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CHANNEL ISLANDS

Spotting The Mistakes

By Glenn H. Morgan

THE POST-independence postage stamps, stationery and postmarks of the Channel Islands have been thoroughly documented. This article deals with some of the modern uncatalogued items that are available to the specialist collector.

The average stamp enthusiast is content with buying mint sets and perhaps an FDC or presentation pack, but these items are issued in such vast quantities. It is only by searching-out the unusual that a collection becomes special rather than run-of-the-mill.

Printing errors are always popular items as most of us love other people making mistakes. When on Channel Islands stamps they tend to be few and far between and very pricey. However, errors are not restricted to just stamps. The 1975 Aviation design stamp booklet exists with the back cover printed twice; whilst the 50p Aviation design is known with two front covers on the same booklet. I have only ever seen one example of both advertised and they were far from expensive. Similarly from Jersey, although admittedly on a postage stamp, the 5d 1969 definitive stamp exists with extra perforations cutting into the design of a left-handed marginal example, again reasonably priced.

Guernsey's FDC envelopes with missing colours are also known. The Thomas de la Rue cover exists with missing yellow



A mirror would help to read these printing errors.

(most spectacular) and the Renoir 1974 cover can be had in an overall purple-brown shade, although what colour is actually missing I do not know.

Meter markings are not terribly popular with collectors, in fact most are usually thrown away. As the Channel Islands are such important financial centres there are a surprisingly large number of postal franking machines on the islands. Consequently there is much to interest the specialist collector including original artwork designs, proof strikes, errors and examples from machines used for only short periods. They may not be as attractive as postage stamps but never lose sight of the fact that they serve precisely the same purpose, namely the pre-payment of postage.

Official paid stationery is used by the

Guernsey and Jersey Post Offices. These consist of envelopes and labels bearing pre-printed Postage Paid franks and they have depicted a map of Guernsey, or the Arms of the respective Bailiwick and exist purely for operational reasons, removing as they do the need for affixing postage stamps. They have been printed in various colours (blue, black or red) and on different types of paper (white or manilla) and the writer has catalogued close-on one hundred different types since 1969. They make an interesting sideline collection at minimal cost as the majority arrive on the doormat with Bureau mailings. Could they be the postal history of the future?

The 1971 Postal Strike resulted when the Post Office Unions in Great Britain took industrial action from January until March. Various private (or 'pirate' as they are sometimes referred to), posts were established to fill the gap left by the Post Office. Certain local issues that had previously been used by offshore Channel Islands before postal independence were over-printed and supposedly used to pre-pay postal costs. It is doubtful whether they ever performed a postal service.

However, three strike post vignettes were produced by M. Laine of Paris in denominations of 2f40 (red on yellow or green on lilac) and 9f40 (green on pale blue). They were used by Laine on mail from Jersey to France and mint examples are very scarce as most of the 960 examples were printed of each value were postally used. A small quantity of airmail envelopes impressed in blue with the 2f40 design also exist.

On Lihou, part of the Bailiwick of Guernsey, special dispensation was given by the Guernsey Post Office to allow labels to be used on mail emanating from the island. Collectors may recall that the Post Office Act of 1969 had previously

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One that wasn't used — unadopted Gordon Drummon artwork.



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outlawed the use of local carriage labels on the Channel Islands. Mail was conveyed from Lihou to Britain by Aurigny Air Services scheduled flights and then delivered by Emergency Strike Post of Southampton.

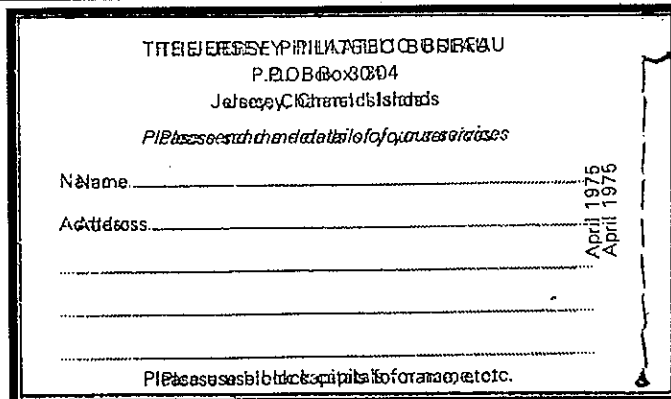
All private services were terminated on 8 March 1971 on resumption of normal postage services.

Unadopted artwork

When an artist is commissioned to prepare an issue of stamps various preliminary designs (often referred to as rough artworks) are made prior to painting the final artwork. There are also occasions when, for various reasons, speculative designs are completed but not accepted. These items remain the property of the artist or designer and he may retain them for his own archives or dispose of them to collectors. Some very interesting artworks, pencil sketches and thumb-nail sketches (hand painted, stamp sized miniatures of the proposed design to see how the artwork would look when reduced at the printing stage) are in the hands of Channel Islands collectors.

At various times during the printing process an offset (or mirror image) of the design is printed onto the reverse side of an otherwise normally printed sheet. Generally these are spotted either by staff at the printers or by Post Office officials who destroy them prior to issue (spoilsports).

The back cover of the 1975 Aviation design booklet, printed twice.



If, like me, you find statistics fascinating you will enjoy reading the Annual Reports of the Postal Committee of the Department of Postal Administration. They each contain a wealth of information not found elsewhere and are available from the States of Jersey Bookshop, States Greffe, States Buildings, Royal Square, St. Helier, Jersey. The Guernsey Post Office have only recently started issuing annual reports as it is now necessary for all States Boards to release their trading figures to the public. They are available from Her Majesty's Greffier, States of Guernsey, The Greffe, St. Peter Port, Guernsey. The prices vary as will the postage and packing costs, so I suggest that if interested you drop a line to the respective authority enclosing a blank cheque.

Collectors should beware of so-called

'colour trials' of the 5d Guernsey Bull stamp issued as part of the 1970 Agriculture and Horticulture set (S.G. 38). They consist of four gummed paper sheets measuring approximately 10cm x 15cm with the entire design placed centrally and coloured either black, mauve, yellow-green or dark green. They were a private venture produced in 1972 and were offered recently in a South African auction with an estimate of 40 Rands. They are of curiosity value only.

I would like to think I have whetted your appetite to find out more about modern Channel Islands collecting. If it has, then why not consider joining the Channel Islands Specialists' Society? The membership secretary is Mr. B. Cropp, 17 Westlands Avenue, Huntercombe, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 6AG. Remember to enclose a stamped, addressed envelope.

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