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A Simple Approach to Measuring Shades (2)
King George V 1d Shades

Revd Dr Gordon Kegg

In a previous article¹ I showed that it was possible, by measuring the red, green and blue intensities of the pixels from a scan of a series of King Edward VII stamps and plotting the percentages of the intensities on an isometric chart, to locate each shade in a different part of the chart. I was keen to tackle the more complicated shades of the King George V Royal Cypher series to see if the technique could be used with these as well. I have used a fairly complete range of shades and the majority of the shades in this exercise have been purchased from, or checked by, KGV specialists and some have RPS certificates.

Measurement techniques

1. The stamps were scanned against a white background. The few used values were off paper.
2. The scanning was done at 1200 dpi using an Epson Perfection V500 which uses white LEDs instead of cold cathode tubes to illuminate

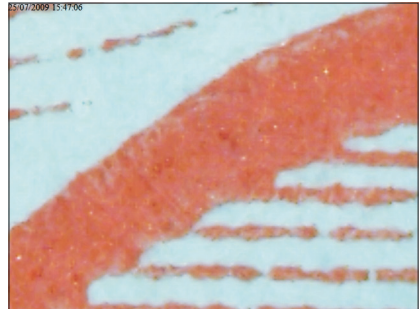


Fig. 1 — Section of base of the neck.
(Magnification approx. x15.)

1 Revd Dr Gordon Kegg, 'A Simple Approach to Measuring Shades (1): King Edward VII 1d Shades', *GBJ*, Vol. 48, No. 5, Sept./Oct. 2010, pp. 105–117.

the stamps for the scan. All image manipulation facilities were deactivated. The resolution of the screen was 1024 x 768.

3. The measurements were taken from the solid area at the base of the neck. This is one of the few areas of the stamp which tends to maintain a solid colour whatever the amount of ink or wear. The measurements were done after careful inspection of the area under a medium power magnifying glass to ensure, as far as possible, that there are few unprinted areas or marks in the section to be measured. **Fig. 1** shows the typical variation in the ink distribution which is less affected by fibres than the DLR Edward VII stamps.

4. All the stamps to be measured were placed together on the same scan.

The resulting scan was viewed using *Adobe Photoshop Elements 6* at a value of 40%. This appeared to be the best compromise for this series of stamps. The smaller the magnification, the greater is the area of the stamp which contributes to a particular pixel but the greater is the chance that unprinted areas or marks may affect the pixel being measured. Pixels near great changes in intensity can be affected by such changes and were not measured.

5. The software used measures the Red, Green and Blue (RGB) intensities of a pixel on a scale from 0 to 255. The software, *Colorpic Version 4*, was downloaded free from www.iconico.com/colorpic/. It has two advantages over that used previously; the first is that the area being measured can be magnified, and the second is that 25 (5 x 5) pixels can be measured simultaneously (see *Fig. 2*).

6. There was a reasonable amount of variation in measuring the same stamp but the pixels that were affected by white patches or postmarks are evident and are avoided. The improved software technique meant that four readings were sufficient for determining the colour and this time no values were discounted.

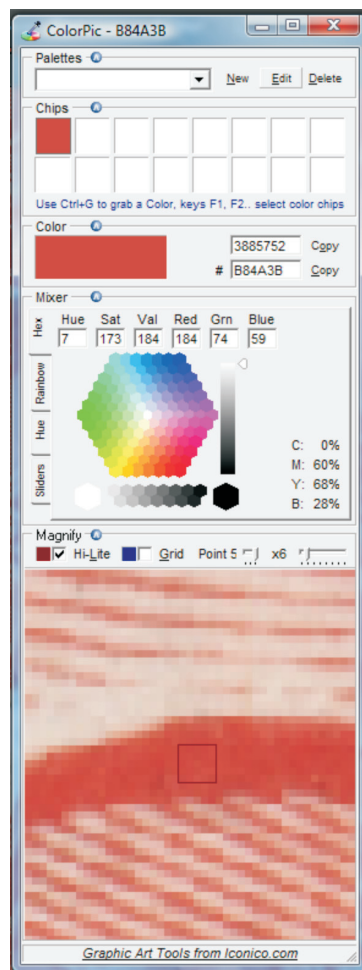


Fig. 2 — Colorpic Version 4.
(25 pixels and magnification x6;
stamp rotated 20°)

Results

Due to the large number of shades to be measured, and to ease comprehension of the results, I have chosen up to four stamps for each shade (unless there is a variation) and broken down the discussion of the shade series into four areas:

1. **Scarlet shades:** Bright Scarlet N16(1); Deep Bright Scarlet N16(2); Scarlet N16(3) and Deep Scarlet N16(4).

2. **Brick-Reds and pale shades:** Brick-Red N16(5); Deep Brick-Red N16(6); Pale Red N16(8); Pale Rose Red N16(9); and Pink N16(10).

3. **Carmine-Red shades:** Carmine-Red N16(11); Bright Carmine-Red N16(12); and Deep Carmine Red N16(13).

4. **Vermilion shades:** Vermilion N16(7); Scarlet-Vermilion N16(14); Orange-Vermilion N16(15) and Deep Orange-Vermilion N16(16)

As before, the raw values of Red, Blue and Green, on a scale of 0–255, yield less useful information for comparison purposes than the percentage of each colour ($\text{value}/255 \times 100$) and the brightness percentage ($(R_i + G_i + B_i)/765 \times 100$). The resulting colour percentages were plotted on an isometric chart.

1. The Scarlet Shades

The results shown in **Table 1** are presented in **Isometric Chart 1**. The results are striking. It can be seen that the Bright Scarlet ● (Stamps 1–4), Deep Bright Scarlet ● (5–8), Scarlet ◆ (9–13) and Deep Scarlet ◆ (14–17) measurements fall on a line, with the Deep values having a greater percentage of red. The fact that they are on a line needs explaining. Presumably much of the change in the depth of colour will be due to the variation in the amount of ink applied. As the amount of ink gets less, the colour gets paler and the dull creamy white of the paper begins to show through until at the extreme of no ink being applied then the Red, Green values are that of the paper. So this line is projected towards the percentage RGB values of the paper with no ink, 35.2%, 33.7% and 31.2%. Pale shades are therefore towards the right of the lines on the graph so Stamp 9, which is clearly well to the right, is best described as Pale Scarlet².

