



Founded 1911

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Hon Life President: David Sinclair President 2020/2022: Ida Potgieter

Hon Sec: Victor Millard (royalphilct@gmail.com)

Meetings will be held at the Athenaeum, Campground Road, Newlands
on the 2nd & 4th Mondays at 7.30 for 8pm
VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

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Important Notices

1. Hugh Amoore invites exhibits for the 2021 syllabus; contact him at hugh.amoore@uct.ac.za
2. Meetings will be held under Covid19 conditions: **Face masks and hand sanitizing will be compulsory. Seating arrangements in the Newberry Hall will ensure social distancing. For safety reasons only the Librarian will be allowed inside the Library**
3. Society Auction: there will be an auction on 25 January 2021. If you have material for this auction, please bring this to a meeting in the next three months or deliver it to Hugh Amoore before year-end.

Dates to diarise Meetings as follows:

1. 26 October 2020 display by **Victor Millard** on *"Imperial Airways: A Time Shrinker's Chronology"*. The display covers the time from inception of Imperial Airways on 1 April 1924 to 1 April 1940 when there was a name change to BOAC. There will be additional material from the display which achieved a Large Silver at the Benoni show.
2. 9 November 2020:
 - (a) **Alan Rogers GB King George V** (Alan will show the exhibit he was to have shown at London 2020; AND
 - (b) **Competition evening**: All members are urged to enter an exhibit (or more than one) for the Crocker Shield (one frame/ 15 or sixteen standard sheets); or a postal history exhibit; or a thematic exhibit; or an exhibit by a member who has not showed competitively at a national before.
3. 23 November 2020
A special evening devoted to:
 - (a) **A short special general meeting** (agenda to follow in November)
 - (b) **Displays** by two senior members to mark their 50 years as members of the Society: Life President **David Sinclair** and **Brian Fenemore** joined the Royal in 1970 and will each give a display illustrative of just some of their philatelic interest and collections.
 - (c) **A tribute to Jenny Siebert**, who joined the Society in 1959, and has been a member since then!!
4. 14 December 2020: **President's Evening**: displays by the President and members of the RPST Committee
5. 25 January 2021: **Society Auction**
6. 9-13 November 2021 **Cape Town 2021**

Society News

We welcome new member Andrew Putter.

Editorial

The first post lockdown meeting was a reminder of how members value meetings and how good an evening, with an excellent display, is.

The meeting was held under strict Covid 19 conditions. The recent Western Cape “super-spreader” event has reminded us that: “we cannot relax”. Hand washing, hand sanitizing, physical distancing, mask wearing and not touching common surfaces, when out at gatherings are crucial. **If meetings are to continue, we must observe rules.**

It is a characteristic of philatelists that there is no end to the study of our material. Our member, Jannie Hofmeyr, currently resident on Vancouver Island, has recently enjoyed the distinction of presenting a paper to the *Fourth International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately* held, virtually, over three weeks in October in conjunction with the Smithsonian. His paper was the result of five days spent doing advanced study at the Smithsonian in 2019 and will be published in the proceedings of the Symposium. The abstract of Jannie’s paper was:

In this paper I argue that reflectance technology should be used to formalize the classification of stamp shades. The US 1861 3¢ serves well for this purpose because of the range of shades and their values. My analysis draws attention to two fundamental problems with traditional methods, which I call ‘Reference Copy’ and ‘Cluster Algorithm’ problems. I test a range of spectrographic sampling methods and suggest a formal protocol for future measurement. The paper concludes by suggesting the use of CIE 1976 Lab coordinates for some of the key shades of the stamp.

The work reported at this Symposium was of the highest order, as the following papers presented at the 2nd session, attest:

Harry Brittain, FRSC, Use of X-Ray Diffraction and Infrared Absorption Spectroscopy for Study of Paper and Ink in Postage Stamps

Bob Mustacich, Computer Analysis of Die-Cut Stamp Edges

Bob Hisey, Single Pixel Colorimetry and Optical Density in Philately

Mere mortals who listened to Dr Brittain’s paper (for example his explanation why Raman spectroscopy¹ would not be applicable to the problem he was interested in) may be excused for asking: Why? Well, to give just one example related to one of his philatelic interests (the confederate states issues):

There are two printings of the 2¢ intaglio Andrew Jackson stamp which can be scientifically identified by paper type. Brittain has published ground-breaking research on papers and inks in *The Confederate Philatelist*, and his certificates for this stamp address whether stamps are from the First or Second Printing, based on his paper studies!

