

Falkland Islands Dependencies - 1946 Map Stamps Oh! What a mess!

On the 1st of January 1946 it was announced to the public that a single set of stamps common to all the Falkland Island Dependencies would be produced to replace the over-printed issues released in 1944. The set, consisting of eight values depicting a map of the Falkland Islands and its four Dependencies, Graham Land, South Georgia, South Orkneys and South Shetlands was released on 11 February 1946 in sheets of 60.

The purpose of this exhibit is to show how a set of stamps, rushed through production, turned out to be one of the most flawed designs in all the British Colonies.

Ironically what is truly rare for this issue is a stamp with no flaw.

Background:- The original request was that the stamps should be ready by mid-September 1945 for delivery. They were designed by L J Newell, Admiralty, London. De La Rue was selected as the printer and the Crown Agents would produce the plates.

½d. plates 1,2 & 3, 1d. plates 1 & 2, 2d plates 1,3, & 4, 3d. plates 1 & 4, 4d. plates 2 & 4, 6d. plates 1 & 2, 9d. plates 2 & 4, 1/- plate 2. The plates were released to De La Rue on 26th and 30th of October.

These were returned between 2nd and 14th November.

On the 11th of November the following numbers of sheets of 60 stamps were issued:-

produced/ordered ½d. 6236/6668, 1d. 6485/6668, 2d. 6389/6668, 3d. 3988/4167,

4d. 4396/4167, 6d. 3000/3000, 9d. 2924/3000, 1/- 3000/3000.

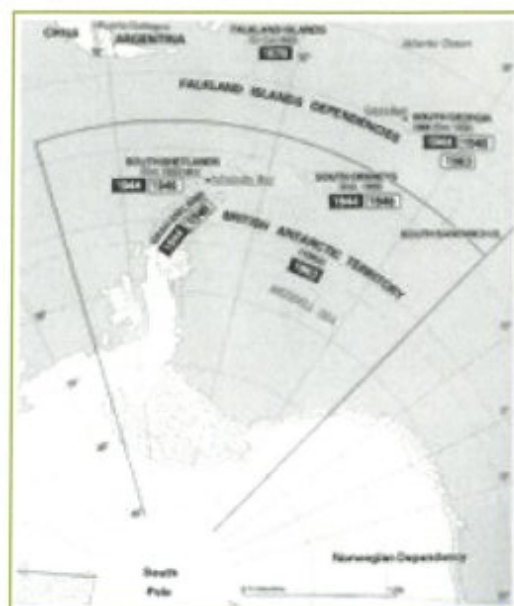


Coat of Arms

Significant items included in the exhibit are highlighted with a blue border and *Blue Bold Print*

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Map of the Falkland Islands and Dependencies



The Specimen set

So, what is a SPECIMEN stamp? Definition: it is a copy of a newly printed stamp issue that wasn't used for postal purposes. It was overprinted or perforated with the word «SPECIMEN». SPECIMEN stamps were used by countries who were part of the UPU (Universal Postal Union). The UPU, a United Nations agency established in 1874, still regulates and coordinates the postal practices and policies of its member nations today.

It was in 1879 that member nations of the UPU agreed that they would send their SPECIMEN stamps to each other. Postmasters used them to help in identifying international stamps. Archives of the stamps of a foreign country could be compiled using SPECIMEN stamps. Postmasters also used SPECIMEN stamps to identify and prevent the fraudulent use of foreign stamps in their country.



The set without flaws



The Vignette Plate Construction and the Group Transfer Flaws

The vignettes of the map were printed by lithography. A drawing of the map was made, and this was then transferred to the "master" stone. This was then reproduced ten times into a secondary group, a block of two rows of five. This block was then reproduced six times into the full plate of sixty stamps.

When the master drawing or stone was transferred into the group of ten, seven of the transfers were imperfect. These flaws or errors are to be found on stamps 2,3,4,5,12,14 & 15. When this group of ten was transferred a further five times these flaws were repeated. These flaws are constant on all the four vignette plates made.

