

Coil Stamps of the Rhodesias' and Nyasaland - 1924-1966

This Exhibit is an account of the production and use of coil stamps designed to be used in stamp vending machines (or over the counter) for the period 1924 to 1966 in :


1. Southern Rhodesia pages (2 to 6)
2. Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (pages 7 to 12)
3. Northern Rhodesia (pages 13 to 14)
4. Nyasaland (pages 15 and 16)

There are no records of coil stamps being issued in any of the earlier BSAC/Rhodesia/BCA period or after UDI. The one coil production, which was still used after UDI was declared, is the Harrison printed issue on page 6 when the word "Southern" was dropped just prior to UDI being declared. Used examples are not seen for long after 1967. These were the last of the stamps printed in Great Britain, all stamps after UDI being printed in Salisbury by Mardon Printers.

The distribution and usage of coils in all the mentioned territories covered was limited by delivery, availability and service of stamp dispensing machines, and the perforation design of the stamps themselves. Literature studied of the period of usage of the coils in the different territories shows low usage.

The main problem, it seems, revolved around the dispensing machines themselves, which were sparsely distributed in the main capitals, and then, where there was a machine, it was poorly calibrated and many instances of jamming or stamp damage were reported. The coil stamps were however an interesting divergence from normal stamp usage, and are a worthy study subject. The best information on these stamps is from the RSCJ, from members who were on the spot, such as Cawood, Twynam, Harris, Calder, Stewart and others.

The exhibit is structured by territory as shown above. The pages are set out to show the coil stamps themselves, their varieties, usage and a technical description.

Rare coil stamp material is shown by a Coloured Circle thus: 

Reference Material

- I. Stanley Gibbons Central and Southern Africa catalogue (1st Edition)
- II. The Rhodesia stamp Catalogue 1981 (Pub by Salisbury Stamp Company)
- III. Rhodesia – a Postal History – its Stamps, Posts and Telegraphs (by R C Smith)
- IV. A Guide to the Stamps of The Rhodesias' and Nyasaland (Pub by The Mashonaland Philatelic Study Group)
- V. The Stamp Magazine (August 1956)
- VI. Rhodesian Study Circle Journals (Numbers 7, 19, 13, 24, 25, 27, 29, 110, 130, 131)
- VII. The Coil Stamps of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Margaret Harris RSCJ 130 and 131)
- VIII. Robson Lowe, "Rhodesia & Nyasaland. The Queen Elizabeth II "The Philatelist', May 1978, vo1. 44, No. 8 Definitives 1954-58
- IX RSC Encyclopaedia

SOUTHERN RHODESIA 1924-1929 - KGV FIRST DEFINITIVE



The 1d. coil (SG 2c) was the current Admiral 1d. stamp specially perforated 12½ to fit the teeth of the vending machines of the day.
 Gibbons gives the date of issue as 1929. These stamps were delivered in rolls of 960 stamps from panes of 60 (6x10). Printed by Waterlow in recess printing.



Used SG 2c perf 14 x 12½



Used and tied on piece is one 1d. normal admiral definitive, together with a 1d. Coil (12½ perfs) on the right

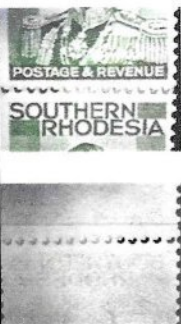
Vertical strip of SG 2c perf 14 x 12½ showing the join between the 5th and 6th stamp

SOUTHERN RHODESIA 1936 - KGVII SECOND DEFINITIVE



Vertical strip of five ½d. SG 40 King George VI Coils – perf 14 – showing the coil join

The ½d. coil (SG 40) was line perforated 14 and joined after every sixth stamp. Waterlow printed the sheets of 240 i.e. four panes of 60 (10 x 6) and presumably also made up the coils.)
 The 1d. coil SG 41/RSC 551) was printed identically.
 Coil Vending Machines are reported to have been found in Bulawayo and Salisbury.
 A possible explanation for the reported jamming of stamps in the machines, and the early withdrawal in 1939, is that the joins, in practice, proved to be too thick at the join for easy tearing apart. Printed by Waterlow in Recess printing.



Vertical strip of four 1d. SG 41 King George VI Coils – perf 14 – showing the coil join

SOUTHERN RHODESIA COILS - 1964 – QUEEN ELIZABETH II

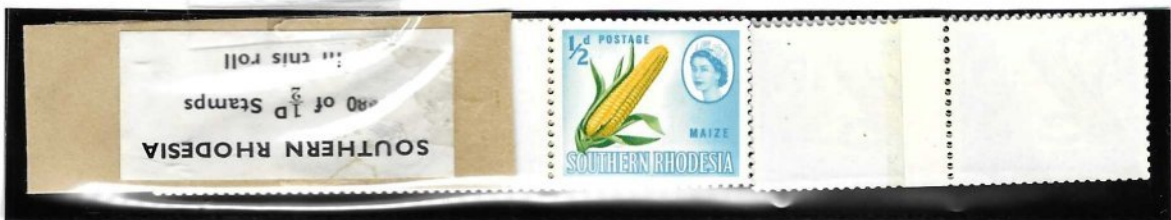
Coil stamps for the ½d and 1d values printed, by Harrison and Sons, were produced from the printed sheets of 240 stamps (10 rows by 12 columns) and printed photogravure perf 14½ . The makeup of the coils was described by the Mashonaland Guide.

