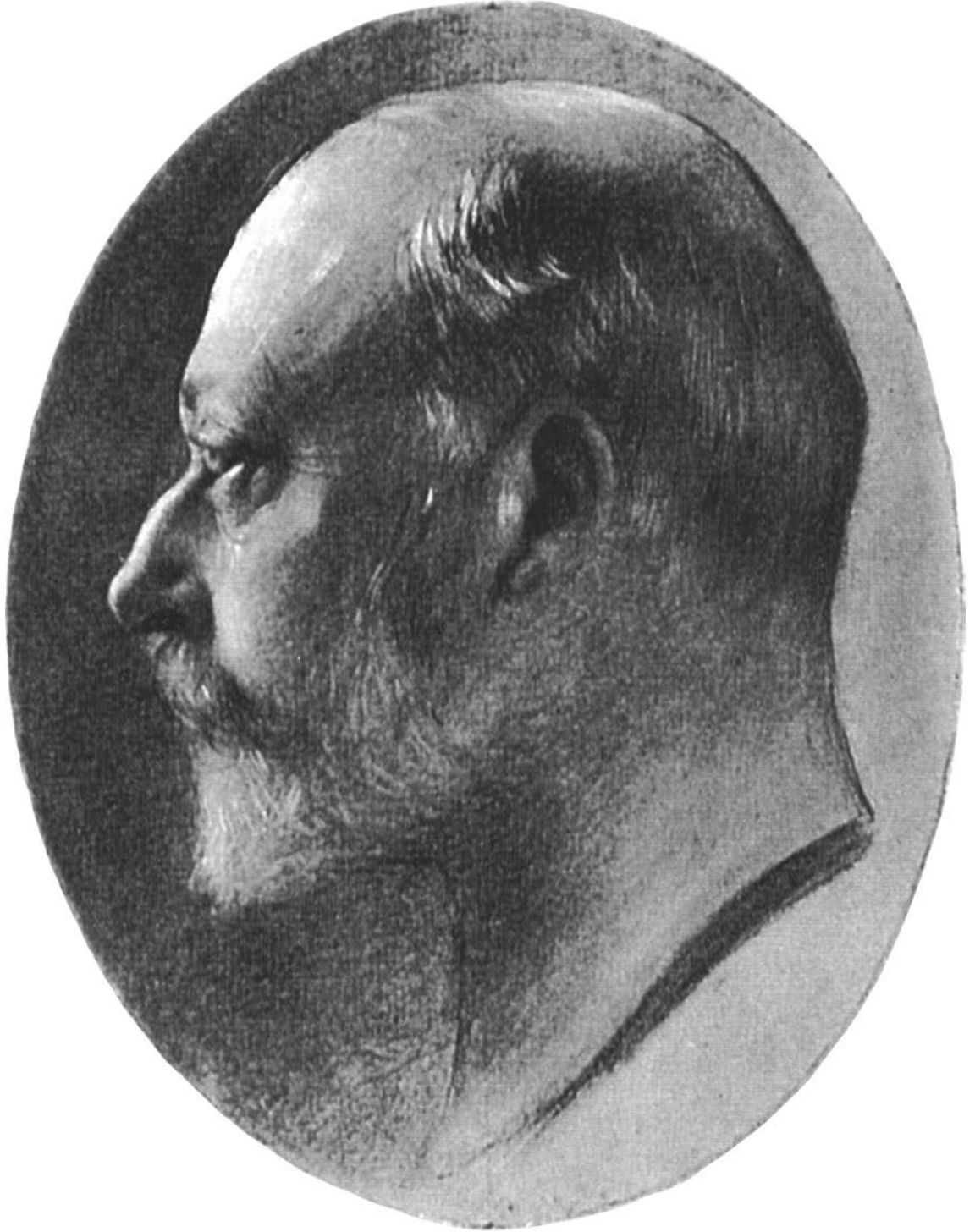


The Edwardian Stamps
of the
South African Colonies



The portrait of King Edward VII used as a basis for the Edwardian stamp designs.

The Edwardian Stamps
of the
South African Colonies

The Postage Stamps and the Revenue Stamps
of the Cape of Good Hope, Natal,
the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, issued
1902–1909

Brian Trotter



James Bendon

This reissue of the original 2004 edition of Brian Trotter's book, *The Edwardian Stamps of the South African Colonies*, has been made possible by kind permission of the author and the original publisher, James Bendon. It has also been sponsored by the Philatelic Federation of South Africa who will be placing a PDF file of the book on their website for purchase at a nominal price. Thank you to everyone, including Andre du Plessis of the PFSA and Chris Hulin of Oxford Book Projects, for their efforts in making the renewed distribution of this important book a reality.

Ian Paterson
June 2023

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Foreword

There has in the last decade been a resurgence of interest in the stamps and postal history of southern Africa, and this book is a timely and authoritative contribution to this very welcome phenomenon. Within a few short years the author has established himself as one of the foremost authorities on the Edwardian stamps of the South African 'states' and the first definitive postage and revenue issues of the Union of South Africa, formulating collections that have been awarded large gold medals at both national and international exhibitions and publishing a number of seminal articles.

His approach, that is the parallel treatment of the postage and revenue issues reflects what was actually happening at the time, that is the requirement for an integrated series of stamps for both postage and revenue purposes for the new colonies of Transvaal and Orange River Colony that had succeeded the Boer republics after the Second Anglo-Boer War, and the need to replace the Victorian issues of the former British colonies – Cape Colony and Natal – following the death of Queen Victoria and accession of Edward VII.