¹ Raman spectroscopy is a spectroscopic technique typically used to determine vibrational modes of molecules, although rotational and other low-frequency modes of systems may also be observed.

Along with philatelic study goes the need to be precise about terminology. It matters if a watermark is inverted or reversed; it matters if a 2d Kings Head is of the deep plum shade; and it matters if a seahorse 5/- was printed by Waterlow Brothers & Layton and not by Bradbury Wilkinson. Why then is the philatelic community (most of it anyway) so indulgent about the sloppy use of the term “reprint”?

Alexander J Sefi divided fakes and forgeries into seven types; the fifth was: “Reprints which might be passed off as original”.²

This is a plea for a rigorous approach to the use of the term in philatelic writing, in catalogues, and in write-ups of material for society display or exhibition.

In their delightful “Stamp Collector and the Philatelist: How to gain the Badge” written for the Boy Scouts Association L.N. & M. W. (Williams) define the term succinctly:

“Reprint. – An impression made from the original printing base after the issue has been withdrawn.”³

In their “Fundamentals of Philately” the Williams brothers amplify this:

“Reprints. These are prints taken from the printing base of issued stamps after they have out of use; the reprints, normally, differ in one or more particulars such as paper or color from the issued stamps. They frequently form part of reference or other collections.”⁴

The Bennet & Watson, Gibbons-published *Philatelic Terms Illustrated* (2nd edition 1978) gets this half right:

Reprints. Stamps, other than re-issues ... printed from the original plates after the official stamps had ceased to be current, usually to satisfy the demands of collectors. Sometimes the plates were disposed of with the remainders so that the purchaser could print as many more stamps as he wished, as in the case of the infamous Nicholas F. Seebeck who contracted to supply certain Latin-American states with stamps free of charge in the 1890s's; in return, he acquired all unsold remainders and the original plates.

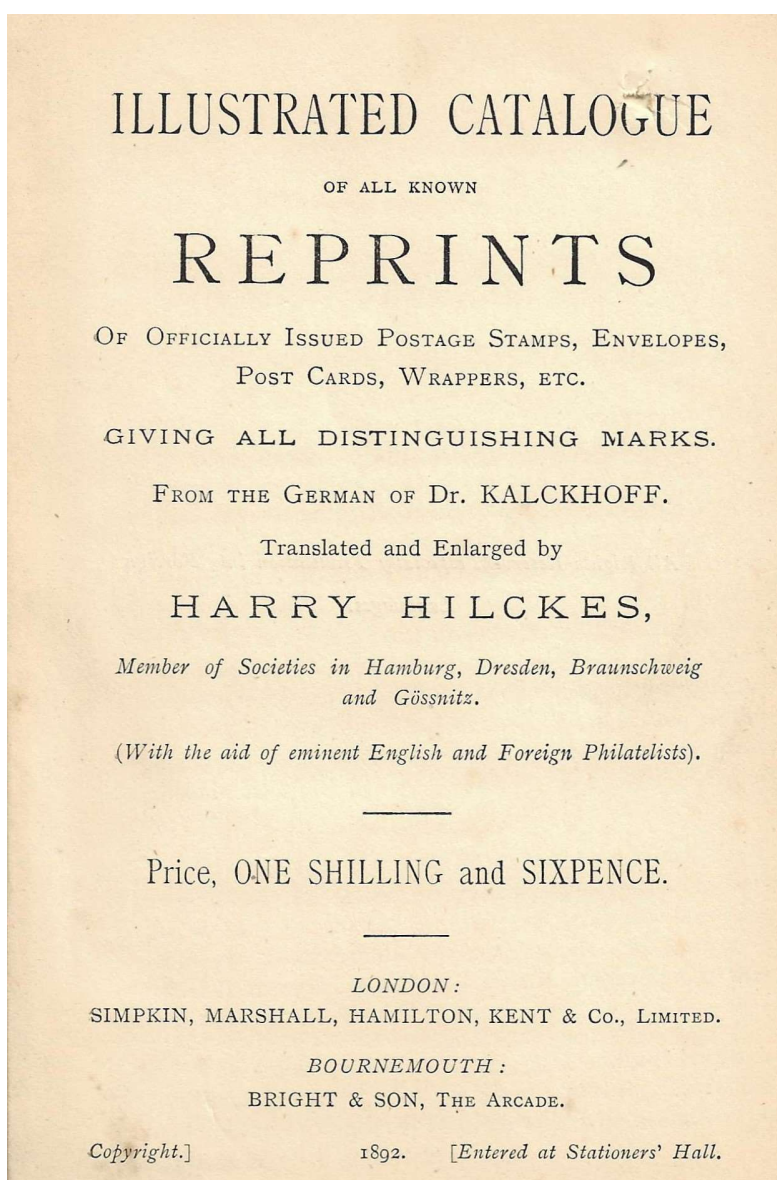
They go on: “‘Reprints’ is the term also applied by the Crown Agents to new printings of Commonwealth stamps in relation to the normal replenishment of current and permanent definitive issues.” The use of the term in that non-technical context should not be confused with its technical, or if you prefer, jargon, usage in philately. The Crown Agents are not and have never been philatelists!

