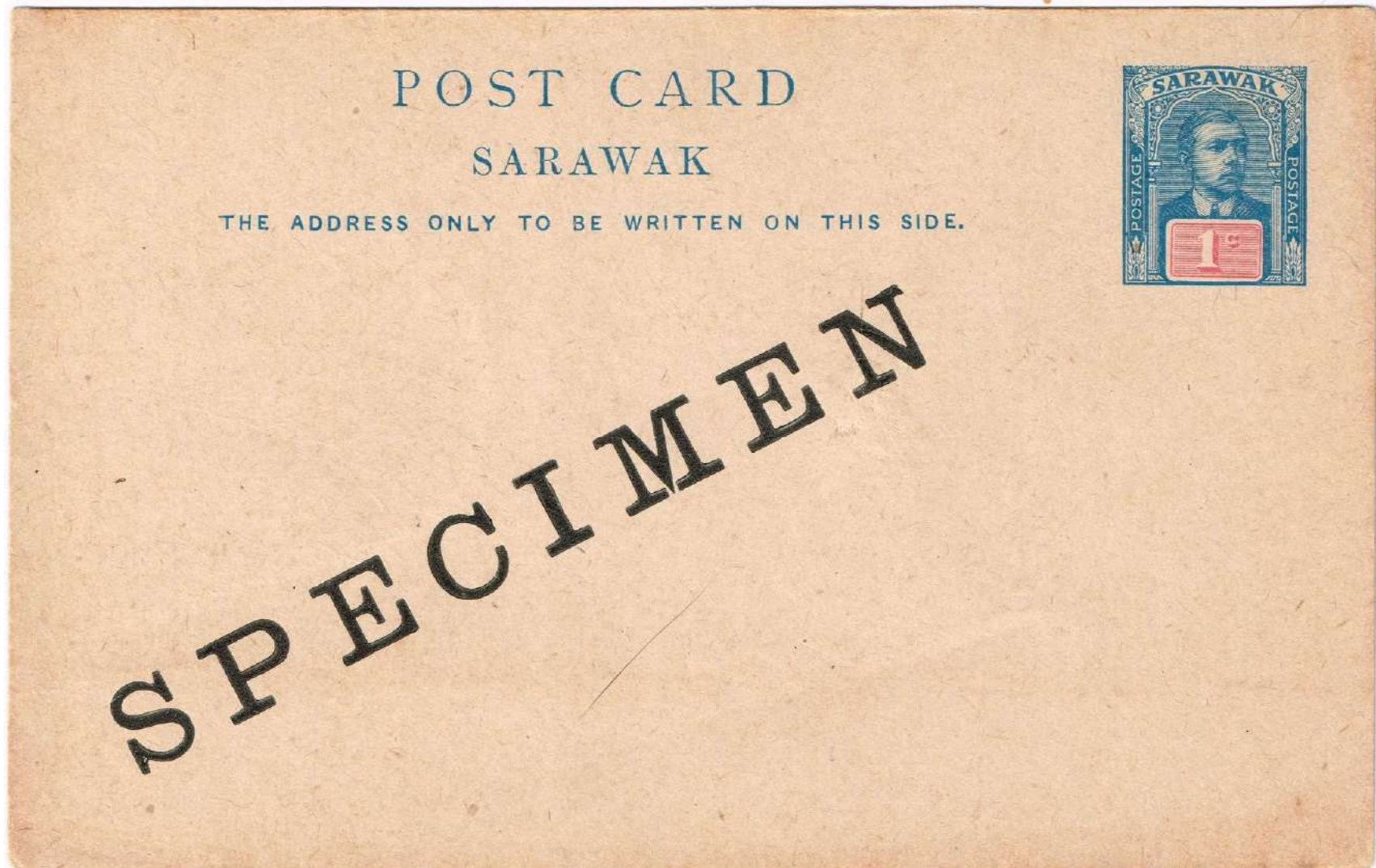


Sarawak Postal History - October 1917 to December 1918

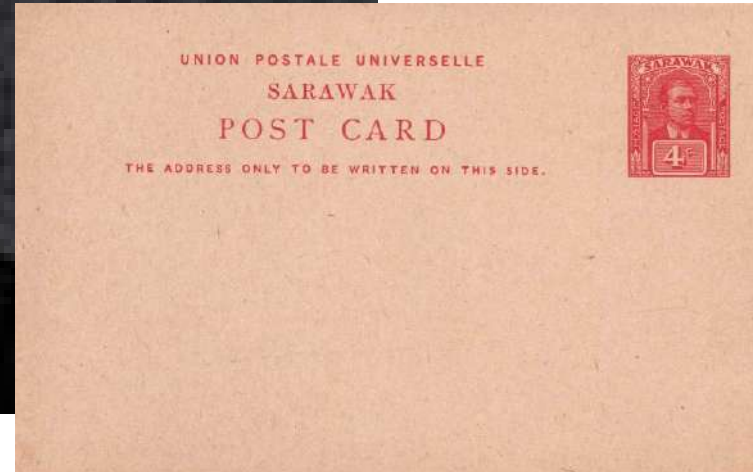
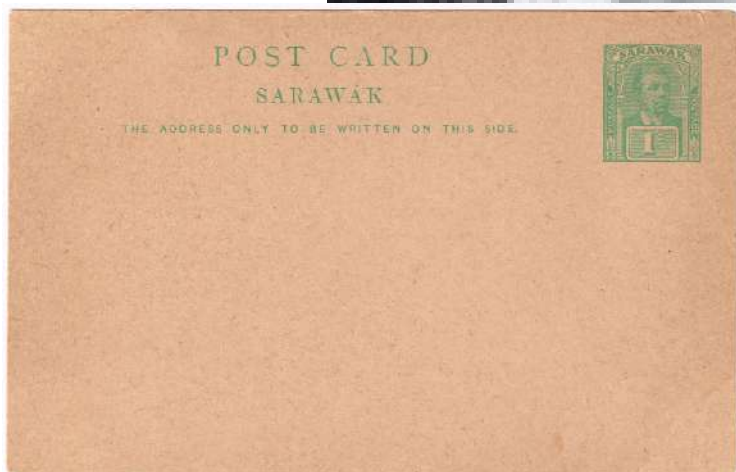


References

De La Rue Archive; TROVE; National Library of Australia
<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-793280048/findingaid?digitised=y>

- ⁽¹⁾ *'Sarawak Gazette 1870-1941'; Batty-Smith; 2000, SSS (BPS) CD*
⁽²⁾ *'Sarawak Government Gazette 1908-1939'; Batty-Smith; 2000, SSS (BPS) CD*

New Rajah – New Stamps, New Postcards



The 30th October 1917 Order (De La Rue archive)

HOLT & CO

BANKERS, NAVY AGENTS
& ARMY AGENTS.

V. G. M. Holt
H. F. Guinness
M. D. V. Holt
A. V. Barber

HEAD OFFICE:

3, Whitehall Place, S.W.1.

WOODHEAD'S BRANCH

44, Charing Cross, S.W.1.

IN REPLY PLEASE
QUOTE REFERENCE
N.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE
ADDRESSED TO THE FIRM

ENCLOSURES _____

WOODHEAD'S BRANCH,

44, Charing Cross,

London, Octr. 30th, 1917.
