

NIGER COAST

To the Editor,
THE LONDON PHILATELIST
G.B. 1d. REDS

DEAR SIR,
Since I live rather far from headquarters of 'G.B. Line Engraved' maybe some fellow members could give me some information regarding early dates of use of 1d. reds from black plates. I have

KH plate 1B March 1, 1841
TG plate 1D March 5, 1841
TK plate 8 March 12, 1841
MF plate 10 February 17, 1841

What are the earliest known dates of these plates in red?

Yours truly,
C. T. CLEAVER

Dallas, Texas

The Editor,
THE LONDON PHILATELIST
GUM

DEAR SIR,
I agree with Mr Stokes that far too much importance is attached to gum. Whilst it is desirable to have a mint copy, a fresh unused copy without gum is preferable to a soiled and grubby copy with (so called) original gum. As they say in the North 'By gum it's cheap!'

Yours truly,
THOMAS ALLEN

Frinton-on-Sea

The Editor,
THE LONDON PHILATELIST
EARLY AMERICAN PERFORATING
MACHINES

DEAR SIR,
Shortly after reading Mr Winthrop S. Boggs's scholarly and intriguing pamphlet *Early American Perforating Machines and Perforations, 1857-67*, I remembered that most of the 5c. Connell stamps of New Brunswick in my collection, which were obviously genuine and had Royal Philatelic Certificates, were perforated 11.75. Therefore I carefully re-checked my measurements to see if I could possibly make them all 11.60. This I could not do. I then proceeded to measure the perforations of stamps on New Brunswick and Nova Scotia covers in my collection of the two earliest years of 1860 and 1861, and discovered a number of instances of both 11.60 and 11.75 perforations: in fact there

were more stamps perforated 11.75 than 11.60 and some with compound perforations. Immediately I wrote to Mr Boggs to inform him of my discovery, which indicated that there must have been in operation in 1860-61 an 11.75 as well as an 11.60 machine. Mr Boggs promptly acknowledged my information, and with his usual energy proceeded to search for other early covers on his side of the Atlantic, so that we could, without reasonable doubt, resolve the problem. It will be appreciated that such a small variation between 11.60 and 11.75 requires very careful work, especially as the variable condition of perforating pins can falsify measurements. Partly for this reason and partly because of his exceptional knowledge of British North American stamps, I asked Mr. William Lea to spend a day with me to check my measurements and to discuss this problem of early perforations. In the meantime, Mr Boggs, across the Atlantic, had been checking more of the early printings of the 1860 issues of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia and from these studies is now able to confirm my conclusion that two perforating machines were then being used for these stamps. On one New Brunswick cover, bearing a 5c. and 10c. stamp, dated May 1861, Mr. Boggs found that the 5c. was perforated 11.75 and the 10c., 11.60. I have found similar instances; moreover I have discovered a number of stamps with the compound perforation of 11.60 by 11.75.

In order that Philatelic Societies and their Expert Committees and Collectors should be in possession of these facts at the earliest opportunity, Mr Boggs has asked me to give this matter the widest publicity by sending this letter to several philatelic journals. Further research work is likely to reveal more information about these early perforating machines, and I understand that Mr. Boggs hopes, in due course, to issue a supplement to his publication of 1954, incorporating my discovery and any other points of interest which may have transpired. Mr Lea is at present working on the early perforated stamps of Canada and authorizes me to say that he has already discovered the 11.75 perforation on the Canadian issue of 1859 and that, when he has completed his research, he hopes to write an article on these Canadian perforations.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr Boggs and Mr Lea for their co-operation and enthusiasm, for it is only in this manner that the results of joint philatelic research can be made available to the fast-growing population of philatelic students.

Yours truly,
NICHOLAS ARGENTI

London, W.1

NIGER COAST

Paper given before the Royal Philatelic Society, London, on January 12, 1956
By R. C. AGABEG

TO cover the stamps, cancellations and postal history of both the Niger territories and the Oil Rivers and Niger Coast Protectorate in full is far beyond the scope of this paper. I have therefore chosen the provisional issues of 1893-94 as the main item for discussion, since it is a controversial subject which could well be accorded further thought and, in addition, no comprehensive attempt to classify and explain the issues has recently been

NIGER COAST

published. The display itself covers all issues of both territories and brief reference is first made to the regular issues, before proceeding with the provisionals.

The philately of the Niger territories is virtually that of the Royal Niger Company, since little or no mail emanated from the area, other than from the Company or its employees. The issues of 1881-90 of Great Britain were used throughout, and the stamps or covers cancelled with rubber handstamps provided by the Company. Occasionally, Administrative or Customs handstamps were used, but these are comparatively rare.

