

Peter Rolfe 4.10.13 Display at Cheltenham

Format International Security Printers

Format International Security Printers Ltd. was formed about 1967 as an offshoot of Questa to provide a "one stop" package of stamp design and printing. The concerns shared common premises in London, as shown on sheets 1 & 2. It is not always clear who printed any particular issue.

The new company was quickly established and received commissions from The Crown Agents, among others from 1969 onwards, covering Gambia, Ghana and Sierra Leone, as well as some West Indies territories that provoked the subsequent scandal.

In about 1988 Clive Feigelbaum became managing director of Format and shortly afterwards the company was accused of fraudulently printing "errors" and "varieties" for the philatelic market, in association with Urch Harris, mainly of the West Indies and Tuvalu issues. At the trial they were found guilty, but, on appeal were cleared. If you consult Google, you will find a rather but very detailed hagiography of Feigenbaum, claiming that he was totally innocent and was "set up". Other opinions describe him as an arrogant bully who was the driving force of the scam, who got off on a legal quibble. There is no doubt that a substantial number of strange items were deliberately produced for sale to collectors under false pretences and some of these may be viewed on Google.

The company had been struggling financially since 1986, but the scandal destroyed it completely and liquidators were called in. Much of the archive was sold by private treaty in 1991-3, and the remains by auction at Christies on 14th July 1995.

Printing by this company was on large sheets with as many panes as practicable, typically 4 panes of 25 or 30. These were cut into single panes by Format for despatch. However, Format apparently retained some uncut sheets for their archives, believed to be not more than 5-10 of any one. These came to the market in the liquidation sales, resulting in the availability of the "cross gutter" blocks, which can also be seen from proof printings.

This display covers only material printed for Sierra Leone between 1980 and 1988. Nothing is known of deliberate errors in these issues, but they should not be ruled out as it is known that records were destroyed to remove evidence.

Format International Security Printers

Sheet

- 1 - Copy proof card from Questa
- 2 - Copy proof card from Format
- 3 - 1980 Birds definitives, Wmk upright, no imprint
- 4 - ditto Wmk inverted or reversed
- 5 - 1981 ditto Imprint date 1981
- 6 - ditto Progressive colour trials
- 7 - ditto 1c pane of 25 x 2
- 8 - ditto 50c pane of 25
- 9 - 1982 ditto Imprint date 1982
- 10 - ditto Progressive colour trials
- 11 - ditto 2c pane of 25 x 2
- 12 - ditto 15c pane of 25 x 2
- 13 - 1983 ditto No Wmk, Imprint date 1983
- 14 - ditto Imperf. proof pairs
- 15 - ditto 2c value proof card
- 16 - ditto 2c pane of 25 x 2
- 17 - ditto 2c Imperf pane proof sheet
- 18 - ditto 20c Imperf. pane proof sheet
- 19 - ditto 10c pane of 25 x 2
- 20 - 1984 ditto Surcharged, no imprint
- 21 - ditto Surcharged, 1981 Imprint date
- 22 - ditto Surcharged, 1982 Imprint date
- 23 - ditto Surcharged, 1983 Imprint date

- 24 - 1981 Royal Wedding, Issues 1 & 2
- 25 - ditto MS
- 26 - 1981 World Food Day, Issues 1 & 2
- 27 - ditto Issue 2 proof "cross gutter" blocks
- 28 - 1981 Royal Wedding Booklet and pane
- 29 - ditto booklet pane
- 30 - 1982 Surcharges on Royal Wedding issues
- 31 - 1983 Disney - Space Ark Fantasy
- 32 - ditto MS
- 33 - ditto 10c value with misplaced perforations
- 34 - 1984 Mano River Union Anniversary
- 35 - ditto "cross gutter" blocks
- 36 - ditto Imperf proof blocks
- 37 - ditto Progressive colour trials on MS
- 38 - ditto ditto
- 39 - ditto ditto
- 40 - 1984 UN Decade of African Transport
- 41 - ditto 12c & 60c Sheetlets - note Specimen O/P
- 42 - ditto Le1.5 & Le2 Sheetlets
- 43 - ditto MS proof card
- 44 - 1985 Surcharges on Royal Wedding issues in black and blue
- 45 - ditto double surcharges
- 46 - ditto double surcharges, one inverted

- 47 - 1985 UN Anniversary
- 48 - 1986 Flowers of Sierra Leone
- 49 - ditto MS
- 50 - ditto "cross gutter" blocks
- 51 - ditto Bromide Progressive colour trials
- 52 - ditto ditto
- 53 - ditto MS ditto
- 54 - ditto MS ditto
- 55 - 1986 "Stockholmia" Stamp Exhibition
- 56 - ditto MS
- 57 - 1987 Bicentenary of Sierra Leone
- 58 - ditto "cross gutter" block
- 59 - ditto Imperf proof pairs
- 60 - ditto MS Imperf proof
- 61 - ditto Progressive colour trials
- 62 - ditto ditto
- 63 - ditto ditto
- 64 - ditto ditto "cross gutter" blocks
- 65 - ditto ditto ditto
- 66 - ditto Proofs on plastic cards
- 67 - 1987 Capex 87 Stamp Exhibition, Toronto
- 68 - ditto MS
- 69 - 1987 Milestones of Transport
- 70 - ditto Le25 value proof on Cromolin
- 71 - 1987 World Scout Jamboree, Australia
- 72 - ditto Bromide print colour trials
- 73 - 1988 Fish of Sierra Leone
- 74 - ditto Uncut sheet of 20 MS
- 75 - 1987 Bicentenary of Sierra Leone 1/2 Uncut sheet of 10 MS
- 76 - 1987 Scout Jamboree Uncut sheet of 20 MS
- 77 - 1984 Mano River Anniversary Uncut sheet of 12 MS