

Bogus Issues, Fakes and Facsimiles – Information and Guide

Updated – 01 September 2013

BUYER BEWARE !!!

The Society is becoming extremely concerned with the increasing numbers of bogus, fake and facsimile items being offered for sale, particularly on internet auction sites.

This article is not a criticism of any specific dealer or an attempt to prescribe what a collector should collect. If any item creates a sense of fun in the collector then he/she is experiencing the joys of philately.

All collectors have items, in their collections that have been created for the purpose of sale to the philatelist. These philatelic items are usually made so that genuine stamps or postmarks can be obtained and are bought with full understanding by the purchaser. In recent years an increasing number of stamps and covers with no postal connection have appeared on the market. These items, often with only a tenuous connection with the Channel Islands, are created to obtain money from the inexperienced collector.

What follows is part of the Society's response to this trend. As sadly more spurious items appear on the market, it is intended that this article will be updated.

This cannot be a comprehensive guide, but only an attempt to provide some information to help the unwary buyer.

Definitions

Bogus. This is an unauthorised stamps or label.

Reprints. Stamps that have been printed from the original plate following the withdrawal of the issued stamps

Fake: A stamp, cover or cancel that has been altered or concocted to appeal to a collector. In a broad sense, fakes include repairs, re-perforations and re-gummed stamps, as well as painted-in cancels, bogus cancels or counterfeit markings. Sometimes entire covers are faked.

Facsimile: A reproduction of a genuine stamp or cover. Such items are usually made with no intent to deceive collectors or postal officials. Catalogue illustrations may also be considered facsimiles.

OCCUPATION

JERSEY

1940 Swastika Overprints

Soon after Jersey was occupied the Commandant ordered that stocks of current stamps should be overprinted with a swastika and '**JERSEY 1940**'. Following protests by the Bailiff all stocks were ordered to be destroyed. Only 4 complete sheets and a few singles survived and these are either in known collections or official archives. It follows therefore that, unless authenticated by experts, all stamps bearing this overprint are forgeries. With a simple printer/scanner and a computer these are extremely easy to forge.

The **only** stamps overprinted were:

1937-39 George VI definitive - ½d. / 1½d. / 2d. / 2½d. / 3d. / 4d. / 5d. / 6d. / 7d. / 8d. / 9d. / 10d. and 1s.

1940 Stamp Centenary Issue - ½d. / 1½d. / 2d. / 2½d. and 3d.

None received a cancellation so all used stamps are forgeries.



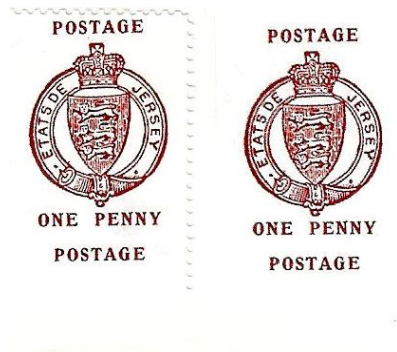
In 1983, Gibbons catalogued these stamps at £160 - £175 each. Items offered at prices below this level are certainly spurious.

Bigwoods Essays

Bigwoods, the printers also prepared local 1d. stamp (Fig 4) with and without an overprint of a swastika and '1940'. These were also destroyed, except for two sheets in museums, two further sheets which were cut up for collectors and a complete but damaged sheet with the overprint.

The colour of the essays was scarlet and none were perforated. Gibbons listed the Bigwood essays at £350 each in 1983.

Facsimiles in blue or scarlet have appeared for sale in the past 10 years.



Arms Issue

Between 1941 and 1943 Jersey issued 750,000 ½d. and 1,000,000 1d. Arms stamps.

After Liberation all printing plates were destroyed.

In the 1970s or 1980s Arms stamps appeared in sheets of 25. This printing was not from original plates and the paper appears harder and thinner. None of the varieties from the originals appear on these stamps. They can be found imperforate. Often described as reprints by dealers they are in fact facsimiles. The proliferation of these in the past few years suggests that they may still be being produced. They can be difficult to identify unless one sees the actual stamp.



