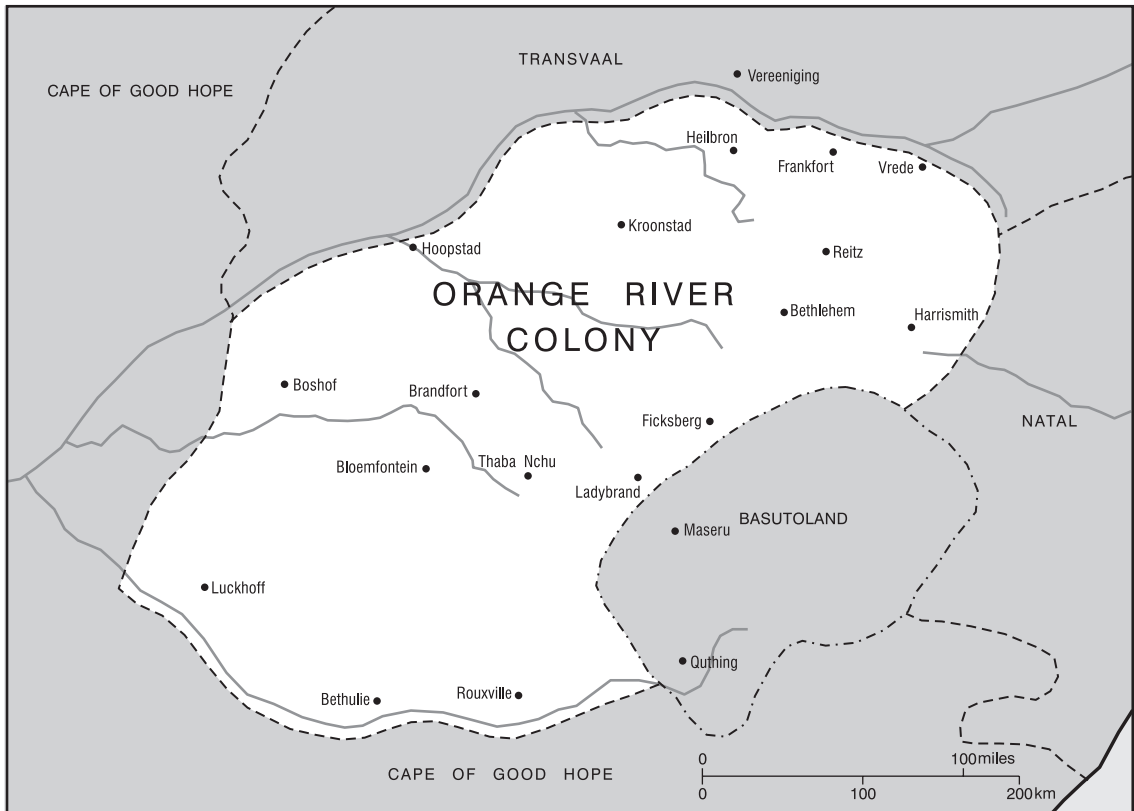


# ORANGE RIVER COLONY



The Orange River Colony.

# 21

## Postage Stamps

### Preamble

Following on from the initial development covered in Chapter 20, the Orange River Colony postage stamp and revenue stamp development continued together. However, despite a single correspondence usually covering them both, they have been treated separately in different chapters.

### Development

The story begins again after the few months delay while the portrait of the King to be used for the postage stamps of the British Empire was being agreed upon. A note from the Crown Agents to De La Rue on 21 August 1901 reads: 'The enclosed letter from the Colonial Office dated 19th instant is forwarded to you with a request that you will furnish designs for the new stamps following the accompanying sketch.' The key part of this forwarded letter was the inclusion of Minute No. 180/01 of 26 July 1901 from H. F. Wilson, the Secretary of the Orange River Colony Administration, to the Imperial Secretary in Johannesburg. The Minute was titled 'O.R.C. Postage and Revenue Stamps' and lays out some reasons for requesting stamps different to those designs originally proposed by De La Rue. The Minute reads:

The Deputy Administrator thinks that it will be desirable for the present to have the Orange River Colony Postage and Revenue Stamps kept distinct, except as regards the penny value, which might be available for 'Postage and Revenue' purposes. We should also prefer to have stamps printed on the key plate system, as proposed by the Crown Agents. The designs for the stamps attached to these papers are not admired, and will in any case have to be altered, owing to the death of Her Majesty the Queen.

I understand from the Deputy Administrator that, some months since, under cover of private letter to Mr. Just, of the Colonial Office, he sent a suggestion of his own, upon which the future design of stamps for this Colony might be based.

A detailed list of the stamps, presses, and dies required is attached.

This detailed list also included stationery requirements. The sketch referred to in the note from the Crown Agents is presumably the same one sent to Mr. Just. This does not appear to have survived. Also the designs that were attached to the Minute that were 'not admired' would have been the originals sent to the Colony with the effigy of Queen Victoria, and

since they were to be replaced, were presumably retained by the Colonial Office. These too do not appear to have survived, explaining perhaps why the De La Rue Reference Collection only contained photographic copies of these early designs.

The detailed list of postage stamps attached to the Minute set out the anticipated initial requirement of postage stamps by denomination, but also gave proposed colours for each denomination. These were:

½d	green	4d	yellowish green
1d	lake (postage and revenue)	6d	reddish violet
2d	raw Sienna	1s	drab
2½d	blue	5s	burnt Sienna
3d	purple lake		

De La Rue responded on 12 September 1901 as follows:

As requested, we beg to submit two designs following the sketch received from the Colony, one for Postage and one for Revenue stamps. We have, according to instructions, prepared these designs to be printed by the key-plate system. The 1d Postage and Revenue stamp would follow the design of the enclosed postage stamp, but would bear the words 'Postage and Revenue'.

The response also included the costs of providing dies and plates. These were: Key die (or head die) £50, 240-set plate of the head £85, border die for 1d postage and revenue £15, and nine 240-set duty border plates at £20 each.

The postage design included with the De La Rue response appeared in the 1976 Robson Lowe auction.<sup>1</sup> It was described as:

2d essay in blue on glazed [*sic*] with head affixed and crown hand-painted above, large Springbok with head to left, mounted on card (90 × 114 mm) dated 'Sept 12th 01'. There are no dots either side of 'RIVER'.

The design was actually in green and blue, not just in blue as described, and in addition to having no dots between the words Orange River Colony as described, there were also no dots on either side of the crown (these dots were to appear on the monocoloured stamps). The frame was hand-painted, with the head of King Edward VII inserted separately. The head that was inserted was not the one finally approved. It was, however, the large springbok that was to cause some difficulty.

A photograph of the frame design before inserting the King's head was also in the De La Rue Correspondence Book. This was overlooked when the Books were stripped of material to offer for auction, and is now in the safe keeping of Royal Mail Heritage Services in London.

The design was sent to South Africa by the Colonial Office. There, on 7 November 1901, the Secretary to the O.R.C. Administration wrote to the Secretary to the Administrator (all very confusing, the Administration was the Government as a whole, while the Administrator, who was Lord Milner, was effectively the Governor). The letter says that, with one exception, there is no objection to the proposed design for the new postage stamps. The exception is the figure of the large springbok where 'the shading and the shape of the horns are somewhat incorrect, and the distinctive dark stripe on the flank is omitted'. The letter continues to say that the depiction of the springbok needs to be accurate, as if not 'it is sure to be keenly criticised here'.

As an indication as to just how important the issue of new stamps was considered, Lord Milner himself got involved. He wrote to the Colonial Office on 6 December 1901, giving his

<sup>1</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 447.

views. After repeating the comments about the shape of the horns being incorrect and the omitted dark stripe, and saying that ‘drawing of the springbok is open to criticism’ he goes on to say:

Nor has the designer observed the relative proportion between the springbok and the wildebeest. The springbok is a much smaller antelope than the wildebeest, its maximum height does not exceed 32 inches, while the maximum height of a wildebeest is 48 inches.

In view of the fact that these two antelope were chosen for a place in the design as being particularly characteristic of the Orange River Colony, I think it would be a pity if one of them was represented on the postage stamps by an inaccurate and conventional figure.

I therefore entirely approve the Deputy Administrator’s suggestion that the springbok should be redrawn from a specimen in the Zoological Gardens or Natural History Museum.

The Crown Agents, having received all this from the Colonial Office, forwarded it all to De La Rue, and asked for a corrected design. De La Rue responded with a modified design on 22 January 1902. The amended design was in purple and green. This too was auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976,<sup>2</sup> and was mounted on a cut down card (28 × 29 mm) and lettered ‘A’. An interesting comment in the De La Rue response reads:

We sent our artist to the Zoological Gardens and also the Natural History Museum and found that the design at the Natural History Museum differed somewhat from the Zoological Gardens. He thought that the better one was at the Natural History Museum, and he has followed it upon the enclosed amended designs.

The presumably live springbok at the zoo seemed to be inferior to the presumably stuffed one in the museum. Unless he was looking at the wrong animal at the zoo, they would have been practically identical. Unless he meant that it was more difficult to draw a live animal, as it would not maintain the required pose.

At this point the Authorities in the Colony were getting somewhat impatient. In order to speed things up, the Crown Agents decided to move things forward without referring back to the Colony in each instance. Accordingly, on 30 January 1902 the Crown Agents wrote to De La Rue:

We think that in view of the great importance attached by Lord Milner to the accuracy of the drawing of the springbok that some further slight improvements are necessary before the design is approved.

Unfortunately there is no good picture of the animal in the books of South African Natural History in the Colonial Office library but there are some very clear illustrations in *‘A Breath from the Veldt’* by J. G. Millais, in which the black marks are very clearly shown.

In these pictures the body is shown higher than in the stamp and the distinctive dark mark on the side shows up very prominently. We have no doubt your artist could see the work we refer to at Messrs. Southeran’s (who we believe brought it out) or at any other bookseller’s, and the illustrations in it would probably assist him in improving the design in several small details, especially in the lightening of the drawing of the neck and head.

<sup>2</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 448.

It may be as well to explain that the animal which appears on the Cape of Good Hope Arms and which also has a peculiar mark on the back is not a springbok and the marking is in a different place.

De La Rue acquired a copy of the book, and again modified the design and submitted this to the Crown Agents on 4 February 1902. This further modified design was in purple and green. This too was auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>3</sup> It was mounted on a cut down card (33 × 36 mm) and lettered 'AA'. In this design the springbok has a visible tail, which does not appear on the issued stamps.

However, the Crown Agents were still not satisfied with the design, and wrote back to De La Rue on 13 February 1902, returning the designs and saying the designs:

... might be still further improved by lightening the colour of the back and also of the neck, which appears a little too thick. The top line of the back might be drawn a little flatter like the springbok in the middle of the illustration facing page 26 in *'A Breath from the Veldt'*. There also appears to be too long a tail which should be taken out of the design.

We think the suggested lightening of the part of the back immediately above the black mark may have the effect of rendering the mark, about which the Government is so particular, more distinct as in the engravings of the book.

Then, after a few comments about the book, they finish by saying: 'Perhaps the mark itself might be made a little darker so as to show up better.'

On 19 February 1902 De La Rue yet again provided a modified design, carrying out the suggestions of the Crown Agents. This design, approved by the Crown Agents on 14 March 1902, was also in purple and green (Fig. 21.1). De La Rue must have been relieved to have this design finally approved. With the need for all the British Empire to issue new stamps with the effigy of King Edward VII, De La Rue certainly did not need to spend so much time on developing a satisfactory design for a new colony. This final design was also auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>4</sup> It was mounted on a card 89 mm wide and 114 mm high, lettered 'C' and dated in manuscript. Like all these designs, it too



**Fig. 21.1** The final accepted design, but with a different portrait of King Edward VII than the issued stamps.

3 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 449.

4 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 450.

had a different effigy of King Edward VII than that used for the issued stamps. Interestingly, that was not the case with the equivalent revenue stamp designs developed alongside these postage stamp designs. All designs were for a 2d denomination.

Another example of this final design is mounted on a sunken card (79 mm wide and 83 mm high), and does not have the letter 'C', but it has the same date in the same manuscript hand as the one on the larger card. The one on the sunken card is believed to have been given to the Colony as the final design, while that on the larger card, which is marked as a duplicate, was the one retained by De La Rue.

