



GRIQUALAND-WEST STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY

Yiannis Lazarides

Published by Camel Press NF



Cover image: This cover image shows Jo Bodeon, a back-roper in the mule room at Chace Cotton Mill. Burlington, Vermont. This and other similar images in this book were taken by Lewis W. Hine, in the period between 1908-1912. These images as well as social campaigns by many including Hine, helped to formulate America's anti-child labour laws...

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DR. YIANNIS LAZARIDES

MAIN

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Griqualand West History

Griqualand West owes its origin to Adam Kok, a slave whose strong sense of duty earned him his freedom. He was initially allowed to settle on a farm near St. Helena Bay. He became the patriarchal head of state of the Grigrigua tribe as well as some Namaquas and a group known as 'Basters', the progeny of a mixture of the indigenous Hottentots and Europeans. However, in the main the group was of Hottentot descent.

../cape-of-good-hope/Maps/south_africa_1885.jpg

Figure 1: 1885 Map of South Africa

In the main, however, the group was of Hottentot descent. Adam Kok was recognised as the head of the 'Griquas' by the Cape Government. In about 1750 he and his followers moved to the Kamiesberg in Namaqualand. In 1795, shortly before his death, he handed over leadership to his son Cornelis.

At about the same time a the genesis of the Kok clan, a group of Basters with allegiance to Barend Barends and his brother Nicholaas, banded together. They too moved north towards the Orange River in the vicinity of the Prieska Drift.



Figure 2: Captain Adam Kok, Chief of

These people were nomadic but following a disastrous drought, they established a permanent settlement, based on agriculture, in 1803-04. This was North of the Orange River, along a series of springs in the area of Prieska to Danielskuil, where the Basters were joined by Koranna and Bechuana tribesmen.

A presence of the South African Missionary Society had meanwhile been established in 1800 for the Bechuana people at what was then known as New Lettakoo, about 320 km to the North.

The London Missionary Society established a mission station at Klaarwater, which in 1813 was named Griquatown. William Anderson was appointed the station's first superintendent. It became the capital of the settlement and the inhabitants referred to themselves collectively as Griquas. The population of Klaarwater and the surrounding district had by then grown to 1300. From 1816, the New Lettakoo mission station had been administered by the London Missionary Society and a year later the mission was moved nearer to Kuruman River, about 20 km from the present town of Kuruman. The mission thence being known as Kuruman Mission. It was superintended from 1821 onwards by Robert Hamilton, who was replaced in 1824 by the famous missionary couple Robert and Mary Moffat. In that year the station was again moved to about 4 km from the present Kuruman.

Diamonds were discovered in Griqua territory in 1866 and the question of sovereignty over the area assumed political importance. Claims to it were made by the Griqua paramount chief, Nicholas Waterboer, who had succeeded Adam Kok, as well as by the South African republic and the Orange Free State.

The Keate Award in October 1871 determined the issue in favour of Waterboer. However, the diamond diggers along the Vaal River disputed the award and set up an independent republic. This was short lived and the territory annexed by Great Britain 10 days later.

In 1873, Griqualand west was constituted a separate British Colony, but it was annexed to the Cape Colony by an Act of Parliament on 5 August 1879 merging with it in 1880 after the Griqua rebellion of 1878 that was suppressed.

Andries Waterboer, who had been an assistant teacher at the mission school, was elected chief of the Griquas in 1821 and a form of local government ensued. In 1823 the settlement numbered 4000.

(See timeline of Griqualand West History).

Postal History of Griqualand

The early postal history of Griqualand is dominated by missionary letters dispatched privately. Both correspondence emanating from Hamilton or Moffat exists. These were both official as well as private letters. They bear no markings.

When John Melville was appointed as a government agent in 1822 mail was probably being sent in the official bag. By 1824 letters were being conveyed by wagon.

In 1828, the nearest post office to Griquatown was at Graaff-Reinet, more than 400 km away. With the opening of a post office at

Colesberg in 1841, Griquatown was closer to established postal routes, but even this office was still about 400 km distant.