S.W.1.

Telegraphic Address:
"NEVA, WERTHAND, LONDON"

De La Rue & Co. Ltd.,
116, Bunhill Row,
E.C.

2 NOV

Dear Sirs,

Sarawak Stamps.

With reference to previous correspondence, please
put in hand the following postage stamps and postcards:-

1 cent.....	40,000.
2 "	150,000.
3 "	120,000.
4 "	60,000.
5 "	3,000.
10 "	15,000.
12 "	3,000.
16 "	2,400.
20 "	2,000.
25 "	1,800.
50 "	900.
£ 1	350.

Postcards.

1 cent.....	2,000.
4 "	1,500.

The Stamps in the 3rd December 1917 Delivery from De La Rue to Holt



200 Sheets

800 Sheets

800 Sheets

The 1c and 2c stamps went on sale in the G.P.O. in Kuching on 14th March 1918
Sarawak Gazette #743; 16.04.1918 (P242⁽¹⁾)

The Stamps in the 12th January 1918 Delivery from De La Rue to Holt



400 Sheets

16 Sheets

85 Sheets

16 Sheets

15 Sheets



12 Sheets

10 Sheets

8 Sheets

4 Sheets

27th February 1918 - The Germans Get Involved!

Dear Sirs,

SARAWAK POSTAGE STAMPS (NEW ISSUE)
and POST CARDS.

