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Title: Gambia

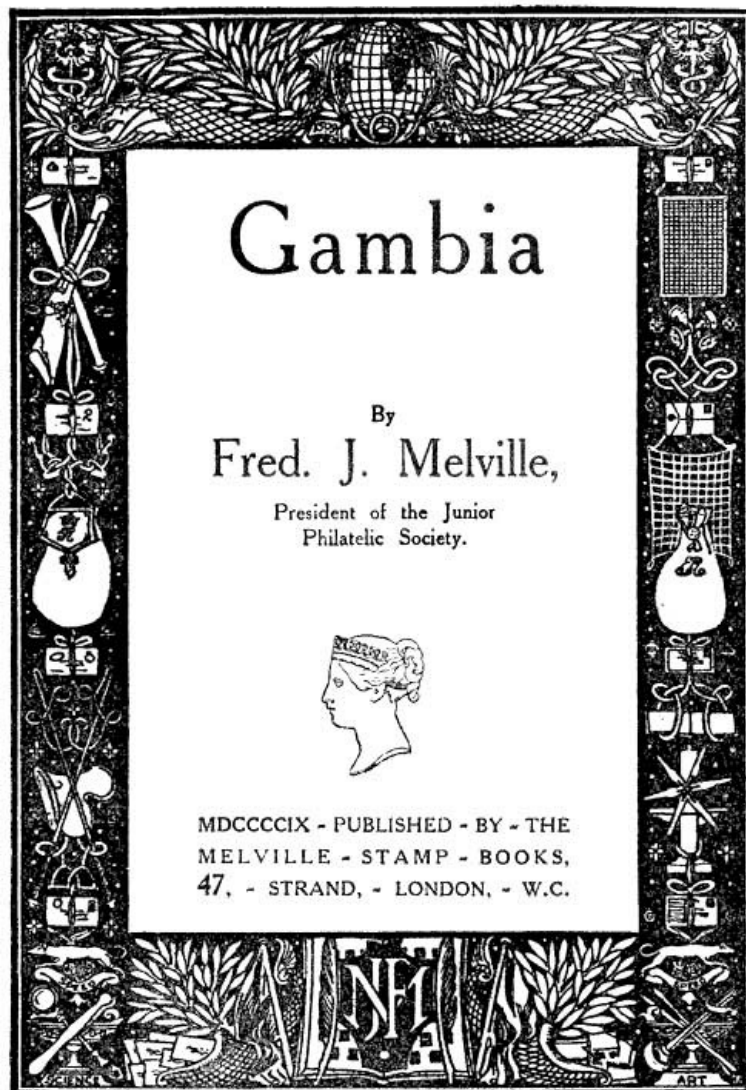
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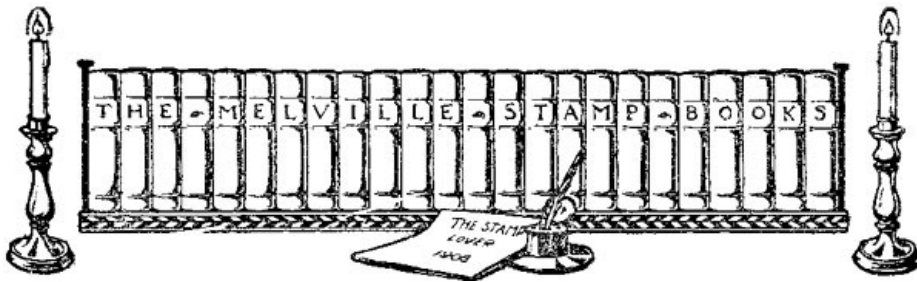
Gambia

By

Fred J. Melville,



MDCCCXC—PUBLISHED—BY—THE
MELVILLE—STAMP—BOOKS,
47,—STRAND,—LONDON,—W.C.



[pg 7]

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In collecting the stamps of Gambia one cannot too strongly emphasise the necessity for guarding the stamps of the "Cameo" series against deterioration by the pressure of the leaves in an ordinary unprotected album. In their pristine state with clear and bold embossing these stamps are of exceptional grace and beauty. Sunk mounts or other similar contrivances, and a liberal use of tissue paper, should be utilised by the collector who desires to retain his specimens in their original state. A neat strip of card affixed to each side of the page in an ordinary album will have the effect of keeping the pages above from flattening out the embossing, but tissue paper should be used as an additional safeguard.

We have to express thanks to Mr. Douglas Ellis, Vice-President of the Junior Philatelic Society, for his notes on the postmarks—of which he has made a special study—and also for the loan of his entire collection of the stamps of Gambia for reference and illustration; to Mr. H. H. Harland for a similar courtesy in the loan of his collection; to Mr. W. H. Peckitt for the loan of stamps for illustration; to Mr. D. B. Armstrong for interesting notes on the postal affairs of the Colony; and to Mr. S. R. Turner for his diagrams.

To the first two gentlemen we are also indebted for their kindness in undertaking the revision of the proofs of this handbook.

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Gambia.

CHAPTER I.

The Colony and Its Posts.

The British West African possession known as the Colony and Protectorate of the Gambia occupies a narrow strip of territory (averaging 12 miles in width) on both sides of the Gambia river. The territory comprises the settlement of St. Mary, where the capital—Bathurst—is situated, British Cambo, Albreda, M'Carthy's Island and the Ceded Mile, a protectorate over a narrow band of land extending from Cape St. Mary for over 250 miles along both banks of the river.

The Gambia river was discovered by a Portuguese navigator in 1447; under a charter of Queen Elizabeth a company was formed to trade with the Gambia in 1588. In the reign of James II. a fort was erected by British traders at the mouth of the river (1686), and for many years their only traffic was in slaves. The territory became recognised as a British possession under the Treaty of Versailles, and on the enforced liquidation of the chartered company it was incorporated with the Crown as one of the West African settlements. Until 1843, when it was granted separate government, it was administered by the Governor of Sierra Leone. In 1868 it was again annexed to Sierra Leone, and not until twenty years later was it created a separate Crown Colony with a Governor and responsible government of its own. At present the staple trade of the Colony is ground nuts, but efforts are being made to induce the natives to take up other products.

Postally there is little to record prior to 1866, which is the date ascribed by Mr. F. Bisset Archer, Treasurer and Postmaster-General, to an alteration in the scale of postage, the half ounce weight for letters being introduced. The rate to Great Britain was, we believe, from that date 6d. per half ounce.

Mr. Archer also gives this year (1866) as the date when the first postage stamps of the Colony were issued. This date was for a time accepted in the stamp catalogues, but it is now generally believed to be an error, the earliest records in the stamp journals of the period shewing the date to be 1869.

The postal notices we have been able to trace are of but little interest, the following being all that bear on matters of interest to collectors:—

POST OFFICE NOTICE.

Reduction of Postage, &c.

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On and from the 1st April, 1892, the Postage to all parts of the World on Letters, Newspapers, Books, etc., will be as follows:—

For Letters, 2½d. per ½ oz.

For Postcards, 1d. each.

For Reply Postcards, 2d. each.

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For Newspapers, books, printed papers, commercial papers, patterns and samples, ½d. per 2 oz., with the Postal Union proviso of a minimum payment of 2½d. for a packet of commercial papers, and of 1d. for a packet of patterns or samples.

Fee for registration of any of the above named articles, 2d.

Fee for the acknowledgment of the delivery of a registered article, 2½d.

By His Excellency's Command,

(Signed) J. H. FINDEN,

Postmaster.

Post Office, Bathurst, Gambia,

3rd March, 1892.

POST OFFICE.

Ordinance No. 6 of 1897.

March 11th, 1897.

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the Post Office Ordinance, 1897, Inland Postal Regulations.

13. From and after the commencement of this Ordinance, postal packets may be sent by post between such places in the Colony of the Gambia and the Protected Territories adjacent thereto as may be from time to time notified by the Administrator.

14. The Administrator-in-Council may from time to time make in relation to the inland post hereby established such regulations as he may think fit—

For prescribing and regulating the places, times, and modes of posting and delivery.

For fixing the rates of postage to be payable on inland letters and postal packets.

For prescribing payment of postage and regulating the mode thereof.

For regulating the affixing of postage stamps.

For prescribing and regulating the payment again of postage in case of redirection.

For regulating the dimensions and maximum weight of packet.

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For prohibiting or restricting the printing or writing of marks or communications or words.

For prohibiting enclosures.

For restricting the sending or conveyance of inland letters.

and such other regulations as the Administrator shall from time to time consider desirable for the more efficient working of such Inland Post.

And may affix a penalty not exceeding ten pounds, to be recovered summarily before the Chief Magistrate, or two Justices of the Peace, or, in default of payment, imprisonment not exceeding two weeks for a contravention of any such regulation.

15. Any revenue derived from the Inland Post herein established shall be paid into the Colonial Treasury at such times and in such a manner as the Administrator shall direct, and shall be applied to the general purposes of the Colony.

Insurance of and Compensation for loss and damage to Parcels.

11. Subject to the provisions of this Ordinance, if any article of pecuniary value enclosed in, or forming part of, a parcel be lost or damaged whilst in the course of transmission through the post, it shall be lawful for the Administrator to cause to be paid out of the public revenues of the Colony to any person or persons who may, in the opinion of the Postmaster, establish a reasonable claim to compensation (having regard to the nature of the article, the care with which

it was packed, and other circumstances), the following rates of compensation—

(a) In respect of an uninsured parcel, such sum, not exceeding twenty shillings, as he may think just.

(b) In respect of an insured parcel the following scale shall apply—

To secure	compensation	up to	£12	there shall be	payable	a fee of	5d
"	"	"	£24	"	"	"	7½d
"	"	"	£36	"	"	"	10d
"	"	"	£48	"	"	"	1/0½d
"	"	"	£50	"	"	"	1/3

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We gather from the official handbook edited by Mr. Archer that a Government steamer maintains weekly communication between the Capital, Bathurst, and M'Carthy's Island both for passengers and mails. There is no house-to-house delivery of mails at either place.

Gambia joined the Universal Postal Union on January 1st, 1879; the Imperial Penny Postage rate was adopted from December 25th, 1898; and the unit of weight for colonial and foreign letter postage was raised from half an ounce to one ounce on October 1st, 1907. The Cash on Delivery system was introduced on October 15th, 1908.

The following table gives an outline of the postal business, the large fluctuations in the revenue being chiefly due to the fluctuations in the demand for postage stamps from dealers and collectors:—

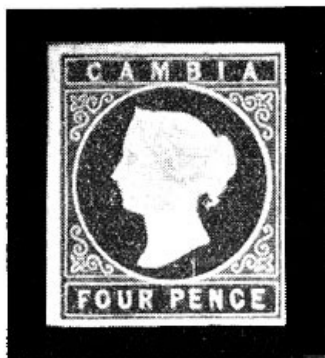
Year	Revenue	Expenditure	Letters	Parcels
1895	£686			
1896	1,506			
1897	1,845			
1898	2,140			
1899	589			
1900	459		66,612	782
1901	769		77,937	1151
1902	1,452		77,918	1340
1903	553		94,365	1532
1904	597		94,358	1677
1905	2,731	£808 0 0	91,768	1554
1906	1,317	712 15 10	98,379	1994

[pg 16]



CHAPTER II.

"Cameo" Issue of 1869.



The *Philatelist* for March 1, 1869, contained the first intimation of the preparation of stamps for the Colony of

"GAMBIA.

"We are proud to announce the preparation of stamps for this African settlement. In a central circle is Queen Victoria's coroneted head in white relief; in straight bands above is GAMBIA; below, the value, which, as well as the spandril ornamentation, is embossed in white. The stamp is nearly square, and the specimens possessed by our correspondent are imperforate. Values:

4 pence, deep brown.
6 " " blue."

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The stamps were manufactured by Messrs. de la Rue & Co. by a double process of flat printing and of relief embossing, the flat printing being doubtless effected first and the embossing afterwards. This combination was unusually effective, and the finished stamps rank among the handsomest adhesive postage stamps known to collectors.

As embossing evenly over a large area presented considerable difficulties, the plates were made up of fifteen stamps only, in three horizontal rows of five stamps. The plates for both processes evidently fitted each other with precision, though in the printing occasionally the embossing is slightly out of register.