Although the above scan is from an internet auction site the overall appearance of these stamps is that they are not genuine. The paper does not look correct and the printing is sharper. Incredibly the seller had a very high reserve on this lot!

Unfortunately this item goes against an oft found trend i.e. that fake items are sold below the market value.

Views Issue

The Views issue was released in 1943. At the end of the Occupation all plates were destroyed.

In recent years facsimiles have appeared on some auction websites. They appear as full sheets (without date of printing), gutter pairs and strips, imperforate and perforated. Often the low prices asked should alert the buyer.



Imperforate with no sheet number or date of printing. NOTE that there is an interpanneau number.



Cover with facsimile views and bogus cancellations.

GUERNSEY

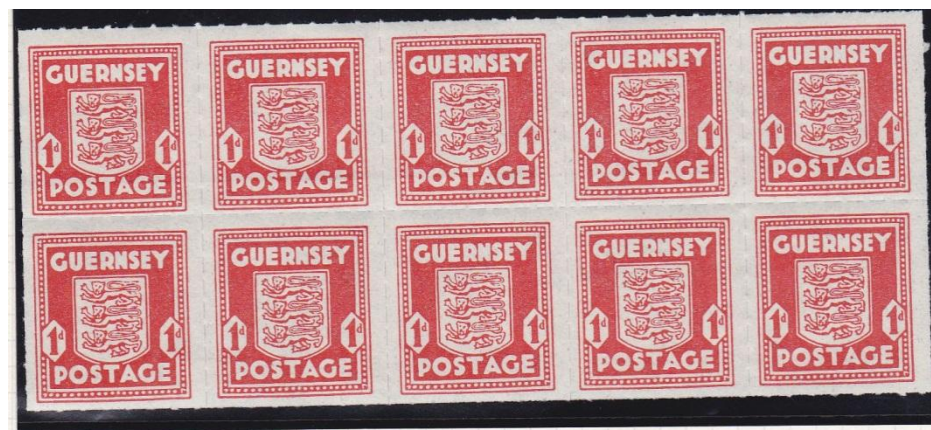
Arms Issue

The Occupation Arms appeared from 1941 until 1944. Printing figures were as follows:

½ value -1,772,160
1d value – 2,478,000
2½ value – 416,640

All plates were destroyed after the Occupation.

In the 1970s and 1980s Arms stamps in sheets of 25 appeared, described as facsimiles but later termed reprints. Inevitably some of these have got into dealer's stocks described as being genuine. They are difficult to identify without holding the actual stamps. Printing and rouletting is superior to the originals and the paper appears thinner and harder. There are none of the varieties found in the war time issues.





SARK

No special stamps were prepared or issued for Sark during the Occupation. Those illustrated below were created in the early 21st. century.



ALDERNEY

No special stamps were prepared or issued for Alderney during the Occupation. Those illustrated below were prepared in the early 21st. century.



HERM

No special stamps were prepared or issued for Herm during the Occupation. Those illustrated below were prepared in the early 21st. century.



FELDPOST

It was forbidden to indicate the place of origin on any cover sent through the Feldpost system by one of the Occupying forces. Mail from the Occupying forces was sent free of charge. Civilian mail had to have the correct postage applied. However as confidence in the permanence of the Occupation grew, sometimes Jersey and Guernsey stamps were applied to covers. This was done for philatelic reasons by stamp dealers, one of which was Karl Hennig.



Another typical cover is illustrated below. It has 'Mit Schnellboot Befordert' and 'Airmail' cachets. Neither of these services were available.



Similar covers are appearing on Internet auction sites in increasing numbers and it is widely reported that most of these are being produced to order in Central America.

One of these recent items is shown below.



Other fake Feldpost items have been offered for sale.





These two covers have facsimile stamps, bogus overprints and fake postmarks. The dealer has described them as fakes. The auction starting price was low suggesting to the buyer that they are not worth much. One wonders why the creator bothered to make such items.

RED CROSS

Some Red Cross envelopes have had additions made to the in an attempt to enhance their value.



A Red Cross cover with correct censor mark, but with a Hitler 25 pfennig and a bisected 1940 Stamp Centenary stamp added.

