

# Malaya Study Group

A display to the  
Royal Philatelic Society, London  
15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2009

by the Malaya Study Group to celebrate the  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of their founding



The Malayan Study Group last displayed to the Royal in March 1971, when 16 members contributed 28 subjects of Malayan philately. In 2009, 22 members here cover 40 aspects of the country's philately and have still not included all the areas of this philatelically rich region, with its fascinating history. We hope there is something here for everyone from the pre-stamp era to modern definitive issues including a few less well-known aspects of the philatelic history of the country.

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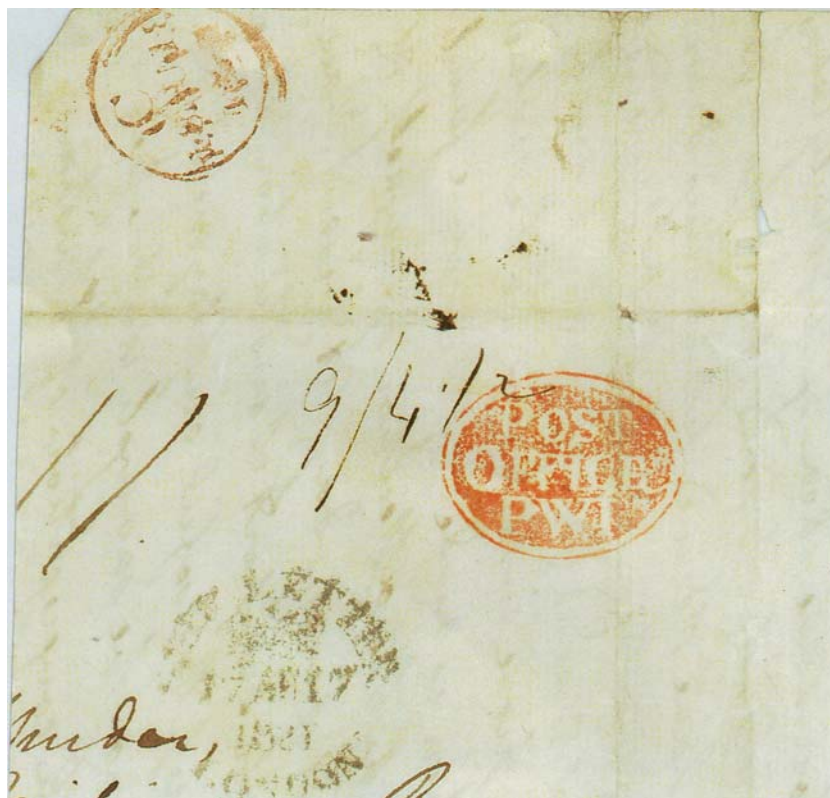
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## Frames 1-2 – Penang, 1812-1867 – Iain Dyce FRPSL

Penang was the first of the British settlements established on the Malay peninsula by Francis Light for the East India Company in 1786.

It was an important and, for a time, the only staging post between India and China where the Company held the British trade monopoly. Its harbour was good and had the potential of development as a naval base. Initial attempts at spice cultivation were encouraging and it was well positioned for trade among the western islands of the archipelago. Enthusiasm was such that in 1805 Penang was raised from a dependency of Bengal to that of fourth Presidency of India. These aspirations were unrealistic. An overlarge bureaucracy with an unsustainable expenditure led in 1826 to amalgamation with Malacca and Singapore to form the Straits Settlements. With the loss of the China monopoly its importance to India diminished further and in 1830 the Settlements were downgraded to a Residency of Bengal. The fortunes of the islands went further into decline with the rise of those of Singapore and the transfer of administration there in 1832. For the next 35 years the perception of Indian administration was that it was largely unsympathetic and indifferent to the aspirations of the Settlements. After much agitation the Straits Settlements were transferred from the control of India to the Colonial Office in 1867.

The postal markings of Penang reflect its change in political status. Before becoming a Presidency in 1805 no local cancellations are recorded. There then followed a period with a number of distinctive strikes. With its downgrading to a Residency, Penang along with the other Settlements was incorporated into the Bengal postal circle using the standard Indian cancellers and instructional marks. With the arrival of postage stamps it was issued with the numeral code B/147 within an octagon and later a duplex with the same numeral.



*Intaglia Post Office PWI (Prince of Wales Island) 1820 piece from a letter to London. The scarcest of the Penang hand stamps in recorded use for less than a year.*

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### Frames 3-4 – Indian Stamps used in Malaya. 1854-1866 – Edward Proud RDP

The first Indian 1854 issue was distributed to all offices under the control of India. The supply, together with a diamond of dots, was sent to Singapore, as expected. However, the diamond of dots was lost in transit and as a temporary measure a circle of dots was used, as shown (one of the two covers known).



*4 March 1865: Front of a large packet to Manila via Singapore and Hong Kong; franked 3 x 4a. Indian and 3 x 8c Hong Kong. Either a triple rate cover which had the additional Hong Kong franking to ensure transmission via that route as the 4a. Singapore rate was for both Hong Kong and Manila, or a six times rate with mixed franking due to a shortage of stamps. The only known mixed franking, one of four items with Hong Kong stamps and one of three items with Indian stamps used in Labuan. On arrival it was struck with '2', the charge for local delivery.*

When Sarawak and Labuan later started their own postal services, Indian stamps were initially used until replaced from 1869 by Straits Settlements' issues.

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## Frames 5-6 – Selangor up to 1900 – Rob Holley



*A rare example of the 1891 Selangor 2c rose on cover from Kwala Lumpur to Singapore, 2.7.1892.  
This stamp was valid for local mail only, little of which survived.*

Selangor, a Native State, became a British Protectorate in 1875 and early mail bore Straits Settlements' stamps without overprint. Covers are unknown. The earliest postmarks, dating from sometime in the period 1878-80, were circular or oval containing a capital 'S' and a star and crescent. Confusion has arisen as overprints exist which are very similar. These may have been the first to be issued but none has, as yet, been authenticated. The earliest confirmed overprint appeared in 1881 being a straight line 'SELANGOR' in black on the Straits' 2c brown. This type continued until 1885 in a variety of triplet settings (although from 1883 the Straits stamp used was the 2c rose) but the printings were very small due to cost. The word 'SELANGOR' was in block letters 3mm high but in different combinations of wide and narrow, resulting in a large number of varieties, some of which are of considerable rarity, especially used. After 1885, overprints from a number of other founts were supplied. They were still printed from triplets but, c.1887, the settings increased to 60 due to an increase in demand. The last Straits' 2c stamps for overprinting were ordered in 1891 when a shortage of 2c rose in the Colony saw surcharged 24c stamps used instead. All Selangor issues, until 1899, could be used only within Malaya.

As Selangor, in common with the other Native States, had to pay half-face for their overprinted stamps from the Straits Settlements they decided, in 1891, to take advantage of De La Rue's newly-introduced Universal Key-Plate system designed to reduce printing costs for territories with limited resources. Being a Protectorate and not a Colony a 'tiger-rampant' was used for the key-plate instead of the head of Queen Victoria. Five values in all bearing this design and the words 'POSTAGE & POSTAGE' were issued before, in 1895, it was decided a replacement set was needed inscribed 'POSTAGE & REVENUE'. The head of a tiger was chosen for the 'cents' values of this new issue and a 'group of elephants' for the dollar stamps. In 1896 Selangor joined with the other Native States to form the Federated Malay States. A delay in the supply of a 'unified' F.M.S. issue caused a shortage of low value stamps in 1900 which had to be made good by borrowing from the Straits and the overprinting of surplus Selangor stamps.

Until Selangor's stamps became valid for overseas use on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1899, all letters addressed outside the Malay Peninsula had to be franked with Straits' stamps, purchased from the Colony at full face and on sale at all Selangor's post offices and agencies which, by 1900, were 12 in number.

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### Frames 7-8 – Johore. 1884-1902 – Susan McEwen

Johore, the most southerly peninsular state has always been independently minded, not being part of the Straits Settlements nor joining the Federated Malay States. The postal service started in 1876 with overprints on Straits Settlements stamps. Johore's first stamps were issued in 1891. Johore stamps were accepted for International use from December 1898, although Johore did not join the U.P.U. until 1928. Thus Combination covers with Johore stamps to pay the postage to Singapore and Straits stamps for the onward postage are known until the end of 1898.



*1893 combination cover to London.*

The Sultan Abu Baker 2c used with a Straits Settlements 5c, cancelled respectively in Johore Bahru and Singapore. Slightly hidden beneath the cancels is the cachet of the sender the Johore Steam Saw Mill.

Johore became part of the Malayan Federation in 1949.

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## Frame 9 – Pahang. 1891-1899 – Bill Pain



Pahang, on the East coast of the Malay peninsula was the largest state in Malaya. In the early days it tended to be a backward state, as the central mountain chain isolated it from the rest of the country, communication being mainly by sea. On display is considered to be the most interesting period of the early issues which could be shown in nine sheets, starting with the “Leaping Tiger” definitives. The 2c rose appeared in November 1891, the 1c green in March 1895 and the 5c blue in June 1898. A 2c orange was not issued in Pahang. The plate flaws shown on the block of the 1c also occurred on some of the other stamps of the same design issued by other States.

Used stamps postmarked in all of the 6 post offices open at the time are shown.

The “Tiger’s Head” definitives of 1895-1897 follow, with die proofs of the 5c and 4c values.

Mr.J.F.Owen, District Officer & Treasurer at Kuala Lipis in August 1897, was responsible for keeping a stock of stamps for use at the local post office. He indented on the State Treasury at Pekan for stamps, but owing to the Indent being mislaid these did not arrive. A shortage of 2c and 3c stamps occurred so, in order to avoid complicating his accounts, he decided to bisect the 5c stamps, of which there was a fair stock, and surcharge one half 2c and the other half 3c. This carried on until the arrival of the stock of stamps from Pekan, a period of only 2 or 3 days. The stamps were first of all bisected horizontally. The top half was surcharged in manuscript “3” and initialled “JFO” in red ink. The bottom half was surcharged “2”, initialled, and the original figure “5” deleted by a stroke of the pen. The remainder of the stamps were bisected diagonally, surcharged and initialled as above. Although Mr.Owen initialled every half stamp, he did not in all cases write in the new figures of value. Many of these were filled in by his clerk – Bloom – and these can be distinguished by a little extra stroke at the top of both the “2” and “3”. This accounts for the differences in the shade of the ink between the figures and the initials. Mr.Owen had pots of both red and black ink on his desk and in a few cases dipped his pen into the wrong pot in error.

Probably for reasons of economy Pahang obtained higher value stamps from the State of Perak and overprinted them “Pahang”, instead of obtaining them from the Crown Agents. Dr. F.E.Wood stated that blocks of these stamps were almost non-existent. The \$5 value shown has the top of the first “a” of “Pahang” broken. Richard Hale has found this on the \$1 also, and due to the scarcity of this variety it is believed to occur only once in a sheet.

The “Four cents” surcharges were required to fulfil the necessity of having this value to comply with the requirement of Imperial “Penny Post” to all parts of the world.

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## Frame 10 – Some Varieties of the Perak Issue of 1895 – Anthony Winner

### Varieties on the 1 cent of the 1895 Tiger's Head

The “G” for “C” variety has been recognised and catalogued by Gibbons for some time. This occurs on stamp 3 of row 9 on both panes. This can be seen on the separate panes that are shown. Note, Gibbons suggests that it only occurs on the left-hand pane.

