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EDITORIAL

MISS WORLD, Carol Joan Crawford, has certainly done a wonderful job for Jamaica, for the Philatelic Department which handled the First Day Covers, serviced more than half a million of these. Yet the Government states that they lost moneys! How and Why?

The Jamaica Government issued an official envelope for Miss World even though the envelope was only given one week's advance notice through The Press, the sales were reasonable for Jamaica - most of the First Day Covers came from London.

If the Philatelic Department hopes to make a success of its undertaking, it must give at least 4 - 6 months' advance notice of all new issues appearing, prior to the issue being released. Also, if they want to service First Day Covers; which is a very large market as they have now found, they should issue their own Bulletin giving all the latest news, and distribute this Bulletin throughout the world to the Stamp Dealers, Philatelic Societies and Government channels.

A well organized Philatelic Department would undertake supplying mint, used and FDC's, and special requirements for the dealer or collector; e.g. plate or imprint blocks at a small commission - when this is established. But the Philatelic Department must at all times give good service. In supplying mint stamps perforations must be 100%. Postmarking whether in sheets or on First Day Covers should be neat and crisp.

Certainly a lot of the First Day Covers for Miss World were anything but good. We have sent to the Philatelic Department of Jamaica examples of covers, where a set was actually placed on the back of the envelope. Other sets were placed on the front but with a piece of the stamp off the face of the envelope. This type of work will not be accepted, and worst of all is the fact that it is being paid for.

Any issues coming out must be given at least 4 - 6 months' advance notice, as mentioned above; e.g. the British Commonwealth Games in August, 1966. Already preparations should be made for an advance Air Letter Sheet and a secondary issue to appear early in the coming year. This is good advertising and the set should be advertised throughout the world.

The servicing of the First Day Covers for the Commonwealth Games can surpass Miss World's. It is up to the Post Office and Government to decide whether they want to tackle this big job or whether they feel they are incapable of doing it.

Government might feel that they are being very clever and wise in having their stamps distributed by the Crown Agents, but the Jamaicans have taken an extremely poor view of the fact that the errors and now watermarks, are being distributed by the Crown Agents and not by the Post Office in Jamaica. The sooner the Government decides to distribute all their own stamps through their Philatelic Department, the better off they will be.

The souvenir sheets for Miss World will be released on May 25th after many delays. We understand that Jamaica will have around 10,000 sheets for sale, and already a large portion has been sold.

What is disappointing is the fact .that after Government has established a Philatelic Department to service at a commission all the First Day Covers of MISS WORLD, that these souvenir sheets will not be done on First Day Covers, for the Philatelic Department will not be accepting orders for First Day Covers. It only shows the inability for Government to undertake Philatelic business, which, unfortunately, they are incapable of doing. We had booked a large number of First Day Covers,

which we had to cancel as May 25th will be a public holiday in Jamaica. Certainly in the future we will not be undertaking any bookings for mint, used, or First Day Covers for the. Stamps of this Colony until Government straightens out their Philatelic Department and the Post Office.

The souvenir sheets for Miss World will only be sold at the General Post Office. This is incorrect, for Post Offices such as Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Mandeville and all the leading district Post Offices should have had their own sheets.

We will look forward to Government setting up a properly run Philatelic Department in the future, and it has been proven and shown that they can get as many First Day Covers as they require mainly by advertising and good promotion, so it is up to them to decide 'which way they wish to go. The printing of Miss World's stamps were anything but good.

We have seen sheet after sheet of the 1/6 value as well as the 1/- which have been pulled through the rollers, causing a blurred printing or almost a double impression. These sheets with the smudged printing are quite frequently seen in Kingston.

The Government of Jamaica should realize that once a stamp has been printed these should always be available, when they are off sale one can obtain them from the Philatelic Department; e.g. the Caribbean Games, the Independence Commemoratives, and the Overprints. Only this week, May 18th, Government gave instructions for all their stocks on hand to be burnt. This clearly show: how extremely wealthy Government is for they have money in their hands which they are prepared to throw away. But of course they consider that Jamaica is a very rich country!

