

The DISTRIBUTION of "SPECIMEN" STAMPS by the UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

By Marcus Samuel

(Continued from page 483, December 4th)

Circular No. 114/4776: August 19th, 1879



BULGARIA: specimens of postage stamps.

Bureau Collection. Only the 1889-91 set exists with SPECIMEN in serif capitals.

NEWFOUNDLAND: specimens of postage stamps.

Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1866-79 1c. brown-purple, 2c. blue-green, 3c. blue, 5c. blue, 6c. rose, 10c. black, 12c. chestnut, 13c. yellow and 24c. blue. There are no stamps with "Specimen" overprints in the collection.

Circular No. 117/4834: September 6th, 1879

CANADA: specimens of postage stamps, stamped postcards and envelopes.

Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1870-79 ½c. (large head) and the small head 1c., 2c., 3c., 5c., 6c. yellow-brown, 10c. deep lilac-magenta, 15c. slate blue (large head) and the Registration 2c. and 5c. There are no stamps with "Specimen" overprints in the collection.

Circular No. 119/4912: October 3rd, 1879

BRITISH GUIANA: specimens of postage stamps and postcards.



Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1876 1c., 2c., 4c., 6c., 8c., 12c., 24c. and the 1866 48c., all with SPECIMEN perforated through the stamp; also the 1876 96c. with a diagonal SPECIMEN overprint in large serif capitals. In the *Paris Postal Museum* collection, the 1866 48c. and 1876 1c. to 48c. are all perforated SPECIMEN, while in the *Berne Postal Museum* collection the 1866 48c. and 1876 1c. to 24c. and 96c. all have diagonal SPECIMEN overprints. There can be little doubt that similar sets were distributed to many members of the U.P.U. It is probable that the stamps were overprinted or perforated in the colony, and they appear to be the first British colonial stamps, defaced in this manner, to be sent to the U.P.U.

BRITISH HONDURAS: specimens of a new 4d. stamp and of a stamped postcard.

CEYLON: specimens of postage stamps, stamped postcards, envelopes and wrappers.

Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1872-79 2c., 4c., 8c., 16c., 24c., 32c., 36c., 48c., 64c., 96c. and 2r.50c. The first stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1884 2c. dull green, 4c. rose and unissued 24c. brown-purple, which were distributed



with the Circular dated July 26th, 1884 (*see note later*), followed by the 1885 5c. on 8c. to 1r.12c. on 2r.50c., which were distributed with the Circular dated March 31st, 1885. There are also some other provisionals without "Specimen" overprints.

LAGOS: specimens of postage stamps.



Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1876 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d. and 1s. The first stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1886 2s.6d., 5s. and 10s., which were distributed with the Circular dated October 28th, 1886.

SIERRA LEONE: specimens of postage stamps.



Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1872 6d. violet and the 1876-77 ½d., 1d., 1½d., 2d., 3d., 4d. and 1s. The first stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1884 ½d., 1d., 2d. and 4d., which were distributed with the Circular dated June 19th, 1884 (*see note later*), followed by the 1888 1s. red-brown which was distributed with the Circular dated November 6th, 1888, the 1890 6d. brown-purple which was distributed with the Circular dated September 12th, 1889, and the 1891 2½d. blue which was distributed with the Circular dated April 21st, 1891.

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Distribution of Specimen Stamps by U.P.U. (contd. from page 547)



STRAITS SETTLEMENTS: specimens of postage stamps.

Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1867-72 2c., 4c., 6c., 8c., 12c., 24c., 30c., 32c. and 96c. The first stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1882 Crown CC 10c. slate and the 1883 2c., 4c., 5c. and 12c., which were distributed with the Circular dated July 26th, 1884. (See note later.) Among the later "Specimen" stamps is the unissued 1921-33 8c. carmine.

Circular No. 121/4967: October 15th, 1879

FALKLAND ISLANDS: specimens of postage stamps.