There are, however, at least two other constant varieties:

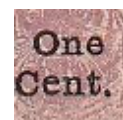
- An extension on the serif at the foot of the “1” on the right panel. This occurs on stamp 2 of row 3 on both panels.
- An underlining of the “c” in the right panel. This occurs on stamp 2 of row 9 on the left-hand pane – next to the “G” for “C”.



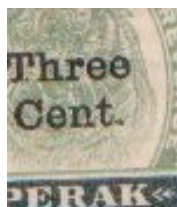
Shown are some other minor varieties, which are described as “blobs”.

### Varieties on the 1900 Surcharges on the 2 cent and 5 cent

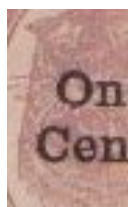
The catalogue shows varieties of both 1 cent and 3 cent surcharges – “antique Es” in both “One” and “Cent” on the 1 cent and the “antique e” in “Cent” of the 3 cent and a “no stop after Cent” on the latter.



Other constant varieties have been found, and some which may not be constant, as shown.



*Nick in “n” of Cent*



*Broken “O”*



*Broken “en” in Cent*



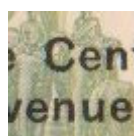
*Small “n” in Cent*

The relevant varieties also occur on the 3 Cents. There are also breaks in the cancelling bar which are also constant. These breaks only occur on the left-hand pane.

### Dollar Values

It has been possible to plate the “Three Cents Revenue only” surcharges. This reveals several bar breaks and a broken back to the “C” variety on stamp 3 of row 5.

The broken “C” on the 3 Cent surcharge on the \$2 and a bar break on the \$1 similar to that on stamp 5 of the revenue surcharge have been found.



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**Frames 11-12 – Sungei Ujong. 1881-1897 – Andrew Norris**



*1895 registered cover from Seremban with markings inscribed SUNGEI UJONG to Sumatra.*

The first frame is stamps of the Straits Settlements overprinted with the state name selected with an emphasis on where it has been possible to either confirm or add to published information. Confirmation of the first state name overprint setting on the 2 cents brown, Group A setting 1, and the establishment of a triplet setting for the 1882 “S.U.” with stops on the 4 cents rose are the more important of these.

The middle row however comprises thoughts on double impressions of single letters and the intriguing overprints normally found on the 2 cents brown but on other values. Two of the three stamps here are noted by SG as ‘trials’ and a fourth variant also exists but no more than two of any one has been noted in a total of six stamps recorded so far. Every example is exclusively overprinted by the 1<sup>st</sup> unit of a known triplet normally found on the 2 cents value but this just adds to the pleasing mystery of these stamps.

The second frame is postal history but almost all of the mail that survives was to overseas destinations for which State stamps were not valid as they were not members of the UPU. They had to use the stamps and postal stationery of Straits Settlements who were members. An 1896 3 cents postal stationery card is also franked by a wasted State 3 cents tiger stamp to show that confusion over the regulations did occur.

The first page sports the earliest Sungei Ujong cover with a cancellation and dated marking of this state used at the main town of Seremban. Following covers show the oval of bars obliteration, two dated markings and Registration hand stamp also used at Seremban.

By 1897 Sungei Ujong had rejoined the Federation that formed Negri Sembilan and though technically an item of the latter State the last page is the earliest recorded date of a cancel inscribed Seremban rather than Sungei Ujong. Thus this item brings a close to the stamps and postal history of Sungei Ujong.

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**Frame 13 – Negri Sembilan. 1891-1900 – Andrew Norris**



*1896 cover from Port Dickson to Austria.*

The name Negri Sembilan means nine states and was a Federation of States with the largest, Sungei Ujong, having rejoined in 1896. The De La Rue key plates and surcharge varieties are the two things that are most associated with this State. These twelve pages to 1900 avoid those items and show that there is a bit more to this State than those two subjects. The few pages that ‘overlap’ those two subjects are there for other reasons.

It starts with the first postmark of the first post office, the straight line ‘Negri Sembilan’ used at Tampin which was a town located close to Malacca. At this time Sungei Ujong had not rejoined the Federation of Negri Sembilan and Malacca was their route to the sea and the outside world. Thus Tampin was the first town to have a post office although Kuala Pilah was the seat of government. These are followed by reconstructed blocks of the De La Rue SPECIMEN overprint, Samuel type D12, that cover fifty units of the setting of sixty.

The centre row begins with the colourful cover from Port Dickson illustrated above and embossed proofs of a tiger’s head similar to the design used by De La Rue on their key plate stamps. Then another of these embossed tiger’s heads used within a hand painted essay for a proposed registration envelope issue. It finishes with a page of the 1 cent on 15 cent surcharge from the collection formed by the doyen of Malayan philately, Dr. F.E. Wood, with its distinctive type-set write-up he produced in Bettws-y-Coed.

The third row shows covers and cards including the provisional use of Selangor and Straits Settlements stamps due to the shortages caused by the delay in providing Federated Malay States stamps.

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**Frame 14 – Straits Settlements. 1826-1942 – Iain Dyce FRPSL**



*1867 Singapore to France. First provisional issue of the Straits Settlements. 16c rate by P & O.*

The Straits Settlements consisted of the three original British possessions on the Malayan peninsula: Penang, founded in 1786; Malacca taken from the Dutch during the Napoleonic war in 1795 and permanently transferred in 1824 under the Treaty of London and Singapore founded in 1819.

The settlements which had been administered individually by the East India Company were amalgamated in 1826 into the Straits Settlements. In 1867 the group was transferred to the control of the Colonial Office.

A number of small remote islands were later added; Cocos Keeling Island in 1886, Christmas Island in 1869 and Labuan in 1907. The Straits Settlements as a political entity came to an end in World War Two with the surrender of Singapore to the Japanese in 1942.

Postally, the Straits Settlements came initially under the control of Calcutta, using Indian stamps. Following the transfer in 1867, the colony issued its own stamps denominated in dollars and cents. It joined the UPU in 1877.



*1873 Singapore to Italy. Double rate letter (2 x 30c). Sent via Marseilles for onward transmission by train through the Mont Cenis tunnel to Florence.*

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**Frame 15 – Straits Settlement Revenue Stamps of Queen Victoria. 1868-1893 – Andrew McClellan**



*A selection of Queen Victorian Revenues.*

Malaya's first ever revenue adhesive for the payment of stamp duty was issued in 1862: the one-anna postage stamp of India specially overprinted 'S.S.' (=Straits Settlements) in a diamond. This frame begins with the three known types of this overprint, together with the larger type 3 cents on 1 anna receipt stamp of 1867 which replaced them, and the 'Straits Settlements Receipt Stamp' adhesive which replaced that. This last stamp went through 11 different printings and three perforations between 1868 and 1874. Included in this frame is the scarce perf 12½ printing of January 1874.

1868 saw the introduction of three new series of revenue adhesives, for use on foreign bills of exchange, marine insurance policies and judicial documents. The three series were printed by De La Rue using key types, with all stamps of a series sharing a common design and colour scheme. Since this enabled a range of values to be produced cheaply, the Straits Government ordered almost every conceivable denomination: 19 different values for Foreign Bill, 20 for Judicial and no fewer than 40 for Marine Policies. Usage however was relatively small and these stamps survive in very low numbers, with not a single known extant document bearing Foreign Bill or Marine Policies adhesives. These stamps are shown in this frame as proofs, specimens and mint or used singles.

In 1874 the system was simplified by the introduction of a general duty series, using a new De La Rue long key type inscribed simply 'Revenue Stamp'. The 16 adhesives of this series replaced the 60 Foreign Bill, Marine Policies and Receipt stamps at a stroke. Judicial stamps were retained since court fees required separate accounting, but the range of denominations was reduced, with odd values such as \$6.50 being eliminated. The Judicial key type eventually went through four different series, the top values from each series being shown in this frame.

The elegant proportions of the long key types led to difficulties when fraudsters realised they could make stamps overlap and so hide one cancel under another adhesive to re-use them. The Government's response was to end the practice of overlapping by issuing a new small-format Revenue series in 1882. Three values were overprinted as provisionals during a temporary shortage of Judicial stamps in 1882; a court document bearing the 50c on 60c is shown here.

From 1888 onwards the small-format Revenue stamps were reprinted in two-colour combinations with head plates printed in fugitive purple or green, and a new top value of \$100 was added in 1893. A Penang deed of property bearing two examples of this top value concludes this frame.

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## Frames 16-17 – Postage Due and Malaya. 1849-1936 – Joe Robertson

Prior to the Straits Settlements joining the UPU in the late 1870s the arrangements for payment of postage to and from Malaya were sometimes of an ad-hoc nature. Three such covers are on sheet 1. After joining the UPU the postage due for underpaid items to Malaya were sometimes only shown in Manuscript (sheet 2).

In the Straits Settlements the first handstruck incoming postage due marks were of Penang (sheet 3) and Singapore (sheet 4). Underpaid items into the mainland were marked mainly in Penang for Perak and Selangor (sheet 5). Later Straits Settlements marks were in boxes as Penang (sheet 6), Singapore (sheet 7) and Malacca (sheet 8).

Handstruck marks exist for three of the states of the Federated Malay States, Perak (sheet 9), Selangor (sheet 10) and Negri Sembilan (sheet 11). The unfederated state of Kedah had manuscript and similar boxed marks (sheet 12). The unfederated state of Johore used manuscript marks (sheet 13) until it introduced its own postage due stamps in 1938.

In 1924 postage due stamps were issued for the separate postal administrations of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States (sheet 14 and 15). The use of each of these stamps is shown (sheets 16 to 21). In 1936/38 the new Malayan Postal Union issued postage due stamps (sheet 22) which were initially used in combination with the stamps they replaced (sheet 23) but were later used alone throughout post war Malaya until replaced by modern postage due stamps of Malaysia and Singapore in the 1960s. Sheet 24 shows marks to cancel postage due stamps for charges not collected.



*Use of an 8 cent Straits Settlements Postage Due stamp just 5 days after issue on an underpaid letter from the US to a sub office in Singapore later cancelled on redelivery.*

## Frame 18-19 – Kedah & Perlis. 1887-1941 – Roger Barry

Kedah and Perlis are the most northern States with Perlis being the smallest in Malaysia. During the 1800s and early 1900s they were administered by Siam. In 1909 an agreement was reached to transfer suzerainty to Great Britain. The Bangkok Treaty was signed in July 1909 and gave the British a share in the administration of both states but enabled the local rulers significant independence and control over the affairs and finance of the States.

The first post office in Kedah was opened at Alor Star in 1887; the first in Perlis was at Kangar and opened in 1894. Both states used Siamese stamps up to 1909 when FMS stamps became available; although the use of Straits Settlements stamps during this period is known. The first Kedah stamps were issued in 1912 and the three designs included a Malay ploughing for the 10c to 50c values. The ploughman design is a little incongruous as it depicts a ploughman in his best clothes using bullocks on dry ground. Rice ploughing is carried out in the wet season with water buffalo, because of their strength; also no ploughman would wear his best clothes when up to his knees in water. Apparently the design was hastily conceived and was engraved from photographs taken in the dry period.

Airmail services started in 1929 and the airfield at Alor Star opened in 1930. Services were by the Dutch airline, K.L.M., Imperial Airways and Pan American Airways. These services all stopped in 1941 with the Japanese invasion. Airmails from Kedah are common but with only a handful of Europeans in Perlis prior to the Second World War, airmails from this State are somewhat rare.

