THE HOUSE OF DE LA RUE

Southern Africa in 1902.

1

De La Rue and South Africa

De La Rue

Thomas De La Rue and Company Limited were the leading stamp printers for Britain and her colonies at the end of Queen Victoria's reign. So, logically, they were to play the leading role in the printing of the stamps for the South African colonies, and subsequently, for the early years of the Union of South Africa.

Thomas De La Rue was born in Guernsey in 1793. His family, having fled the persecution of the Huguenots in France, had lived there for generations. He was apprenticed to a printer at an early age. Thomas had connections, in so far as his maternal grandfather, Charles Andros, was the King's Sheriff. Thomas was very proud of his grandfather's standing, and in due course his grandson was named Thomas Andros, and he in turn named his children Evelyn Andros, Stuart Andros, and Ivor Andros. In 1811 Thomas started his own business, but with the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the withdrawal of the troops from Guernsey, business conditions became difficult.

In 1816 Thomas decided to try his luck in London. He started manufacturing hats, but quickly moved on to producing stationery and playing cards, where he could demonstrate his skill as a printer. Around 1835 he established himself at 110 Bunhill Row, which was to become the De La Rue headquarters for many years. The Company was awarded the contract to print British revenue stamps in 1853, and postage stamps two years later.

After Thomas died in 1866, the business continued to prosper under the guidance of his sons, and then later, his grandsons. Thomas Andros De La Rue, one of his grandsons, was in sole charge in 1896, when he decided to convert to a limited company. He became Chairman, and placed his three sons, Evelyn, Stuart and Ivor on the Board.

The Company had been fortunate in being able to attract skilled engravers like Joubert de la Ferte, and also other very capable people to work with their organization. Perhaps the most noteworthy of these was the distinguished scientist, Dr. Hugo Muller of Leipzig, who received credit for much of the work on De La Rue's singly and doubly fugitive inks.

South Africa

South Africa was in turmoil at the time of Queen Victoria's death in January 1901, and King Edward VII's subsequent accession to the throne. The Anglo-Boer War was still being bitterly fought. The War finally came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging on 31 May 1902. As a result the two Boer Republics ceased to exist, and came under crown

colony rule as the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. Along with the self-governing colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal, this meant that the whole of South Africa was brought under the British crown. The Transvaal became a self-governing colony in 1906, as did the Orange River Colony in 1907. For both political and economic reasons, a movement for the closer union of the four colonies developed.

After the Anglo-Boer War, Milner, high commissioner and governor of the two new crown colonies, concentrated on material reconstruction of the war ravaged colonies. The gold mines were expanded and resumed large scale operations. Milner also prepared the way for political union by bringing all the four colonies into a South African customs union, and by merging the railways of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony.

Lord Selborne, who succeeded Milner in 1905, made a case for political union in a memorandum published in 1907. In 1908 and 1909, a national convention, consisting of representation of the four colonial parliaments, and to which Rhodesia sent observers, met. A constitution was drafted and approved by the four colonial parliaments, and was enacted by the British Parliament in September 1909.

The South Africa Act came into force on 31 May 1910, and the four colonies became provinces of the Union of South Africa. The South African Party, under former Boer generals Botha and Smuts, governed the country from 1910 to 1924, and South Africa operated as a proud member of the British Commonwealth during this time. Hertzog's National Party came to power in 1924, with the objective of releasing South Africa from imperial domination. A side effect of this movement was the eventual printing of postage and revenue stamps locally, rather than in Britain.

De La Rue and South Africa

De La Rue was already well established as a printer of South African Colonial stamps and stationery by the onset of the Anglo-Boer War.

The Cape of Good Hope was the mother colony in South Africa. First settled by the Dutch East Indies Company in 1652, as a base to supply fresh produce to the Company ships on route to and from the Dutch East Indies. The Cape had changed hands between the Dutch and British over the years. The early postage stamps, the well known Cape triangulars, were printed by Perkins Bacon, but De La Rue took over the printing of these, using the Perkins Bacon plates, in 1863, and printed all Cape postage and also revenue stamps from then onwards.