There are three minor flaws that appear on every stamp on every plate. These are shown on page 5 with the Plate 3 flaws.

Flaws are listed by position below and one example shown on the plate by coloured arrow:-

Stamps 2,7,22,27,42,47 70° parallel does not touch bottom frame line.

Stamps 3,8,23,28,43,48 50° meridian continues beyond frame as a small dash.

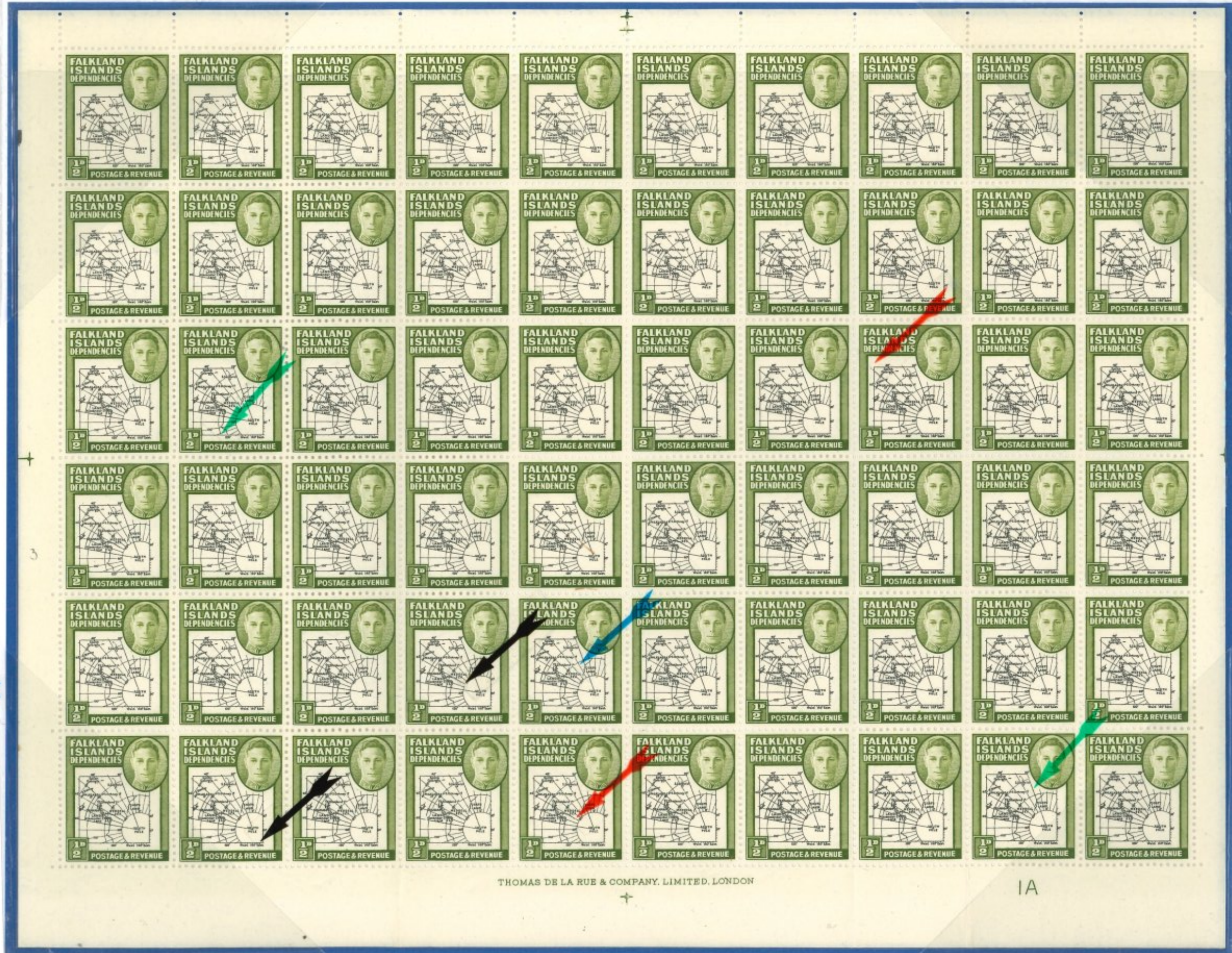
Stamps 4,9,24,29,44,49 Break in the 80° parallel, where it meets 60° meridian

Stamps 5,10,25,30,45,50 Break and dash on the 30° meridian, close to the 70° parallel.