Field Post Offices were set up in 1939 at the outbreak of war to protect the anonymity of British service mail. No official records exist concerning the allocation of the FPOs but it has been established that there were six British offices in Malaya numbered SP 501 to 506. SP 503 was allocated to Kedah and was located at the RAF base at Alor Star. With the influx of significant numbers of Commonwealth military forces further FPOs were established. The FPOs moved as required to service troop mail and it is known that FPO 31 was near Jitra, FPO 36 and 47 were allocated to Sungei Patani and FPO 60 to Alor Star.



*1935 airmail cover from Kangar, Perlis to England.*

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## Frame 20 – Early Registered Mail. 1888-1912 – Malcolm Clarke

Registered mail from the Straits Settlements and Malaya States is scarce before 1890 as business and other correspondents preferred to send mail abroad through forwarding agents, or by trusted messengers for local delivery of valuable items.

This display is a small selection comprising six sheets from the Straits Settlements and six more from Perak (4) and Selangor (2). Until August 1890 the fee for registration varied according to destination starting at 6c locally, 12c to most countries including Australia and New Zealand and 8c to the United Kingdom. From August 1890 the registration fee for all mail was reduced to a standard fee of 5 cents. This allowed the introduction of registration envelopes, introduced in February 1891 in five different sizes, each with an embossed stamp for the fee on the flap. The fee was doubled to 10 cents from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1904. Both rates are shown in the display and also the 8 cent fee to England on the earliest item from Penang to Cambridge in 1888.

Adhesive registration labels were not introduced to Malaya until 1911 and then only in the Straits Settlements. This is substantially later than in the neighbouring Dutch territories of Java and Sumatra. Boxed hand stamped etiquettes were used instead to meet UPU requirements that registered mail should display a large “R”, name of the office of origin, date and a unique number for each article. Those for Penang and Singapore are unusual in that the capital R was placed in a panel on the right whereas in most other places, including Perak and Selangor, it is placed on the left.

If mail was registered it was possible from 1892, to ask for an advice of receipt (Avis de reception) on delivery to be returned to the sender on payment of an additional fee. This was set initially at 5c, later raised to 8c and again to 10c. Insurance was also available for 10c to cover \$20 against loss, rising at 5c intervals for each extra \$10 of cover up to a maximum of \$250. This limit was raised to \$500 in 1896. Insured items were not readily identifiable until the introduction of red or pink labels after the end of the First World War. The cover from Lahat, Perak of 1908 is probably one such insured item and two others are possible candidates though they could be merely over-franked with philatelic intent.

One of the attractions of registered mail is that it offers opportunities for high or unusual denominations in franking given the range of extra services as well as additional transit and arrival marks to illustrate routes. Registered mail is often bulky and multiple rates are charged for postage.

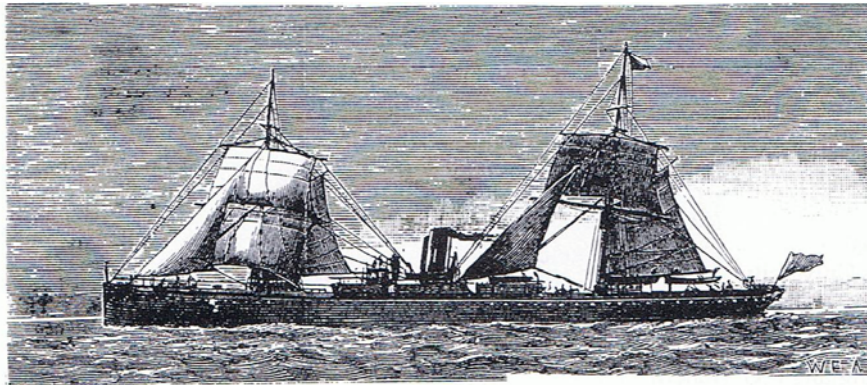


*1903 Postal stationery card, registered from Rawang to Antwerp, via Port Swettenham.*

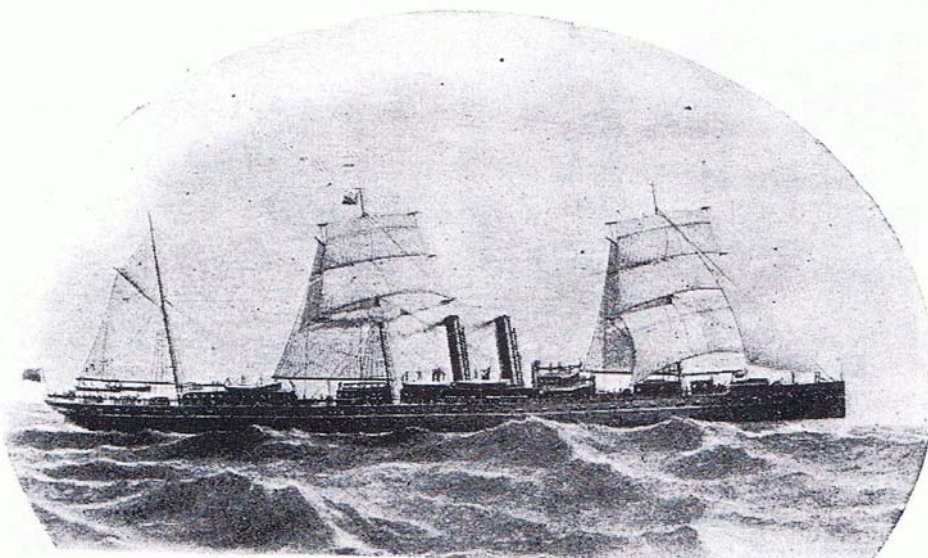
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**Frame 21 – Straits Settlement Marine Post Offices. 1889-1915 – Edward Proud RDP**

This frame shows examples of the cancels used on the Penang/Singapore Marine Post Office; also showing the link with the FMS TPO.



**S.S. Khiva built 1874, 2,609 tons**



**P & O Valetta (1884)**

## Frame 22 – Early Postcards of Singapore. 1890-1910 – Doug Cotterell

The first official Straits Settlements postcards were issued in 1879, but it was 1894 before privately printed postcards were allowed at the same postal rate as official cards.

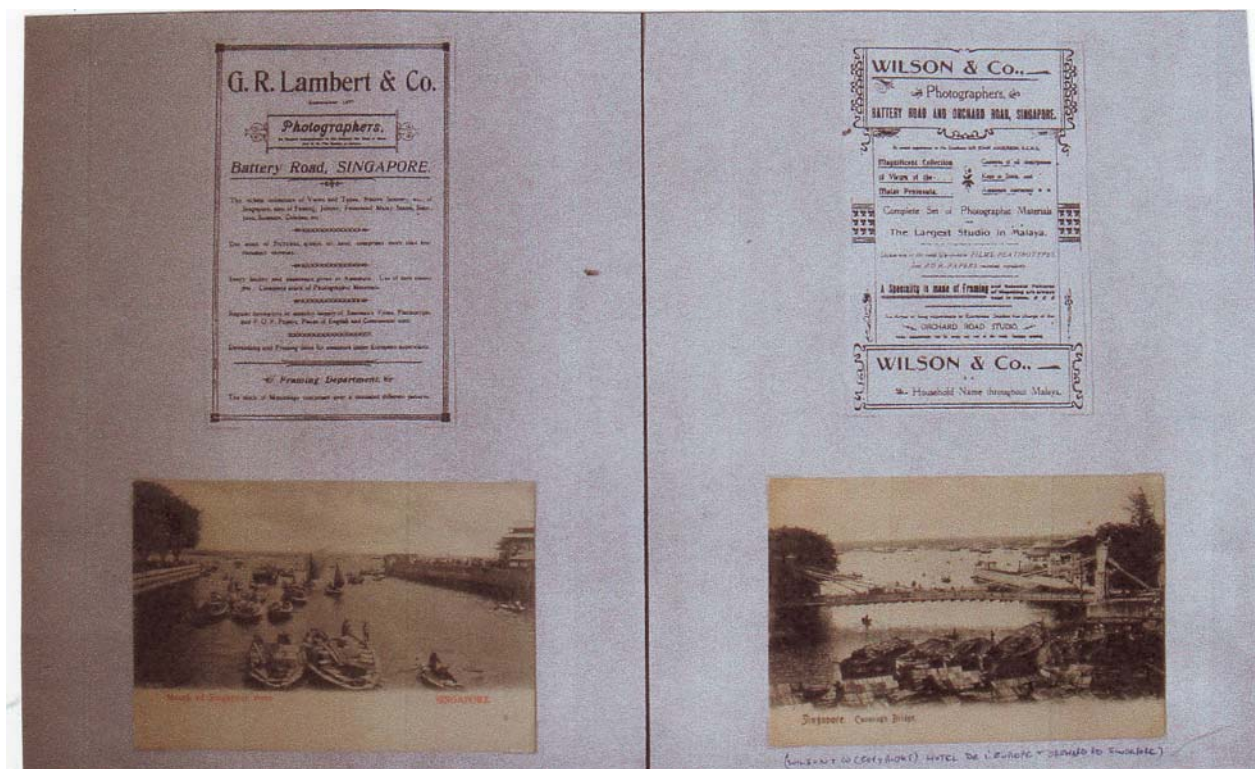
Early cards had undivided backs for use of address only; some had room beside the picture for small messages.

Later cards had divided backs allowing the address on the right hand side and the message on the left.

The number of picture postcards sent from the Straits Settlements between 1898 and 1908 was in the region of 3,000,000.

Well known publishers of picture postcards at this time were:

R. F. Lambert & Co.  
Wilson & Co.  
Max. H. Hickes.  
Continental Stamp Co.  
Koh & Co.  
Kong Hinh Chiong & Co.  
M. Prager.  
C. A. Ribero.  
Hartwig & Co.



*Advertisements for Lambert & Co and Wilson & Co. – two well known postcard publishers.*

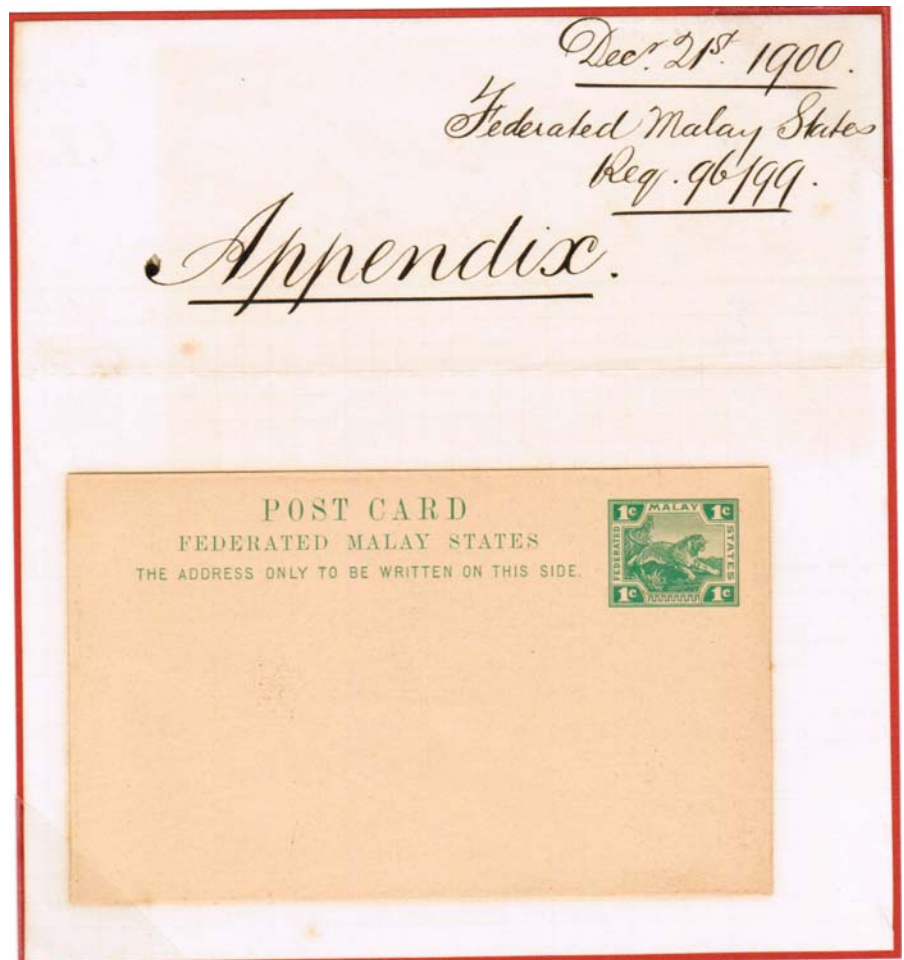
## Frames 23-24 – Federated Malay States Postal Stationery. 1887-1935 – Henry Ong

**Forerunner** – Postal Stationery items were supplied directly from the Straits Settlements to the 4 states from 1885 prior to their own issues. Perak was the only state to issue a Straits Settlements overprinted 1cent local rate card in 1887, which made it the first of the 4 states to have its own Post Card. Subsequently, Perak (1893), followed by Selangor (1896), Negri Sembilan (1897) and lastly Pahang (1899), issued their own 1-cent local rate Post Card. These cards were sometimes additionally franked with Straits Settlements stamps for overseas destinations.