With Government burning all the Overprints which were in stock, it now leaves the position of the high values the 2/-, 10/- and £ on the new watermark extremely rare items. What is rather puzzling is the fact that from information, Jamaica certainly does not seem to have re-printed these stamps in recent months. How comes they were available from the Crown Agents in the last week of the issue?

As Jamaica will be having at least another 5 Commemoratives this year, the Government should definitely release at least 3 months before each issue, all the necessary data and information on these. Otherwise they will not worry about preparing any envelopes or doing any service outside of a nominal amount of these at the G.P.O., for they will not be getting this.

Recently published in London by Mr. A.W. Robertson, was a very interesting series of Post Cards relating to the early Packet Boats used throughout the world on different stamps. One found that on the Centenary 2d value 1960 issue of Jamaica which illustrated a Packet Boat with an Aeroplane overhead, that the Packet Boat had in fact never in its history visited the Caribbean. It was the SS City of Berlin a Trans Atlantic Boat, which quite obviously the design was prepared and done by the Crown Agents, and they used whatever picture they had available.

Readers must remember that the Crown Agents did all the designs for the Colony, even though the Colony itself submits the design, the Crown Agents are at liberty to substitute their own pictures such as in the case of the above 2d Centenary Jamaica, where an old Packet Boat was used from an English design. This should not happen to Independent countries now, for the Crown. Agents have got to be a lot more careful; even though they might want the business, they should not attempt to overdo a good thing.

THE NEW DEFINITIVES FOR JAMAICA

The long awaited Definitives for Jamaica appeared on May 4th with sixteen values from the 1d to the £1. Generally speaking there was little enthusiasm for First Day Covers. Only a small amount was done through the General Post Office, so that the Philatelic Department had a comparatively easy day.

The general re-action from collectors, not only in Jamaica but in the West Indies and North America; is that the designs were quite well thought out but generally speaking many of the designs are very poor.

The Minister, the day before the issue appeared, announced that it would be the most colourful and beautiful set ever yet put out by Jamaica. This certainly was misleading.

Her Majesty the Queen must have been shocked at the £1 stamp which the Philatelic Committee for Jamaica designed for this value. One only has to look at the 10/- value and compare this with the

£. The 3d also is not particularly good, while the 4d is incorrectly coloured. Anyone knowing the ackee, which is illustrated on the 1½d value, will appreciate the fact that these hang in clusters not upwards, but this may have been designed from the artist's point of view. This is not good designing.

It was always our belief that Jamaica was an agricultural country and also at the present time Miss World is promoting very heavily the Tourist Industry, yet we find nothing on this set illustrating the Tourist Industry or the manufacture of sugar, rum or any product of agriculture. WHY?

The one stamp which leaves us extremely puzzled is the 9d value Gypsum, and cannot understand how this appeared in the series, for the export of Gypsum from Jamaica is very small. The 8d value with the Humming Bird: in as much that the stamp is partly balanced, this is not a good design as compared to the last issue of the Queen with the 6d value; while the 1/- is certainly not correctly coloured.

Frankly the 1/6, 3/- and 5/- stamps were all disappointing. The 3/- shows a Marlin, obviously photographed from a mounted specimen. How much better would it have been to have shown the Game Fish fighting from the end of a line. The 5/- value illustrating Port Royal Exploration of a Sunken City, which was done many years ago but do believe that there is a new scheme afoot to once again go over a lot of this work, for such a log of old glassware, watches and decanters were found, however, one would not have thought that this would have qualified.

Unfortunately Government and the Philatelic advisers would not be able to tell the difference of a Commemorative design to a Definitive design. The 5/- value is completely out of place.

Certainly the best stamp of the whole series is the 10/- which is a classic. The £ could not be much worse. It would have been far better their using the 10/- value for the £ value.

From what one can see some thought has been made in thinking out the designs which unfortunately has not worked out in all cases: Colouring again leaves a lot to be desired, although the Bauxite industry is very well done.

We look forward to many more sets in the near future, and trust that they will be far better thought out and designed than some of these which have just appeared. For these new stamps are not good advertising for Jamaica!

