

**EXHIBITOR**

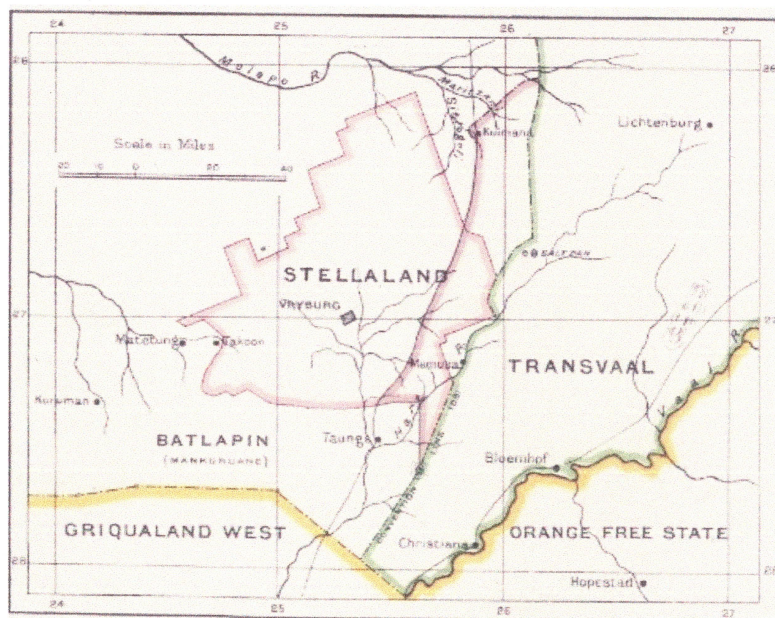
Karel Veselý, Czech Republic

**SCOPE OF THE EXHIBIT**

A study of all postage stamps of Stellaland (1d, 3d, 4d, 6d and 1/- plus 'Twee' overprint) including their postal use (this area is still not fully understood today).

**A SHORT HISTORY OF STELLALAND**

The Republic of Stellaland (*Republiek Stellaland* in Dutch) was created by Boer farmers after they had acquired land in July 1882 as a reward for supporting one side in a quarrel between two native rival chiefs. It was given the name Stellaland (Star Land) in reference to a comet that was visible in the skies at the time. The new country soon became disputed territory between the British and the Boers of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (Transvaal). The British sent in a force of 4000 troops led by Sir Charles Warren who occupied Vryburg (the capital of Stellaland) on 7 February 1885. On 30 September 1885 Stellaland became part of the new British crown colony of Bechuanaland which was in 1895 annexed to Cape Colony. Now it is part of the Republic of South Africa.



*The London Convention Line*

**PLAN OF THE EXHIBIT**

Frame	Page	
I	2	Overview of stamps issued in February 1884
	3	Proofs and peculiarities present on all stamps
	4-8	Distinctive features of the setting of 1d, 3d, 4d, 6d and 1/- stamps
	9-12	A complete sheet of 3d stamps
	13-16	A complete sheet of 4d stamps
II	17-20	A complete sheet of 6d stamps
	21-22	Perforation varieties
	23	'Twee' overprint
	24	Forgeries and comparison with genuine stamps
	25-32	Various types of cancellations of Stellaland stamps (includes 2 covers of Stellaland)

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Extremely rare and very rare items are marked '**RR**' or '**R**', respectively. Note the following in particular:

- three complete sheets (3d, 4d and 6d), 4d sheet showing an unrecorded perforation variety
- pairs with perforation varieties (1d horizontal imperforate between, 3d horizontal without vertical perforation, 4d horizontal imperforate between, 6d horizontal and vertical imperforate between)
- two out of only 14 surviving covers of Stellaland (one of which with a 'Twee' stamp)
- three other stamps with a 'Twee' overprint (two unused and one used)
- an exceptionally high number of cancelled stamps of Stellaland (over 70) including the unique stamps cancelled with 'C.G.D.' initials, four of five known stamps cancelled 'F.C.D.' and two of three known earliest date of cancellation (29/2/84).