Buckley and Marriott<sup>5</sup> had the opportunity to examine the De La Rue records before the philatelic material was dispersed via auction, and they show illustrations of all these designs. They do, however, have some confusion on the illustration of the finally accepted design. They show it with a manuscript lettering of 'BB' and a date of 'Feb 4th 02'. The illustration is correct, but the confusing manuscript notation belongs to the second last of the revenue stamp designs, which presumably they had originally intended to illustrate in that position.

On 17 March 1902 De La Rue confirmed that 'we will put the engraving of the stamps in hand at once'. The engraving obviously referring to the dies. They had previously been advised



**Fig. 21.2** Die proof of complete design with uncleared tablets and surrounds.



**Fig. 21.3** Uncleared die proofs with POSTAGE and POSTAGE & REVENUE now inscribed.

<sup>5</sup> 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, p. 86.

that there would be the eight postage denominations and the 1d postage and revenue denomination, and that the colour proposals from the Colony were for monocoloured stamps. But they were also told that the key-plate system was favoured by the Colony. This seems contradictory, but it appears to have been intended that the key plate would be for the whole stamp design in one colour, with the duty plates being in a different colour, as was common at the time.

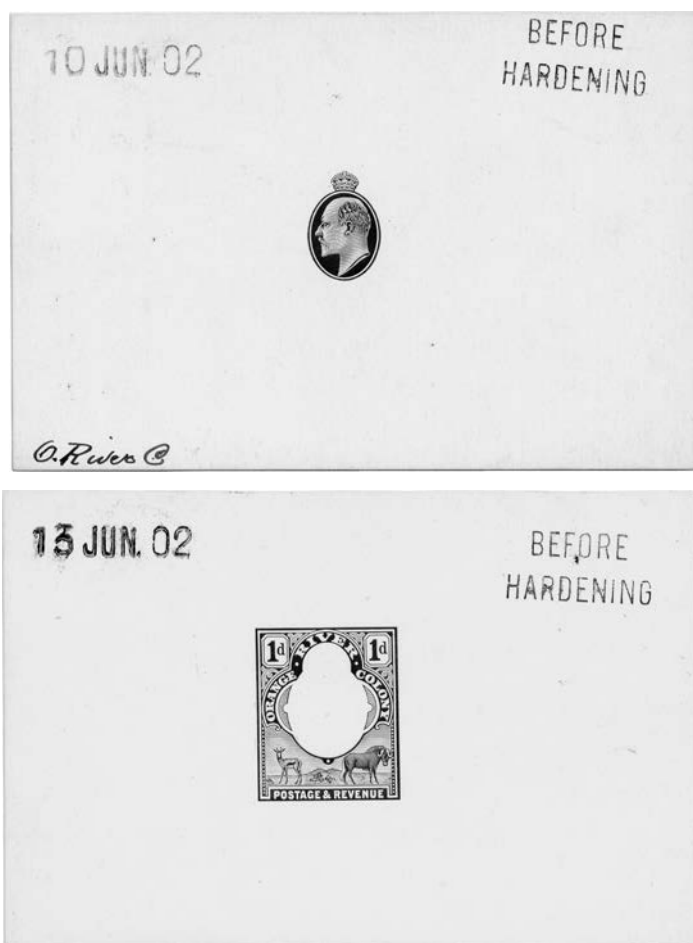
Accordingly, De La Rue prepared a complete master die with blank value tablets and a blank base for the insertion of either POSTAGE or POSTAGE AND REVENUE. A proof was taken before hardening of the die on 2 May 1902 (Fig. 21.2). There were four dots in the design, one each side of the crown, and one each side of the word RIVER in Orange River Colony. None of these dots had appeared on the finally approved design.

From this master die, two replica dies (known as secondary dies) were prepared, one with the words POSTAGE & REVENUE and one with just POSTAGE plus an ornament on each side to help fill up the rest of the tablet (Fig. 21.3). These were ready for hardening on 13 May 1902.

The approved final design was in two colours, with the central King's head and crown in purple, and the border design (including the value tablets) all in green. However, the key dies that De La Rue was now preparing were for the whole design to be in one colour, with the value tablets possibly either the same or a different colour. Since nothing appears in the Correspondence Books on this, it would seem that although De La Rue was preparing something that fitted the original request, the colour combination would not match that of the approved design. Given all the protracted difficulties involved in the design relating to the springbok, De La Rue probably felt it necessary to ensure that the stamp issue would match the approved design in so far as colour combination options were concerned. This meant that the key plate (or now, head plate) would comprise the central King's head and crown, and the border plate the rest of the design.

There is an essay consisting of a photograph of the border only of the finally accepted design, with the words POSTAGE & REVENUE pasted over the word POSTAGE in the bottom tablet. This was mounted on a card dated 1 June 1902, and was presumably the proposal for the postage and revenue border die.

This border die was prepared by cutting away the central vignette (the King's head and crown) from the secondary die



**Fig. 21.4** Die proof of the head die and the postage and revenue border die.

(Fig. 21.3), and engraving the 1d value on the blank tablets. This was ready on 13 June 1902 (Fig. 21.4). This, along with the head die (Fig. 21.4), was used in producing the colour trials. The dots on either side of the crown were cut out of the secondary die, and were not included in the head die, so have now disappeared. The rest of the postage dies and plates were completed by the end of July.

The next relevant communication in the Correspondence Book is a letter from De La Rue to the Crown Agents of 3 July 1902, regarding proposed colours of stamps. This reads:

On Appendix A we beg to hand you a colour scheme for Postage-size stamps which we should recommend for adoption. The 1d would be printed in doubly-fugitive black and doubly-fugitive purple, so that the whole of the stamp would be sensitive to a written cancellation, which we consider desirable.

Upon Appendix B will be found the colour scheme suggested by the Colony, which we do not consider as distinctive as the colour scheme recommended by us. It seems a pity not to get a variation between the stamps by printing them in some instances in two colours.

On Appendix C we hand you 23 further combinations of the Postage-size stamps, in case you wish to make an alteration in the colour scheme.

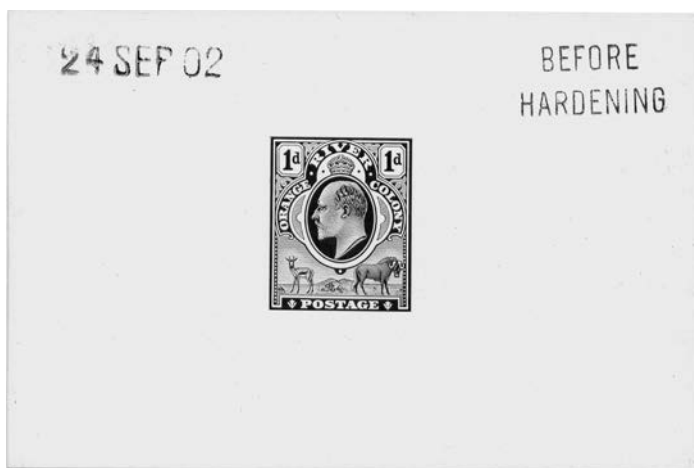
Appendices D, E and F were for revenue stamps.

The Crown Agents responded on 11 July 1902 as follows:

With reference to the enclosed colour scheme for the O.R.C. Postage Stamps, we think the specimens for the 1d and 6d duties on Appendix A, would be more effective if printed in one colour only and we request you to furnish another Appendix to be labelled G, showing a scheme as follows:

½d	as on Appendix A
1d	as on Appendix A (but in doubly fugitive black ink)
2d	as on Appendix B
2½d	as on Appendix B
3d	similar to 6d on Appendix D
4d	as on Appendix B
6d	as on Appendix A, but in Sienna only
1s	grey, as on Appendix E
5s	as on Appendix B

De La Rue provided the requested Appendix G on 15 July 1902. The Crown Agents sent the Appendix sheets to Bloemfontein on 22 August 1902 for the Colonial Government to select the colour scheme required. A letter of 15 September 1902 from B. T. Blackwood, the Acting



**Fig. 21.5** New die for the single colour 1d denomination.

Colonial Secretary in Bloemfontein lists the choice made by the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams. The relevant part of the letter reads:

On the Appendices returned will be found the specimen (marked round with blue pencil) of the stamps selected, as under, by his Excellency, who hopes that the quantities of each originally asked for may be sent out as soon as possible:

½d	as on Appendix C (all one colour)
1d	as on Appendix A (all one colour)
2d	as on Appendix B (all one colour)
2½d	as on Appendix B (all one colour)
3d	as on Appendix B (all one colour)
4d	as on Appendix A
6d	as on Appendix A
1s	as on Appendix B (with red centre)
5s	as on Appendix A

All denominations should be 'Postage' only, not 'Postage and Revenue'.

As all the colour specimens were printed from the 1d plate, they all showed POSTAGE & REVENUE, and this may have been what prompted the statement that they should be postage-only. Perhaps the Colonial Government had forgotten their original request to have the 1d as a dual purpose postage and revenue stamp. This was to be a bit confusing later, as the lowest denomination revenue stamp was 6d, yet for all receipts, a 1d stamp duty was required. The result was that the 1d postage stamp was pressed into service, despite it being technically a postage-only stamp.

The Appendices that were now returned by the Colony had some items from Appendix C removed and stuck onto Appendix A. This marked up Appendix A (Colour Plate 5) shows that the approved 1d, 4d, and 6d were in fact originally from Appendix C. This letter from Bloemfontein with the marked up Appendices was only received by the Crown Agents on 6 October 1902. However, things had been moving along while this letter was in transit. The day after the letter was posted, on 16 September, the Crown Agents sent a note to De La Rue, saying that they had received a telegram from the Orange River Colony asking to have the 1d postage stamps supplied as soon as possible, with 'colour similar to English penny postage stamps'. It also advised that the 1d stamp was to be for postage only, and not postage and revenue use. It went on to say: 'If this requires a new duty plate it should be put in hand at once and a colour specimen submitted as usual'.

De La Rue responded the next day, saying that if the stamp was to be printed in 'English Red', it would be much cheaper to have a 240 set single colour plate made. The cost would be £50 for the die, and £85 for the plate. Two days later, on 19 September, the Crown Agents confirmed that De La Rue should put the 'single colour plate in hand at once'.

On 10 October 1902, the Crown Agents, now having received the marked up Appendices showing the selected colour scheme from the Colony, wrote to De La Rue saying that they had referred the question of making special plates for those denominations (other than the 1d) that were to be printed in single colours to the Colonial Office. They also asked De La Rue to proceed with the printing of the higher denominations that were to be in two colours. De La Rue confirmed that they would proceed on the 13 October, and also enclosed 'duplicates of the Appendices for filing with the papers'. It is not clear why this was done, as the Crown Agents' note did not request this. So, it would appear that a duplicate set of the Appendices also existed. It is not known what has happened to this duplicate set.

On 16 October 1902 De La Rue wrote to the Crown Agents enclosing an Appendix with ‘a specimen of the 1d stamp printed in the English 1d red’. This was approved by Sir William Mercer, head of the Crown Agents, on 18 October. On 29 October, he also approved the De La Rue suggestion that special dies and plates should also be made for the other single colour stamps (½d, 2d, 2½d and 3d denominations). A new die was prepared for the 1d (and subsequently also for the other single colour stamps), and the dots either side of the crown were again introduced, but somewhat smaller dots than the original ones (Fig. 21.5).

The decision to produce new dies for the other single colour stamps is questionable. It could be justified economically for the ½d and 1d denominations due to the numbers to be printed, but not for the other values, especially since the border dies and plates had already been produced and invoiced.

### Material from the De La Rue Records

Much material was preserved in the De La Rue Records, with practically all the Orange River Colony (and indeed the other 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. With the material now dispersed, it is worth attempting to record what is still believed to be in existence.

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 (Fig. 21.6).

These items were all auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>6</sup> The proofs of the dies used to make up the plates and their manuscript dates and markings were as follows:



**Fig. 21.6** Striking Book die proofs for both 1d plates.

6 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lots 453 to 455.

Head plate: 'Jun 18 02, 240 leads and 6 extra & 6 experimental' (in black),  
'Orange River Aug 28 02' (in red)

1d border plate: 'June 18 240 leads 6 extra & 6 experimental' (in black)  
 ½d border plate: 'July 17 240 leads' (in black)  
 2d border plate: 'July 18 240 leads' (on black)  
 2½d border plate: 'July 21 240 leads' (in black)  
 3d border plate: 'July 22 240 leads' (in black)  
 4d border plate: 'July 23 240 leads' (in black)

Notes:

- 1 The 1d is a postage and revenue die proof.
- 2 Across the top of the ½d, 2d, 2½d, 3d and 4d is noted: '6 leads extra from each one' (in black).
- 3 Across the top of the 1d, ½d, 2d, 2½d and 3d is noted: 'These 5 plates not used, superseded by single colour plates, Aug 28 02' (in red).
- 4 When auctioned, these six border die proofs were on one piece. The 1d has now been cut off from the left side, and the 4d from the right side. The central four die proofs are still on a single piece.