**Post Cards** – The unified ‘leaping tiger’ design was used on all Federated Malay States Post Cards. There were major changes in the postal rates from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1918 and to meet demand, the existing Post Cards were overprinted with the new rates. The colour of the 2 cents local rate card was changed from green to brown in 1922. The local rate Post Card was also upgraded in 1924 to 5½" x 3½". To conform to the UPU colour scheme, the local rate card reverted back to green and the 4 cents Empire card was changed from carmine to orange in 1927. A new format 2 cents green Post Card was issued in 1934.

**Envelope, Letter Card and Newspaper Wrapper** – On 16<sup>th</sup> October 1928, various other types of postal stationery were introduced to meet the increasing demand from the public. Envelopes with embossed value in two denominations, the 4 cents for use within Malaya and 6 cents for the British Empire were issued. At the same time, a 2 cents Newspaper Wrapper for the printed matter rate and a 4 cents Letter Card were also issued.

**Registration Fee Paid Envelopes** – 5 cents Registration Fee Paid Envelopes in 4 standard sizes (F, G, H and H2) were issued in 1901. They were subsequently re-issued in 1905 with new values of 10 cents when the registration fees were revised on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 1904. From 1906, De La Rue produced the 10 cents Registered Envelope in a new format and 5 standard sizes (F, G, H, H2 and K) were recorded as issued between 1907 and 1921. It should be noted that the 'F' size was last issued in 1919 and the 'K' size was introduced in 1920. The 12 cents Registration Fee Paid Envelope in 4 standard sizes (G, H, H2 and K) were subsequently issued from 1923 when the registration fee was increased to 12 cents on 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 1921. In 1929, the 15 cents Registration Fee Paid Envelopes in 4 standard sizes (G, H, H2 and K) were issued with an embossed design similar to the Prepaid Envelope. From 1934, the 15 cents Registration Fee Paid Envelope in 3 standard sizes (G, H and H2) were issued with the embossed oval on the long tapered flap folded to the back of the envelope. This new design conformed to the International Agreement regarding the sealing of insured letters.



*Essay of the 1-cent Postal Stationery card in near adopted design.*

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Frame 25 – Trengganu, the Early Years up to 1922 – Rob Holley



*Registered cover Kemasek to Russia via Vladivostok and the Siberian Railway. Franked 8c blue.  
10c stamp probably removed by Russian censor at Irkutsk. Re-censored Petrograd.  
Despatched 27.5.16 (Gregorian Calendar). Arrived 16.6.16 (Julian Calendar). Transit time: 33 days.  
The only recorded registered cover from Kemasek.*

Trengganu was one of the four Malay states which were transferred from the suzerainty of Siam (as Thailand was then known) to that of Great Britain under the terms of the 1909 Treaty of Bangkok. The Sultan at the time, Zainal Abidin III, a ruler with independent views, had already refused to allow Siam to open a post office in his territory and Britain was similarly prevented from issuing Federated Malay States' stamps while the first Trengganu definitives were being prepared. Typically, he insisted the latter should bear his portrait, the only state of the four where this occurred.

Trengganu issued its first stamps on 14 December 1910 from a post office set up in a private building in the state capital, Kuala Trengganu. Hitherto, members of the Trengganu public wishing to communicate with the outside world kept Straits Settlements' stamps to frank their mail which was then handed to captains of passing steamers to take to Singapore. The volume of such mail must have been very small and the only example recorded so far is the postcard shown on Sheet 2. After an initial flurry of philatelic mail in 1910-11, letters from Trengganu were reduced to a trickle. The main reasons for this were the limited economic development in the State and a lack of Europeans (the letter-writers). In 1918 the British representative, the 'British Agent' (Sultan Zainal refused to sign a treaty with the British and allow a British Adviser) claimed in his Annual Report that white faces were so rare in the capital, Kuala Trengganu, that in the six months from November 1918 to April 1919, he had seen only two. It is not until the 1930s that commercial mail from Trengganu appeared with any regularity.

In 1917 Trengganu, somewhat surprisingly, became the only Malay state to issue Red Cross stamps but they were virtually unused by the public and commercial covers are almost unknown. In 1921 a shortage of some lower values was made good by the borrowing of 2c, 4c and 6c stamps from the Straits Settlements, the last value occasioning some surprise as Trengganu had not issued a 6c stamp. In April 1922 the last of the Sultan Zainal issue appeared bearing an overprint commemorating the Malaya-Borneo Exhibition currently being held in Singapore. As the stamps were sold only during the period of the Exhibition (17 days) commercial covers bearing the issue are great rarities.

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## Frame 26 – The Federated Malay States. 1900-1934 – Michael Waugh

The Federated Malay States were formed by the federation of the states of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1896 under a British Resident General stationed at Kuala Lumpur. For four years their own stamps were used but post from abroad had to be prepaid with Straits Settlement stamps, stocks being held at post offices.

Although not catalogued as such by Stanley Gibbons, the first issues were the One and Three cent surcharges of 1900 of Perak and Selangor.



These were followed by the Provisional Issue of 1900 where stamps of Perak and Negri Sembilan were overprinted by De La Rue in London.



Then follows the “Springing Tiger” design for lower values and Elephants for higher values which lasted until 1934. These were printed with key and duty plates Die I and from 1908 for lower values 1c to 4c, single working plates Die II, the line under Malay being thin in the latter. 1901 with Watermark Crown CA sideways; 1904 Multiple Crown CA sideways; 1922 Multiple Crown Script CA sideways.



*Die I Crown CA  
Plate 1 Late State  
Horizontal line under  
Right I blurred.*



*Die II  
Multiple Script CA  
2c green 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 1926.*

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## Frames 27-29 –The High Value Elephant Issues of the Federated States. 1895-1936

### – Peter Chang

#### History

It is believed that the design of the “elephant” stamps came from a photograph probably taken in 1878 by Major J.F.A. McNair. The “elephant” stamps have a very important place in Malayan postal history. These were the first and only stamps used for more than 40 years (much longer than GB’s “seahorse” issues and the Australia’s “kangaroo” issues). They were also the first bi-color, large format stamps, and they were very attractively designed. The initial high value (\$1-\$25) issues of Selangor and Perak were recorded in 1895-1899. Pahang did not issue its own high value stamps instead a provisional issue was made with an overprint of “Pahang” on the Perak \$1 and \$5 “elephant” stamps for the 1898-1899 period. In 1900 a provisional issue of the high value “elephant” stamps were made to cater for the immediate needs of the newly formed Federated Malay States (FMS). The Perak high value stamps of \$1, \$2, \$5, and \$25 were overprinted with Federated Malay States in two lines and a horizontal bar. Later in 1900, the Federated Malay States had their own general issues by using the “elephant” key plates of Selangor and Perak. They were printed by De La Rue & Co. on white woven paper with Crown CC watermark. The face values of \$1, \$2, \$5 and \$25 were retained. Two subsequent issues were made with the Multiple Crown CA and Script CA watermarks.



*Map of Federated Malay States.*

*On July 1, 1896, the States of Selangor, Perak, Pahang and Negri Sembilan were organized on a federal basis known as The Federated Malay States.*

#### Display Materials

Pre-production items, specimen, mint, plate numbered singles and blocks, postally used, covers, and revenue on documents are displayed. Many unique items are noted with red border, including the only known complete sheet of the Pahang \$25 revenue (probably the only complete sheet of any “elephant” value), the FMS \$25 value mint plate numbered block with the MCA watermark (ex-Royal Philatelic Collection), and the only die proof in private hands.

#### Challenges

1. Not much information is available on the “elephant” issues. Virtually nothing has been written on varieties such as inverted watermark, reversed watermark, colour varieties and overprint varieties.
2. Information about ordered, supplied, invoiced and charged quantities stated in *The De La Rue History of British and Foreign Postage Stamps (1855-1901)* by John Easton is confusing.
3. Other than the \$1 value, no higher values of the Selangor issue are known to be postally used, except for few which were cancelled to order. Most of these high values were overprinted with “J” and “Judicial” for revenue use.
4. The green ink was fugitive to prevent re-use, and those printed on chalk-surfaced paper are known for the “washed” appearance of almost all used copies. Superb copies with circular date stamp cancels are very scarce.

### Frame 30 – Malayan Stamp Shortages. 1900-1901 – Michael Waugh

Although Federated Malay States (FMS) had been established in 1896, Selangor, Perak, Negri Sembilan and Pahang had used pre-existing issues. Poor organisation and communication meant that the Tiger definitives did not arrive until February 1901. Meantime shortages of low value stamps had occurred. Various stop gap measures were taken to ensure supplies of stamps from existing stocks and reprints.

Detailed accounts are given by Dr. F.E. Wood in *The Postage Stamps of the Native Protected States of Malaya, Part 1*, 2<sup>nd</sup> reprint 1981, Kuala Lumpur. W.A. Reeves, *The Postage Stamps of the Federated Malay States*, Malaya Study Group, 1978. *The Postal History of British Malaya Volume 2*, E.B. Proud, 2000 2<sup>nd</sup> edition pp 26-33 and Dr. N.H. Gong and D.R.M. Holley, *Selangor Issue of 1895-1899*, *Malayan Philatelist*, 2000. 41. 71. The last suggests a shortfall in Negri Sembilan and Pahang from October 1899.



*Straits Settlement used in Selangor  
Kuala Lumpur 29<sup>th</sup> November 1900*



*Straits Settlement used in Perak  
Gopeng 4<sup>th</sup> February 1901*

Further notes:

From 16<sup>th</sup> June 1900 Straits Settlement stamps could be used in FMS.

About August 1900 values of Perak and Selangor were overprinted 1c and 3c.

From 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1900 mail could be sent without stamps, cash being paid as postage.

