | Johannesburg. | First service was on 25.1.1937 in a converted lorry but a specially designed and first proper mobile van was put into use on 10th May 1939. |
| No. 3. | Port Elizabeth | opened 2.9.40. |
| No. 5. | Cape Town | 2.9.40 |
| No. 6. | Durban | 20.5.40 |
| No. 7. | Pretoria | 1.8.40 |

London.

R. D. ALLEN, Snr.

" THE SPRINGBOOK "

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

New Members.

365. Dr. Z. Gurevics, c/o Nisselle (Pty.) Ltd., 288 Little Collins Street,
Melbourne, Australia.
366. G. W. Farnham, 24 Drovers Way, Dunstable, Beds.
367. John E. Banfield, Meads Cottage, Ryton, Nr Shifnal, Salop.

Member Rejoining.

46. F. J. Falkiner, Belfast
84. A. W. Cousins, Hemel Hempstead.

Change of Address.

333. Mrs D. Branwell, The Ascension Vicarage, Pountney Road, London, S.W.11.

Resignations.

115. S. H. Urlwin, Leigh-on-Sea.
241. E. S. Jones, Rhyl.
272. C. Clement, Matatielle, South Africa.

PRESS CUTTINGS

"South African Philatelist" January 1959. Report of new Coat-of-Arms type of watermark. Continuation of The Union 2d Photo-vignette Hyphenated Rotogravure Stamps by G. N. Gilbert and P. D. Haigh, (to be further continued). Supplementary Notes on The Airposts of South Africa booklet issued recently. (to be contd.) Annual Index.

The "O.F.S." Philatelic Magazine January 1959. Further Boer War covers illustrated in article by A. L. Meyburgh.

Dr. Gordon Ward of 7 Pembroke Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, writes that he is trying to sort out the 1d ship issues typographed in London and Pretoria and would be obliged if anyone could and would lend him material especially large blocks of known positions for plating purposes. All items will be returned speedily and postage paid. Please help if you can do, for in turn we are sure we shall all be helped.