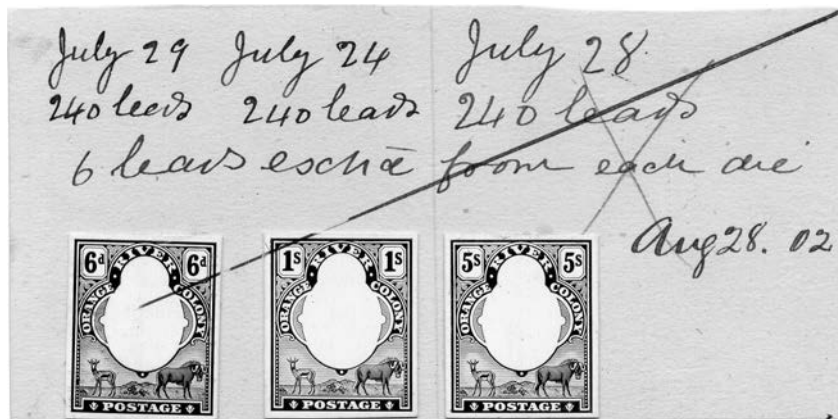
6d border plate: 'July 29 240 leads' (in black)  
 1s border plate: 'July 24 240 leads' (in black)  
 5s border plate: 'July 28 240 leads' (in black)

Notes:

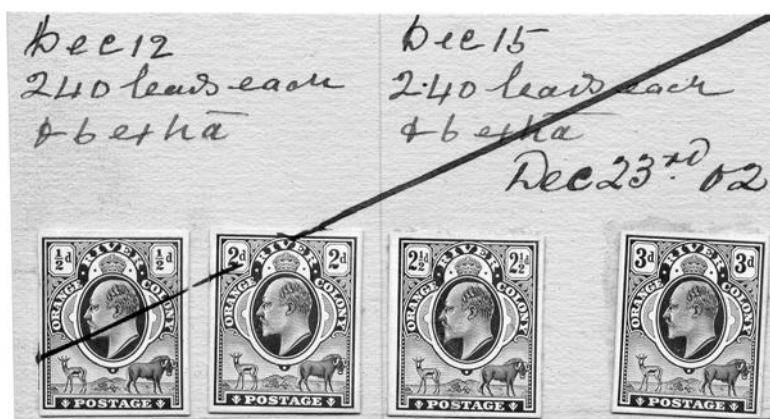
- 1 These three die proofs are on a single piece as auctioned (Fig. 21.7).
- 2 Across the top of the three is '6 leads extra from each die' (in black).
- 3 The piece is dated 'Aug 28 02' (in red).

The next set of die proofs were from the dies used to make the single plate printing of the whole design. Their manuscript dates and markings were as follows:

½d plate: 'Dec 12 240 leads each & 6 extra' (in black)  
 ½d plate: 'July 24 240 leads' (in black) 'No. 2 No charge' (in red)  
 1d plate: 'Sept 27 240 leads & 6 extra' (in black), 'Dec 11 02' (in red)  
 1d plate: 'Dec 21 240 leads' (in black), 'No. 2 Jan 17th 08' (in red)  
 2d plate: 'Dec 12 240 leads each & 6 extra' (in black)  
 2½d plate: 'Dec 15 240 leads each & 6 extra' (in black)  
 3d plate: 'Dec 15 240 leads each & 6 extra' (in black)



**Fig. 21.7** Striking Book die proofs of the three high values.



**Fig. 21.8** Striking Book die proofs of the first ½d, 2d, 2½d and 3d for the single plates.

Notes:

- 1 The first ½d die proof and the 2d die proof are on a piece with the 2½d and 3d die proofs. The piece also has 'Dec 23rd 02' (in red) (Fig. 21.8).
- 2 The first ½d and 2d have a common manuscript notation, as do the 2½d and 3d (Fig. 21.8).

Also noted are some cut down die proofs with the same date as the BEFORE HARDENING state cards (with the exception of the 5s, which is 15 July 1902, while the BEFORE HARDENING state card is 16 July 1902). Three of these border plate die proofs are initialled. All nine have the date in manuscript. These may have been the ones finally approved, then cut down and perhaps stuck in the Work Book (or Striking Book), indicating that job had been completed, so these die proofs are listed here. The 1d is postage and revenue (Fig. 21.9), while all other values are postage-only. In addition there is an early master die proof of the complete design, with uncleared surrounds and uncleared value and duty tablets. This one is dated 7 May 1902 on the back. This date does not tie in with the Before Hardening date (2 May 1902) or the After Hardening date (5 May 1902). These die proofs are:



**Fig. 21.9** The 1d postage and revenue and an example of the postage-only (2½d) border die proof.

	Master die proof of full design with uncleared surrounds and tablets, dated '7.5.02'
½d	dated '7.7.02'
1d	dated '13.6.02'
2d	dated '7.7.02'
2½d	dated '10.7.02' (Fig. 21.9)
3d	dated '10.7.02'
4d	dated 'July 11 1902' and initialled
6d	dated 'July 14 1902' and initialled
1s	dated '9.7.02'
5s	dated 'July 15 1902' and initialled

The later full design die proofs, all postage-only:

½d	dated '8.12.02' (Fig. 21.10)
1d	dated '24.9.02' (Fig. 21.10)
2d	dated '8.12.02'
2½d	dated '2.12.02'
3d	dated '5.12.02'

**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. No BEFORE STRIKING states are known on these Orange River Colony proofs), 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 some in the BEFORE STRIKING state as well, but none of these have been seen. So at least three different die proofs would have been made for each duty value, and one extra each for the later plates of the ½d and for the 1d.

The die proofs actually noted are:

- Master die proof of complete design with uncleared surrounds and tablets, BEFORE HARDENING, dated 2 May 02.
- Secondary die proof of complete design with uncleared surrounds and value tablets, with POSTAGE & REVENUE inscribed at base, BEFORE HARDENING, Dated 13 May 02.
- Secondary die proof of complete design with uncleared surrounds and value tablets, with POSTAGE inscribed at base, BEFORE HARDENING, Dated 13 May 02.



**Fig. 21.10** The ½d and 1d full design die proofs showing the 1d now as postage-only.

- Crowned King's Head vignette, BEFORE HARDENING, dated 10 Jun. 02, with 'O. River C' in manuscript.
- 1d frame only inscribed POSTAGE & REVENUE, BEFORE HARDENING, dated 13 Jun. 02.

Note: All the following die proofs are only inscribed POSTAGE.

Die proofs of the frame only:

½d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 7 Jul 02
½d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 10 Jul 02
2d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 7 Jul 02
2d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 10 Jul 02
2½d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 10 Jul 02
2½d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 16 Jul 02
3d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 10 Jul 02
3d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 16 Jul 02
4d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 11 Jul 02
4d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 16 Jul 02
6d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 14 Jul 02
1s	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 9 Jul 02
5s	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 16 Jul 02

Die proofs of the complete design:

½d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 8 Dec 02
½d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 10 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'
½d	AFTER STRIKING, dated 23 Jul 07, initialled 'G.C.G'
1d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 24 Sep 02
1d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 25 Sep 02, initialled 'GW'
1d	AFTER STRIKING, dated 21 Dec 07, initialled 'G.C.G'
2d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 8 Dec 02
2d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 10 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'
2½d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 5 Dec 02
2½d	AFTER HARDENING, dated 10 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'
3d	BEFORE HARDENING, dated 5 Dec 02

The die proofs missing from the list are known to exist, and are recorded by Buckley and Marriott<sup>7</sup> as follows:

- Master die proof of complete design with uncleared surrounds and tablets, BEFORE HARDENING, dated 2 May 02, with 'Original Die Plate' in manuscript
- Master die proof of complete design with uncleared surrounds and tablets, AFTER HARDENING, dated 5 May 02, initialled 'GW'
- Secondary die proof of complete design with uncleared surrounds and value tablets, with POSTAGE & REVENUE inscribed at the base, AFTER HARDENING, dated 13 May 02, initialled 'GW' (also a similar one cut down, unfinished, with heavy scratches on the surround)
- Secondary die proof of complete design with uncleared surrounds and value tablets, with POSTAGE inscribed at base, AFTER HARDENING, dated 13 May 02, initialled 'GW' (also similar one cut down, unfinished, with heavy scratches on the surround)

<sup>7</sup> 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, pp. 98–101.

- Crowned King's Head vignette, dated 10 Jun 02 only, and initialled 'T.V.E.'
- Crowned King's Head vignette, AFTER HARDENING, dated 11 Jun 02, initialled 'GW'
- Crowned Kings Head vignette, AFTER STRIKING, dated 18 Jun 02, Initialled 'GW'
- 1d frame only inscribed POSTAGE & REVENUE, AFTER HARDENING, dated 16 Jun 02
- 1d frame only inscribed POSTAGE & REVENUE, AFTER STRIKING, dated 25 Jun 02

Note: No mention is made of initials on either of the last two die proofs, this would be unusual, especially for an AFTER STRIKING die proof.

All the following die proofs are only inscribed POSTAGE:

- 1s frame only, AFTER HARDENING, dated 16 Jul 02
- 5s frame only, BEFORE HARDENING, dated 15 Jul 02, initialled 'T.D.'
- 5s frame only, AFTER HARDENING, dated 16 July 02

The following die proofs are all complete designs and inscribed POSTAGE:

- ½d AFTER STRIKING, dated 16 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'
- 1d AFTER STRIKING, dated 27 Sep 02, initialled 'GW'
- 2d AFTER STRIKING, dated 16 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'
- 2½d AFTER STRIKING, dated 16 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'
- 3d AFTER HARDENING, dated 10 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'
- 3d AFTER STRIKING, dated 16 Dec 02, initialled 'GW'

De La Rue also usually kept file copies of the issued stamps, stuck into a file book. All denominations, except the 6d, were part of the De La Rue reference collection, but their present whereabouts are not known. They also kept file copies of the issued stamps handstamped SPECIMEN, three denominations of these have been noted, and are covered in Chapter 24 with the other specimen stamps.

**Ink Recipe Books** The pages have been seen for the ½d, 1d, 2d and 2½d postage denominations. As a good number of similar ones have been seen for the other colonies, it is probable that the pages for the other denominations also still exist.

**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. Not all of the designs and colour proposals may have survived. Whatever is known about the material is noted.

#### *12 September 1901*

A manuscript dated design proposal for postage stamps based on a sketch received from the Colony, showing a 2d denomination in green and blue. The King's head being a different one to that finally employed. The design is mounted on a card 89 × 114 mm.

Along with the design proposal, there was also a photograph of the design without the centre vignette (which is now kept by Royal Mail Heritage Services in London).

#### *22 January 1902*

A manuscript dated modified version of the previous design, marked 'A' with the depiction of the springbok changed as requested. This time the design was in green and violet, and is now on a cut down card.

#### *4 February 1902*

Another manuscript dated modified version of the previous design, with a further improved depiction of the springbok. This one was marked 'AA', and was in purple and green, now on a cut down card.

*19 February 1902*

The final manuscript dated design with the accepted version of the springbok, marked 'C', and has 'Dupl.' in the bottom left corner (Fig. 21.1). This is again in purple and green, and is mounted on a card 89 × 114 mm. Like all the previous designs, the effigy of King Edward VII was not the one used on the issued stamps.

Another example of the accepted design is mounted on a smaller sunken card (79 × 83 mm) and is not marked 'C'. It is believed to have been the one sent to the Colony.

*1 June 1902*

An essay consisting of a photograph of the border only of the finally accepted design, with the words POSTAGE & REVENUE pasted over the word POSTAGE in the bottom tablet. This was mounted on a card 79 mm wide and 83 mm high, dated 1 June 1902. There is no mention of this in the De La Rue records, but is probably the essay for the postage and revenue border die.