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**Frame 31 – Labuan. 1907-1941 – Andrew Norris**



*Straits Settlements 4 cents orange postal stationery envelope franked pair of 4 cents violet in 1930 to Java.*

This period was when Labuan was part of the Straits Settlements having been transferred from the Chartered British North Borneo Company. The official transfer took place on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1907 and lasted exactly 35 years ending on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1942 with Japanese invasion and occupation.

Initially Labuan stamps and postal stationery overprinted Straits Settlements were issued but these were heavily speculated in making genuine covers and cards difficult to find. Some values from the overprinted issue were almost immediately replaced by Straits Settlements stamps and soon the stamps and postal stationery of the Straits Settlements became the norm.

The items chosen have something unusual or of interest about them and begins with mail using the overprinted stamps and postal stationery, finishing the top row is an early Paquebot item. The second row shows registered and A.R. items plus an interesting attempt to use earlier issues that were by this time invalid. The centre row finishes off with a personal favourite illustrated above.

The last row deals with Imperial Censorship that took place at Labuan from 1939 to 1941. It shows the two Censorship Passed For Transmission hand stamps known to have been used at Labuan and an instructional marking. All of these are struck on local mail which would not have gone anywhere near Singapore or Penang where these markings were otherwise applied. The fourth item is the only recorded example of the Passed For Transmission No.84 that is most probably also applied at Labuan.

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### Frame 32 – Revenue of Malaya: the Nyasa Types. 1900-1953 – Peter Cockburn

After the Revenue and Judicial issues of 1888 and 1890 there were no further issues of purely revenue stamps until 1936. During the interim period high values of \$25, \$100 and \$500, all of the *Nyasa* large key type design, were issued for each monarch and each change of paper but in every case they were denominated Postage and Revenue. Because of their listing by SG these high value stamps have become, in mint condition, some of the defining rarities of Empire collections.

In this exhibit the correct use of these stamps is shown on documents receipting revenue for various indentures, deeds and certificates.

Initially the rules remained as previously by requiring the value of the revenue to be indicated by the adhesive and the payment receipt being embossed thereon using the same value embossing die. Later the embossing die did not contain a value and hence it became only a foolproof method of cancelling the adhesive stamp.



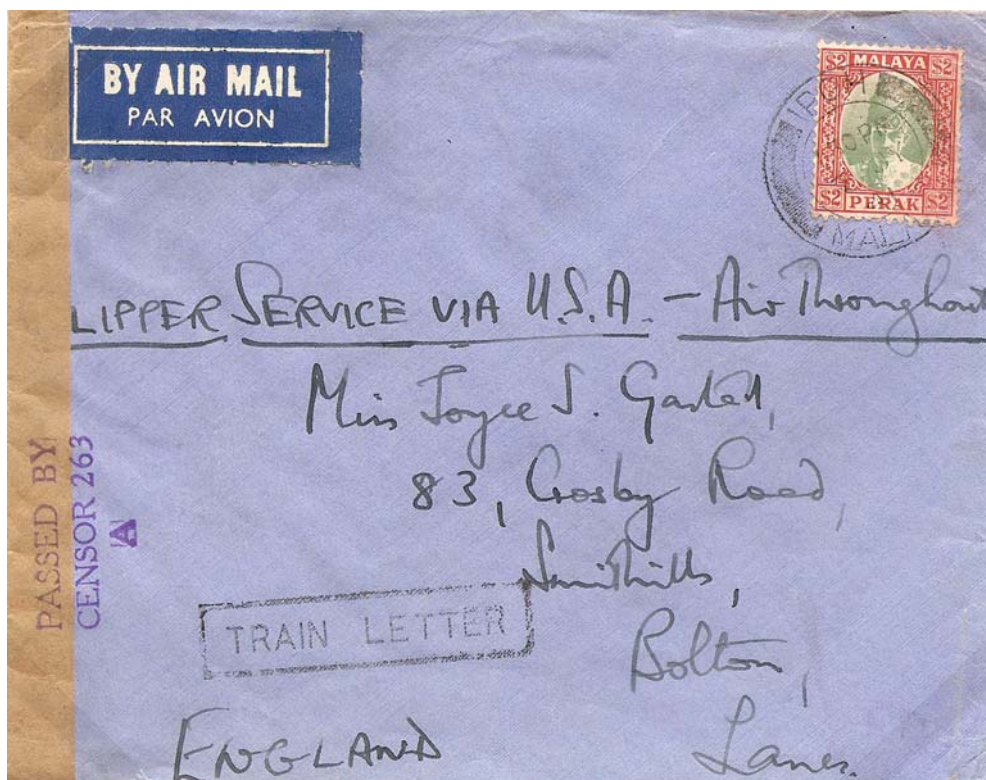
*Indenture document of 1922.*

Many of these *Nyasa* type stamps were issued in very small quantities.

In 1936 the *Nyasa* design was used for the George V revenue \$25 and later for the George VI revenues \$25, \$100 and \$500.

The BMA revenue stamps of Malaya printed during the war used the *Nyasa* type with George VI head and also the three states derived from the Straits Settlements; Singapore, Malacca and Penang.

Queen Elizabeth's Head on the *Nyasa* design was used only for the high value revenues of Singapore in 1953.



*Clipper cover to U.K. Posted at Parit Buntar & cleared Ipoh 7.7.41. Bears Ipoh train letter cachet (third type). An unusual example of forward mail being processed at Ipoh.*

Malaya's train mail is of two types. The first, dating 1902-26, is mail sorted in railway carriages to hasten its distribution. The second, 1926-42, is mail posted by the public in Travelling Letter Boxes attached to the outside of railway carriages. The first bears sorting marks and the second, train letter cachets. The latter were applied to account for mail being cancelled at offices other than the place of posting often resulting in stamps of one state being cancelled in another.

### **SORTING MARKS**

It is thought the first sorting carriage was used on the trains of the Selangor State Railway carrying overseas mail from Port Swettenham to Kuala Lumpur. In August 1903 the railway from Penang in the north of Malaya to Kuala Lumpur was completed and it is assumed that the sorting carriage was transferred to this line as it was quicker. Several types of sorting mark, all with 'R.M.S.' at the top and 'SELANGOR' around the foot, were used 1902-14 but it is not known if they were used just in the State of Selangor or further afield. Circa 1915, a sorting mark 'F.M.S. SELANGOR' was introduced followed, around 1922, by 'F.M.S. RAILWAY SORTING CARRIAGE'. The last recorded date of the latter, 1926, is roughly when the use of railway sorters ceased. Much remains to be discovered about this subject.

### **TRAVELLING LETTER BOXES**

The earliest train letter cachet known is dated 1926 on a cover (shown on Sheet 8) brought down from Thailand to Penang although the service may have begun earlier. The Travelling Letter Boxes were cleared at Ipoh in Perak, Kuala Lumpur in Selangor and Singapore on south-bound trains, and the first two plus Penang going north. At Ipoh the mail was actually sorted on the station, with the forward mail usually being replaced in the TLB uncanceled, the train not staying long enough for it to be taken to the local post office and processed. Ipoh cachets are therefore scarce. For some reason Singapore used its Paquebot cancel instead of a train letter cachet. A travelling Letter Box was available on the east coast line which ran between Singapore and Kota Bharu in the northern state of Kelantan but only at stations in Kelantan itself. For this reason, no cachet is thought to have been used in Kota Bharu as it would only have had to cancel Kelantan mail.

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### Frame 34 – Kelantan: The First Issue. January 1911 – Bill Pain



*F.M.S. used at  
Batu Mengkebang.*



*Boustead & Co. Ltd.  
perfin chop.*



*Siam Steam Navigation Co.  
S.S. Mahidol.*

The State of Kelantan sits on the basin of the Kelantan river which flows into the South China Sea on the north east coast of the Malay peninsula. To the west of the state are high mountains which form the boundaries with the states of Perak and Pahang. To the south is the state of Trengganu while to the north is Siam, now Thailand.

From the 16<sup>th</sup> Century onwards the Siamese monarchy exercised suzerainty over Kelantan. Post offices using Siamese stamps, whose use there can only be identified from the postmarks, were opened at Kota Bharu in 1895.

The Duff Development Company commenced operations in 1903, which led to the opening of a second post office at Batu Mengkebang (from 1907) on the Kelantan river. This subsequently became Kuala Krai, named after the Sungei Kerek. The earliest letters from Batu Mengkebang were franked by Siamese stamps with B. M. and the date written on them in manuscript in black ink. These are very scarce. Subsequently the stamps were postmarked. Mail was carried from Batu Mengkebang to Kota Bharu on the Duff Development Co.'s river steamers. From Kota Bharu external mail was mainly carried by coastal steamers of the Siam Steam Navigation Co. or the Straits Steamship Co. which operated between Bangkok and Singapore.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> March 1909, the Anglo-Siamese treaty was signed which transferred the suzerainty over Kelantan from Siam to Britain. So, from 1909, stamps of the Federated Malay States were supplied for use in the two post offices, which again can only be recognised from their postmarks.

The 'Crescent & Emblems' definitives inscribed Kelantan were issued in January 1911. Specimen, mint and used are shown, including examples of the two scarce 'River Post' cancellations. Also 4c cover to India and a 'Barker' cover showing an unauthorised vertically bisected 3c. An uncanceled post card from the 'Gimlette' correspondence describing the exhumation of a Malay who had been murdered by the Chinese. Dr. Gimlette was employed by the Duff Development Co. Finally examples of a 'Siam Steam Navigation Company' chop from S.S. Mahidol on a 3c and a 5c with the very scarce 'B & Co / Ltd perfin from Boustead & Co.'s office in Tumpat, Kelantan, the port for Kota Bharu, the capital.

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### Frame 35 – First World War Censorship. 1914-1919 – Mac McClaren

From the outbreak of the First World War, incoming, outgoing, transit and internal mail was subject to scrutiny by the censor. Early on, the Straits Settlements was not much troubled by the war that was being waged in far-off Europe and as a result, early censorship was fairly relaxed, the majority of mails being left to the attention of the Indian censors who had a large contingent of examiners based in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. This made sense as the majority of mail at this time was to and from the Sub Continent, dealing with business by the Chetti community or in transit through India.

After the sinking of the German raider 'SMS Emden' by HMAS Sydney on the 9th November 1914 off the Cocos Islands, and the subsequent mutiny of Indian troops in Malaya guarding the prisoners of war captured from that event in 15th February 1915, more attention was paid within Malaya to the war, to the extent that even internal mail became subject to examination from 1915 onwards.

There were two major points of censorship within the country, the Straits Settlements ports of Singapore and Penang. Handstamps and labels are grouped into these two areas for incoming and outgoing mails, 'S' numbers for Singapore and 'P' numbers for Penang.

One point of interest was the official response to mail to and from India and internally within the Indian community. It was impossible to censor all items, and two hand stamps have been identified which are thought to state 'We are watching you, we can read your mail at any time, so be careful what information you may communicate!' This appears to have been as a response to the earlier mutiny, and the stirrings of Indian Nationalism in India. The two different handstamps are illustrated below, the 'Saturn' mark and the 'Eye' mark.



*Illustrations of 'Saturn' and 'Eye' hand stamps applied to Indian covers by the Malayan Censor.*

Although most mail was examined in India, receiving Indian censor markings as a result, or on arrival in England, only items handstamped or labelled in Malaya are shown in this display.

Much research remains to be carried out as this area of collecting appears to have been neglected in the past.