The coils were produced in rolls of 480 stamps, with the joins occurring at every 12th stamp, total number of rolls – 2,280 of the ½d (total of 1,094,400 stamps) and 3,280 of the 1d (1,574,400 stamps). With 480 stamps per roll this would mean that two complete sheets would have been used to create the roll.

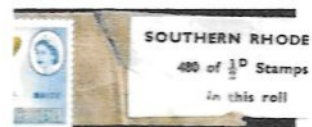
Invalidated on 1 February 1969 while being withdrawn on 8th February 1966.



The ½d coil (SG 92) showing the Leader and the first thirteen stamps in the roll up to the first coil join where stamp 12 joins onto stamp 13, and the Coil End and the last coil join 12 stamps from the end (40th row) i.e. stamps 468 -480



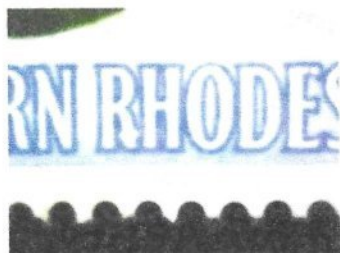
The ½d coil (SG 92) showing the Leader Label inverted. This could have been a repair, as there is often an issue with the label as can be seen in the inset (from the RSC encyclopaedia)



The ½d coil (SG 93) showing the Leader and the first thirteen stamps in the roll up to the first coil join where stamp 12 joins onto stamp 13, and the Coil End And the last 7 stamps (40th row) i.e. stamps 474 -480

Southern Rhodesia Coils - 1964 – Queen Elizabeth II

ERRORS



The 1/2d coil (SG 92) in a strip of 5 with a coil join and showing the Row 15 No 12 variety "White bar across lower part of the R of Rhodesia"



The 1/2d coil (SG 92) in a strip of 12 with a coil join and showing :

Variety 1 – Row 17 No 11 – Missing Partition between grains of maize

Variety 2 – Row 17 No 1 – Blue Serif at bottom of the right leg of A in Rhodesia



A beautiful example of the guillotined row with the perforation shift resulting. This is another way of identifying a used coil on a cover.

Southern Rhodesia – 1964 – Queen Elizabeth II

USAGE



Airmail Envelope from Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia to London, postmarked with double circle BULAWAYO strike dated 19 MAY'64 using 2 pairs of 1/2d coils SG 92 with coil joins, one pair SG93 with coil join plus a normal 2d definitive to make up 6d which was the airmail rate.



A registered (philatelic) first day cover from Avondale to Salisbury with a strike dated 19 FEB '64 using a pair of 1/2d coils SG 92 with coil joins, one pair 1d SG 93 with coil join plus a booklet page

Southern Rhodesia Coils - 1964 – Queen Elizabeth II

AFTER UDI - RHODESIA

The last coil issued in the territory formerly known as Southern Rhodesia was part of the 1966 "Rhodesia" issue printed in photogravure by Harrison and Sons. The ½d had by then disappeared as a unit of currency and coil stamps were issued only for the 1d value.

The 1d coil (SG 374) was again produced from regular sheets, comb perforated 14½ the same way as the last issue. Thus there was a join after every twelfth stamp. Coils were not available until May 1966, about three months after the rest of the issue. The delay may have been due to sanctions rather than anything to do with the production of the stamps. No stocks were available from London after the original supply of 960,000 had been exhausted, and no coils were produced locally. As a result, coil vending machines were not used in Rhodesia after 1967, and they have not been brought back into service for the sale of Zimbabwean stamps.



The 1d Coil (SG 374) with the normal coil leader showing the start of a roll of 480 coil stamps for Rhodesia -1d Duty.



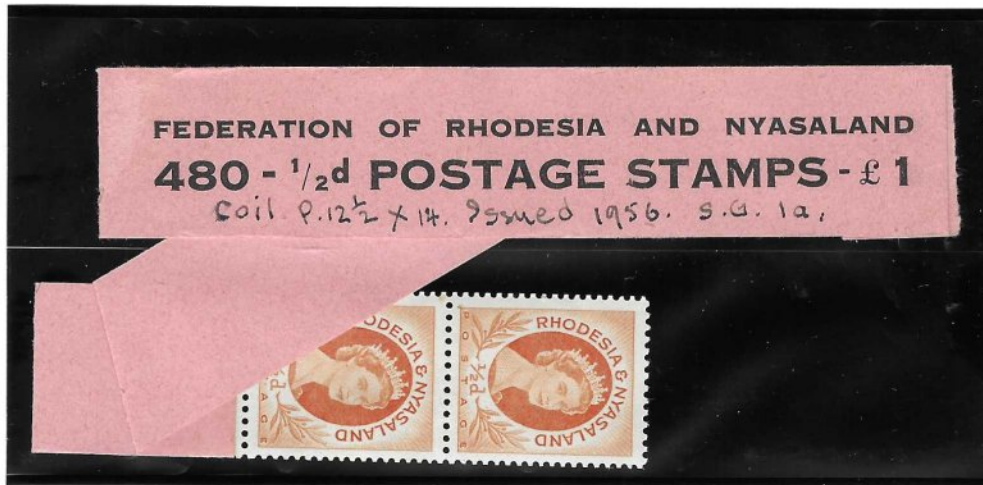
The 1d Coil (SG 374) with the normal coil end strip



