

# KING GEORGE VI VARIETIES

## Part 20—Falkland Island Dependencies

(Continued from February GSM)

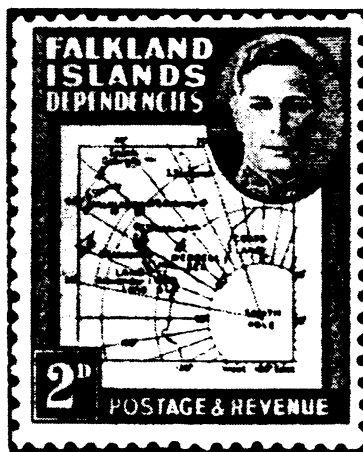
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### Shades in the First Map Issue

It has been suggested that, before dealing with the second Map Issue for the Falkland Island Dependencies released in 1948, a brief word about shades in the first, 1946, issue would be helpful.

Three values deserve comment— $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 4d. and 6d. They caused Mrs M A Owen to put pen to paper for *Stamp Collecting* soon after the release of the stamps on 1 February 1946. She noted two very distinct shades of green in the frame colour of the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and associated them with the use of centre plates, stating that the yellow-green found with CP2 was considerable lighter than the deep green found on sheets from CP1 and 3. Mrs Owen added that it was also possible to distinguish the slightly darker green linked to CP3. She reported that two frame shades could be found with the 4d. value: magenta tied to CP2, which appeared deeper in colour when compared with the claret from CP4. Bearing in mind comment in Part 19 (*GSM* February 1991) concerning the construction of the '240 set' centre plate, the remarks by Mrs Owen can be assessed against the very high probability that, after the very large sheets were quartered, the resulting '60 set' sheets were stacked at random. It, therefore, seems very reasonable that the frame shade centre plate combinations described by Mrs Owen did occur, albeit by accident. Furthermore, although sheets are hard to find in 1991, the existence of a sheet of the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. from CP2 which is darker than another from CP3, i.e. the reverse quoted by Mrs Owen, adds more evidence to the belief that random stacking of sheets occurred prior to printing the frames. The explanation for the shade differences could well have been slight changes in ink density during a printing run or simply the end of the working day interrupting a run.

Turning to the 6d. Mrs Owen suggested that the well-known ochre shade might have been due to a change in paper. This now seems to be out of the question as there was a bulk issue of the large mill sheets to meet the requisition for the eight values. A far more likely reason was offered by F Bentley Kettle when writing in *Stamp Collecting* on 23 September 1950. He remarked that the 6d. ochre gave him much food for thought as, having examined 20 different examples, none appeared to match in shade, which varied from 'something only describable as "bright mud" to those which are only a little duller than the normal stamp'. He offered the following explanation for the cause of the variation. 'The make-ready on the machine may, for some reason unknown, have been less than thorough than usual, with the result that ink from the previous run had been left in the ink duct and this adulterated the ink added for the new run. This off-shade ink would gradually work itself out and the shade in due course



would become normal, the shade in the meantime having varied over a whole range of colour. An alternative explanation might be dirty inking rollers or distributors, but neither of these explanations explain how the off-shade material passed the inspectors.' Bentley Kettle's reasoning seems to be very sound, unless someone else has other ideas, while the answer to his own query, must in 1991, be a matter for conjecture. However, some background information given by Marcus Fox to the King George VI Collectors' Society, is relevant. He has explained that recess printing requires an ink that is heavy and extremely dense so that it will completely fill the tiniest recess in the printing plate, while the matching of ink against a colour sheet is always a tricky business. Indeed, the Crown Agents Inspector at the printing works usually preferred to wait for several hours after printing before affixing his signature to a sheet submitted for his approval, as some colours had a tendency to change shade slightly. Faux has mentioned that up until the beginning of 1960 all sheets were given a preliminary examination by members of the printing staff to determine whether they were good or waste. The sheets were then generally put into packages containing 500 sheets (a ream) and passed over in small batches into the custody of the Crown Agents Stamp Examiners for their final examination and classification. This examination had to take into account the needs of stamp dealers, while not forgetting that the bulk of most issues was required for postal use. Prior to 1944, when the Crown Agents Bureau came into being, it had been the general practice to retain a small quantity of each value, of new issues only, in this country for three months. At the expiration of that time all stamps not sold to dealers were sent to the Postal Authority. There were only two exceptions—the 1935 Silver Jubilee and the 1937 Coronation

issues, when supplies were retained for a much longer period. This may seem very strange today when Philatelic Bureaux proliferate around the world, but older readers will remember that dealers had to replenish their stocks by buying direct from a colony—hence the appearance of climatised stamps with brownish gum.

