

THE TRIANGULAR STAMPS OF CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

SUPPLEMENT

Page 25. Line 28. "narrower" should be "wider".

Page 38. Para. 2. It is suggested by C. P. Rang (*Gibbons' Stamp Monthly*, July 1950) that impression 2 on ROLLER R2 was taken up before the words ONE PENNY were engraved on the MASTER DIE D1 which was complete with background.

Page 42. Para. 3. The hypotenuse dot is closer to die B whether or not it shows the F flaw.

Page 47. The alignments stated should be superseded by the following mm. measurements of the distances apart of base lines below inner edges of corner parallelograms (with die A on top and using a steel scale on die or plate proofs).

1d. pair—left 1.3; right 1.4.

4d. pair—left 1.4; right 1.5.

6d. pair—left 1.6; right 1.6.

1s. pair—left 1.4; right 1.4.

Page 50. Stephen G. Rich (*Collectors' Club Philatelist*, September 1950) suggests locating constant marks on stamps with reference to the transfer side points. Even with the 4d. stamps this must be left for future research as the only regular plate marks identified yet are the E strokes.

Page 51. Line 6. Delete "at the end of the book".

Page 53. Add additional constant mark (reproduced overleaf):—

LXIII. Die A. Patch below PE and diagonal stroke in gutter to right of H of HOPE.

Page 54. Para. 1. Though re-entry II was definitely inverted, confirmation of inversion of the pair I on its re-entry requires additional measurements.

Page 65. Douglas Roth suggests that A of watermark in central block may have been reversed in reproduction.

Page 66. W. E. Lea reports two additional varieties (reproduced overleaf):—

VII Die A. This shows curve I (2), a curve across middle of loop of P of CAPE and marks, apparently re-entries, in OF HOPE.

VIII Die B. This shows lines, apparently re-entries, in lower parts of letters G, OPE of base and in bases of letters NCE. Right parallelogram is doubled.

Page 71. Douglas Armstrong (*Stamp Collecting*, April 1950) describes a re-examination of the dies and stereos in the South African Museum.

Page 76. D. Roth doubts whether the 1d. blue error occurred in row 2 as he has a copy which appears to be marginal on the POSTAGE edge. There might be two settings of the error.

Page 90. The blue shilling was noted by Bacon and not by Pemberton.

Page 93. In the *London Philatelist* (June 1950), the reviewer points out that the close proximity to its neighbour of the stamp with retouched corner almost precludes the possibility of it being in exactly the same position on both large and small frames. This suggests that the damage occurred in removing the cliché from the small to the large frame.

Page 112. A. A. Jurgens considers that although Francis & Co. made the oval date stamp, the triangular defacing stamps were made possibly by Twentyman & Co. who supplied pre-stamp defacers.



BLUE PAIR WITH 1d. COLOUR ERROR, RED BLOCK OF FOUR WITH 4d. COLOUR ERROR, UNUSED BLUE 1d. COLOUR ERROR (CUT MARGIN), UNUSED PAIR PALE BLUE 4d., UNUSED BLUE 4d., UNUSED PAIR RED 1d. AND ONE OF THE FINEST KNOWN USED RED 1d.

As stated in the Introduction, a spot in the 1d. unused pair is scarcely perceptible, and the cut base of the 1d. unused error of colour is seen repaired.

RARE WOODBLOCKS.

THE TRIANGULAR STAMPS OF CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

D. ALAN STEVENSON

B.Sc., F.R.S.(EDIN.), M.I.C.E.



1950

H. R. HARMER LIMITED

32 EAST 57TH STREET
NEW YORK, 22.

39-42 NEW BOND ST.
LONDON, W.1.

2B CASTLEREAGH ST.
SYDNEY.

TO
FRANK GODDEN
WHO FIRST SET TRIANGLES ACROSS MY PATH
AND EASED MY PROGRESS OVER MANY STILES
AND TO MY FAMILY
WHO ENDURED WITH IMPERTURBABLE GOOD HUMOUR
THE CONSEQUENT INUNDATION OF STAMPS AND MSS.

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INTRODUCTION

THIS book is my tribute to the charm of these beautiful stamps and is intended to bring simply and conveniently to collectors information which has resulted from widespread enquiries and laborious examination of thousands of specimens. It brings together the known facts and includes original matter, unpublished hitherto, relating to the stamps engraved by Perkins Bacon, such as re-entries and constant marks of the 4*d.* and 6*d.*, central dot of the 4*d.* pair, separation of two dies of the 1*d.* and inversion of dies on the printing plates of all values. The diagrams should assist in setting the whole subject in proper perspective.

I am glad that space has sufficed to include reference to the postal stones and to early sea-transport which necessarily affected the development of South Africa's postal system and the history of the triangular stamps. Opportunity has been taken to include rather than to exclude facts that might prove of interest hereafter. I am under great obligation to H. R. Harmer and C. H. C. Harmer for facilitating my work and for many valuable suggestions.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to the delightful books by Gilbert J. Allis [15] and A. A. Jurgens [26] in which they collected information in wonderful detail. The reader is directed to these excellent works and also to the articles by Brazer, Meyer and Rich [29, 30], who have written fully on essays and proofs. Copies of records collected by Allis have enabled information included in his book to be checked and amplified. Of Perkins Bacon records, two books of die proofs and a roller are all that can be seen at the Royal Philatelic Society, London. A. A. Jurgens kindly sent me photographs of Charles Bell and Saul Solomon, and as Trustee of the Elliott collection in Cape Town has permitted me to reproduce them. All stamps illustrated are in my collection, except when stated otherwise. The illustration of the blue-framed 1*d.* is from E. C. Francis. I am grateful to Miss Jean Brown for her assistance in preparing many drafts of my script.