The 1d Coil (SG 374) on piece in a strip of 5 with a Coil Join and cancelled Salisbury, Rhodesia on 2 July 1968. This must have been obtained before the vending machines were decommissioned in 1967. It also contains the Variety "Retouch on Queen's Forehead".

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Coils 1953 to 1965 - Queen Elizabeth II FIRST DEFINITIVE

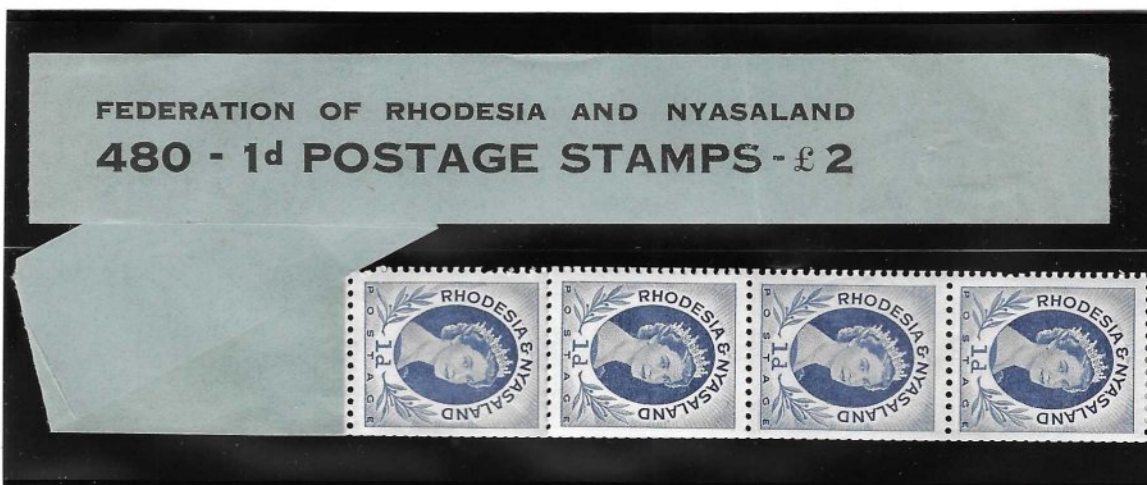
All the stamps in this issue were recess-printed by Waterlow and Sons Limited, and, while they were responsible for sheet production, the ½d and 1d. coils were printed on rotary machines in continuous rolls of 480 by a subsidiary company, Imprimerie Belge de Securite, Brussels. They went on sale some eighteen months after the rest of the series, but issue date is uncertain and varied in the three territories. The ½d coil became available in February 1956. The ½d was added to the set due to the rise in the postage increase to 2½d in 1956, while the 1d was available at the end of 1955



The ½d Coil perf 12½x14 (SG. 1a is variously described as red-orange, orange red, or orange. (Gibbons Catalogue, Rhodesia Stamp Catalogue and Mashonaland Guide) respectively). This is the normal Leader indication "Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland 480 – ½d Postage stamps - £1" on pink paper attached to orange red coil stamps



The ½d Coil strip (SG 1a) with the normal coil end strip in red-orange shade. **The 1/3rd overlap of the first stamp is clearly seen as a clear offset of the ink on the gum side of the stamps. Issued 09 1955.**



The 1d Coil perf 12½x14 (SG. 2a) This is the normal Leader label "Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland 480 – 1d Postage stamps - £2" on light blue paper attached to ultramarine coil stamps. Issued 10 1955



The 1d Coil Stamp (SG 2a) in deep blue with the normal coil end strip in light blue

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Coils 1953 to 1965 - Queen Elizabeth II FIRST DEFINITIVE CONTINUED (VARIETIES)



The 1/2d Coil strip (SG 1a) With catalogued constant variety SG 1ab showing missing perf hole



The 1/2d Coil strip (SG 1a) showing offset on gummed side



The 1/2d Coil strip (SG 1a) showing damage done to coil by incorrectly adjusted coil dispensing machine



The 1d Coil strip (SG 2a) showing blue printer's mark. This mark varies and has been recorded as passing through the entire stamp



The 1d Coil strip (SG 2a) oddity on a used strip of 3 with double circle strikes with one perf closed in between each stamp.



The 1d Coil strip (SG 2a) showing damage done to coil by incorrectly adjusted coil dispensing machine



The 1d Coil strip (SG 2a) showing damage done to coil by incorrectly adjusted coil dispensing machine

FIRST DEFINITIVE CONTINUED – PROVINCIAL USAGE.



