

Mauritius 1847 'Post Office' Issue – Spectacular Exhibition in Berlin



From the 2nd to 25th September 2011 the exhibition *The Blue Mauritius – The meeting of the Queens in Berlin* was held at the Museum for Communications Berlin (pictured above). An international colloquium about the stamps took place on the opening day. The concept of the exhibition was to gather together as many examples of Post Office Mauritius stamps as possible.

The main organiser of the exhibition and colloquium was Dr Andreas Hahn, FRPSL Keeper of the Philatelic Archive of the Museum Foundation Post and Telecommunication, in Germany who was also the managing editor of the associated 246 page book.



Dr Andreas Hahn.
Photo: Peter Jennings

Dr Hahn chaired the international colloquium with David Beech, FRPSL Head of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library and both presented papers. David's paper *The Printing Plate of the Mauritius 1847 'Post Office' Issue* charts the history of the plate and the mystery surrounding its current whereabouts. It is thought that the plate was purchased by Maurice Burrus around 1930, and was last seen in public when it was

exhibited in May 1935. When Burrus died in 1959 his philatelic collections were sold to the Amhelca Trust, who subsequently dispersed of it through some seventy-five spectacular auctions, but the plate never reappeared. One can only hope that this great philatelic treasure still exists, and is not lost to philately forever.

The British Library played a significant role – lending from the Tapling collection a 1d used on Ball cover, a 2d unused, Barnard's original estimate for engraving the plate; together with proofs taken from the plate in 1912, in black, orange, and blue from the Mosely Collection. In addition, also shown was another example of the 1d on ball cover which is currently on loan to the British Library from Vikram Chand, FRPSL.



Emmanuel Richon, Curator of the 'Blue Penny' Museum in Mauritius, presenting his paper.
Photo: Peter Jennings

In total, eighteen of the twenty-seven existing examples of the Mauritius Post Office stamps were shown at the exhibition. These were: Moens classification numbers III, IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIV, XV, XVII, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXVII; Williams classification numbers: 1d value 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, Limbo 1; 2d value 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24.

The exhibition attracted a great deal of media interest in Germany, where the Post Office Mauritius stamps (particularly the 2d), hold a special place in the public's imagination.

We congratulate Dr Andreas Hahn and Dr Lieselotte Kugler, the Director, Veit Didczuneit Head of the Collections at the Museum and their colleagues, together with the sponsors, for making possible such an important and unprecedented exhibition.

SPONSORED BY



VACCARI s.r.l.



Philately and Books

Via M. Buonarroti, 46 - 41058 Vignola (Modena) Italy
Tel. +39 059 771 251 - 059 764 106 - Fax +39 - 059 760 157
email: info@vaccari.it - internet: www.vaccari.it

PHILATELY AND POSTAL HISTORY • WORLD CLASSIC POSTAGE STAMPS
AND COVERS • OLD ITALIAN STATES • RARITIES • PHILATELIC LITERATURE

Research in the Philatelic Collections – Palestine

Part of the work of the Curators at the library is to be able to recognise all of the potential aspects of the subject that is being studied by a researcher, to locate and make all of the relevant material available, and in certain circumstances to help the researcher understand or interpret the philatelic items seen. Because of the diverse and world wide scope of the collections held, many enquiries are received remotely, either by email, letter, or telephone enquiry, in such circumstances curators assist as far as is practical, without actually undertaking the research.

In the last edition of the Newsletter an explanation was outlined as to why the collections held are maintained in the original format and context in which they were created. In this edition, one country (Palestine), has been selected to demonstrate how material relevant to a research project may be sourced from the different collections or archives held. For the purposes of this article, philatelic literature, and the vast resources of information from other areas of the library have not been included, as they can be accessed in the normal fashion in the reading rooms of the library, without directly referring to this department.

The Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) invaded Palestine (which had previously been part of the Ottoman Empire) in November 1917, eventually capturing Gaza, Jaffa and Jerusalem. The stamps that were issued during the British Military Occupation were not only available for use in Palestine, but also at EEF post offices in Cilicia, Lebanon, and Syria (including an area that subsequently became Transjordan).

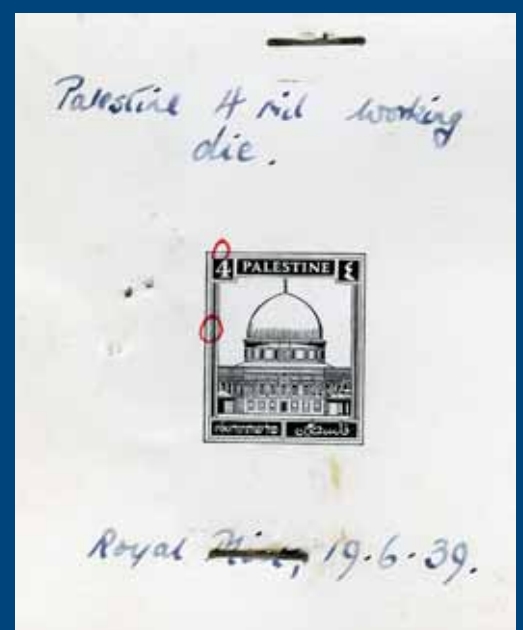
The most significant items in the collections from this period are the 1918 (16 July – 27 Dec) 1 milliemes to 20 piastre imperforate black proofs in complete sheets of 240, from The Board of Inland Revenue Stamping Department Archive. Examples of stamps issued during this period are also to be found in The Imperial War Museum's Stamp Collection (which is on extended loan to the Library), and the in Wilson-Todd Collection, both of which focus on the stamps issued during The Great War of 1914–18.

Palestine was placed under British Civil Administration from 1920 until 1922, and from this period the Crown Agents Philatelic and Security Printing Archive includes a fabulous set of colour trials for the 1922 (Sep – Nov) 1 milliemes to 20 piastre definitives, comprising the 13 milliemes in thirty different colours (fifteen unaccepted). The archive also has die proofs and colour trials for the 1927–45 and 1932–44 pictorial definitives, which were issued during the period of the British Mandate to the League of Nations. There are also Postage Due 1924 'MILLIEMES' and 1928–44 'MILS' colour trials; and Postal Stationery proofs.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection has the 1921–44 issues basically complete unused, including stamps additionally overprinted for use as Consular fee stamps, and for use in Trans-Jordan (1925 onwards, including for revenues), these revenue stamps are rarely seen. So for anyone interested in this fascinating area, there are items from a number of different sources to refer to.



Colour Trials for the 1922 issue.



1927-45 4 mils die proof.

A Researcher's Note

By Susan McEwen – Chairman of the Malaya Study Group, and a Trustee of the Stuart Rossiter Trust.

Malaya in the British Library Philatelic Collections



Susan McEwen

In 2007 I published an article in *The Malayan Philatelist* about the printings of the stamps of Johore (1922–1941), in many ways this was completing the project on Malayan printings, of the King George VI era, started by Dr WH (Bill) Barker. The process included my first visits to the Philatelic Collections, and first glimpses of the amazing range of Malayan stamps in the Collections.

'Malaya' is a geographical area, not a Political one. It covers the Peninsula of Malaya, now the Western part of Malaysia and the Republic of Singapore. It has a long, fascinating and at times complex history resulting in twenty-one different Stamp Issuing authorities being represented in the Collections. This history gives plenty of scope and interest for Philatelists and Postal Historians.

I started collecting stamps more years ago than I care to admit, and although my interests now are primarily Postal History the opportunity to study the Malaya in the Collections could not be turned down. Since early 2010 I have been working on a book listing all the Malaya in the Philatelic Collections, eighteen of the different Collections contain some Malaya.