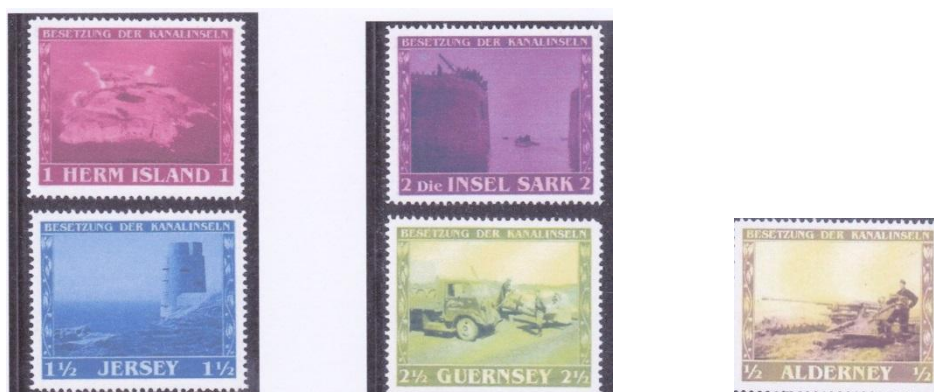
BOGUS AND FANTASY ISSUES

Stamps, described as fantasy issues or 'mockupation' issues have recently appeared on the market. These are usually correctly described but may in the future appear in uninformed dealers stock. Below are a number of illustrations of these items.



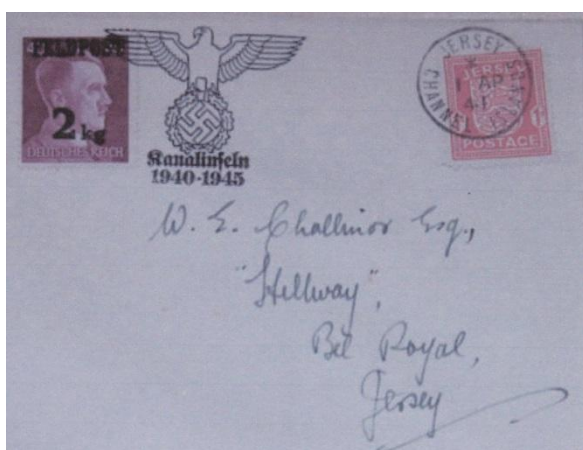
There are a number of fantasy issues with similar frame decorations.



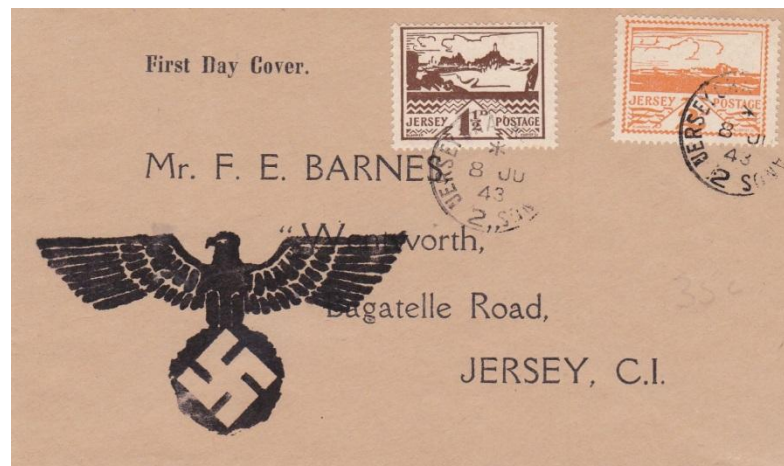


Enhanced Covers

During their period of use covers were created by the local stamp dealers and collectors. Many remain on the market at low prices. To increase the saleability of covers some have been 'enhanced' by the addition of spurious postmarks, extra stamps and cachets. Some are sold as souvenirs of the Occupation.



Genuine 1d Arms FDC with enhanced marking and Hitler stamp.



Genuine First Day Cover of Views issue with large swastika and stylised eagle mark



Arms First Day Cover with Eagle and Swastika mark. Note the mirror image of the swastika.