Such handstamps (in some cases several types) are known for Akassa, Burutu, Lokoja and Abutshi and covers are recorded, both with and without adhesives. The handstamps were generally impressed in violet but are also known in blue, black and violet/black. All values up to and including the 2s. 6d. were available for use, the rarest being the 4d., 4½d. and 9d. values, whilst the 2d., 3d. and 1s. are by no means easy to find. I do not include the 1½d. value, since although this appears in some catalogues, I am not convinced that it was ever officially made available for postal purposes.

The first stamps of the Protectorate (issued in July 1892) comprised six values of the same Great Britain issue (½d., 1d., 2d., 2½d., 5d. and 1s.) overprinted 'OIL RIVERS BRITISH PROTECTORATE' by De La Rue and Co. Ltd. The issue is remarkably free from errors, only one major variety, the 1d. lilac, with overprint transposed, being recorded. It is reported that only eight examples of this error have survived, but it can be shown that at least twenty-four must have been made since the plate (12 × 10) overprinted the whole sheet at one operation and copies of this error have been identified as arising in both the ninth and tenth rows. It is more probable that a whole sheet actually existed, all but a few copies being destroyed. A marginal copy from the bottom row shows 'OIL RIVERS' on the margin, thus proving that the error was due to misplacement of the overprinting plate in a downward direction. Logically, this would create one row in which 'BRITISH PROTECTORATE' was misplaced downwards and 'OIL RIVERS' was omitted, though, so far as I know, no record of such items exists.

This issue was superseded in November 1893 by a new set of the same six values engraved by G. Drummond, Esq., and printed by Waterlow and Sons Ltd., the design being in principle, the head of Queen Victoria in an oval, surrounded by intricate scroll work and the words 'NIGER COAST PROTECTORATE' and the value added. Apart from bisects, which are described later, the issue is of interest for its proofs, amongst which I have recorded the following:—

(1) Large die proof in issued colour of the 5d. and 1s., but before alteration of the name from 'OIL RIVERS' to 'NIGER COAST'.

(2) Similar but smaller die proofs of all values in issued colours, also the following in unissued colours:—

½d. green, 1d. vermilion, 2d. carmine-lake, 2½d. olive-yellow, 5d. grey-lilac and 1s. lake.

(3) Imperforate die proofs of all but the 1s. in more or less the issued colours, but before 'OIL RIVERS' was obscured from the design and overprinted 'NIGER COAST' in black, sans serif capitals at the top. So far as I know, only one set of these exists.

(4) Imperforate plate proofs of the design, as issued for all values in issued colours, also the following:—

½d. Violet, 1d. red-brown, 2d. greyish blue, 2½d. orange-yellow, 5d. lake, 1s. green.

(5) Perforated proofs of the ½d. in greyish blue and 1s. in green have also been reported, but I have never seen any examples.

The 2d. is known imperforate vertically between pairs, six pairs being recorded, and many

NIGER COAST

perforation varieties and minor re-entries and re-touches have been confirmed. A feature of the perforation varieties is the existence of examples where one or more sides are compound—e.g. the top half of the left-hand vertical side gauges 14, and the bottom 12½.

This issue was superseded in May 1894 by a new set, also printed by Waterlow and Sons on unwatermarked paper, the same six values being represented, but in new designs and colours. Imperforate proofs in issued and unissued colours are recorded. It is believed that these were printed direct from the dies and not the plate. Again perforation varieties abound, but otherwise the issue is remarkably free from errors. A minor re-entry is recorded on the ½d. value and a retouched frame on the 1s. These stamps were re-issued in 1897, but on Crown CA watermarked paper and with three new values added, the 6d., 2s. 6d. and 10s. The majority were perforated 15, though again a variety of compound perforations are recorded. All values were withdrawn at the end of 1899 when the territory was incorporated in Southern Nigeria, but were re-issued perforated 14, pending the arrival of the new definitive issue in March 1901. Further stocks were again placed on sale in 1902-03 during a temporary shortage of Southern Nigerian stamps and used specimens cancelled from January 1, 1900, onwards, therefore, belong to Southern Nigeria and not the Niger Coast. Residual stocks must have been available for some years, since specimens are known cancelled as late as 1906.

A number of imperforate plate proofs are recorded in various colours, but no die proofs so far as I know. The 6d., 2s. 6d. and 10s. exist overprinted specimen and these, together with the 1s. are known overprinted CONSULAR in red for official use.