Responsibility for views expressed is entirely mine and all uncertainties have been indicated. In the attempt to make each section fairly independent, some repetition has been unavoidable. The coloured illustrations are included not merely for their decorative value but because they should give a fair impression of the range of colours of the various issues. But matching stamps for shades with those reproduced in this book is quite impossible, so shades are not named except in particular instances which might be helpful. One reason for this difficulty is that, although a certain shade might

be copied by a separate printing from a special mixture of inks, a compromise is necessary when a range of shades is to be reproduced on one Plate. Further, differences in the papers used for printing a stamp and printing its reproduction prevent near-matching and affect several items in the colour Plates. A careful examination of Plate I (as stated thereon) will show the only touching-up effected in these reproductions. This was considered desirable as colour range and not stamp detail was concerned, but the fact is emphasised. Further, for strict accuracy it might be stated that several stamps illustrated have imperfections not visible from the process of reproduction.

I hope this book will stimulate research into the questions outstanding. It contains no magic formula for distinguishing Perkins Bacon from De La Rue printings, but to those who have seen a fair number of stamps which are identified correctly, only a small proportion of 4*d.* and a few copies of the other denominations will cause difficulty and this, unfortunately, cannot be overcome by means other than wide experience. The glossiness of De La Rue prints affords a useful distinction that has been overlooked. It is easy enough to separate De La Rue prints into groups of like stamps in respect of clearness of print and shades of colour but it is impossible yet to determine which are different printings and to date these or put them in the correct sequence. The student's difficulty in identification is shared by many professionals: few selections of triangulars do not include Perkins Bacon prints misnamed De La Rue—most frequently the 4*d.*, then the 1*d.* and, less often, the 6*d.*

It is curious that although these triangular stamps have always been favourites with collectors, ever since their unpretentious introduction in Cape Colony in 1853, many decades passed before important details were discovered. In 1924 the two dies were detected in the 4*d.*, 6*d.*, and 1*s.* of the Perkins Bacon plates, in 1925 the three types of clichés were noticed in the 4*d.* woodblocks and in 1935 and 1936 re-entries were discovered in the 4*d.* Perkins Bacon plates and the curved line in the 6*d.* All these points are visible to the eye without magnification: yet over seventy years elapsed after issue of the stamps before any of these characteristics were observed. Two prominent philatelists considered that the engraved triangulars "presented no great field for study". With these words M.P. Castle in 1908 [3] emphasised Sir Edward Bacon's declaration that these issues were "of a remarkably simple matter, presenting no philatelic variations except those of shade arising from the varying printings and the change of printers. For this reason doubtless there has always been a remarkable absence in the philatelic journals of any articles dealing with these stamps". Philately has suffered from a lack of workers with scientific training and outlook. Among those who have added to the specialised knowledge of triangulars the name of P. L. Pemberton stands out with particular prominence.

In my work on this book I have found great help from setting down facts and figures graphically. The results often suggest enquiry in other directions and I recommend this procedure to students and specialists in philately.

Fair copies of Cape triangulars can be found with reasonable facility but the

search for really fine copies is well worth while and is far from being a matter of merely unlimited funds. How greatly older collectors must regret the opportunities of their youth when all these fine stamps could be had, and that at no large expenditure! The De La Rue prints are not yet appreciated sufficiently. Old catalogues and auction records abound with information which is a real help to collectors of classic stamps and offer a fascinating source of knowledge which is largely untapped. These records demonstrate that Cape triangulars have risen steadily in the esteem of collectors over a period of years—but in making any comparisons it must not be overlooked that *condition* dominates the values of stamps now far more than formerly. Among sound advice on collecting, which could not be bettered to-day, C. J. Phillips included in his *Fifty Years of Philately* published in 1906 an assessment of the stamps of various countries and his remarks on Cape triangulars deserve quotation—"debenture stock, always a safe seller, and always increasing in value."

In describing the Cape triangular stamp as the Queen of Classics, and claiming that it led them in popularity, Frank Godden wrote in 1939: "These beautiful miniatures, with their novel shape, have lent themselves—more than any other—to this spell of romance and glamour in the finding and possession of old and rare stamps." M. P. Castle named it "the most popular stamp in the world—from the most youthful collector upwards". We must be grateful to Charles Bell for his striking design and to Perkins Bacon for their splendid workmanship.

One of the attractions of the triangulars is the provisional issue, popularly termed "woodblocks", which was printed at short notice at Cape Town in 1861. Its famous errors in colour are outstanding among the great treasures of philately. So long as the charm of lovely things remains with us, Cape triangulars will continue to fascinate philatelists all over the world as the most interesting issue of postage stamps yet made, and I feel it is a great privilege to be able to add something new to our knowledge of them.

D. ALAN STEVENSON.

22 GLENCAIRN CRESCENT,
EDINBURGH. February 1950.