*3 July 1902*

Three Appendix sheets marked A, B and C. All three were depicting 1d postage and revenue stamps. Appendix A was for nine bicoloured stamps depicting the proposed colours for the ½d to the 5s. This now exists with five stamps from Appendix C removed and stuck alongside five of the original stamps for comparison (Colour Plate 5). Appendix B was for nine monocolour stamps in the colours for the ½d to 5s originally suggested by the Colony. Appendix C was for 23 alternative colour combinations for the Colony to consider. All three Appendices were auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>8</sup> The present whereabouts of Appendices B and C are unknown.

*15 July 1902*

Appendix G was nine more colour combinations, derived from the previous Appendices at the request of the Crown Agents, one each for the proposed denominations from ½d to the 5s. These colour trial stamps were again all 1d denominations inscribed POSTAGE & REVENUE. This too was auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976,<sup>9</sup> and again the present whereabouts of the Appendix are unknown.

*16 October 1902*

An Appendix (with no other designation, other than that it was related to the Orange River Colony Requisition No. 72/01) was for a single 1d stamp in red, inscribed POSTAGE. This is the only colour trial not inscribed POSTAGE & REVENUE. It is marked 'Approved', and initialled, but not dated. This was sold intact by Robson Lowe in 1976,<sup>10</sup> the present whereabouts of this Appendix are also unknown.

A number of colour proofs other than those on the Appendix sheets were also retained. It is not clear how many, or even if they were complete sets, but there appear to be two or three copies of some colour combinations, and none of others. There is only one copy of the 1d red colour proof inscribed POSTAGE, all other colours are inscribed POSTAGE & REVENUE. These imperforate colour trials are on gummed paper with the Crown CA watermark.

## The Printing Requisitions

The Orange River Colony Government entered periodic requisitions. The term Indent was often used by the Colony for their printing orders, but the Crown Agents and De La Rue

<sup>8</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lots 456, 457, and 459.

<sup>9</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 458.

<sup>10</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 460.

used the term Requisition, so for consistency, the term Requisition has been adopted throughout this section. Many requisitions were for stamps and also other postal items (like postal stationery), but only the postage stamps on any requisition are mentioned in this section. Consequently, the same requisition may be referred to in another chapter, for the relevant items to that particular chapter. The Colony had a system of numbering their requisitions (or indents) that went to the Crown Agents, however, the Crown Agents used their own numbering system when placing the requisition with De La Rue. This is the one used here, showing a number and the year, as in the first one below, number 73 of the year 1901 shown as 73/01.

**Requisition No. 73/01** was originally part of Minute No. 180/01 from the Secretary to the Orange River Colony Administration of 26 July 1901, and hence the '01' in the requisition numbering. As the design and colours were not yet resolved, it only entered the Colonial Work Book on 14 March 1902. It was for the following numbers of stamps:

½d	3,600,000	4d	480,000
1d	7,200,000	6d	2,400,000
2d	1,200,000	1s	2,400,000
2½d	1,200,000	5s	240,000
3d	1,440,000		

**Requisition No. 103/03** was dated 30 November 1903, and was for the following number of stamps:

½d	4,800,000	1d	14,400,000
----	-----------	----	------------

**Requisition No. 4/05** was dated 24 January 1905, and was for the following number of stamps:

1d	7,200,000
----	-----------

**Requisition No. 1/06** was dated 1 January 1906, and was for the following number of stamps:

1d	7,200,000
----	-----------

**Requisition No. 106/06** was dated 31 December 1906, and was for the following number of stamps:

½d	4,800,000	4d	1,200,000
----	-----------	----	-----------

**Requisition No. 49/07** was dated 18 July 1907, and was for the following number of stamps:

½d	2,400,000	1d	12,000,000
----	-----------	----	------------

**Requisition No. 56/08** was dated 16 June 1908, and was for the following number of stamps:

½d	1,200,000	1s	240,000
1d	2,400,000		

**Requisition No. 53/09** was dated 12 July 1909, and was for the following number of stamps:

½d	2,880,000	1d	7,200,000
----	-----------	----	-----------

De La Rue tended to produce a few more sheets than were actually ordered, and then ship and invoice the full printing, so the number printed was usually a little above that on the

requisition. The exact number printed and shipped is available in the De La Rue Private Day Books, but this has not been recorded here.

## The Stamps

In summary, the stamps were issued during 1903, with the 1d value being issued in February, and the other values in July 1903. The 5s is reported to have only been issued to the public in October 1904. If this is correct, it must have been due to a supply of the over-printed Orange Free State 5s stamps still being available, as the new Edwardian 5s denomination was sent to the Colony along with the other values that were issued in July 1903. The stamps were printed in sheets of 240 stamps (4 panes of 60 stamps, in 10 rows of 6 per pane), The perforation of all the stamps was 14.

These stamps were printed on paper with two different watermarks. They were initially the Crown CA watermark, and subsequently all stamps printed from 1905 used paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA (the Multiple Crown CA watermarked paper was introduced in 1904, but there were no Orange River Colony stamps printed that year). The Crown CA watermark is known inverted on the ½d and 1d values. The noted dates of these inverted watermarks are 1905 for the ½d (so probably from the second printing) and 1903 for the 1d (definitely from the first printing). The only four denominations printed after the introduction of the new watermarked paper were the ½d, 1d, 4d and 1s.

The colours selected for the issued stamps were:

½d	yellow-green	4d	scarlet and sage-green
1d	scarlet	6d	scarlet and mauve
2d	brown	1s	scarlet and bistre
2½d	bright blue	5s	blue and brown
3d	mauve		

Several printings of each were made, resulting in shades of each duty. The 1d, being the most frequently used, required two different plates, the ½d also required two different plates, but that was because the first plate was damaged, and was replaced free of charge by De La Rue. All the other denominations required only a single plate. The stamps from the second plate of the ½d value were printed in the second half of 1907. Stamps from the second plate of the 1d value were printed in the second half of 1908.

As per the requisitions, several printings were made of some denominations:

½d	6 printings, using 2 different plates
1d	7 printings, using 2 different plates
2d	1 printing, using 1 plate
2½d	1 printing, using 1 plate
3d	1 printing, using 1 plate
4d	2 printings, using 1 plate
6d	1 printing, using 1 plate
1s	2 printings, using 1 plate
5s	1 printing, using 1 plate

Some of the requisition quantities for the 1d were rather large, and were printed in parts. These are sometimes counted as different printings. Here only each requisition as a whole is considered as a different printing.

The 1d denomination and to a lesser extent, the ½d denomination, were the most used for postage. However, in addition, the fact that there was no revenue stamp below the 6d

denomination, meant the only way to pay things like the duty on receipts was with either a 1d or two ½d postage stamps. The duty regulations of 1903 had to reflect the fact that the authorities had mistakenly dropped the 1d postage and revenue stamp in favour of a postage-only stamp by stating that where the regulations required a 1d revenue stamp: ‘in this case a postage stamp may be used’.

The 2d stamp was used as a coil stamp in 1911, along with Transvaal and Cape of Good Hope stamps. See the section on coil stamps at the end of Chapter 25.

There are two recognised plate flaws, both on the 4d value. The ‘broken spandrel’ variety, which is the ornament on the right of the word POSTAGE. This appears to have the base of the ornament filled in with foreign matter, so is partially inked in. The other plate flaw is the well known ‘lostage’ flaw, which is covered below.

### The ‘lostage’ Flaw

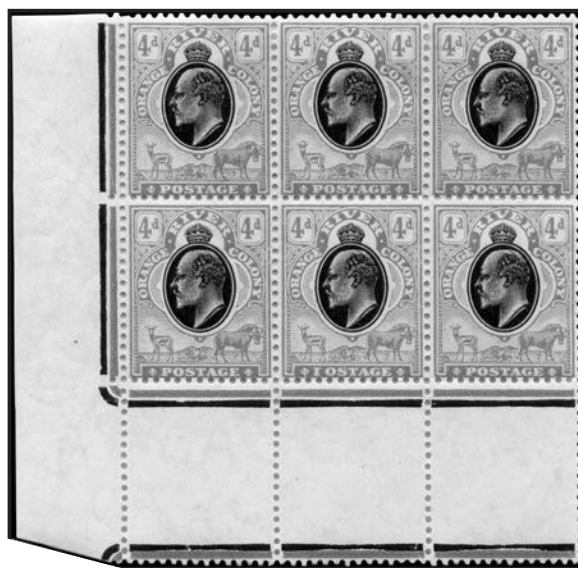
This flaw on the King Edward VII 4d issue occurs on the second stamp of the bottom row of the top left pane (Fig. 21.11). It is believed to have been caused by some foreign matter being lodged in the loop of the ‘P’ of Postage, and then a gradual build-up of ink around this foreign matter, eventually filling in the loop of the ‘P’. There were two printings of the 4d, the first in 1903 and the second in 1907, and the plate flaw occurs in both. That of the first printing is the rarer of the two (the printings can be easily distinguished by the changed watermark from Crown CA for the first, to Multiple Crown CA for the second). The first printing was also much smaller than the second (494,400 for the first, and 1,200,000 for the second), and the flaw was developed during the first printing, but existed for the duration of the second printing

The existence of the flaw obviously went unnoticed between the two printings, otherwise it would have been corrected. In fact it went unnoticed much longer than that, and was only noticed after the Orange River Colony had been incorporated into the Union of South Africa.

The first known reference to the flaw was in the Dutch philatelic journal *Nederlandsche Philatelist* of November 1910. It was again mentioned in the Dutch newspaper *Nederlandsche Tijdschrift* in December 1910, but it does not seem to have been picked up by the South African authorities or the philatelic community in South Africa.

The earliest official reference found to the flaw is a letter from H. S. Wilkinson, the Distributor of Stamps for the Union Government, dated 10 October 1911, to the Acting Secretary of Finance. He writes: ‘My attention was directed yesterday to an “error” in the fourpenny Orange River Colony postage stamp, which is a current issue.’

It was a current issue as it was now part of the stamp stock of South Africa, being used along with the other former colonial issues of all the four former colonies until such time as the new Union of South Africa stamps were printed. Wilkinson’s letter explains the nature of the ‘error’, and suggests that De La Rue should be asked to ‘furnish an explanation’. The



**Fig. 21.11** The ‘lostage’ flaw on the second stamp of the bottom row of the top left pane.

*Rand Daily Mail*, a South African newspaper referred to it on 16 October 1911, the philatelic press then picked up on the discovery.

The Acting Secretary of Finance asked about the number of sheets involved, and on 17 October 1911 Wilkinson replied that he had issued 2,300 sheets, but did not know how many contained the error. Obviously all the 2,300 sheets would have a stamp with the 'Iostage' flaw, but at this stage nothing was really known about it. A hand written note to the Secretary of Finance from the Acting Secretary on the bottom of this letter dated 19 October says: 'I don't think we can do anything – it does not appear to be serious enough to recall the sheets'. This probably explains why so many unused copies of the flaw have survived, since the philatelic press had by now become aware of the flaw, and philatelists must have rushed to purchase copies.

On 6 November 1911, the High Commissioner in London wrote to De La Rue:

The Minister of Finance, Pretoria, has called the attention of the High Commissioner to the fact that an error has been discovered in the current issue of the Orange River Colony fourpenny postage stamp. The error is comprised of the mutilation of the initial letter 'P' in the word 'Postage' and occurs in one stamp only on each sheet, viz., the last stamp in the second strip of the top left hand pane.

I am to request that you will be good enough to furnish an explanation in regard to this matter at an early date.

At this point the new stamps of the Union of South Africa had not been issued, and would not be until the end of September 1913, so these stocks of 4d Orange River Colony stamps formed part of the then current Union stamps. Some colonial stamps were to be printed again for ongoing use in the Union until the new Union issues were ready, so it was not a merely academic interest in the printing of the former colonial stamps.

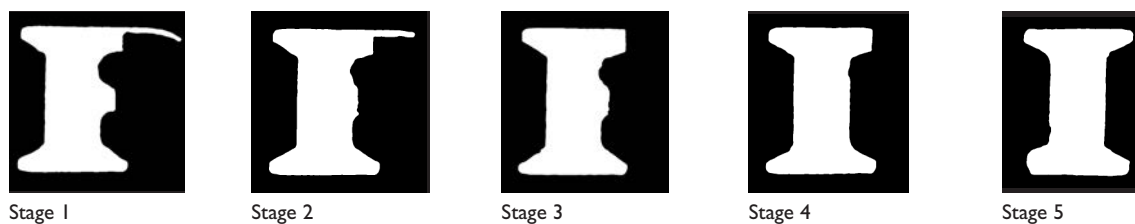
De La Rue responded on 8 November 1911:

We beg to report that we find the plate in perfect condition, and we can therefore only attribute the mutilation of the letter 'P' in the word 'Postage' to the presence of what is called a 'pick' on the forme. These picks are occasioned by a small piece of foreign substance adhering to the printing plate, it being part of the machine-minder's duty to watch the sheets for the presence of such picks, and to remove them by washing the plate when they occur.

