

## BRITISH STAMPS USED ABROAD AND CANCELLATIONS.

Most collectors are aware that British stamps were used in many of the Colonies before those Colonies were supplied with special issues of their own, and also in a large number of South and Central American Republics, and foreign West Indies, before they joined the Postal Union.

These stamps can only be distinguished from specimens used in the United Kingdom by the postmark, excepting of course those used in the Levant, on which, since the general use of British stamps abroad ceased in 1884, the value has been overprinted in local currency. The fact that the Colonies had no stamps of their own, and that the foreign countries' stamps at that time had no franking power beyond their borders, led many to maintain that stamps so used became the stamps of that particular country. The British stamp with the Gibraltar postmark became a stamp of Gibraltar, and so on. Much may be said in favor of this contention, the fact that the design was the same as the one in use in Great Britain being after all of little moment. Were not Bermuda stamps used in Gibraltar? Indian stamps in Zanzibar?—not to mention other instances. These latter were of course surcharged, but had, perchance, a row of stamps been accidentally missed in the surcharging process on, for instance, the first issue of Gibraltar, would the unsurcharged stamp, if still unsevered from its surcharged neighbour, be considered a Bermudan or a Gibraltar stamp? A Gibraltar stamp, I warrant, and a first class rarity, too, even though it were unused, and might never have seen Gibraltar. Why not then consider a stamp that undoubtedly has seen Gibraltar, been officially issued there, and done postal service, a Gibraltar stamp?

This is a question that has led to a deal of debate, but whatever view one takes it must be admitted that the postmark on these stamps is on a par with surcharges used at a later period to make stamps available in a country for which they were not primarily issued. The postmark, like the surcharge, is indelibly printed on the stamp, is officially applied, and in fact only differs in that the one is printed before use by machinery, the other at the time of use by hand. It is only owing to the fact that the postal authorities of those days were not fully alive to the growth of Philately that we have not today a complete series of surcharges for all these countries with their accompanying errors, broken letters, inverts, etc. Really we present day philatelists have much to be thankful for! Fancy the recent Postmasters of, say, Seychelles or Zanzibar at the head of affairs with an opportunity like this! Had such a series of surcharges been issued it would have been the business of every general collector to collect them; as it is, only those that like them need do so.

It is maintained by many that the collection of British stamps used abroad is not Philately, but merely an interesting study of postmarks; but then postmarks are so bound up with the science of Philately that it is hard to draw a line and say: "This is collectable, but that is not collectable," and whilst not going so far as to maintain that general collectors should start, for instance, their collection of Malta with the various English used there, certainly any

specialist of Malta (or any of these other countries) ought to do so; and more particularly should the English specialist include them in his collection. They most emphatically form a distinct branch of the British Post Office and are certainly of more interest than, say, the green Maltese Cross on the 1d black. That, after all, was only an accident or experiment—these were officially and intentionally issued. The contention that there is no more in them than in a stamp posted, say, in Bradford, is misleading. Bradford used British stamps then and does so now. Nevis, etc., only used them provisionally, and ceased when it had an issue of its own. The fact that it is a study in which we are not entirely dependent on the dealers, should count for a lot.

There is a fascination and pleasure in studying and endeavouring to discover new varieties, a thing that is by no means difficult in connection with British stamps used abroad, since a complete list of known varieties has not yet been compiled. Another thing which should recommend them to collectors is that new and often unnecessary issues need never disturb their equilibrium. Having endeavored to the best of my ability to prove the collectability of these stamps, and to prove their just title to a place in the collection of all English specialists, I will now endeavour to group the various places where they were used, together with a short account of the periods during which they were current. A complete list giving the various offices would here occupy too much space. British stamps used abroad can be roughly divided into five groups, viz:—

### (1) THE BRITISH POSSESSIONS IN EUROPE AND THE LEVANT.

Malta and Gibraltar used British stamps from the end of 1857 till 1884. Cyprus on its inclusion in the British Empire in 1878 till the stamps were machine surcharged in 1880. Constantinople from 1857, and continues to do so, but in 1885 certain values were surcharged in local currency, Smyrna and Beyrout from 1873 till 1884, when they and Stamboul began to use the same stamps as Constantinople. As however in all these Post Offices in the Levant any kind of English stamp was available for postage, it is possible to meet stamps of a later issue than 1884 (unsurcharged) used in these places, although they are not I believe sold at the Post Offices. Alexandria and Suez ran from 1860 to 1877.

