

A Penguin too Far

Having read Gilly's article on the Falkland Islands 5/- Centenary Penguin, I decided to look at this issue in a bit more detail.

To most members the catalogue values for SG136 and 136a are likely, as not, to result in these stamps being excluded from any 'wants list' they may keep. To those who restrict their collection to Penguins then they may well already have SG136 and if not, it may be a stamp that they are willing to seek out. It is likely as not to be 'a Penguin too far' as suggested by Gilly.

Stefan Heijitz is the leading authority on the Falkland Islands and his catalogue provides information that other catalogues will not include. Numbers issued and subsequently destroyed, postmarks, postal rates are all included in his catalogue. Although he lives in Sweden he issues certificates of authenticity for Falklands stamps and has been responsible for assisting with the setting up the Postal Museum in Fox Bay. In this regard I would rely on his catalogues over all others.

SG136 Black & yellow was issued on 23 September 1932 and 5280 of these were issued by the Crown Agents. On 14 January 1933 SG136a Black & yellow-orange was issued and the Crown Agents provided 1320 copies. Of the 6600 issued, 1023 were destroyed in 1934 however Heijitz does not break this down for each shade.

The 5/- Whale and Penguin stamp, issued on 10 May 1929, saw 9240 of these issued by the Crown Agents and only 120 of these were destroyed in 1938, well after the Centenary 5/- was issued and just after the 15000 copies of the 5/- Sea Lion from the KGVI issue of 1937. There was therefore, a situation when 4 x 5/- stamps from 3 x different issues were available in 1937/38.

As Gilly has mentioned in the December Flight the catalogue values of these stamps using SG2020 Empire and Commonwealth catalogue are as follows;

SG136 is £950 for Mounted Mint and £1500 for Good Used. SG136a is £3250 for Mounted Mint and £3750 for Good Used. The value for SG136 remains unchanged since 2015 and possibly before that. In 2015, SG136a was catalogued at £3000 for Mounted Mint and £3500 for Good Used.

In 1983 when Collect Birds on Stamps (CBOS) Edition 1 was issued, SG136 was catalogued at £450 for Mounted Mint and £600 for Good Used. CBOS Edition 2 issued in 1988 saw the values rise to £500 and £650 respectively. Over the next 14 x years there was no movement in these values as witnessed by CBOS Editions 3 and 4 and the 2002 Commonwealth and Empire catalogue. The 2002 Commonwealth and Empire catalogue is the oldest Gibbons publication that I have and this lists SG136a at £1200 for Mounted Mint and £1400 for Good Used.

Heitz 2nd Edition, issued in 1990, lists No 66a (SG136) at £300 for Mounted Mint and £400 for Good Used and No 66b (SG136a) at £600 for Mounted Mint and £800 for Good Used.

CBOS only includes the cheapest of the issues as it is a 'simplified' catalogue. There was during the 1980s a downward shift in catalogue values for several countries and even today the values have not got back to the values quoted in the 1980s. The catalogue values for many issues remained fairly static for many years.

The catalogue values of the Centenary Penguin does require potential buyers to view this stamp and I suspect many of our members will be disinclined to travel to Auctions to view this stamp. I receive several auction catalogues each month and I see Mint copies of SG136 many times each year. Used copies are much less frequent, maybe 1 per year if I am lucky. As for SG136a they occasionally appear. Estimates for a mint copy of SG136 can be as much as £900.

Mint copies of SG136 are subject to slight gum toning as is often the case with yellow & orange stamps. Good auction houses should mention any gum toning in their descriptions. In 1933, to my knowledge, there were 2 x Post Offices in the Falkland Islands. Port Stanley is the main post office and is in the East Falklands. Fox Bay Post Office serves the community of the West Falklands. Both Post Offices frank all stamps with a circular date stamp – none of this wavy line rubbish!!