# POSTAGE STAMPS OF STELLALAND

## EXHIBIT SYNOPSIS

This exhibit is a study of postage stamps of the short-lived Republic of Stellaland in Southern Africa. Only five stamps were issued, postally used from 29 February 1884 till 2 December 1885. They however offer a fertile field of research to a philatelist. While some intriguing aspects of Stellaland stamps were recognised soon after their issue (see B.Poole 1908), there are others which we do not fully understand even today. This exhibit demonstrates not only the well known areas like stamp varieties existing due to the way they were produced originally from a single die or perforation varieties caused by a missing perforation line but also, with a particular focus, their postal use. This is the area still not fully grasped although significant progress has recently been made (A.Drysdall 1992, H.Taljaard 2013).

### Exhibit Plan

#### Introduction

#### Distinctive features of the setting

#### Complete sheets

#### Perforation varieties

#### 'Twee' overprint

#### Forgeries

#### Cancellations

## EXHIBIT NOTES

### Introduction (pages 1-3)

The exhibit starts with presenting five denominations of postage stamps (page 2). As no document defining postal rates of Stellaland is known, it is only from their later postal use that we can derive hypotheses about rates and thus about the intended purpose of each stamp denomination.

Inclusion of a fiscal stamp may appear inappropriate, but Stellaland fiscals are so closely related to Stellaland postage stamps that often they are studied (H.R.Holmes) or exhibited together (R.Carswell). The exhibitor did not go this way but included three copies to compare their more elaborate design with that of postage stamps.

A copy of a 6d proof in black and several imperforate proofs in colour demonstrate peculiar features of design common for all (genuine) stamps of Stellaland which is evidence of their production from a single (6d) die.

### Distinctive features of the setting (pages 4-8)

This part of the exhibit demonstrates the distinctive types of each value present in a particular column of Stellaland stamp sheets. This is a result of how the full sheet of each stamp was produced, starting from a single die to a horizontal line of eight impressions (or nine for 6d) and finally to the stone with a full sheet of 96 stamp impressions (117 for 6d) made by multiple transfers of this horizontal

line. All eight basic types for 3d, 4d and 1/- are presented as well as all nine types for 6d. For 1d, four types are presented on page 4 and three other types on page 21 (in the section focused on perforation varieties).

In a few cases, the specific features are hard to distinguish but this is common for most stamps for certain types as described by B.Poole and H.R.Holmes. For example, Type 5 and Type 6 of 3d are very difficult to recognise even on the exhibited complete sheet.

### Complete sheets (pages 9-20)

Three complete sheets, namely those of 3d (96 stamps), 4d (96 stamps) and 6d (117 stamps) are presented. Complete sheets almost certainly come from the remainders of Stellaland stamps which were after their withdrawal from postal use on 2 December 1885 sold in late 1886 by the Administrator of British Bechuanaland to Whitfield King & Co. Most of the complete sheets available at that time have since been separated in order to meet the demand for individual mint stamps so today complete sheets are very rare. The number of individual stamps sold in late 1886 (621 of 1d, 10,514 of 3d, 11,762 of 4d, 9,566 of 6d and 4,329 of 1/-) explains why multiples of 1d (in particular) and those of 1/- are rarer. Whether complete sheets of these two values have survived till now at all is not known to the exhibitor.

Complete sheets are useful to demonstrate not only the distinctive basic types 1-8 (3d, 4d) or 1-9 (6d) common for a particular column but also individual flaws that exist in case of certain single stamps on the sheet.

A new discovery yet unrecorded in the catalogues and the literature is the perforation variety 'imperforate between stamps and the lower margin' on 4d sheet.

### Perforation varieties (pages 21-22)

Pairs with five of nine known perforation varieties are presented. All are extremely rare, in particular the



1d horizontal pairs imperforate between. Two different 1d horizontal pairs are displayed in order to illustrate Types 3, 5 and 6 of 1d.

### 'Twee' overprint (page 23)

The 'Twee' overprint has been the subject of much controversy. Some experts (A. Drysdall) have claimed that it may have never been authorised for postal use (and noted that it has not been cancelled on letters), others (H.R.Holmes) have



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tentatively recognised it as a provisional issued probably by Stellaland authorities due to a change of postal rates, the absence of 2d stamps and the insufficient quantity of 1d stamps. In the exhibitor's opinion, the recent discovery by H. Taljaard of the Bestuur resolution of 1 October 1885 confirms that the local authorities have approved the provisional. The absence of cancellation on Twee stamps should be understood

in the wider context: none of Stellaland stamps used after July 1885 is cancelled. In other words, Twee stamps were treated in the same way as original Stellaland stamps in this respect. And both of the only two surviving covers sent from Stellaland between 1 October 1885 and 2 December 1885 (including the one exhibited on page 31) use Twee stamps which suggest genuine need for them in this period. These reasons lead the

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EXHIBIT

- Two out of only 14 surviving covers of Stellaland (June 1885 to Sitlagoli, the only one not sent abroad, and October 1885 to Venterstad in the Cape Colony, one of two existing with a 'Twee' stamp).