The values are scattered on and around the blue line and, in practice, if a large number of the Bright Scarlet, Deep Bright Scarlet, Scarlet and Deep Scarlet were to be measured then a narrow band of values would be plotted on the graph. The stamps were chosen to be similar to each other within a shade band and to be clearly different from other shades. On the whole the Bright Scarlet shades have a greater percentage of red in them than the corresponding Scarlet Shades but in the middle of the blue line there is overlap of Bright Scarlet, Scarlet and Deep Scarlet and the isometric chart alone is not sufficient to distinguish

2 Pale Scarlet, although not listed in the SG *Specialised*, is listed in Beaumont & Stanton (1957), p. 65.

Shade	No.	Red	Green	Blue	% Red	Standard Deviation	% Green	Standard Deviation	% Blue	Standard Deviation	% Brightness	Standard Deviation
Bright Scarlet N16(1)	1	192.0	77.3	59.8	58.5	0.3	23.4	0.1	18.1	0.1	43.1	0.1
	2	192.0	74.0	57.3	59.4	0.2	22.9	0.2	17.7	0.1	42.2	0.3
	3	192.3	73.5	56.8	59.6	0.1	22.8	0.1	17.6	0.1	42.2	0.6
	4	191.0	73.5	56	59.6	0.3	23.0	0.2	17.5	0.2	41.9	0.4
Deep Bright Scarlet N16(2)	5*	186.3	70.8	52.8	59.8	0.3	22.7	0.1	17.6	0.3	40.8	0.3
	6	179.3	66.5	49.5	60.7	0.3	22.5	0.1	16.8	0.3	38.6	0.4
	7	195.5	70.5	52.3	61.4	0.1	22.2	0.1	16.4	0.1	41.6	0.1
	8	190.8	65.5	48.0	62.7	0.1	21.5	0.1	15.8	0.1	39.7	0.2
Scarlet N16(3)	9	194.3	85.5	69.8	55.6	0.1	24.5	0.1	20.0	0.1	45.7	0.4
	10	190.3	79.5	62.8	57.2	0.2	23.9	0.1	18.9	0.2	43.5	0.3
	11	188.5	78.0	61.0	57.6	0.2	23.8	0.1	18.6	0.2	42.8	0.3
	12	181.3	72.5	56.8	58.4	0.3	23.4	0.2	18.3	0.3	40.6	0.5
	13	185.3	73.8	56.5	58.7	0.3	23.3	0.1	17.9	0.3	41.2	0.3
Deep Scarlet N16(4)	14*	162.5	64.0	49.5	58.8	0.3	23.2	0.1	18.0	0.2	36.1	0.3
	15	173.5	67.3	52.5	59.2	0.2	22.9	0.2	17.9	0.2	38.3	0.6
	16	178.3	68.3	52.8	59.4	0.3	22.8	0.2	16.8	0.2	39.1	0.7
	17	175.8	65.5	50.5	60.2	0.3	22.4	0.1	17.3	0.2	38.1	0.1

* RPS cert.

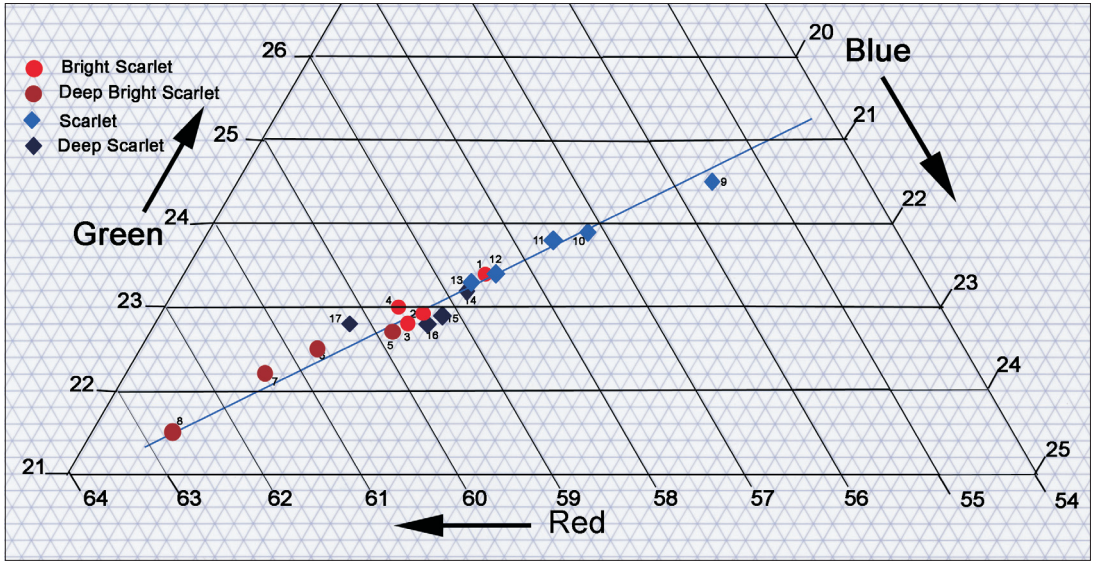
Table 1 — SCARLET shades: Red, Green and Blue Values, Percentages and Percentage Brightness.

between these shades. Thus far, I have ignored the importance of the brightness of the readings but if the percentage of red against the measured total brightness is plotted then a clear distinction between the Bright Scarlets and the Scarlets can be seen.

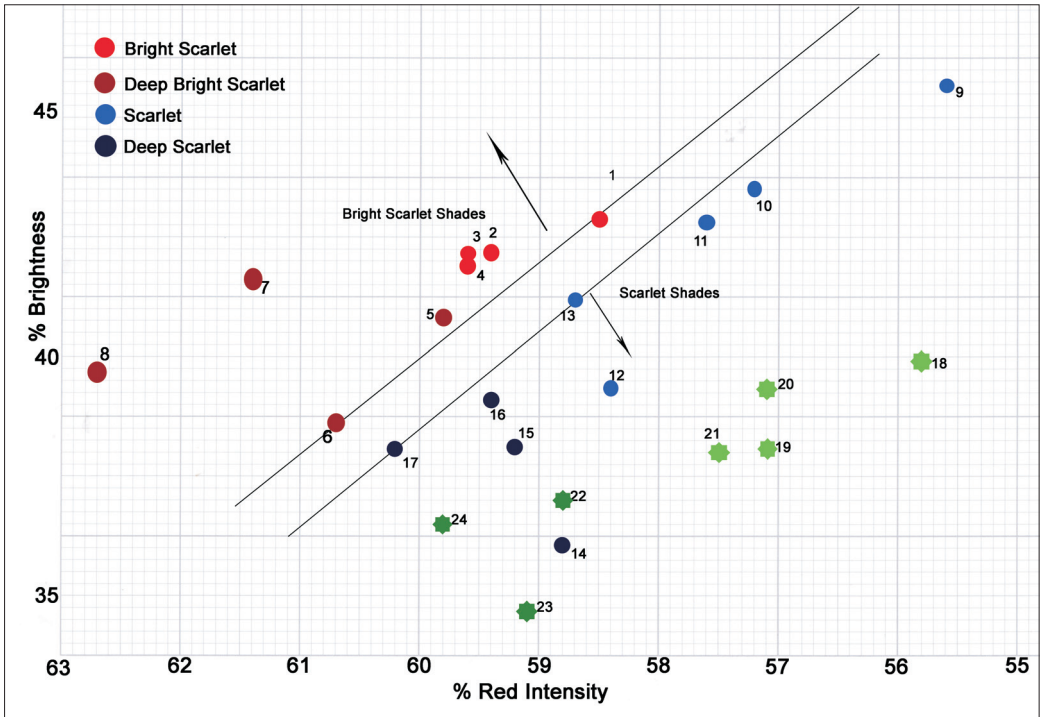
The Bright Scarlet and Deep Bright Scarlet lie above the upper line, and in some cases well above and the Scarlet shades lie below the lower line, i.e. the Scarlets are less bright or are duller than the Bright Scarlets for the same red percentage. An obvious conclusion but one well illustrated by the results (the values plotted in green are discussed later). So using the two graphs in combination we can be confident in asserting when a particular stamp is a particular shade. For example, a Bright Scarlet stamp needs to be on or close to the blue line on the isometric chart, it needs to have a percentage of red which is less than 59.7%, and it also needs to be on or above the upper line in the Brightness versus Red Intensity, **Graph 1**. Interestingly, Stamp 14's position on the graph, and its appearance, suggests a Deep Dull Scarlet shade. Stamp 9 by its positioning on both graphs confirms its description as Pale Scarlet.