Port Stanley used several different cancellations – a small sample covering the period when these stamps were available is below:

					
12	F.6	FALKLAND ISLANDS - + - (25mm, 16mm) (1913-38)	8	50	
-	X	v1. brown ink (1913-15)	40		
<hr/>					
					
		A	B	Bv1	v2
13a	PS.1A	PORT STANLEY + FALKLAND ISLANDS (25.5mm, 15.5mm), left cross higher than right cross, code letter below "S", "O" of PORT normal (1913-44). Code letter A, B or C.		3	25
-	-	v1. brown ink (1913-14)		25	
X	X	v2. curly "32" (Feb - Nov? 1932)		5	50
X	X	v3. reuse after post office fire 16.4.44 (Apr - Dec 1944)		8	35
-	PS.1B	PORT STANLEY + FALKLAND ISLANDS (25.5mm, 15.5mm), crosses at same height, code letter below "T", "O" of PORT narrow (1913-44). Code letter A or C.		3	25
X	X	v1. "2" for 32 (January 1932)		100	200
X	X	v2. curly "32" (Feb - Nov? 1932)		5	50
<hr/>					
					
		A	B		
13b	PS.2A	PORT STANLEY + FALKLAND ISLANDS (26.5mm, 16.5mm), 4mm between FALKLAND and ISLANDS, large crosses (1935-44). Code letter A, B or C.		2	20
13c	PS.2B	PORT STANLEY + FALKLAND ISLANDS (27mm, 16.5mm), 3mm between FALKLAND and ISLANDS, small crosses (1935-44). Code letter A, B or C.		8	60

Fox Bay cancellations are below:



v1

18a	FB.1	FOX-BAY - FALKLAND ISLANDS (26mm, 16mm) (1914-53). Code letter A, B or C.
-	X	v1. "2" for 32 (1932)

For reasons unknown a lot of 'used' copies appear to have 'forged' postmarks however on speaking to Stefan and my friend who is an ex Islander and runs the Southampton Philatelic Auctions, both are of the opinion, that where a postmark does not provide definitive evidence that the postmark is genuine then they will be regarded as forged. I can see why someone would take a Mint copy and 'pretend' it is used by using a forged postmark given that used copies have a higher catalogue value than Mint copies. Even forged copies command a decent price – £300++ for SG136a.

Below is the Fox Bay cancellation, with accompanying notes, used when SG136/136a was issued.

A mint copy of SG36 and a used copy of SG136a with its accompanying certificate is below; this clearly shows the difference in the 2 x shades:



Member of:

Falkland Islands Philatelic Study Group
Polar Postal History Society of G.B.
Falkland Islands Association
Falklands Conservation
British Antarctic Survey Club
South Georgia Association

Phone: 08-108362, 08-107401, 08-6118727

STEFAN HEIJTZ

BOX 19541

S-104 32 STOCKHOLM

SWEDEN

Fax: +46-8 108361

Member of:

British West Indies Study Circle
West Africa Study Circle
Sociedad Filatelica de Puerto Rico
Stockholm Philatelist Society
Porsche Club Sweden
Swedish Polar Society

E-mail: stefan@novastamps.com

CERTIFICATE

686-13



The above illustrated stamp, FALKLAND ISLANDS 1933 5/- black & yellow-orange, has a very light Port Stanley marking which cannot be confirmed to be genuine. It is not a PS.1 marking which was the marking used in 1933; it could be a PS.2 marking which was introduced in 1935 but it is more likely that it is a forged postmark. The basic stamp is genuine.

Cat. No. SG136a , SH66b

Stockholm 9 September 2013



Stefan Heijtz

Specialist of the philately of the Falkland Islands.
Author of the "Specialised Stamp Catalogue of the Falkland Islands
and Dependencies including Postal History and Cancellations".

So back to the question, is this a Penguin too Far? To most it is a definite YES, to specialists who have the wherewithal then they probably already have a copy/copies in their collection. Good luck to anyone who still is prepared to pay the going rate for this superb stamp.

Graham