

The 1922-1927 Badge Issue of St. Helena

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The Badge Issue of St. Helena has always proved to be a popular one among collectors. It may be simply the design which catches our imagination, or the numerous printings which yield distinct shades on many of the values. A more likely reason, however, is the existence of some very pronounced varieties which offer the collector an interesting and often profitable sideline.

The design was produced by Mr. T. Bruce, a former St. Helena postmaster. The stamps were surface printed by Messrs. De La Rue & Co. Ltd. in sheets of 60-- five horizontal rows of 12. Five values were printed on Multiple Crown CA paper (4d to £1) and 16 values were printed on Multiple Script CA paper (1/2d to 15/-). All printings were from vignette plate 1, the plate number being above stamps 2 and 11 and below stamps 50 and 59 (Figure 1).

The other sheet markings are the jubilee lines around the stamps. The inner line relates to the duty plate and the outer to the vignette plate. The vignette jubilee line is broken at irregular intervals and this enables the positioning of any marginal copy (Figure 1). Most of the varieties occur within the vignette (*i.e.*, on the main design of the Badge of the Colony [an Indianman passing between two large rocks]). Consequently, the broken jubilee line proves very useful for positioning a particular flaw.

The fine lines in the design and the surface printed method produced many flaws both in the making of the plate and during its working life. It must be noted, however, that over-inking, under-inking, or faulty "make ready" can induce varieties in themselves, or indeed, conceal them. The main varieties are well documented, but worth noting here. They are "The Broken Mast" (stamp 13), "The Cleft in Rock" (stamp 49) and "The Torn Flag" (stamp 42). The latter was retouched in 1926-1927, producing "The Repaired Flag."

Identification of Printings Notes for Guidance

The object of this portion of the article is to make an intelligent assessment of the printings of the Badge Issue, with a view of forming a reference collection. Ideally, one example from each printing would be represented, along with any shade deviations. In order that anyone interested may benefit from or contribute to the work, a basic set of standards is desirable. These will take the form of itemized paragraphs, each numbered for easy reference. Each fact, assumption, or observation may be included for consideration, and rejected, if necessary, without affecting the remainder of the text.

1) Invoice Dates and Quantities Printed

The latest information available on dates and quantities is shown in Table I and forms the basis of this work. The details,

as presented in Table I, agree generally with those given in *St. Helena Postal History and Stamps* by Edward

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60

Figure 1

The makeup of the sheet, the plate numbers, the irregularly broken vignette jubilee lines, and the position numbers assigned to stamps within the sheet.

Hibbert, with certain amendments. The amendments have been derived from the De La Rue records now held at the National Postal Museum in London.

2) Used Stamps off Paper

Used stamps should not be used as reference for shades if off paper. The very process of removing the stamps by soaking or steaming is more than sufficient to affect their color.

3) Stamps on Piece or Cover

Used stamps on piece or cover are less likely to be affected by color changing as when soaked off, and may prove useful for dating a particular specimen. However, with the large proportion of philatelic covers from this issue, due consideration should be made regarding date of use. It is more than possible that 1923 printings could appear on covers dated much later.

4) Stamps Overprinted "Specimen"

Overprints appear on every value and, without exception, come from the first printings. They are, therefore, an ideal reference for color matching, providing the overprint is genuine and other conditions are satisfied (gum toning, etc.). Note: Forged specimen overprints are not particularly common and probably do not exist on the high values at all. However, it should be borne in mind that the value of a half-penny stamp overprinted "Specimen" is virtually the same as the 15/- in view of the fact that the quantities are 416 and 404, respectively.

5) Varieties

If a variety is known to occur on a specific printing, such stamps are useful for reference in color matching, providing: a) the variety is definitely confined to a known printing; b) there is no disputing the particular variety, and c) other condi-

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Table 1
St. Helena 1922 Badge Issue Printing Dates and Quantities