The paper is white wove and has no watermark, and the stamps were not perforated. There are two colours of the gum, one being the usual clear white: the other is a pale yellow colour, which may, however, be due to climatic influence, particularly as it is a noticeable feature of a number of the later issues.

The colour of the 4d. value varies in shade from a deep chocolate brown to brown and pale brown. The 6d. is pale to deep blue. There is a quite pale shade which is very rarely met with, most of the so-called "pale blue" specimens being an intermediate shade better described as "blue."

The sheets of both values shew one printer's guide dot in each side margin, opposite stamps No. 6 and 10 respectively ([plate I](#)).

Both values are known with the embossing shewing a distinct double impression.

There are some peculiarities in these stamps which, although their significance is uncertain, it may not be well to overlook.

[pg 18]

Firstly, there frequently occurs throughout the embossed stamps of Gambia a small spot of colour on the back hair, which in later embossed stamps becomes a large spot, and even develops into a coloured indentation from the coloured circular ground.

In this issue the spot, when it occurs, is usually quite small, two copies of the 6d. examined shewing it somewhat enlarged.

Secondly, there are noticeable varieties of the pendant curl at the back. The normal design shews a fairly thick wavy curl with a hair branching out from it into the space between the curl and the neck. This sub-curl, as we may call it, is occasionally missing, broken, or as in No. 11 on the imperforate 6d. sheet ([plate I](#)), the curl and sub-curl have joined together, giving a very different appearance to the back hair. There are also varying lengths of the main curl.

In the sheet of the 6d. value the plates seem to have been slightly defective, and there is a gentle slope down from the centre to the outside stamp on each side (Nos. 1 and 5), the slope being more pronounced on No. 5, where the upper label containing the word Gambia is recognised as the variety with slanting label. The left side of stamp 5 is 22½mm. high, and the right side 22mm. That the peculiarity occurs reversed on stamp No. 1, though it is less pronounced, there can be no doubt. In later issues both stamps 1 and 5 shew the defect more prominently, as will be

readily seen from an examination of plates I., X., and XI. Curiously enough, the fault is not confined to the two outside stamps, as is generally supposed. The trouble is in the entire top row being $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. taller than the normal stamps of rows 2 and 3, except the left and right sides respectively of the end stamps (Nos. 1 and 5). The middle stamp of the top row shews a further peculiarity in the shape of the base of the neck. (Compare plates I., X., XI., with XIV.)

Copies of both values exist overprinted SPECIMEN, and we have seen similar copies of all the regular issues of this Colony.



CHAPTER III.

Issue of 1874.

The introduction of watermarked paper for these stamps occurred in 1874, the paper being that familiar to collectors of British Colonial stamps as watermarked "Crown C.C." The paper was not readily adaptable for the small sheets of the Gambia stamps, and the method of cutting it to suitable sizes for these sheets has produced some varieties for the specialist.

Major Evans, writing in the *Philatelic Record* for January, 1883, says:—

"Most collectors are probably aware that the stamps of the British Colonies printed in England are, as a rule, in sheets of 240, divided into four panes of 60, each pane consisting of ten horizontal rows of six stamps. The Crown and C.C. watermarks are arranged in the same manner upon the sheet of paper; each pane is enclosed in a single-lined frame. Down the centre of the sheet is a blank space of about half an inch wide; across the centre is a wider space, watermarked with the words CROWN COLONIES, which are also repeated twice along each side of the sheet.

"Some of my readers may have noticed that the watermark is not always very clearly shown in the Gambia stamps. This is due partly to the fact of their being embossed, and partly to their being arranged in small blocks of fifteen—three horizontal rows of five—so that a row of five stamps is printed on a row of six watermarks, and in most cases a complete watermark is not found on any one of the stamps in a block. Very frequently the upper and lower blocks on a sheet encroach on the margins, and consequently some of the stamps show portions of the words CROWN COLONIES in watermark; and I have seen a block which had been printed in the centre of one side of a sheet, and the middle row of which was watermarked COLONIES, while the upper and lower rows bore the Crown and C.C. Recent printings of some of the values of Gambia show the blocks printed sideways on the sheet, in which case each stamp will not show a complete watermark; and of these again I have seen a block with the vertical division of the sheet

running across the central row."

In addition the stamps have been found with the watermark reversed, indicating that occasionally a sheet has been fed into the press the wrong side up. Inverted watermarks of this Crown and C.C. type are also to be found.

Of this issue, which comprises the same two values—4d. brown and 6d. blue, imperforate—we get the following variations in the watermark—

- Crown C.C. upright (Fig. A).
- " inverted (Fig. C).
- " reversed (Fig. B).
- Portions of the words CROWN COLONIES.
- Bars (*i.e.*, division lines of the panes).

The gum shews the same variation—white and yellow—as in the original issue. The 4d. stamp varies in colour from deep brown to pale brown; the 6d. deep blue to blue, the solid colour in this case presenting a very mottled appearance.

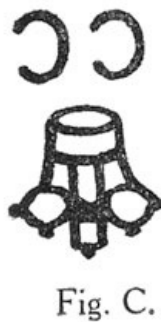
Again, both values are known with the embossing doubly impressed.

[pg 22]

Very few copies of the 4d. of this issue examined shew the spot on the hair, but in the sheet of the 6d. (plate I.) there are faint spots on stamps Nos. 1, 4, 5, 9, 12 and 13.

No. 11 on the same sheet shews the curl and sub-curl joined.

The date of issue of these watermarked stamps is uncertain, but the 6d. was chronicled in *Le Timbre Poste* for December, 1874. The 4d. was not recorded in any of the contemporary magazines, and was probably not issued until some time after the higher denomination.



[pg 25]

CHAPTER IV.

Issue of 1880.

Together with a number of other colonial possessions, Gambia was admitted to the Universal Postal Union on January 1st, 1879, and in June of the following year (1880) a more comprehensive series of postage stamps was issued, all modelled after the same fashion as the two denominations which had done service in the Colony for the previous twelve years. The convenience of perforation was adopted at the same time. The new series comprised the following values, the shades being given in the approximate order of printings—

- ½d. golden yellow, deep golden yellow, pale orange, vermilion, deep orange vermilion, citron,^[1] pale ochre.^[1]
- 1d. lake, deep lake.
- 2d. pale rose, rose, deep rose.
- 3d. pale ultramarine, deep ultramarine, deep blue.
- 4d. sepia brown, deep sepia brown.
- 6d. pale blue, blue, deep blue.
- 1s. bright green, deep green.

[Footnote 1] The ½d. citron and ½d. pale ochre are generally believed to be changelings, due to atmospheric or other influences after the stamps were printed.

[pg 26]

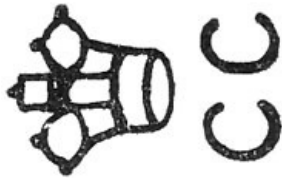


Fig. D.



Fig. E.

The watermark on this issue appears variously upright or sideways, varieties of each being inverted. The normal "sideways" may be taken as from left to right. Portions of the marginal lettering and the vertical division lines of the panes are also to be found. The following is a synopsis of these varieties—

Crown C.C.	vertical	(Fig. A).
"	"	inverted (Fig. C).
"	sideways	(Fig. D).
"	"	inverted (Fig. E).

Portions of words "CROWN COLONIES."

Division lines of the panes.

The subject of perforations is of peculiar interest in this and the next issue of the stamps of Gambia, as while to a certain extent the printings are to be differentiated by shade the chief distinctions may be made in the case of blocks and sheets by the perforations.

At first the stamps were perforated by a single line machine gauging 14. A single line machine, as its name implies, simply makes a single long row of holes in one direction—

.....

In the present case, where the sheets were so small, the row is much longer than necessary, so in the sheets it extends through the margins on all sides, as in [plate II](#).

[pg 29]

The horizontal rows may be perforated first (one row at a time), and then the sheet is turned sideways and the vertical divisions are similarly perforated. A peculiarity of this style of perforating machine is that the points where the vertical lines cross the horizontal lines rarely fail to fall foul of each other, and an effect is produced like this—



Single line perforation. Note the crossing of perforated lines.

In this manner it is possible to tell blocks and pairs of this perforation without any side margins. Single copies perforated in this manner can occasionally be detected by the distance between the vertical perforations. In the later perforation of this issue the distance is fixed (as will be shewn), and the distance is $20\frac{1}{2}$ mm., measuring from perf. point to perf. point across the stamp. Any stamp differing in width to any extent more than $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. from $20\frac{1}{2}$ mm. may therefore be set down as perforated by the single line machine.

[pg 30]

We have seen all the values except the 2d. rose and 1/- green perforated by the single line machine, in practically every case the C.C. watermark being upright, the exception being a strip of three 6d. with the sideways watermark. All the sheets with this perforation appear to have one printer's guide dot in the centre of each side margin.

The next form of perforating machine introduced in later printings of the Crown and C.C. 1880 issue is known as a comb machine. The comb machine perforates three sides of a stamp at once, and the form of the first comb machine was arranged thus—



The arrangement of the teeth of the comb fitted the arrangement of the panes of the regular Colonial postage stamps printed by Messrs. De la Rue & Co., the narrow spaced teeth in the centre marking the dividing space between two horizontal panes.

In perforating the stamps of Gambia in the small sheets of fifteen in three horizontal rows of five, both sides of the machine appear to have been used, the extreme end portion of the comb at either end running off the side margin of the small sheet. When the left portion of the machine was being used the sheet was inserted upright and the top row of stamps perforated first, the effect being that the top margin is not cut through by vertical perforations, and the bottom row is (see [plate III.](#)).

[pg 33]

When the right-hand portion was in use the sheets appear to have been systematically inverted when placed in the machine. This left the bottom margin blank and the top margin cut through. Had the sheet been simply inverted and perforated by the same portion of the machine, as already described, the narrow spaced teeth would have been produced on the left hand margin instead of the right. A comparison of [plates III.](#) and [VI.](#) will shew that the narrow spacing is on the right in both cases, but in [III.](#) the perforating has been started at the top on the left side of

the machine, and in VI. from the bottom on the right side of the machine.

It is possible that sheets exist with the narrow spaced lines of perforation on the left side. We have searched in vain for such varieties, but they may exist. A sheet inverted when placed on the left side of the machine would shew the top margin perforated through, and narrow spaced perforation to left; while a sheet inserted top first on the right hand side would leave the top margin blank and the bottom one perforated through, and the narrow spaced perforation to left.

This comb generally perforates so evenly that there is no clashing of the perforations where the lines meet. Occasionally, however, a sheet may get off the straight and an irregular perforation occurs.

The sheets perforated in this machine generally have one guide dot in the left margin, and three at the right (see sheets [III.-VII.](#), [IX.-XI.](#), [XIV.](#), [XV.](#)).

[pg 34]



Comb perforation. Compare crossing of perforated lines with illustration on [page 29](#).

The ½d. pale orange vermilion exists doubly perforated at the top and sides.

A minor variety of the 2d. rose shews a small white spot ½mm. from the nose. The stamp is No. 6 on the sheet. The variety has been noted on several (not all) the sheets of this value, and in various blocks, pairs and singles.

The left and right hand top stamps (1 and 5) of the 6d. value shew the sloping label, which is now very prominent (see [plate X.](#)).

All the values shew variations in the marks on the back hair and in the curls.

[pg 37]



CHAPTER V.

Issue of 1886-87.

In 1886 a number of the stamps began to appear on the paper watermarked Crown C.A., the initials of "Crown Agents." The colours were changed, and a new value inscribed "2½ PENNY" on the value tablet was added. The values and colours are—

- ½d. grey-green, myrtle-green (shades).
- 1d. carmine, rose-carmine, crimson.
- 2d. orange-yellow, orange, deep orange.
- 2½d. pale ultramarine, deep ultramarine.
- 3d. grey, slate-grey, pearl-grey.
- 4d. brown, deep brown.
- 6d. olive-green, bronze-green, grey-green.
- 1s. violet, deep violet.

All values exist with the embossing double; several with the embossing double, one of the impressions being inverted; part double and treble perforations; and the white and the yellow gum.

