

**The Worner Collection  
of St Helena**

## Foreword

I was fortunate enough to acquire this collection in August 2021 on eBay. It was an unusually large single offering. More normally you might expect that it would be broken up to be sold. Fortunately it wasn't.

For me it represented a good opportunity to acquire some uncommon stamps early on in my collecting. Whilst there are only a couple of plate flaw varieties included, the coverage of the early QV issues, in particular, is good. This includes some that are really quite hard to come by, as well as interesting and unusual cancellations on more common issues.

On page 2, there is a reasonably decent mint copy of the clean cut 1861 6d (SG2), for example. This stamp has the highest catalogue value of any St Helena regular issue, with the possible exception of the Tristan Relief Set of 1961.

Coverage through the early QV issues is complete, albeit with a mixture of mint and used copies; sometimes there are both. They have been arranged (correctly in my view) based on the year of issue rather than by Stanley Gibbons catalogue number, which is rather curious prior to 1876.

The mint 1/- stamps from 1864 (SG17) and 1876 (SG26) are again moderately rare and of high catalogue value, as are the 6d stamps of 1871 (SG16), 1876 (SG25) and 1880 (SG29).

The more common issues from 1884-1894 include a nice exploration of watermark varieties. There are also 4 QV specimen stamps on page 15. One has a handstamp in purple, likely applied locally on the island, whilst the other three are UPU overprints.

Pages 16-22 feature a study of the different cancels used on the island. 22 in total are shown, including the rather scarce "2" cancel of 1868. They are each nicely illustrated beside the stamp examples.

The collection is then reasonably complete through to 1938, albeit missing the Centenary of British Colonization set of 1934, the Coronation set of 1937 and certain high-value stamps, notably the 1908 10/- (SG70), 1922 £1 (SG96), 1922-37 10/- and 15/- used (SG112/113). The latter is a notably rare stamp from the island.

There are a few oddities spotted. Of the six examples of the 1864 1d issue on Page 5, only two are likely correct. The other four have the taller typeface associated with the 1871 issue. This seems to be a fairly

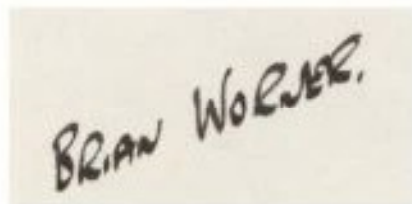
common mistake due to the text description currently provided in the Stanley Gibbons catalogue, which relies solely on bar length, albeit that the associated image shows the taller typeface [1]. A clearer definition is provided in Hibbert [2].

The "Centre – Black not catalogued" variety shown on Page 30 is now recognized as SG97h.

The "February 1937" shade of the 1½d (SG99f) is incorrect. That should be the much darker Deep Carmine, an example of which is shown on Page 29. Consequently, the February 1923 designation for that stamp is also wrong.

What is most striking about this collection, though, is the beautiful way in which it is presented. The calligraphy must have taken a very significant amount of time.

The name Brian Worner appears on the back of some of the sheets as reproduced below and is presumably the original owner. I have attempted to identify who he is/was but sadly with no success. He appears not to have been known to members of the West Africa Study Circle (WASC) or the St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha Philatelic Society (SHATPS).

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored, possibly aged, paper. The signature reads "BRIAN WORNER" in a cursive, slightly slanted script.

Given how carefully written up the collection is, it seemed only right to preserve it in electronic and printed form so that it can still be enjoyed by others in the future.

Steve Garland

February 2026

[1] Steve Garland, The St Helena Perkins-Bacon 1d Issues of 1864, 1868 and 1871 (2026), The South Atlantic Chronical, 193, *in press*.

[2] Edward Hibbert, St. Helena Postal History and Stamps (1979), ISBN 0853971048.

On the 28th. April 1854 the Governor of St. Helena, Sir Thomas Gore Browne requested that the Colonial Office authorise the issue of a sixpenny stamp, the current charge for mail between St. Helena and Great Britain. The sixpenny postal charge was divided as follows :- 1d. to the Colony, 4d. for the sea rate and 1d. for the United Kingdom inland letter rate.

The order for 2,000 stamps was given to Messrs. Perkins Bacon and Company. After some delay the stamps were eventually invoiced on the 1st September 1855, probably reaching the island in October but they were not put on sale until the 1st. January 1856.

The portrait used for the design is believed to have been engraved by William Humphreys

### THE SIXPENCE IMPERFORATE.



The stamps were recess printed on a white wove paper watermarked with a large six pointed star. The paper often has a slightly blue tinge on the face of the stamp caused by absorbing the ink during printing.