Faux has stressed that great care was taken when selecting the stamps to be set aside for dealers and has recalled that some had been returned to the Crown Agents, particularly when of high value, with a reminder that perfection was expected! The CA Examiners used three categories—supplies for dealers, supplies for normal postage use and waste. Four factors determined the category. First, to have colours approximating to the colours on the colour chart, secondly, to have a well centred design, thirdly, to have perforations clear of the design and, lastly, the watermark had to be as shown on the colour chart. A slight relaxation of the standard concerning perforation was allowed on sheets destined for postal use. All waste was destroyed by burning. Bearing all this in mind and remembering that in 1946 paper and ink was in short supply, together with the pressing need to despatch the issue quickly, it is reasonable to suggest that even if the 'bright mud' shade described by Kettle had been noticed, it may have been classified as 'approximate' in the eyes of the examiner and allowed through. Furthermore, it is possible that the variation in shade gradually occurred over a fair number of sheets, as suggested by Kettle, and was not noticed by someone looking through hundreds of sheets. In conclusion, *Commonwealth* lists both shades of the 4d. value, calling them reddish-claret and deep lake, and the 6d., describing the shades as orange and yellow-ochre. Part 1 restricts comment to the 6d.—orange and ochre.

### Crown Agents Records for the Second Map Issue

The requisition book contains the usual information covering the orders for the second general issue for the FID released in 1948. Requisition (Req) 5275/1 lists the same eight values ( $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 1s.) used for the 1946 release. Req 5397/2 deals with the new  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and Req 5464/1 covers the extra supply of the 3d. called for in 1949. Finally Req 6265/1 is concerned with a further printing of the 1d. released in 1953. The paper issue book was also completed in the normal way, but, most unfortunately, the plate issue book only records the distribution of minor quantities of stamps, such as the customary allocation of four stamps ear-marked for the Royal Collection. These were usually taken from the lower right corner with the plate number or, if otherwise, the corner with the plate number. Faux has

explained that King George V gave instructions about how the blocks were to be presented—the two margins having to be cut with scissors and the perforations torn. It was not unknown for blocks to be returned if these instructions were not carried out precisely. It is curious that the plate issue book does not contain information about the issue and return of plates, indeed, in one instance, the ½d. issued in 1953, there is no record about anything.

Both the requisition book and the paper issue book agree that the sheets for all values were '60 set'. The planned date for the despatch of Req 5275/1 was 'about 30 September 1947'. The eventual despatch dates varied between 19 January and 3 April 1948. 9350 large mill sheets (i.e. 37,400 sheets '60 set') were issued on 30 June 1947 to meet the needs of the requisition. This took into account an anticipated wastage totalling 6233 '60 set' sheets. The relevant details are set out in the table.

Value	No of Sheets Required	No. of Sheets Issued for Printing	No of Sheets Despatched	Date of Despatch
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
½d.	6176	7400	6348	5 Feb 48/3 Apr 48
1d.	4500	5400	4700	19 Jan 48/2 Apr 48
2d.	3500	4200	3697	5 Feb 48/2 Apr 48
3d.	4000	4800	3933	19 Jan 48/2 Apr 48
4d.	2750	3300	2825	5 Feb 48/2 Apr 48
6d.	3500	4200	3526	5 Feb 48/2 Apr 48
9d.	3500	4200	3677	5 Feb 48/2 Apr 48
1s.	3250	3900	3450	5 Feb 48/2 Apr 48