The cancellations of this period form an interesting study, details of which cannot be recorded here. A notable feature, however, is the wide range of colours used and the existence of numerous ship marks, paquebots and arrival marks.

THE PROVISIONALS 1893-94

These provisionals, which form the main subject of this paper can, for the sake of convenience, be divided into two sections:—

- (1) Stamps bisected for use at half rate, but not surcharged.
- (2) Stamps either whole or bisected and surcharged with a new value.

Bisects of the 1892, 1893 and 1894 definitive issues are recorded for both 1d. and 2d. values and were authorized for use at Bonny River from August 7 to September 11, 1894. Of these six values, the bisect of the 1894 2d. lake is undoubtedly the rarest, in fact it is only within the last few weeks that I have recorded the first examples. It is probable that many bisects correctly dated were prepared specially for collectors, and ideally only covers or large pieces showing evidence of having passed through the post should be collected.

The second and largest group of provisionals contains many items of extreme rarity and, as a result, much of my work has had to be conducted with the aid of photographs. The information given on these issues results partly from a survey of previously published articles and books of reference and partly from a study of actual examples in my possession, supplemented by photographs from numerous famous collections.

For the sake of convenience, I will deal with these provisionals in the order in which they appear in Messrs Stanley Gibbons' Catalogue, the first item, therefore, being the 1d. lilac, bisected diagonally and each half surcharged ½d. This was issued on September 3, 1893, and consisted of four sheets (960 half stamps), the first row of twenty-four half stamps being surcharged in violet and the balance of the issue in vermilion, presumably as the violet surcharge was considered too indistinct for general use.

NIGER COAST

Since this surcharge was applied locally, errors and varieties are to be expected and the following have been recorded:—

(a) *Violet Surcharge*.—Double surcharge—one pair; se-tenant with vermilion—five pairs; normal—one pair.

(b) *Vermilion Surcharge*.—Inverted surcharge—one pair; reversed surcharge (dividing line running from top left to bottom right)—one pair; fraction bar and figure 2 omitted—one single; whole fraction omitted—one single; straight top to 1 in fraction (second vertical row from left)—presumably 39 singles; Small thick 1 in fraction (not known if constant)—4 singles.

NOTE.—The surcharge was applied one row at a time and it is probable that some of the type was reset on more than one occasion. It is probable that one example of the 'stright top to 1' variety existed in violet but, so far, I have not seen it.

THE HALFPENNY PROVISIONALS

In December 1893, a further shortage of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamps arose, resulting in the surcharging at Old Calabar of sheets of the 2d. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. values of 1892, with the words 'ONE HALFPENNY' with a bar cancelling the original value. This is perhaps the most controversial of all the Niger Coast provisionals and, before attempting to draw any conclusions, it is appropriate to summarize all established or accepted facts:—

(1) The issue comprised a total of 2,400 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamps surcharged either on the 2d. or $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. value of the 1892 issue.

(2) Of the whole issue, three or four sheets (360–480 stamps) were surcharged on the 2d. value, leaving 16–17 sheets (1,920–2,040) on the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.

(3) A multiplicity of surcharge types and coloured inks were used and, in all, we now recognize eight different types which are fully described in Appendix A. Seven different coloured inks were used including vermilion, carmine, blue, green, violet, black and blue-black.

(4) The work was done by natives, each surcharge being individually handstamped and, in some sheets, different surcharge types and colours were used indiscriminately as demonstrated by the existence of se-tenant pieces.

(5) The first two sheets of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. value were surcharged haphazardly and were said to have served as trials to determine the most suitable types and colours for general use. It seems doubtful whether a whole sheet or only half a sheet of the 2d. was similarly treated.

(6) Occasional surcharges are found, inverted, diagonal or even vertical and it has been suggested that these only occurred in the very early printings (i.e. the trial sheets), since most exist in combination pieces subsequent instructions being given to the natives to place only one upright surcharge on each stamp. (Double surcharges are also recorded, but there is no evidence to suggest that they existed only in the trial sheets.)

(7) No accurate records of the numbers of each type printed have survived, but the *R.P.S. Africa* (Part 3) records a list of approximate numbers of each type and colour. This list is, however, of restricted value only, since it assumes the existence of only four different surcharge types, whereas eight are now recognized. Its main value lies in the figures quoted for the rare types which, for the moment, may be assumed to be reasonably accurate.