By September 1858 the first consignment had run out and St. Helena requested the Crown agents for a further supply of 500 stamps. As the number of stamps ordered was so small Perkins, Bacon and Co. assumed that 500 sheets were required. Total quantity issued 28,500.

## SAINT HELENA.

### THE SIXPENCE STAMPS OF 1861.

Perkins, Bacon and Co. perforated some of the sixpence stamps and an initial consignment of 6,000 stamps with a perforation of 14 to 16 was invoiced on the 3rd. December 1860. They were first issued in the Colony in early 1861.

On the 25th June 1862 the Crown Agents took-over the printing plate from Perkins, Bacon and Co. together with the remaining stock from the 500 sheets printed in September 1858. In December 1863 Perkins, Bacon and Co. perforated 24,000 of these stamps.



Perforation was by a single line of punches, spacing of which varied between 14 and 16 punches in two centimetres. In time the holes in the lower plate became clogged and the punches hardly pierced the paper and produced a very rough perforation instead of a clean cut. Total quantity issued was 30,000.

### CANCELLATIONS.

Many different types of cancellers were used to cancel stamps between 1856 and the early part of the 20th century. There was only one post office on the island and the Postmaster cut his own canceller from corks or wood blocks whenever he needed any. These would wear out easily or become blurred after use and another one would be cut. Most stamps used during 1864 were pen-cancelled.

The new postal rates to be introduced in 1863 necessitated a 4d. stamp for the postal charge for carriage by private ship and a 1d. stamp for newspapers and forced letters. The Governor of St. Helena sent a letter, via the Crown Agents, to Messrs. De La Rue and Co., the Perkins Bacon plate had been transferred, asking what would be the cost of providing the new stamps. De La Rue's reply is interesting in that it shows how the overprinting of different values on the 6d. stamp arose:-

November 25th, 1862.

"Sirs,

In reply to your letter of 22nd. September enquiring the cost of two additional postage plates for St. Helena, viz 1d and 4d, we have the honor to inform you that the cost of each plate would be ninety pounds. The present die would be of no service to us in the production of new plates.

If the expense of new plates is larger than is desirable to incur we would suggest as an alternative that we should print across the present stamps the words "Four pence" and "One Penny" respectively. Type forms to accomplish this would not be very expensive, probably £20 to £25."

Authority to proceed was given on the 6th December 1862 on the assumption "that the stamps of different values will also be of different colours."

De La Rue charged £6.6.0 for "preparing two special overprint forms for printing the duties One Penny and Fourpence on stamps from the Sixpenny plate" and 2/- per 1,000 for printing the stamps and afterwards overprinting the new values in black.

THE IMPERFORATE ISSUES OF 1863.

Recess printed and surcharged by De La Rue on paper watermarked with Crown CC.

Words and bar 16-17mm long.

Total quantity issued:- 16,560



Words and bar 18½-19mm long.



Words 16½-17mm long, bar 15½-16½mm long.

Total quantity issued:-  
10,800



THE SURCHARGED ISSUE OF 1864.

Recess printed and surcharged by De La Rue on paper watermarked with Crown CC.  
Perforation 12½.

1d. Words 17-17½ m.m. long. Thin bar 16½-17 m.m. long. 51,360 issued.



4d. Words 17 m.m. long. Thin bar 16½-17 m.m. long. 30,240 issued.



1/-. Words 18 m.m. long. Thin bar 16½-17 m.m. long. 37,572 issued.



THE SURCHARGED ISSUE OF 1868.

Recess printed and surcharged by De La Rue on paper watermarked with Crown CC. Perforation 12½.



Short thick bar.

48,000 issued.

Short thick bar

27,360 issued



Short thick bar. 26,880 issued.



Words 18<sup>m</sup> long.

50,880 issued.

Words 19<sup>m</sup> long.



Short thick bar. 24,000 issued.

Short thick bar. 12,960 issued.

Reversed wmk.

THE SURCHARGED ISSUE OF 1871.

Recess printed and surcharged by De La Rue on paper watermarked with Crown CC. Perforation 12½



Long bar 17-18m.m. 96,720 issued.

Long thin bar.

22,320 issued.



37,440 issued.



Long thin bar. 11,520 issued.

Long bar.

49,920 issued.

THE SURCHARGED ISSUE OF 1876.

Recess printed and surcharged by De La Rue on paper watermarked Crown CC.  
Perforation 14 x 12 1/2.