The difference between the quantities shown in columns (b) and (c) is the number of sheets allowed for waste. It can be seen from column (d) that the number of sheets despatched, with one exception, exceeded the number ordered. Wastage had not reached the expected figure. The Crown Agents were empowered to accept up to 10 per cent more than the total order of a value and 10 per cent less than the full amount if wastage was higher than planned. The planning figure for waste was not constant, for example, when only a 100 sheets of a high value were required, an extra 50 sheets could be used and wasted to 'prove' a plate. On the other hand, should a great quantity of a low value be needed then the allowance would be 10 per cent. Finally, to complete the account of Req 5275/1 there is a note in the remarks column that sheets for the colony were to be numbered '1 up' for each duty and interleaved with waxed paper. A further note states that 30,000 of the 3d. and 20,000 of the 1d. were to be despatched direct to South Georgia. The plate issue book is not helpful merely recording 'HM.4. DLR 120 all values'.

Req 5397/2 called for 4834 sheets (60 set) of a new value—the 2½d. The date due was 1 October 1948. The eventual despatch dates were 6 December 1948 and 22 February 1949, when 4855 sheets left De La Rue with 1500 destined for the Crown Agents Bureau. The plate issue book notes only, 'CA 1, CI 1, CO 2, HM 8, GPO 385 (DLR 341)'. However, the paper issue book records not only the issue of 5800 sheets to meet the order for 4834, but an additional 1964 sheets to fulfill a reprint of 1125 (these details were written in red ink in the book, a practice used to draw attention to the comment). Eight more sheets were also issued for ink testing. The implications of these records will be considered later.

Req 6464/1 was for an additional order of 1667 sheets of the 3d.—wanted by 22 May

1949'. A single sheet of mill paper (four out) was issued on 2 March 1949 for an ink test and was followed by 708 mill sheets of the same size on 13 April to print the 1667 sheets ordered, plus a wastage allowance of 1165 sheets which was exceedingly high. In the event on 8 April 1000 sheets were despatched to the colony from Bureau stock and another 2200 sheets followed on 17 June 1949. In the remarks column it was noted that the order was to be despatched by parcel post and a token supply of stamps from the new printing was to be sent to the colony, with 50,000 to be delivered direct to South Georgia. The wastage rate was clearly far lower than expected and the Crown Agents must have accepted the additional sheets disregarding the 10 per cent rule. Once again the plate issue book is unhelpful, noting only, 'HM 4. DLR 180'.

Req 6265/1 called for 4025 sheets, 60 set, of the ½d. (241,500 stamps). The remarks column contains the intriguing statement, 'Bureau no exchange. 240,000 with the excep-

tion of Bureau supplies. Sheets to be numbered 1 up and interleaved with waxed paper.' The number 240,000 has been amended with red ink to read '213,000 inc. 780 sh. 30 set'. The paper issue book records the issue of 4628 sheets on 21 July 1953, with 602 allowed for waste and, surprisingly, one for specimen. These mill sheets measured 15¼ × 17¼ inches and were, therefore, only big enough to print 60 set sheets. In addition, the paper issue book contains an entry in red ink noting the issue of 200 sheets on 10 September 1953, which were printed and wasted. In the event 3575 sheets were despatched on 30 September 1953 and, bearing in mind the apparent wastage of 1253 sheets, it appears that De La Rue could still have been experiencing production difficulties using lithography. The plate issue book does not have an entry relating to this 1953 printing of the ½d. However, it is interesting to note that *GSM* reported that the ½d. reprint was released in London on 24 September 1953, a date which conflicts with the official records already quoted. Mention was also made that the frame was slightly yellow-green, in contrast to *Stamp Collecting* (24 September 1953) where the frame was described as deeper green than before.

### Centre Plate Construction and Shades

The Second or Thin Map issue released on 16 February 1948 was seemingly printed with more care than its predecessor. The 'master stone' was redrawn, consequently the primary flaws on the 1946 stamps, described in Part 19, are no longer present. However, three new ones appear and they show how the new unnumbered centre plate was built up. In general the design is much clearer in detail and the letters are different in shape. Furthermore, there are three small, but noticeable changes.