A printed commercial return cover from National Mail Orders Pty Ltd. From Luanda in Northern Rhodesia to Johannesburg South Africa. A strip of three 1/2d SG 1a Federation coils with a T2 in blue crayon and circular T / 2D postage due strike, being double the difference between the 2 1/2d postage required and the 1 1/2d paid for card postage. There is a 2d South African postage due stamp cancelled 12 12 57 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

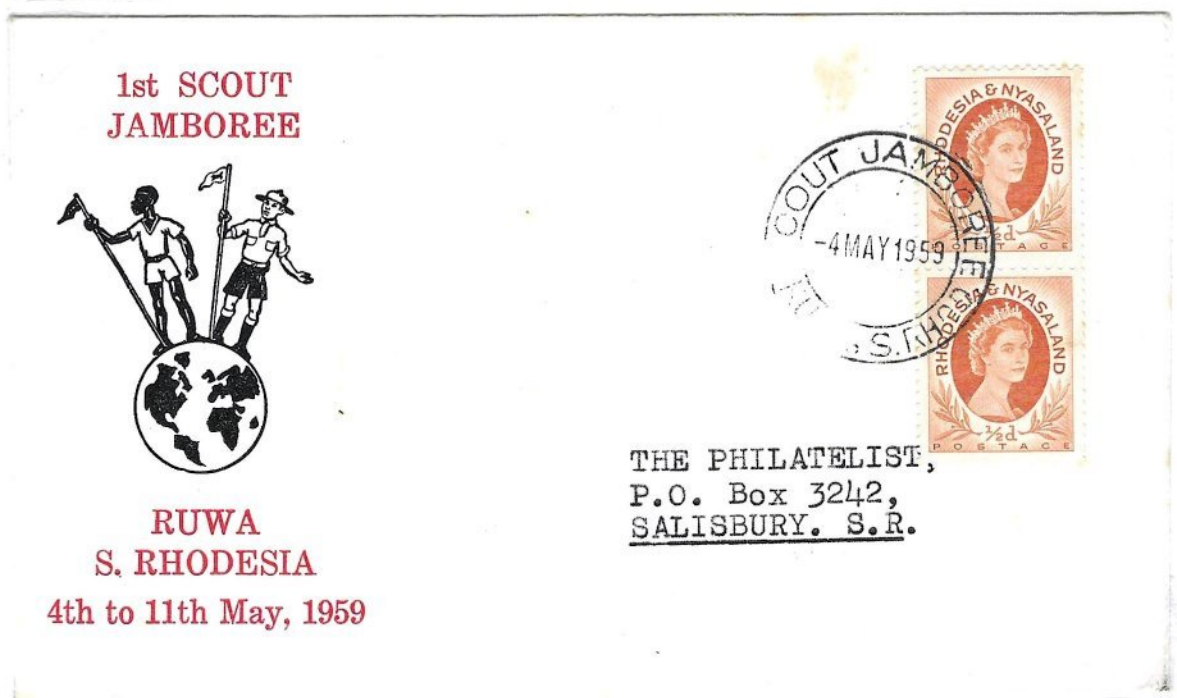


A private airmail letter from Hillside, Southern Rhodesia, to Pretoria, South Africa using a pair each of the 1/2d and 1d Federation coils SG 1a and 2a making up the rate of 2 1/2d airmail charge. Strike is dated 18 JUL 58.

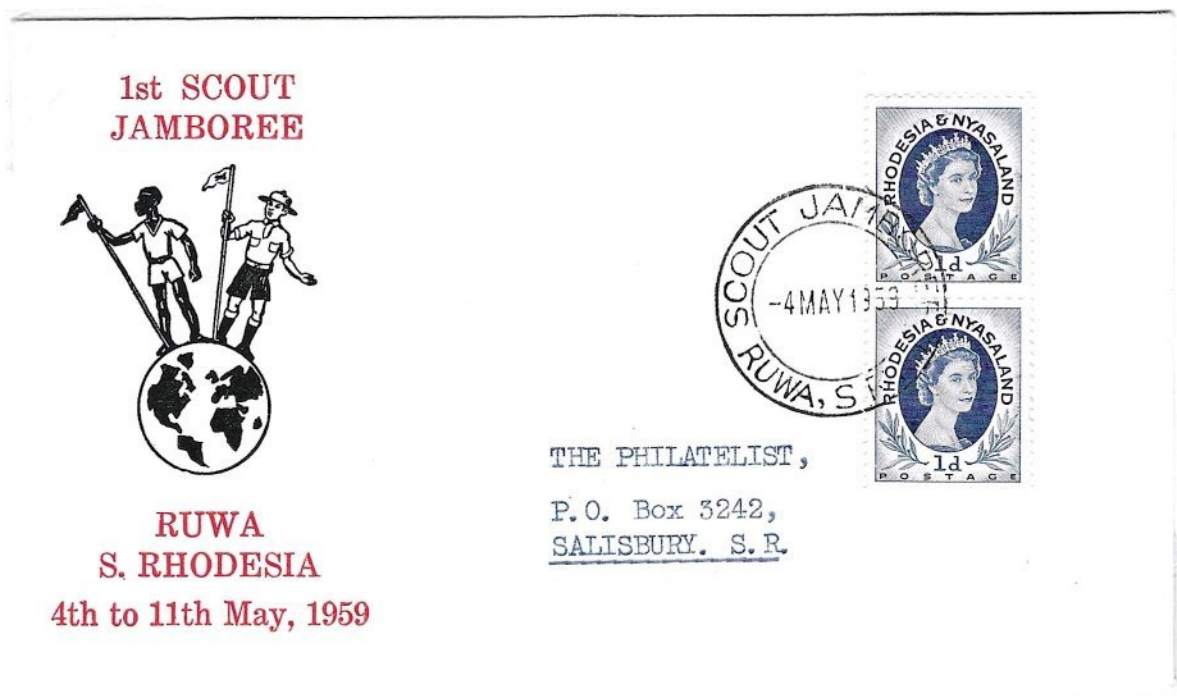
FIRST DEFINITIVE CONTINUED (USAGE)