We beg to inform you that we despatched yesterday the undermentioned Stamps and Post Cards by Parcel Post in 6 tins.

<u>STAMPS</u>	234	Sheets	1	Cent printed in Red and Blue.
	200	"	1	" " "
	433	"	2	" " "
	368	"	3	" " "
	408	"	4	" " "
	17	"	8	" " "
	84	"	10	" " "
	17	"	12	" " "
	16	"	16	" " "
	11	"	20	" " "
	10	"	25	" " "
	8	"	50	" " "
	8	"		1 Dollar.

<u>POST CARDS.</u>	1,000	1	Cent.
	1,030	2	"
	760	4	"

Commercial Value about £19.

6th February 1918 Delivery from De La Rue to Holt

The 6 tins sunk with SS Machaon on 27th February

Machaon

Position of attack on Machaon

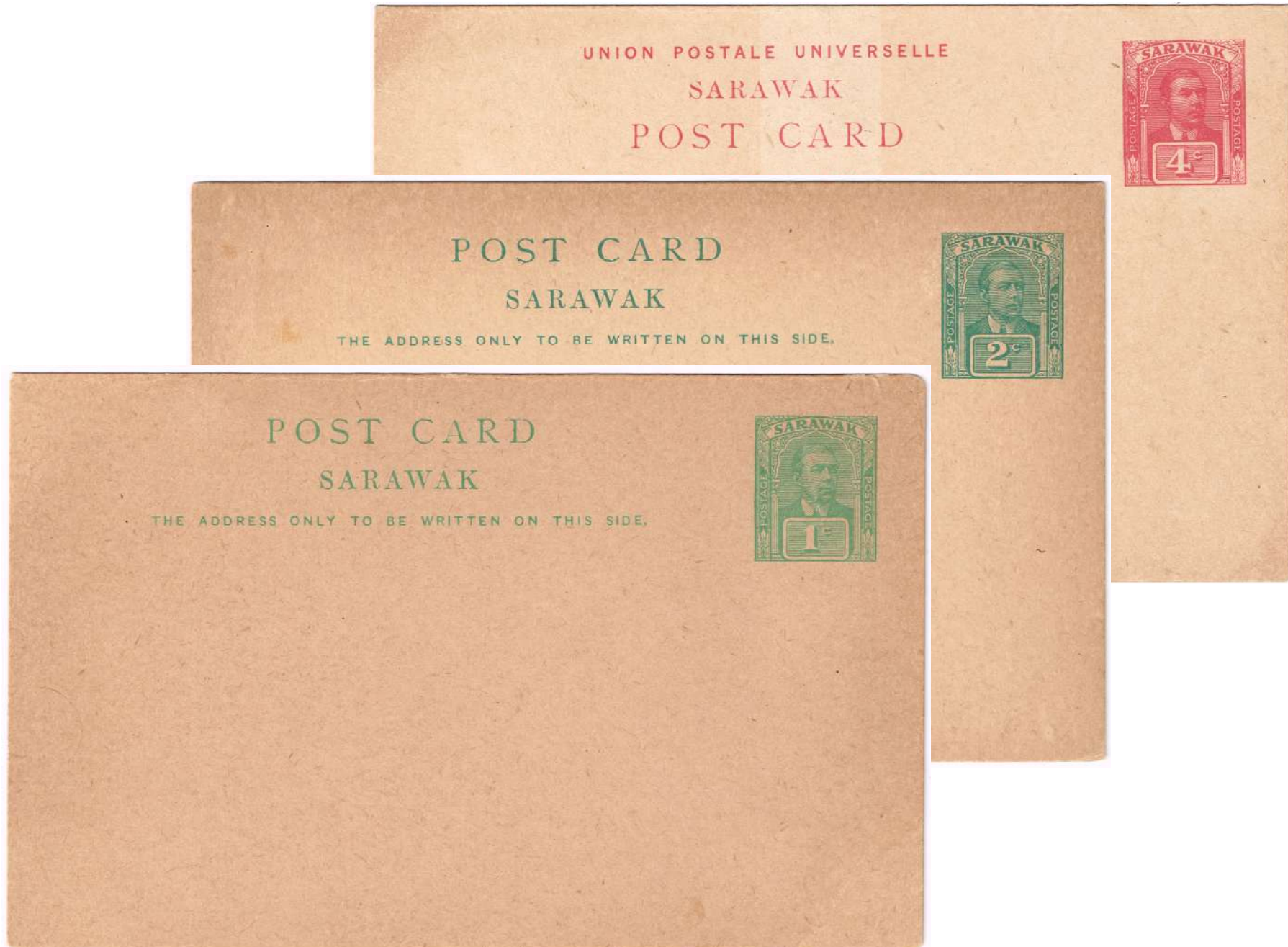
Name	Machaon
Type	Steamer
GRT	6,738 tons
Country	 British
Built	1899
Builder	Scott & Co., Greenock
Operator	Ocean Steam Ship Co., Ltd. (A. Holt & Co.), Liverpool
History	