### (2) THE BRITISH WEST INDIES.

The issue in these Post Offices began early in 1858 and continued to 1860. Before 1858 all letters were prepaid in cash, and after the issue of British stamps ceased in 1860 all Colonies that had not by then an issue of their own for some unknown reason reverted to their antiquated method again.

### (3) THE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS AND SPANISH AND DANISH WEST INDIES.

St. Thomas being in those days the most convenient and Central Port for Central and South America, was the first to use British stamps in 1860, and as the rarity of these stamps depends not so much on the number printed as the number used, they are together with Malta, Gibraltar and Constantinople (all

of which places had a big correspondence) comparatively the commonest. Two years later, 1862, Buenos Ayres, Montevideo and Valparaiso and other important towns both on the East and West Coast of South America, together with Panama on the Isthmus were added to the list followed as necessity arose in 1863, 1865, and so on up to 1873. Their use ceased on the various countries in which these ports were situated, joining the Postal Union at dates varying from 1877 to 1882. The postal rates in those days were appalling compared with the present day tariff, ranging from 1sh to 2sh 6d per ½oz, hence we have the seeming anomaly of the 1d stamp being infinitely rarer than the 1sh and 2sh issue, the last two values together with the 6d and 4d being in nearly every instance the commonest of all.

### (4) BRITISH NAVAL STATIONS.

These principally consist of the Pacific and China Stations, the North American Station and Sidnev, N. S. W., but as the correspondence from these offices consisted mainly of sailors letters, very little is known about them, and they are very rare indeed. The Post Offices were established in 1858 and closed somewhere about 1865.

(5) This group consists of the stamps used in the British Army in their campaigns in 1854 Crimea, 1885 Egypt and 1899 B. S. Africa.

It certainly adds a zest to one's pleasure in collecting to find that surcharges such as were deemed necessary for the "C. E. F." and Somaliland campaigns do not enter into the field of British stamps used abroad.

The first three places abroad to use British stamps were Malta, Gibraltar and Constantinople, and for these places postmarks were issued showing the initial "M" for Malta, "G" for Gibraltar and "C" for Constantinople. When however, in 1860, the number of offices was increased, it would appear from the postmarks that the authorities decided to have a distinctive mark, consisting of a letter and number in combination for use in the Colonies, and a start was made with A01. The initials of M and G gave way to No. A25 and A26. C, however, was retained till 1885, when a circular date stamp came in use. The original intention does not however seem to have been long adhered to, because after fifteen numbers had been allotted to the West Indies, A16 and A17 were given to Post Offices in Great Britain, and it is pretty evident that the numbers were used in rotation indiscriminately as the offices were opened, either at home or abroad. Thus there is no hard and fast rule by which a novice can tell the "used abroad" stamp. It is a matter of study and research. The fact that the postmark consists of a letter and a number is no guide. For instance, C51 is St. Thomas, while C50 is Sale, in Cheshire. Then again, some places abroad used just plain numbers in the customary bar cancellation, and we have 942 Cyprus, 466 Liverpool. Round date stamps were also used in conjunction with these hand stamps and the shape and sizes vary as they did at the same period in England.