It was a similar story with the stamps of Natal. First printed by Perkins Bacon, then taken over by De La Rue from 1863, initially using the original Perkins Bacon plates, and then printing all postage and also revenue stamps from then onwards.

Interestingly, given the concern the Dutch settlers of the Orange Free State had about getting away from British domination, they chose De La Rue to print their first issue of 1868, and also all subsequent printings of the stamps of the Orange Free State.

De La Rue's dominance was not complete, as the Transvaal (known as the South African Republic prior to British annexation in 1877, and after the British departed in 1881, it reverted to its former name again) had not used De La Rue. The first issue being printed by Adolph Otto of Germany, then intermingled with local printings until the British annexation, when the 1878 issue was printed by Bradbury Wilkinson. After the British departure in 1881, stamps were mostly printed by Enschede & Son of Holland.

So, as the Anglo-Boer War ended, three of the four South African colonies were already having their stamps printed by De La Rue, with the new crown colony of the Transvaal being the only exception. Both the former Boer Republics continued to use their former

stamps, initially overprinted V.R.I., but after the death of Queen Victoria, and King Edward VII becoming the new British monarch, some were overprinted E.R.I. There was an urgent need to progress to new stamps for the new colonies of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, while having a new British monarch required that Natal change to stamps showing the head of the new king. The Cape of Good Hope did not have either postage or revenue stamps depicting the head of Queen Victoria, so, theoretically no new stamp issue was required. However, the Cape also decided to issue new stamps depicting the head of King Edward VII.

It was time for the De La Rue Edwardian stamps of the South African colonies to take the stage.

2

The Workings of De La Rue

Die Preparation

In typographic (or relief) printing the die is cut by removing the part that is not to be printed, and leaving the printing lines standing in relief. While in recess printing the printing lines are cut (or recessed) into the metal.

A general look at the steps involved in producing the dies will enable the various die proofs to fit more logically into the process. The simplified version of the procedure was to engrave the King's head die (the parent die), harden this, and transfer it to a roller, which was in turn hardened. From this roller die, a number of replica King's head dies were impressed into flat steel blocks, depending on the number needed for the new stamp series involved.

For the monocoloured stamps, the frame was now engraved on the new replica die, but with the value tablets and the immediate surrounding of the frame left uncleared (that is, unengraved), (Fig. 2.3). This way dies could be created with a common head, but with different frames, as in the case of the postage stamps of the Cape Colony. After hardening, these new subsidiary dies were transferred, via the roller die step again, to new blocks of steel. On these new dies with a common head and either a common frame (as was the case for all stamps other than the postage stamps of the Cape Colony), or different individual frames (as was the case for the postage stamps of the Cape Colony), the duty was engraved, and the immediate surrounding of the die cleared. This final die becomes the master die for that particular duty.[1]

For the bicoloured stamps, the King's head die and the frame die are engraved separately, with the frame die going through the same steps of hardening, being transferred via the roller step to new blocks of steel, and then having the duty engraved and the immediate surrounding cleared as did the monocoloured stamps. In this case the head and the frame are printed separately, so each duty would have its own master frame die, but a separate common head die. This common head die (or central vignette die) was usually called a key die.

Fig. 2.1 Cut down die proof from the De La Rue Work Books.

1 Melville, Fred J. *Postage Stamps in the Making,* Vol. 1, London: Stanley Gibbons, 1916, p. 176 for further explanation of the procedure.

Plate Preparation

The master die, cut down to the required stamp size and having been hardened, was inserted into a device, which was essentially a long collar and plunger. The original die was placed face up at the bottom of the collar, below the plunger, with a carefully prepared piece of lead inserted just above the original die. The plunger was hydraulically forced down, or struck, onto the lead, so that the die image was imparted to the piece of lead. This was known as lead mould striking.

The number of lead moulds struck would depend on the size of the plate (number of panes) planned. A few extra were always struck in case of damage or an imperfect impression on the struck lead. The number of leads struck for any specific plate was noted alongside the cut down die proofs in the De La Rue Work Books (Fig. 2.1).