2. Brick-Reds and pale shades

The results for the brick reds and paler shades are given in **Table 2**. Plotting the values of this table on the original Isometric chart yields some similar features but also interesting differences — see **Isometric Chart 2**.



Isometric Chart 1 — Red, Green and Blue percentages for the Scarlet series.



Graph 1 — The percentage of Red versus the Percentage Brightness.

Shade	No.	Red	Green	Blue	% Red	Standard Deviation	% Green	Standard Deviation	% Blue	Standard Deviation	% Brightness	Standard Deviation
Brick-Red N16(5)	18	170.5	76.3	58.8	55.8	0.2	25.0	0.2	19.2	0.2	39.9	0.2
	19	166.8	70.8	54.3	57.2	0.4	24.2	0.2	18.6	0.3	38.1	0.3
	20	172.0	73.5	55.5	57.2	0.2	24.4	0.1	18.4	0.1	39.3	0.5
	21	167.2	70.8	53.0	57.5	0.1	24.3	0.1	18.2	0.1	38.0	0.4
Deep Brick-Red N16(6)	22	166.3	66.5	50.8	58.8	0.3	23.5	0.2	17.8	0.2	37.0	0.5
	23	157.0	62.5	46.3	59.1	0.1	23.5	0.2	17.4	0.1	34.7	0.4
	24	167.3	64.8	47.5	59.8	0.2	23.2	0.1	17.0	0.1	36.5	0.3
Pale Red N16(8)	25	186.0	88.3	68.8	54.2	0.3	25.7	0.2	20.0	0.2	44.8	0.4
	26	170.8	80.8	61.8	54.5	0.2	25.8	0.2	19.7	0.1	40.9	0.4
	27	175.8	80.8	63.0	55.0	0.2	25.3	0.2	19.7	0.0	41.8	0.4
	28	184.0	83.0	63.5	55.7	0.2	25.1	0.1	19.2	0.2	43.2	0.6
Pale Rose-Red N16(9)	29	193.8	85.5	70.5	55.4	0.4	24.4	0.2	29.2	0.3	45.7	0.9
	30	193.3	80.8	65.3	57.0	0.2	23.8	0.1	19.2	0.2	44.3	0.1
Pink N16(10)	31*	202.3	114.8	91.0	49.6	0.5	28.1	0.2	22.3	0.4	53.3	0.9

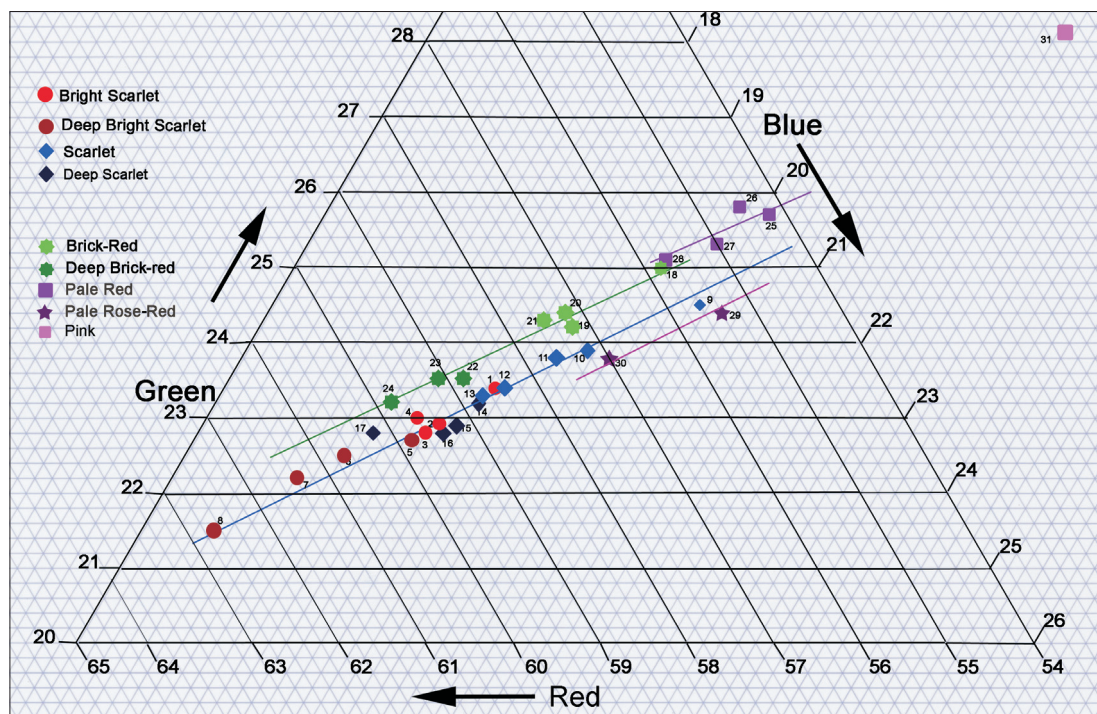
* RPS cert.

Table 2 — BRICK-RED and PALE shades: Red, Green and Blue values, Percentages and Percentage Brightness.

The Brick-Red 🟡 (Stamps 18–21) and Deep Brick-Red shades 🟢 (22–24) lie on a line above the scarlet shades. This is an increase in the green percentage and a decrease in the blue percentage. This, as will be seen later, shows that they contain some vermilion compared with the scarlet shades. The difference between the two lines is 0.4% in the green value. The standard variation for the green percentage in these stamps is 0.1% or 0.2% so this difference is significant. Again the Deep shade contains a higher percentage of red than the normal shade. However, significantly, the shade series is very much duller than the Scarlet/Bright Scarlet series. This can be seen from the graph of the red percentage plotted against the brightness percentage, **Graph 1**, where the green symbols for Brick-Red and Deep Brick-Red lie below the scarlet values with the exception of Stamp 14 which was discussed above.

The Pale Reds 🟠 (25–28) lie to the right of Brick-Red; that is they are paler, they are also significantly brighter and probably contain more Vermilion. Stamps 28 (Pale Red) and 18 (Brick-Red) are almost co-incident on this graph but the Pale Red stamp is much brighter.