While the Williams brothers were right that reprints can form [useful] additions to reference collections, they are often dangerous as they can be confused with, or passed off as, the real thing. No Transvaal collector will buy a Vurtheim £5 deep green (SG 187), mint or “used” without a certificate or expert knowledge; the *real thing* is worth a lot of money (and deserves a good home) while reprints of the £5 are two-a-penny. The extent of this danger is shown by a remarkable 1892 catalogue “of all known reprints” compiled with Teutonic thoroughness. This was translated and published in English:

² Alexander J Sefi was a stamp dealer and philatelist who signed the Roll in 1933. He is best known for his “*An introduction to advanced philately*” (1926). This quote is from his paper: “*Forgeries and Fakes, with Special Reference to Modern Methods of Detection*” delivered to the 1929 Birmingham Congress of the GB Philatelic Federation.

³ Williams, LN & M (1950) *Stamp Collector and Philatelist: How to gain the Badge*. Scout Badge Test Series No 9. Glasgow. Brown, Son & Ferguson Limited

⁴ Williams, LN & M (1971) *Fundamentals of Philately*. Atlantic City. The American Philatelic Society, Inc. p 13



The entry for the Cape of Good Hope is instructive:

"An official reprint [of the 1d and 4d woodblocks] was made in 1884. The stamps are printed upon smooth wove paper, instead of laid and the colours are much darker. Besides this there exists an official "facsimile" of 1873. The inscriptions on the sides are far too short and differ in shape; they are printed on smooth white paper, the 1d in orange red (and black) and the 4d stamp in light blue; they are in the imperial collection in Berlin, having been obtained officially."

Stevenson puts the record straight on these facsimiles and concludes that "they must surely, bluntly, be described as forgeries". (p124)

Stevenson details the 1883 official re-printing of the woodblocks issues. He notes: "Re-prints were made of the 1d. and 4d. woodblocks in sheets of 62 and 63 – in shades of colour different from the original and

escribed as bright red and deep indigo blue – 195 sheets were printed of each denomination.” These were distributed to other Postal Services. That some of these came onto the market was one of the reasons for the early demonetisation of the triangular issues.⁵

And then we have Jurgens’ 1940/1941 woodblock reprints, which he himself detailed, and those he did not but which were found subsequently.⁶

The editor’s plea therefore is that philatelists should use *reprint* in this sense; too often a 2nd (or nth) printing of an issue is referred to as a reprint. It was not. It should not be so called.

Account of the 12 October 2020 Meeting

The penny lilac



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Account of the 12 October 2020 Meeting

At the first meeting since the President (of the Republic) imposed a lockdown under the Disaster Management Act (on 9 March 2020), Malcom Suttill showed the exhibit he was to have taken to the since postponed London 2020 Exhibition, and what a memorable evening his display made. The title of the display was:

⁵ These reprints remain collectable. Lots 20091 & 20092 of the Lady Hope Collection, Feldman 2003, were reprints including the “1883 reprints of the Woodblocks 1d (5) and 4d (2), 1940 sheets of 63 each of the 1d and 4d in black”.