Stamps 12,17,32,37,52,57 Dot over "A" of East, bottom right-hand corner.

Stamps 14,19,34,39,54,59 Dash by the 20° meridian, above the 70° parallel

Stamps 15 20,35,40,55,60 Gap in the 60° meridian, close to the 80° parallel



Vignette Plate 1: Center Plate Flaws
 When the six groups of ten drawings were brought together to make the full sheet of 60, individual flaws occurred.

Stamp 2:
Missing "I" in Shetland Is



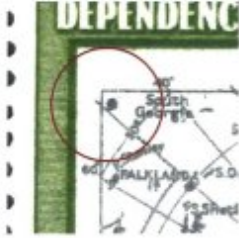
Stamp 3:
Broken "O" in Qrkney



Stamp 22: Broken "O" in COATS - CCATS for COATS



Stamp 29: Extra Island top left hand corner



Stamp 30:
Break in 40° W



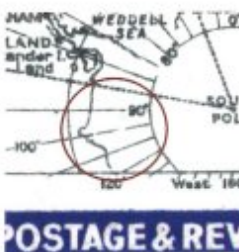
Stamp 36: Dot by medallion of King's head



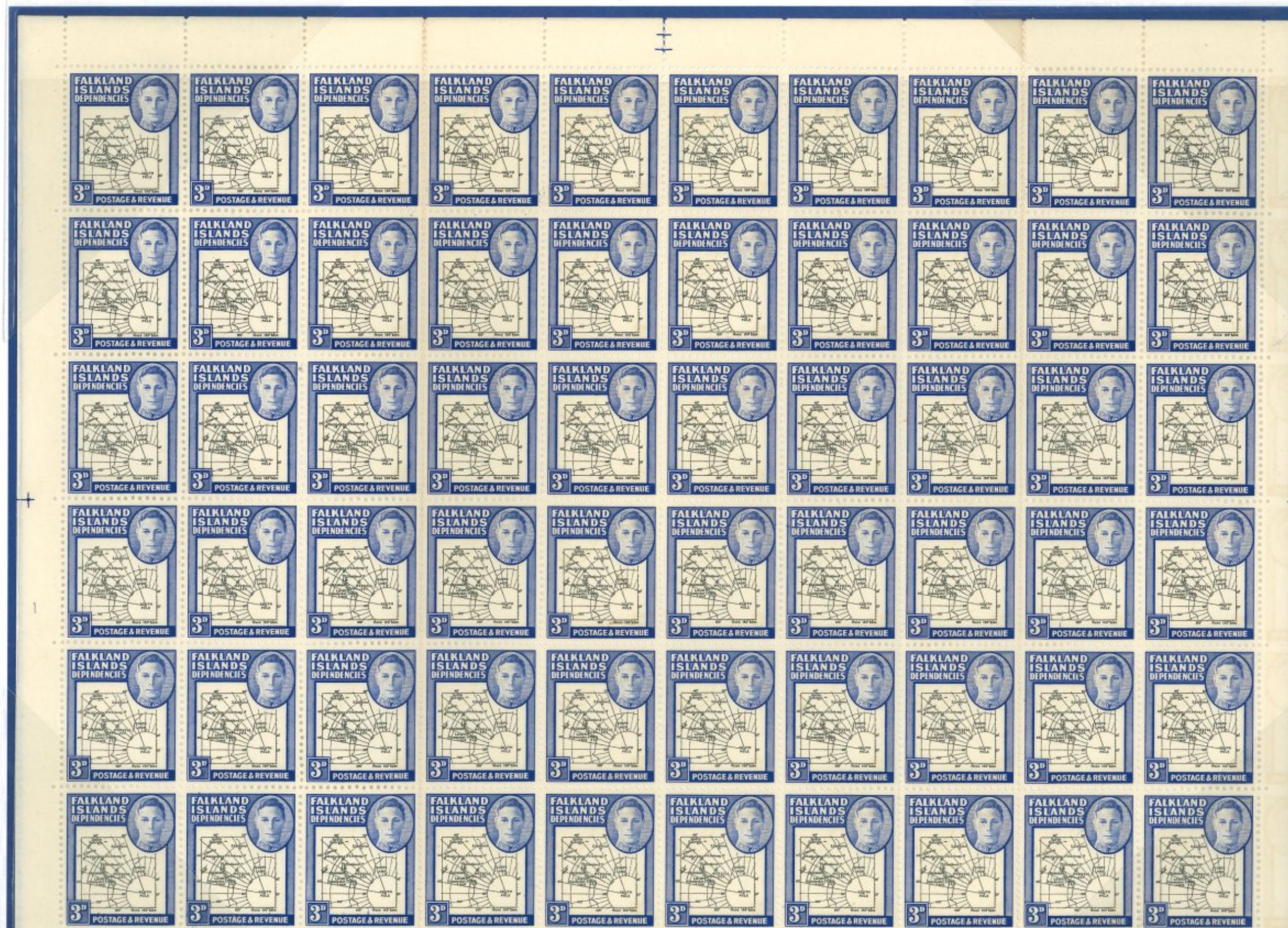
Stamp 37: Break in right corner



Stamp 49: Breaks in 100° W frame bottom



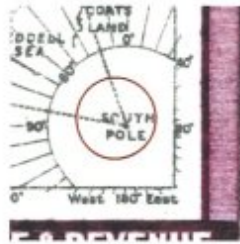
Stamp 57: Constant variety only found on the 3d of Plate 1



Vignette Plate 2: Center Plate Flaws