It is now four years since the stamps you mention were last printed, and it is somewhat difficult for us to go more fully into the subject; but we feel sure that you will find that but a few sheets only have passed the machine-minder and the examining staff with the defect in question.

The High Commissioner was still not entirely satisfied, and wrote to De La Rue on 16 December 1911, saying that he believed that this letter 'P' had been repaired at some point. On 19 December De La Rue replied that they believed the information in their previous letter had been correct, but would ask their chief engraver to have a look at the plate. The following day De La Rue followed up with the information that their chief engraver had examined the plate, and found no evidence of any repair having been done to the plate at the point in question. All this was fed back to the Distributor of Stamps in Pretoria, who in turn passed the letter on to Secretary of Finance on 21 December 1911.

A hand written note from the Secretary of Finance to the Distributor of Stamps dated 12 January 1912, says: 'I don't think anything will be gained by pursuing the matter further', and on the same date, the Distributor of Stamps responded: 'Hundreds of defective sheets passed out, but I agree that it is not necessary to take further action in the matter'.



**Fig. 21.12** The five stages of the 'lostage' flaw.

So, the matter was dropped. De La Rue was not accepting any blame, yet the plate flaw continued throughout the second printing. This was the time that De La Rue was attempting to secure the printing contract for the new Union stamps, and perhaps did not wish to be seen as having perhaps missed making a timely correction to the 4d plate.

The development of the flaw can be traced, firstly with the initial printing in 1903 on the paper watermarked Crown CA. (The stages of development of this flaw that are illustrated here vary from those illustrated by Buckley and Marriott.<sup>11</sup>) Stages are tentatively numbered from 1 to 5 (Fig. 21.12). Stage 1 shows part of the loop of the 'P' still visible, while Stage 2 shows just the remains of the bottom of the loop of the 'P'. Obviously the change happened gradually, so there are stamps that are somewhere in between each of the arbitrarily chosen stages.

Presumably the plate was cleaned after the completion of the first printing, as the second printing in 1907 (on paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA) shows some stamps with the flaw now less developed than Stage 2. Then comes Stage 3. Stage 4 shows what looks completely like an 'I', with a small indentation where the bottom loop of the 'P' comes into the 'I'. Stage 5 is a reversal of the process. Somewhere during the second printing, the cleaning of the plate must have removed part of the foreign matter lodged in the loop of the 'P', as sheets printed later during the second printing expose something more of part of the top loop of the 'P' than is visible in stage 1.

One would expect this Stage 5 to be an earlier stage. However, it occurs during the second printing on paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA, and only on sheets with the outer red Marginal Rule (Jubilee Line) damaged just above the second last row of the upper left pane, the row above the 'lostage' flaw (Fig. 21.13). On the blocks examined Stage 5 only occurs with this damaged Marginal Rule. Stages 3 and 4 occur on blocks with full Marginal Rules (as in Fig. 21.11), but something between Stages 3 and 4 also occur on blocks with the damaged Marginal Rule. It is probable that after the cleaning of the plate the ink again accumulated around the foreign matter, forming the state somewhere between Stages 3 and 4 again.

A larger than might be expected number of unused positional blocks of the second printing have survived. This is



**Fig. 21.13** Block showing damaged Marginal Rule at top left.

11 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, p. 114.

probably due to Emil Tamsen, a well known philatelic personality of the time, who commented on the error in *The South African Philatelist* of December 1911.<sup>12</sup> He wrote:

In 1910 I read in the *Nederlandsche Philatelist* a short note regarding the error. It was stated that the copy was unique, that the plate had been corrected, and the copy was for sale at £40. After reading the above I examined a full sheet of the 4d with multiple watermark, the single watermark paper having already been obsolete for some time, but I could discover no error and was therefore quite satisfied with the Editor's statement that the error had been corrected. Some months ago, in July I think, I casually looked through another sheet of the 4d and found the error, being the second stamp in the bottom row of the left hand top pane.

Since then I have pointed out to the local Post Office the nice colouring of this stamp, and have been able to buy several full sheets. In fact, the Post Office in Pretoria have also supplied me with full sheets, and wondered why I was so fond of these stamps. It was no good stating that they looked so nice on a letter, but, as I was known as a collector, it was put down to a 'whim of his'.

So, the flaw was discovered by someone in Holland in 1910, and it was believed to have been corrected. It was then forgotten until Emil Tamsen rediscovered it, and bought up as many full sheets as he could. Since he found the flaw sometime about July of 1911, and the authorities only picked it up in October of 1911, he had enjoyed about three months of acquiring sheets before it was realised that a flaw existed.

## Stamp Booklets

The Orange River Colony was the first of the South African colonies to consider the issue of a stamp booklet. While the other three colonies did all eventually introduce booklets, none was ever issued by the Orange River Colony.

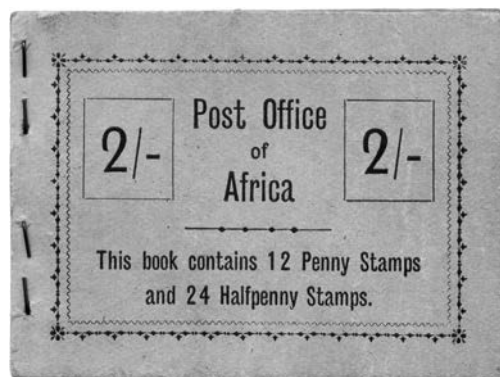
On 10 January 1905, the Crown Agents forwarded to De La Rue a letter from the General Post Office regarding an enquiry for stamp booklets from the Orange River Colony. The enquiry was regarding the cost of binding ½d and 1d stamps into 2s books of stamps.

De La Rue responded on 12 January 1905, giving all the requested information, and in addition saying:

We enclose a specimen book showing the style in which the books would be bound, and we shall of course require to be furnished with the lettering which is to appear on the covers (Fig. 21.14).

It has a pink cover headed 'Post Office of Africa' and contains two pages of stamp-sized perforated labels in red to simulate 1d stamps and four pages in green to simulate ½d stamps.

Nothing else appears on the subject of booklets in the De La Rue Correspondence Books. Presumably the Colony decided not to pursue the idea, or it just got neglected and eventually forgotten.



**Fig. 21.14** The De La Rue 'Specimen' booklet.

<sup>12</sup> Tamsen, Emil. "The O.F.S. 4d Error "Tostage"", *The South African Philatelist*, December 1911, pp. 46–47.



# 22

## Postage Stamp Usage

### Preamble

Apart from the one intended usage to prepay postage in the Orange River Colony, the postage stamps were sometimes adapted for special uses. These were being needle punctured or overprinted for official railway use, and overprinted for Customs Duty use. The 1d was also authorised for revenue use as a cheque stamp.

### Prepayment of Postage

This was the primary purpose of the postage stamp issue.

The postage rates of the time were similar to those in the other South African Colonies. Destinations were charged in three general categories, the first being Southern Africa (including Mozambique), the second being the United Kingdom and other British Possessions, and the third being Australia and Foreign Countries. It is interesting to note that New Zealand was specifically included in the British Possessions rates, while Australia was specifically excluded. The rates applied for mail posted on board the mail steamers was the same as that for the regular mails. The rates that applied are shown in Table 22.1.

Parcel rate categories were divided a little differently. These rates are shown in Table 22.2.

The **Registration Fee** was 4d. An acknowledgement of delivery of a registered mail item sent could be obtained by paying an additional fee. This required payment at the time of registration of a fee of 2½d.

A **Late Fee** was payable on mail handed in at the post offices after the time fixed for the closing of the mail. This late fee was paid using additional postage stamps affixed to the late mail. The late fee rate for letters was 2d if the mail was posted less than 15 minutes after the mail closing time, and 4d if between 15 and 30 minutes after the mail closing. Registered articles could be posted up to a maximum of 15 minutes after the mail closing time for a late fee of 4d.

The general **postal regulations** allowed for letters up to a maximum size of 24 inches in length, 12 inches in width, and 12 inches in depth. Quite a size for a letter! There does not seem to be a maximum weight for letters. Newspapers and books had the same maximum dimensions, and could not exceed 7 lbs weight. None of the dimension and weight restrictions applied to mail sent to or from Government Offices. Parcels could be a maximum of

Mail Type	Southern Africa	UK and British Possessions, excluding Australia	Australia and Foreign Countries
Letters	1d per ½ oz	1d per ½ oz	2½d per ½ oz
Postcards, Single	½d each	1d each	1d each
Postcards, Reply paid	1d each	2d each	2d each
Newspapers	½d per 4 oz, Rhodesia ½d for each 2 oz or part thereof	½d per 2 oz	½d per 2 oz
Books and Commercial Papers	½d per 2 oz	½d per 2 oz, minimum 2½d	½d per 2 oz, minimum 2½d
Sample Packets	½d per 2 oz, with minimum charge of 1d if going outside ORC	½d per 2 oz, minimum 1d	½d per 2 oz, minimum 1d

Table 22.1 Postage Rates.

For destinations within Southern Africa, except Rhodesia and the Bechuanaland Protectorate	ORC 1½d for every 4oz or part thereof, other countries 4d for first 8 oz, and 2d for each additional 4 oz
For Rhodesia and the Bechuanaland Protectorate	1s 6d per lb
For the United Kingdom	1s per lb
For British Possessions and Foreign Countries	Various

Table 22.2 Parcel Postage Rates.

3 feet 6 inches in length, and the combined length and girth could not exceed 6 feet. The maximum parcel weight was 11 lbs.

## British Association

The 75th Annual Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science was held in South Africa, and the Association visited Bloemfontein, where a temporary post office was provided in the Raadzaal (parliament building). This office was open from 8.30 am on 2 September 1905 until 10.45 am on 4 September 1905. As 3 September was a Sunday, the only strikes possible are those of 2 and 4 September.

A part set of eight postage stamps, ½d to 1s (no 5s) are known cancelled very neatly and centrally 'British Assn ORC SE/1905'. These may have been part of a presentation set, or simply carefully cancelled to order.

## Railway Use

Some Orange River Colony stamps were also needle punctured or overprinted for official railway use. These are covered in Chapter 33, which gives a short overview of Edwardian stamps of all four colonies that were used for railway service.

# 23

## Revenue Stamps

### Preamble

Following on from the early development covered in Chapter 20, the Orange River Colony postage stamp and revenue stamp development continued together. However, despite a single correspondence usually covering them both, they have been treated separately in different chapters.

### Development

The story begins again after the few months delay while the portrait of the King to be used for the postage and revenue stamps of the British Empire was being agreed upon. A note from the Crown Agents to De La Rue on 21 August 1901 reads:

The enclosed letter from the Colonial Office dated 19th instant is forwarded to you with a request that you will furnish designs for the new stamps following the accompanying sketch.

The key part of this forwarded letter was the inclusion of Minute No. 180/01 of 26 July 1901 from H. F. Wilson, the Secretary of the Orange River Colony Administration, to the Imperial Secretary in Johannesburg. The Minute was titled 'O.R.C. Postage and Revenue Stamps' and lays out some reasons for requesting stamps different to those designs originally proposed by De La Rue. The Minute reads:

The Deputy Administrator thinks that it will be desirable for the present to have the Orange River Colony Postage and Revenue Stamps kept distinct, except as regards the penny value, which might be available for 'Postage and Revenue' purposes. We should also prefer to have stamps printed on the key plate system, as proposed by the Crown Agents. The designs for the stamps attached to these papers are not admired, and will in any case have to be altered, owing to the death of Her Majesty the Queen.

I understand from the Deputy Administrator that, some months since, under cover of private letter to Mr. Just, of the Colonial Office, he sent a suggestion of his own, upon which the future design of stamps for this Colony might be based.

A detailed list of the stamps, presses, and dies required is attached.

This detailed list also included stationery requirements. The sketch referred to in the note from the Crown Agents is presumably the same one sent to Mr. Just. This does not appear to have survived. Also the designs that were attached to the Minute that were 'not admired' would have been the originals sent to the Colony with the effigy of Queen Victoria, and since they were to be replaced, were presumably retained by the Colonial Office. These too do not appear to have survived, explaining perhaps why the De La Rue Reference Collection only contained photographic copies of these early designs.