On the 1946 issue the 50 degree west meridian extends beyond the frame-line, on the new plate it stops short of the frame-line and there is only a very small mark on the outer edge. Secondly, the 0 degree meridian, instead of running through the 'S' of 'COATS LAND' as on the first set, now has a break above and below the 'S'. Finally, the 'N' of 'ALEXANDER I' is not joined to the 'L' of 'LAND' immediately below on the 1948 issue in contrast to the earlier one. The presence of the three constant secondary flaws confirm that a secondary group of 12 impressions, two wide and six deep, was made up. This was repeated five times to make a lithographic plate of 60. A significant flaw can be seen on the fifth row, where every other stamp has a dot on the right arm of the 'T' of 'SOUTH POLE' on R5/2, 5/4, 5/6, 5/8 and 5/10. The second flaw occurs on R2/1, 2/3, 2/5, 2/7 and 2/9 and can only be described as a wobble in the line of longitude to the left of 'COATS'. The third flaw occurs on the same stamps and is a dot in the white gap between the right-hand frame line of the map and the inside recess frame line, just above the horizontal line drawn through the top of 'SHETLAND IS.'

The 'Dot in the T of SOUTH POLE' drew considerable comment and lengthy discussion in the philatelic magazines of the early 1950s, when it was reported that an attempt had been made to remove the dot leaving the 'T' like an inverted and reversed 'L'. A W Morley and R W Bagshawe considered that the dot occurred first and the second state was the inverted 'L' caused by a retouch. A G Carpenter disagreed and argued that the reverse was the case expounding his theory in *GSM* dated April 1952. This drew a response from Morley in the following month explaining most cogently why he and Bagshawe had come to their conclusion and there the matter rests, unless someone somewhere has a theory.

Contemporary philatelic journals reported that the 2½d., released on 6 March 1949, was printed from two plates—2 and 3 under R6/10. The plate issue book is of no help. The characteristics of the letters in the design point to the use of a new master stone. Furthermore, the secondary flaws previously mentioned do not show. A W Morley suggested that Plate 2 was discarded as it produced too weak an impression. The clue to what happened could well lie with the 'reprint' noted in the paper issue book and already mentioned. *Commonwealth* lists two shades of the frame plate—dark blue and dark grey-blue. However, it is relevant to repeat an item from *Stamp Mirror* dated 11 November 1950 concerning shades in the frame of the 2½d. The anonymous contributor wrote, 'In the first and only issue of this stamp (2½d.) issued in March 1949 there are three distinct shades and it is as well to note and record this fact because in years to come collectors may try and identify them as different printings, and well they might, so great is the difference. First, comes a rather delicate grey-blue frame used in conjunction with CP2, next is a deeper shade with more blue in it, also found with CP2, and thirdly, a rather harsh colour of a real, blue-black type with CP3. This latter one is quite distinct in its basic colour from the others, it is an awkward shade to describe adequately, but it stands out from the other two by its depth and brighter tone. I have only seen this last one used in company with CP3 and it would appear that those from CP2 were printed at a different time and a different mixing of ink was used.' W J W Potter also noted shades of grey-blue in his book dealing with colonial printings.

The 3d. was reprinted and released on 7 July 1949. It came from a new CP4, the number appearing under R6/10. On 30 July *Stamp Collecting* announced the new release and stated that, whereas a new stone had been used for the February 1948 stamp together with the other values 'The present release appears to be from the old centre stone, but the colour is a more intense black than hitherto.' In a summary the 1948 value was called 'Black and Blue, Thin Map', while the 1949 stamp was given the same colour, but classified 'Coarse Map'. Saunders and Harding, in their excellent study paper published by the KGVICS, expressed the view that CP4 produced a much heavier and less clear version of the redrawn map and pointed out that the plate, together with CP2 and 3, lacked the flaws of the first plate. It appears, therefore, that the original early appraisal in *Stamp Collecting* was only partly correct in noting the heavier impression of the map. Saunders and Harding found more violet-blue in the frame colour.

## Varieties

**'Dot on the T.'** The 'dot on the T of SOUTH POLE' rates a footnote in *Part 1* and *Commonwealth* catalogues. It is as distinct as the 'Broken Arc' on the 1946 issue, which has now been priced in *Part 1*. It is worth noting that in November 1953 *GSM* noted that the centre plate used for the 1/2d. reprint, released in London on 24 September, appeared to have the same construction as in the previous printing (1948) as 'the dot on the T' occurred as before. Saunders and Harding allocate CP1 to the reprint. Contemporary comment in *Stamp Collecting* observed that it was evident that De La Rue did not keep the centre plates, bearing in mind the use of CP2, 3 and 4—a very reasonable supposition. It is curious, therefore, that De La Rue chose to revert to CP1 for the reprint in 1953.