It appears at this stage transmission of letters from Griquatown to Colesberg was largely depended on 'favourable opportunity'. From Colesberg the letters were sent to Graaf-Reinet, and then via Cradock to Port Elizabeth. Moffat complained in March 1851 that 'opportunities between the nearest post office at Colesberg and this (Griquatown) are sometimes far few and between.

The opening of a post office in the village of Hopetown in 1855, just over 100 km from Griquatown, brought facilities considerably closer.

Postal developments after the discovery of diamonds in 1866 was rapid. The Diamond News of 15 October 1870 stated that 'Last Saturday was the first day on which the Free State post came into operation here. Postmaster Palier informs us that on that day he issued 670 letters and 705 Newspapers...'

The notification refers to the post office opened at Pniel on the south bank of the Vaal River in the Orange River Sovereignty. The offices at Klip Drift on the North bank and Du Toit's Pan were opened shortly afterwards. It is likely that mail was processed through the Free State until the opening of the Klip Drift office.

In September 1870 tenders were invited to convey the mail from Hopetown to Klip Drift. Until then the Hopetown residents had to cross the Vaal by ferry to collect their mail.

The first mail to Klipdrift was dispatched from Cape Town to the diamond fields on 14 January 1871. The mail contained 16 letters and 26 books and newspapers and was conveyed by passenger wagon. Mr. A Von Bressendorf was the postmaster.

The first mailcart from Hopetown to Klip Drift was in March 1871. In March 1872 two other post offices were opened one at De Beers New Rush and the other at Du Toit's Pan.

In 1873-74 the Griqualand West Post Offices were as shown in the table below:

Griqualand West

The philately of Griqualand can roughly be divided into four periods: The early missionary letters, the use of Cape adhesives, the use of Griqualand West overprints on Cape stamps, and lastly the use of Griqualand West stamps in the Cape, after the annexation of Griqualand West and its incorporation in the Cape Colony.

The overprinted series are of interest in themselves as even today, no clear picture has emerged as to the plating of the issues. The postal marks and routes are fairly well researched, but very little material has survived to enable detail studies.

1874 (Sept) Cape Surcharged in manuscript in red ink ^{1d} and ^FOURPENCE struck out by a horizontal stroke. This was a provisional issue made in Kimberley when the stock was exhausted. **SG 1**



Figure 3: Sale 4001 Lot 273 Griqualand West 1874 (Sept.) "1d" in red manuscript by the Kimberley Postmaster on 4d. blue, fresh mint; fine and scarce. Sc. 1; S.G. 1, AAA£AAAA1,000. (WF). Photo Estimate AAA£AAAA350-400 Sold for AAA£AAAA1100 </p><p class="small">Spinks, 2004</p><div style="clear:both"></div>

Holmes¹ reported that the Royal Collection at Buckingham Palace includes a notable strip of this provisional. It is an unused marginal strip of six, and on the margin it is written: "Purchased from the Post Office Kimberley Griqualand West September 1874 O. H. Bate". The block was formerly in the collections of M. P. Castle, and later in Sir Harold Reckitt's collection before being acquired by King George V. Used examples of this provisional are rarer than used.

SG 1

SG 1
SG 1

SG 1

Holmes H.R., *The Postage Stamps of Griqualand West, Part I*, November 1962, 71:839 LP839.pdf



Figure 4:

Sale 4001 Lot 273
 Griqualand West 1874 (Sept.)
 "1d" in red manuscript by the Kimberley Postmaster on 4d. blue, fresh mint; fine and scarce. Sc. 1; S.G. 1, AAA£AAAA1,000. (WF). Photo Estimate AAA£AAAA350-400 Sold for AAA£AAAA600



Figure 5:

fresh unused example with a bold ms. surcharge, strong color, nibbed perf. at lower left, otherwise Very Fine and scarce. Scott for o.g. \$1,350 (SG #1, for o.g., AAA£AAAA1,500=\$2,250) [VF]

\$400

Nutmeg, 2008



Figure 6:

S.G. #1, 1874 "1d" Manuscript surcharge on 4d Blue, fresh unused example with a bold ms. surcharge, strong color, nibbed perf. at lower left, otherwise Very Fine and scarce (Scott #1; \$1,350). View Image \$1300.00