The watermark Crown C.A. is uniformly sideways in this issue, the normal position being from right to left (Fig. F.), but it may be found inverted (Fig. G.).

[pg 38]

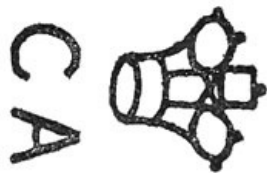


Fig. F.

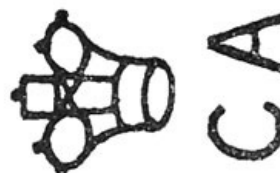


Fig. G.

The method of cutting up the sheets of Crown C.A. paper was to guillotine the half sheets horizontally in half and then twice vertically, dividing each horizontal half into three small sheets, the half C.A. sheet of paper yielding six small Gambia sheets (plates XII. and XIII.). The operators both at the guillotine and at the press seem to have taken the utmost care to arrange all the small sheets uniformly for passing through the press, as the varieties shewing the watermark from left to right are rare. The diagrams on plates XII. and XIII. will illustrate more clearly than a verbal explanation the precise method of dividing up the Crown C.A. paper.

The early printings of the Crown C.A. issue were perforated with the comb machine described in the previous chapter, but in the later printings a new comb machine was introduced, which has not the narrow spaced teeth in the margin, and, consequently, has not the double row of perforation on the right hand margins of the sheets. The perforations produced by the two machines gauge the same, and are not distinguishable in single specimens or blocks, but only in sheets or specimens with pieces of margins. The effect of the two different combs on the sheet may be compared on the two sheets of the 6d. value illustrated on plates X. and XI. We may note (plate VIII.) the second comb with the teeth extending through the top margin, leaving the bottom margin blank, shewing that some of the sheets were perforated from the bottom, which would produce this effect.

[pg 41]

Unused imperforate copies exist of all values in the following shades—

Imperforate	½d. grey-green.
"	1d. pale crimson.
"	2d. orange-yellow.
"	2½d. pale ultramarine.
"	3d. pearl-grey.
"	4d. brown.
"	6d. slate-green.
"	1s. deep violet.

Copies in trial colours, perforated 12 instead of 14, exist as follows—

- ½d. rose.
- ½d. violet.
- ½d. dull green.
- ½d. pale dull orange.
- 3d. olive-green.

On some of the sheets of the ½d. value stamp 2 shews a slightly elongated left stroke of the letter m in Gambia; No. 5 on the same sheet shews a similar defect in the right stroke of the letter. (See [plate III.](#), which reproduction, however, only shews the variety on stamp 2.) Stamps Nos. 1, 12, 13 on the same sheet illustrated shew a peculiarity in the form of a broken nose. We have not been able to trace other copies shewing a similar defect, so possibly it is simply due to over-inking or faulty inking of the colour plate.

[pg 42]

The plate of the 3d. was altered in the final printing, two additional printers' guide dots being added in the left margin, and the top and bottom dot on the right being removed ([plate VIII.](#)). This was printed in pearl-grey only.

The early printings of the 6d. value shew the sloping labels; they also shew the slight enlargement of the stamps in the top row. These varieties occur in the olive-green, bronze-green, and grey-green shades. Later a new plate was made without the defect in the top row, and this was printed in grey-green only. (Cp. plates [XI.](#) and [XIV.](#))

It may be noted that there are two varieties of the overprint on the SPECIMEN stamps of this series, one having the letters sloping upwards from left to right, the other being horizontal.



[pg 45]



CHAPTER VI.

Queen's Head Series, 1898.



On the 31st January, 1898, the following notice was issued in reference to the postage stamps of the Colony:—

"WITHDRAWAL OF PRESENT ISSUE OF
GAMBIA POSTAGE STAMPS.

"On the 1st May, 1898, the present issue, if not previously exhausted, of all denominations of Postage Stamps in the Gambia that are then in the hands of the Government will be destroyed, and a complete new set of stamps will then be put in circulation.

"ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE,
BATHURST, GAMBIA,
31st January, 1898."

[pg 46]

After being faithful for nearly thirty years to the graceful design of the "cameo" stamps the Colony adopted the regular De la Rue type printed from a general key plate which did duty for a number of colonial issues.

Essays were prepared by making impressions from this key plate, shewing the profile of the Queen to left in a circle, and the words POSTAGE—POSTAGE at the sides, the top tablet being left blank for the name of the Colony, and a space for the sexagonal tablet of value at bottom also being left blank. The essays consist of such impressions with the name GAMBIA and the proposed values painted in by hand, to shew the approximate effect of the stamps which would be produced from this key plate. Only a very few such essays are known.

The values which were actually produced in the new series were—

- ½d. dull green and green (plates 2 and 3).
- 1d. carmine and carmine (plate 2).
- 1d. deep carmine and deep carmine (plate 3).
- 2d. orange and mauve (plate 2).
- 2½d. ultramarine and ultramarine (plate 2).
- 3d. mauve and pale ultramarine (plate 2).
- 3d. deep mauve and deep ultramarine (plate 3).
- 4d. brown and ultramarine (plate 2).
- 6d. olive-green and carmine (plate 2).
- 1s. violet and green (plate 2).

All the stamps were printed at two impressions, the general design being printed from the key plate, and the name GAMBIA and the value tablet by a "duty" plate printed separately. In the ½d., 1d. and 2½d. values, however, both key and duty plates were impressed in the same colour. The plates are constructed to print sheets of 120 stamps, divided in two panes of 60 stamps each. The plate number appears in the margin above and below each pane (plate XVI.). It consists of an uncoloured figure on a circular ground of colour, and is printed by the key plate. The plate numbered "2" was used for all the values in the set, but later printings of the ½d., 1d. and 3d. were printed from plate III. In the case of the ½d. and 1d. the printings from plate III. do not shew any marked variation in shade; but in the case of the 3d. both the mauve and the ultramarine colours are distinctively deeper.

[pg 49]

The perforation throughout gauges 14; the watermark is Crown C.A. as in the last issue, but upright instead of sideways, as these POSTAGE—POSTAGE plates were constructed to fit the watermarked paper.



[pg 50]



CHAPTER VII.

King's Head Series, 1902-1906.



The change from the Queen's Head type to the King's Head type of design came in 1902, the new general Colonial key plate being used. It is numbered 1 in a similar manner to the numbering on the Queen's Head plates. All the denominations in the previous set were repeated, and a 2s. value was added; later (May, 1905) three new stamps appeared of the face values 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d. and 3s. respectively. Of these three denominations it is stated that only 6000^[2] copies of each were printed. The stamps, which were perforated 14 and were printed on the same paper (Crown and C.A.) as the last issue, comprised the following values—

[pg 51]



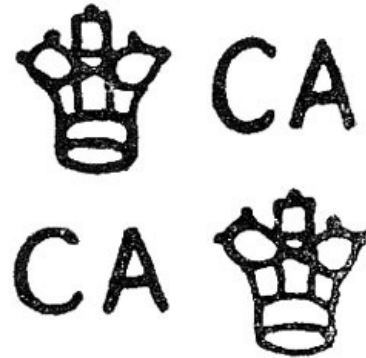
Watermarked Crown C.A.

- ½d. green and green.
- 1d. carmine and carmine.
- 2d. orange and mauve.
- 2½d. ultramarine and ultramarine.
- 3d. magenta and ultramarine.
- 4d. brown and ultramarine.
- 6d. sage-green and carmine.
- 1s. violet and green.

- 1s. 6d. green and carmine on yellow paper.
- 2s. deep slate and orange.
- 2s. 6d. purple and brown on yellow paper.
- 3s. carmine and green on yellow paper.

Footnote 2: Compare numbers overprinted in 1906. (Chapter VIII.)

In May, 1905, appeared also three new values printed on multiple Crown C.A. paper, each stamp shewing portions of two or more watermark designs instead of one more or less complete design as heretofore. The new values were the 5d., 7½d. and 10d. These being rather unusual denominations, their appearance caused considerable ferment among collectors, who ascribed their issue to motives not strictly associated with legitimate postal business. Reference to the Post Office Ordinance No. 6 of 1897 (quoted in Chapter I.) will shew that the fees for insured parcels in force in the Gambia were 5d. for compensation up to £12, 7½d. up to £24, and 10d. up to £36; so it is not unreasonable if, as one may assume, the colonists availed themselves of these rates of insurance, that there was a use for such denominations.



[pg 52]

The new multiple watermarked paper had been adopted for the 1d. value in 1904, and was during 1905-6 introduced for all the regular denominations except the 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d. and 3s. On this paper, therefore, we get the following—

Multiple Crown C.A.

- ½d. green and green.
- 1d. carmine and carmine.
- 2d. orange and mauve.
- 2½d. ultramarine and ultramarine.
- 3d. magenta and ultramarine.
- 4d. brown and ultramarine.
- 5d. grey and black.
- 6d. sage-green and carmine.
- 7½d. green and carmine.
- 10d. olive-brown and carmine.
- 1s. violet and green.
- 2s. deep slate and orange.



[pg 53]



CHAPTER VIII.

Provisional Issue 1906.



The next and only remaining issue we have to describe are in the nature of Provisionals issued during a temporary shortage of halfpenny and penny stamps. The Bathurst correspondent of *Ewen's Weekly Stamp News*, writing April 30, 1906, communicated the following information, which is published in the issue of that journal for May 26, 1906:—

[pg 54]

"The surcharged penny and halfpenny postage stamps on the 3/- and 2/6 denominations respectively were issued on the 10th instant, and withdrawn on the 23rd April. The issue was necessary owing to a delay in receipt of a requisition for stamps sent to England on the 9th February, and by the abnormal sales, from some unknown reason, of the usual penny and halfpenny stamps during February and March.

"A very small issue was made pending the arrival of the mail on the 24th, by which the indent above mentioned was received. The total issue was 4500 penny and 3780 halfpenny."

The stamps overprinted to provide these emergency supplies were the 2s. 6d. purple and brown on yellow paper, which was overprinted for the halfpenny, and the 3s. carmine and green on yellow paper for the penny overprint.

The surcharging was effected in the Colony. In the case of the ½d. the overprint consists of the word

HALF
PENNY

in two lines of block capitals, and below this are two bars formed by ordinary printers' rules about 8½mm. long cancelling the figures denoting the original value of the stamp.

The type and rules were set up to overprint the stamps thirty at a time (5 horizontal rows of 6 stamps); thus the complete sheet of 120 stamps had to pass four times through the press. There is a slight variation in the distance between the bottom of the letters comprising the word PENNY and the uppermost bar, in the third and fourth rows of the setting. In rows 1, 2 and 5 the bar is 5mm. away from the bottom of the type; in rows 3 and 4 it is only 4mm. distant.

The first stamp in the second row of the setting is a variety in which the E of PENNY is broken and the word reads PFENNY. The only other variety occurring in the setting is a slightly depressed Y of PENNY. This occurs in the first stamp in the 5th row.

[pg 55]

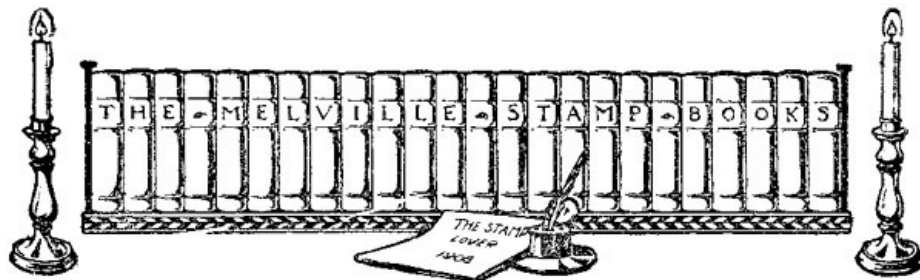
The 3s. stamp was overprinted with the words "ONE PENNY" in one line of small capitals. The overprint was applied to a complete pane of 60 stamps at a time, so that the entire sheet of 120 was surcharged at two impressions instead of four, as in the ½d. on 2s. 6d. stamp. The only varieties which have been recorded of this ONE PENNY overprint are of slight defects, possibly occurring only in particular impressions. It, however, exists with the overprint double.