At the start of the project I wrote in the Malaya Study Group Newsletter *"The collections range from The Crown Agents Philatelic and Security Printing Archive, which is massive, to the 'Tapling collection' relatively small being stamps up to 1891, but containing great rarities. Quite what some of the other collections contain is currently a mystery, and that is part of the reason for starting this project. The result will be a reference document which will answer many questions and provide a ground work*

for future Study projects." I should have added that it will also illustrate some unique proofs and archival pieces.

The book is now approaching publication, this simply would not have been possible without the friendly help and co-operation of David Beech and Paul Skinner. Their knowledge of the Collections, and Stamp Printing techniques has been more than just useful it has been essential. Specialist help on the Revenues and Meters has been gratefully received from MSG Members Andrew Norris and Peter Cockburn making this a Study Group Project.

'*Malaya in the British Library Philatelic Collections*' is expected to be published by the Malaya Study Group in the spring of 2012. More information including price and ordering will be on the MSG's website: www.malayastudygroup.com



Johore 1922–41 \$500 unused – The Crown Agents Collection.

International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately

The First International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately will be held at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum in Washington, DC between November 12th and 14th, jointly sponsored by the Museum and The Institute for Analytical Philately (IAP). The featured speaker will be Bruce Kaiser, chief scientist at Bruker Elemental, Utah, and the keynote address will be given by David Beech FRPSL, Head of the British Library Philatelic Collections.

A call for symposium technical papers has been issued by IAP, and approximately 10 will be accepted. If you are interested in participating, or for more details, see: www.analyticalphilately.org/symposiumcall.html

Seeing the Philatelic Collections

For details about our collections and services please see the Philatelic Collections web pages at: www.bl.uk/collections/philatelic

Open free of charge, during the following times

Monday, Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday 09.30 – 18.00

Tuesday 09.30 – 20.00

Saturday 09.30 – 17.00

Sunday and Bank Holidays
11.00 – 17.00



Researchers may view material; not on display, by appointment. A British Library Reader's Pass is required.

Monday to Friday 10.00 – 16.00

Donations Received

Spanish Civil War – Blackburn Collection



The period has been a wonderful one for donations. In the spring we received from Tony Blackburn a collection that principally comprises of Spanish Civil War (1936–39) material in thirty-five volumes. This complements the existing holdings of The Shelley Collection (which is of postal history related to the International Brigades), and The Bailey Collection, which was donated to the

library by the Spanish Study Circle in 2007. The Blackburn Collection also includes 17th century Royal letters sent by Kings Philip II, III and IV of Spain, and a group of mail delivered by the Message Carriers of Cadiz.

Friends of The British Library

With a generous donation from the Friends of the British Library, we were able to purchase *Edition D'Or* volumes IX to XXV to bring up to date the Library's holding of this series. Published by the International Auction House Corinthia, illustrating important collections of philatelic material, this latest group includes volumes on Saxony, Roumania, Heligoland, Venezuela, India, and Cape of Good Hope. For details about the Friends and how to become a member see: www.bl.uk/friends



Stanley Gibbons Catalogues

The British Library is a strong advocate for the provision of Philatelic Literature in public libraries in this country and around the world, and the Stanley Gibbons catalogue is a key part of this provision. We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Stanley Gibbons for their continued support in providing additional catalogues for the Philatelic Collections departmental reference library, which is a vital resource for the day to day curatorial work. The British Library has long enjoyed a relationship with the company, which started in the late 19th century, when Stanley Gibbons contributed important material missing from the Tapling Collection. Details of these donations are still annotated on the collection's pages today.

Published Works

The British Library and the Stuart Rossiter Trust are pleased to have supported and encouraged the work and publication of *Fleeing from the Fuhrer – A Postal History of Refugees from the Nazis* by Charmian Brinson & William Kaczynski, published 2011 by The History Press ISBN 978 07524 6195 3, with foreword by David Beech.

CONTACT POINT

The British Library Philatelic Collections
96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB
T +44 (0) 20 7412 7635
F +44 (0) 20 7412 7780
Email philatelic@bl.uk