It appears that the 1878 1d., 6d. and 1s. were distributed with this circular, followed by the 1879 4d. with the Circular dated January 27th, 1880. The first stamps overprinted SPECIMEN (by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co.) were the 1891 1/2d. blue-green and 2 1/2d. ultramarine, which were distributed with the Circular dated June 9th, 1891, followed by the 6d. yellow with the Circular dated December 2nd, 1891, and later by the 1895 2d. reddish-purple and 9d. orange-vermilion. In Circular No. 805/38, dated March 5th, 1891, the Falkland Islands notified the other members of the Union that while awaiting a supply of 2 1/2d. and 1/2d. postage stamps, the postal administration had authorised the representation of 1/2d. stamps by diagonally divided 1d. stamps.

JAMAICA: specimens of postage stamps, stamped postcards and envelopes.



Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1870-79 1/2d., 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d., 1s., 2s. and 5s. The first stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1885 1/2d. green, 1d. rose, 2d. grey and 4d. red-brown, which were distributed with the Circular dated February 10th, 1885, followed by the 3d. sage-green with the Circular dated October 28th, 1886. Among the later "Specimen" stamps is the 1921 6d. carmine and myrtle, depicting the Proclamation of the Abolition of Slavery in the Colony



on August 1st, 1838, not issued because of political unrest in the island. This exists on paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA (SPECIMEN reading upwards) and Multiple Script CA (SPECIMEN reading downwards).

TRINIDAD: specimens of postage stamps.



Bureau Collection. The earliest stamps are the 1869-79 1/2d. lilac, 1d. carmine (with "1d." in manuscript to indicate the denomination), 4d. grey, 6d. green, 1s. ochre and 5s. rose-lake, followed by the 1882 "1d." in red manuscript on the 6d. green. The first stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1883-84 1/2d. to 1s., which were almost certainly distributed with the Circular dated August 30th, 1884. (See note later.)

Among the later "Specimen" stamps is the unissued 1899 "3d." on 5d. dull purple and mauve. It has been stated that the postal authorities of Trinidad, finding that they required a stamp of this denomination, ordered a provisional supply from London, in the absence of the Colonial Postmaster-General, Mr. J. A. Bulmer. Quite by accident, Mr. Bulmer saw specimens of these stamps at the Colonial Office, London, and at once objected to surcharged stamps being issued in the Colony. All were destroyed with the exception of those which had been distributed to members of the U.P.U. and five copies which were reserved for the Trinidad Official Album.

DANISH ANTILLES: specimens of a new 50c. postage stamp and a 2c. postcard.

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December 11th, 1964

Distribution of Specimen Stamps by U.P.U. (contd. from page 549)

Circular No. 126/5054: November 11th, 1879

A certain number of postal administrations having recently joined the Union since the publication of Circular No. 36/3151, dated December 12th, 1878, it is requested that, in future, 80 (instead of 70) examples of each of the documents specified in Article XXIX should be transmitted. (This is difficult to understand because, in fact, 80 examples were called for in Circular No. 36/3151 and no intermediate instructions on this procedure have been seen.)

Circular No. 128/5150: December 4th, 1879

PORTO RICO: specimens of postage stamps.

This concludes the information on the circulars and postage stamps distributed during the year 1879. It will be noted that there is no information concerning the postage stamps of two of the original members of the Union, Italy and the Netherlands. A possible explanation is that these two countries sent information and specimens direct to other members of the Union, and not *via* the International Bureau until many years later.

ITALY: no stamps in the collection of the International Bureau have "Specimen" overprints, but a few are overprinted SAGGIO.



NETHERLANDS: In the collection of the International Bureau, the following stamps are overprinted SPECIMEN: 1872-91 7½c., 22½c., 1g.; 1891-95 3c., 5c., 7½c., 10c., 12½c., 15c., 20c., 22½c., 25c., 50c., and Postage Due 1885 5c. and 10c. only.