TRAIN POST MARKS

By Mr. T. Foster. (Published by Mr. E.F. Aguilar)

Despite these extensions and the ever increasing trade caused through the growth of the commercial fruit trade, and which was probably one of the primary reasons for the purchase of the railway, the operating Company did not make a great success of their venture. By March, 1899, the United Fruit Company had emerged victorious from the "Banana War" of the previous decade and almost all the smaller firms had been eliminated, so that in April of 1900 the Government again resumed ownership of the Railway, from which date it has operated as a Government Department.

The success of the Post Office Mail Boxes on the Railway Stations had been carefully noted, and in 1901 further mailing boxes were introduced on the actual trains themselves, for the benefit of passengers and for the use of the public at the many "halts" where there was no Post Box or Station.

The letter boxes at the Railway Stations were cleared ten minutes before the arrival of each train, and the, collected mail was taken into the Railway Station Office, where it was carefully postmarked with the new date-stamps provided by the Post Office and then put on the train for ensuing transmission to its destination.

Railway Station Offices were in all cases separate entities from the ordinary post offices of the same name in the towns and villages served by the railway, and in at least one case served a different village of the same name.

This system continued to run satisfactorily to the great appreciation of both passengers and public, and although the catastrophic earthquake of 1907 reaped enormous destruction in Kingston and one or two surrounding areas, it in no way affected the Mail Coach system of the train schedules.

On 1st April, 1910, mails were carried for the first time by motor conveyance in cars supplied by the Jamaica Motor Company under a contract with the postal authorities. The experiment was

short lived, however, for the brief time that it was in use, breakdowns to cars and vans caused a definite failure in the service, and by prior arrangement, the contractors were relieved and the motor service was not re-introduced until 1913 when they operated under direct Post Office control.

On 10th March, 1913 a new thirteen-mile extension from May Pen to Chapelton was opened, and on 20th October of the same year, the Public Works Department undertook to carry out a daily Motor Service on one of the mail lines of post, and this was successfully accomplished. The work was later handed over to a Contractor; although now-a-days, the Post Office itself carries out the majority of the work, if not all.

On 1st September, 1913, yet another innovation was introduced, which resulted in the speeding up of the mails. On the two mail lines, a Travelling Post Office was opened, which enabled the mail to be sorted en route, and bagged up ready for delivery at any station on that line. Mail posted by passengers on the train in question, and often the mail posted at the Railway Boxes was postmarked with the new handstamps, the first Jamaica T.P.O. markings.

(+ This was Inverness. The Post Office of that name is at the Village of Inverness in western St. Ann parish, whilst the railway station of that name, known as Inverness Siding is in Clarendon parish, between Old Harbour and May Pen).

The economic situation resulting from the aftermath of 1914-18 war had serious repercussions on this system of communication. On 31st December, 1924 all facilities for posting letters at railway stations were withdrawn and the use of the special railway postmark ceased, although administrative railway markings continued to remain in use and can occasionally be found used as receiving marks and often as "Free" marks on official correspondence. It would appear, however, that some station offices retained their date-stamps, or were re-issued with them at a later date, as the writer has seen examples from two stations used during 1945, and he has vague references but no further definite proof of the existence of the others. In this respect it should be noted that no records were kept by the railway of instructions given to Railway Station Offices regarding the postmarking and handling of mail.

On this same date the Travelling Post Offices were axed for economic reasons, but they were resumed on 28th March, 1927 and still remain in use.

Whilst these economies were being enforced, a further ten-mile extension of the railway from Chapelton to Frankfield had opened on 16th March, 1925 bringing the total mileage operated by the Jamaica Government Railway to two hundred and fifty one miles of main and branch lines, running through some of the most beautiful country in the world.

The line to Montego Bay from Kingston is typical this description. After leaving the teaming capital the track meanders through the irrigated banana fields of St. Catherine and the little stations at Gregory Park and Grange Lane to Spanish Town and through the wooded parish of Clarendon. At one time a halt was called at the old sugar estate of Bernard Lodge close by to Spanish Town, but nowadays this does not happen and the name has all but disappeared from most maps of that area. After the old capital, the line ventures through Hartlands and Bushy Park to Old Harbour, one of the first settlements of the English in the 17th Century, through Inverness and past Old Clarendon Cross of ancient memory to the thriving little town and junction of May Pen and thence on quickly to Four Paths, Clarendon Park and Porus.