**'The 2d. Doubled Map.'** In June 1948 *GSM* reported that Mr Stenning possessed a copy of the 1948 2d. with the map doubly printed and although the second impression was extremely pale and not readily apparent it was quite sharp and away from the normal black impression, misplaced upwards and a little to the left. In April 1951, when writing in *Stamp Collecting*, W J Foster reported that a sheet of 60 had been split up and mentioned that it was first offered (intact) to a collector at 5s. a stamp, but the sheet was then split between a collector and a dealer who sold them for £1 each. In a letter dated October 1973 the original owner of the complete sheet suggested that the plate had not been wiped completely clean and so the sheet was printed again. He also mentioned that the 'double' at the top left of the sheet was not in the same position as the bottom right, and that the 'Dot on the T' variety was in the second state showing the inverted 'L'. Furthermore, three covers with two singles and a pair had been sent to South Georgia. They were most probably the only ones in existence. Surprisingly, the variety, although listed in the *Commonwealth* catalogue, where it is stated to be a blanket off-set print, has not been included in *Part 1*. In 1964 a mint copy was sold at auction for £15.10s. (£15.50). In April 1981 the variety reached £260 at Harpers and in 1990 the 'hammer price' at the Wilson Wong sale at Christie's was £300. It is to be hoped that those who own the variety on cover or mint copies with the inverted 'L' appreciate their good fortune!

**'The 2 1/2d. Doubled Map.'** On 11 August 1951 an anonymous article in *The Stamp Mirror* reported the existence of two copies of the 2 1/2d. with double vignettes. Both had been

used by the same person to the same address. The doubling was upward about 1mm above the main impression and resulted in the second figure or letters 'sitting' on the top of the proper print. The doubling was not consistent on both stamps in that parts of it showed more clearly in one place than another. Two or three areas stood out well: the latitude figure 60 and 80 degrees on the left side, the top frame line and the outline of South Georgia. The letters dated May 1951 originated from people engaged in the whaling industry and the author suggested that some of these double impressions could have found their way to Norway via South Georgia, where he believed the stamps had been purchased. Just over 20 years later two other specialists reported that they had seen one of the copies and did not think much of it.

**'3d. Doubled Map.'** The existence of a doubled map on the 3d. has only just come to light, a collector in East Anglia having found a mint copy in a club packet. The doubling is as clear, if not clearer than that on the 2d. and is easily detected by the naked eye. The letters and figures 'sitting' on top of the proper print, in the same manner described for the 2 1/2d. This variety has been listed in the 1991 edition of the *Commonwealth* catalogue (CW 45b). A pair of sharp eyes picked out the stamp—it is a cracker—perhaps others will now come to the notice of variety hunters. Bearing in mind that the copy is mint it is possible that another 59 copies could be lurking somewhere waiting to be found...good hunting!

**'4d. Doubled Map.'** A single mint copy of the 4d. with a doubled map has been seen by the *Commonwealth* catalogue editor and is listed in their catalogue—again others must be about.

**'3d. Frame Plate Variety.'** In *Part 19* mention was made of the only frame plate variety detected on the 1946 issue. It occurs on the 3d. and the defect consists of a flaw in the shape of a tear below the King's right eye on R6/7. In the 1950s when collectors had the opportunity to study complete sheets it was claimed that the flaw was corrected on the 1948 issue, by a very neat retouch, as there was no sign of the original to be seen. However, the existence of a positional copy belies this and it is possible that those who made the claim were examining sheets from the 1949 reprint which had had the flaw corrected. Does anyone else have the 'Tear Drop' variety on the 1948 3d. value? Once again...good hunting.

*Parts 21 and 22 of this series will be published in the August and November editions of GSM. They will describe the overprint and minor plate varieties to be found on the 1950 St Kitts-Nevis Anguilla Tercentenary issue.*