- Three other stamps with a 'Twee' overprint (two unused and one used). Only 20-25 exist today.
- Three complete sheets (3d, 4d and 6d), 4d sheet showing an unrecorded perforation variety.
- An exceptionally high number (over 70) of cancelled stamps of Stellaland; the exhibitor estimates that only about 300 exist at present. All main types of cancellations known are presented including the unique stamps cancelled with 'C.G.D.', 'KA' and 'A.V.Riet', four of five known stamps cancelled 'F.C.D.' and two of three known earliest date of cancellation (29/2/84).



- Pairs with five different perforation varieties.



# POSTAGE STAMPS OF STELLALAND

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exhibitor to his conclusion that Twee stamps should indeed be included in an exhibit of Stellaland stamps.

### Forgeries (page 24)

One page of the exhibit is focused on forgeries and comparison with genuine stamps. Four different types of forgeries are displayed. Forgeries are common in the philatelic market, and from time to time offered even by reputable international auction houses as genuine.

### Cancellations (pages 25-32)

A significant part of the exhibit (8 pages with over 70 used stamps) is devoted to cancellations. Only 14 covers with Stellaland stamps exist (2 of them presented in the exhibit). Alan Drysdall based his 1992 article on postal history of Stellaland on 13 of 14 covers known to him at the time. Although this was a very important contribution to understanding the postal use of Stellaland stamps, some of Drysdall's conclusions required revision. Due to the lack of covers, cancelled Stellaland stamps offer important additional insight in the postal use. Hennie Taljaard has only recently provided a comprehensive overview of Stellaland cancellations (he has made a list of 120 used Stellaland stamps known to him including 14 on cover) and suggested a link between the method of cancellation, the period and the postmaster in Vryburg. The structure of this section of the exhibit is in line with these recent Taljaard's findings.

Rather than presenting just a few examples of each type of cancellation, the exhibitor has decided to include a larger number of copies. The goal is to offer a deeper insight in the development of postal use between February 1884 and December 1885. For example:

- The relative high number of stamps cancelled by a single postmaster (Ferdinand Hartzenberg between August 1884 and June 1885, the isolated stamp from April 1884 appears to be an early exception) can be compared to the scarcity of other types of cancellations (date only in early 1884, initials of other postmasters, manuscript cancellation without a date or a name, transit or receiving office postmark only).
- The hypothesis about reduction of Stellaland internal rate to 2d (which also explains the need for the 'Twee' overprint) can be compared to the denominations of stamps postally used between June and November 1885. Indeed, most such stamps are denominated 1d (pages 29 and 30 – in some cases the date of postal use is also a hypothesis). Sometimes they are in pairs.



- Given the low number of surviving covers, transit or receiving office postmarks also provide additional information on the transit (initially, ZAR office at Christiana, then later Barkly West or Kimberley in the Cape Colony) or the destination (ZAR, OFS, UK) of the mail from Stellaland.



Finally, one page is focused on late cancellations and a bogus Vryburg cancellation on genuine Stellaland stamps. This part is included to distinguish what

### WHAT IS MISSING AND WHY

- A full row of 1d showing all Types 1-8 is not in the exhibit, just multiples showing Types 1, 2, 7 and 8 (page 4) and two pairs imperforate between showing Types 2+3 and 5+6 (page 21). Multiples of 1d are very rare and the exhibitor has not seen suitable combinations covering a full row.
- The following perforation varieties are not in the exhibit although they are described in the literature: 1d vertical pair imperforate between (SG 1b), 3d horizontal pair imperforate between (SG 2a), 3d vertical pair imperforate between (SG 2b) and 4d vertical pair imperforate between (SG 3b). They are elusive and the exhibitor has so far not been able to obtain these.

the exhibitor believes are genuine examples of postally used Stellaland stamps (pages 25-31) from cancellations which were likely to be by favour or have been produced to deceive collectors. Cancelled Stellaland stamps are much rarer than mint so an appropriate level of caution has to be applied.

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