Value	Date of Invoice	Stamps Printed	Sheets printed	Sheets sent to Dealers	Specimen Overprints
4d	Dec. 30, 1922	120,720	2,012	120	416
1/6	May 17, 1922	10,088	168	80	404
2/6	May 17, 1922	9,120	152	60	404
5/	May 17, 1922	7,620	127	36	404
£1	May 17, 1922	5,880	98	12	404
1/2d	Dec. 30, 1922	117,180	1,953	300	416
	Feb. 16, 1932	62,100	1,035		
	April 9, 1936	31,500	525		
	June 15, 1936	30,000	500		
	Oct. 14, 1936	63,000	1,050		
	Nov. 28, 1936	59,940	999		
	Feb. 11, 1937	88,140	1,469		
		451,860	7,531		
1d	May 17, 1922	23,880	398	150	404
	April 1923	120,120	2,001		
	March 26, 1930	60,780	1,013		
	Feb. 16, 1931	61,860	1,031		
	Nov. 28, 1936	30,900	515		
	Feb. 11, 1937	60,060	1,001		
		357,600	5,960		
1 1/2d	Dec. 22, 1922	118,440	1,974	180	416
	Feb. 11, 1937	44,160	736		
		162,600	2,710		
2d	Dec. 30, 1922	119,460	1,991	140	416
	Dec. 2, 1926	60,120	1,002		
	July 12, 1928	61,200	1,020		
	Feb. 16, 1931	61,260	1,021		
	June 15, 1936	30,000	500		
	Feb. 11, 1937	28,440	474		
		360,480	6,008		
3d	Dec. 22, 1922	111,720	1,862	120	416
	Dec. 30, 1922	7,620	127		
		119,340	1,989		
5d	July 23, 1927	29,760	496		422
	April 9, 1936	6,300	105		
	June 15, 1936	15,000	250		
	April 29, 1937	11,280	188		
		62,340	1,039		
6d	May 17, 1922	15,900	265	100	404
	March 16, 1925	62,400	1,040		
		78,300	1,305		

Table 1
St. Helena 1922 Badge Issue Printing Dates and Quantities (Continued)

Value	Date of Invoice	Stamps Printed	Sheets printed	Sheets sent to Dealers	Specimen Overprints
8d	Dec. 22, 1922	119,760	1,996	100	416
	April 29, 1937	11,400	190		
		131,160	2,186		
1/-	May 17, 1922	13,920	232	100	404
	Dec. 2, 1926	30,000	500		
	April 29, 1937	6,000	100		
		49,920	832		
1/6	Dec. 2, 1926	20,220	337	100	421
2/-	July 23, 1927	20,760	346		422
2/6	Dec. 2, 1926	20,460	341	80	421
5/-	Dec. 2, 1926	15,540	259	40	421
	April 29, 1937	5,750	95		
		21,240	354		
7/6	May 17, 1922	6,480	108	25	404
	April 29, 1937	5,340	89		
		11,820	197		
10/-	May 17, 1922	6,720	112	20	404
15/-	May 17, 1922	6,460	107 2/3	16 2/3	404

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tions listed here are satisfied.

6) Dating by Quantity Batching

Where a printing represents say 10 percent of the total quantity, it is reasonable to assume that a particular shade can be identified if that shade represents a similar percentage taken from a random batch. Such identification should only be used as a guide and many factors should be considered: a) a reasonably large quantity should be used as the batch; b) the batch should be genuinely "random" and not originate from one source; c) each item considered should be counted only once, regardless of whether a pair, block, or complete sheet as, for example, it would be unwise to count a sheet as 60 against a total batch of 70; d) the disproportional distribution at the time of the issue has been balanced out with time, for even today, certain stamps issued in one area in millions may be considered as "scarce" in another area. However, it does not take long for the situation to sort itself out — the Great Britain "England winners" is a good example.

7) Color Variations from One Printing

It is known that one printing can produce two (or more) distinctly different shades -- the Queen Victoria 5/- orange/yellow issue from St. Helena being a classic example. The reasons for this are numerous and often technical, but, nevertheless, the problem exists. To extend the problem to the limit of feasibility, a two-color stamp could be represented by nine permutations if each color has three shades.

8) Identification by Elimination

Identification solely by elimination should be avoided if at all possible. If two shades exist from two printings, identification on one does not determine the pedigree of the other. In such cases, it is desirable that both shades be classified independently. Elimination may be used as a guide or for verification, but it should be backed up with at least some additional evidence.