The Pale Rose-Reds 🟡 (29, 30) again lie in the Pale region and have similar brightness to the Scarlet stamps. As the difference between these values and the scarlet values is only



Isometric Chart 2 — Red, Green and Blue percentages for the Brick-Reds and pale shades.

0.3% in the Green value this must be at or approaching the limit of confidence in this method for distinguishing this shade. These stamps, compared with the Scarlet shade, are displaced in the direction of carmine.

The Pink (31) is unmistakable and well to the right.

3. Carmine Shades

The results for the Carmine shades are given in **Table 3**. These Red, Green and Blue percentages are plotted on **Isometric Chart 3** which shows the Carmine shades all occurring below the line along which the Bright Scarlet/Scarlet values lie. The Carmine-Reds (32–35) continue the previous trends by forming along a line which if projected would pass through the ‘cream spot’. Stamp 34 is significantly less bright than its near neighbours and could be described as Dull Carmine-Red. The Bright Carmine-Reds (36–39) extend this line in a similar way that Bright Scarlet did with Scarlet, that is they contain a higher percentage of Red. However, unlike the scarlet shades, there appears to be no significant and systematic increase in brightness of the Bright Carmine-Reds compared with the Carmine-Reds. Stamps 36 and 37 have the same proportion of red but Stamp 36 is

KING GEORGE V 1d SHADES

Shade	No.	Red	Green	Blue	% Red	Standard Deviation	% Green	Standard Deviation	% Blue	Standard Deviation	% Brightness	Standard Deviation
Carmine-Red	32	168.0	65.3	54.0	58.5	0.3	22.7	0.2	18.8	0.2	37.5	0.4
	33	166.8	63.0	53.0	59.0	0.2	22.3	0.3	18.8	0.1	37.0	0.1
	34	151.0	57.3	47.3	59.1	0.3	22.4	0.3	18.5	0.2	33.4	0.4
	35	167.8	62.0	51.0	59.8	0.4	22.0	0.2	18.2	0.3	36.7	0.6
Bright Carmine-Red	36	160.8	58.8	48.5	60.0	0.2	20.9	0.2	18.1	0.4	33.6	0.3
	37	174.3	63.8	53.3	60.0	0.3	22.0	0.1	18.0	0.2	37.9	0.3
	38	160.3	57.5	45.8	60.8	0.4	21.8	0.2	17.4	0.2	34.4	0.4
	39	170.5	60.3	49.0	61.0	0.3	21.5	0.1	17.5	0.2	36.6	0.2
Deep Carmine-Red	40	160.5	55.5	45.5	61.4	0.2	21.2	0.1	17.4	0.3	34.2	0.4
	41†	150.8	50.2	41.4	62.2	0.2	20.7	0.1	17.1	0.2	31.7	0.1
	42†	158.8	52.8	43.5	62.3	0.4	20.7	0.2	17.0	0.2	33.3	0.3
Carmine	43	161.5	57.5	50.3	60.0	0.3	21.4	0.2	18.7	0.2	35.2	0.1
	44	177.0	65.5	57.3	59.0	0.4	21.8	0.1	19.1	0.3	39.2	0.6
	45	167.0	62.8	57.5	57.9	0.2	22.1	0.2	20.0	0.1	37.7	0.4
Rose-Carmine	46	190.5	75.3	64.5	57.7	0.2	22.8	0.1	19.5	0.2	43.2	0.4
	47	188.0	77.5	66.3	56.6	0.3	23.4	0.1	20.0	0.3	43.4	0.4
† Used												

Table 3 — CARMINE shades: Red, Green and Blue values, Percentages and Percentage Brightness.

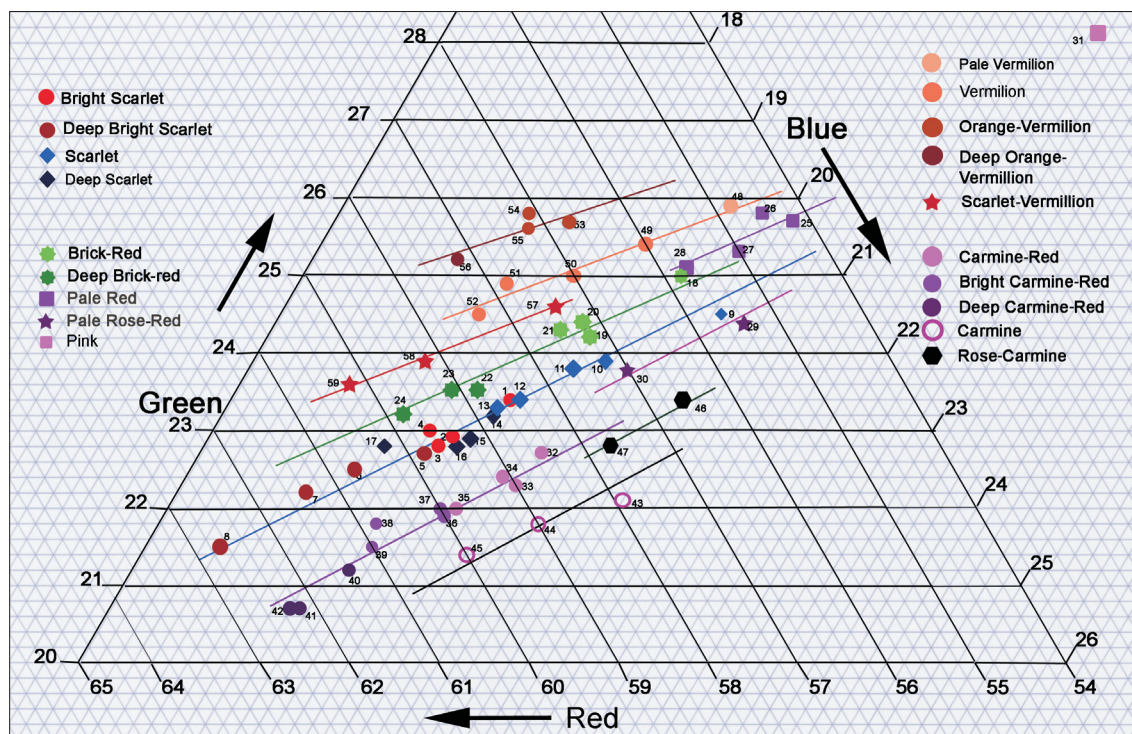
very much less bright and would appear to be Dull Carmine-Red. The Deep Carmine-Reds ● (40–42) are to the left of the line and have a greater red intensity; they also have lower brightness values. Stamp 40 is assigned to this shade with less confidence than for Stamps 41 and 42.

There are three stamps that I have labelled Carmine ○ (43–45), partly this is because it does appear to be their shade and partly because there is an obvious difference between these shades and Carmine-Red on the graph. The stamps labelled Rose-Carmine ● (46, 47) are paler, significantly brighter and contain a little more carmine than the Carmine-Red shade in these stamps. Whether the latter is a necessary requirement for this shade must await further examples.

The Vermilion Shades

These values are also plotted on **Isometric Chart 3**.