H R harmer inc, June 2008



Figure 7:

S.G. #1, 1874 "1d" red manuscript surcharge on 4p Blue, an unused single of this rare provisional that was produced in Kimberly when the stock of 1p Cape of Good Hope stamps ran out, stamp with deep strong color, very fine for this terribly elusive and ridiculously undercataloged issue; 1991 BPA certificate (Scott #1; \$1,000.00). (Image) AAA£AAAA1,000

SOLD for \$1,200.00
 Shreeves Neal M. Allen Collection April 3, 2004

The use of Cape Stamps without Overprint, 1871-77

Shortly before Griqualand West was proclaimed British territory in 1871, the Cape Government instituted a postal service, opening post offices at which ordinary Cape stamps without overprint were sold. A contemporary account of the conditions at the time was published in *Stamp-Collector's Magazine* for 1874 (Volume XII, p. 63), as a communication from E.L. Pemberton:

Posts at the Diamond Fields.- There are government post-offices at the principal places on the Fields (Klip Drift, New Rush, and Du Toit's Pan), which are conducted exactly the same as those in the Cape Colony, the same rates of postage are charged, and money-orders are issued on all parts of the colony and the United Kingdom at the same charge. No special stamps are yet issued for Griqualand, those of the Cape being used at present; but as the governments of the who are now different, probably a special issue will be made for the former, though no steps have as yet been taken in that direction. Bi-weekly mails run between the colonies and the fields, conveyed by contractors in the usual manner in South Africa—a cart and four. A weekly mail is also despatched from Klip Drift to places further up the interior, and there is a daily one between the above-mentioned places.

In addition to the government post-offices, there are, at both New Rush and Du Toit's Pan, what are called 'Natal and Free State Post-Offices.' These are the property of private persons, and are simply agencies for forwarding and receiving letters to and from a post-office on the borders of the Orange Free State. Most Natal letters pass through this office, as it is the quickest way of sending them; and the proprietors of the agency charge a monthly subscription of two shillings and sixpence, which entitles the subscriber to send and receive as many letters as he pleases: non-subscribers have to pay sixpence for each letter sent or received through the agency. The stamp required on letters to any part of Natal or the Orange Free State by this means is 6d., O.F.S. The reason for the establishment of this agency was, that letters sent through the government office would have to pay 4d. Colonial and 6d. Orange State, which is the rate paid in colonial towns, as there is no postal convention between the two countries.

In September 1870 tenders were invited to convey the mail from Hopetown to Klip Drift, which has been opened following a petition of its residents^². As Goldblatt notes the petition was not surprising as the Hopetown residents had to cross the Vaal River by ferry and pay a fee of 2s in order to collect their mail from Pniel.

Pniel (pronounced Peeneel) is situated on the east bank of the Vaal River, about 100 miles from its mouth. The Town attracted early

diamond diggers with the diggings being about three miles from the mission station. The Vaal at the diggings is about 200 yards wide, and numerous yawl ferries are constantly plying to and from Klip Drift, or Parketon as it was called. A large wagon ferry has also been started, to be used at high water, when the river cannot be forded.

There are about 3,000 inhabitants at Pniel at present; and although many leave for the new rushes, the place is gradually growing. . .

A post-office has been established, and a newspaper, called the *Diamond News*, is successfully under way, and has six pages of new and advertisements; it is issued weekly (on Saturday). You can safely ship diamonds by post from here if you register them, and you can rely upon their being delivered to any part of the colony that you may wish to send them.

References

2 178

South African Diamond Fields, J. L. Babe, Correspondent of the "New York World." David Esley Co., 1872.

Griqualand West

1874 (Sept) Cape Surcharged in manuscript in red ink 1d and FOUR PENCE struck out by a horizontal stroke. This was a provisional issue made in Kimberley when the stock of Cape 1d. had been temporarily exhausted.