The lead moulds, or leads as they were usually called, were clamped together in 10 rows of 6 to form a stereo, or stereotype, which would ultimately create part of a plate to make a pane of 60 stamp impressions. After treatment, the stereo was immersed in a bath, where copper was electrolytically deposited on the surface. The copper shell so created was removed from the stereo, and filled with printer's metal. This was now known as an electro, or electrotype. The copper surface was now further electro coated with a film of steel to provide a hard surface for printing. By clamping two electros of 60 together, a plate for 120 impressions was created, or by clamping four electros of 60 together, a plate for 240 impressions was created.[2]

For bicoloured stamps, the common head plate (or central vignette plate) made from the key die, was called a key plate. The individual duty, or frame and duty plates made from the individual dies were sometimes called overprint plates.

De La Rue introduced protective lines around the borders of the plates or panes for the British series of stamps for the Jubilee year in 1887. They were intended to protect the stamp plates at points where the strain of wear was the greatest. Being in relief, they received the full strain of the inking rollers and of the printing impression. These protective lines, technically known as marginal rules, continued in use, and subsequently became popularly known as Jubilee lines.

Proofs

For the engraver or the printer to check whether the die was still able to produce the desired impression, prints (known as proofs, or die proofs) would be taken at various stages of the process. The De La Rue practice was to use glazed white cards (92 mm wide and 60 mm high), on which they made the test print, or die proof.

Some of these were cut down and stuck in the De La Rue Striking Books, and the instructions for the job in hand noted beside them (Fig. 2.1). The others were kept on the glazed cards and filed in their records. Most, but not all, are dated (usually a hand stamp at the top left corner), and show the state of the die at the time the proof was made (usually a hand stamp in the top right corner). Some are also initialled, and may have further information added as well (Fig. 2.2).

States of the Die when the Proof was made

It was necessary to check the die before hardening took place, as it would have been much more difficult to make corrections or modifications to the hardened die than while it was still

2 Williams, L. N. *Fundamentals of Philately,* Rev. Edn, Pennsylvania: American Philatelic Society, 1990, pp. 435–575 has much detail on relief printing.

in the unhardened state. So a proof impression of the die was taken (or pulled), and examined carefully before being passed for hardening. This die proof on its glazed card was usually handstamped BEFORE HARDENING (Fig. 2.3). These are not usually initialled. In theory, not many proofs would have been taken of any of the die states, however, the BEFORE HARDENING die proofs seem to be the most readily available of all the states.

Fig. 2.2 Die proofs indicating the various states of the die.

Fig. 2.3 Die proof with blank duty tablets and uncleared surrounds.

After being passed for hardening, the die would be hardened by heat and chemical treatment. In order to check that the die had not been scratched or damaged in any way during the hardening process, further proofs were taken. These were usually handstamped AFTER HARDENING. These were usually initialled by the person approving the impression the die was able to create. One would expect a few more of the AFTER HARDENING proofs would have been pulled, as they would have formed the file reference, however, these seem to be more difficult to find than the BEFORE HARDENING die proofs.

The state of AFTER HARDENING and that of BEFORE STRIKING (that is before striking of the leads) is theoretically the same, as the die had not been through any further processing. It would seem that if the die had been hardened, and either used, or not yet used to strike a number of leads, but had been stored for a period of time, it would need to be cleaned and checked that it was still satisfactory. So, the printer would have taken some proofs, which were then handstamped BEFORE STRIKING. As can be expected, this was the least common of the die proof states, as this would not have been frequently needed.

After the die had been used to strike a series of lead moulds, the printer would want to again check the die had not been scratched or damaged during the striking process. So, again, a die proof was made and the impression checked, and handstamped AFTER STRIKING (Fig. 2.2), and initialled by the person inspecting the proof and confirming that its condition was satisfactory. These too are not common, as presumably one or two proofs would have been sufficient to record the state of the die.

Proofs of the various states would have been pulled from the King's head die and the duty plate dies in the case of bicoloured stamps, and of the complete stamp dies in the case of the monocoloured stamps. Proofs were also taken of the die during intermediate steps of preparation. For example, with blank duty tablets and uncleared surrounds (Fig. 2.3).