The list of the desired revenue stamps attached to the Minute set out the anticipated initial requirement of each by denomination. Alongside was a note 'Same colours as under late Orange Free State Government'.

De La Rue responded on 12 September 1901 as follows:

As requested, we beg to submit two designs following the sketch received from the Colony, one for Postage and one for Revenue stamps. We have, according to instructions, prepared these designs to be printed by the key-plate system. The 1d Postage and Revenue stamp would follow the design of the enclosed postage stamp, but would bear the words 'Postage and Revenue'.

The response also included the costs of providing dies and plates. These were: Key die (or head die) £50, 120-set plate of the head £85, border die for 1d postage and revenue £15, and nine 120-set duty border plates at £20 each.

The revenue design included with the De La Rue response appeared in the 1976 Robson Lowe auction.<sup>1</sup> It, along with all the subsequent design modifications, were bundled into a single lot, where it was incorrectly described as having a black centre and mauve border, whereas the border was in fact red. It had a large springbok with head to left, and was mounted on a card (90 × 114 mm), and dated 12 Sept 1901. Unlike the postage stamp design, the head that was inserted was the one finally approved. It was, however, the large springbok that was to cause some difficulty.

A photograph of the frame design before inserting the King's head was also in the De La Rue Correspondence Book. This was overlooked when the Books were stripped of material to offer for auction, and is now in the safe keeping of Royal Mail Heritage Services in London.

The story of the springbok depicted on the left of the border went through various stages of modification, and this was done in parallel with the similar depiction and modifications of a springbok on the postage stamps. This has all been described in Chapter 21, so does not need to be repeated.

The modified photographic designs were lettered B (dated 22 January 1902 on a cut down card), BB (dated 4 February 1902 on a cut down card), and D (dated 19 February 1902, on a full 90 × 114 mm card). All had a green centre and purple border, with design D being the accepted design. These were all, along with the original design, part of the same lot in the 1976 Robson Lowe auction.

Buckley and Marriott<sup>2</sup> show illustrations of some of these designs. They had the opportunity to examine the De La Rue records before the philatelic material was dispersed via auction. They do, however, have some confusion with their illustrations. They show the initial design, and the modified design B. They have an illustration with the correct manuscript annotation of 'BB Feb. 4th 02', but the stamp illustrated is the finally accepted postage stamp design, not the second modified revenue design. Presumably they had planned to

<sup>1</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 474.

<sup>2</sup> 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, p. 86.

illustrate the second modified design, but had made a change without deleting the manuscript notation from the illustration.

De La Rue had previously been advised that there would be the nine revenue denominations and that the colour proposals from the Colony were for monocoloured stamps, the same colours as those used by the former Orange Free State. Accordingly, De La Rue prepared a head die (Fig. 23.1) and a complete master die with



**Fig. 23.1** Die proof of head die.



**Fig. 23.2** Die proof of complete master die with blank value tablets.



**Fig. 23.3** Die proof of the 6d revenue border die.

blank value tablets (Fig. 23.2). The head die was approved 3 May 1902, and the complete master die on 5 May 1902. It was probably anticipated that the complete stamp would be in one colour, and the value tablets in another, which was the way the Cape revenue stamps were printed.

However, the approved final design was in two colours, with the central King's head and crown in dull green, and the border design (including the value tablets) all in purple. The secondary key dies that De La Rue were now preparing were for the whole design to be in one colour, with the value tablets possibly either the same or a different colour. Since nothing appears in the Correspondence Books on this, it would seem that although De La Rue was preparing something that fitted the original request, the colour combination would not match that of the approved design. Given all the protracted difficulties involved in the design relating to the springbok, De La Rue probably felt it necessary to ensure that the stamp issue would match the approved design in so far as colour combination options were concerned. This meant that the key plate (or now, head plate) would comprise the central King's head and crown, and the border plate the rest of the design.

This border die was prepared by cutting away the central vignette (the King's head and crown) from the secondary die, and engraving the value on the blank tablets. This was done on 5 May for the 6d (Fig. 23.3) and 1s 6d, and the rest of the dies were completed by 30 June 1902. The 6d, along with the head die, was used in producing the colour trials. The rest of the revenue dies and plates were completed by the end of August.

The next relevant communication in the Correspondence Book is a letter from De La Rue to the Crown Agents of 3 July 1902, regarding proposed colours of stamps. This reads:

On Appendix D we hand you a colour scheme for Revenue-size stamps which we should recommend for adoption. On Appendix E will be found the colours suggested by the Colony.

They go on to say they do not consider these colours as distinctive as the colour scheme they recommended in Appendix D.

De La Rue continues:

On Appendix D all the heads are printed in doubly-fugitive colours, whereas on Appendix E this is impossible, as the Colony have suggested colours which do not exist in doubly-fugitive inks.

A further Appendix marked F offered twelve alternative colours for the Colony to choose from, should they not be satisfied with the colours proposed on Appendix D.

The Crown Agents sent the Appendix sheets to Bloemfontein on 22 August 1902 for the Colonial Government to select the colour scheme required. A letter of 15 September 1902 from B. T. Blackwood, the Acting Colonial Secretary in Bloemfontein, lists the choice made by the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams. The relevant part of the letter reads: 'The Revenue Stamps as shown complete in Appendix D may be supplied with the heads printed in doubly-fugitive colours as suggested.' So the De La Rue colour proposals had all been accepted.

On 24 January 1905 the Crown Agents sent a requisition to De La Rue including five additional denominations of revenue stamps. De La Rue pointed out the need to make new border plates, at a cost of £20 each.

Then on 17 February De La Rue submitted Appendix A, which was their proposed colours for the five additional denominations, and Appendix B, which provided fifteen alternative colours to choose from. All the colour proposals were again made from the 6d plate.

On 25 February the Crown Agents responded as follows:

We return colour scheme enclosed in your memo of 17th inst. showing the colours which we approve for the £10, 3/- and 2/6 duties. For the £2-10/- and 6/- duties we propose to adopt a bright red or carmine centre with doubly fugitive purple and green borders respectively. We shall be glad to receive specimens of the stamps in these colours.

Given the short time elapsed, the Crown Agents must have been making the decisions without first sending the Appendix sheets to the Colony.

De La Rue obliged on 28 February with not just the two requested colours, but with a further nine additional alternatives to choose from. These were again made from the 6d plate. They were mounted on an Appendix sheet without a designating letter. The Crown Agents, however, chose to stick to their requested colours, and advised De La Rue of this on 2 March 1905. The new border dies were prepared, and the plates made in March.

On 7 February 1906 the Crown Agents wrote to De La Rue saying the Colony had requested a change in the colour of the 2s revenue stamp. On 9 February De La Rue responded with an Appendix sheet containing eight new colour alternatives for the 2s denomination, made from the 2s plate. However, the Crown Agents did not like any of them, and on 14 February requested a green stamp with a bright red centre. This one new colour proposal was sent on its own Appendix sheet on 19 February 1906. This was approved by Sir William Mercer of the Crown Agents on 21 February.

The Crown Agents having requested and approved a grey-green stamp with a bright red centre were happy, De La Rue was satisfied too, and 500 sheets were printed and sent to the Colony, where a problem was blatantly obvious. The new 2s colour combination was practically the same as that of the 6s!

On 19 July 1906 the Crown Agents again wrote to De La Rue:

With reference to our memo of 21 Feb we have to inform you that owing to a specimen of the 6/- stamp not being before us the colour chosen for the 2/- was

identical with it. We have now chosen a fresh colour shown on the enclosed colour scheme supplied under Reqn. 4/05. This colour should be adopted in all future supplies. The colour scheme should be returned when noted.

This colour scheme was a duplicate which De la Rue had sent to the Crown Agents on 17 February 1905. A requisition was entered for 1,000 sheets of the new 2s colour on 31 December 1906.

### Material from the De La Rue Records

Much material was preserved in the De La Rue Records, with practically all the Orange River Colony (and indeed the other 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. With the material now dispersed, it is worth attempting to record what is still believed to be in existence.

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.

These items were all auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>3</sup> The proofs of the dies used to make up the plates and their manuscript dates and markings were for the:

- Head plate: 'Jun 17 (02), 120 leads 6 extra & 6 experimental' (in black), 'Orange River Aug 28 02' (in red)
- 6d border plate: 'June 9 120 leads 6 extra & 6 experimental' (in black)
- 1s border plate: 'June 27 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)
- 1s 6d border plate: 'June 10 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)
- 2s border plate: 'June 24 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)
- 5s border plate: 'June 13 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)
- 10s border plate: 'June 28 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)

Notes:

- 1 These six die proofs are on a single piece.
- 2 Across these six die proofs is a diagonal line in red and over the 10s at the end 'Aug 28. 02' in red.

- £1 border plate: 'July 2 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)
- £2 border plate: 'July 3 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)
- £5 border plate: 'July 4 120 leads & 6 extra' (in black)

3 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 475.

Notes:

- 1 These three die proofs are on a single piece.
- 2 Across these three die proofs is a diagonal line in red and beside the £5 at the end 'Aug 28. 02' in red.

2s 6d plate: 'March 1' (05) (in black)

3s plate: 'March 7' (in black)

6s plate: 'March 11' (in black)

£2 10s plate: 'March 16' (in black)

£10 plate: 'March 21' (in black)

Notes:

- 1 These five die proofs are on a single piece.
- 2 Across the top of the five die proofs is '120 leads & 6 extra from each' in black.
- 3 Across the five die proofs is a diagonal line in red, and above the £10 at the end 'May 1st 05' in red.

Also noted, are a complete set of cut down die proofs from the De La Rue Collection with what is presumably again the date of the final BEFORE HARDENING state of the die. The proof of the complete die has a handstamped date, while all the others have the date in manuscript. These may have been the ones finally approved, then cut down and perhaps stuck in the Work Book (or Striking Book), indicating that job had been completed, so these die proofs are listed here.

Central head and crown vignette, dated 3 May 1902 and initialled

Complete die with uncleared surrounds and value tablets, dated 5 May 1902 and initialled

6d Cut close, no date or initial visible, but believed to be 5 May 1902, as it was used for the colour trials

1s Dated 24 June 1902 and initialled

1s 6d Dated 5 May 1902 and initialled

2s Dated 17 June 1902 and initialled

5s Dated 6 June 1902 and initialled

10s Dated 24 June 1902 and initialled

£1 Dated 26 June 1902 and initialled

£2 Dated 26 June 1902 and initialled

£5 Dated 30 June 1902 and initialled

Similar cut down die proofs for the additional denominations added later.

2s 6d Dated 23 February 1905 and initialled

3s Dated 21 February 1905 and initialled

6s Dated 27 February 1905 and initialled

£2 10s Dated 28 February and initialled

£10 Dated 1 March and initialled

**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.

However, the only die proof on the standard De La Rue glazed card noted is that for the central head and crown vignette, marked BEFORE HARDENING, and is dated 3 June 1902. It has a manuscript endorsement in the lower left corner 'O.R. Colony' (Fig. 23.1). Buckley and Marriott<sup>4</sup> do not list this, or any other of these die proofs on the standard De La Rue Card.

De La Rue also usually kept file copies of the issued stamps, stuck into a file book. None were part of the De La Rue reference collection, so if they did exist, their fate is not known. They also kept file copies of the issued stamps handstamped SPECIMEN. These are covered in Chapter 24 with the other specimen stamps.

**Ink Recipe Book** Pages have been seen for the 6d, 1s and 1s 6d revenue denominations. As a good many pages for the other colonies have been seen, it is probable that those for the other denominations also still exist.

**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. Not all of the designs and colour proposals may have survived. Whatever is known about the material is noted.

*12 September 1901*

A manuscript dated design proposal for revenue stamps based on a sketch received from the Colony, showing a 6d denomination in black and red. The design is mounted on a card 89 × 114 mm and has 'Dupl.' in the bottom left corner.

Along with the design proposal, there was also a photograph of the design without the centre vignette (which is now kept by Royal Mail Heritage Services in London).

*22 January 1902*

A manuscript dated modified version of the previous design, marked 'B' with the depiction of the springbok changed as requested. This time the design was in green and violet, and is now on a cut down card.

*4 February 1902*

Another manuscript dated modified version of the previous design, with a further improved depiction of the springbok. This one was marked 'BB', and was again in green and violet, and is now on a cut down card.