This summary suggests an obvious line of approach for further study, namely an examination of existing combination pieces and rare types so as to reconstruct as far as possible

the constitution of the supposed trial sheets. Applying this to the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. surcharges, I have recorded 89 pieces totalling 192 stamps or over one and a half sheets. If to this we add the balance of the rare types (represented by the difference between the numbers I have recorded and those published in *R.P.S. Africa*), a total of 236 stamps are accounted for out of the 240 in the two trial sheets. A similar study has been made of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on 2d. surcharges, and the results in each case recorded in Appendix B and C respectively.

This study can be taken a stage further and a restricted amount of positioning achieved by examination of the overprint. The plate for overprinting was made up by repeating six distinct types (forming a horizontal row) twenty times; thus, all stamps in any vertical column will be identical and columns one and seven, two and eight, three and nine and so on will also be similar; thus any single item can quickly be allocated definitely to one of two vertical columns.

Wear and minor damage to the overprinting plate during use resulted in a number of constant, but generally minute, differences arising, particularly during the later stages of printing and, in all thirty-one positions on the sheet can be identified. The differences are so small, however, that they can only be distinguished by examination of the stamps themselves, photographs being too indistinct and consequently, my work on this aspect has been limited to items in my own collection or which have recently been made available for examination.

Of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. surcharges, I have positioned twenty-six stamps beyond reasonable doubt and have provisionally identified nineteen others. This total is considered too small to permit any attempt at accurate reconstruction, though as time goes by, sufficient items may be identified to justify a start being made. The position with the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on 2d. surcharges is much less hopeful, only eight stamps having been identified, and it will be a very long time before any sort of picture can emerge.

Apart from this record of numbers which is of obvious interest, further conclusions can be drawn, the more important of which are summarized below:—

(1) The trial sheets have been shown to include all known surcharge types, except one (type 1D for the 2d. and type 1C for the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.), but several colours have not yet been recorded and it is, therefore, probable that the following only occurred in subsequent regular printings:—

$\frac{1}{2}$ d. on 2d.—Type 1D in violet and type 3 in blue.

$\frac{1}{2}$ d. on $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.—Type 1B and 1C in vermillion and type 4 in green.

(2) It is probable that only half a sheet (60 stamps) was printed as trials for the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on 2d.

(3) Until recently, no used copy of a combination piece or rare type had been recorded, but, within the last few days, a used example of type 1B (S.G. type 4) surcharge in violet on the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. has come to my notice. This type was recognized by Gibbons some years ago, but has since been withdrawn. It is not recorded in *R.P.S. Africa* and, so far as I know, has not been passed by any expert committee and I have consequently not included it in my lists, pending further information on its status. In view of the lack of used examples, I find it difficult to agree with the statement in *R.P.S. Africa* to the effect that the trial sheets were actually sold 'over the counter' for normal postal purposes.

(4) My examination of so much material, has enabled me to form a fair idea of the relative scarcity of the normal types and I have, therefore, attempted to estimate the approximate numbers made during the subsequent regular printings. When added to the items recorded as originating in the trial sheets, an overall picture emerges which may serve as a rough guide to the composition of the issue as a whole. Appendix D summarizes this in

tabular form, but I must emphasize that this is only an estimate and must, therefore, be accepted as being of a tentative nature.

(5) Of the 192 stamps recorded, 41 are the so-called rare types, thus leaving 44 unrecorded if the figures given in *R.P.S. Africa* are accepted as being correct. Addition of this balance to the figure of 192 gives a total of 236, or only four short of the 240 required to complete two sheets. Further, if other recorded, though not photographed combination pieces are also included, the total exceeds 240 and this could only be explained if more than two trial sheets existed or if the numbers given in *R.P.S. Africa* for the rare types were too high.

Since, in general, less than half of the rare types have been recorded, whereas a much larger number of combination pieces have been located, it seems logical to explain the facts by suggesting that the quoted figures are in fact too large, rather than admit the existence of more than two trial sheets. This applies mainly to the black and blue-black type 1B (S.G. type 4) surcharges and to the violet type 3 surcharge (S.G. type 9) where I suggest that the actual numbers printed are unlikely to exceed 60-70 per cent of those recorded by *R.P.S. Africa*.

THE HIGH VALUE PROVISIONALS

At the same time, further provisionals, including the 1s., 5s., 10s., and 20s. were made by surcharging the 2d., 5d. or 1s. values of the 1892 issue. Whilst these provisionals provide many classic rarities, their 'philatelic' interest is, to my mind, confined to the 1s. value, where it has been possible to partly reconstruct the original printings.