In the normal course of events, proofs would be taken of each final die in three states, BEFORE HARDENING, AFTER HARDENING, and AFTER STRIKING. When a subsequent plate was made, either when the first one was damaged or too worn to make good impressions, a further AFTER STRIKING proof would be taken to check that the die was still in good order after having been used to strike new leads for a new plate. On some few occasions, if the die had not been used for a long time, and may possibly have been subject to damage, a proof would be pulled in the BEFORE STRIKING state. This means that final dies would have proofs taken three times for the initial plate, and usually once for every subsequent plate.

The only state on which no initials occur is the BEFORE HARDENING state. The exception being the first ones approved, cut down, and believed to be inserted in the Work Books. It would seem that a number of other proofs were then made in this BEFORE HARDENING state, and kept more as examples of work to show clients, than as part of the actual work process checks. All other states appear to always be initialled. The fact that the BEFORE HARDENING state proofs seem to be more plentiful than the others may support this theory.

The Crown Agents

De La Rue mostly worked with the Crown Agents for the Colonies, who represented the colonies in their day-to-day interaction with the company. However, long established self-governing colonies like the Cape of Good Hope had their own Agents General in London, who worked directly with De La Rue. The procedure involved was the same in both cases.

The Crown Agents, since they represented most of the British Colonies, were able to bring their experience to help the less knowledgeable Administrations deal with De La Rue, and apart from the service of managing the various printing contracts, were able to provide guidance to both De La Rue in dealing with their clients, and their colonial clients in dealing with De La Rue.

The Colonial Government sent an indent for the printing work required to the Crown Agents, who then placed an order, or requisition for that printing work with De La Rue. The Crown Agents essentially controlled the whole printing operation. They provided the paper with the watermark that incorporated the letters CA, signifying Crown Agents. They had a staff of Inspectors and Stamp Examiners located in the De La Rue printing works. All printing materials, like their watermarked paper, the dies, the rollers, and the plates, were kept in the Crown Agents Safes on the De La Rue premises.

When the stamps or stationery were printed, inspected and packed, they were stored in De La Rue's strong room, until they were collected by the Crown Agents Shipping Officer. He saw them stored aboard the carrying vessel, in their strong room, or, if they did not have one, in the Captain's cabin. Small packages were posted by registered parcel post by the Shipping Officer. That was where the Crown Agents responsibility ended.

When the Crown Agents were not used (as in the case of the Cape Colony), the colony would send their own Inspector to oversee the work being done for them, but the labour for the various jobs would be provided by the staff of De La Rue.

Outline of the Procedure

Once the colony placed the order with De La Rue, either directly or through the Crown Agents, De La Rue would develop some proposed designs. These may be left to De La Rue to develop, or some sketches, photographs, or other instructions may have been provided by the colony. Usually, a proposed design, with at least one alternative proposal, would be sent by De La Rue on

After the final design had been agreed upon, De La Rue would send an Appendix sheet (usually only made up of one or two denominations) in the proposed colours (colour trials). A second Appendix sheet would offer alternative colours for the colony to choose from, should they not like some of the proposed colours. These Appendix sheets would often, but not always, be given a letter of the alphabet for easy identification. No colour trial Appendix sheets were made for the Cape of Good Hope, as the Cape Government decided to use the same colours for each denomination that had been previously used.

Each of the designs and Appendix sheets would usually be prepared in duplicate. One copy placed in the De La Rue Correspondence Book, and the other sent to the colony for approval. So it is possible to find two practically identical Appendix sheets or design cards.

Once the colours had been selected, the order would be placed, the dies and plates made, and the stamps or stationery printed and despatched to the colony.

Work Books, Striking Books and Day Books

The Crown Agents kept their own Day Books to record the transactions of the day from their side. These do not seem to have survived for the period relevant to the South African Edwardian stamps printed by De La Rue.