Two enhanced Guernsey covers



Covers with strange created curved 'Guernsey' marks and an unauthorised bisect. This cover is now worthless.



Jersey covers with eagle and swastika cachets. Defacement of genuine commercial covers.





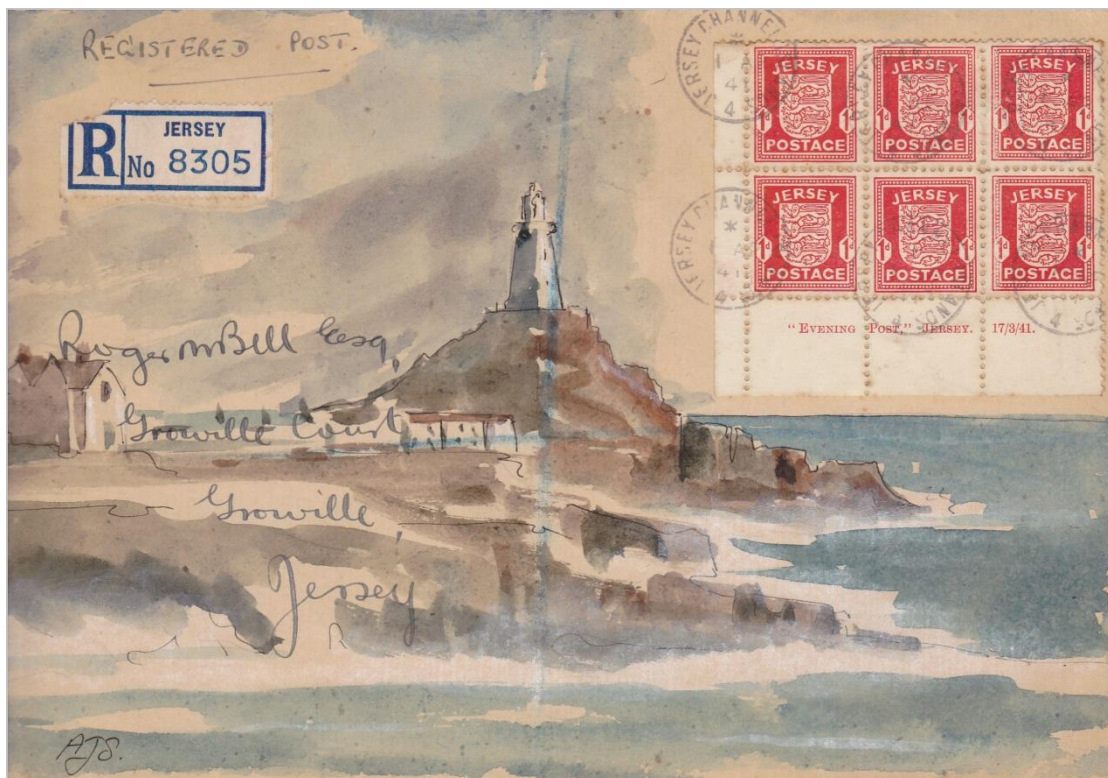
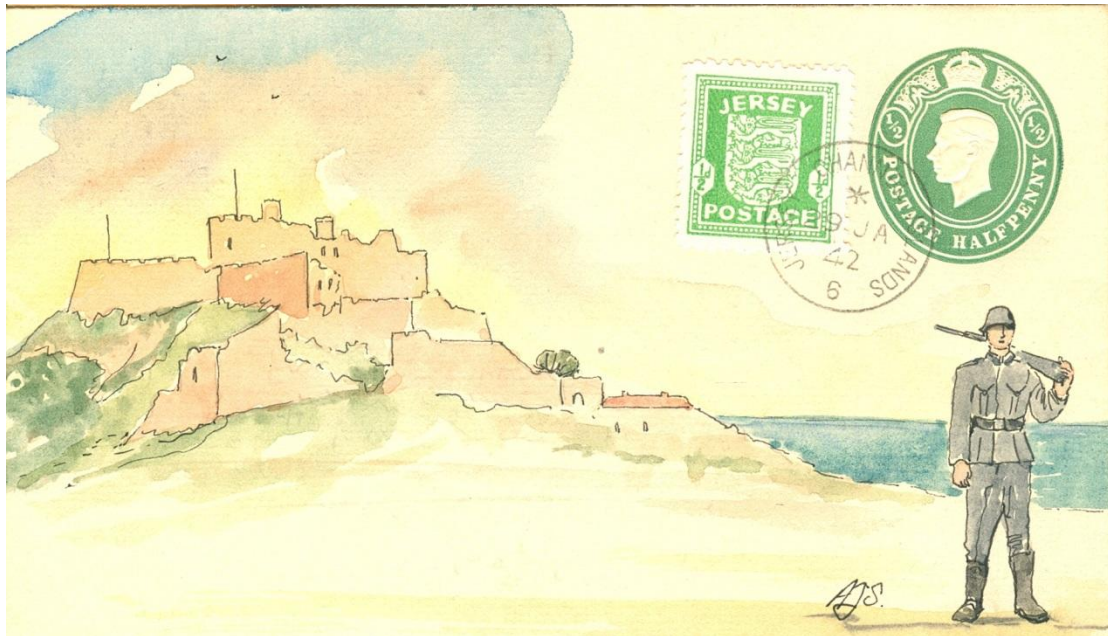
The above are first day covers of the Guernsey Arms stamp and are worth a few pounds. With the addition of a bisect of a stamp not authorised for this use, and Hitler head stamps the covers are now worthless. The large ring cancellation is genuine, but was used in Danzig! The dealer put a reserve of £64 on the top cover and £75 on the lower one.