At Porus the ascent of the hills begins, and the way now becomes an intricate series of twists and curves, steep climbs up noble hills and rapid descents through wooded gorges and over rushing torrents, all combining to give a sequence of wonderful panoramas. The next halt is made at Williamsfield, the station for the "English Village" of Mandeville, and now-a-days a great social centre for visits to nearby attractions and then on through Kendal and the steady haul up to Greenvale, the highest point of the railway to a height of 1,705 ft. above sea level, and the rush downhill to Balaclava in St. Elizabeth. At this point one can leave the train for the Santa Cruz Mountains, the Dickenson Trust School or Malvern of the bracing climate, or possibly for the wonderful Black River fishing and the famous Bamboo Walk at Lacovia.

Here also access can be found to the mysterious Cockpit Country and the Land of Look Behind.

After Appleton is reached the railway runs to the "frontier post" of Maggoty on the fringe of the Maroon Country with easy access to Accompong Town, and then down to Ipswich of recent disastrous memory, Stonehenge and Catadupa and the thickly cultivated areas of lower St. James,

and on through Cambridge, Montpelier and Anchovy to the terminus at Montego Bay with its lofty vistas and many hotels.

Yet another interesting section runs from the junction of May pen up the Rio Minho Valley to Frankfield. It explores mainly agricultural country with many beautiful views and wanders past much of Old Jamaica – through stations, "halts," estates, towns and villages of Sutton, Ivy Store Halt, Chapelton, the nearby Banks Estate, Morgan's Pass, Crooked River, and Trout Hall of breakfast fame to Frankfield a very important agricultural centre and market.

The other main line wends its way northwards from Spanish Town and the old district of the Angels, through the Bog Walk Gorge to the junction of that name where the line divides. One fork continues northwards to Ewarton and this part is now in disuse. The other fork heads eastward through the rich lands and plantations and past New Works to Riversdale, Harewood Halt, Troja and Richmond which owes some of its status to the railway extension of 1896. Next comes the villages of Highgate and Albany in fair St. Mary, twin centres of departure for- the commerce of Port Maria and then the glorious run along the sun washed shores of St. Mary and Portland through Bellefield, Gray's Inn and Annotto Bay past Windsor Castle and its nearby siding to Buff Bay with its mountain scenery. In rapid succession the busy little village: of Orange Bay, Hope Bay and St. Margaret's Bay pass by and finally the old district of Titchfield is reached and a groaning halt is made amid the busy bustle of Port Antonio.

Here then the railway, now presented in a modern setting, but still fulfilling the tasks for which it was constructed.

NOTES HERE AND THERE

- JAMAICA It was announced early April that during the coming year Jamaica would slowly start changing over to the decimal currency. What was not stated was to what currency would it be aligned; i.e. U.S., Canada or the W.I. dollar.
- GENERAL POST OFFICE KINGSTON Five values of the Queen Elizabeth overprints ½d, 3d, 8d, 1/- and 3/- have been found with the new watermark. Although others are known, they have not been available.
- GERMANY It was announced that the German Air Line - Lufthansa - will be starting their regular service in October; three flights weekly, flying from Frankfurt, New York, Kingston, Panama.
- KINGSTON JAMAICA A new Air service was started by DELTA C & S between New Orleans, Kingston, San Juan on April 24th, 1964. Special cachet was stamped on all envelopes at the General Post Office. No announcement was made by them of this. No covers are available.
- ENGLAND The new Shakespearean issue has been very popular, the 2/6 value being outstanding, and certainly will be among th best designed and coloured in recent years.
- JAMAICA A very good item collectors should be on the lookout for, is the Queen Elizabeth 8d Scotts 167 stamp illustrating the view of Blue Mountain Peak. The word 'Jamaica' appears normally at the top of the sheet. On the twelve copies shown to us the word 'JAMAICA' is at the BOTTOM of the stamp.
The sheet was very badly perforated with the result that the word 'JAMAICA' is at the bottom of the design instead of being at the top.