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### Frame 36 – Airmails of Malaya. 1926-1931 – Peter Lister

Air mail to Malaya commenced in 1931 when the first experimental flight to Australia took place. Until this time only parts of the distance between London and Singapore had been covered by a regular air service, London-Paris, Cairo-Basra, London-Marseille, London-Karachi with various sectors being covered by surface or sea transport. Competition to the British company, Imperial Airways, came from K.L.M, who started a service from Holland to Java in 1928. This gave the colony a choice of services. A totally flown service, operated by Imperial Airways, did not commence until December 1933 and thereafter the competition was fierce.

As early as 1919 the Colonial Office were looking for a suitable place for an aerodrome in Singapore. This was most likely a result of Ross and Keith Smith making the pioneering flight to Australia in the Vickers Vimy. Survey flights were carried out in 1926 by a Mr Vincent who was doing an aerial photographic survey of the area and who carried the first internal airmail within Malaya and also carried the first direct overseas delivery from Rangoon to Penang.

Mails from Sarawak and North Borneo were routed through Singapore using the aerial services available at the time.

In October 1928 the first Air Mail dispatch for London took place consisting of just 65 items. This used the Marseilles-London service. This was followed by 300 items which were dispatched to Medan to connect with the K.L.M. Java-Holland service.



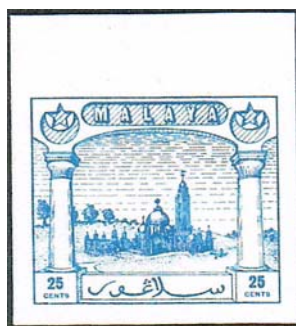
*First Flight cover from Rangoon to Penang April 1927 postmarked Rangoon 31<sup>st</sup> March 1927.*

Penang was designated as the collecting point for Air Mails to Europe and the West, whilst Singapore became the centre for mail to Australia. In 1929 the Karachi-London route was opened beginning with a bi weekly service.

Other interesting items shown and not referred to above are the use of the Pre-bagged mail for the continent, a cachet which was applied for one day only when the plane failed to call at Alor Star, and a cover which missed a first flight due to being in a plane crash.

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## Frames 37-38 – Essays for the Malaya stamps issued in 1935-1936 – Gordon Peters



On 1st January 1934, the Malayan Postal Union was established between the Crown Colony of the Straits Settlements and the four Federated Malay States of Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Perak and Selangor.

A new issue of definitive stamps was required for each administration. The stamps were to be inscribed "MALAYA" and the central design was to be appropriate for the State concerned.

The Survey Department of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States prepared a number of essays for the new stamps.

They were printed by photolithography in black and in one or two colours, on thin glazed paper which had no watermark or gum.

For each State the design of the issued stamps is very similar to, but not identical with, that of one of the essays for that State.



*Some examples of the essays.*

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**Frame 39 – Airmails to and from the Far East by the Trans-Pacific Route. 1940-1941**  
**– Iain Dyce FRPSL**

The traditional air route to Europe established by KLM and Imperial Airways was severed in June 1940 with the entry of Italy into the war and the closure of the Mediterranean to commercial flying. The westward route continued to be operated by BOAC flying the “horseshoe” route to Durban followed by the long and dangerous sea voyage to the UK.

A longer, safer and more expensive alternative was available by way of the Pan American Trans Pacific system. Access to Pan American could be made at Manila, Hong Kong, Auckland or Singapore for the flight to San Francisco, the crossing of the USA and the subsequent Trans Atlantic flight to Lisbon from where it was flown to England.

As Japanese pressure increased in 1941, the Bangkok to Hong Kong link was suspended for a time and mail shipped between Singapore and Hong Kong. This was followed by a link from Rangoon via Chungking across Southern China.

The service ceased abruptly on the outbreak of the war with Japan on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941.



*1941. Kedah to UK. Cover from FPO 36 on the Siam-Malayan border franked at the \$2.00 Trans-Pacific rate plus 10 cents for the Wearne Bros Air Service feeder connection between Penang and Singapore. The PAA flight left Singapore on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1941.*

## Frame 40 – Registered Mail from the Second World War. 1940-1945 – Malcolm Clarke

This display falls into two parts. The first includes six registered covers from Malaya prior to the Japanese occupation. The second part shows six items posted during the occupation between 1942 and 1945, or 2403-2405 in the Japanese Imperial calendar. The registration fee remained at 15c throughout and beyond until August 1947.

All items in the first part show a variety of Malayan civil censorship marks, although only two were opened by censors. Two show additional censor marks applied in India and a third was applied in Southern Rhodesia. Notwithstanding the high fees charged for airmail after the outbreak of war, four of the six were sent by air and one also paid the 12c Avis de reception (A.R.) fee.

The use of registration postmarks meant that the patriotic slogan cancels often used on ordinary mail are not on display here. There are other signs of patriotic sentiment in the form of special charity labels for the Malayan Patriotic Fund on two covers. In addition a cover sent to France in May 1940 bears a "Postal Communications suspended" handstamp as it was delayed through the rapidity of the fall of France that month.



*1940 Registered and A.R. airmail, Singapore to Kilasavalpatti, South India.*

The registration labels are Malayan style of their period, printed on perf 14 sheets as numbered blanks in blue with the office names and identifiers printed in black at the Singapore Government Printing Office. Those used during the occupation included pre-war stock and others produced locally early in the war. Most of the latter, especially in the small offices, were blank hand stamped with the office name.

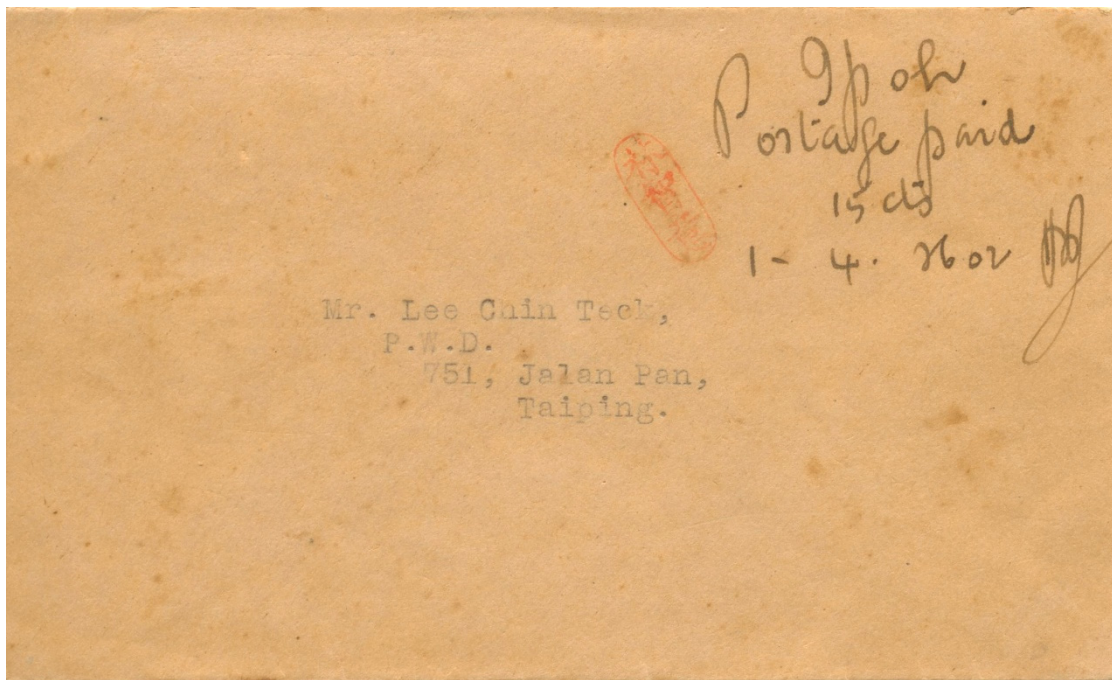
Occupation covers include a high proportion of philatelic items and most are usually found with Japanese military censor marks. Atypically three of those shown lack censor marks, two of which were on government business while the earliest bears a special commemorative cancellation used in Penang and locally delivered. The philatelic items are not without interest. For example the spectacular cover from Medan, Sumatra is not strictly Malayan. It was apparently franked with a copy of every stamp available in the office that day, but it demonstrates that the Japanese authorities took scant interest in the colonial boundaries. They had supplied overprinted and chopped Malayan stamps to offices in the former Dutch East Indies as this cover demonstrates. The Kedah cover from Alor Star, though philatelic, shows how careless overprinting creates errors so beloved of stamp collectors.

Postal rates, the fees for registration and other services such as express delivery remained unchanged during hostilities until into the post-war BMA period despite galloping inflation during the last years of the war. Consequently the use of registration and express delivery increased in the hope that the under-resourced postal service would prioritise such mail.

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### Frames 41-42 – Japanese Occupation. 1942-1945 – Susan McEwen

The importance of the postal service to the occupiers is shown by the priority given to restarting the post. In Kedah, in the north, a local service was actually started before the fall of Singapore on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1942. The post was re-opened in Singapore a month later on 16<sup>th</sup> March, the same day as the trolley service restarted, but before charcoal and firewood supplies for cooking were available.



*Perak manuscript 'Postage Paid 15 cents 1-4-2602' - 1<sup>st</sup> April 1942.*

Each state re-started the post in its own way, with overprinted stamps, and postmarks modified to Japanese date format. Most states used the pre-occupation rates of 4c postcard and 8c letter.

Perak started their post on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1942 with rates of 8c postcard and 15c letter. These had been the rates to Japan before the occupation. Stamps were not available and postage was paid in cash and receipted on the envelope. These rates continued till the 6<sup>th</sup> May, and the stamps arrived on the 12<sup>th</sup> May.

It was 1943 before the 'Nipponisation' of Malaya extended to Kanji overprints and postmarks, and before any shortages of postal supplies. The northern states of Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu were handed over to Thailand by the Japanese in October 1943 in recognition of Thailand's attachment to those states and as a 'thank you' for their neutrality in the war. These states had been part of Thailand (then Siam) until 1909.

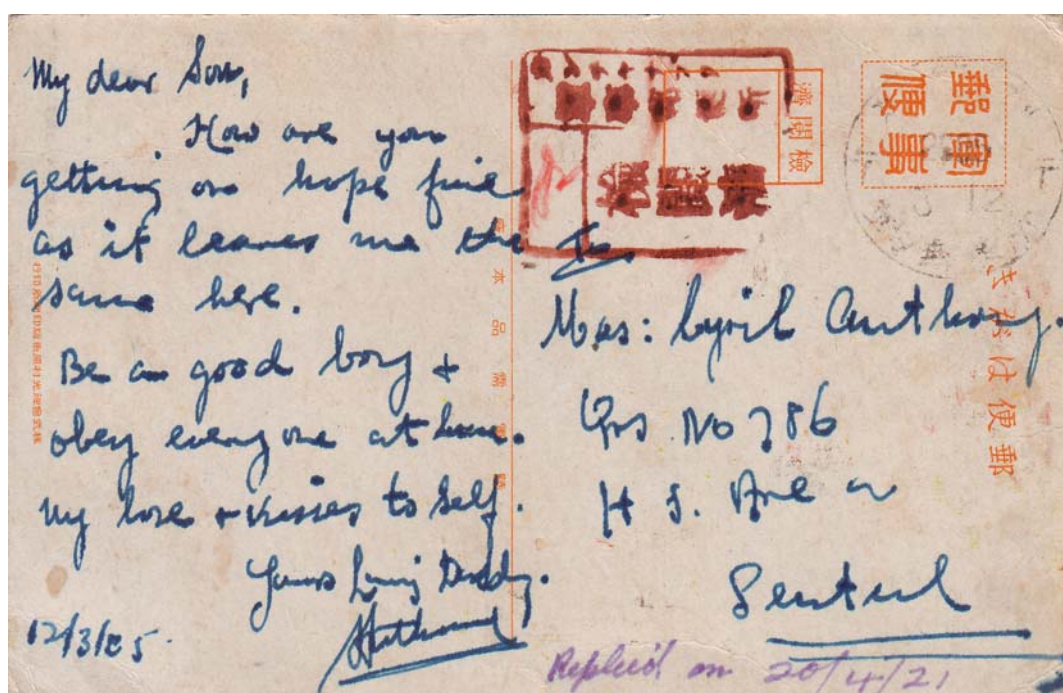
### Frame 43 – Malayan Civilians' Mail on the Burma-Thailand Railway. 1943-1945 – David Tett FRPSL

The Burma-Thailand railway was built principally by the enforced labour of allied prisoners of war. These POWs were transported from Java, Sumatra, Timor, Malaya and Singapore to Thailand and Burma to slave in the atrocious conditions to build the railway across the jungle-covered mountains.