As the only plate that shows the stamp 20 flaw, this sheet does not show the flaw therefore this has to be from one of the early sheets printed.

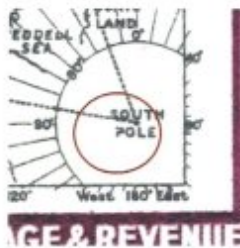
Stamp 20: First "O" in South Pole broken
"SCUTH"



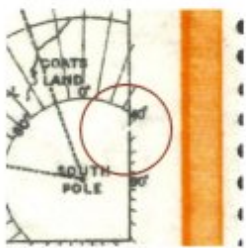
Stamp 30: Broken "R" in Qrkney



Stamp 32: Broken "P" in Pole



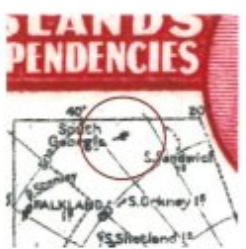
Stamp 36: Break in right frame



Stamp 40: Broken W in West



Stamp 49: Enlarged South Georgia Island



Stamp 58: South "Poke: instead of Pole



Vignette Plate 3: Center Plate Flaws & The Three Minor Flaws

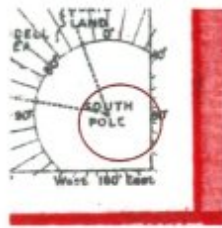
Stamp 22: Spot to the right of 90° E



Stamp 54: Rubbed "A" of "Alexander"



Stamp 55: Missing center bar of "E" in POLE



The Three Minor Flaws

Break in 20° Meridian by right frame



Kink in left frame above the 70° Meridian



To the left of South Georgia there are usually three small dots however sometimes there are only one or two.