SG 1



Figure 8: Sale 4001 Lot 273 Griqualand West 1874 (Sept.) "1d" in red manuscript by the Kimberley Postmaster on 4d. blue, fresh mint; fine and scarce. Sc. 1; S.G. 1, AAA£AAAA1,000. (WF). Photo Estimate AAA£AAAA350-400 Sold for AAA£AAAA1100 </p><p class="small">Spinks, 2004</p><div style="clear:both"></div>

Holmes¹ reported that the Royal Collection at Buckingham Palace includes a notable strip of this provisional. I is an unused marginal strip of six, and on the margin it is written: "Purchased from the Post Office Kimberley Griqualand West September 1874 O. H. Bate". The block was formerly in the collections of M. P. Castle, and later in Sir Harold Reckitt's collection before being acquired by King George V. Used examples of this provisional are rarer than used. The strip was shown at the Royal Philatelic Society in and is illustrated below:

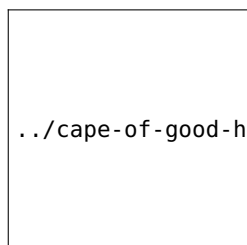


Figure 9: The SG1 1d. strip from the Royal Collection.

SG 1

SG 1
SG 1

SG 1

¹ Holmes H.R., *The Postage Stamps of Griqualand West, Part I*, November 1962, 71:839 LP839.pdf

1

² Sefi M, *The Royal Philatelic Collection: Southern Africa. Comments on a display from the Royal Philatelic Collection given by the gracious permission of Her Majesty The Queen to the Royal Philatelic Society London on 20 September 2007, June 2008*, 117:159 LP1356



Figure 10:

Sale 4001 Lot 273

Griqualand West 1874 (Sept.) "1d" in red manuscript by the Kimberley Postmaster on 4d. blue, fresh mint; fine and scarce. Sc. 1; S.G. 1, AAA£AAAA1,000. (WF). Photo Estimate AAA£AAAA350-400 Sold for AAA£AAAA600 </p> <p class="small">Spinks, 2005</p><div style="clear:both"></div>



Figure 11:

resh unused example with a bold ms. surcharge, strong color, nibbed perf. at lower left, otherwise Very Fine and scarce. Scott for o.g. \$1,350 (SG #1, for o.g., AAA£AAAA1,500=\$2,250) [VF]

\$400

</p> <p class="small">Nutmeg, 2008</p><div style="clear:both"></div>



Figure 12:

S.G. #1, 1874 "1d" Manuscript surcharge on 4d Blue, fresh unused example with a bold ms. surcharge, strong color, nibbed perf. at lower left, otherwise Very Fine and scarce (Scott #1; \$1,350). View Image \$1300.00

</p> <p class="small">H R harmer inc, June 2008</p><div style="clear:both"></div>

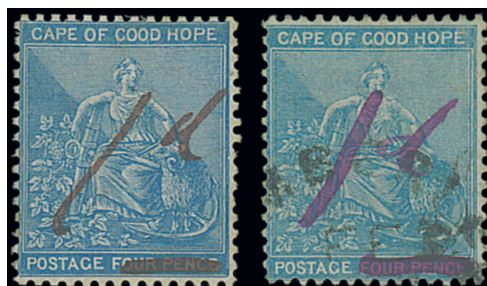


Figure 13:

S.G. #1, 1874 "1d" red manuscript surcharge on 4p Blue, an unused single of this rare provisional that was produced in Kimberly when the stock of 1p Cape of Good Hope stamps ran out, stamp with deep strong color, very fine for this terribly elusive and ridiculously undercataloged issue; 1991 BPA certificate (Scott #1; \$1,000.00). (Image) AAA£AAAA1,000

SOLD for \$1,200.00 </p> <p class="small">Shreeves Neal M. Allen Collection April 3, 2004</p><div style="clear:both"></div>

Figure 14: 732 1874 (Sept.) "1d" in red manuscript by the Kimberley Postmaster on 4d. blue, unused with part original gum; a couple of shortish perfs. at right, otherwise sound. Also forged used example. R.P.S. Certificate (1941) and Holcombe Opinion (1990). S.G. 1, AAA£AAAA1,800. AAA£AAAA300-350. spinks13027



1877 G.W. Overprints

With the settlement of the dispute with the Orange Free State it was decided that Griqualand West should have its own postage stamps, and according to the early stamp journals they were to be of distinctive design. *The Philatelist* stated that the order had been sent to England and that the design of the stamp was to be diamond-shaped! In the event however, the issue was more prosaic, merely an overprint on Cape stamps bearing the letters G.W. as shown in 15.

