

King George VI Varieties

Part 54—Falkland Islands

Details of flaws, varieties, shades, marginal markings and even forged postmarks are covered by Richard Lockyer, OBE

As early as 10 January 1953, Philip Halward contributed a two-page account of the Falkland Islands 1938-50 definitive issue in *The Stamp Collector's Fortnightly*. Henry Philip provided an even longer article in *Stamp Magazine* in 1962. During the next few years, members of the Falkland Islands Study Group and the King George VI Collectors' Society devoted much time and energy to the study of the shades associated with the printings of the 1938 set, as well as those used for the 1944-45 overprinted stamps for use in the four dependencies.

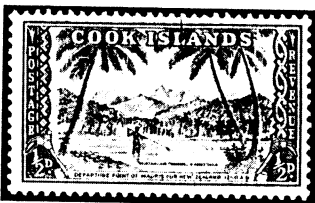
F R Saunders released his findings as a supplement to *Geosix* in November 1968. Some nine years later, *The Philatelist* published a very detailed study of the entire issue by C E Glass in the February, March and April 1979 editions. The latest contribution is a monograph entitled *The Stamps of the Pictorial Issue of the Falkland Islands and Dependencies—1938-51* by A G Belfield, FRPSL, who is a member of both societies. The 56-page study is well presented, full of information and very easy to read and understand. It has just been published by the Falkland Islands Philatelic Study Group. Copies are available from Stanley Gibbons, 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX (price £5 plus postage). Nevertheless, leaving aside the nuances of shade and printings to be found in the 1938 definitive set, there are some other points to make about the King George VI issues, including those values overprinted for use in the Falkland Islands Dependencies—and where better to start than with the 1937 Coronation issue?

1937 Coronation

Bernard Livermore described a couple of varieties on the 1d. in *GSM* (April 1965) and appealed for help. Assistance may have been forthcoming, but his information is repeated here, as both are most intriguing and may not be known to some collectors today. Fig 1 illustrates the Queen as she normally appears on the Coronation issue, Fig 2 shows the first variety reported by Livermore—a wavy lock of hair that descended in a graceful curve from the forehead of the Queen to her nose. Close examination had ruled out the possibility of a scratch as two lines followed the same curve gradually tapering at the lower end. Furthermore, he had failed to find any similar recut on other copies or a flaw which might have necessitated corrective work and postulated that the lines were the result of deliberate cutting with the engraver's burin. The second item mentioned was a fresh looking, cancelled-to-order copy of the 1d. with full gum on the back. It did not appear to have been affected by atmosphere or water. The colour was, however, completely different from the usual carmine; Livermore described it, in painter's terms, as claret with a dash of lake. He recalled a discussion he

had had with Leonard Weldhen, a Malta specialist, about the unusual shade of the Malta 1½d. Coronation stamp in place of the normal scarlet. This is now listed as SG 215a—brown-lake. Weldhen told him that a similar colour variety existed in the Falkland stamps and was equally elusive. The editor of *GSM* could not help at the time, but perhaps a reader will be able to assist now.

Paper creases



The illustration of an almost-vertical paper crease affecting the 'I' of 'ISLANDS' and the lower border on a ½d. Cook Islands stamp may not seem of much consequence. However, *GSM* (June 1944) reported finding a crease on an overprinted ½d. Falkland Islands stamp where the frame was broken by the crease, but not the centre. This led to the philatelic deduction that the centre plate was printed first. Thus, paper creased before printing has its uses and a stamp displaying the fault should never be discarded.

Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3



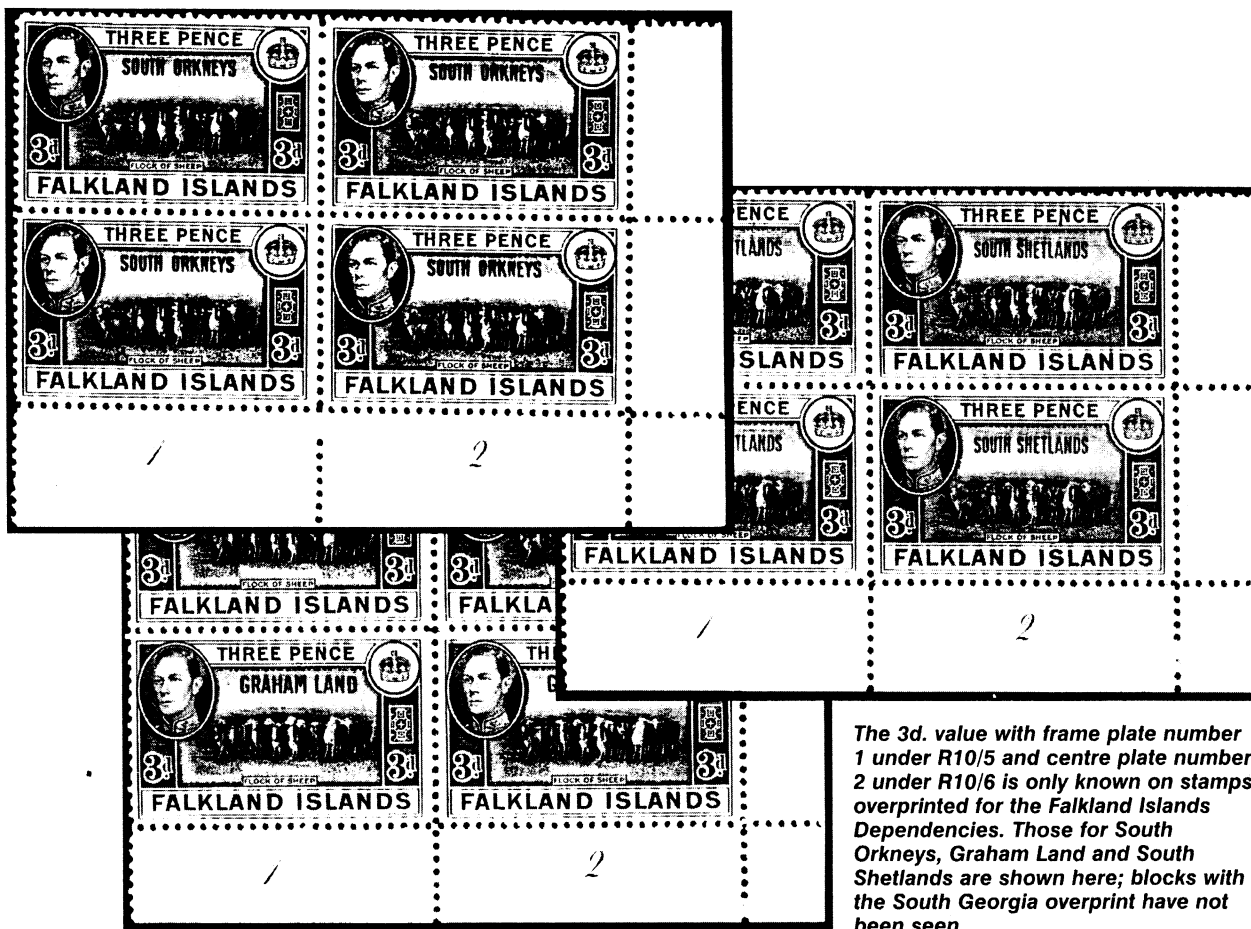
More about the 1938 issue

A most interesting item was included in the Spink sale on 4 March 1998. It was a vertical strip of ten copies of the 2d. black and deep violet with part imprint in the bottom margin and imperforate between the top stamp and the margin. It fetched £3105. It would be reasonable to assume that another five copies could exist. However, the known facts point to the existence of only two. The vertical strip of ten has a sheet number (1944) in the margin over what was Row 1/3. This implies that only half a sheet was despatched. It is believed that the other, larger strip of the first two vertical columns are in the care of a collector in South Africa and, together, formed the original half sheet.

The overall standard of printing was very high and no instances of doubling or retouch work has been noted—as yet. An odd defect on R3/4 of the 2½d. (SG 151) has been seen on a sheet numbered 1561. It is a cylinder-shaped mark that extends from the top of 'N' of 'PENGE' and breaks through both upper frame lines (Fig 3). Are there other copies of the value with the same flaw?