U-boat attacks on Steamer Machaon

Date	U-boat	Loss type	Position	Location	Route	Cargo	Casualties
27 Feb 1918	UC 27 (Otto Gerke)	Sunk	50 miles NE3/4N of Cani Rock	38° 40'N, 10° 35'E	Liverpool - Port Said	general cargo	0



Postcards Lost in the 6th February Delivery from De La Rue



1000 1c Cards, 1030 2c Cards, 760 4c Cards

The Stamps Lost in the 6th February Delivery from De La Rue



234 Sheets



200 Sheets



433 Sheets



365 Sheets



408 Sheets



17 Sheets



84 Sheets



17 Sheets



15 Sheets



11 Sheets



10 Sheets



8 Sheets



5 Sheets

The 27th December 1917 Order

Dear Sirs,

We have today received an order from the Sarawak Government to supply the following new postage stamps, etc. as soon as possible:-

20,000.....1 cent stamps, blue.
2,000.....2 cent postcards, stamp and superscription pale green, corresponding with previous order for 2 cent stamps.

They also request us, if not too late, to have the 2,000.... 1 cent postcards printed in blue to match the 1 cent stamps. Please let us hear from you on this subject.

We remain, dear Sirs,

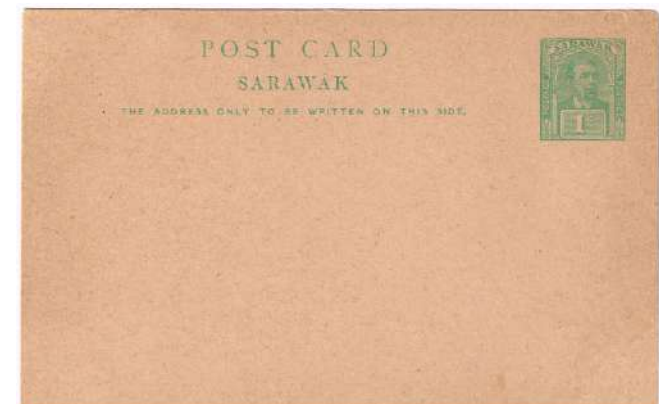
Yours faithfully,

*J. P. Holt Co.
Singapore*

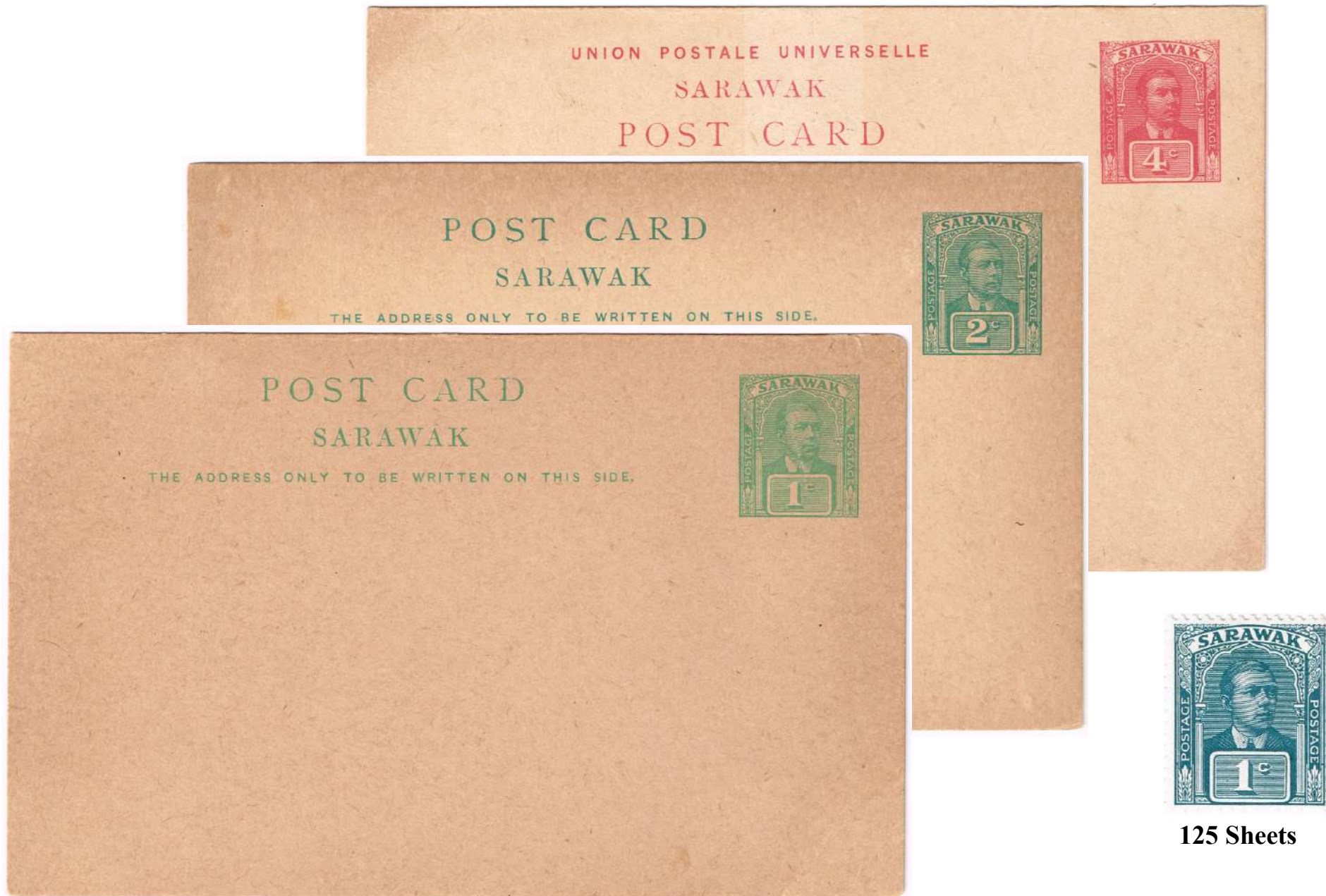
De La Rue responded to this order by querying the colour required for the 1 cent stamp and were told by Holt the key and duty plate should both be blue.