Three colours, black, violet and vermilion were used for the 1s. and two distinct settings of the surcharge can be recognized as follows:—

- (1) Where the downstrokes of the 'n' in one are vertically above the 'll' of 'shilling'.
- (2) Where the downstrokes of the 'n' are vertically above the 'li' of 'shilling'.

A further minor variety which has been noted on the black surcharge only is almost half way between (1) and (2), but since only three examples have so far come to light (one of which is in a block with 3 type (1) with Royal Certificate), I do not yet feel justified in classifying it as a third setting. For the sake of convenience, however, it is referred to in the text as setting IA.

As with the halfpenny provisionals, a trial sheet of 120 stamps containing all three colours and surcharge varieties is supposed to have existed and all the evidence so far obtained tends to support this. In addition, two (some say three) sheets were printed in violet or vermilion and, judging by the comparative ease with which copies of the violet surcharge can be obtained as opposed to the vermilion which is several times rarer, I suggest that two sheets in violet and one in vermilion were printed making with the trial four sheets (480 stamps) in all.

Once again, examination of combination pieces reveals useful information, the most important point being that, of thirty combination pieces and black surcharges (totalling sixty stamps) examined, all are setting I (or IA), whereas examination of a large number of single specimens in violet and vermilion has revealed only one example of setting I. I therefore conclude that setting I (and IA) was used for the trial sheets only and setting II for the printing of the subsequent normal sheets. I have recorded only one used example of setting I, but no used combination piece or black surcharge and, therefore, conclude that the trial sheet was not actually issued for postal use.

(To be continued)

NIGER COAST

Paper given before the Royal Philatelic Society, London, on January 12, 1956

By R. C. AGABEG

(Continued from No. 762, page 100)

Insufficient material has yet been examined to reconstruct the trial sheet in any detail, but, for what it is worth, an analysis of the results is given in Appendix E. The only point of real importance arising from this, and which has now been proved beyond all doubt, is that at least thirteen examples of the rare black surcharge exist, not eight as previously reported by several authorities including *R.P.S. Africa*. This figure is confirmed by photographs, but further evidence exists which suggests that the total should be nearer sixteen to twenty. This surcharge therefore is much less rare than is indicated by previously published articles.

The higher values do not, in my opinion, call for much comment, except to query their necessity at this early date. Twenty-eight copies of the 5s., thirty-two of the 10s. and eight or nine of the 20s. are said to have been printed. I possess photographs of over half of these and can record only three 5s. and one 10s. in used condition. All are dated (1895) two years after their date of issue, thus providing evidence for doubting their necessity at the time of issue. The 5s. was surcharged in violet, the 10s. in vermilion and the 20s. in violet (5), vermilion (2) and black (1) or (2). The following errors have been recorded:—

5s. on 2d.—Inverted, diagonal and vertical (both up and down) surcharges.

10s. on 5d.—Inverted and diagonal surcharges.

20s. on 1s.—None (one violet surcharge inverted has been reported but I cannot confirm this).

THE OPOBO PROVISIONALS

During the period May to October 1894, shortages of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 1d. stamps again arose and further provisionals were prepared.

The first of these, issued in May, consisted of a sheet of sixty of the 1d. dark blue, followed in August by a sheet of 1d. pale blue, which were bisected vertically and surcharged half in red, the surcharge measuring 9 mm. in height and with fraction bar $5\frac{1}{2}$ mm. wide. Later, owing to the 1d. blue being exhausted, two sheets of 1d. vermilion were similarly surcharged, though this time, violet, blue or black ink was used. Some of these were bisected diagonally instead of vertically, otherwise the surcharge is identical, apart from colour. One copy has been noted which suggests the existence of two different surcharges, but I do not feel that any definite conclusion can be drawn until further copies have been recorded.

The numbers printed in violet, blue and black are not known but it is generally accepted that black is by far the rarest, followed by violet and lastly blue. The writer has personally submitted six so-called blacks to the expert committee, but in all cases, they were subsequently certified as the blue surcharge. In fact, I have only recorded one certified copy of the black surcharge. Many examples show traces of two colours, the less prominent one presumably resulting from a previous impression which had not fully dried on the surcharge.

I know of no varieties on the vermilion stamps, but have recorded one copy with inverted surcharge in each of the dull and pale blue shades and also one copy with the one and the left hand half of the fraction bar missing. Stanley Gibbons records the blue surcharge on half of the 1d. vermilion as existing double, but I have never seen this. The only diagonal bisect I have recorded is the blue surcharge on 1d. vermilion.