The overprinted issue

Watermark errors are certainly worth a search. Although strictly speaking the following should be included under Falkland Island Dependencies, they are mentioned now, as the basic stamps are from the 1938-50 issue. The ½d. with a sideways watermark from South Georgia and the 1d. overprinted for South Orkneys with an inverted watermark are fine examples. It appears that, so far, only mint copies of the former are known and a reasonable



The 3d. value with frame plate number 1 under R10/5 and centre plate number 2 under R10/6 is only known on stamps overprinted for the Falkland Islands Dependencies. Those for South Orkneys, Graham Land and South Shetlands are shown here; blocks with the South Georgia overprint have not been seen

deduction from this is that a sheet was unknowingly broken up and probably sold as normal copies in the days when watermark errors on King George VI stamps were not as sought after as they are to-day. Collectors who are old enough to remember the late 1940s will recall that a copy of one of the four ½d. values often featured as a 'free offer' to attract recruits to receive approval books through the post. Therefore, it is always worth looking through that pile of sheets, mostly from schoolboy collections, that often appear on dealers' stands at stamp fairs. After all a glance at the catalogue price will convince most people!

In Part 53, mention was made, when considering Cyprus stamps, of the 3.3 plate combination for the ½pi. It was used only for the September 1940 printing. A similarly desirable combination occurs on the 3d. Falkland Islands stamp with the Flock of Sheep design, where the frame plate number 1 appears under R10/5 and the centre plate number 2 under R10/6. It was used for the September 1945 overprinted release for the Falkland Islands Dependencies. So far as is known, this combination only exists with the overprinted stamps. Plate blocks or pairs of the 3d. value with this combination are items to be cherished. Neither Belfield, nor the author have seen a block with the overprint for South Georgia. Confirmation that such copies exist would be appreciated. The illustration shows examples from the other three dependencies.

Confetti flaws

These have featured before in this series and another example appeared at the Victoria Stamp Company auction in the USA in June 1998. This time it was a copy of the 6d. with the Graham Land overprint. The white circle obscured the lower half of the letters 'ND' and the outer frame lines. The hammer price was \$120. This illustrates the desire of collectors to have examples of unusual flaws. The financial message is clear. Two other 'confetti flaws' have been reported, derived from small scraps of irregularly-shaped paper and another in the usual circular shape.

Forged postmarks

Only three forged postmarks are recorded for the King George VI period in the book *Madame Joseph Forged Postmarks*: two for Port Stanley (14 JY 41 and 28 JY 43) and one for South Georgia (30 MR 49).

As a general observation, it is worth noting that examples of Madame Joseph forged postmarks are now featuring as separate lots in auctions, because collectors have begun to search for and collect them. The book itself has also popped up at auction and those who purchased a copy at publication price should give themselves a pat on the back. It was originally believed that only King George VI high values received forged postmarks. After all, to turn a heavily hinged or brown-gummed 10s. or £1 stamp into a very fine used version was obviously financially worth

while. However, forged cancels on low values have come to light recently, so the net for those wishing to collect examples has to spread wider.

The 1952 issue

Sheets were printed in two panes of 60 (6x10 horizontal stamps or 10x6 vertical stamps) and then trimmed and cut in two. The Waterlow and Sons imprint is centrally placed in the bottom margin, with plate numbers '1' (frame) and '1' (centre) below the 59th and 60th stamps respectively on the 2½d. and '1' below the 59th stamp on all other values.

Marginal markings: Karl Lellman had a real philatelic advantage as he lived on the Falkland Islands in the early 1950s. He wrote in *Stamp Collecting* (16 May 1952) that he had examined a number of sheets of all values, looking for marginal letters and perforation differences. He submitted a list where on some values a letter 'A' or 'B' showed in the top left. He noticed that on many sheets the letters had been trimmed away completely. However, sometimes only part of a letter had been removed. An example of the letter 'B' on a corner margin of the 2d. is shown, together with an example where the letter has been partially trimmed. *GSM* had already noted (February 1952) some more letters 'A' and 'B' affecting values not mentioned by Lellman and pointed out that two different comb perforators had been used. Fortunately, a fairly complicated story does not stop there.

In June 1976 a most erudite article by B D Underwood appeared in *The Upland Goose* (Volume III, No 4) the journal of the Falkland Islands Study Group. It dealt with all aspects of the 1952-55 issue as well as the following Queen Elizabeth II set (187/92). Underwood's research, with help from other members of his study group, described the various perforations and pane control letters, sheet numbering, shades, quantities printed and varieties. Despite this sterling effort, it is highly probable that, during the intervening years, other information has come to light, particularly connected with the use and existence of additional pane control letters. Nevertheless, any reader wishing to study the issue can do no better than obtain a copy of the article and then meet the challenge of finding the material. After all, the 1952 definitive issue is, in the words of Dr A O Crane, when writing in *Philately*, 'Superior to all other postage stamps of the Falkland Islands in artistry of design and delicacy of colour'. A view also shared by Kendalian (*Stamp Collecting*, 9 April 1953) who liked the set—as the designs were a distinct change from the usual sugary versions that seemed to be so popular'. As a final note, members of the KGVICS will recall that permission was kindly given to republish the study by Underwood in the September and December 1988 editions of *Geosix*.