What is less well known is the fact that between 200,000 and 270,000 native labourers were also taken from their countries of residence to supplement the work of the POWs. They were called romusha. The romusha were not prisoners of war but conscripted or forced labourers. The majority of those used in Burma were Burmese. In Thailand the majority were Indians – mostly Tamils – from Malaya and Javanese from Java, but Chinese from Malaya and natives of Indochina and Thailand itself were also used.

Amazingly, the Japanese permitted mail facilities to be provided for the civilian labourers. Post Offices were opened at Aparon, Konkaita, Niike, Kinsaiyoku, Purangkashi, Kanchanaburi and Tamajo, and on the Kra Isthmus at Chumpon. Postal workers were sent from Malaya to administer and manage these postal facilities, and they and the labourers wrote cards back to their friends and relatives. Skilled railway workers were also sent to Thailand from Malaya to organise and supervise the procurement of the necessary materials to maintain the railway once completed.

It will be noted that several of the illustrations in the exhibit are addressed to the Postmaster in Prai. These are from postal workers. Others are addressed to the Stores Superintendent's Office, Rlys [Railways] Sentul. Sentul was a "Railway town", the next station north of Kuala Lumpur on the Malayan peninsula railway that ran from Singapore to Thailand. These are from employees of the Malayan railway. This exhibit illustrates examples of mail sent by the postal workers, skilled railway workers and labourers to their families and friends in Malaya.



Postcard dated 12<sup>th</sup> March 1945, from S Anthony to his son Cyril Anthony in Sentul.

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## Frame 44 – The British Military Administration (BMA). 1945 – Peter Cockburn

Malaya was reoccupied after the Japanese surrender on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

The BMA postal service was started on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1945 before adhesive stamps were available. The service was free for all letters up to 1oz both local and overseas. Some mail at least was carried by air using RAF flights when available. Straits Settlements stamps found in the stores at Kuala Lumpur were overprinted by the Government Printer, from a plate sent out by the Crown Agents the plate having been made by De La Rue. A further plate was sent to the Bank Note printing branch of the Australian National Bank in Fitzroy Melbourne to overprint stamps which had been off loaded in 1942 by ships unable to dock in occupied ports in Malaya and Singapore. These cargoes were landed in Sydney and Melbourne and kept under customs control until released three years later. Exact details of all these printings are now known. Supplies of Straits Settlements stamps printed pre-war and remaining undelivered at the time of the Fall of Singapore were overprinted using a third plate by De La Rue in London in June 1945. These actually arrived in Singapore before locally printed stamps became available and six values were issued on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1945.

Some remote places did not receive supplies of stamps until later in the month.



*\$5 specimen stamps with SPECIMEN omitted on the centre stamp of three.*

As the political wrangling over the future of the area was protracted and indeed at least one scheme, that of the Malayan Union, abandoned unceremoniously, there were no stamps of any new design issued until the Singapore issue of 1<sup>st</sup> September 1948. Further issues took place in all the States over time but BMA stamps were still in use up to July 1951.

Many new printings, some from new plates, were made in London between 1945 and 1950. Approximately 240 million stamps were actually overprinted BMA, of which 8,418,141 were overprinted in Kuala Lumpur from stocks found there and in India, and 9,698,200 overprinted in Australia. The remainder were overprinted or specially printed and overprinted in London.

This very small display features some of the scarcer printings of the stamps from London, Australia and Malaya. One of the two known proof sheets of the overprint is shown along with striated paper types printed around the time of the De La Rue bombing in London and afterwards overprinted in Australia.

Malayan printings often show tropicalisation of the gum arabic, from having been kept in store for more than three and a half years.

The missing specimen illustrated here above is believed to be unique. Great credit must go to the printers of the overprint who in three different countries produced very few errors and very small wastage. In Australia there was no wastage at all.

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### Frame 45 – Malayan Emergency. 1948-1960 – Susan McEwen

The Malayan Emergency was really a war against communist terrorists. A war in which Commonwealth troops eventually defeated the Terrorists and which led to Independence and the Malayan Federation in 1957. It was a 'Hearts and Minds' campaign, long before the expression was used in Vietnam. This display briefly covers aspects of the Postal History of the Emergency.

Troops stationed in Malaya had a reduced 'Forces Airmail' rate of 10c for letters home, most of the covers we see are from British troops, but many Commonwealth Forces also served in Malaya during the Emergency, and mail from some of them is shown.

As this was a 'Hearts and Minds' campaign, the involvement of local people in the Home Guard was important. During the Emergency a number of detention camps were opened and used to house suspected terrorists and their sympathisers.



*From China to Majeedi Camp. Received 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1949.*

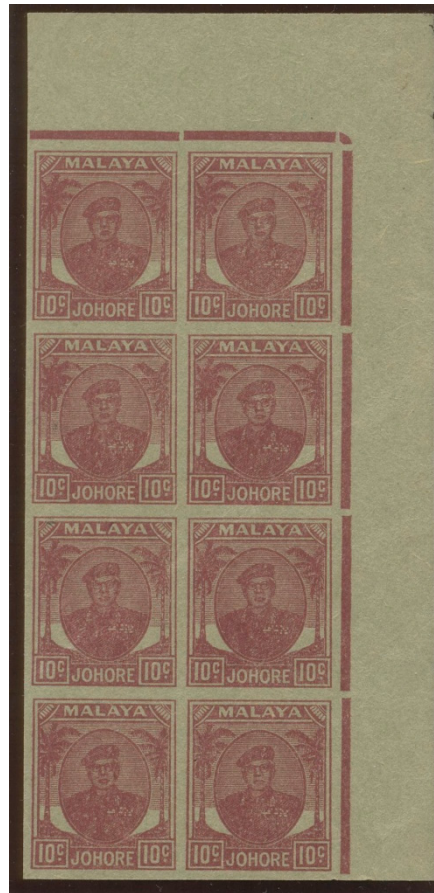
One such was at Majeedi, Johore Bahru, in the State of Johore. Mail was not censored in Malaya during the Emergency. The censor mark shown is the Camp Censor applied on receipt to most covers from overseas. Majeedi was open from 1949 to sometime in the mid 1950s.

Many different designs of Air drop leaflets were dropped over Malaya. All are on flimsy paper and most are highly coloured. Many are foolscap size, to be visible in the jungle, most promoting the advantages of life as an ex-terrorist, and many double as Safe Conduct Passes.

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### Frame 46 – Small Head Issue. 1949-1955 – Susan McEwen

Between 1949 and 1955 all the Malay States, plus Singapore, issued stamps in a unified format. Known as the Small Head Issues, all had MALAYA at the top, Palm trees at left and right, the state name at the bottom. Singapore, Malacca and Penang had the King's portrait; the other states had their Sultan or Coat of Arms in the centre.



*An imperforate block of plate proofs for the 10c.*

The design was based on the 1935 Straits Settlements 'Malaya Key Type'. Later Malacca and Penang re-issued the stamps with Queen Elizabeth II replacing the late King.

The concept was a clever compromise. The stamps were usable in all the states, meeting the Federal requirement whilst pleasing the Sultans by giving them their own stamps. The colours were consistent across the states. The 1935 Issue had started the idea of common designs, and shared colour schemes, but the Un-Federated states had not participated in that scheme. This was the first truly unified series in Malaya.

This display is based on a selection of Johore's Small Head Issue, as a representation of the Small Heads of all the states.

## Frame 47 – The ‘Independence’ Pictorial Issue. 1957 – Rob Holley



*Airmail cover from Kota Bharu to U.K., 15.3.64, franked by Kelantan's 1957 Sultan Ibrahim and 1961 Sultan Yahya Petra 'independence' issues and the 25c 'national' stamp.*

Malaya became an independent member of the British Commonwealth at midnight on 31 August 1957. The fifteen definitives prepared for this event had been issued in stages during the previous three months and so were already in use. They were line-engraved by Thomas De La Rue & Company, London. Four of the values were national stamps on sale throughout Malaya, but the remainder, depicting various aspects of contemporary Malayan life, were issued as separate sets for each of the 11 states, their common designs differentiated by the state name and an oval inset portrait of their Malay ruler.

There were three exceptions. Negri Sembilan, not having a hereditary ruler, used its coat-of-arms, while the sets of Malacca and Penang, both formerly part of the colony of the Straits Settlements, continued to bear a portrait of Queen Elizabeth. The portrayal of Her Majesty as ruler of territories now belonging to a sovereign state independent of the U.K. was an apparent anomaly which has never been satisfactorily explained. In 1960 these stamps were replaced by sets bearing Malacca's and Penang's state emblems. There was one further complication. The elderly Sultan of Johore, Sultan Ibrahim, in his last years of a 64-year reign, objected to the design of the 10c value which portrayed a tiger emerging from long grass. He claimed it conveyed a misleading impression of his country and refused to allow the set to be sold in his state. He accepted the four 'national' issues, however, they being non-state-defined. This curious incident is explained on Sheet 2 of the display. Sultan Ibrahim died in 1959 and his successor, Sultan Ismail, permitted the issue of the 'independence' set in Johore in 1960. The 20c value showed an interesting alteration in the design and a possible explanation for this is provided.

During the eight years of the issue's use three sultans died. In 1959 Kedah issued another set bearing the new ruler's portrait, but two years later Kelantan (see the illustration above) and Selangor replaced only the seven lowest-value stamps, in anticipation of a future change in stamp-issuing policy. There was one change of colour during the eight years – a 10c maroon replacing the 10c brown due to its duplication of the colour of the 4c. The only other changes were minor alterations in the perforations of the 50c, \$2 and \$5 values. The display includes examples of the stamps of all the 10 states which issued the 'independence' set in 1957.

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## Frame 48 – Malayan Federation: the First Issue. 5th May 1957 – Bill Pain



*Lithographed frame doubled (Enlarged for clarity).*

The design of the six cent stamp was made up from two photographs of a Malay man and woman tapping rubber. The photograph of the man was reduced and skilfully blended with that of the woman to give the effect of distance. The added manuscript inscription “TAPPING RUBBER” was included in two lines in a rectangular box under the central tree in the finished design. The design of the Twelve Cent featured the Armorial Ensigns of the Federation of Malaya. The star and crescent together is the traditional emblem of Islam, the National Religion. The eleven pointed star symbolises the eleven States and Settlements. The five Krises represent the former Unfederated States; the Prince of Wales feathers, Penang and the Santiago Gate, Malacca. The colours used are also symbolic. Two sheets show the art work for the first 6c and 10c (changed to 12c) stamps. Note the manuscript change in value from 10c to 12c and that on the issued stamp “MALAYA” is in white, not in colour.