NIGER COAST

Perhaps as a result of the 1d. value being used for surcharging, a shortage of this value arose, also in Opobo, in June 1894, and provisionals were prepared by vertically bisecting the 2d. green and carmine of 1892 and surcharging each half with a figure 1 in vermillion. The surcharge was made locally from wooden blocks and applied by handstamping. A half sheet (sixty whole stamps) were surcharged in June, followed by a whole sheet in October, making 360 bisects in all.

The normal surcharge measures 12 mm. in height, but smaller figures measuring $4\frac{3}{4}$ and $3\frac{3}{4}$ mm. are also known. I have recorded three of the former and one of the latter included in a vertical pair with the $4\frac{3}{4}$ mm. surcharge. This pair is dated August 1894 and must, therefore, have come from the first printing. A second copy of the $3\frac{3}{4}$ mm. surcharge has been reported, but I have been unable to confirm its existence.

The large surcharge exists both double and inverted, the latter being exceedingly rare. only three examples being so far recorded. Though issued at Opobo, copies are also known cancelled at Old Calabar, presumably as a result of travellers purchasing stamps at Opobo and not using them until arriving at Old Calabar.

Since this is the first provisional for which I have traced official records, it may be of interest to quote here from a letter from Mr A. G. Griffith, acting Vice-Consul at Old Calabar, which was published in the LONDON PHILATELIST of February 1904, and which comments on the small surcharges:—

‘It (the $4\frac{3}{4}$ mm. surcharge) is evidently a variety of the provisionals issued by acting Vice-Consul Tanner in 1894. There was no printing press available at Opobo and the probability is that this is a sort of essay. Tanner probably cut the die himself from a piece of wood and, after surcharging one or more stamps with the small figure, may have thought that a large figure would be better and, therefore surcharged the remainder with the more generally known type. Each individual stamp had to be accounted for in the monthly account of stamps sold and remaining in hand (as rendered to the G.P.O. at Old Calabar), and any trials or essays would, therefore, have to be used as part of the issue, though no distinction would be made between different types.’

THE OLD CALABAR PROVISIONALS

The final provisional was yet another halfpenny value prepared locally by surcharging the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. value of 1894 with the words ‘ONE HALFPENNY’ in black with six bars cancelling the original value. A total of 960 were prepared, the surcharge being applied by a forme of eight members to one horizontal row at a time. Each member was set differently and may be distinguished by small differences in the shape, length and continuity of the cancelling bars. These differences are set out in tabular form in Appendix F.

At some stage in the surcharging, damage occurred to the ‘N’ of ONE in setting VIII, resulting in a variety which reads ‘OIE’ for ‘ONE’. It is not known when this occurred, though the existence of examples of setting VIII which do not show this variety, confirms that it occurred during the surcharging and not at the beginning. Such examples are difficult to find and are certainly scarcer than the variety itself, thus suggesting that the damage occurred at a relatively early stage of the surcharging.

A number of double surcharges are also known; unconfirmed reports suggest that three horizontal rows (24 stamps) received a double impression and at least one example of the double surcharge showing the ‘OIE’ variety has been recorded, also one in position VIII, which does not show the ‘OIE’ variety and must, therefore, be from an early printing.

NIGER COAST

This concludes my paper on these interesting stamps and it only remains for me to emphasize the tentative nature of much of the data given and the conclusions drawn therefrom. It is often a fact that a controversial subject can only be resolved by infinite patience and research and such is human nature that fresh work is often stimulated by the expression of opinions open to constructive criticism. It is frequently so in other fields of endeavour and, provided our hobby is no exception, a reasonably accurate picture of the history of the Niger Coast Provisionals may eventually emerge.

APPENDIX A

1893 HALFPENNY ON TWOPENCE AND TWOPENCE HALFPENNY THE EIGHT SURCHARGE TYPES

Type 1.—Surcharged HALFPENNY in two lines in tall upright sans-serif capitals with cancelling bar below through original value.

Sub-types:—

- 1A. 'HALF' 9½ mm. long, 'PENNY' 12½ mm. long, vertical spacing 1½ mm. Bar 14½ mm. ending below period after 'penny.' The 'F' of 'HALF' nearly always defective.
- 1B. 'HALF' 8½ mm. long, 'PENNY' 12½ mm. long, vertical spacing 4 mm. Bar 16 mm. long extends beyond period.
- 1C. 'HALF' 9½ mm. long, 'PENNY' 12½ mm. long, vertical spacing 4 mm. Bar 13½ mm. long, square period between 'N' and 'Y' of 'penny'. Letters 'P' and 'Y' raised.
- 1D. As Sub-type 1C, but no period and raising of 'N' and 'Y' not so pronounced.