The issue of these two Provisional overprints, following upon the appearance in 1905 of the 5d., 7½d. and 10d. stamps, brought a good deal of censure from philatelists, who considered that the Colony was descending to undignified means of increasing the revenue by the sale of stamps to collectors. At the instance of Lord Crewe an inquiry has lately been held into the reasons for the emission of various Colonial postage stamps, and the report of the Governor of the Gambia is quoted in the printed report of the Commission:—

"The Governor of the Colony states that as the supply of the ½d. and 1d. stamps had

been exhausted before the arrival of a new supply which had been ordered, no [regular] stamps of these denominations were available from the 2nd to the 10th April, letters requiring such postage being stamped 'Postage Paid.' The surcharged stamps were on sale from the 10th to the 24th of April, the date on which the new supply became available. A surplus was left over, which was destroyed with proper precautions."

The unsold balance of the Provisional ½d. stamps on hand was destroyed "under direction from the Secretary of State and by a special Board appointed by His Excellency the Acting Governor" on October 16, 1906. How small the "unsold balance" was is not stated.



CHAPTER IX.

Bibliography.

INDEX TO THE CHIEF PRINTED ARTICLES AND PAPERS IN PHILATELIC PERIODICALS.

ABBREVIATIONS.

- 2 A.J.P.— American Journal of Philately, 2nd series.
- E.W.S.N.— Ewen's Weekly Stamp News.
- G.S.W.— Gibbons Stamp Weekly.
- M.W.S.N.— Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News.
- P.J.G.B.— Philatelic Journal of Great Britain.
- P.R.— Philatelic Record.
- P.S.— The Postage Stamp.
- S.— Stamps.
- S.C.F.— Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly.
- S.C.M.— Stamp Collectors' Magazine.
- S.G.M.J.— Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal.

NOTE.—Roman figures thus—V.—denote the volume, and Arabic figures—135—indicate the page. In a few cases the date takes the place of the volume number. In E.W.S.N. the number of the issue alone is given.

COLONIAL POST OFFICES COMMISSION [Ward], G.S.W., IX., 88.

Contains the report of the Governor of the Gambia on the Provisional stamps of 1906.

CORRECTED PLATE, 6d., S.C.F., III., 207.

FORGERIES, 6d. [Hilckes], S.C.F., II., 217.

GENERAL. The Postage Stamps, etc. ... of the British Colonies, Possessions and Protectorates in Africa. Part II., London, 1900.

The Philatelic Society's work on Africa, pp. 65-72, covers the issues of Gambia adhesives from 1869-1898; also the postcards and reply paid cards.

— S.G.M.J., VI., 26, 144; [Pemberton], P.J.G.B., XVII., 78; [Barnsdall], G.S.W., VIII., 65, 81; [Nankivell], P.S., II., 3; 2 A.J.P., IV., 498; [Lehner], S., I., 90; [Clark], S., I., 102, reprinted in M.W.S.N., X., 255.

ISSUE OF 1869, S.C.M., VII., 57.

— Date of [Lehner], S., I., 90; [Nankivell], S., I., 106.

MINOR VARIETIES. Sloping label. [Hilckes], S.C.F., II., 253.

PERFORATIONS [Bacon], P.R., XXV., 3. ✱ Plates. [Napier & Bacon], S.G.M.J., XIV., 97. ✱ Plates.

PROVISIONALS, E.W.S.N., 347, 348, 350, 352, 353, 360, 373.

SHEETS [Thiele], *The Adhesive*, July, 1904.

SPECULATION, S.C.F., VI., 142.

VALUES, S.C.F., VI., 119, 126.

WATERMARKS [Evans], P.R., IV., 224.

[pg 58]



CHAPTER X.

Check List.

1869.—No watermark. Imperforate. White gum.

4d. deep chocolate-brown.

4d. brown.

4d. pale brown.

Yellow gum.

Double embossing.

6d. deep blue.

6d. blue.

Yellow gum.

Label sloping to right.

" " left.

Double embossing.

1874.—Watermarked vertically Crown C.C. Imperforate. White gum.

4d. deep brown.

4d. brown.

4d. pale brown.

Double embossing.

Yellow gum.

Watermark inverted.

" reversed.

" inverted and reversed.

" bars (division lines of the panes).

" portions of words CROWN COLONIES.

6d. deep blue.

6d. blue.

Double embossing.

Yellow gum.

Watermark inverted.

" reversed.

" inverted and reversed.

" bars.

" portions of words CROWN COLONIES.

1880.—Watermarked Crown C.C. vertical. Perf. 14. White gum.

[pg 59]

½d. golden-yellow.
 ½d. deep golden-yellow,
 ½d. pale orange-vermilion.
 ½d. deep orange-vermilion.
 ½d. citron.
 ½d. pale ochre.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " sideways.
 " " inverted.
 " portions of words Crown Colonies.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Single line perf.
 1st comb perf.
 Double perf. top and sides (pale orange-vermilion).
 1d. lake.
 1d. deep lake.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " sideways.
 " " inverted.
 " portions of words Crown Colonies.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Single line perf.
 1st comb perf.

 2d. pale rose.
 2d. rose.
 2d. deep rose.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " sideways.
 " " inverted.
 " portions of words Crown Colonies.
 " division lines of the panes.
 ? Single line perf.
 1st comb perf.
 Dot variety.
 3d. pale ultramarine.
 3d. deep ultramarine.
 3d. deep blue.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " sideways.
 " " inverted.
 " portions of words Crown Colonies.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Single line perf.
 1st comb perf.
 4d. sepia-brown.
 4d. deep sepia-brown.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " sideways.
 " " inverted.
 " portions of words Crown Colonies.
 " division lines of the panes.

Single line perf.
 1st comb perf.
 6d. pale blue.
 6d. blue.

 6d. deep blue.
 Slanting label to right.
 " " left.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " sideways.
 " " inverted.
 " portions of words Crown Colonies.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Single line perf. (vertical watermark).
 " " (sideways watermark).
 1st comb perf.
 1s. bright green.
 1s. deep green.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " sideways.
 " " inverted.
 " portions of words Crown Colonies.
 " division lines of the panes.
 ? Single line perf.
 1st comb perf.

1886-7.—Watermarked Crown C.A. sideways. Comb perf. 14.

½d. grey-green.
 ½d. myrtle-green.
 Double embossing.
 " " one inverted.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (grey-green).
 Treble perf. at bottom.
 Left stroke of M long.
 Right " "
 Sheets—1st and 2nd comb perforations.

1d. carmine.
 1d. rose-carmine.
 1d. crimson.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (pale crimson).
 Sheets—1st and 2nd comb perforations.
 2d. orange-yellow.
 2d. orange.
 2d. deep orange.

 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (orange-yellow).

Sheets—1st and 2nd comb perforations.
 2½d. pale ultramarine.
 2½d. deep ultramarine.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (pale ultramarine).
 Sheets—1st and 2nd comb perforations.

3d. grey.
 3d. slate-grey.
 3d. pearl-grey.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (pearl-grey).
 Sheets—1st and 2nd comb perforations.
 Final printing, 3 guide dots in left margin (pearl-grey only).

[pg 63]

4d. brown.
 4d. deep brown.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark inverted.
 " portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (brown).
 Sheets—1st comb perforation.

6d. olive-green.
 6d. bronze-green.
 6d. grey-green.
 Label slanting to right.
 " " left.
 Double embossing.
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (slate-green).
 Sheets—1st and 2nd comb perforations.
 New plate without defective top row.

1s. violet (shades).
 1s. deep violet.
 Double embossing.
 " " one inverted (violet).
 Yellow gum.
 Watermark portions of words CROWN AGENTS.
 " division lines of the panes.
 Imperforate (deep violet).
 Sheets—1st comb perforation.

[pg 64]

1898.—Watermarked Crown C.A. (upright). Perf. 14.

[NOTE.—Unless otherwise stated, the plate number is 2.]

½d. dull green and green (plates 2 and 3).
 1d. carmine and carmine.
 1d. deep carmine and deep carmine (plate 3).
 2d. orange and mauve.
 2½d. ultramarine and ultramarine.
 3d. mauve and pale ultramarine.
 Imperforate.
 3d. deep purple and deep ultramarine (plate 3).

- 4d. brown and ultramarine.
- 6d. olive-green and carmine.
- 1s. violet and green.

1902-1905.—Watermarked Crown C.A. Perf. 14.

[Printed from [plate 1](#) in each case.]

- ½d. green and green.
- 1d. carmine and carmine.
- 2d. orange and mauve.
- 2½d. ultramarine and ultramarine.
- 3d. magenta and ultramarine.
- 4d. brown and ultramarine.
- 6d. sage-green and carmine.
- 1s. violet and green.
- 1s. 6d. green and carmine on yellow paper.
- 2s. deep slate and orange.
- 2s. 6d. purple and brown on yellow paper.
- 3s. carmine and green on yellow paper.

[pg 65]

1904-1905.—Watermarked Multiple Crown C.A. Perf. 14.

- ½d. green and green.
- 1d. carmine and carmine.
- 2d. orange and mauve.
- 2½d. ultramarine and ultramarine.
- 3d. magenta and ultramarine.
- 4d. brown and ultramarine.
- 5d. grey and black.
- 6d. sage-green and carmine.
- 7½d. green and carmine.
- 10d. olive-brown and carmine.
- 1s. violet and green.
- 2s. deep slate and orange.

1906 (April 10).—Provisional Issue. Overprinted in black.

HALF on 2s. 6d. purple and brown on yellow
PENNY paper.

5mm. between letters and bars.

4mm. " "

Depressed y in PENNY.

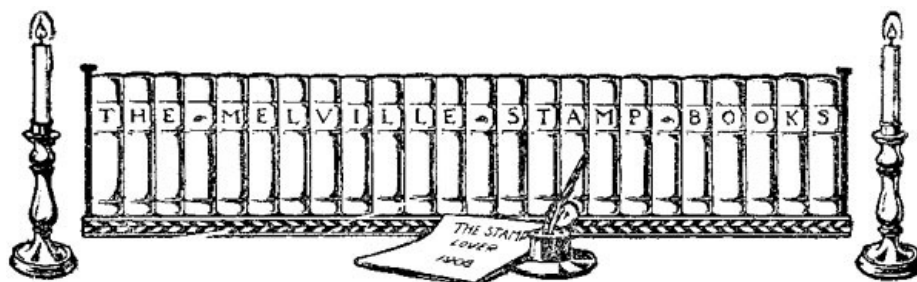
ONE PENNY on 3s. carmine and green on yellow paper.

Double overprint.

Depressed y in PENNY.

" E "

[pg 66]



APPENDIX.

Notes on the Postmarks.

By DOUGLAS ELLIS.

The first Gambia stamps appeared early in 1869, and postmarks of that year are usually composed of a circle with "Gambia" across the centre in a straight line, and the date in two lines below and a control letter above.

This postmark is usually in red, but is also found in black. It was apparently only in use for a short time, being superseded by a circular postmark of the same size, but with "Gambia" at top

and "Paid" at bottom, both following the line of the circle.

The day and month are in a straight line across the centre of the circle, with the year (last two figures only) below and a control letter above. This, in the early dated specimens, is A, followed by B and then C. The postmark is always in red down to the early part of 1887.

On the early imperforate stamps we find a similar postmark in black, but lettered "Gambia" above and "Unpaid" below. This was probably intended for use on letters posted without a stamp. The control letter is A.

[pg 67]

From 1887 to 1892 the Gambia-Paid postmark appears in black. The control letters are B or C.

In 1892 this was superseded by a fresh cancellation with "Bathurst" above and "Gambia" below, both following the line of the circle, the date across the centre as before, and the control letter being C.

The lettering may be found in two sizes; on one the distance between the B of Bathurst and the G of Gambia is 3mm. and on the other 6mm.

In 1895 the control letter C was replaced by a six-pointed *, and this cancellation is still in use.

About 1901 a special postmark for Registered letters was brought into use, consisting of a large ellipse with "Registered" above and "Gambia" below, both following the line of curve, and with date in centre and control letter above, either B or C, the latter often being found reversed or upside down. This is still in use.

From 1895 onwards stamps may be found cancelled with a circular postmark with "Received" above and "Gambia" below, and either a control letter C or a six-pointed *. Possibly this was a Fiscal cancellation wrongly used on postage stamps.