Genuine cover with added bisect and curved Guernsey cancellation. Cover is now worthless.

AJS Covers

A number of wartime covers have been 'enhanced' by the addition of watercolour paintings. These are signed by 'AJS'. For more details see the article by David Gurney in 'Les Iles Normandes' V20.4 p33.



Two covers enhanced by AJS.

POSTAL HISTORY

Most of the bogus stamps and facsimiles produced, relate to the period of the Occupation.

There are however other items on the market from the wider postal history field as below:-



OCCUPATION TOKENS



Thought to have been produced in California in the 1970s, there is no record of any such tokens ever having been used during the Occupation. Nevertheless they make a frequent appearance on Internet auction sites. A visit to the website below will show more illustrations and some background detail to these tokens.

<https://sites.google.com/site/malstokens/c-i>

EPHEMERA

Fortunately the forgers and fantasists have yet to make significant inroads into Channel Island ephemera, although one item is illustrated below.



Many of these unused Tages-Ausweis (Day Permits) were left after the Occupation and hence do not command a high price.

The penny Arms stamp and the mock cancellation have been applied recently in an attempt to attract the buyer. Do not buy – this is now worthless.

Further Reading

For a number of years, David Gurney has enabled the subject of forgery production to be aired in a series of articles in the Society's journal 'Les Isles Normandes'. Below is a list of these articles:-

Hand Painted Covers	V20.4 p33
Forged Guernsey Postmarks on 2d. Bisects	V21.1 p9
Forged Cancellations from the Occupation Period	V21.3 p25

Facsimile Arms Stamps	V24.3 p21
Spurious Cachets and Postmarks	V24.3 p22
A Warning – Occupation Covers	V27.2 p16
The Swastika Overprints	V28.1 p21
More Fraudulent Occupation Items	V28.2 p14
More on the Swastika Overprints	V28.4 p17
Forgeries-A Warning to Members	V31.4 p7
Forged Enhancements to German Occup. Envelopes	V32.1 p1

Advice to Buyers

The Society does not provide an authenticating service.

If an item appears to be too good to be true then it is probably is. Remember that the collecting of Channel Islands philately is a well-established and explored field. New finds are rare. Any new finds will command a much higher price than is asked on internet auction sites.

Many internet sellers do not know the market.

The re-sale value of bogus material is low – many dealers will not buy and the Society will refuse to handle such items.

If you are unsure of the provenance or authenticity of an item ask a member with knowledge in that area.

BUYER BEWARE !!!