The Vermilion shade ● (Stamps 49–52) is significantly above the Pale Red shade, containing more orange. The Pale Vermilion ● (48) is further towards the cream spot although not significantly brighter than the other Vermilions and Stamp 52 could be described as Deep Vermilion.



Isometric Chart 3 — Red, Green, Blue and Brightness Percentages for all the shades.

The Orange-Vermilion shades ● (53–56) have more orange in them compared with the Vermilion and they are raised above Vermilion on the graph. The Deep Orange-Vermilion has a significantly higher percentage of Red than the Orange-Vermilion. The used values were chosen very carefully as damp affects these shades very easily. Scarlet-Vermilion ★ (57–59) is, as expected, between the line joining the Vermilion shades and the Bright Scarlet/Scarlet line. Stamp 57 is paler than the other Scarlet-Vermilions and could be described as Pale Scarlet-Vermilion.

Final Comments

1. In the complex field of the shades of the King George V Royal Cypher 1d stamps, plotting the percentages of red, green and blue on an isometric chart yields results, which, with the assistance of a graph of Red Intensity versus Total Brightness, allows a high degree of confidence in the process of assigning a particular stamp to the centre region of a particular shade band. Shades towards the edges of a particular shade band are difficult to determine whichever procedure is used and even the experts can disagree (David Rowland had a Deep Carmine-Red re-designated as Bright Carmine-Red by the RPSL Expert

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Shade	No.	Red	Green	Blue	% Red	Standard Deviation	% Green	Standard Deviation	% Blue	Standard Deviation	% Brightness	Standard Deviation
Pale Vermilion	48	172.8	81.8	60.5	54.8	0.3	25.9	0.1	19.2	0.3	41.2	0.7
Vermilion	49	182.8	82.8	60.8	56.0	0.4	25.4	0.1	18.6	0.3	42.6	0.2
	50	183.0	80.3	58.0	57.0	0.1	25.0	0.1	18.1	0.1	42.0	0.2
	51	171.7	74.0	51.7	57.8	0.3	24.9	0.1	17.4	0.2	38.9	0.1
	52	176.3	74.0	52.3	58.3	0.4	24.5	0.2	17.3	0.2	39.5	0.5
Orange Vermilion	53†	168.3	76.3	52.0	56.7	0.4	25.7	0.2	17.5	0.2	38.8	0.7
	54	184.3	83.3	55.0	57.1	0.3	25.8	0.2	17.0	0.2	42.2	0.7
	55†	169.5	76.0	51.0	57.2	0.2	25.6	0.2	17.2	0.1	38.8	0.9
Deep Orange Vermilion	56†	162.5	70.5	46.3	58.2	0.3	25.2	0.2	16.6	0.2	36.5	0.4
Scarlet Vermilion	57†	171.8	73.5	53.8	57.4	0.1	24.6	0.2	18.0	0.2	39.1	0.4
	58	166.8	67.5	47.5	59.2	0.3	23.9	0.1	16.8	0.3	36.8	0.2
	59*	170.8	67.0	46.0	60.2	0.3	23.6	0.2	16.2	0.2	37.2	0.6
* RPS cert. † Used												

Table 4 — Vermilion shades :- Red, Green and Blue and total intensities; Red, Green and Blue Percentage intensities and Total Percentage Brightness

Committee (GBPS *Newsletter* 316, Mar./Apr. 2009, p. 6)). If a large number of any particular shade were to be measured, then the measurements would produce a narrow band of results. The particular stamps chosen for this exercise were carefully compared with each other and chosen to be similar to each other for a particular shade and consequently were distinctively different from other shade bands.

2. A significant advantage of this technique is that no specialised equipment is required and the procedure can simply use a scanner and computer. The calculations and the plotting of the results can be done using a computer program developed by a colleague Mr A. E. Cossey.

3. The existence of Pale and Dull shades in addition to the SG *Specialised* shades is readily shown.

The values of Red, Blue and Green intensities determined for the various shades depends on the particular hardware and software used. However, the relationship between one shade and any other shade will be reasonably constant whatever the hardware and software is used. It is also worth noting that even if some of my stamps have been assigned to the incorrect shade band, the technique described is still a valid way of determining the shades of King George V Royal Cypher 1d stamps. Clearly, the technique can be used on any series of stamps which have a sufficient area of 'solid' colour, and shade variation is of interest. ☒

'Passed by BPA'

Maurice Buxton

The recent pieces in the *Newsletter* on the subject of the wartime Philatelic Import and Export Control sparked my interest, as the stamp trade during and immediately after the war is part of my 'Philatelic Mail' collection — indeed, it's grown enough to become a 'collection within a collection'. If I can master the subject rather better than I have at the moment, I'm hoping to put together an e-book at some point, but for the time being this should be taken in conjunction with Graham Mark's excellent summary in NL326. Here I'm merely taking the opportunity to add a few details, and report information so far assembled regarding dates of use and so on.

'Passed by BPA' items are fairly plentiful, and I've put together a spreadsheet of about 200 items between 1940 and 1953 from which the details below are taken. New examples turn up frequently. On covers that have senders' addresses I've seen about forty different dealers' names so far, although only a few major players of the time (Whitfield King, Stanley Gibbons, R. Roberts, Francis Field) occur often.

The official rationale for allowing the trade at all was that it brought in more much-needed foreign currency through exports than was paid out for imports, as London was a (if not, indeed, *the*) major centre of the world stamp trade at the time. *Bona fide* dealers could obtain a licence to import stamps and the necessary foreign exchange for purchases. Regulations were relaxed for the sterling area ('Scheduled Territories') shortly after VE Day, but continued in effect for the rest of the world. In this context the great majority of the outgoing covers I've seen were sent to the 'dollar area' — about half to the USA and a quarter to Canada — although there may well be sample bias here as these are common sources of material, especially on eBay. Other countries represented span the globe.

Archival sources

There are a few files in the National Archives and the British Postal Museum & Archive that deal with the Control and/or the stamp trade in this period generally. Those referenced in this article are:

- T 231/146: Import and export of postage stamps
- CUST 106/827: Complaint by Philatelic Traders Society: illegal importation of foreign stamps
- POST 122/3: Import/export of stamps: official paid labels sent to British Philatelic Association for examination

Period of the Control

The date on the authorising Board of Trade Order itself is 16 July 1940, and on that day the new BPA rules were handed out at a meeting of the stamp trade. However, a document in POST 122/3 dated 24 September, which refers to '5000 outgoing packets ... examined since the inception of the arrangement', has a date of 16 July overwritten, although frustratingly it is not clear if the figure replacing the '6' is a '5' or an '8'. A letter in CUST 106/827 from the Board of Trade Export Licensing Department, dated 17 July, states 'Our authority to the B.P.A. to do the work will be signed to-day and I expect that Greig, secretary of the B.P.A. will be posting packets as from tomorrow'. It's possible that the BPA anticipated formal permission and began processing packets early, but 18 July looks to be the best candidate for the actual start date.