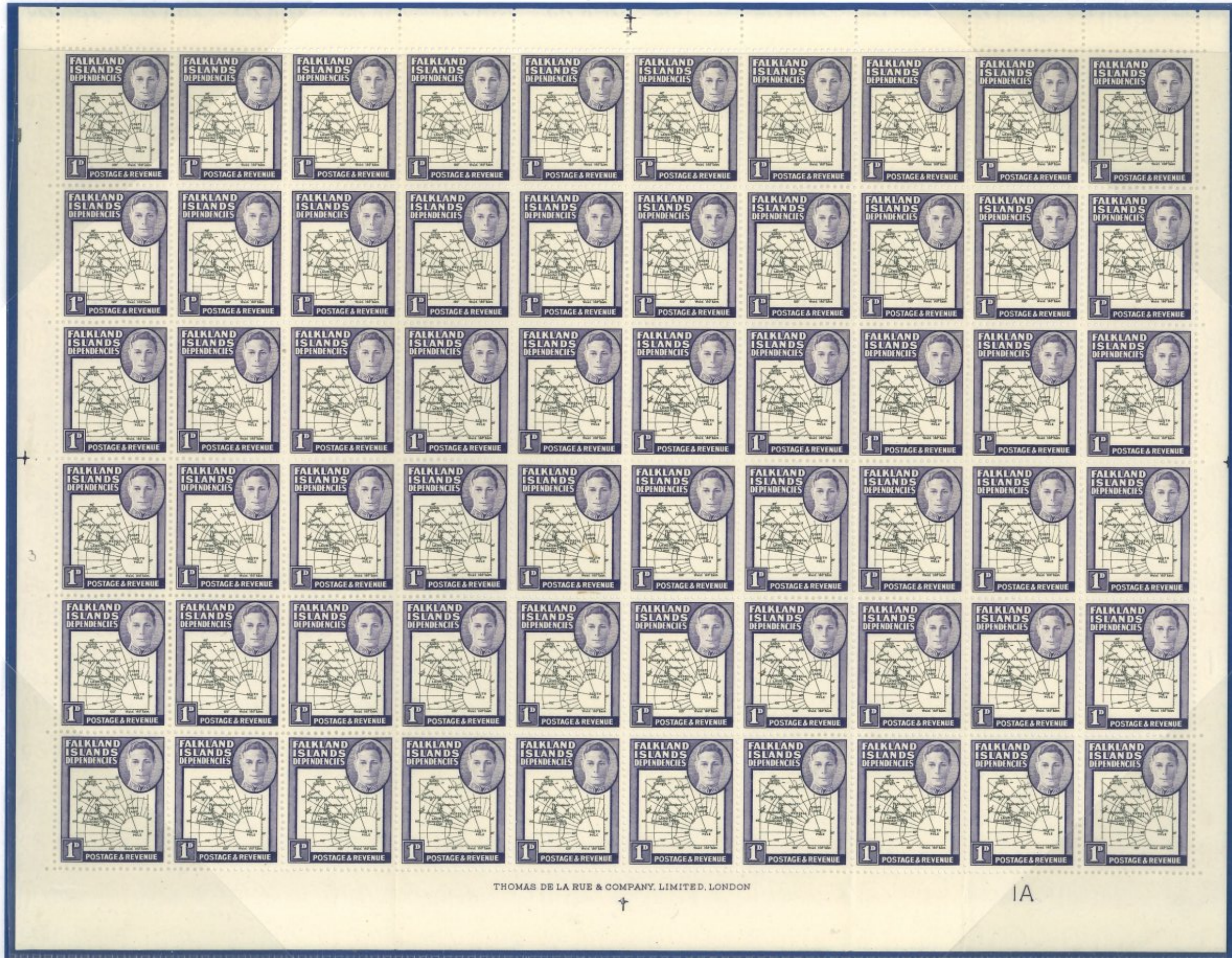
1



2



3



Vignette Plate 4: Center Plate Flaws

Stamp 3: Break in 80° Meridian
Stamp 9: Spot outside right frame on 30° E



Stamp 18: Broken "O" in COATS - CJATS for COATS