The following is a list of the postmarks employed in the Colonies and abroad:—

247 Fernando Poo (since 1875).

582	Noguabo, Porto Rico (since 1874).	A53	Mandreville, Jamaica.	C35	Panama, Central America.
942	Larnaca, Cyprus.	A54	May Hill, "	C36	Arica, Peru.
969	Vikosia, "	A55	Mile Gully, "	C37	Caldera, Chili.
974	Baffo, "	A56	Mongeaune, "	C38	Callas, Peru.
975	Famagusta, "	A57	Montego Bay, "	C39	Cobija or Puerto - de - la - Mar, Bolivia.
981	Limasol, "	A58	Montpelier, "	C40	Coquimbo, Chili.
982	Kyrenia, "	A59	Morant Bay, "	C41	Guayaquil, Ecuador.
098	Platres, "	A60	Ocho Rios, "	C42	Islay, Peru.
A01	Kingston, Jamaica.	A61	Old Harbour, "	C43	Payta, "
A02	Antigua.	A62	Plaintain Gr. Riv., "	C51	St. Thomas, Danish West Indies.
A03	Demerara.	A63	Pear Tree Grove, "	C56	Carthagena or (C65 error), Colombia.
A04	Berbice.	A64	Port Antinio, "	C57	Greytown or San Juan del Porte, Nicaragua.
A05	Bahamas.	A65	Port Morant, "	C58	Havana, Cuba.
A06	British Honduras.	A66	Port Maria, "	C59	Jacmel, "
A07	Dominica.	A67	Port Royal, "	C60	La Guaica, Venezuela.
A08	Montserrat.	A68	Porus, "	C61	San Juan, Porto Rico.
A09	Nevis.	A69	Ramble, "	C62	Santa Martha, Columbia.
A10	St. Vincent.	A70	Rio Bueno, "	C63	Tampico, Mexico.
A11	St. Lucia.	A71	Rodney Hall, "	C64	Vera Cruz, "
A12	St. Kitts.	A72	St. David, "	C79	Hong-Kong (before 1871).
A13	Tortola.	A73	St. Anne's Bay, "	C81	Bahia, Brazil.
A14	Tobago.	A74	Salt Gut, "	C82	Pernambuco, Brazil.
A15	Grenada.	A75	Savannah-la-Mar, "	C83	Rio de Janeiro, "
A18	English Harbour Antigua.	A76	Spanish Town, "	C86	Porto Plata, Dominican Rep.
A25	Malta.	A77	Stewart Town, "	C87	St. Domingo, "
A26	Gibraltar.	A78	Verc, "	C88	St. Jago de Cuba or Santiago, Cuba.
A27	Alexandria, Jamaica	A79	Naval Station till 1871.	D22	Cidad Bolivar or Angostura, Venezuela.
A28	Annotte Bay, "	A80	" " "	D26	Spanish Mail Packet, St. Thomas.
A29	Bath, "	A81	" " "	D27	Amoy, China.
A30	Black River, "	A82	" " "	D28	Kiung Chow, China.
A31	Brown's Town, "	A83	" " "	D29	Hankow, "
A32	Buff Bay, "	A84	" " "	D30	Hio-go, Japan.
A33	Capelton, "	A85	" " "	D47	Polymedia, Cyprus.
A34	Claremont, "	A86	" " "	D48	Head Quarter's Camp, Cyprus.
A35	Clarendon, "	A87	" " "	D74	Pisco, Peru.
A36	Dry Harbour, "	A88	" " "	D87	Iquique, Peru.
A37	Duncans, "	A91	Virgin Island (in England after 1867).	E53	Port au Prince, Hayti.
A38	Ewarton, "	A92	Halifax, Nova Scotia.	E88	Colon or Aspinwall, Colombia.
A39	Falmouth, "	A99	Sydney, New South Wales.	F69	Savanilla, "
A40	Flint River, "	B01	Alexandria, Egypt.	F83	Arroys, Porto Rico.
A41	Gagle, "	B02	Suez.	F84	Aguadilla, "
A42	Golden Spring, "	B31	Free Town, Sierra Leone.	F85	Mayaguez, "
A43	Gordon Town, "	B32	Buenos Ayres.	F87	Smyrna, Levant.
A44	Goshen, "	B53	Mauritius.	F88	Ponce, Porto Rico.
A45	Grange Hill, "	B56	Hong-Kong.	G06	Beyrout, Levant.
A46	Green Island, "	B57	" " "	G	Gibraltar.
A47	Highgate, "	B62	" " "	M	Malta.
A48	Hope Bay, "	B64	Seychelles.	S	Stamboul, Constantinople.
A49	Lilliput, "	C	Constantinople.		
A50	Little River, "	C28	Montevideo, Uruguay.		
A51	Lucia, "	C30	Valparaiso, Chili.		
A52	Manchioneal, "				