66,000 issued.

Watermark has vertical line.

Watermark has horizontal line.



24,000 issued.

12,240 issued.



12,960 issued.

47,520 issued.



46,080 issued.

THE SURCHARGED ISSUE OF 1880.

Recess printed and surcharged by De La Rue on paper watermarked with Crown CC  
Perforation 14.



75,120 issued.

24,000 issued.



24,960 issued.



46,080 issued.



The Crown Agents passed on to De La Rue an enquiry from St. Helena for an estimate for a die for "printing stamps with values of halfpenny, two and a halfpence and five pence. Stamps to be like the existing ones unless it is proposed in England to adopt stamps to the altered age of Her Majesty as is being done with coins."

De La Rue replied :- "It would appear from the terms of the requisition that the Insular authorities are under the impression that in order to produce a new duty of stamps all that would be requisite would be a die, where as a printing plate, involving a much greater outlay than the die itself, would also be necessary. The consumption of stamps in St. Helena is so small that the provision of a costly printing plate would seem to be out of the question, and we suggest therefore, that the stamps be produced on the same system as has been previously employed viz by overprinting from temporary overprint formes.

The cost of each form would be £3.3.0 and the cost of the stamps 1/10 per 1,000."

Clearly the quantities of stamps which the colony ordered were so small that it was uneconomic to adopt surface printing and the overprinting of new values on the sixpenny stamp continued.

THE SURCHARGED ISSUES OF 1884-1894.

Recess printed and surcharged by De La Rue on paper watermarked Crown CA. Perforation 14.



SHORT  
BAR.



Wmk. vertical line.

Watermark shows open T.

Watermark  
reversed.



LONG  
BAR.



Watermark  
shows lines.





Watermark varieties.



Horizontal line  
and open letters.



Horizontal and vertical lines.



Vertical line.



Horizontal line.



Horizontal line.



Reversed



Open letters.



Horizontal line  
and open letters.



Watermark shows open O.



Watermark shows open G and is reversed.

Watermark reversed.



Watermark reversed.



Watermark  
reversed.



Watermark has  
a vertical line.

Watermark  
reversed.



SPECIMEN STAMPS.

1876 Watermark Crown CC Perforation 14 x 12½.  
Locally handstamped "Specimen" in violet.



1884 watermark Crown CA. Perforation 14.  
Printed "specimen" in black.



watermark shows  
a vertical line.



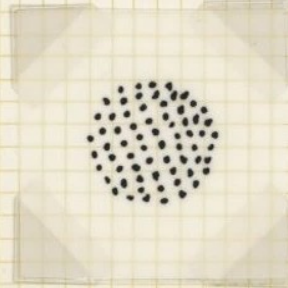
watermark  
reversed.



## CANCELLATIONS.

Many different types of cancellers were used to cancel stamps between 1856 and the early part of the 20th century. There was only one post office on the island and the postmaster cut his own canceller from corks or woodblocks whenever he needed any. These would wear out easily or become blurred after use and another canceller would be cut.

Imperforate 1d.  
of 1863.



This is the earliest of the cancellations, being found only on the imperforate issues. It is known in black and red.

Imperforate 4d.  
of 1863.



The oval date stamp of 1858, known in red, black and blue. Usually applied to the letter, rarely to the postage stamp.

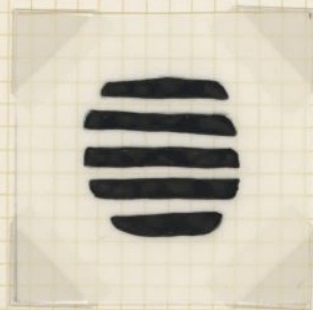
1d. of 1864.



This is a relatively scarce cancellation of 1868. The significance of the figure 2 is uncertain. It may have been used to denote a double rate letter.



Letter H. Known period of use is between 1865 and 1866. The examples shown are all of the surcharged issue of 1864.



5 Bars. Known period of use is during 1870. The example shown is from the surcharged issue of 1868.



Possible variation of the 5 bar canceller shown above. The 2d. stamp is from the surcharged issue of 1868.



Another possible variation of the 5 bar canceller. The 2d. stamp is from the surcharged issue of 1868.



8 segments of a circle forming a crude union jack. Known to be in use in 1868. Examples shown below are this canceller or variations of it.



1868 4d.