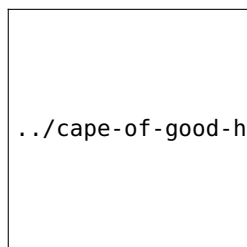


Figure 15: GRIQUALAND WEST 1877 1d UNUSED, RARE STAMP 1877 1d carmine-red (SG 2). Unused example. A rare stamp. Signed: Calves. (cvAAAEAAAA700).

The first issue was of two values, 1d. and 4d., and the overprint consisted of the two initial letters: 'G.W.', in black on the 1d. and in red on the 4d. No record appears to exist as to the size of the setting; the largest block known being a pane of 60 of the 1d., which was in the A. H. West collection. Beyond saying that it was a setting of at least 60 and might have been twice as large so as to overprint two panes in one go. There were a few minor varieties in the setting consisting of a large full-stop after 'G' or after 'W'. The 1d. exists with double overprint; only used examples being known, and these are very rare. The two stamps to receive the overprint were the 1d. carmine-red (without outer frame) and the 4d. blue (also without outer frame).



Figure 16: 733 1877 (Mar.) overprinted "G.W." 1d. carmine-red and 4d. blue unused or with part original gum, and used; the unused 4d. with a thin, the used a little soiled, otherwise sound. S.G. 2, 3, AA£AAAA1,280 AA£AAAA150-200.

The overprinting was almost certainly the work of Messrs Saul Solomon & Co., the Cape Government Printers, and the two values were issued in March 1877.

1877 The 'G' Red Overprints

During April 1877 five values of the current Cape of Good Hope stamps were overprinted in red and one (the 1d) overprinted in black with a large capital 'G'. These stamps are referred to as the red overprints, despite the exceptional use of black ink for the 1d. value. Of course it did not make much sense to have the 1d. overprinted in red, as it would be very difficult to distinguish it from the background of the carmine-red colour of the postage stamp. Six values of the Cape stamps were overprinted as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1/2d. grey-black | 6d. violet |
| 1d. carmine-red | 1s. green |
| 4d. blue (with outer frame line) | 5s. orange-yellow |
| 4d. blue (without outer frame line) | |

All stamps are perforated 14 and watermarked Crown over CC.

The issue has been plated by Holmes, based on extending studies by...

*2a	1b	1b	1b	1b	1b
1b	1b	1b	1b	1b	1b
*6	6	6	6	6	6
6	6	6	6	6	6
1a	1a	*1a	1a	1a	1a
1a	1a	1a	1a	1a	1a
3	3	3	*3	3	3
3	3	3	3	2b	3
4	4	4	4	4	5
6	5	5	5	5	*5

2a	1b	1b	*1b	1b	1b
6	6	6	*6	6	6
6	6	6	6	6	6
6	6	1a	1a	1a	1a
1a	1a	1a	1a	1a	*1a
1a	1a	1a	3	3	3
3	3	3	8	3	3
*3	3	3	3	2a	4
4	4	4	4	5	5
2a	2a	2a	2a	2a	2a

Figure 17: Complete setting as given by Holmes. The asterisk indicates a broken type.

The overprinting was done very carefully, though one half-sheet of 120 of the 1/- value received the overprint inverted. Only Type 1 is catalogued by Stanley Gibbons, but several of the other types also exist. Of these the Royal Collection has types 1a, 2a, and 4, while the Tapling Collection includes Types 1a, 2a, 4 and 6. It seems likely that most of the half-sheet was returned to Cape Town with the remainders in 1880, as a majority of the known inverts have Cape Colony cancellations.

Double overprints exist on the 6d., 1/-, and 5/-, but they are more in the nature of 'jumps' rather than the result of two distinct impressions, and are not of any real importance.