A letter by Winifred Worsell in my possession, written in response to a query by George Crabb in 1969, states that the rubber stamp was in use from 1 July. This is most probably due simply to a lapse of memory after nearly thirty years; it could conceivably refer to the cachet itself rather than the Control as such, although papers in CUST 106/827 dated 11 July include a sketched version of the 'proposed' stamp.

All sources agree that the end date for the Control was officially 30 June 1953 (notwithstanding the backlog of packets still in the system that had to be cleared). According to Miss Worsell, even then it was only possible to import stamps from the 'dollar countries' by means of barter arrangements rather than in cash, a requirement that finally ceased on 1 January 1956.

'Passed by BPA' Cachets

I've recorded four different types of cachet, two of which date from the last year of the Control.

Type	Earliest	Latest
1	22 July 1940	19 September 1946
2	20 November 1946	11 February 1953
3	4 March 1953	26 June 1953
4	14 May 1953	14 May 1953

I've only ever seen one example of Type 4, which lacks a mention of 'consignment no.' in the inscription, although as it's on a BEA first flight cover it wouldn't have needed one. It has the dotted lines of the Type 1 and Type 2 cachets, so on balance is probably not a general use office cachet pressed into service.

Strikes of the Type 1 cachet look *very* much the worse for wear in the last few months of use, so it's not surprising that a replacement was obtained. The late Type 2 strikes have a



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



Type 4

blurred address, but that seems to have been the case for at least a couple of years. Occasionally the 'consignment no.' line failed to strike, either totally or partially. The Type 3 cachet is larger and in use for only a short time, hence the lettering is clearer.

Black ink was normally used, sometimes appearing purplish. However, for a time Type 2 cachets were regularly struck in blue ink of various shades from bright to dark; the earliest and latest dates I have noted are 9 February 1949 and 6 October 1952. Black ink is most unusual in this period.

The cachets seem to have been used for general purposes in addition to the basic task of recording that a consignment had been approved. In the CUST 106/827 file there's a form sent to the BPA to inquire if the addressee of a parcel stopped by Customs was authorised to receive it; the BPA response was '*No request for permission to import these stamps has been received. Under the circumstances please return same to the addressee*'. It was stamped with the cachet and signed, although of course this situation was actually the opposite of a consignment *passed* by the BPA.

They also appear on OHMS letters on Control business (e.g. advising senders of a breach of the regulations), and on other mail of philatelic interest where any sale involved would presumably not have fallen under the exchange regulations, but for which a BPA check was needed to make sure they were not being circumvented. Souvenir covers such as first flights are the most common examples of this, but I have a 'no consignment number' cover that enclosed stamps ordered from the Polish Government in exile, and the cover with the cachet of the Royal Philatelic Society London illustrated (*Fig. 1*) probably contained an item sent for expertisation.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2 — Miss Murphy's signature.

Signatures

Three individuals' signatures appear in the cachets, although the great majority throughout the period of the Control are signed by Winifred Worsell. Originally employed by the umbrella organisation the London Association for the Protection of Trade, she was seconded to the BPA for Control business, and later became BPA Assistant Secretary. (Later still, she married well-known Yorkshire philatelist Bob Wright.) I've also seen a few cachets from the early part of the war signed by the then BPA Assistant Secretary, Sybil Murphy. I've yet to see one signed by the BPA Secretary of the time, Cuthbert Greig, but some in the post-war era are signed by his successor, C. C. Worters.

Typical signatures are shown in the cachet illustrations above (Worsell Types 1 and 2, Worters Types 3 and 4). Miss Murphy's signature is shown in Fig. 2.

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Earliest</i>	<i>Latest</i>
Worsell	22 July 1940	6 June 1953
Murphy	11 October 1940	19 August 1942
Worters	29 August 1946	26 June 1953

Consignment Numbers

Outgoing sendings handled by the BPA were allocated a consignment number for record keeping purposes, and this was written on the cover, at first inside the cachet and later next to it and much larger, presumably for reasons of clarity. When I assembled the spreadsheet, it became obvious that the numbering sequence had been restarted twice. The highest number used is open to correction, but a reasonable guess would be 99,999, making a grand total of over a quarter of a million packets processed in the thirteen years the Control was in business.

<i>Sequence</i>	<i>Lowest</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Highest</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	211	22 July 1940	98040	19 March 1947
2	2006	29 May 1947	99469	30 July 1951
3	2232	10 September 1951	68023	26 June 1953

It is clear that the average number of packets handled weekly increased substantially as time went on.

Censor Marks

There were only two of these, an unusual boxed type and a standard shield mark. These are given the type numbers H 3A and H 2D in the Civil Censorship Study Group publication *British Empire Civil Censorship Devices World War II United Kingdom* by Torrance & Morenweiser (T&M).



Type H 3A



Type H 2D

<i>Type</i>	<i>Earliest</i>	<i>Latest</i>
H 3A Boxed	22 July 1940	14 February 1941
H 2D Shield	20 February 1941	4 June 1945

It's only fair to note that T&M give 10 November 1939 as the earliest use of H 3A, although I personally have recorded no examples of this boxed censor mark from before the introduction of the BPA Control. Earlier uses could conceivably have been on something other than philatelic mail, or a stray report of the similar H 3B used on trade and internee mail, but I would welcome a sight of examples to clear up the point.

Office of Posting

The registered letters were posted at the Newman Street branch office two streets away until 1946, and thereafter at the main Western District Office about half a mile away in Wimpole Street. Correspondence in POST 122/3 suggests (indirectly) that the change *might* have been due to the BPA arranging for the letters to be collected, something not allowed for the branch office.

<i>Office</i>	<i>Earliest</i>	<i>Latest</i>
Newman Street	22 July 1940	19 September 1946
Western District Office	20 November 1946	26 June 1953

I have a record of one letter posted at Newman Street on 3 May 1952, but that may have been a one-off. With unregistered letters it's not possible to tell where they were posted, as they have only the normal London W.1 machine cancel.

Registration Labels

As a collector of registered mail, naturally I take note of these! The earliest items bear the 'London W.11' registration label of Newman Street — note this is *not* the London postal district number (which is W1), merely the identifier used for that sub-office when registration labels were supplied. Firms posting registered letters in bulk could be supplied with rolls of labels, with their own 'sub-office' number, so they could do most of the paperwork in advance before bringing the letters to the post office. The BPA fell into that category and virtually all Control packets have a 'London W.74' label, regardless of whether the letters were posted at Newman Street or the WDO.

Registration labels in general seem to have been printed as and when required, and stocks issued from the supplies department as they came to hand, and there are several 'W.74' types which overlap in use. The 'Mackay' type numbers refer to the classification scheme used by James Mackay in his book *Registered Mail of the British Isles* (1982); they have 'B' suffixes as these labels are what the PO originally referred to as type 'B' labels, with printed sub-office number. Types 5B and 13B, both long-running styles that span the war years, are very similar (a distinctive feature of the latter being a 'R' slightly truncated at the right).