Stamp 19: Broken "O" in COATS - CUATS for COATS



Stamp 20: "8U" for "80" in left margin



Stamp 28: "00" for "80" on 80° parallel



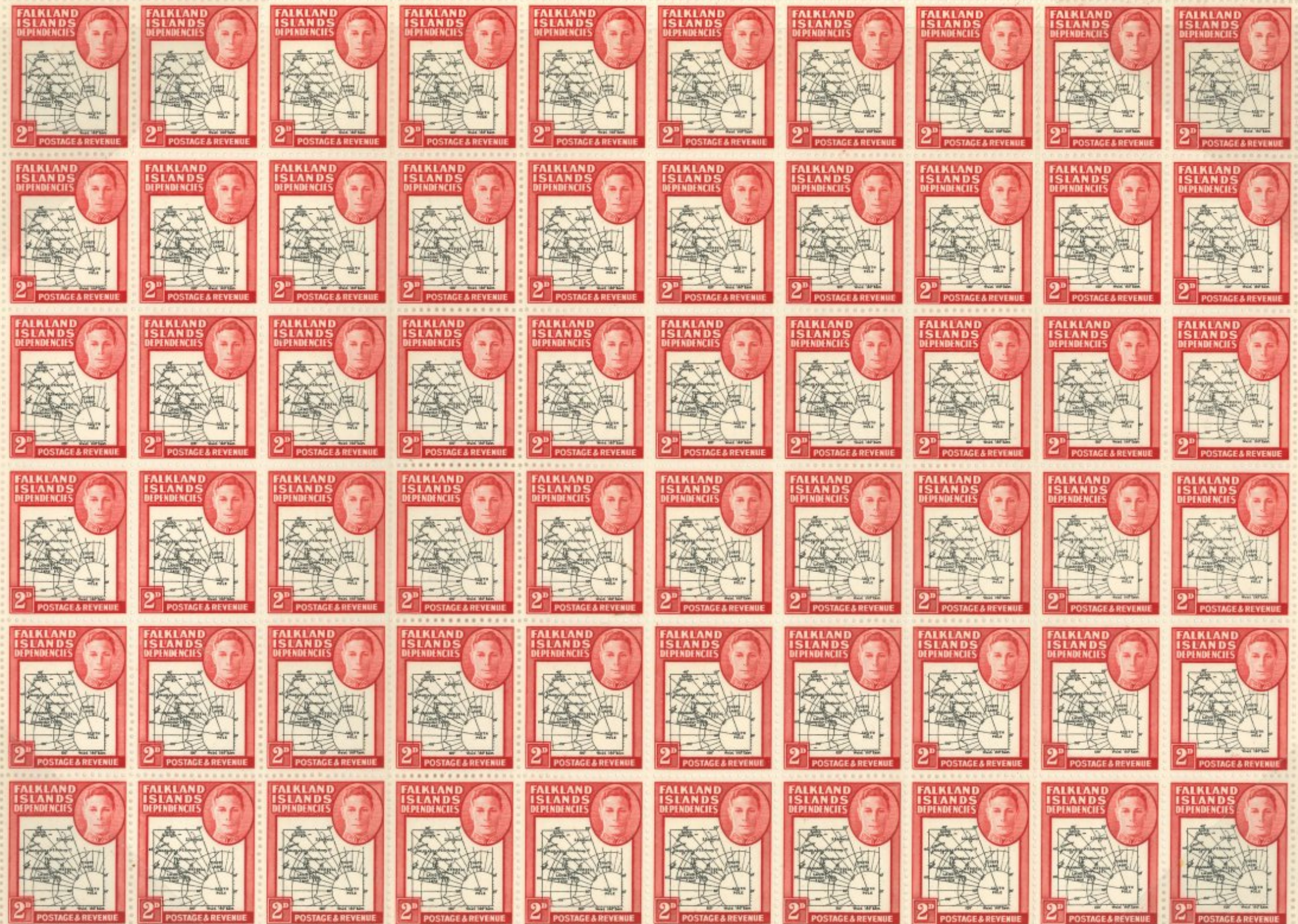
Stamp 30: "Lana" for "Land"