⁶ Jurgens, AA (1947?) The Handstruck Letter Stamps of the Cape of Good Hope 1=from 1792 – 1853 and the postmarks from 1853 to 1910, pp 123,124

⁷ Image by Scan by Stan Shebs, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=266056>

From line engraved to the ubiquitous penny lilac

The Penny Lilac superseded the short-lived 1d Venetian red because the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1881 necessitated new stamps that were valid for both postage and revenue. The oval design of the Penny Lilac was adapted from that used for revenue stamps in Britain from the early 1860s. The Penny Lilac was issued in two forms:

- Die I with 14 dots in each corner from 12 July 1881 (495,984,000 issued)
- Die II with 16 dots in each corner, 13 December 1881–1901 (33,600,000,000 issued)

Malcolm explained that the advent of new chemical solvents led to concerns in the British Post Office about the dangers that the Post Office revenue might be affected were the public to use these to enable the fraudulent reuse of cleaned, line-engraved stamps. They needed fugitive inks. The result was a set of unsuccessful trials (by Perkins Bacon, anxious to retain the low-value postage-stamps printing contract) followed by two tenders. In 1879 seven companies were invited to tender for the 1d values and in 1880 for the remaining low value postage stamps. The 1d result was the 1d venetian red stamp (SG 166) issued on 1 January 1880. This was a surface-printed *postage* stamp by De La Rue. It ended the Perkins Bacon printing and the design that had lasted for nearly 40 years.

But this did not satisfy the Post Office, worried as it was that the new stamp was not doubly fugitive. These concerns, De La Rues desire to consolidate the printing of the 1d *postage* and *revenue* stamps and the legislation of 1881 all made possible the new design, using the colour of the revenue duties and within three months of the new law being introduced the 1d lilac was born, a *postage and revenue* stamp that was to set the pattern for low value stamps for the empire for the next half century and more. Die 1 was issued on 12 July 1881 and die 2 on 13 December 1881. It was to remain current for over 20 years and some 33 billion stamps were issued.

Malcolm's display began with a choice selection of the line engraved stamps that preceded the surface printed low values.

First up was a selection of the ½d value in use in 1879: the line engraved SG 48. The display included choice specimens including plate 8 & the very difficult plate 9 used on cover. This was followed by examples of the last 1d reds including imprimaturs, a mint top left marginal block a plate 207 showing the plate number, a spectacular usage of plate 225 on a long cover and an important item: a piece of stamp Large Crown type II paper.

These are shown below.



This was followed by a page of the 1½ d line engraved issues, including a specimen of the 1860 stamp, a block of specimens of the 1870 issue and an example of the OP – PC flaw (for CP-PC).

This was followed by a selection of the very attractive final 2d line engraved stamps, with thick white lines (plates 7 – 12) and with thin white lines (plates 13- 15).

The line engraved section ended with a study of the underprints. In addition to the better known O.U.S. and Copestone Moore & Crampton Co underprints (on 1d, 1½d and 2d values!) we saw those of the stationers W H Smith and Son and J C Boyd.

This was by way of introduction and led into a marvellous selection of the trials and essays produced by the companies hoping to win the tender for the new stamps. Perhaps most important and most interesting were Malcolm's examples of the trials by Perkins Bacon, using the plate 191, but with fugitive inks. These are great rarities. (They do not exist in the Reginald Phillips Collection in the National Postal Museum!). We saw an array of the surface printed essays submitted by Perkins Bacon, by McCorquodale & Co, by Harrison & Sons, by Charles Skipper & East, and by Bradbury Wilkinson & Co, and by De La Rue to whom the contract was awarded.



A page from Malcolm's display showing the 1d venetian red; showing die proofs, imprimaturs, a specimen and issued stamps.



A page from Malcolm's display showing Perkins Bacon essays for the 1879 tender.

This led on to the study of the 1881 issue, the difference between the two dies and imprimaturs from the first plates – the “unknown” plate: and plate 2, as well as a stunning rose shade and an example of the controversial reddish shade (not listed by Gibbons) The study included a full pane of the die 2 stamps, a large multiple of specimen stamps, and an array of usage, in some cases with revenue stamps used to prepay postage.



The 1d lilac appeared in the first stamp booklets and shown was an example for the second series of booklets with the initials of the vending company SDC as a perfin.

The 1d lilac was the first stamp for which large scale studies of the plate letters is possible and we saw a good selection of these, including the “N’ for “O” error.

The stamp may be found with underprints and we saw the famous Pears Soap underprint as well as the OUS (Oxford University Society) underprint on the 1d lilac.



Several pages of stamps overprinted for officials and other purposes (as well as those for Bechuanaland) were shown with some important usages as a prelude to a study of usages of the unoverprinted stamp. This was prelude to a wonderful lot of illustrated envelopes and the Wonderland stamp case by Lewis Carrol.

A quite enchanting end to a magnificent display of an important stamp, to which these brief notes are an inadequate summary.