9) Reading Between the Lines

Although the dates and printing quantities given in Table 1 must be accepted as accurate, they are by no means the abso-

lute and should not be relied upon too much for assumptions. For example, the figures given in Table 1 for the 15/- value would indicate that only 15 percent were distributed to dealers. It might be assumed that the remaining 85 percent were sent to St. Helena for postal use. This is further endorsed as the stamp was in use there for the full 15 year duration of this issue. If all this were true, used copies should outnumber mint stamps in the ratio of 5 to 1. General observation and auction realizations would disprove this theory.

10) Over-inking, Under-inking, and Poor Make-Ready

Many stamps from this issue appear to be over-inked (5d and 2/- vignettes) or under-inked (6d vignette). In the majority of cases, the technical reason for this is poor make-ready. Essentially, this is unequal or incorrect pressure on the plate. In such cases, the over-inking darkens the color, while the under-inking lightens it. This effect is also pertinent to the varieties where breaks in the lines of shading may appear or close.

11) Discoloration and Gum Toning

It is generally accepted now that Stanley Gibbons 99a and 99b are from the one printing, 99b only being known with brown gum. The effect that toning has on the color of a stamp, in this case, is quite dramatic and worthy of being a constant reminder. Any stamps with brown gum or other discoloration should not be regarded too highly as reliable examples of shades.

12) Plate Number Wear

It has been suggested that dating may be possible by studying the plate number (stamps 2, 11, 50, and 59) which varies from a full circle to less than half. My own collection contains several items which make it difficult to form a sensible conclusion. I have a plate block of the 1 1/2d with full circles and 60 percent missing (both 1922). I also have early printings of the 1/2d with again full and part circles, one copy (stamp 2) with the color disk in full but with no surrounding circle at all. I believe that there is little to be derived from these data, and I have put the variations down to poor make-ready and not plate wear. Furthermore, if the variations were due to wear of the plate, it would be reasonable to assume that this would be evident on other parts of the plate. In fact, some of the later printings are much more clearer than the earlier ones.

Identification of Printings Results and Conclusions

1) **Variety stamp 2:** This variety has three lines of shading broken above the rock. It has been observed that this variety does not appear on stamp 2 of the 1/6 and 2/6 on Multiple Script CA paper (S), not on the 2/- of 1927. It does, however, appear on the 4d and 2/6 MCA of 1922 and can, therefore, be considered as being confined to the early printings only. Subject to verification, the following conclusions are made:

- The flaw appears on all five MCA values, the 3d, the 10/- and 15/-.
- The flaw does not appear on the 5d, 1/6 (S), the 2/-, the

2/6 (S), or the 5/- (S).

- The flaw appears on the first printing of the 1/2d, 1 1/2d, 2d, 8d, 1/- and 7/6 values.
- The flaw appears on the first two printings of the 1d.
- The flaw appears on both printings (I believe) of the 6d.

2) **Three pence value:** With only eight days separating the two printings, it is virtually impossible to identify them by relying solely on used dated copies. However, the first printing outnumbers the second in the ratio of 15 to 1; and it is more likely that identification can be made by batching. My own findings would make the Pale Blue the more common shade and, therefore, from the first printing. The Bright Blue shade may be assigned to the second printing; however, it should be noted that many intermediate shades exist on this value.

3) **Eight pence value:** Probably the easiest of values to identify as the two printings are separated by 15 years. The first printing can therefore be recognized by any used copy dated before April 1937. Also, the second printing is relatively scarce, being outnumbered in the ratio of 10 to 1. The shades are dull violet (first printing) and brownish gray (second).

List of Queries

Are the following frame varieties constant?

1). On the 1/2d, a weak right hand frame line almost level at the top of the vignette (*Figure 2*).

2). On the 1/2d, a line above the right hand value tablet (*Figure 3*).

3). On the 1d, a dot in "P" of "POSTAGE" (*Figure 4*).

4). On the 1d, the top frame line thickened to the left of the crown (*Figure*

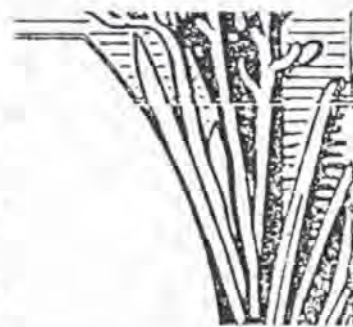


Figure 2



Figure 3

5).