Type 2.—Surcharged in italic type with cancelling bar as before.

Sub-Types:—

- 2A. 'HALF' 10½ mm. long, 'PENNY' 13½ mm. long, vertical spacing 5½ mm. Bar 14 mm. long. Letters a, l, and e have small upward terminal hooks and the 'nny' of 'penny' have curved serifs.
- 2B. As for Sub-type 2A, but vertical spacing only 4 mm. and letters and bar much bolder and thicker. Straight serifs to letters 'nny'.

Type 3.—Surcharged in fancy capitals 'HALF' 9 mm. long, 'PENNY' 11½ mm. long, vertical spacing 2½ mm. and bar 16½ mm. long. No Sub-types.

Type 4.—Surcharged in small serif capitals. 'HALF' 9 mm. long, 'PENNY' 11½ mm. long, vertical spacing 1½ mm. and bar 16½ mm. long. No Sub-types.

APPENDIX B

PARTIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF TRIAL SHEETS (½D. ON 2½D.)

Type	S.G. No.	Colour	Variety	Number	Rare Types recorded in R.P.S. Africa
1A	10	*Vermilion	Normal	5	(-)
	10a	*Carmine	Normal	1	(-)
1B	12	Vermilion	Normal	1	
	13	Carmine	Normal	6	
	14	Blue	Normal	8	
	11	Green	Normal	5	
	16	*Blue-black	Normal	7	(23)
	15	*Black	Normal	8	(19)
	15b	*Black	Diagonal inverted	2	
1C	17	Vermilion	Normal	Nil	

NIGER COAST

Type	S.G. No.	Colour	Variety	Number	Rare Types recorded in R.P.S. Africa
1D	19	Vermilion	Normal	14	28
	19a	Vermilion	Inverted	2	
	19b	Vermilion	Diagonal	6	
	19b	Vermilion	Diagonal inverted	5	
		Vermilion	Vertical	1	
2A	22	*Blue	Normal	1	(4)
	24	*Violet	Normal	5	(9)
	23	*Carmine	Normal	2	(2)
	21	Vermilion	Normal	20	28
	21c	Vermilion	Inverted	2	
	21d	Vermilion	Diagonal	3	
	21b	Vermilion	Vertical	3	
2B	25	Vermilion	Normal	19	(-)
	26	*Blue	Normal	1	
	27	Green	Normal	17	
3	32	Blue	Normal	7	(22)
	33	Green	Normal	19	
	31	Vermilion	Normal	7	
	34	*Violet	Normal	12	
4	35	Green	Normal	Nil	(6)
	36	*Vermilion	Normal	3	
TOTAL				192	

* Denotes so called 'rare type'.

APPENDIX C

PARTIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF TRIAL SHEET (2D. VALUES)

S.G. No.	Type	Colour	Variety	Number	
9	1A	Violet	Normal	4	13
9a	1A	Violet	Inverted	1	
9b	1A	Violet	Diagonal	4	
9c	1A	Violet	Vertical	4	
18	1D	Violet	Normal	Nil	—
20	2A	Violet	Normal	10	16
20b	2A	Violet	Vertical	3	
20c	2A	Violet	Diagonal	2	
	2A	Violet	Diagonal inverted	1	
29	3	Violet	Normal	8	8
30	3	Blue	Normal	Nil	—
TOTAL				37	
Unrecorded				23	
				60	= ½ sheet

(To be concluded)

NIGER COAST

Low's Sydney Directory of 1847 gives A. C. Maxwell, Chief Inspector of Distilleries, and Ford's Directory of 1851 has A. C. Maxwell, Registrar, Court of Requests, p.r. (private residence) McLeay St, Darlinghurst. According to Waugh & Cox' Directory of 1855, Maxwell's christian names were 'Alexander Charles'—so it seems pretty assured that this is our Maxwell.

Did Maxwell write the letter or did the writer give Alexander Maxwell as his forwarding address? We are in the realm of surmise and I record the evidence gathered and the deductions made in the hopes that a better detective than I can unravel the skein.