Most Gambia stamps, from the C.C. perforated issue onwards, may be found with a cancellation consisting of seven parallel bars forming a circle of 19mm. diameter, the two outside bars being rounded off to form part of the circle. Though this can be found on the last issue of Queen's Head stamps, it does not appear to be now used.

On the 1887 and later issues we find a cancellation composed of four concentric circles, the diameter of the largest being 18mm.

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Many letters appear to have been posted on board the mail steamer, or sent from the post office without the stamp being cancelled, as Gambia stamps are found with the mail steamer postmark, which consists of two circles with "Paquebot" above, and either "Plymouth" or, "Liverpool" below, both being between the two circles.

The date, comprising not only the year and month but day and hour, is in three lines in the centre.

Many Gambia stamps can also be found postmarked "Freetown, Sierra Leone," or "Registered, Sierra Leone," but as we have no record of Gambia stamps being used to defray postage from Sierra Leone, we must conclude that they were sent on by a steamer which did not possess a post office, and cancelled at Sierra Leone before being shipped on the mail steamer.

Stamps of Gambia can also occasionally be found with the postmark of the French Colony of Senegambia.



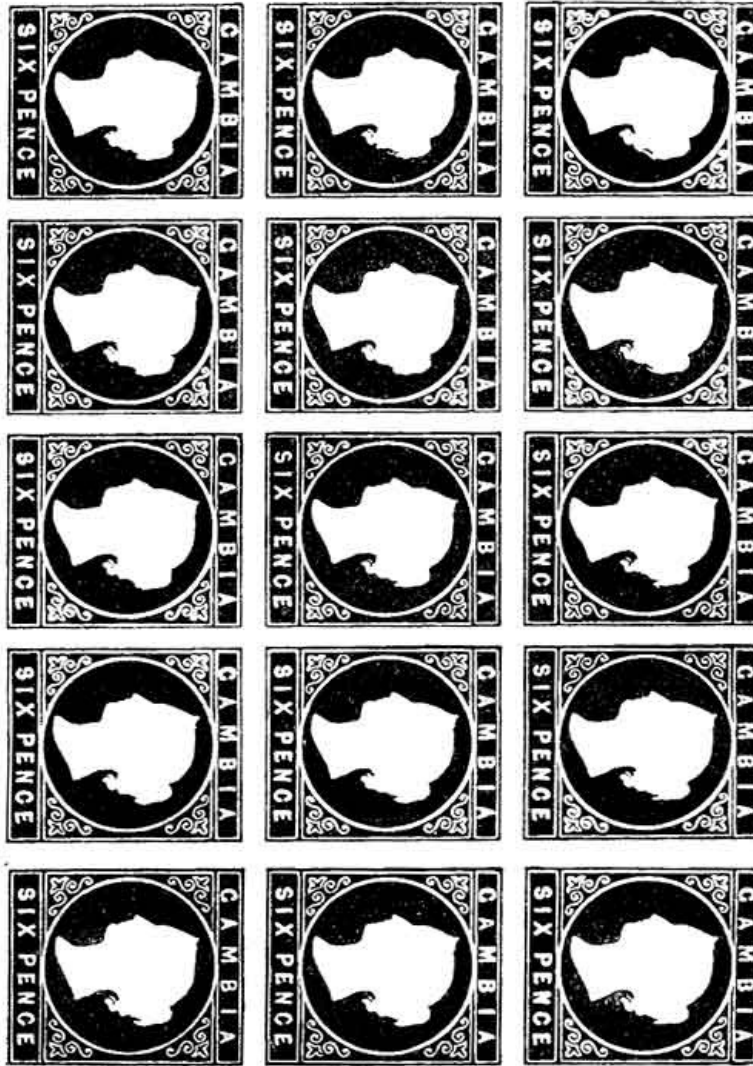


Plate I.—6d. Imperforate.

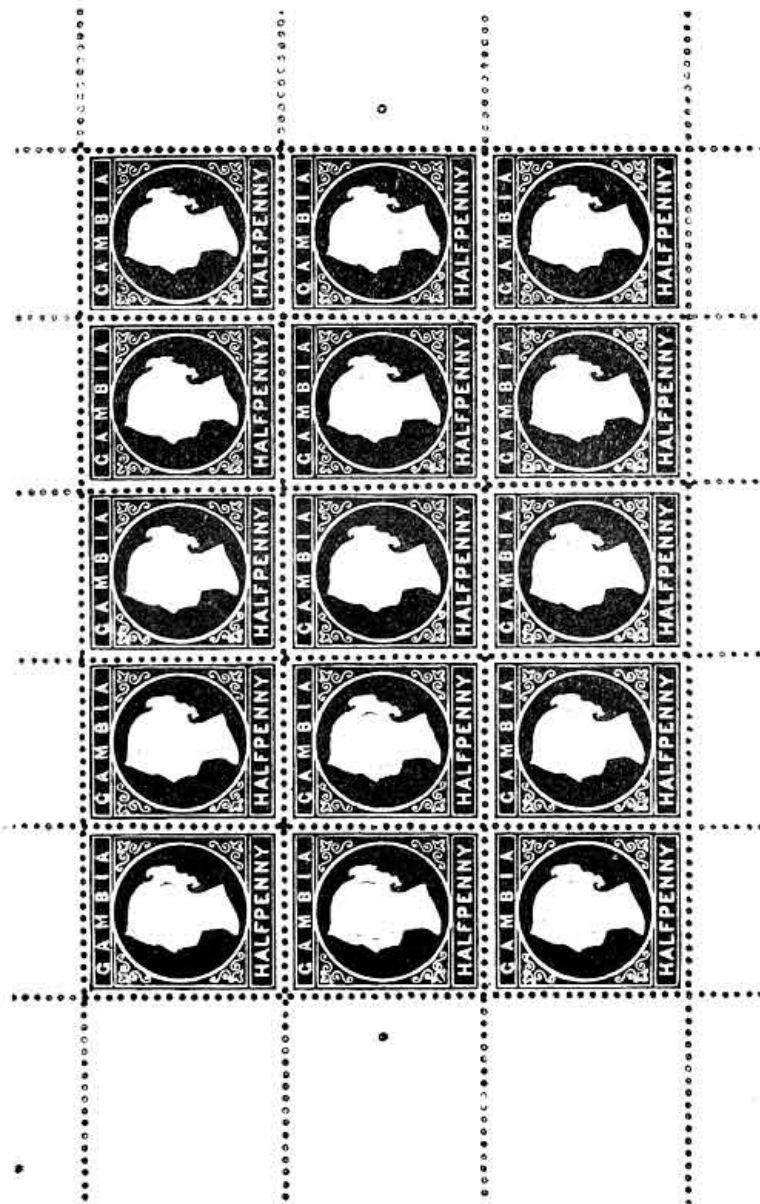


Plate II.— $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Single line perforation.

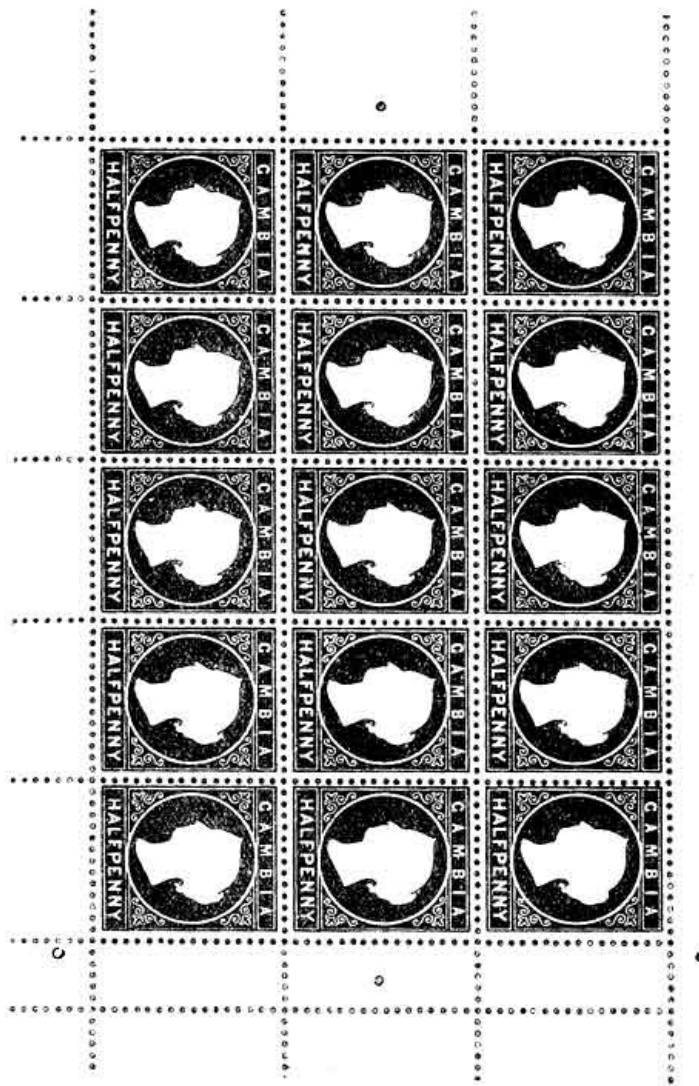


Plate III.— $\frac{1}{2}$ d. First comb perforation (points down).

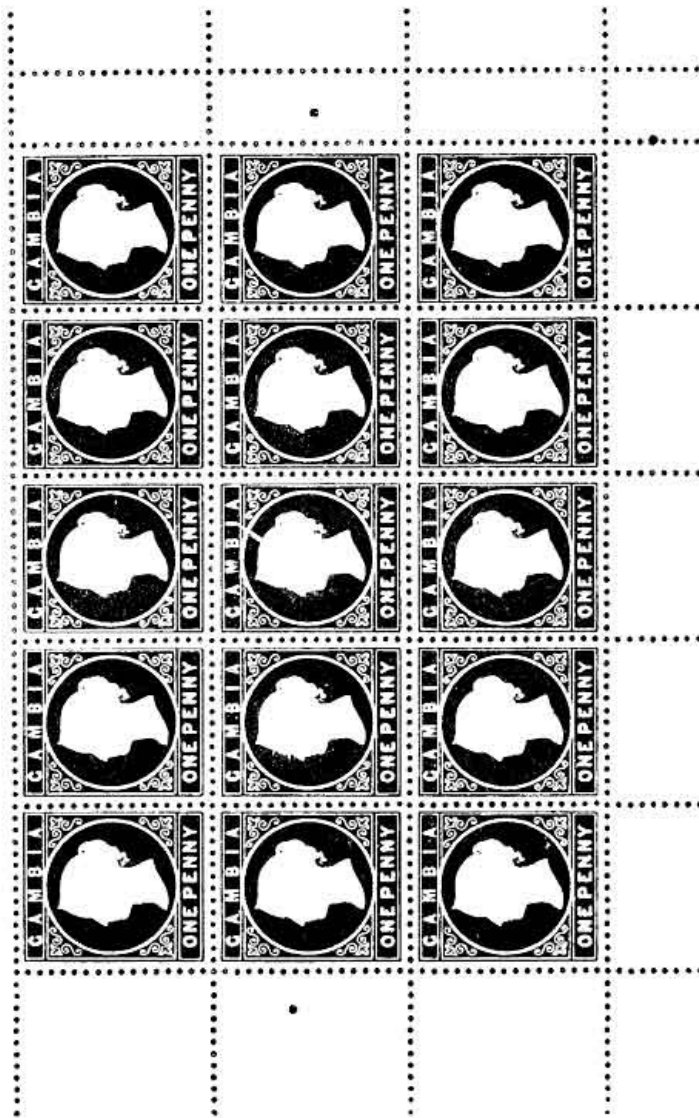


Plate IV.—1d. First comb perforation.