A further requirement for a comparable issue of postage and revenue stamps arose in 1910 with the amalgamation of the four colonies as the Union of South Africa, a political development that had been the ultimate goal of British policy in southern Africa for the previous half century. Moreover once again the situation was complicated by a coincidence of political change and the accession of a new monarch. The story as a whole is a very convincing demonstration that philately as it originally developed, i.e. the collecting and study of stamp issues, is ultimately another aspect of postal history.

Alan Drysdall

Preface

This book covers the postage as well as the revenue stamps issued during Edwardian period by the four South African Colonies that made up the Union of South Africa in 1910.

The colonies are treated individually, only coming together during the Inter Provincial period, after the formation of the Union of the four colonies. All the colonies had their stamps needle punched for railway use, and hand stamped or overprinted for Customs Duty. These are covered collectively in single chapters, and not under the individual colonies.

Remarkably, relatively little has been published regarding the stamps of these South African Colonies during the Edwardian period. Of the four South African Colonies, the Orange River Colony currently has by far the most detailed published information on the development and printing of the Edwardian stamps and postal stationery. This is in Buckley and Marriott's third volume of the *Stamps of the Orange Free State*,¹ which was written before the dispersal of the De La Rue archival material. The only other section that is covered to any degree, are the Transvaal Edwardian revenue stamps, which are very well documented in Alan Drysdall's *Transvaal Revenue and Telegraph Stamps*.²

The Edwardian stamps of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal have been largely neglected, with most collections and writings focussing only on the classic Victorian period stamps of these colonies. In the case of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, most of their previous philatelic life had been as the Boer Republics of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic, and collections and writings on these tended to ignore the short Edwardian colonial period prior to their incorporation into the Union of South Africa.

This book, therefore, focuses only on the Edwardian period, across all four colonies. All the stamps (with the one exception of the first Patent and Proprietary Medicine stamps of the Cape of Good Hope) were printed by De La Rue, so there is a common element in the development and printing of the various postage and revenue stamps of the four colonies.

¹ Buckley, G. D. and Marriott, W. B. *Stamps of the Orange Free State, Part III: Orange River Colony 1900–1913*. London: The Orange Free State Study Circle, 1976.

² Drysdall, Alan R. *Transvaal Revenue and Telegraph Stamps*. Limassol: James Bendon, 1995.

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This work would not have been possible without help and support from many capable and knowledgeable people, providing comments and sharing their insights on the subject of the Edwardian stamps of South Africa. My grateful thanks to them all.

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Alan Drysdall for helping me with tips on drafting the book, and providing copies of his own outstanding philatelic writings.

Douglas Muir, of Royal Mail Heritage Services in London, and his staff, for the access to the remaining De La Rue records in their keeping, and for showing me whatever related material he was able to lay his hands on.

David Parsons, of Spink, formerly Robson Lowe, for giving me insights into the dispersal of the De La Rue archival material, and for giving me access to their records and auction catalogues over the years.

James Bendon and his wife Rida, for all their helpful comments and suggestions throughout the process of developing and writing the book.

Names, Terms and Abbreviations

Some names and terms have been used interchangeably, but are intended to have the same meaning. Full names are written, and the abbreviation for the name is shown in brackets afterwards (e.g. Natal Government Railways would be followed by the abbreviation NGR in brackets). After that, only the abbreviation may be used in the text that follows.

When obviously writing about a particular Colony, for example the Cape of Good Hope, it will often just be referred to as the Colony.

Interchangeable Names

Cape of Good Hope Cape Colony (or sometimes just the Cape)

Interchangeable Terms

Revenue use fiscal use
Denomination value, or duty (for monetary amount)
Requisition indent (for work orders placed with De La Rue)
Booklet book (of stamps)
News wrapper newspaper wrapper

Abbreviations

CSAR Central South African Railways
NGR Natal Government Railways
ORC Orange River Colony
SAR South African Railways
TPO Travelling Post Office
UPU Universal Postal Union
s (e.g. 5s) Shillings
d (e.g. 3d) Pence

COLOUR PLATE I



a Imperforate pairs of the Cape of Good Hope postage stamp set. See p. 30.



b Cape of Good Hope revenue stamps overprinted PENALTY in 1911 for use across South Africa. See p. 80.



c Interprovincial piece showing the use of stamps of all four colonies. See p. 286.

COLOUR PLATE 2



Set of Cape of Good Hope specimen revenue stamps presented to the Royal Empire Society in 1910. See p. 67.

28th June 1906.

Appendix A



Natal Appendix A (reduced) showing the proposed colours up to the 4s denomination. See p. 94.



Natal UPU specimens on a Madagascar Post Office ledger page (folded and reduced). See p. 130.

3rd July 1902.
Orange River Colony
Reg. 73/01

Appendix A



Orange River Colony Appendix A (folded and reduced) showing the colours selected for the postage stamps. See pp. 150, 157.



Orange River Colony Appendix for 1906 colour change (folded and reduced) for 2s revenue stamps. See p. 174.

1st October 1901.
Transvaal Reg. 90/1900.

Appendix A

Postage and Revenue.

$\frac{1}{2}$ d.



1d.



2d.



$2\frac{1}{2}$ d.



6d.



1/-



2/-



Postage.

~~2/6~~



5/-



10/-



Transvaal Appendix A (folded and reduced) showing the proposed and approved colours for the postage and revenue stamps. See pp. 188, 194, 203 and 206.

CA 38795

1st October 1901.
Transvaal Reg. 90/1900

Appendix B.

Revenue.

2/6



See Appendix
F



10/-



£1



£5



£10



£25



Transvaal Appendix B (folded and reduced) showing the proposed and approved colours for revenue stamps. See p. 236.