De La Rue kept Work Books (sometimes known as Stamp Books), where the order details were kept, and recording of the work activity undertaken. These were the instructions as to what needed to be done, from which the printing staff took their work orders. When a task had been completed, a line was usually (but not always) ruled through it to show that it was done. Parts of these Work Books have survived. De La Rue also kept Striking Books, keeping records of the dies struck in lead to make the necessary plates for printing. These too were usually ruled through when the task had been completed. There must have also been some sort of die making book, but nothing has been found of this nature.

De La Rue also kept Private Day Books. Presumably called private as this was their record for invoicing. All the completed tasks from the Work Books were neatly written up, with charges recorded for each die made, or stamps or stationery etc. printed, or other service provided. These have all survived.

Ink Recipe Books

These were also a form of Work Book. Here, after the colours were approved, the recipes for the inks of each individual stamp were recorded. A De La Rue dummy stamp or label produced from the ink made using that specific recipe was stuck alongside, so that the person who was to make up the ink for the printing of any specific stamp also had a colour reference to work from. If one of the colours were a standard colour, for example, the doubly fugitive green, there would just be 'D.F. green' in the recipe column. Stamps to be printed in two colours obviously had separate recipes for each colour, and each had a separate De La Rue colour label stuck alongside (Fig. 2.4).

Correspondence Books

De La Rue also kept copies of their correspondence in Correspondence Books. These too have survived. Most of their correspondence was kept in these books, though there are some small gaps where some letter is referred to, but is not in the Book. Some of these, like some of the Private Day Books, are now quite difficult to read. These were

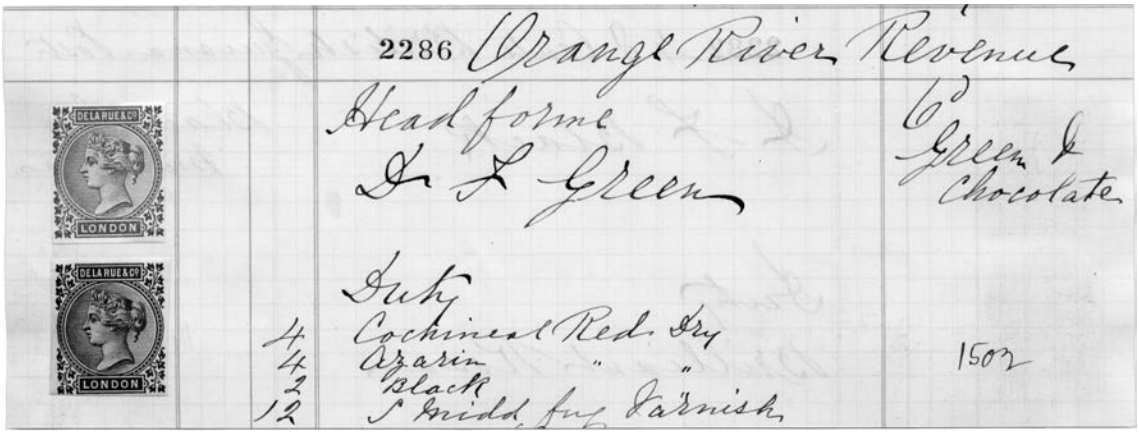

Fig. 2.4 Ink recipe example showing the Orange River Colony 6d revenue stamp recipe section (reduced).

(and to some extent still are) a wonderful source of information on how the stamps and stationery were developed, as not only did they contain the correspondence, but also copies of the proposed designs and colours, specimens of the final items, and much other material of interest too.

Dispersal of Correspondence Book Material

From 1954 to 1976, the copies of die proofs, specimens, colour trials, and all similar printing record material were removed from the Correspondence Books and other records. Many of those removed earlier in the period, have, in the place where they once resided in the Correspondence Books, a note that they were 'Removed for Collection', initialled and dated. The rest just have 'Removed', and are initialled and dated.

De La Rue had formed a reference collection, and this was where the material went. This was sold via Robson Lowe in 1976. Most of the numerous items taken in 1976 never actually went into the reference collection, but were sent directly to the Robson Lowe sales. A few items were missed, and these are now in the keeping of the Royal Mail Heritage Services in London, along with the rest of the surviving De La Rue records.