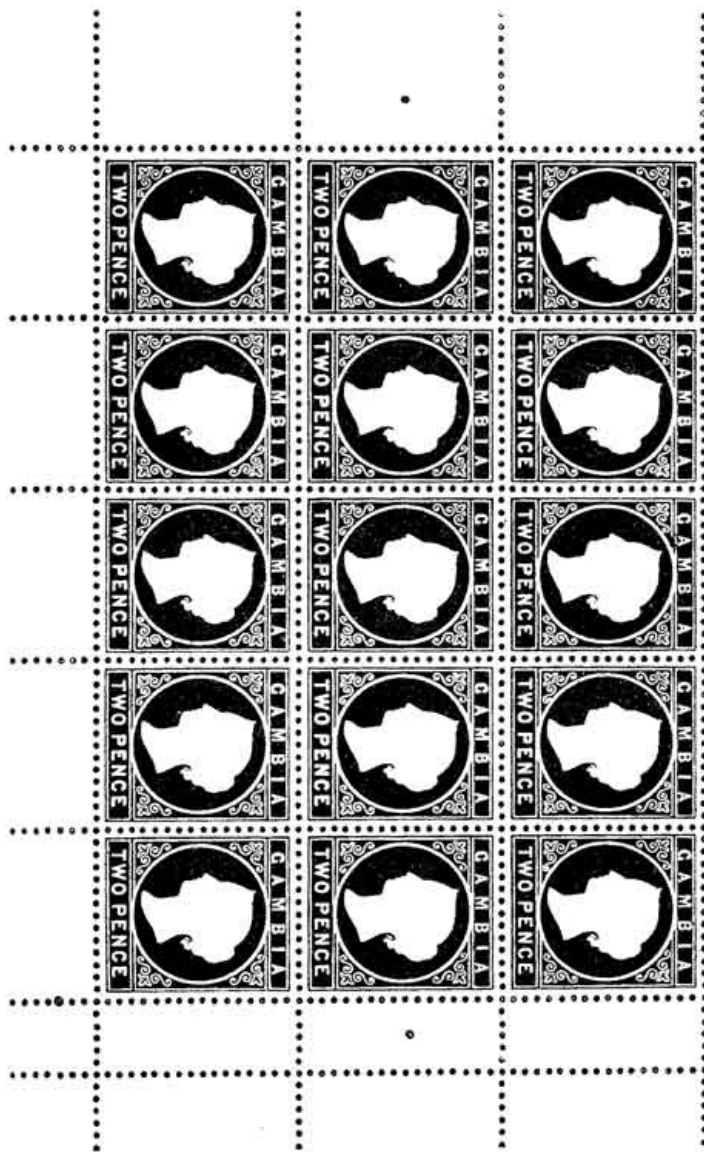


Plate V.—2d. First comb perforation.

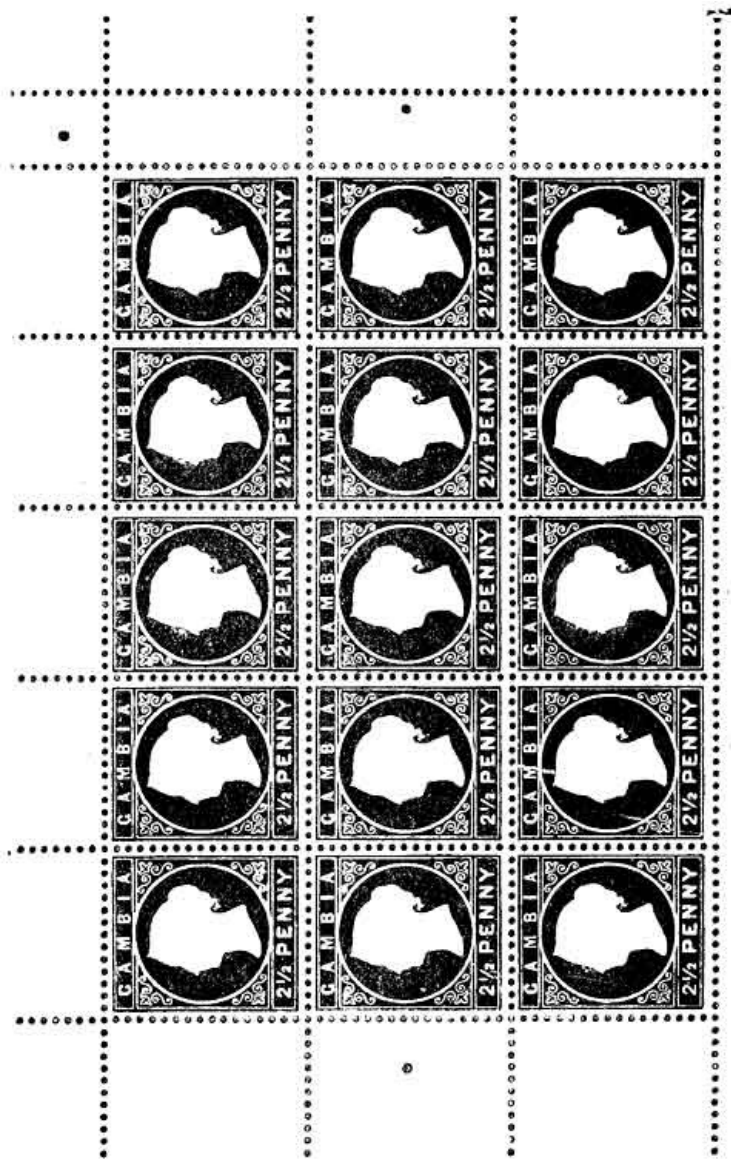


Plate VI.—2½d. First comb perforation (points up).

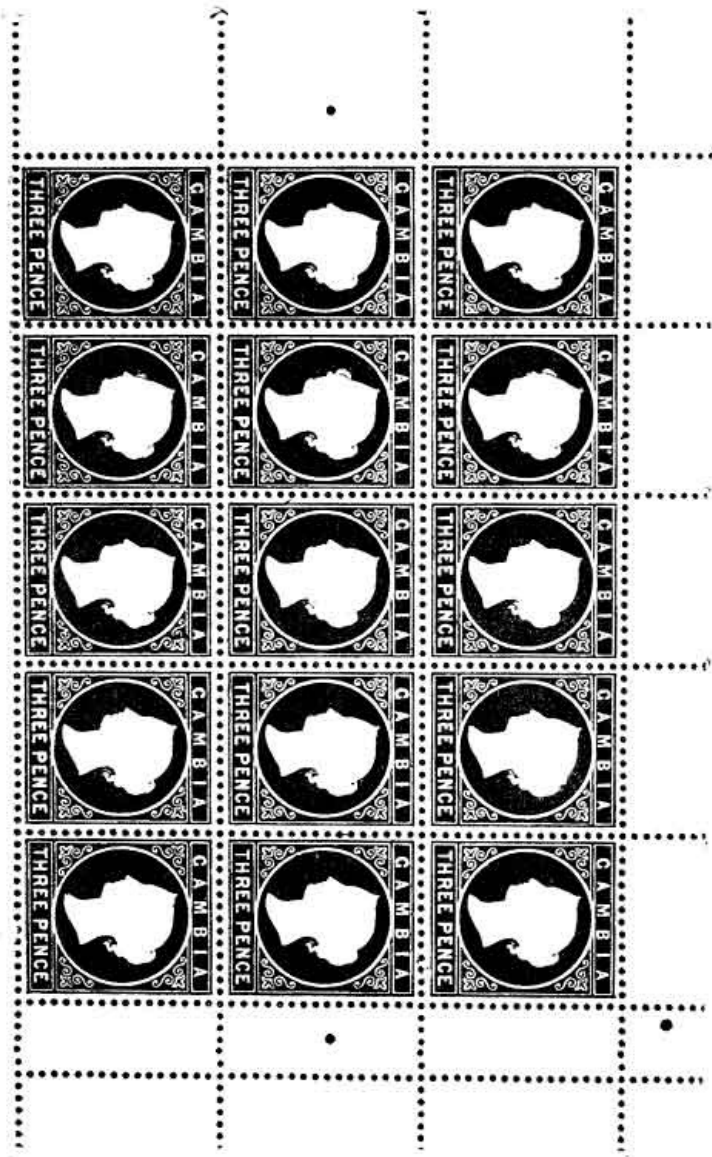


Plate VII.—3d. First comb perforation. Three guide dots to right.

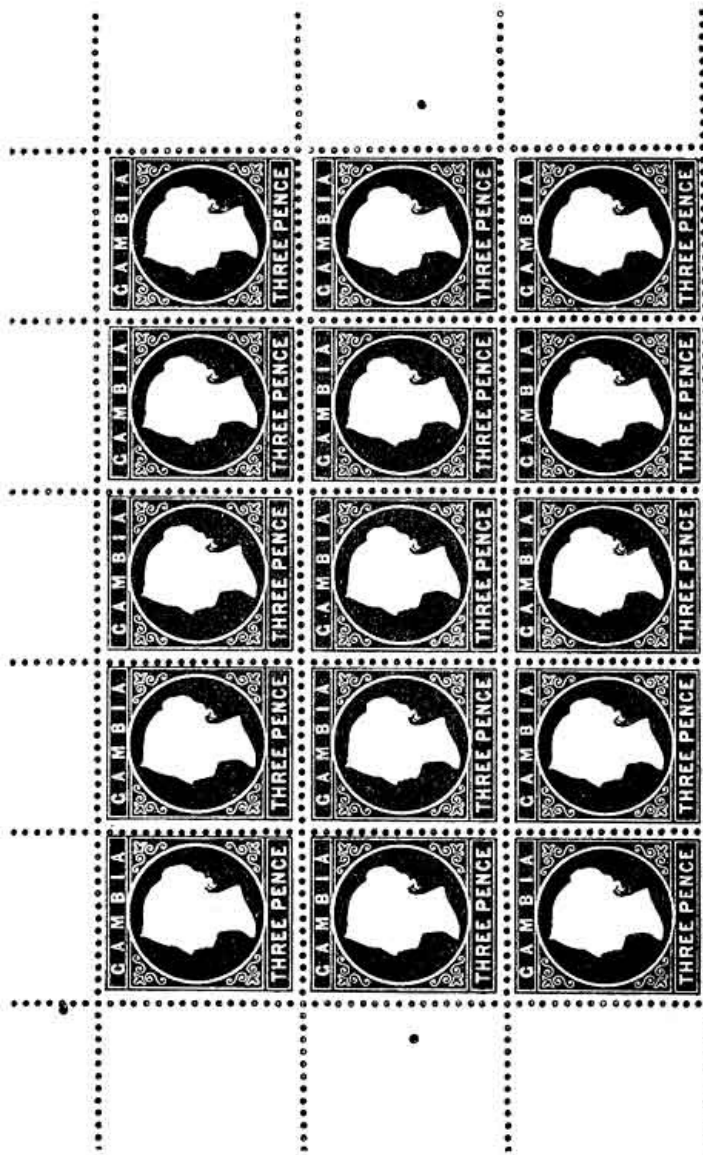


Plate VIII.—3d. Second comb perforation. Three guide dots to left.

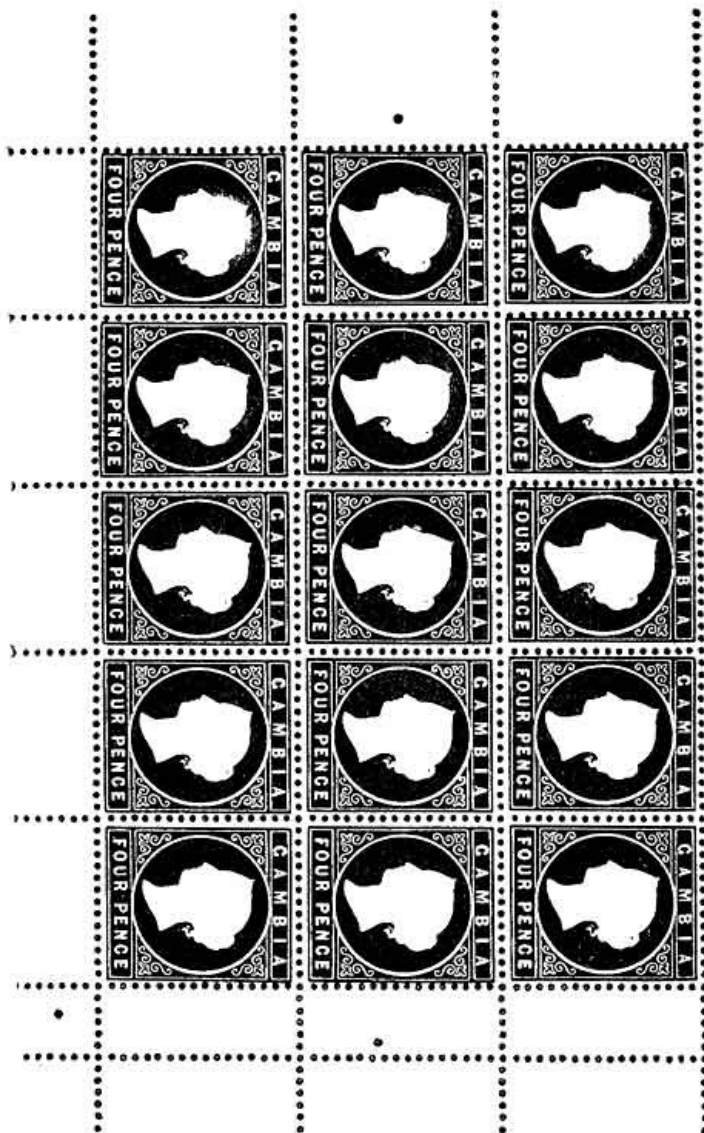


Plate IX.—4d. First comb perforation.