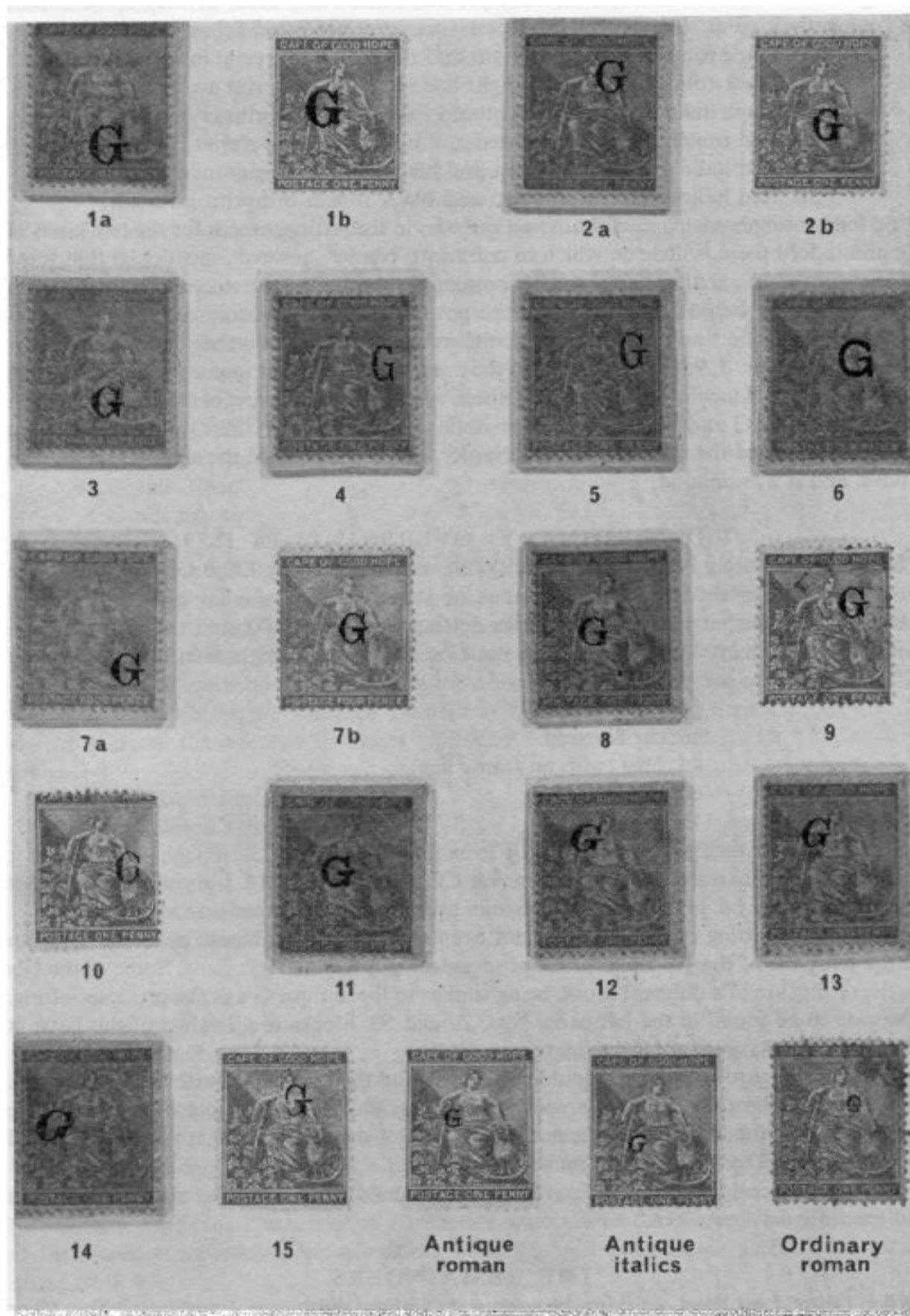


Figure 18: The various types as described by Holmes. The image is from his article in the *London Philatelist*.