Robson Lowe received some 70 to 80 large blue albums, which constituted the De La Rue reference collection, to sell. Robson Lowe divided these up into what were thought to be appropriate lots for auction. Unfortunately many of the pages and Appendix sheets were cut up for this purpose, leaving very few of these intact. These lots were sold in a series of sales over several years from 1976. More material was sold via Robson Lowe than just the material in the reference collection, as De La Rue dug through their Correspondence Books and other records, turning up more items for sale. At that time the interest among collectors was somewhat mixed, as the material was an unfamiliar part of the story of the stamps and stationery.

The most interesting sale from the South African point of view was the one held in Basle on 26 and 27 of October 1976, titled 'Africa in Switzerland'. The sale was originally intended to take place in South Africa, and all the estimates were in South African Rand, but Robson Lowe were unable to obtain the necessary permits to hold the auction there, so held it in Switzerland instead. Some of the material relevant to the Edwardian issues of South Africa remained unsold, and potential buyers had to be encouraged to acquire the material. Times have certainly changed!

From a research point of view, this was very unfortunate, as it became no longer possible to see the material referred to in the De La Rue correspondence. However, from the collector's viewpoint, this allowed the opportunity to acquire some very special material.

3

The De La Rue Edwardian Issues

Stamps Sizes

Practically all the Edwardian stamps printed for the South African colonies were in either what De La Rue called postage size (about 20.5 mm wide by 24.5 mm high), or receipt size (about 29 mm wide by 34 mm high). The postage size were either inscribed for postage, or both postage and revenue. The receipt size were usually inscribed for revenue, but in the case of Natal, this size was also sometimes inscribed for postage and revenue, as well as for postage-only stamps.

The one exception to these standard sizes was the Cape of Good Hope Patent and Proprietary stamps (about 41 mm wide and 24.5 mm high, exactly the size of a pair of postage size stamps. There were also locally printed versions of these stamps, but they were slightly smaller). These, along with the postage due stamps of the Transvaal, were the only adhesive stamps of the period that did not show the King's head.

Factors Common to All Four Colonies

All four of the Colonies issued stamps for postage use, and also for revenue use, with a vignette of the head of King Edward VII as the centre of the design. The master dies used for the King's head vignettes of all the four colonies were engraved by David Turner.[1] His similar engravings of two different sizes of the head of King Edward VII in profile were made from the portrait done by Emil Fuchs.

The decisions involved in the selection of the portrait of the new monarch were not straightforward. Britain and her Colonies had only had one monarch in the sixty years since the advent of adhesive stamps, so no precedent existed. It is fascinating to note some of the dilemmas that arose. Queen Victoria's head had always faced left on both stamps and coins of Britain. (This was also true for most, but not all the Colonies). Since Tudor times, it was customary to alternate the profiles of successive monarchs from left to right on the coins. Over the centuries this had become an accepted practice. So the debate was as to whether this should also apply to stamps.

It was eventually decided, for a number of reasons, that the profile of King Edward VII would also face left on the stamps of Britain, and the four South African Colonies followed

1 Sydow, A. Hilton. 'Notes Anent Engravers of the Master Dies of Certain of the Stamps of Southern Africa', *The South African Philatelist*, June 1942, p. 64.

this precedent, using the same basic profile of the King as the British stamps. Some of the considerations were that if the King looked to the right, and the stamp was affixed to the top right of the envelope, he would be gazing away from the body of an envelope. This was not considered desirable. Also, if he should look left, the decorations mounted on the King's left breast could be included in the design (in fact they were not included in the design). Also, other countries had not reversed the profile on the accession of a new ruler. These all seem like trivia, but they resulted in considerable delay in the selection of the appropriate portrait for the stamp design.

Apart from these sort of considerations, the King also had some views on how he should be depicted on the stamps, and the final portrait had to be approved by him. This was not surprising, as the image of the King on coins and stamps would probably be the only ones that the vast majority of his subjects would ever see. The King made it clear that he wished to be depicted bare-headed. He also wished to have some indication of the fact that he was the King, and so a small crown was incorporated in the stamp frame above his head.