5). On the 1 1/2d, outer frame line broken above the "L" of "ST. HELENA" (*Figure 6*).

6). On the 2d, frame line weak adjacent to left hand value tablet (*Figure 7*).

7). On the 2d, inner frame line weak at right at water level (*Figure 8*).

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8). On the 2d, outer frame line broken above "H" of "HELENA" on stamp 29 (Figure 9).

9). On the 3d, a white mark to the left of the left hand scroll (Figure 10).

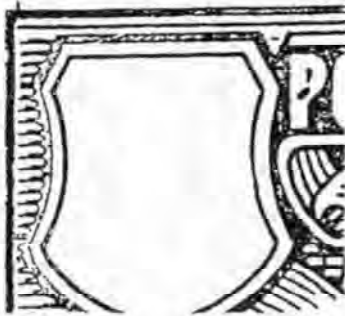


Figure 4

13). On the 6d, a line through the bottom left of right hand value tablet (Figure 14).

14). On the 6d, a dot below the "L" of "ST. HELENA" (Figure 15).

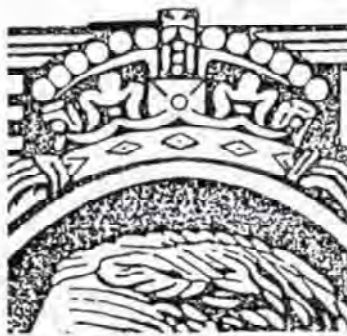


Figure 5

17). On the 1/-, a vertical line above the "N" of "HELENA" (Figure 17).

18). On the 1/-, a white line through "NU" of "REVENUE" (Figure 18).



Figure 6

19). On the 2/-, the center bar of the middle "E" of "REVENUE" is thickened (Figure 19).

Vignette Varieties

I have numerous copies of two very similar flaws, both of which I am sure are constant and both of which are found on at least several val-

ues. These take the form of white vertical lines at the bottom right corner of the vignette. I also have a pair of the 1/2d (early printing, I believe) and both show one of these flaws. Although the flaws appear side by side on the plate, they have never been previously recorded, and I am unable to plate them. Can anyone confirm the flaw and/or give the sheet position? The flaw is illustrated in Figure 20 and Figure 21.



Figure 8



Figure 9

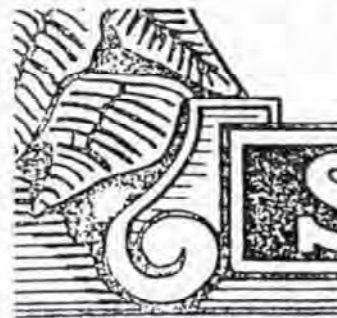


Figure 10

I have a couple mint copies of the 1/- value with a brownish vignette as opposed to gray. I am wondering if these are from the 1937 printing. The few copies I have probably represent about a tenth of my total stock. Does this stamp exist used before April 1937?

Summary of Varieties

In an earlier article (*Stamp Collecting*, April 12, 1979, 191ff), I described a number of flaws based on the existence of at least two copies of each variety. That list is repeated here as follows:

Key to Notations:

- a = early printings only
- b = did not occur on early printings
- c = later printings only
- d = did not occur on later printings
- e = does not occur on all values
- f = part printing only (not known whether early or late)

The numbers given refer to the positional number of the stamp in the sheet, as given above in Figure 1.

1a: Chip out of left hand rock.

1: White spot on bottom



Figure 11



Figure 7

vignette frame above "EL."

2: Three lines of shading broken immediately above rock.

3: Second line of shading broken 1mm from left.

4: Vignette frame and top three lines of shading broken 1.5mm from right.

4a: (1/2d value only) damage to left value tablet and broken "P."

5b: Broken frame of vignette, broken 1mm from left.

7ae: Half moon flaw above right value tablet.

7: Break in sail and rigging of main mast just below first spar.

8: Break in top vignette frame just above and to right of rock.

13e: Broken mast and rope broken on mizzen mast.