These two sheets were originally part of a large loose leaf album which formed the basis of a series of articles published in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* in June to November 1958. The material was made available to Gibbons by the Malaysian Government through the good offices of the Crown Agents. Over the years the original pages became somewhat tatty and the material has been re-mounted. Artwork for the 25c was not available at the time of Gibbons articles and the location of that for the 30c is currently unknown.

The 6c stamp – the post card rate – went through numerous printings, producing three different shade combinations and numerous combinations of plate numbers. A selection of these are shown, as are a number of the recorded plate flaws.

Two more major errors occurred: the yellow colour was omitted in the crescent and star and the lithographed frame was doubled.

Three different plate numbers of the 12c are shown, together with two minor plate flaws.

Various plate numbers and three plate flaws of the 25c, are displayed.

Early issues of the 30c were made using a modified perforator, which ran from the bottom to the top of each pane, and had an extra five perforation pins added at the top. The perforation measured 11.8, compared with 12.8 for the rest of the pane. Later printings used a conventional perforator, measuring 12.8 x 13.2, as was used for the other values. A two pane plate was used for this value, numbered 1 and 2, one above the other.

Finally a first day cover and a set of used stamps are shown.

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## Frame 49 – Malaysian Butterflies Issue: Rarities and Errors. 1970-1978 – Mac McClaren

During 1970 and 1971, new stamps were issued for Malaysia and the Malaysian states featuring butterflies, replacing the earlier set of Birds and Orchids. Each state had its own customised set of seven stamps based on an identical design for each value. The values produced were 1c, 2c, 5c, 6c, 10c, 15c and 20c. The eight higher values – 25c, 30c, 50c, 75c, \$1, \$2, \$5 and \$10 – were produced without state names, just ‘Malaysia’, being for use in any state. The issue was printed by Bradbury Wilkinson in lithography for the low values and photogravure for the higher values.

In addition to sheet stamps, coil stamps of 10c and 15c were produced in rolls of 1,000 inscribed ‘Malaysia’. These stamps were printed by Harrison & Sons using photogravure. The coil stamps were not a success, as they would not dispense correctly from the stamp machines, probably as a result of humidity, and were withdrawn from service. Commercially used are difficult to find. Items of postal stationery were also produced, a postcard with an imprinted 10c stamp in cyan and an envelope with an imprinted 15c stamp in magenta. Hand assembled, machine stitched booklets were manufactured for each state containing panes of four stamps of various values making up a total of \$3.

The butterfly series was planned to be replaced during 1977 by the Orchids and Animals series, but problems of supply occurred. As a result, Harrison & Sons were contracted to produce re-prints of some of the values. All of the higher values were re-printed and many of the state ones as well, the low value stamps also being printed in photogravure for the first time. The difference in the low value printings is best seen on the value numerals. On the lithography printings the numeral edges are smooth whilst on the photogravure printings they are rough, having a ‘saw tooth’ appearance. The higher values are much more difficult and the only known proven method of identification is the perforations in the margins if not perforated through. If there are two pin extensions they are Bradbury Wilkinson and if only one they are Harrison & Sons. There are also differences in the marginal markings where existing.

Two re-prints took place over 1977-78, after which the issue was finally replaced. Some of the values were only printed during the second printing and are scarce as they were withdrawn soon after issue.

The sheets displayed show some of the rarities and scarcer items associated with this series, in particular the missing colours. Errors are few and far between, none being recorded so far for the higher values.



*Bradbury Wilkinson and Harrison printings of the 25 cents value showing double and single perforation extensions and differing marginal markings.*

## Frame 50 – Singapore Post Office Mechanisation. 1983-2009 – Len Stanway FRPSL

Since 1983, Singapore has sought to reduce the burden on counter staff by provision of Postage Label Counter Machines and, at the same time, to make post office services more accessible to the general public by provision of Postage Label Vending Machines in convenient places. The latter developed into automated micro post offices now found at the roadside, in shopping areas, stations, workplaces and even blocks of flats. This display shows a few examples of the labels used from these machines.

Postage Label Counter Machines were introduced in post offices in 1983. They included weighing facilities and have gone through four generations, most of which are also found used as Postage Due labels with suitable hand stamps or modifications. As well as having post offices, sub post offices and postal agencies, Singapore Post had a network of “stamp vendors”, which was a burden to administer. Conventional stamp vending machines were unsuccessful and inflexible for customers needing a variety of postal rates. Fifty “PVLM” machines based on bus ticket / car parking technology were obtained from Almex Control Systems and installed in various locations, entering service in 1988. They could print 16 values to \$2. Hand stamped labels were used as Postage Due labels in 1995. Following the success of the SAM machines, the last PLVM was withdrawn in 2000. Seven label types were used.

The “Self Service Automatic Machine” (SAM), introduced in 1997, took roadside stamp vending to a new level by incorporating many of the attributes of a post office and a bank automatic teller machine. This used touch-screen technology so that the machines could be updated with new capabilities without physical change. Labels could be dispensed at 13 pre-set values to \$10, plus 3 “small change” values. Values were applied by direct thermal printing and are prone to fading. First Generation (SAM I) machines included weighing facilities; the last were taken out of service in 2009. SAM II machines, without weighing, appeared in 2003. SAM III, a more advanced, non-weighing, version, followed in 2004-2009. Fourth Generation machines came in two types, S400 (with weighing) and S500 (without weighing). Introduced in 2008, these are still entering service. SAM-PLUS of 2006 is combined with letter pigeon hole lockers for use in blocks of flats. This can print and issue stamps as well as many other functions, such as posting letters, paying bills and fines, doing on-line shopping, donating items to the Salvation Army or even returning library books! There have been four issues of SAM labels.

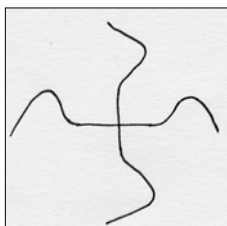


*2001 cover with Encrypted counter machine label used as postage due, undelivered, cancelled and replaced by a Sifortel counter machine label as postage due for return to sender (reduced).*

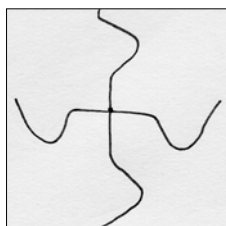
## Frame 51 – Jewels of the Sea: Singapore’s Low Value Definitive Issue – Len Stanway FRPSL

Issued on 24 October 2001 and designed by Eng Siak Loy, this series was used for six years, during which time three printers were involved. The display opens with stamps from the original printing of all values, printed in sheets of 100 by Cartor using 5-colour litho with matt and gloss varnish (matt over the stamp surface, leaving a white margin, with the fish picked out in gloss varnish), and the miniature sheet.

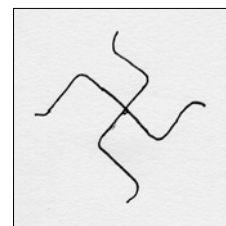
Singapore predominantly uses self-adhesive stamps for general issue on health grounds and prefers Non-Value Indicator stamps for first and second step letter rates. The gummed first step NVI stamp was only issued for inclusion in collector’s sets. For general use, self-adhesive versions appeared in booklets of 10 and folder sheetlets of 20. Three different styles of die-cut were used at different times defined by how the cuts intersected at the centre of a block of four stamps.



*North and East square cross*



*South and East square cross*



*Right hand diagonal cross*

The eighth reprint of the booklet and the fifth of the sheetlet were printed by Walsall in 2006 as Cartor had no spare capacity, resulting in significant differences in appearance.

The second step NVI stamp was issued in 2004, resulting in design changes to both NVI stamps which are illustrated in the display.

Finally, six values were printed in 2006 by Secura Singapore in a smaller format as part of a “MyStamp” sheet sponsored by Disney; this erroneously reproduced a spelling error that had appeared on the 50c. original counter sheet, but which had been corrected on subsequent printings.



*Miniature sheet, containing corrected Latin text on 50-cent stamp.*



*Siam postal stationery postcard used on the island of Langkawi, Kedah in 1909.*

The Malaya group can be like collecting a half score of different countries as well as the phases the region went through such as colonial pioneers, commercial development, war, occupation, insurgency and finally independence. Add the various modes of mail transmission by land, air and sea and it becomes clear that the scope of collecting Malaya, Malaysia, the States, the islands and all manner of topics is an almost endless rich seam.

Not everything can have a frame devoted to it today so this final display is to touch on some of those squeezed out for reasons of space or the Group's desire to get as many members displaying as reasonably practical. Herewith a repurchase of twelve further subjects.

First historical letters or autographed items are represented by a letter signed by Sir Stamford Raffles. He founded Singapore as a Free Port which grew to become a hub for maritime trade in the region. The rest of the top row shows French, German and Dutch maritime mail.

Next are neighbouring countries with the Netherlands Indies being allowed to open Post Offices in Penang and Singapore to facilitate movement of mail to, from and between their territories. The Siamese connection with the Bangkok Post Office and the transfer of States that now form northern parts of Malaysia. Christmas Island (Indian Ocean) and Cocos Island were at times governed by the Straits Settlements followed by a page of hotels and their post.

The third row is diverse and comprises a personal definition of Cinderella material including Forgeries and Postal Forgeries, followed by Exhibition overprints, Meter Stamps and finally Wreck and Crash mail.

## *The Malaya Study Group.*

### *50<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary, 1959 – 2009.*

The 'Malaya Study Group' was formed by Howard Selzer in the United States in 1959, and this year is our 50th. anniversary. Since formation, the Study Group has gone from strength to strength, and now has over 400 hundred members worldwide.

The group is based in the United Kingdom and is administered by an annually elected committee.

Several meetings are held throughout the year at various locations in the U.K., with the majority being in London. Specialist displays are given by individual members or as a group where all are invited to contribute, however modest. Meetings also take place in Malaysia, Singapore and Australia.

Room/postal and postal only auctions are held two or three times during the year for all members and normally include high class specialist items as well as a wide range of other material. A 'Packet Circuit' is also in operation for U.K. members and is an excellent way to fill those awkward gaps.

The highly respected society journal, 'The Malayan Philatelist' and an informative 'News Letter' are distributed four times a year, by airmail where appropriate at no extra cost, containing a wealth of information and in depth articles on all aspects of Malayan, Malaysian and Singaporean philately, all members being encouraged to contribute.

Several specialist books have been produced by the study group, which can be purchased, subject to availability. New works are in progress.

A comprehensive cross referenced index has also recently been compiled in bound A4 format and is free to all new members upon joining. In addition to the index, the majority of the past issues of the journal have been digitised and issued on a two CD set which is available for purchase for a nominal cost.

A website at [www.malayastudygroup.com](http://www.malayastudygroup.com) has been established, in addition to a complementary forum accessed through the site. A visit would provide much more information than it is possible to give here.

All collectors are welcome to join, from beginners to specialists, in what is a fascinating area to collect and study, being as simple or as complex as the individual wishes to make it. There are always other members on hand who will give friendly and helpful advice to those who require it, whatever the subject.

**Full membership is £15.00 per annum or US \$25.00.**

Any existing member paying before the 30th June in any year will receive an early payment discount of £3.00 or US \$5.00. For new members joining after the 1st October in any year, the subscription will be £18.00 or US \$30.00, being a half subscription for the current year and a full subscription for the following year, including early payment discounts.

***Please see the website for membership details.***

Non web users please contact:

David Tett, Membership Secretary, PO Box 34, Wheathampstead Herts, AL4 8JY, UK.