*19 February 1902*

The final manuscript dated design with the accepted version of the springbok, marked 'D', and has 'Dupl.' in the bottom left corner. This is again in green and violet, and is mounted on a card 89 × 114 mm.

*3 July 1902*

Three Appendix sheets marked D, E and F. All three were depicting 6d revenue stamps. Appendix D was for nine bicoloured stamps depicting the proposed colours for the 6d to the £5, which was approved as proposed. Appendix E was for nine monocolour stamps in the colours for the 6d to £5 originally suggested by the Colony. Appendix F was for 12 alternative colour combinations for the Colony to consider. All three Appendices were

4 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.

auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>5</sup> The present whereabouts of Appendix E are unknown.

*17 February 1905*

Two Appendix sheets, marked A and B. Appendix A showed the proposed colours for the five additional denominations, and Appendix B offered fifteen alternative colour combinations to choose from should the proposed colours in Appendix A not be accepted. Both Appendices were auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>6</sup>

*28 February 1905*

An Appendix (with no other designation, other than that it was related to the Orange River Colony Requisition No. 4/05) depicting 6d revenue stamps, showed the requested colour scheme for the 6s and £2 10s denominations, and an additional nine alternative colours to choose from should the requested colours not be accepted. This Appendix was auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>7</sup>

*9 February 1906*

An Appendix (with no other designation, other than that it was related to the Orange River Colony Requisition No. 6/06) depicting 2s revenue stamps, showed eight colour combinations for the requested colour change of the 2s (Colour Plate 6). This Appendix was auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>8</sup>

*19 February 1906*

An Appendix (with no other designation, other than that it was related to the Orange River Colony Requisition No. 6/06), showed a single 2s revenue stamp with the requested colour combination for the colour change of the 2s. It was approved by Sir William Mercer of the Crown Agents, and dated 21 February 1906. This Appendix was auctioned by Robson Lowe in 1976.<sup>9</sup>

A number of colour proofs other than those on the Appendix sheets were also retained. It is not clear how many, but there appears to be one copy of some colour combinations that appear on the 1902 Appendix sheets, and none of others. Some have obviously been stuck on paper, and may have been removed from either Appendix sheet E or F. These imperforate colour trials are on gummed paper with the Crown CA watermark.

## The Printing Requisitions

The Orange River Colony Government entered periodic requisitions. The term *Indent* was often used by the Colony for their printing orders, but the Crown Agents and De La Rue used the term *Requisition*, so for consistency, the term *Requisition* has been adopted throughout this section. Many requisitions were for stamps and also other postal items (like postal stationery), but only the revenue stamps on any requisition are mentioned in this section. Consequently, the same requisition may be referred to in another chapter, for the relevant items to that particular chapter. The Colony had a system of numbering their requisitions (or *indents*) that went to the Crown Agents, however, the Crown Agents used their own numbering system when placing the requisition with De La Rue. This is the one used

5 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lots 476, 477, and 478.

6 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 479.

7 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, lot 480.

8 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, part of lot 481.

9 Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, part of lot 481.

here, showing a number and the year, as in the first one below, number 73 of the year 1901 shown as 73/01.

**Requisition No. 73/01** was originally part of Minute No. 180/01 from the Secretary to the Orange River Colony Administration of 26 July 1901, and hence the '01' in the requisition numbering. As the design and colours were not yet resolved, it only entered the Colonial Work Book on 14 March 1902. It was for the following numbers of stamps:

6d	240,000	10s	240,000
1s	240,000	£1	120,000
1s 6d	120,000	£2	120,000
2s	60,000	£5	240,000
5s	120,000		

The original order was for 60,000 of the 5s and 120,000 of the 10s stamps. This was increased to the numbers above (120,000 of the 5s and 240,000 of the 10s stamps) on 10 October 1902.

**Requisition No. 4/05** was dated 24 January 1905, and was for the 1s stamp plus five new denominations. The requisition was for the following number of stamps:

1s	240,000	6s	120,000
2s 6d	120,000	£2 10s	60,000
3s	120,000	£10	60,000

The 2s 6d was printed on yellow paper, the 3s on blue paper and the £10 on red paper.

**Requisition No. 6/06** was dated 6 January 1906, and was for the following number of stamps:

6d	240,000	2s	60,000
----	---------	----	--------

The colours of the 2s were changed.

**Requisition No. 106/06** was dated 31 December 1906, and was for the following number of stamps:

1s	360,000	2s	120,000
1s 6d	120,000	5s	120,000

The colours of the 2s were again changed, having been too close to those of the 6s.

**Requisition No. 50/08** was dated 3 June 1908, and was for the following number of stamps:

6d	240,000
----	---------

**Requisition No. 53/09** was dated 12 July 1909, and was for the following number of stamps:

6d	120,000	1s	120,000
----	---------	----	---------

De La Rue tended to produce a few more sheets than were actually ordered, and then ship and invoice the full printing, so the number printed was usually a little above that on the requisition. The exact number printed and shipped is available in the De La Rue Private Day Books, but this has not been recorded here.

## The Stamps

In summary, the initial denominations were issued during the second half of 1903. The additional five values were issued in the second half of 1905. The stamps were printed in sheets of 120 stamps (2 panes of 60 stamps, in 6 rows of 10 per pane). The perforation of all the stamps was 14.

These stamps were printed on paper with two different watermarks. They were initially the Crown CC watermark, and subsequently most of the stamps printed from 1905 used paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA (the Multiple Crown CA watermarked paper was introduced in 1904, but there were no Orange River Colony stamps printed that year). The exceptions are the 1905 printings of the 6s and £2 10s, which are both on Crown CC watermarked paper. Presumably De La Rue was using up the last few pages of Crown CC watermarked paper in stock. Buckley and Marriott<sup>10</sup> list the 2s 6d denomination as being on Crown CA watermarked paper, however, all examples examined are in fact on Multiple Crown CA watermarked paper.

The colours selected for the issued stamps were:

6d	dull blue-green and brownish purple
1s	sepia and grey green
1s 6d	deep blue green and bright blue
2s	sepia and purple
2s	red and grey green
2s	sepia and green/yellow
2s 6d	sepia and bright rose red/yellow
3s	sepia and blue/blue
5s	deep blue green and bright rose red
6s	red and grey green
10s	deep blue green and bright orange
£1	reddish lilac and grey black
£2	reddish lilac and orange brown
£2 10s	red and grey lilac
£5	reddish lilac and green
£10	sepia and brown purple/orange

The 2s 6d denomination is also known on what appears to be the standard uncoloured paper. Either a sheet or more were inadvertently printed on this paper instead of the yellow paper, or the yellow paper on some stamps has faded out evenly. Some printed colours, especially the doubly fugitive greens, are often found faded if the stamps have been immersed in water.

Several printings of some denominations were made, resulting in some different shades. All the denominations required only a single plate.

As per the requisitions, several printings were made of some denominations:

6d	4 printings	6s	1 printing
1s	4 printings	10s	1 printing
1s 6d	2 printings	£1	1 printing
2s	3 printings	£2	1 printing
2s 6d	1 printing	£2 10s	1 printing
3s	1 printing	£5	1 printing
5s	2 printings	£10	1 printing

<sup>10</sup> 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, p. 132.

Each requisition as a whole is considered as a different printing.

The fact that there was no revenue stamp below the 6d denomination, meant the only way to pay things like the duty on receipts was with either a 1d or two ½d postage stamps. The duty regulations of 1903 had to reflect the fact that the authorities had mistakenly dropped the 1d postage and revenue stamp in favour of a postage-only stamp. So, for things like the receipt duty of 1d, the regulations stated: ‘in this case a postage stamp may be used’.

## Embossed Revenue Stamps

After the British forces had occupied the former Boer Republics, they had to attend to the business of government. Along with the proposals for adhesive postage and revenue stamps of the two new colonies, De La Rue provided design proposals for embossed revenue stamps. The initial submission included design proposals for both the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. Designs A to D were for the Transvaal postage stamps and revenue stamps, designs E to H were the equivalent designs for the Orange River Colony. Designs I and J were for Transvaal embossed revenue stamps, and finally, designs K and L were for Orange River Colony embossed revenue stamps. These designs were provided along with De La Rue’s letter of 28 November 1900.

This was in response to a letter from the Crown Agents of 23 November 1900, requesting an estimate for machinery to emboss cheques with a 1d duty, and also one for embossing higher values. Proposals for suitable stamps were also requested. The Crown Agents advised that each Colony should have different designs. They also requested alternative estimates for plain and colour embossing, as well as for hand and power presses. They stated that the estimates should only include the press, as ‘driving shafting and machinery would be provided in the Colonies’. Presumably the mining industry had spawned a competent engineering capability.

De La Rue’s response of 28 November 1900 that included the design proposals, commented that for the various duties of embossing dies required, ‘distinction is made by varying the shapes and designs’. They explained that the cost of the dies would be that same for plain or colour embossing, but that a different class of press was required.

The costs quoted for each die ‘engraved with crown and pierced for plugs’ was £7 10s, and date plugs were 10s extra each. Presses for plain embossing cost £18 each, and for colour embossing £90 19s 5d. ‘Steam Cameo Embossing Machines, such as we use at our factory for embossing envelopes’ were £285 each.

They mentioned that Britain used date plugs, but most of the colonies did not, as it was less costly without the date plugs. De La Rue provided explanations as to the virtues of the different pieces of equipment, going to some length explaining recommended security and operating procedures.

Design K was for the 1d cheque stamps. When this was taken from the De La Rue Correspondence Book to be used as a guide for the final designs, it was roughly removed, so that the original letter K still adheres to the page (it was the top left of the design), and the remainder of the date from the top right of the design is also still adhering to the page. The Correspondence Book has the manuscript notation ‘Mr. Muller 23/8/01’. Design L was a larger size design showing a 3s stamp duty as an example. Both of these items were offered in the Robson Lowe action of 1976.<sup>11</sup> The present whereabouts of design L are unknown.

<sup>11</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, part of lot 483.

Queen Victoria's death in January 1901, resulted in most of the previous stamp proposals being reviewed, as the original proposal included an effigy of the monarch, however, these designs for embossed revenue stamps did not, so, could proceed unhindered by the selection of which effigy of King Edward VII would be used on the stamps. However, no further action was taken for some time.

The embossed revenue stamps are next referred to in Minute No. 180/01 from the Secretary of the Orange River Colony Administration to the Imperial Secretary dated 26 July 1901. It includes the requirement of four embossing dies, for 1d, 3d, 6d and 1s. Also for two 'extra strong fly presses for plain embossing' at £18 each. It also states: 'Designs to be on the same principle as per specimen "K" of De La Rue & Co., except that the shapes may be somewhat different to distinguish the denomination at a glance'. This information was passed on to De La Rue by the Crown Agents on 22 August 1901.

On 12 September 1901, De La Rue submitted six designs. Designs A and B were for postal stationery, but designs C, D, E and F were for the four denominations of embossing dies requested. All were now of the smaller cheque size. These too were offered in the Robson Lowe auction of 1976.<sup>12</sup> They, like the previous two designs, are hand painted in red and white on tracing paper. The designs were all accepted as proposed.

The dies, presses and plugs were ordered as part of Requisition 73/01 on 14 March 1902. This was for one die of each denomination, two presses, and two sets of date plugs with five year plugs, so the years 1902 to 1906 were covered by the five year plugs. The only other order involving the embossed revenue stamps was Requisition 62/07 of 18 July 1907. This was for 2 sets of year plugs for the years 1907 to 1910. The order was completed within four weeks, but it means that the 1907 year plugs could not have been put into use until October of 1907. It is not clear whether the items stamped earlier in the year were stamped without a year plug.

There is an impression of these four issued dies in black that is believed to have been done in about 1936 by the Government Printer in Pretoria, along with impressions of all other dies in their possession at the time (Fig. 23.4).



Fig. 23.4 Impressions of the four issued embossed revenue stamps.

### O.R.C. Essay for Universal Key Plate Scheme

In 1907 the Crown Agents proposed to use a Universal Key Plate Scheme for all British Colonies. In considering possible designs for the Scheme, (which was only partially implemented), De La Rue drew up two design proposals, dated 8 March 1907. These were mounted on glazed cards (89 × 114 mm). The small postage size was shown as Straits Settlements, while the large revenue size design was shown as Orange River Colony. The large size design was for postage and revenue, and had a denomination of £10. Both the chosen examples were for colonies with long names, so it may have been to illustrate that the design could accommodate long colony names.