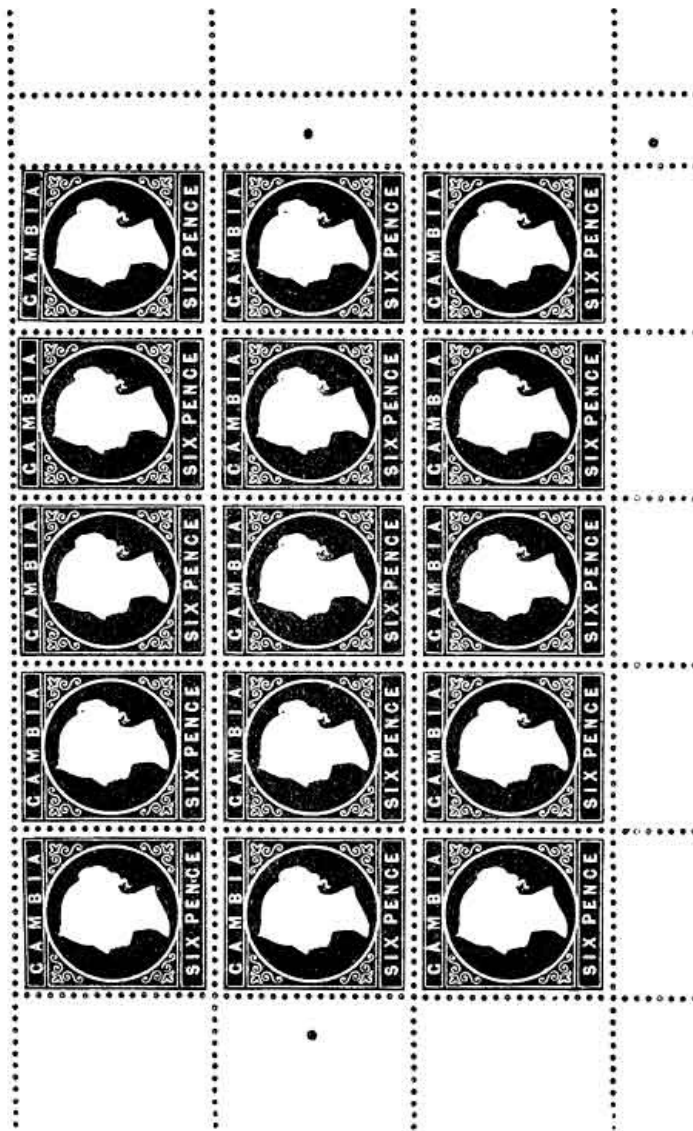


Plate X.—6d. First comb perforation (sloping label stamps, 1 and 5).

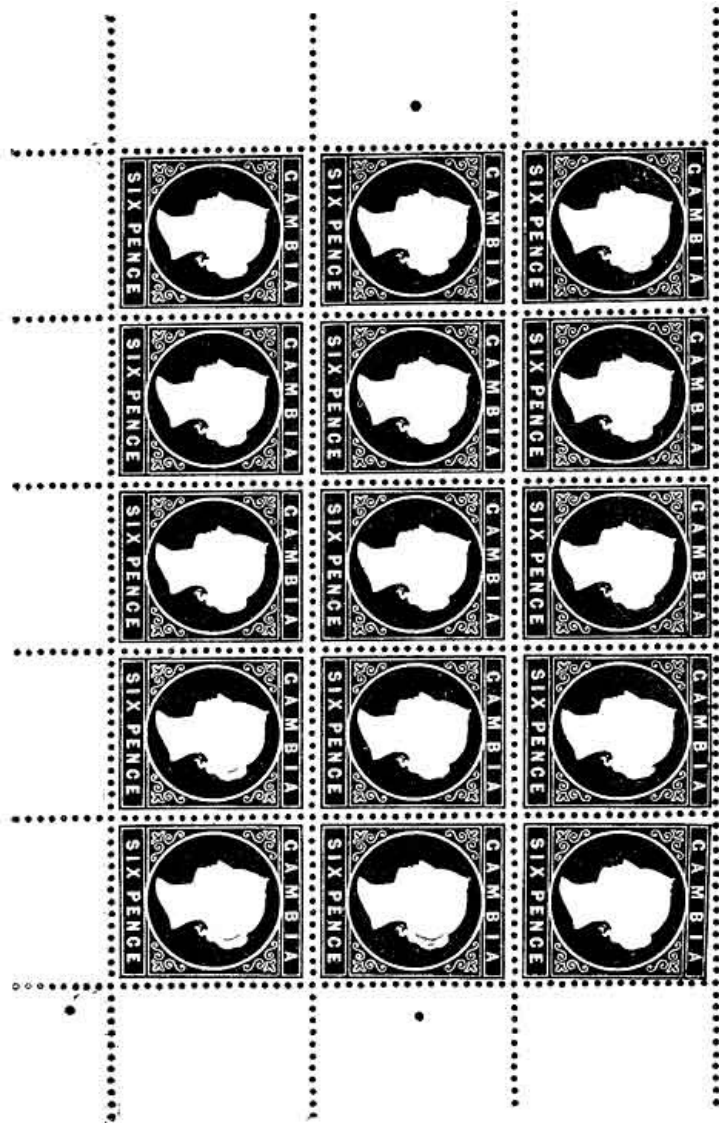


Plate XI.—6d. Second comb perforation (sloping label stamps, 1 and 5).

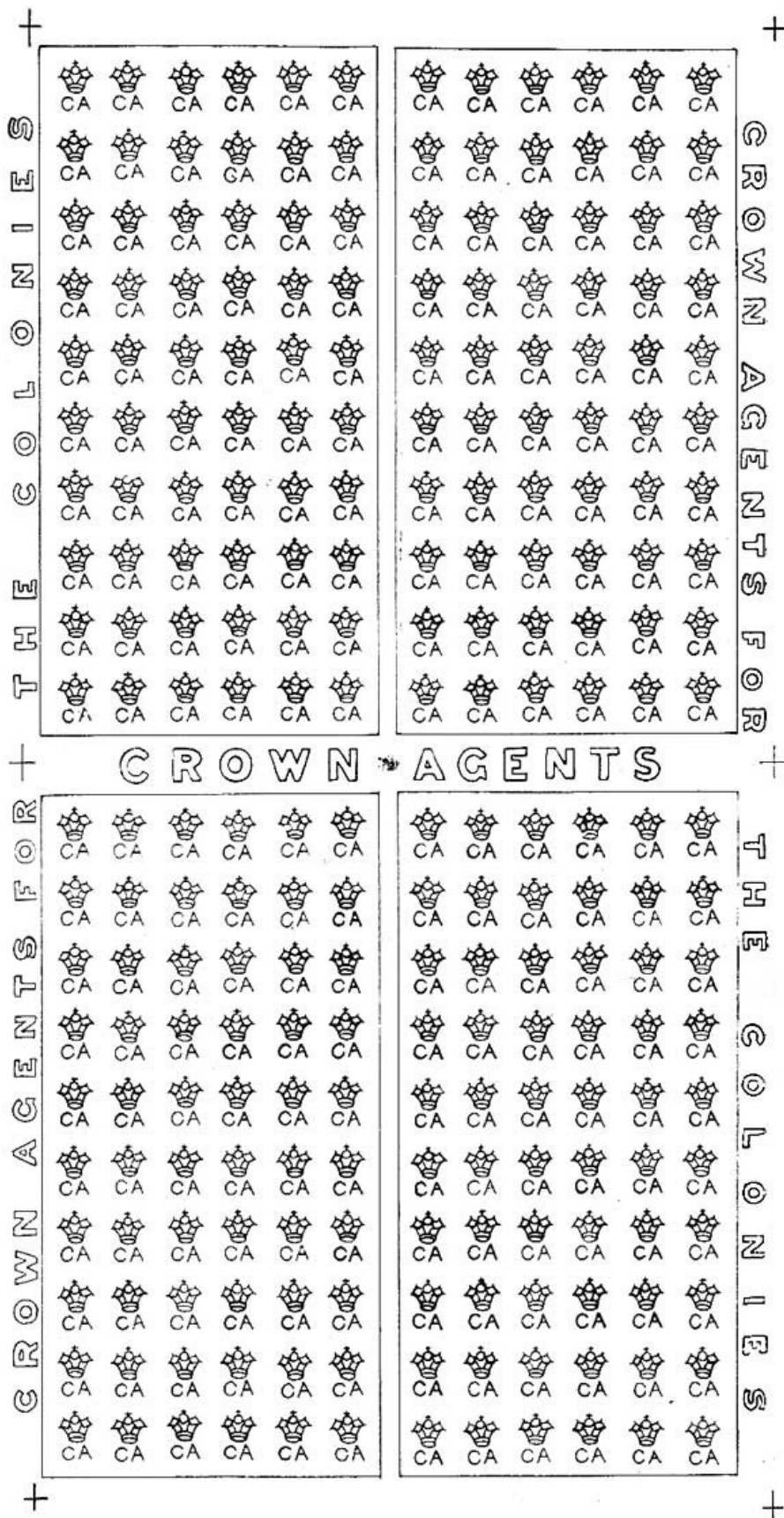


Plate XII.—Diagram of an uncut sheet of "Crown C.A." paper.

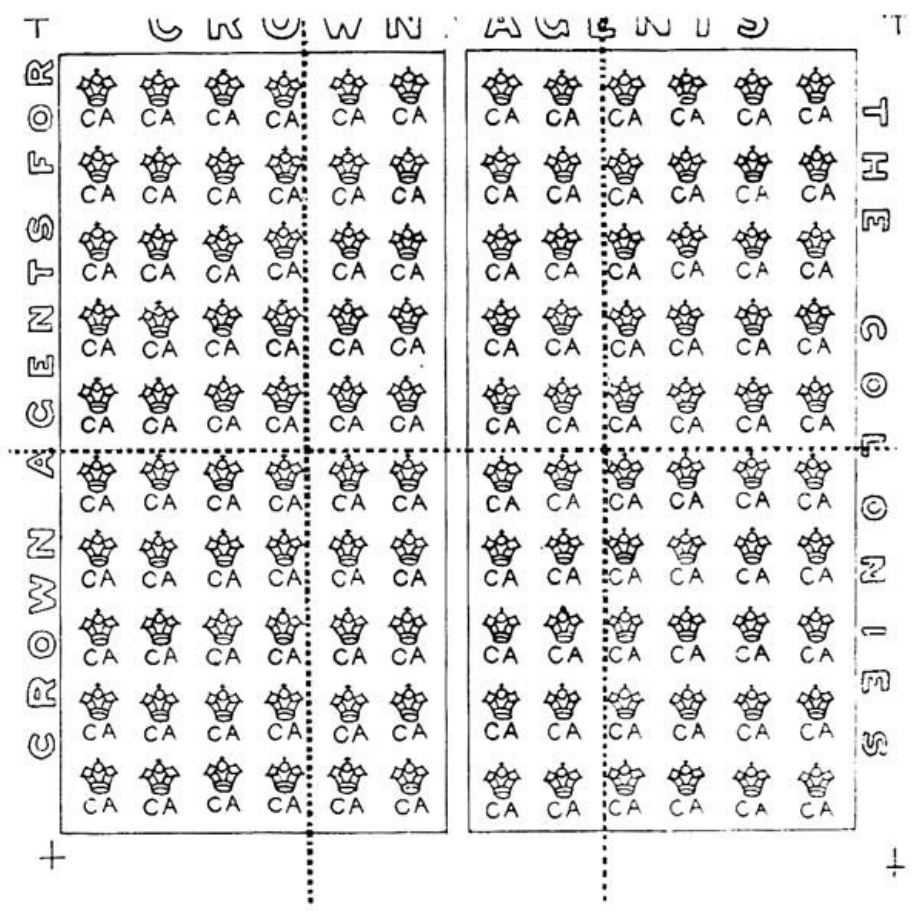


Plate XIII.—Diagram showing method of cutting the "Crown C.A." paper for the "Cameo" stamps.