De La Rue also informed Holt that the 1 cent postcards had already been printed in green.



The Stamps and Postcards in the 20th February 1918 Delivery from De La Rue to Holt



125 Sheets

1050 1c Cards, 1000 2c Cards, 750 4c Cards

Deliveries from De La Rue to Holt December 1917 to February 1918

Delivery Date	Delivery Contents	Notes
3 rd Dec 1917	200 sheets 1c Red/Blue, 800 sheets 2c Green, 800 sheets 3c Brown-Purple	Only Stamps
12 th Jan 1918	400 sheets 4c Rose-Carmine, 16 sheets 8c Yellow/Black, 85 sheets 10c Blue, 16 sheets 12c Purple, 15 sheets 16c Chestnut/Green, 12 sheets 20c Olive/Violet, 10 sheets 25c Brown/Blue, 8 sheets 50c Olive-Green/Carmine, 4 sheets \$1 Rose/Green	Only Stamps
6 th Feb 1918	234 sheets 1c Blue, 200 sheets 1c Red/Blue, 433 sheets 2c Green, 366 Sheets 3c Brown-Purple, 408 sheets 4c Rose-Carmine, 17 sheets 8c Yellow/Black, 84 sheets 10c Blue, 17 sheets 12c Purple, 5 sheets 16c Chestnut/Green, 11 sheets 20c Olive/Violet, 10 sheets 25c Brown/Blue, 8 sheets 50c Olive-Green/Carmine, 5 sheets \$1 Rose/Green 1000 1c Green Postcards, 1030 2c Green Postcards, 750 4c Carmine Postcards	Stamps & Postcards Sunk by the Germans
20 th Feb 1918	125 sheets 1c Blue 1050 1c Green Postcards, 1000 2c Green Postcards, 750 4c Carmine Postcards	Stamps & Postcards

Confusion and Shortages in Sarawak!