From an Orange River Colony point of view, this design is only a curiosity, as it has nothing directly to do with the issued, or planned issue of stamps for the Colony. This was the well known Nyasaland key plate design, but had nothing more to do with the Orange River Colony.

<sup>12</sup> Robson Lowe auction catalogue, *Africa in Switzerland*, Basle 26–27 September 1976, part of lot 483.

## **Revenue Stamp Usage**

Until recently, there has been little interest in the collection of revenue stamps. As a result, much potentially interesting material was discarded. What often tended to survive, were the higher value stamps, as these were usually used on things like title deeds and other documents that it was necessary to preserve for reasons other than the revenue stamps. Consequently, the low value stamps with the most common usage, are often the more difficult to find, as these were usually discarded when the document was no longer needed.

The revenue stamps were never officially authorised for postage use, although some may have been incorrectly used this way.

## **Payment of Fiscal Duties and Fees**

This was the intended purposes of the Edwardian revenue stamps, as it was for the embossed revenue stamps. These stamps were used for a wide range of fees and duties. Many of these were graduated according to the size of financial transaction involved, type of license applied for, and numerous other yardsticks. Even a general overview of all of these is rather complex. So, this has been included in Appendix 3 at the end of the book as a summary of the main stamp duties and fees. In summarising these sometimes lengthy regulations, some clarity is lost, but it does provide a reference that covers most situations.

The basic Act in force in Orange River Colony during the Edwardian period was Ordinance No. 10 of 1903, which was titled 'Ordinance to Consolidate and Amend the Laws relating to the Payment of Stamp Duty and Licenses', and was the most recent significant consolidation and amendment to the stamp duties and fees in the Colony. Some small amendments were made during the Edwardian period.



# 24

## Specimen Stamps

### Preamble

One type of UPU specimen overprint was used on the O.R.C. Edwardian stamps, Samuel<sup>1</sup> type D12, and one local specimen handstamp. De La Rue specimen handstamps have also been recorded. It is possible that some Receiving Authority would have marked some O.R.C. stamps received as 'specimens', but none have yet been recorded. Postage stamp sets handstamped 'Ultramar' by the Portuguese authorities for distribution to their overseas colonies are known, but the handstamp is in addition to the UPU specimen overprint.

### Specimen Stamps

**UPU Specimens** De La Rue overprinted the UPU specimens. The Samuel type D12 overprints (Fig. 24.1) appeared on all the 1902–03 Edwardian issue denominations, that is from the ½d to the 5s values.

Samuel<sup>2</sup> states that the D12 overprint was produced from a 60-set plate (6 × 10). There is a characteristic broken 'M' in 'SPECIMEN', the position of which is believed to be row 7 stamp 5. Theoretically all the denominations overprinted with type D12 will have this broken 'M' variety, so far the 1d denomination has been noted.

The specimen stamps were distributed by the UPU to UPU members as they came available. The 1d was distributed on 18 December 1902, the 2d and 4d on 7 March 1903. Then on 20 March 1903, the ½d, 2½d, 3d, 6d and 1s were distributed, and finally on 18 April 1904 the 5s was distributed.

**De La Rue Specimens** These all came from the De La Rue records. They are the Samuel types D5a. The 1d, 2d and 5s denominations were part of the De La Rue reference collection, but their present whereabouts are not known. Nothing is known of the fate of the other denominations, which must surely have also existed. Only one of each is known.

**Fig. 24.1** Example of overprint type D12 on an O.R.C. postage stamp.



<sup>1</sup> Samuel, Marcus. *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857–1948*, London: The Royal Philatelic Society, 1976.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel, Marcus. *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857–1948*, London: The Royal Philatelic Society, 1976, p. 43.

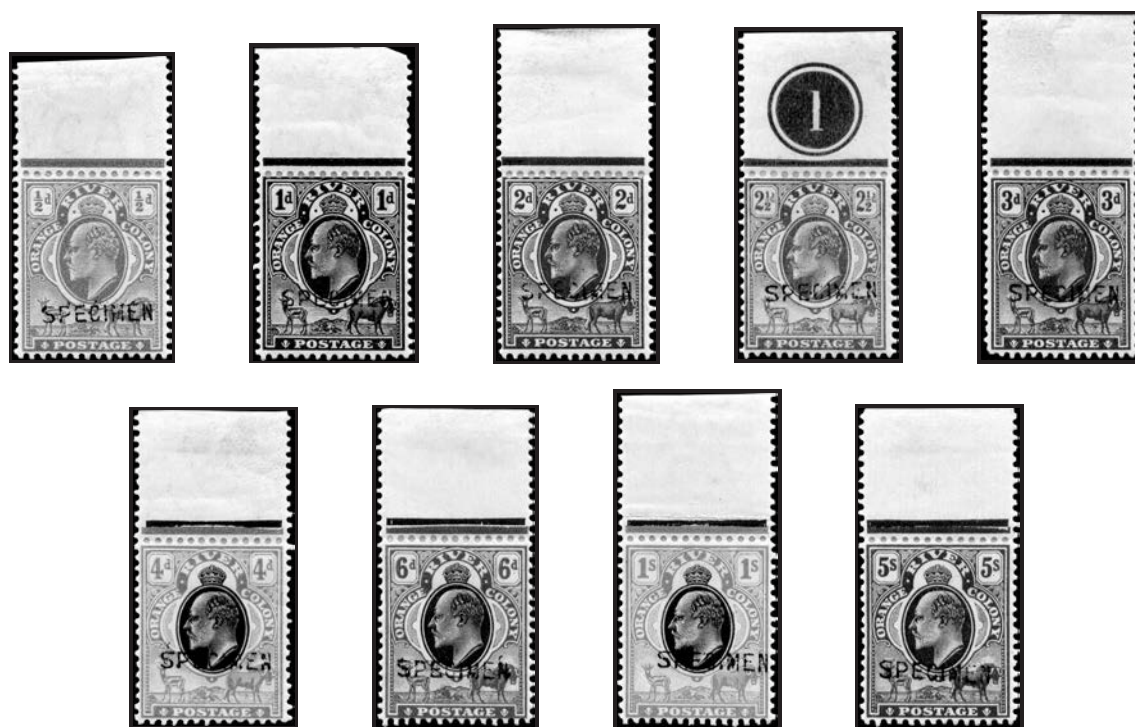


Fig. 24.2 Examples of stamps with the SA5 type handstamp.

**Receiving Authority Specimens** The only receiving authority specimens so far noted are the complete set with the handstamp 'Ultramar', which was the handstamp used by the Portuguese for their colonies.

**Presentation Specimens** Samuel<sup>3</sup> refers to a set handstamped with type SA5 (Fig. 24.2). This consisted of the 1903–04 issue 2d, 2½d, 3d, 6d 1s and 5s (Crown CA watermark), the 1905–07 issue ½d, 1d and 4d (Multiple Crown CA watermark). This set was presented to the Royal Empire Society in about 1910. As far as can be ascertained, only one set was made. Each of the other three South African Colonies also presented similar sets of both postage and revenue stamps to the Society.

### Revenue Stamp Specimens

The only presently recorded specimen stamps of the Edwardian revenues are a set of De La Rue reference specimens, and the set presented to the Royal Empire Society. The De La Rue specimens consist of the nine original values issued (6d to £5), lightly handstamped SPECIMEN in violet with Samuel<sup>4</sup> type D5a. The later issues of the 2s 6d, 3s, 6s and £2 10, as well as the two colour changes of the 2s are more heavily handstamped in black with the same D5a type. There is no record of a specimen of the later £10 value, and there was none in the De La Rue Collection.

The complete set of values, with the 2s being represented by the last printing, which was the sepia and green stamp printed on yellow paper, presented to the Royal Empire Society,

3 Samuel, Marcus. *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857–1948*, London: The Royal Philatelic Society, 1976, p. 193.

4 Samuel, Marcus. *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857–1948*, London: The Royal Philatelic Society, 1976.

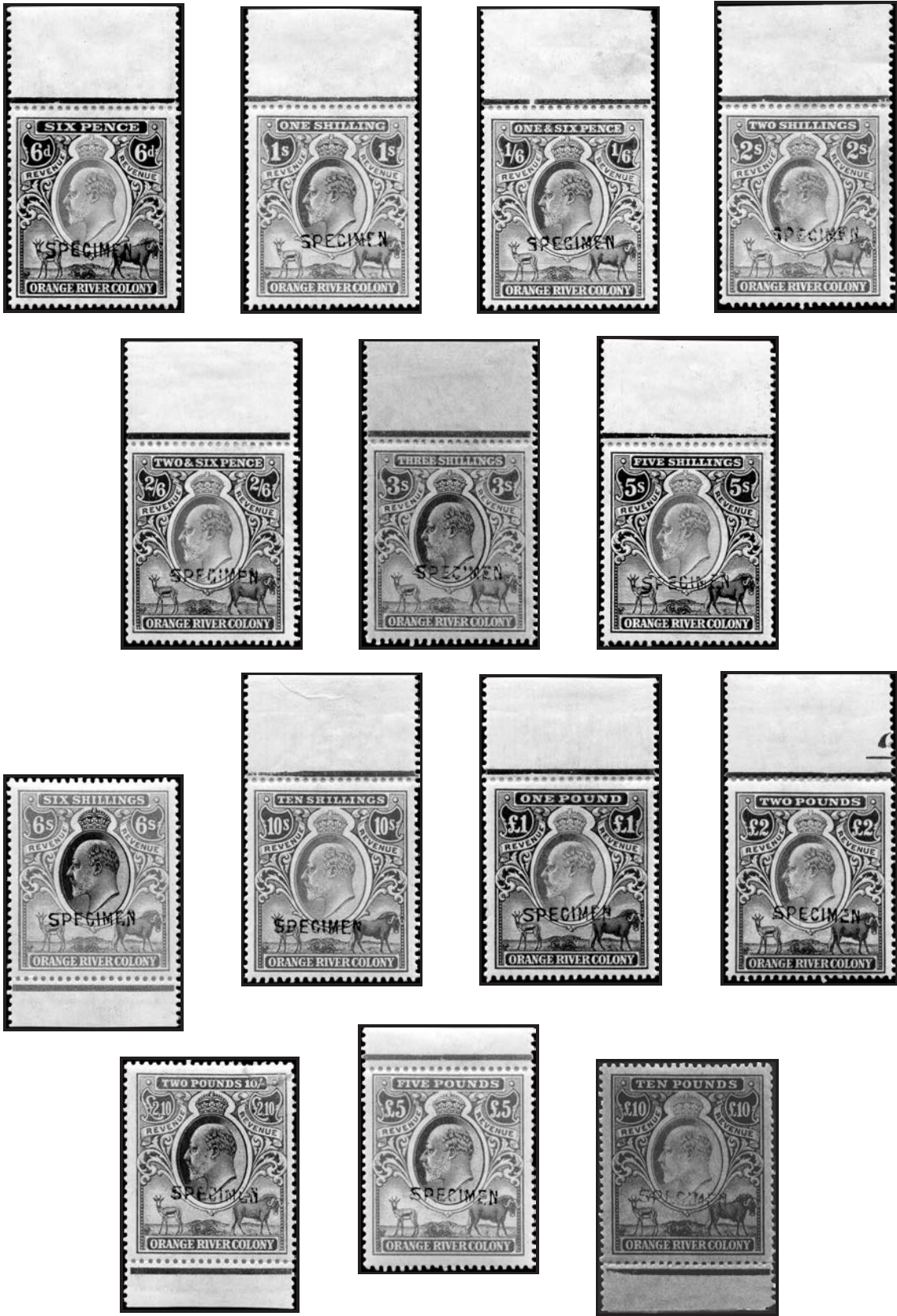


Fig. 24.3 Set of specimen stamps presented to the Royal Empire Society.

were handstamped SPECIMEN, Samuel<sup>5</sup> type SA5 (Fig. 24.3). They are believed to have been presented in 1910, at the time of the Royal Empire Society visit to South Africa. As far as can be ascertained, only one set was made. This was done for each of the four South African Colonies, with both a set of revenue and of postage stamps being presented.

A 10s and a £5 value are also known with the word SPECIMEN written in red diagonally across the stamp in manuscript, and initialled. The purpose of these two stamps is unclear.

---

5 Samuel, Marcus. *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857–1948*, London: The Royal Philatelic Society, 1976.