Scouting in the former Rhodesia and Nyasaland started in 1909 when the first Boy Scout troop was registered. This Jamboree celebrated 50 years of Scouting in Rhodesia and in the colony.

The main idea of the Central African Jamboree was for Scouts from various territories to get together, and to know one another. Particularly for those who did not come from the Salisbury area, the Jamboree provided a wonderful opportunity of seeing something of the Federal capital and its surroundings. Notably, the Special First Day Covers for the occasion made use of the SG 1a and SG 2a Coil Stamps. **Only coils were used on these covers.**



SG 1a on First Day Cover of the Central African Jamboree at Ruwa dated 4 May 1959

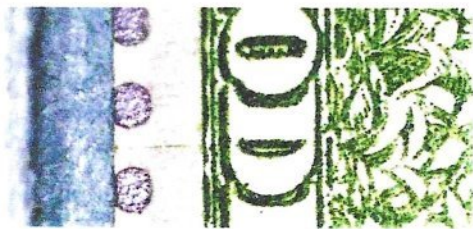
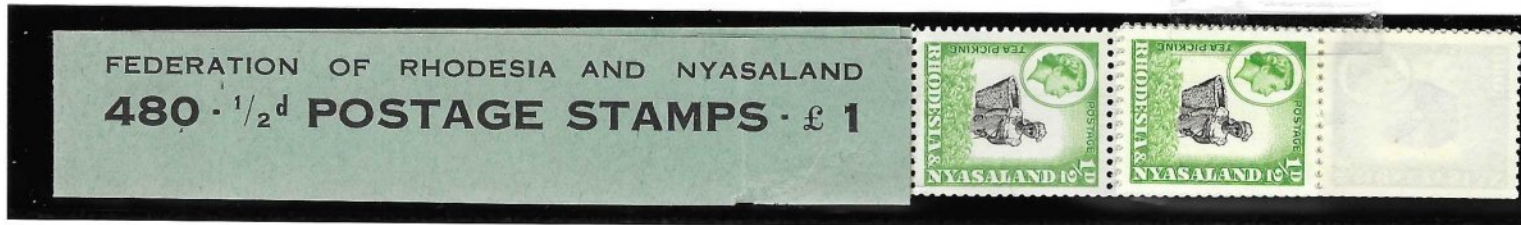


SG 2a on First Day Cover of the Central African Jamboree at Ruwa dated 4 May 1959

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Coils 1953 to 1965 - Queen Elizabeth II

SECOND DEFINITIVE

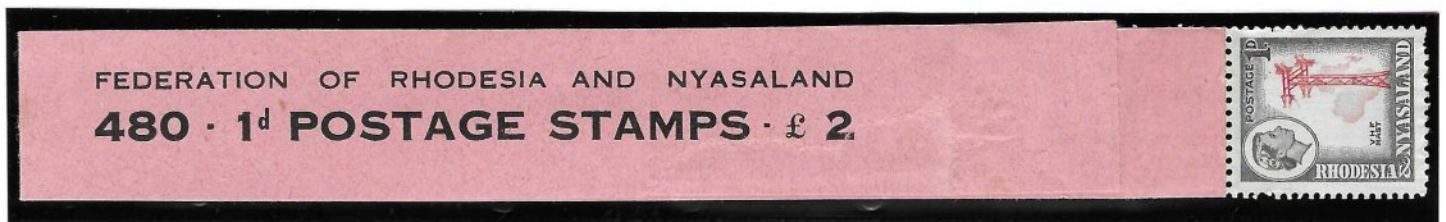
In this issue the ½d and 1d sheet and coil stamps were recess printed perf 12½x14 by Waterlow and Sons Limited until 1962 when De La Rue and Co. took over, although it is not clear whether there were any De La Rue printings of either coil. The date of issue for sheets and coils is given in Gibbons as 12th August 1959. Like the previous issue, both coil values were in rolls of 480, without joins. Single stamps can be positively identified by the perforation and often guillotine cuts



The ½d Coil perf 12½x14 (SG I8a) has a bright light emerald frame - the Mashonaland Guide also notes yellow-green and bright green shades - whilst the centre is a deep intense black. **Shown is the Starter strip with 12 stamps, all of which have a continuous green line running through them.**



The ½d Coil SG I8a showing two distinct shades of the green



The 1d Coil perf 12½x14 (SG I9a) has a more greyish frame than the sheet, whilst the colour of the centre is a deeper carmine-red. The Mashonaland describes the frame colour as "brownish-grey". Shown is the Starter strip with the first Stamp – vignette shifted to the right – almost touching the frame.