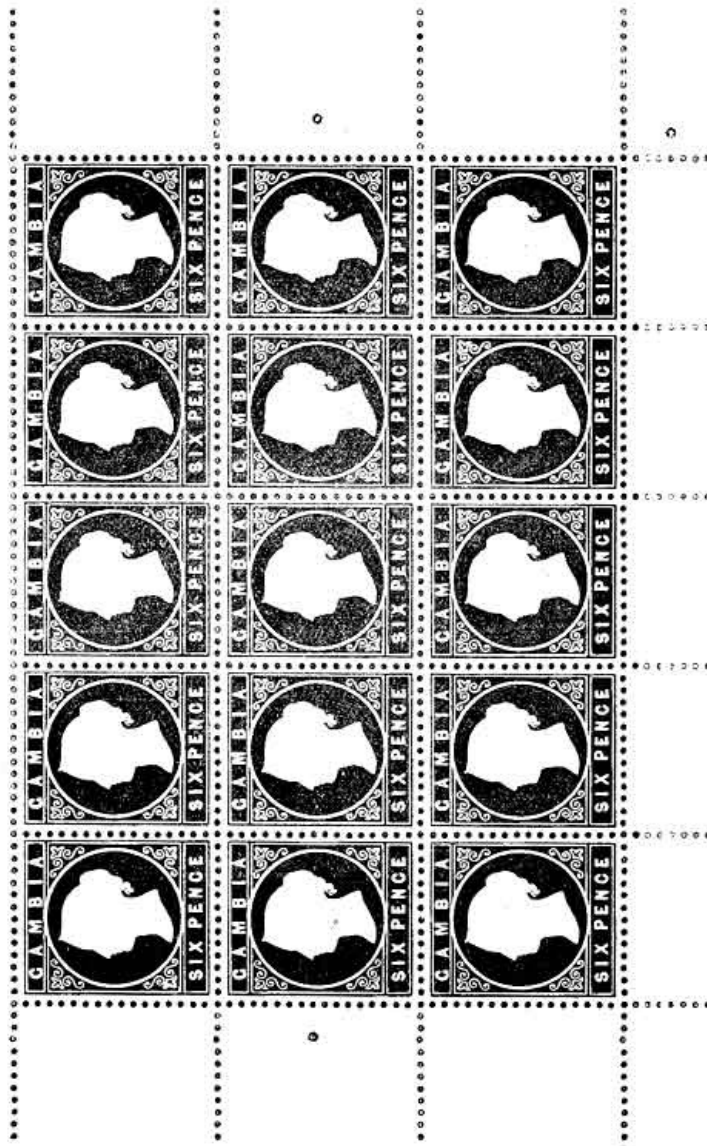


Plate XIV.—6d. New plate. Without defective top row.

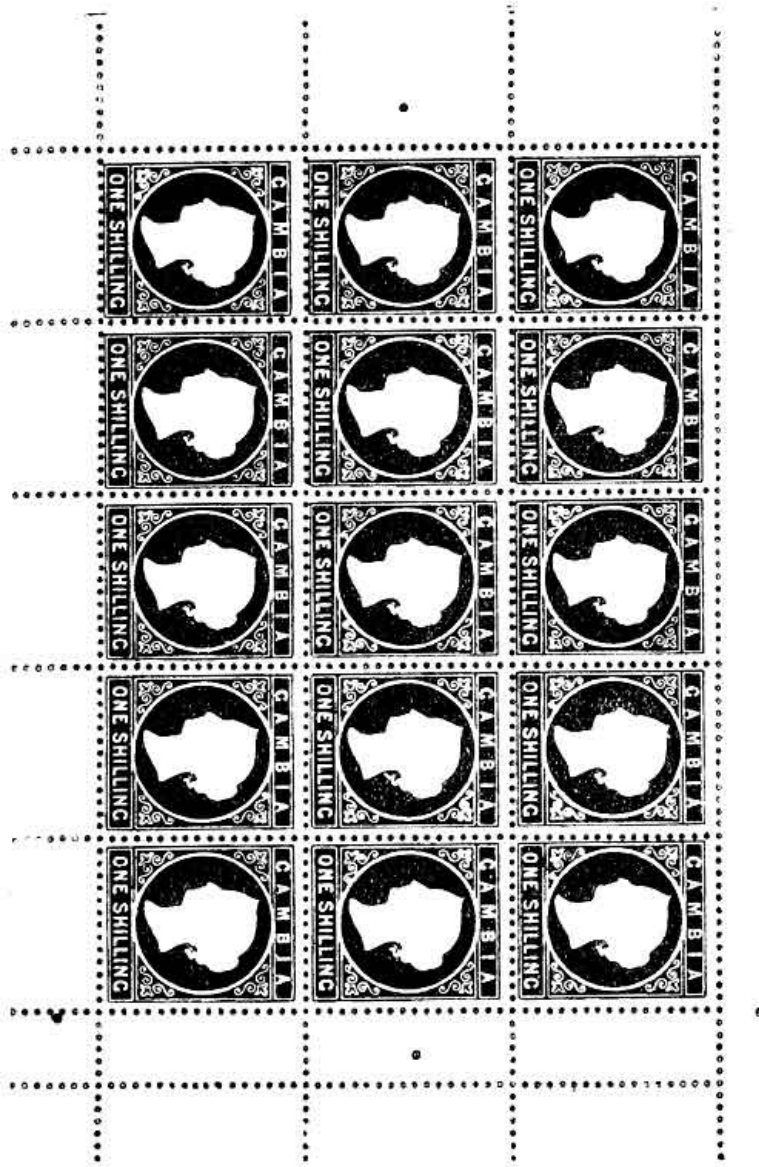


Plate XV.—1s. First comb perforation.

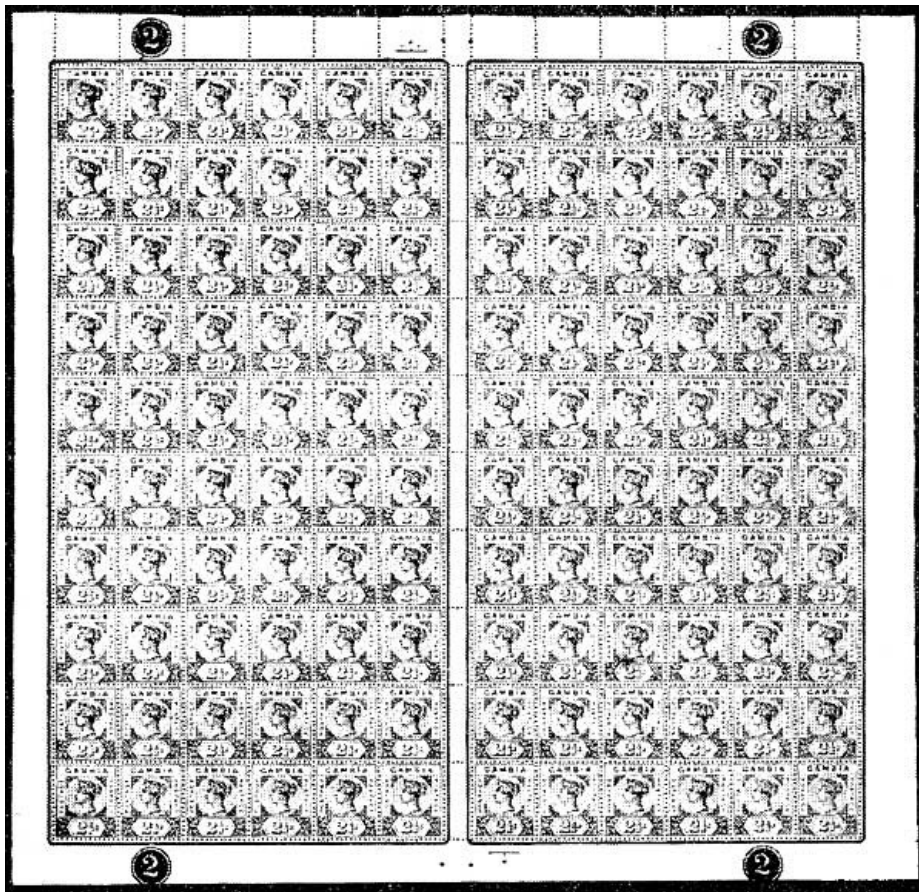
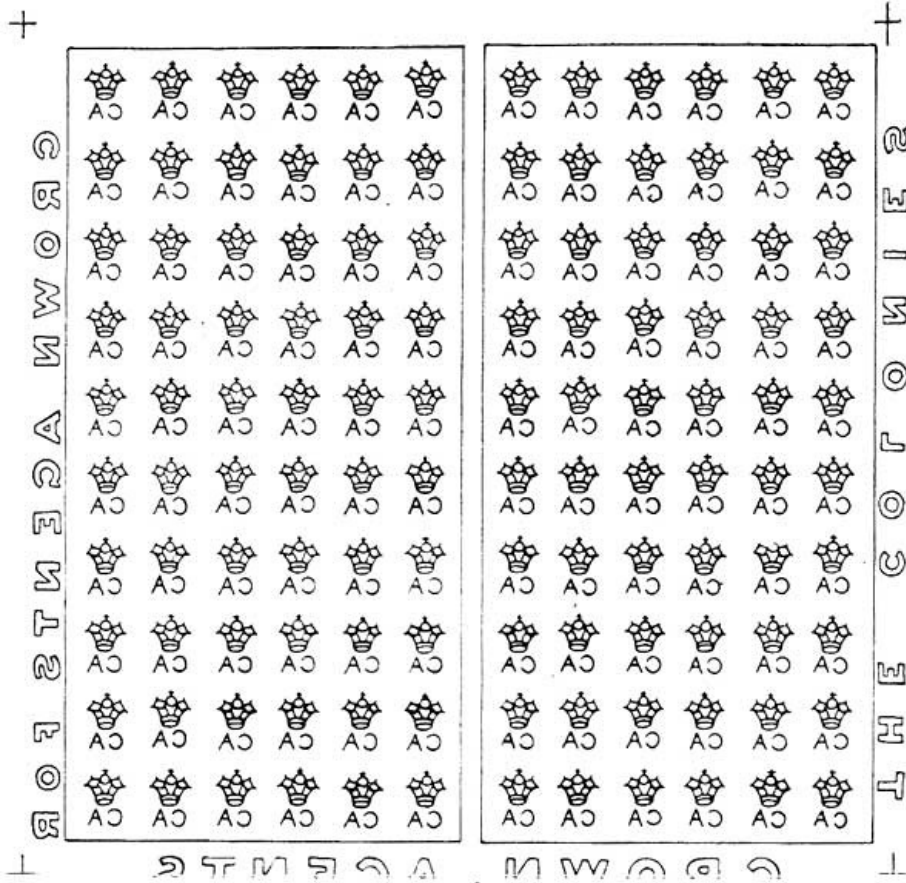


Plate XVI.—2½d. Complete Sheet, shewing arrangement of panes, fitting half sheet of watermarked paper, which shews through the page from the back.



N.B.—To be examined through the stamps on the other side of the plate.

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