W.11, Mackay 13B
Large capitals



W.74, Mackay 6B
Narrow font



W.74, Mackay 10B
Small serial number



W.74, Mackay 13Ba
Small capitals



W.74, Mackay 5B
Large capitals

<i>Type</i>	<i>Earliest</i>	<i>Latest</i>
W.11 13B	22 July 1940	2 August 1940
W.74 6B	23 August 1940	11 February 1953
W.74 10B	28 August 1945	19 September 1946
W.74 13Ba	18 May 1949	26 June 1953
W.74 5B	19 May 1950	24 November 1950

W.74 6B and W.74 13Ba are the most commonly seen types. The change-over from 'mostly 6B' to 'mostly 13Ba' is about mid-1949, although 10B — the distinctive 'small serial' type seen mostly in 1945 — appears to have been used more or less exclusively over a period of about a year.

Postmarks

The cancellations on the registered letters have no direct relation to the BPA Control, because the office of posting would have used whatever cancellations were in use at the time. However, for the record I've made a note of them and illustrated them as well as possible (which on average is not well at all; strikes are often weak and poorly applied).

Newman Street Registered Mail



Rubber hooded
a.k.a. 'scroll' c.d.s.



Steel c.d.s.



Rubber undated oval
(sans-serif lettering)



Rubber undated oval
(serif lettering)

Western District Office Registered Mail



Steel oval



Rubber double oval
(Registered letter duty)



Rubber single oval



Rubber packet c.d.s.

Western District Unregistered Mail



Standard 'Unified' type machine cancel with cancelling bars or various slogans

<i>Type</i>	<i>Earliest</i>	<i>Latest</i>
Newman St scroll	22 July 1940	3 January 1945
Newman St steel c.d.s.	11 October 1940	13 December 1945
Newman St undated sans	21 July 1942	19 September 1946
Newman St undated serif	18 April 1945	6 June 1946
WDO steel oval	20 November 1946	19 March 1951
WDO RLD double oval	24 January 1948	11 January 1951
WDO rubber oval	10 May 1951	6 June 1953
WDO rubber c.d.s.	28 August 1948	11 May 1949

These exclude items where it is impossible to tell what the postmark is! The general pattern at Newman Street was for the scroll to be used until summer 1942, followed by the sans-serif undated oval until 1946. At the WDO the steel oval was used until roughly the end of 1947, followed by the RLD double oval and then the rubber oval from about mid-1951. The earlier and later dates and other types are occasional usages.

Incoming mail

The other half of the equation was the BPA *Import* Control. Gifts of stamps sent to or from abroad without passing through the Control were routinely (although not always) stopped by the censors and returned to sender. Letters from abroad to dealers were supposed to be addressed care of the BPA, so they could be checked to ensure they did not fall foul of the regulations regarding currency control or trading with the enemy. However, it is reported that mail to known reputable dealers was often forwarded unopened. This may account for the fact that examples are considerably harder to find than outgoing ones, despite the fact that covers sent to a philatelically-aware addressee would *a priori* have good survival chances.

The Nicosia item from the early days of the Control mentioned by Graham Mark in NL326 is unusual, in that it bears the BPA cachet and a consignment number (which

appears to have been part of a different sequence to those used for outgoing mail). Later examples during the war have neither, but do have a plain black-on-white sealing label reading 'Examined by the BRITISH PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION Ltd'. There are several setting variations, but as Torrance & Morenweiser put it,

'examples are so scarce that dates of use are difficult to establish'. The cover from the USA illustrated here (Fig. 3) is probably a typical example. It returned stamps sent as an approval selection, using a printed label supplied by the dealer that gave his address as c/o the BPA, who sealed it after examination and readdressed and reposted it.

Stamps sent by overseas postal administrations not in forbidden currency areas would also appear to have called for checking. The item shown in Fig. 4 was sent registered by the Colonial Postmaster in Barbados, examined by the BPA, then resealed with a label and re-registered (itself an unusual occurrence) using the W.74 Type 6B label:

Official Paid franking labels for dealers

As dealers had to send their material to the BPA for checking, it cost them extra postage in addition to the actual overseas rate. A request was soon made for the supply of suitable 'Official Paid' labels to be used on these packages, which ranged in size from ordinary letters to *'suit-box size'* parcels. Authority for this was given on 24 September 1940. A longish circular letter to dealers from the BPA on 13 January 1941 mentioned *inter alia* that these labels were now available, and that exporters should apply to the BPA for a supply, stating the estimated number to be used over a three month period.

The labels were originally obtained from the Post Office Stores Department but, after the resumption of inter-departmental accounting in 1947, fresh supplies were obtained from the Board of Trade, against whose account the printing costs and postage were charged. Specimens of several types are included among the documents in POST 122/3, although I have only one unused example, dating from the Board of Trade period. Reports of other examples would be of interest.

Also among those documents is a correspondence relating to a complaint from one A. Davies, a dealer in the Isle of Wight, who had parcels stopped at both the Lake and Ventnor offices. Investigation showed that he had been posting letter packets bigger than 10 in. x 5 in. using the BPA Official Paid labels, but these packets had been surcharged as the labels were white in colour. (Yellow labels were to be used for big packets, to facilitate



Fig. 3



Fig. 4 (front and back)



Fig. 5

assessment of postage charges.) After some discussion there is a note that the surcharge should not have been raised, and the postage due was cancelled with an apology. Part of an original wrapper dated 17 December 1948 was included in the file, complete with its Official Paid label and postage dues — so this is what such a package looked like (Fig. 5).

Final notes

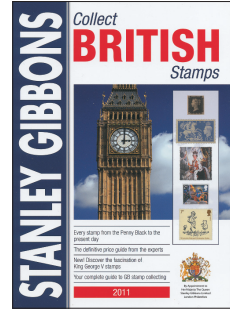
I would be delighted to receive scans or photocopies of any further covers with BPA cachets, especially if they extend one of the dates of use given above (there are annoyingly large gaps in my records around some of the changes). If this isn't possible, it would still be helpful to have a note of the cachet type, the consignment number and date, and the signature (plus any other details readers care to add).

While Miss Worsell's signatures and handwritten dates in the cachets were neat and precise in the early years, the later ones are generally best described as a scrawl. Possibly this reflects the fact that after the war there were more packets to deal with, but it's often necessary to check the postmark for confirmation. Unfortunately, as previously mentioned, these are often impossible to read, too . . .