Stamp 52: Broken "t" in "Stanley"



Stamp 56: Broken top frame by 20° W

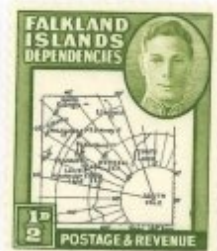


Shades

½d Black & Green



½d Black & Yellow-Green



1d Black & Violet



1d Black & Slate-Violet



2d Black & Carmine



2d Black & Bright Carmine-Red



3d Black & Blue



3d Black & Ultramarine



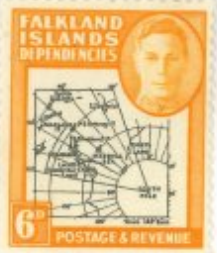
4d Black & Claret



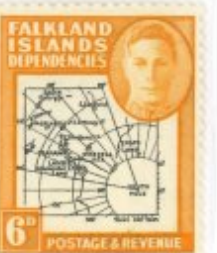
4d Black & Lake



6d Black & orange



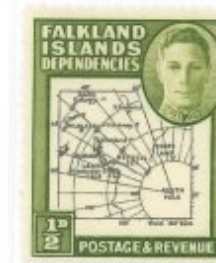
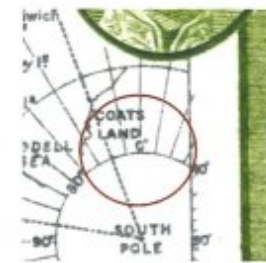
6d Black & Ochre



Unlisted Flaws

There are many other flaws in this issue, these are a few of the ones I have found.

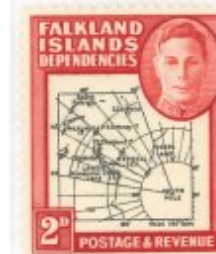
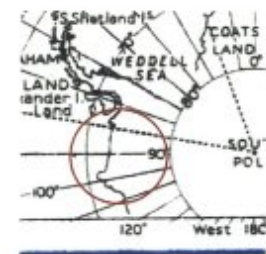
Broken 0°



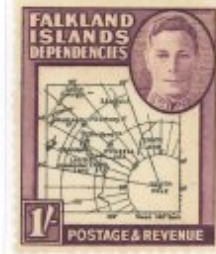
Broken "h" in Shetland Is



Break in 90° Meridian



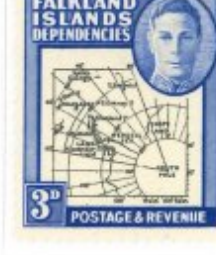
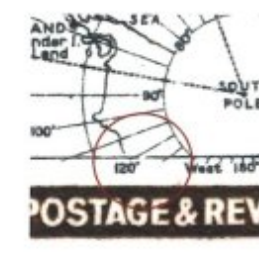
Break in "D" of WEDDELL SEA



Break In 40° Meridian below Orkney



Break in bottom frame by 120° Meridian



Sheet Numbering

The Crown Agents instructed Thomas De La Rue to number only the stamps for the Colony. The number is usually above stamp 10 of the top row and is a counting aid for the Post Office employees.



Sheet Numbering Flaws

Sheets were normally numbered above stamp 10 of the top row as a counting aid for the Post Office employees. In this instance incorrect numbers were used and had to be excised. Correct numbers were printed above stamp 9. (Broken Arc)



Epilogue

On the 16th of February 1948 an updated set was released by De La Rue. This set became known as "The Thin Set" as the map was redrawn using thinner and sharper lines. Although all the previous issues of the 1946 set were addressed and fixed, this issue ended up with twelve secondary flaws. These flaws occur on all values except the 2½d., each flaw five times in every sheet