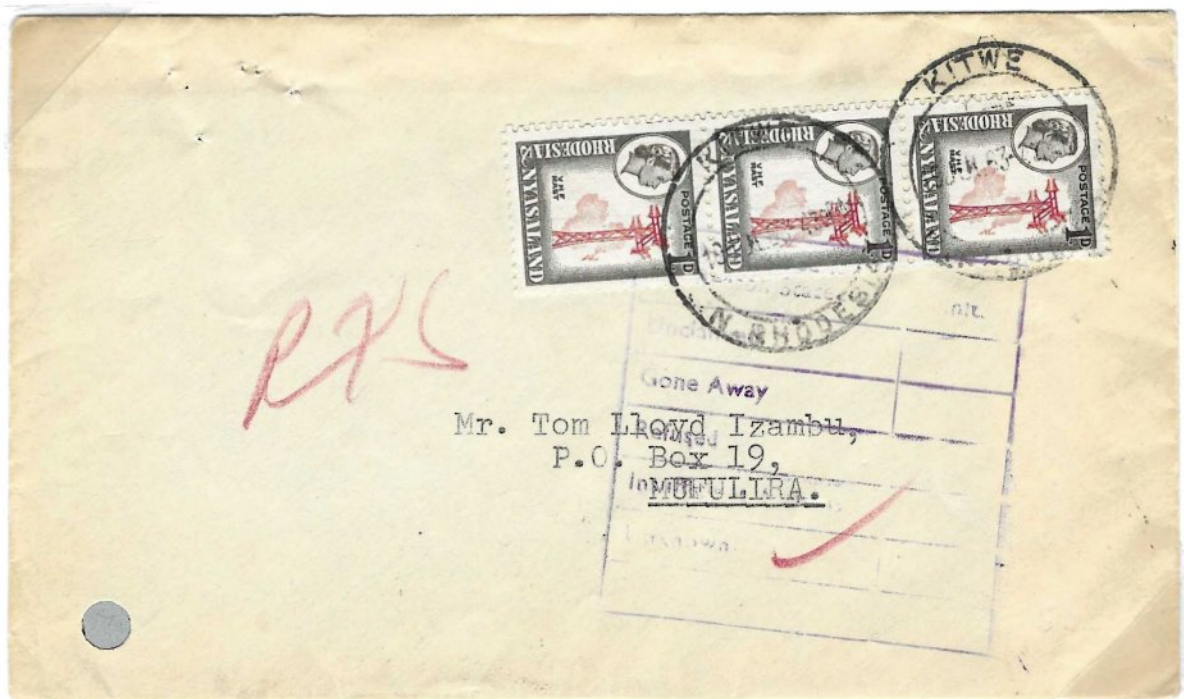
The 1d Coil SG I9a **showing the Africa map missing**, and the fading of the tower with normal printing for comparison. The guillotined perfs can be seen on the comparison stamps.

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Coils 1953 to 1965 - Queen Elizabeth II

SECOND DEFINITIVE



A pair of ½d Coil perf 12½x14 (SG 18a) And a pair of 1d Coils (SG 19a) to make up the 3d normal postage rate; on a cream coloured business envelope addressed to Heston in the UK. **Interestingly cancelled by Travelling Post Office No. 1 Northern Rhodesia on 19 VIII 63**



A strip of three 1d Coils, perf 12½x14 (SG 19a) to make up the normal postage rate of 3d. On manila coloured envelope addressed to Mufilira in Northern Rhodesia. Cancelled in Kitwe in Northern Rhodesia on 19 JUN 63. Also a purple cachet from the post office indicating "Gone Away"

Northern Rhodesia – Coils – 1953-64-King George VI

SECOND DEFINITIVE

The ½d coil stamps of Northern Rhodesia (SG 26a ½d Chocolate and SG 28 1d Green) were recess printed by Waterlow and Sons Limited on paper with the Multiple Script CA watermark. The rolls are said to have been prepared by pasting up vertical strips of twelve stamps torn from regular sheets of 240 (20 x 12), giving a join after every twelfth stamp.

The first day of sale for the ½d coil was 22 October 1952, at Livingstone, (RSCJ 91/52-55, September 1975), but authority for this date is not cited. Gibbons gives 10th December 1952.