The package of three tins received by Holt on 15th February would have arrived in Sarawak around the beginning of April, before the larger shipment, sent earlier on 12th February and lying at the bottom of the Mediterranean; a fact of which the Postmaster General in Sarawak was not aware.

On opening the package it was found to contain 125 sheets of a 1c blue stamp (instead of blue and carmine) and 1050 green 1c postcards (instead of blue and carmine) and 1050 green 1c postcards (instead of blue), the same colour as the 2c card.

The total stock of postcards and lower value stamps received into Sarawak by the beginning of April was:-



200 Sheets



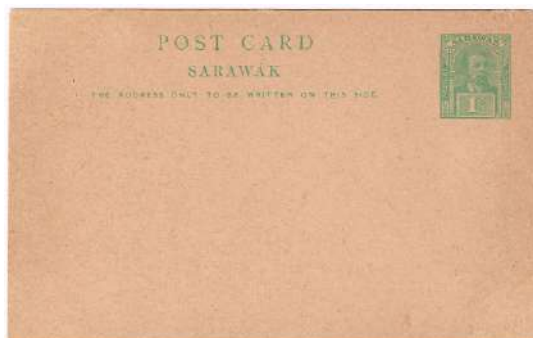
800 Sheets



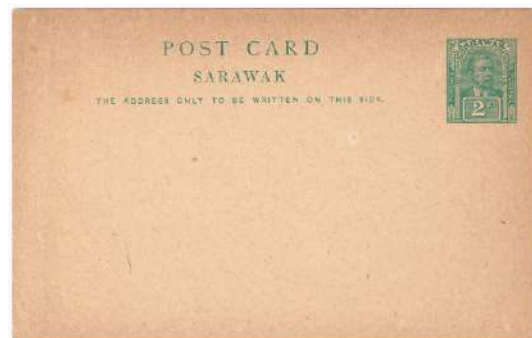
800 Sheets



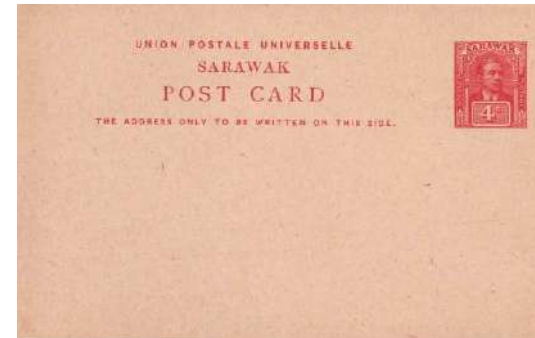
400 Sheets



1050 1c Cards



1000 2c Cards

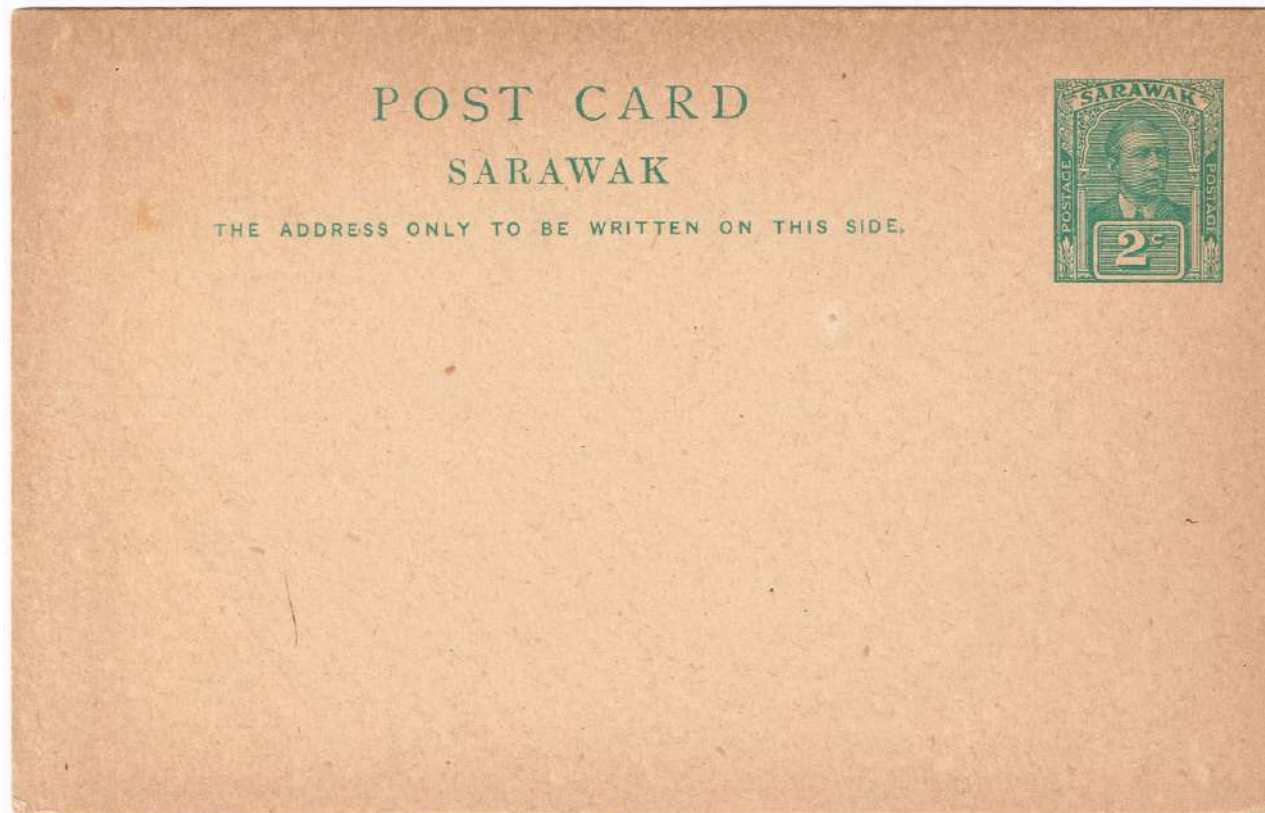


750 4c Cards



125 Sheets

The 1918 2c 'States Rate' Postcard (1)