All four Colonies followed the UPU colour convention. These being green for the ½d value, red for the 1d value, and blue for the 2½d value. MacKay[2] points out that this was not a convention for any particular value or denomination (the UPU member countries would have a wide variety of currencies), but rather for an international postage rate. This way the receiving country postal authorities would know that the correct postage had been paid, even though the individual may have no knowledge of the currencies and exchange rates of the sending country. The convention was therefore green for the stamp prepaying the international printed paper rate, red for the international postcard rate, and blue for the international letter rate.

All four Colonies also issued similar types of stationery, again with the same vignette as the centre of the design. Stamp sizes, and stationery sizes too, were nearly always the same.

Variations between the Colonies

While generally following the same pattern, each Colony did have its own particular variations. The major ones are noted below:

Engraved Dies David Turner engraved two sizes of master dies of the profile of King Edward VII.[3] The larger profile was used for the Cape of Good Hope and the Transvaal stamps, while the smaller one was used for the Natal and the Orange River Colony stamps.

Design The Cape Colony had a different frame design for each postage stamp denomination, but not for revenue stamps, where a common frame design was used. All the other Colonies had a common design for the frames of both their postage as well as their revenue stamps. Only the postage due stamps of the Transvaal, and the Patent and Proprietary stamps of the Cape Colony, did not incorporate the King's head in the design.

Dual Purpose Stamps The Cape Colony and the Orange River Colony had stamps designated only for postage, or only for revenue purposes, though sometimes these, especially the postage stamps, were used for the other purpose. Natal and the Transvaal had some of their stamps inscribed for both postage and revenue purposes.

Watermarks From 1884 the Cape stamps were printed on paper with the distinctive watermark of a Cabled Anchor, and this continued throughout the Edwardian issues. The

2 MacKay, James A. *Under the Gum*, Limassol: James Bendon, 1997, p. 207.

3 Sydow, A. Hilton. 'An Index of British Engravers and a Guide to the Stamps Engraved by them Referenced by Gibbon's 1940 Catalogue Illustration Numbers', *The South African Philatelist,* July 1943, p. 79.

watermark was spaced to ensure that each individual stamp had its own complete watermark. The larger receipt size stamps having a larger version of the watermark.

The stamps of the other three Colonies initially had the Crown Agents watermark of Crown CA (the CA designating Crown Agents). The exception being the initial large (receipt) size high values of Natal, and the revenue stamps of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, which had the earlier Crown CC (designating Crown Colony) watermark. This had been phased out as the Crown Agents began supplying the paper to De La Rue, but presumably a supply of paper for the large size stamps was still in stock, so was being used up. Each individual stamp had its own complete watermark.

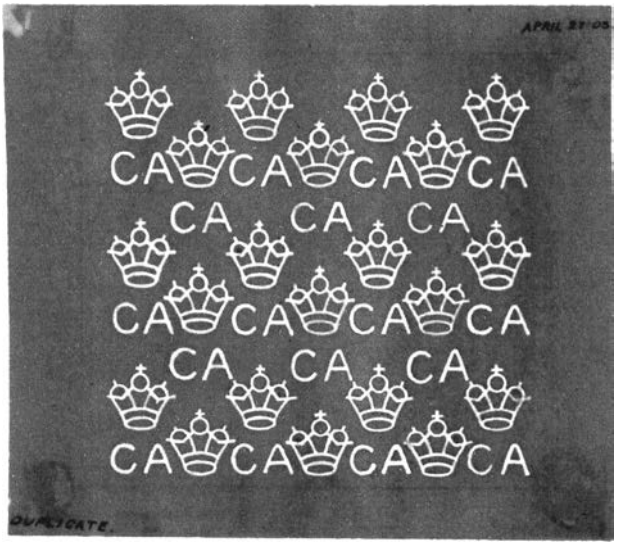

Fig. 3.1 Multiple Crown CA watermark design from De La Rue Records, dated 27 April 03, and marked duplicate in manuscript.

In 1904 the Crown Agents made a change to the watermark known as the Multiple Crown CA (Fig. 3.1). Here the watermark was reduced in size, and repeated close together over the entire area of the paper. (Giving about 237 watermarks to the space that formerly had only 60 on the postage stamp size). The reason for the change was to obviate the necessity for accurate spacing, and having to have paper with different watermark spacing for the different size stamps.