Figure 19: AC389 1878 watermark Crown CC, 1d carmine-red block of 48 (6x8) with interpaneau margin at right (Somerset House perforator producing 'wing margins'). Overprinted 'G' (types 7 or 9) with each stamp showing an albino impression on the gum, printed onto the reverse, inverted. Two with tears, a few creases and some reinforcing though remarkably fresh mint with many unmounted. A very rare and spectacular multiple. SG 11b, 11d AAAEAAAA2,800



Figure 20: AC630 1878 4d dull blue without frame lines, with interpaneau margin at left, overprinted 'G' (Type 6) in red. Thinning along edge of interpaneau margin and a few blunt perfs at top, otherwise a very fine mint example in an attractive deep shade. Very scarce. SG 6f AAAEAAAA325, rhodesia.co.za



Figure 21: AC633 1877-78 6d deep lilac overprinted 'G' (Type 1a) in red. Horizontal strip of three with interpanneau margin at right. The right stamp with horizontal split at top and the gum somewhat yellowed though a rare and attractive multiple. SG 8a AAA£AAAA650.

Second Printing

A number of stamps do not fit in the plating study quoted above.

1 Holmes H.R., *The Postage Stamps of Griqualand West, Part III*, January 1963, 71:841 LP841.pdf

2 From McGregor dealer's stock, June 2013.

[10pt,justified,oneside,a4paper]tufte-book [utf8]inputenc

mathpazo [T1]fontenc [utf8]inputenc

xspace booktabs numprint,textcomp,verbatim marvosym

graphicx makeidx xcolor caption lettrine comment lipsum ams-

math amssymb wasysym

alltt verbatimbox

listings

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DR. YIANNIS LAZARIDES

MAIN

Contents

1878 Antique Overprint

By the middle of 1878 a new supply of stamps was required to be overprinted. As the previous type was clearly wearing out and new font was used. This time a smaller 'G' was used in a type known as 'antique face'. Both roman as well as italics were used in the setting of 120. Holmes report that he had in his collection full panes of the $\frac{1}{2}$, so it is easier to identify the positioning of the different fonts. He reported¹ that the left-hand pane was made up entirely of roman G's, but the right-hand pane consisted of a mixture of both, with the italic lettering predominating. The upright roman lettering can be found in positions 6, 23, 36, 42, 48, 54 and 60. *Se-tenant* pairs showing both types are rare.

The overprinting was in red or black or both on some varieties. The values are as shown in the table below:

<i>Red overprint</i>	$\frac{1}{2}$ d. grey-black 4d. blue (without frame line).
<i>Black overprint</i>	$\frac{1}{2}$ d. grey-black. 1d. carmine-rose. 4d. blue (with frame line). 4d. blue (without frame line). 6d. violet.
Double overprint (black and red)	$\frac{1}{2}$ d. grey-black. 1d. carmine-rose.

Double overprints

24 and 23 show specimens with the overprint double the one in red and the other in black. Holmes thought that these could have come out of a trial run or printed in the wrong colour and then overprinted once again with black ink to correct the error.

¹ Holmes H.R., *The Postage Stamps of Griqualand West, Part III*, January 1963, 71:841, p.1 LP841.pdf



Figure 22: AC388 1878 watermark Crown CC, $\frac{1}{2}$ grey-black. Vertical inter-panneau block of eight, the upper four stamps showing overprint 'G' type 15 (upright) and the lower four type 16 (inverted), clearly demonstrating that the setting of 120 was sometimes inverted on the lower two panes. The margin also showing 'CROWN' of watermark. Marginal crease barely affects one, otherwise very fine or unmounted mint. Scarce and attractive. SG 14, 15a AAA£AAAA475



Figure 23: AC632 1878 1d carmine-red overprinted 'G' (Type 15). With variety OVERPRINT DOUBLE, BOTH INVERTED WITH ONE IN RED. Thinned and with perforation faults, otherwise fine mint and of reasonable appearance. SG 16d AAA£AAAA25



Figure 24: AC631 1878 1d carmine-red overprinted 'G' (Type 16). With variety OVERPRINT DOUBLE, BOTH INVERTED WITH ONE IN RED. Hinge remnants, otherwise fine mint. Scarce. SG 17d AAA£AAAA110.

Bibliography