The 1d coil stamps (SG 28) came from regular sheets of the November 1951 issue, described as green, deep green and blue green (29), made up into rolls in the same way as the ½d value so that joins occur after every twelfth stamp in the strip. Printed from Plate 4, the 1d. coil is perforated 12½.



The ½d coil (SG 26a) in a strip of 12 with a coil join (Perforated 12½ X14) and were made up from regular sheets



The 1d coil (SG 28) in a strip of 4 with a coil join (perforated 14X14) and were made up from regular sheets



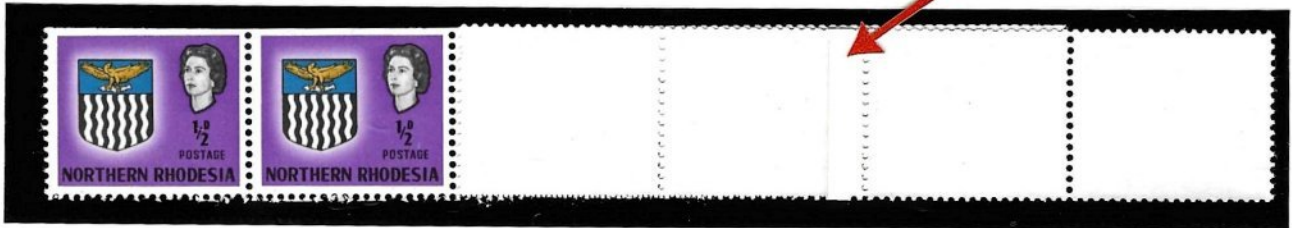
The ½d coil (SG 26a) and the 1d coil (SG 28) on a philatelicly cancelled and registered envelope in strips of 6 with a Coil Join and cancelled Zomba (Nyasaland) on 25 JULY 1955. Backstamp indicates received in Kitwe 28 JUNE 1955.

Northern Rhodesia – Coils – 1953-64- Queen Elizabeth II

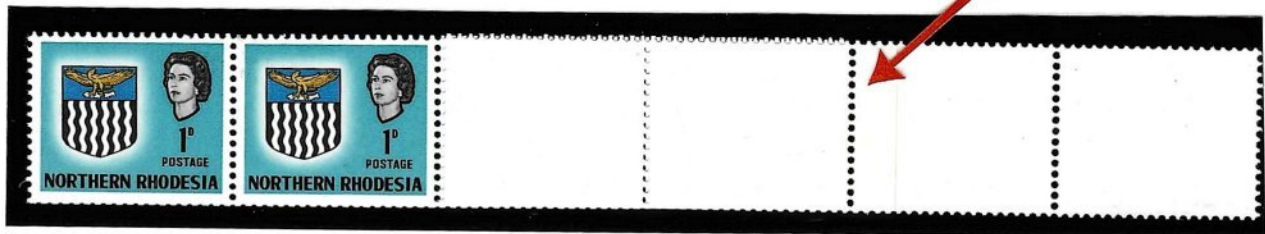
FOURTH DEFINITIVE

The final Northern Rhodesian definitive issue replaced stamps of the Federation whose break-up was imminent. The printers, Harrison and Sons Limited, made up ½d and 1d rolls, each containing 480 stamps, by guillotining regular sheets of 120 (12 x 10) comb perforated 14½ into horizontal rows, making joins from the sheet margins every twelve stamps. These joins and the clipped perforations - which could, of course, have come from booklets - are the only means of identifying coils of this issue.

The newly reconstituted GPO assumed responsibility for postal services in Northern Rhodesia from 1st December 1963 but this final definitive issue was not available until ten days later, having been produced in great haste. Moreover, rolls of the ½d value and of the 1d were not despatched until 30th and 11th December, 1963, respectively (Drysdall, A. R., "The Stamps and Postal History of Northern Rhodesia and Zambia, 1963-1965", pp. 18-19)



The ½d coils (SG 75) comprised 300 rolls - of which 288 were sent out to Northern Rhodesia - taken from a printing requirement of 1,044,000 stamps (i.e. 8,700 sheets). Coil joins were at every 12th stamp (arrowed).



The 1d coils (SG 76) comprised 450 rolls - of which 438 were despatched - taken from a printing requirement of 8,366,040 stamps (i.e. 69,717 sheets), and again the Crown Agents retained two (Drysdall, A. R., "The Stamps and Postal History of Northern Rhodesia and Zambia, 1963-1965", pp. 18-19). The 1d value was printed as two panes, IAx 5 and IB x 5, which were then guillotined into sheets of 120 stamps (Drysdall, A. R. and Case, J. H., "Post-Federation Stamp Issues of Northern Rhodesia and Zambia: 1963-71", p. 4). Coil joins were at every 12th stamp (arrowed).



The ½d coil (SG 75) strip of four on piece showing clipped perfs and coil join



The 1d coil (SG 76) strip of four on piece showing clipped perfs and coil join

Nyasaland - Coils 1953/54 – Queen Elizabeth II

9TH DEFINITIVE

The coil stamps were of the same design as the sheets, but comb perforated 12x12½, while sheets were line perf 12. Printed by Bradbury Wilkinson and Co LTD. Printers guillotined the sheets of 10x6 (60) and joined every tenth stamp.