The note written by De La Rue that was with the De La Rue Collection is of interest. It reads:

> On April 7 1903 we wrote to the Crown Agents for the Colonies that as the Colonies were ordering large quantities of Revenue size stamps we felt that the time had arrived for a new dandyroll to be made, which would be available for all sizes of stamps. We pointed out that many stamps printed by the copper-plate process were being sent out without watermark, in consequence of some of the stamps falling on the plain portion of the paper. We also reminded the Crown Agents that no 240-set Revenue plates, for which the existing paper was made, were in existence.
>
> We also reported that we had experienced considerable difficulty with the paper made from the existing roll, as it had to be cut down before gumming, which made the edge cockle, thus rendering it extremely difficult to feed the sheet accurately when stamps were printed by machine, causing bad register. If the suggested watermarks were adopted, the printing of the stamps would be materially improved by having suitable paper.
>
> The Crown Agents on April 21 queried whether it would not also render unnecessary their CA Postage, and CA Revenue paper? We replied that it was immaterial to us which paper we printed upon and that it was a question for them to decide whether they would adopt this paper universally when their present CA and CA Revenue dandyrolls were worn out.
>
> On 27 May 1903 the Crown Agents requested us to put in hand the dandyroll for an all-over watermark for the design we submitted which they returned, and which is now known as the 'Multiple Crown CA' (type W8) watermark

Stamp Booklets The only Colony not to issue a stamp booklet was the Orange River Colony. There was correspondence with De La Rue regarding such an issue, but it never happened.

Postage Due Stamps The Transvaal was the only Colony to issue postage due stamps.

Denominations These varied somewhat amongst the four Colonies, in both revenue and postage stamps.

Official Stamps The Cape of Good Hope and Natal issued Official stamps, while the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal did not.

Revenue Stamps Most of the revenue stamps were for similar purposes in each of the four Colonies, but there were a number of variations, for example, Cigarette Duty and Patent and Proprietary medicine stamps in the Cape of Good Hope. The use of embossed revenue stamps was also much more widely used in the Cape, while the Transvaal was the only Colony to have Pass stamps.

Material from the De La Rue Records

Much material was preserved in the De La Rue Records, with practically all the Colonial material surviving the bombing and resultant devastating fire that destroyed the De La Rue Works and headquarters in London on the night of 29 December 1940.

There are three main categories of material. That from the Striking and Work Books, which were De La Rue's internal work records. That from the file records, which were the various die proofs in their various states. That from the Correspondence Books, which were the proposals sent to the Colony for selection and approval. The Correspondence Book material was often prepared in duplicate, one copy being retained, while the other was sent to the Crown Agents, who may have sent it to the Colony.

Striking and Work Books The Striking Book items were single copies of die proofs stuck into the Book, with the work instructions written alongside, often dated, sometimes with both the date the job was placed into the work programme, and the date it was completed. Once the job had been completed the die proof usually had a red line ruled across it, designating that the job was now done, and had been written up in the Private Day Book. These are among the more scarce items, as there was only one copy in existence for each plate made. They are usually cut down, presumably to not take too much space on the Striking Book page.

File Records These were die proofs normally on the standard De La Rue glazed card (92 mm wide and 60 mm high). They usually showed the state of the die (BEFORE HARDENING, AFTER HARDENING or AFTER STRIKING), and the date the proof was made. The die state, as well as the date, were usually hand stamped in black, or occasionally in blue. These were sometimes initialled, and some had some other information noted in manuscript as well. The number of proofs taken in each state and on each date seems to vary, but in all cases only a few were made. Proofs of each die used for making up the first plate would have been pulled in all the three states. Then for subsequent plates the same hardened die would have been used, so only the AFTER STRIKING state proofs would be pulled, and perhaps a few in the BEFORE STRIKING state as well.

Correspondence Books These items were the stamp designs that De La Rue prepared. There were also a number of colour proposals involved in the form of Appendix sheets.