Shades: Kendalian drew attention to the change in shade when the second printing of the ½d. value was released on 9 April 1953. He called this green, rather than his choice of bluish-green for the first printing, issued on 2 January 1952. On the other hand, *GSM* (June 1953) noted that the 1953 release was a yellower green, when compared with the 1952 issue. *Part 1* sticks to green for both releases. *Commonwealth* uses green followed by yellow-green. (Shades always cause problems!)

Plate varieties

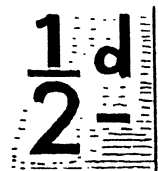


Fig 4



Fig 5

½d. Fig 4 shows the normal lower right corner. However, the shading to the right of the right-hand value on some sheets is virtually non-existent on R1/5 (Fig 5). So far as is known, the pane has not been identified. The variety has been seen on two sheets in different shades of green with the left margin perforated through. Neither has a sheet number nor, unfortunately, is there any trace of a pane control letter.

R C F Baker reported in *Geosix* (March 1989), the quarterly newsletter of the KGVICS, that a sheet numbered 0442 from the first printing did not have the variety, but another, sheet 1538, also from the same printing, did have it. Sheets from the first printing destined for the colony were given four-figure numbers, with the minor exception that additional supplies



1952 2d. showing letter B on corner margin complete (left) and partially trimmed

from Crown Agents Bureau stock had to be despatched just prior to the second printings and these were not numbered. Sheet numbers for the second printing sent to Port Stanley had only three figures. Sheets retained in London for sale to dealers or retention in CAB stock remained numbered. It does, therefore, appear that the defect appeared some time during the first printing run and continued into the second. For the record, there were 421,740 stamps printed for the first release and 270,000 for the second; of these, 121,740 and 240,000 respectively went out to the colony. It is interesting to note that *Commonwealth* rates used copies of the yellow-green stamp (CW 19a) higher than the original green (CW 19).

2½d. It was reported in *GSM* (August 1952) by Mr A Roch that the 'K' in 'FALKLAND' had a large blob at the base of the right-hand leg on R10/3 on some sheets from Plate 1. C P Rang could not vouch for its constancy as it did not appear on stock held by Gibbons.

3d. An intriguing advertisement by J E Lea in *Stamp Collecting* (date unknown) described a marginal block of nine with 'T marks' on Nos 11 and 23 on the sheet.

4d. Roch also spotted a slight weakening of the horizontal lines of shading, giving the appearance of a white patch, above the 'A' of 'FALKLAND' on R9/6 of sheets from Plate 1 with a small 'B' in the top left corner. Rang confirmed this and expressed the hope that the popularity of the country would make up for the smallness of the variety.

6d. Roch reported that on some sheets from Plate 1 the right leaf of the left-hand fleur de lys in the crown was disfigured on R6/6. Once again, Rang could not vouch for its constancy.

The 1946 Victory issue

The varieties occurring on the 3d. value printed from Plate 1 were described in Part 13 (*GSM* August 1989). It was also mentioned that a few sheets from Plate 2 had passed through the hands of Stanley Gibbons when they were first released in 1946. The illustration of a plate block will reassure those who doubt that they do, in fact, exist. It is the only one seen by the author and is a brighter shade of blue when compared with similar blocks printed from Plate 1. This shade difference was noted in *GSM* (December 1946).

Part 55 (*GSM*, February 2000) in this series will consider the most attractive and popular 1938 definitive issue of Gibraltar and 'The Battle of George VI Re-entries' that followed Kettle's discoveries of doubling on some of the values.

Readers interested in the philatelic aspects of the King George VI reign are invited to join the King George VI Collectors' Society. Details can be obtained from The Secretary, KGVICS, 98 Albany, Manor Road, Bournemouth, BH1 3EW.

Plate 2 marginal corner block of the 1946 Victory 3d. value