1871 2d.  
watermark reversed

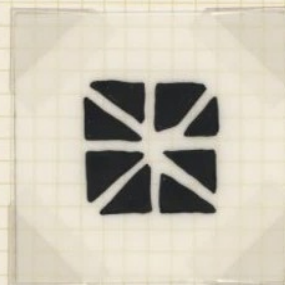


1876 1d.



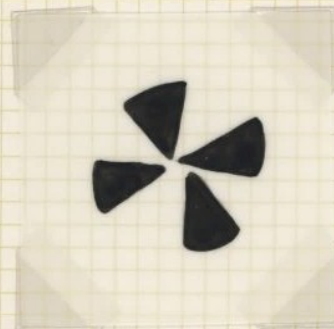
1876 4d.  
watermark inverted  
and reversed.

1876 4d.

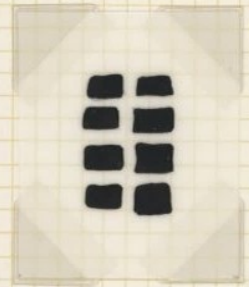
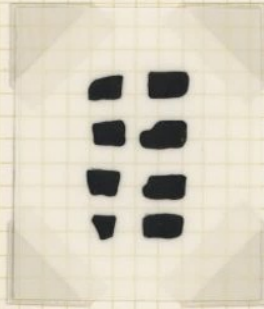


Rectangle of triangles forming a crude union jack. Known to be in use in 1880 and as late as 1890.

1880 1d.



Four segments forming a cross. Known period of use 1882-1886.



Various blocks and wedges. Known period of use  
1868 until 1890.



1871 1/-



1871 1/-



1880 6d.  
watermark has vertical  
line.

1880 1/-



Known period of use 1882-1886.



1876 1/-  
watermark  
has a  
horizontal  
line.



Union Jack canceller. Known to be in use in 1870 and as evidenced below was still being used as late as 1884.



1868 3d.



1876 1d.



1876 1/-



1876 1/-



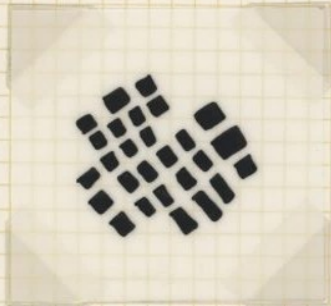
1880 1d.



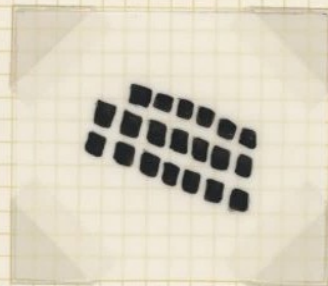
1884 1/2d.

1880 1/-  
watermark shows  
letter N.





Various squares and rectangular shapes. In various forms known to be in use between 1868 and 1895.



1884 3d.



1884 6d.



1876 1/-



1880 1d.

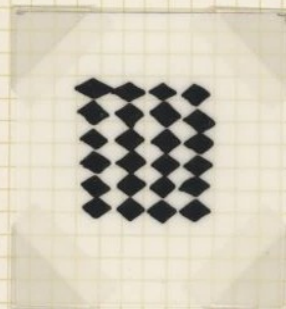


1880 1/-



1871 1/-

1884 6d.  
Late use of stamp.



Diamond grille.  
Known period of use 1896 and 1897.



Short bars. First noted on covers in 1880 and variations of this type known until 1901.

1871 1/-  
Late use of this stamp.



1884 1d.



1884 2d.

1884 1/2d.



Long thick bars.



1884 6d.

1884 1d.



Long thin bars.

Variations of this type in use from 1870 to 1900.



1880 1/-

On the 26th. November 1889 the Government of St. Helena sent a requisition for an additional value, a 1½d. stamp. In the normal way such a stamp would have been produced by printing from the Perkins Bacon plate in a new colour and surcharging the value. De La Rue asked the Crown Agents to call the attention of the St. Helena Government to the greater protection afforded to the revenue by surface printed stamps.

The suggestion was accepted and the original 6d. Perkins Bacon plate that had been in use for over 34 years was destroyed.

# SAINT HELENA.

## THE VICTORIAN KEYPLATE DESIGN OF 1890-1897.

On the 26th. November 1889 the Government of St. Helena requested a 1½d. stamp. In the normal way such a stamp would have been produced by printing from the old Perkins Bacon plate in a new colour and surcharging the value. De La Rue sent a specimen of the recently accepted Seychelles keyplate design and called to the Governments attention the greater protection afforded to their revenue by the use of surface printed stamps.