NIGER COAST

Paper given before the Royal Philatelic Society, London, on January 12, 1956

By R. C. AGABEG

(Continued from No. 763, page 119)

APPENDIX D

1893 HALFPENNY PROVISIONALS—SUMMARY OF PRINTING

S.G. No.			Type	Colour	Trial Sheets		Subsequent Printings		TOTALS	
	$\frac{1}{2}$ d.	$\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}$ d.			$\frac{1}{2}$ d.	$\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}$ d.	$\frac{1}{2}$ d.	$\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}$ d.	$\frac{1}{2}$ d.	$\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}$ d.
9	—	—	1A	Violet	13	—	60	—	73	—
—	—	10	1A	Vermilion	—	5	—	—	—	5
—	—	10a	1A	Carmine	—	1	—	—	—	1
—	—	12	1B	Vermilion	—	1	—	60	—	61
—	—	13	1B	Carmine	—	6	—	120	—	126
—	—	14	1B	Blue	—	8	—	120	—	128
—	—	11	1B	Green	—	5	—	120	—	125
—	—	16	1B	Blue/Black	—	23	—	—	—	23*
—	—	15	1B	Black	—	19	—	—	—	19*
—	—	17	1C	Vermilion	—	—	—	60	—	60
—	—	19	1D	Vermilion	—	28	—	240	—	268
18	—	19	1D	Violet	—	—	60	—	60	—
—	—	22	2A	Blue	—	3	—	—	—	3
20	—	24	2A	Violet	16	9	120	—	136	9*
—	—	21	2A	Vermilion	—	28	—	360	—	388
—	—	23	2A	Carmine	—	2	—	—	—	2
—	—	25	2B	Vermilion	—	19	—	60	—	79
—	—	26	2B	Blue	—	1	—	—	—	1
—	—	27	2B	Green	—	17	—	120	—	137
—	—	33	3	Green	—	19	—	120	—	139
30	—	32	3	Blue	—	7	60	120	60	127
29	—	34	3	Violet	8	22	120	—	128	22*
—	—	31	3	Vermilion	—	7	—	60	—	67
—	—	35	4	Green	—	—	—	120	—	120
—	—	36	4	Vermilion	—	6	—	—	—	6
				Unrecorded	23	4	—	—	23	4
Totals					60	240	420	1680	480	1920
					($\frac{1}{2}$ sheet)	(2 sheets)	(3 $\frac{1}{2}$ sheets)	(14 sheets)	(4 sheets)	(16 sheets)

* These figures are probably too high by 30-40 per cent.

NIGER COAST

APPENDIX E

PARTIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF TRIAL SHEET (1s. ON 2D.)

<i>S.G. No.</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Variety</i>	<i>Number</i>
39	Black	Normal	11
39b	Black	Vertical (up)	2
39b	Black	Vertical (down)	2
37	Violet	Normal	24
37b	Violet	Vertical (up)	3
37b	Violet	Vertical (down)	4
37c	Violet	Diagonal	2
37d	Violet	Diagonal inverted	3
37a	Violet	Inverted	1
38	Vermilion	Normal	5
38b	Vermilion	Diagonal (up)	1
38b	Vermilion	Diagonal (down)	1
38c	Vermilion	Vertical	1
			<hr/>
			60
			<hr/>

APPENDIX F

<i>Setting No.</i>	<i>Appearance of Upper Cancelling Bars</i>	<i>Appearance of Lower Cancelling Bars</i>
1.	Left-hand bars notched at top	Both 21 mm., no overlapping or breaks
2.	T.L. thin, B.L. medium T.R. medium, B.R. thin	Both 21 mm., no breaks, but top overlaps bottom at left
3.	T.L. thin, B.L. thick T.R. thin, B.R. medium	Both 21 mm., no overlapping, but top bar broken 12½ mm. from left
4.	T.L. thin, B.L. medium T.R. thin, B.R. thick	Top bar 20½ mm. broken 12½ mm. from left, bottom bar 21 mm. unbroken, but overlapping top at left
5.	T.L. thin, B.L. thick T.R. thin, B.R. medium	Both 21 mm., no overlapping but bottom bar broken 8 mm. from left.
6.	T.L. thin, B.L. medium T.R. thin, B.R. medium	Top bar 21 mm. broken 12½ mm. from left and overlapping bottom at right. Bottom bar no breaks but only 20½ mm.
7.	T.L. thin, B.L. medium T.R. medium, B.R. medium (Top right prints weakly)	Top bar 20½ mm. broken 12 mm. from left and overlapping bottom bar at left. Bottom bar broken 7½ mm. from left
8.	T.L. thick, B.L. medium T.R. thin, B.R. medium (Top left bar trapezian shaped, right hand side sloping upwards from right to left)	Top bar 20½ mm. broken 12½ mm. from left, bottom bar 21 mm. unbroken but overlapping top bar at right

T.L. = Top Left; T.R. = Top Right; B.L. = Bottom Left; B.R. = Bottom Right.

THE END