I've put a set of scans of my written-up pages on the general topic of the British stamp trade in World War II in the Displays section of the Society Web site (<http://www.gbgs.org.uk/displays/passed-by-bpa>). I can be contacted at gbgswebsite@gmail.com. ☒

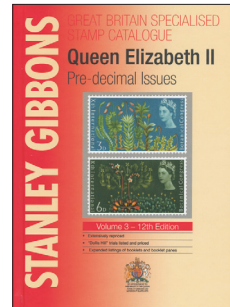
Book Reviews

SG Collect British Stamps 2011, 62nd edn. Size 240 x 170 mm, soft bound, xlix + 211 pp. Published by Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 2011. ISBN 978-0-85259-781-1. Price £12.95. Order from Stanley Gibbons Sales Department on 01425 472363 or e-mail orders@stanleygibbons.co.uk



The latest edition of *Collect British Stamps*, in the larger format which was introduced with the last edition, lists all British stamps up to Christmas 2010, and now includes Royal Mail Faststamps. The book includes an article on the stamps of King George V, as well as the regular commemorative design index, glossary, and guide to collecting stamps. Prices remain mostly unrealistic, although they do give a relative indication of scarcity. It's very difficult to explain to a non-collector why normal retail prices are typically half to three-quarters of the SG catalogue price. Nevertheless, *Collect British Stamps* is a beautifully-presented and useful work, even to a specialist collector. MJ

SG Great Britain Specialised Catalogue, Vol. 3, Queen Elizabeth Pre-Decimal Issues, 12th edn. Size 240 x 170 mm, case bound, ix + 300 pp. Published by Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 2011. ISBN 978-0-85259-778-1. Price £39.95. Order from Stanley Gibbons Sales Department on 01425 472363 or e-mail orders@stanleygibbons.co.uk



Now in SG's new larger format with 'lay-flat' binding, the latest edition of the *Specialised Volume 3* is the standard guide to the early stamps of the present reign. The catalogue provides a specialised listing of all British postage stamps, from the first two definitives showing HM Queen Elizabeth II, issued in December 1952, up to the end of 1970. This includes definitive stamps, commemoratives and special issues, postage dues, regionals and booklets. All are covered in depth; each section being preceded by a comprehensive introduction explaining the technical details of the stamps involved, errors and varieties and marginal sheet markings.

Information on the 'Castles' high values has been expanded following research by Peter Shaw, and details of the methods of plate production employed by the three printers, the plate numbers and the quantities issued are all now included.

Listings also cover watermarks, errors, constant flaws, cylinder blocks, rolls, 'imprimaturs', paper changes, graphite and phosphor bands (including different phosphor wavelengths) and booklet panes (with different perforation types, and including listings of

the Type AP(2E) and IE panes, now recognised by specialist collectors).

Details of the £.s.d. Machin colour trials, prepared for the then-forthcoming decimal series are provided for the first time, with a full listing of those known, and also information on the encapsulated stamp sets produced for some later commemorative issues (the stamps within now considered to have been printed on uncoated paper). In the Booklets section, 'paste up' and advertiser voucher copy books are now listed and priced, and details are given of publicity proofs for booklets with pictorial covers and the £1 'Stamps for Cooks' pattern books.

Appendices cover booklets, perforators, postage rates and additional sources of information, including details of the phosphor trials carried out at the Post Office Research Station in Dollis Hill, London, with a listing of the stamps from these trials which have now come on to the market. (These were featured in the late Mike Holt's article 'The "Dollis Hill" Wilding Experimental Phosphor Trials' in GBJ 45/128.)

The catalogue is well-produced to SG's usual high standard, and it is hard to imagine any collector of pre-decimal issues not having it on their bookshelf. MJ

The Truro Crown Cancellation: A Comment

Andrew Higson

Bob Galland and Karl Louis wrote about the Truro Crown cancellation in the November/December 2008 issue of this *Journal*. Whilst in the past there has been speculation about why this cancellation was used, I am surprised that despite that fact it can be found on medium and high values

circa 1872, there has been no suggestion that it was brought into use for telegraph purposes. This would certainly explain why it has not been found on cover.

Langmead (p. 45) reported that a number of unusual cancels were employed on telegraphically-used postage stamps in the early days of Post Office control (e.g. the 'P.P.12/PAID' rectangle and the 'No. 1B' in a 20 mm circle) and I would venture to suggest that the Truro Crown cancellation would probably fall into the same category.



Reference

Langmead, P. and A. Huggins. *The Telegraph Stamps and Stationery of Great Britain 1851–1954*. London: GB Philatelic Publications Ltd, 2003. ☒

1d Die 2, Alphabet 2, Plate 6 — Imperforate

Nigel Pearson



When I was a youngster, very many years ago, I collected the stamps of Great Britain and quickly became a *Windsor* album fan. I then joined the Royal Air Force and my collection was disposed of, as I had other priorities in life. Retirement after 37 years' service gave me the opportunity to start again — with a *Windsor* album; however, this way of collecting did not provide the opportunities to develop an appropriate and unique collection and so I quickly migrated to QV Penny Reds — both imperforate and stars. I then joined the GBPS, the Mulready Group, purchased Statham, Wiggins, Tonna and some CDs, and my collecting moved into a different world.

To date, the highlight of this fantasy was the purchase, by postal auction, without viewing, of a 1d red imperforate re-construction from a well-known auction house in the south of England. As is normal, when it arrived I was less than happy, but I accept that if you buy this way it is very much 'buyer beware'. I sorted them into four-margin copies and others and then set about plating the better copies. One stamp QI foxed me; it was clearly Alphabet 2, but the Q would not match any of the imprimaturs and so, as usual, I checked it on the Mulready plating site. It quickly came back that it was Die 2, Plate 6 and on checking the watermark I found it to be Large Crown.

I was then advised to send it to the RSPL for a certificate, which I duly did, and so I now have the only recorded example of a C6(1)j for Plate 6, the details of which I have since forwarded to SG in order that they can amend the *Specialised Volume 1* catalogue. I believe that, from my personal perspective, that this was a 'find of a lifetime' which should be the focal point of my collection. ☒

A new flaw for King Edward VIII

Robin Restall



Fig. 1 — Pearl Beneath Crown, State 1 and State 2.

As I'm sure is the case with all specialist collectors, one always seems to have some bags of reserves to be examined when there is time, and sometimes the time never seems to be there when the stamps are! I recently found both together and am happy to say that the time was very well spent. I found three stamps, all the 1½d brown, in fine used condition, that show a hitherto undescribed flaw. This I have called 'Pearl beneath Crown', which compares nicely with 'Pearl beside Crown'. The pearl is virtually identical, and easy enough to see with the naked eye, although a x2 magnifier is advised to see the corrected flaw.

The two stamps to the left of Fig. 1 show the flaw, while the third stamp shows the flaw corrected. The watermark is upright on all three stamps. The perforations on the centre stamp are partially trimmed, particularly on the upper side, and at first glance it appears to be from a booklet pane. However, the other examples do not show trimmed perforations, and so the trimmed stamp may be the result of the use of scissors to initially clip it from its envelope. If anybody with a good collection of these stamps is able to find the flaw, we might get a step closer to figuring out the location and cylinder. Incidentally, the white spot in the King's hair on the third stamp is a printing flaw, and looks very much like one of those ephemeral dust spots that usually gets wiped off by the doctor blade on the next sweep.

No sooner had I drafted the above notes than I came across a cover that included a block of four 1½d stamps (Fig. 2), the lower left stamp clearly carrying this flaw. Three examples in one day! The two right-hand stamps of this block have a fine but clearly visible line running down the right side of the stamps, through the crown and E, very slightly slanted, indicating a doctor blade flaw and almost certainly ephemeral. Furthermore, the bottom right stamp shows signs of dry printing!



Fig. 2