14: Chip out of bottom vignette frame line above second "E" of "HELENA,"

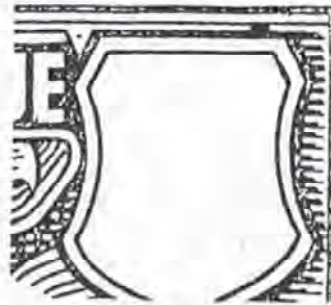


Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14

24: Bottom vignette frame broken twice.

25: Break in ninth line of shading between rock and fore mast.

26b: Diagonal cut across main mast (between main yard and main top).

27: Right vignette frame dented inwards opposite 10th line of shading.

28b?: Mizzen mast broken above mizzen royal yard.

28b?: White dot on hull near waterline below fore mast.



Figure 15

later developing into irregular bottom frame.

14: Sixth line of shading broken 1mm from left.

17: Vignette frame broken at right, level with the top of flag pole.

18: White zig-zag flaw in water 1mm behind stern.

20: Bottom vignette frame broken 2.5mm from left and thin at center.

29: Scratch across three lines of shading in front of rock.

30b: Break in right vignette frame between first and second lines above water.

31b: Break in top line of water 1mm from right frame.

32: Eleventh line of shading broken to right of mizzen mast.

33: Break in 12th line of shading between main and mizzen masts.

33: Diagonal scratch in front of rock.

33e: Small dot to right of crown (1/2d and 3d values only).

39: Right frame broken opposite water line.

40b: Break in second line of shading below curve of medallion.

40: Bottom frame line very thick.

41c: Top line of white on stern tilts upwards at right, touching hull.

42d: Torn flag and thickening of bottom frame below hull.

42e: Torn flag repaired and thickening of bottom frame below hull.

42c: As above with break in eighth line of shading to right and top of mizzen mast.

45?: Top vignette frame broken 1mm from left.

46: Right vignette frame broken at top between third and fourth line of shading.

48: Break in left vignette frame at center.

49b: Cleft in rock (previously known as the Seal's Mouth Flaw).

50: Break in eighth line of shading to right of rock.

51b: White patch on hull below deck to right of fore mast.

52: Break in right vignette frame four lines above water level.

55: Break in water line 1mm behind ship.



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18

As mentioned earlier in this article, the three main varieties are well documented and consequently it has been possible to

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RMS *St. Helena* ends service to Tristan da Cunha

Governor Hollamby arrived on Tristan da Cunha on Wednesday, January 21, 2004, and while there, he spoke to the islanders about the changes to the visit of the RMS *St. Helena* to the island. Normally, the *St. Helena* visits Tristan every January, but this visit will not take place any longer.

The decision to stop visits to Tristan was made after careful consideration by the St. Helena Government. It was noted that Tristanians have not been relying on the ship to carry passengers and cargo to their island. This is due to the expensive tariffs on the *St. Helena* to carry both freight and passengers to and from Tristan. The islanders can travel on South African fishing vessels and the SA *Aghulas* at a fraction of the cost of the RMS *St. Helena*.

Governor Hollamby stressed that the changed schedule will not affect either the relationship of the United Kingdom or St. Helena with Tristan da Cunha. Her Majesty's Government and Governor Hollamby will remain in contact with Tristan via telephone, fax, email and Inmarsat.

Although the change in passenger travel and freight to and from the island will not be affected, the RMS *St. Helena* was the only direct link from Tristan to St. Helena. As the center of Tristan's Government is on St. Helena, the breaking of this physical tie will change the relationship of the island. Does this also mean the end to the governor's visit to Tristan?

(NOTE: From the Tristan da Cunha Association website.)

Study of 1922-27 *St. Helena* Badge issue varieties

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construct data, noting on which values each flaw appears. It is the intention of the author to extend the data to include all the above (and any other) varieties. In order to do this, much information is still required. Interested readers are, therefore, invited to contact the editor if they can help with any of the following:

- a) A list of values each variety appears on with the dates of printing, if known.
- b) A list of values which do not show the varieties, again with dates of printing.
- c) A description and position of any other variety with values affected.
- d) General information or comments on the above.



Figure 19

The task, by necessity, will be a long one and may never be finalized; however, any information received will, in due course, be published. Finally, although the printings do not apply, many of the varieties also appear on the 1924 issues of Ascension. Good hunting! ☺



Figure 20



Figure 21