It is interesting to read what seems to be a contradictory report (Mashonaland Guide, p. 112, quoting from SAP 29 /9 (Vol. 29, Sept. 1953) of "coils of 480 stamps made up from sheets, for use in Vending Machines". Yet, other reports (See RSCJ 130/87-88, June 1985) indicated that machines were not to be brought into service, so why add coil stamps to the QEII 9th definitives, especially when they were to be replaced by the first Federation issue within four months? Or did the early machines perhaps prove unsatisfactory in some way, so that by the time Mr Twynam commented in his report, they had been taken out of operation - even if only as a temporary measure? It seems, on the balance of probabilities, that the machines were unable to dispense the stamps properly.



The ½d. coil (SG 173a) stamps were of the same design as the sheets, but comb perforated 12x12½, while sheets were line perfs . Printed by Bradbury Wilkinson and Co LTD. Printers guillotined the sheets of 10x6(60) and joined every tenth stamp. Leader strip labelled "Nyasaland 2161/1 – 480 – ½d. Postage and Revenue Stamps – Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co Ltd". The join on the 10th stamp can be seen. In this strip the label has been inverted.



The 2d. coil (SG 176a) stamps were the same design as the sheets, but comb perforated 12x12½, while sheets were line perfs . Printed by Bradbury Wilkinson and Co LTD. Printers guillotined the sheets of 10x6(60) and joined every tenth stamp. Leader strip labelled "Nyasaland 2161/1 – 480 – 2d. Postage and Revenue Stamps – Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co Ltd". The join on the 10th stamp can be seen.



The 6d. coil (SG 180a) stamps were the same design as the sheets, but comb perforated 12x12½, while sheets were line perfs . Printed by Bradbury Wilkinson and Co LTD. Printers guillotined the sheets of 10x6(60) and joined every tenth stamp. Leader strip labelled "Nyasaland 2161/1 – 480 – 6d. Postage and Revenue Stamps – Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co Ltd". The join on the 10th stamp can be seen.

this strip the label has been inverted.

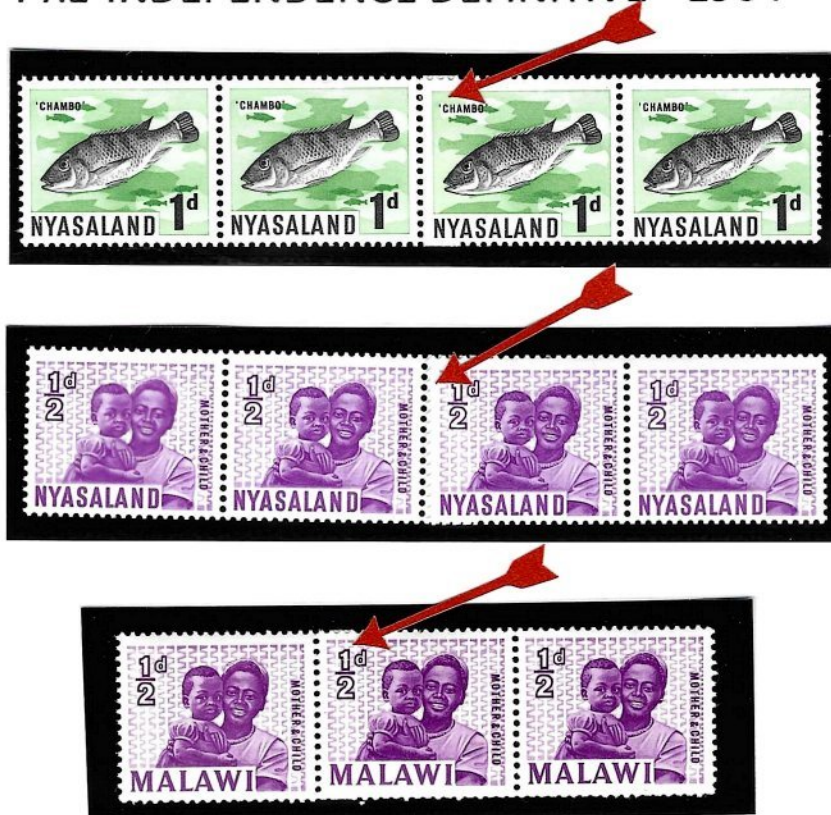
Nyasaland - Coils 1953/54 – Queen Elizabeth II

9TH DEFINITIVE



Cover from Monkey Bay, Nyasaland dated 24 Jan 54 to Johannesburg. All three coils, SG 173a, 176a and 180a are used and tied to the envelope, all showing coil joins (arrowed).

NYASALAND – PRE-INDEPENDENCE DEFINITIVE - 1964



In January 1964, six months before independence, Nyasaland produced a pictorial definitive set of stamps without the Queen's head. SG 199 (½d) and SG 200 (1d) were produced as part of the set, and although not catalogued, coils were produced from the normal sheets. This continued into the new Malawi on the same set of stamps with only the country name changed. Examples of both with coil joins are shown here.