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Crown CA. Perforation 14.



## THE EDWARDIAN KEYPLATE DESIGN OF 1902.

A small crown has been added to the design, above the King's head, which is shown against a solid background instead of a shaded background.

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Crown CA. Perforation 14.



# SAINT HELENA.

## THE EDWARDIAN VIEWS OF 1903.

The keyplate design had not been popular and was mentioned by the Governor in his 1898 report to the Colonial Office "the sale of stamps to collectors continued to fall off, being only £96-11-1 as against £253-9-10 in the previous year, owing to the pattern of the stamps being a common one and not in favour with collectors."

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Crown CC. Perforation 14.



## THE EDWARDIAN KEYPLATES OF 1908.

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA. Perforation 14.



# SAINT HELENA.

## THE GEORGIAN VIEWS OF 1912.

The new reign produced no original designs for the first issue, in spite of the two years which elapsed between the death of King Edward VII and the appearance of the first stamps showing the portrait of King George V.

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA.  
Perforation 14.



# SAINT HELENA.

## THE GEORGIAN KEYPLATES OF 1912.

Typographed by De La Rue on chalk surfaced paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA. Inscribed "Postage and Revenue". Perforation 14.



## THE GEORGIAN KEYPLATES OF 1913.

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA. Inscribed "Postage-Postage". Perforation 14.



## WAR TAX SURCHARGES OF 1916 AND 1919.

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Multiple Crown CA. Perforation 14.



Thin paper.



Thick paper.

# SAINT HELENA.

## LANDSCAPES IN ONE COLOUR 1922.

Typographed by De La Rue on paper watermarked Multiple Script CA.  
Perforation 14.



## THE COLONY'S BADGE ISSUE OF 1922.

The first stamps to be issued showing the Colony's badge were designed by T. Bruce and printed by De La Rue by typography.

These stamps were first issued in June 1922 with additional values in February 1923. The first two issues were printed on paper with the watermark Multiple Crown CA, some being block letters whilst others were script letters. It is assumed that the printers, De La Rue, intention was to exhaust stocks of paper that they held having the block CA watermark.

Chalk surfaced paper watermarked multiple crown CA in block letters.  
Issue dates shown below stamps. Perforation 14



February 1923  
Yellow paper.



June 1922  
Green paper.



June 1922  
Yellow paper.



June 1922  
Yellow paper.

# SAINT HELENA.

White paper watermarked multiple crown CA in script letters.  
Issue dates shown below stamps.

Perforation 14.



February 1923.



June 1922.



February 1923.



February 1923.



February 1923.



June 1922.



February 1923.



June 1922.



June 1922.

# SAINT HELENA.

December 1926. Re-issue of existing values but now on non-chalk paper and with watermark multiple crown CA in script letters.

Perforation 14.



July 1927. New values on paper watermarked multiple crown CA in script letters.

Perforation 14.



Colour variations.  
script letters.

White paper watermarked multiple crown CA in  
Perforation 14.



Normal with  
grey centre.



Centre - Black  
not catalogued.



February 1937.

# SAINT HELENA.

Plate flaws in the printing of the vignette have produced a quantity of varieties in the 1922-1937 Colony's badge issue.

This issue was printed in sheets of 60 (12 x 5) and the constant flaws shown below did not exist on the first printing but were constant on each subsequent printing.



The major flaw, known as the **BROKEN MAST** occurs as a white flaw across the main mast nears its foot in row 2 column 1

The major flaw known as the **CLEFT ROCK** shows as a gap in the face of the right hand rock and occurs on row 5 of column 1.



# THE BADGE OF THE COLONY.

12th. May 1938. Recess printed by Waterlow and Sons Ltd. on paper watermarked Multiple Script CA. Perforation 12 1/2.

There are marked differences in the engraving of the Colony's Badge compared to the De La Rue's issues. This is particularly noticeable in the treatment of the frigate, the rigging and the sky.



8th. July 1940. New values and colours.



THE COLONY'S BADGE ISSUE OF 1938.

12th. May 1938. Recess printed by Waterlow and Sons Ltd. on paper  
watermarked Multiple Script CA. Perforation  $12\frac{1}{2}$ .



8th. July 1940. New values and colours.



# THE BADGE OF THE COLONY.

In 1938 Tristan da Cunha became a dependency of St. Helena.

The current definitive stamp issue of St. Helena, the Badge of the Colony, were overprinted Tristan da Cunha by Waterlow and Sons Ltd. and put on sale on the 1st. January 1952.