Produced using
the die of the
new 2c stamp

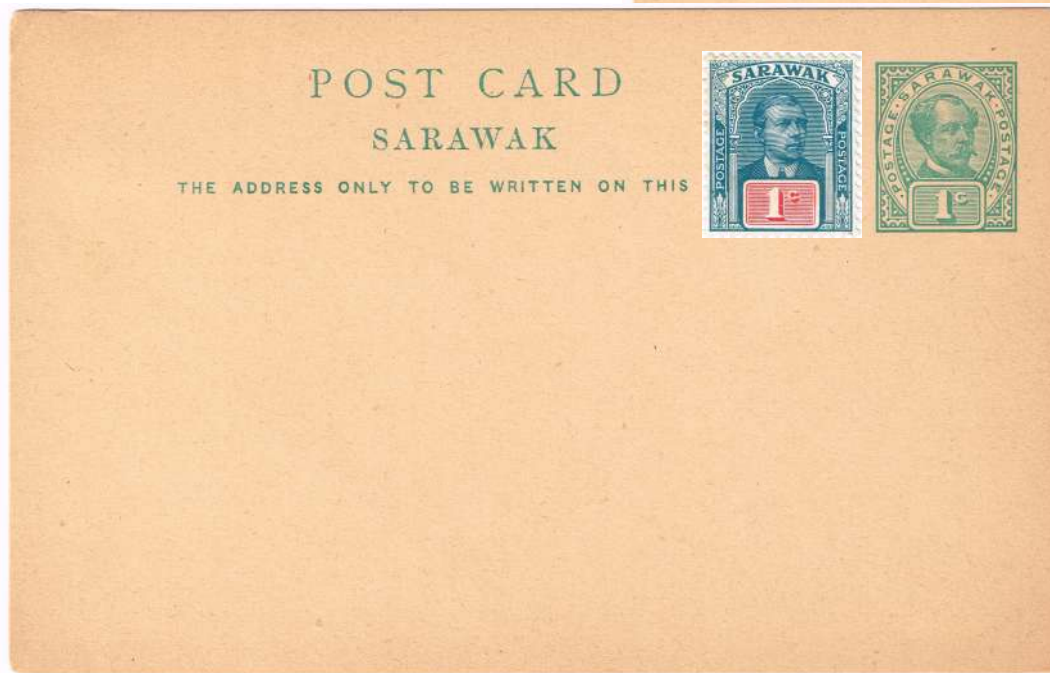
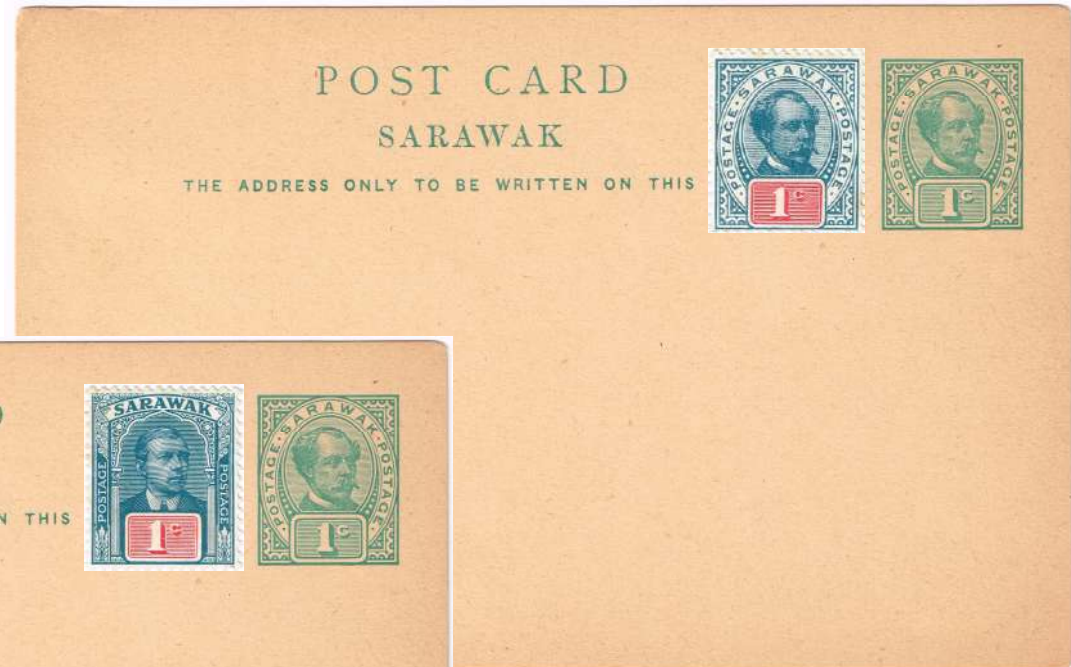
This Postcard was ordered by the Sarawak Government for use between Sarawak and the Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis, Tringganu, Straits Settlements, and British North Borneo.

The Postal Rate of 2c for Postcards to these States was introduced on 1st January 1918.

Sarawak Government Gazette #228; 07.12.1917; Order No. XL., 1917 (P394⁽²⁾)

The 1918 2c 'States Rate' Postcard (2)

Between January and April 1918 (when the new 2c Postcard became available) the only way to send a Postcard to one of the States would have been with the addition of an 'old issue' 1c stamp to the 'old issue' 1c Postcard; after 14th March a 'new issue' 1c stamp would have been available.



Do any used examples exist?

A New Order - and the 1c Stamp Colour Doubts

Please supply for delivery here, the following Sarawak Postage stamps of the new issue, and shall be glad to know when we may expect to receive delivery of these as well as the supply of the old issue:-

1 Cent.....	700	Stamps.
3 "	700	"
3 "	700	"
4 "	700	"
8 "	700	"
10 "	700	"
12 "	700	"
16 "	700	"
20 "	700	"
25 "	700	"
50 "	300	"
1 Dollar.....	300	"

8th April 1918 Order from Holt to De La Rue

Two days later, presumably after being contacted by the Sarawak Government, Holt cancelled the 8th April order:-

Dear Sirs,

Sarawak Stamps.

Please cancel our order of the 8th inst., for 700 of each denomination of postage stamps, and in lieu thereof have printed 5000 of each, except the 1 cent printed in blue.

Of these, please deliver here, made up in one parcel, as soon as possible, 700 stamps of each denomination, and one parcel containing one sheet of each. We presume that you will have no objection to retaining the remainder in safe custody until required.

We take it that the ~~only~~ 1 cent stamps already delivered here were printed in blue and red. Please confirm this.

10th April 1918 Order from Holt to De La Rue

This One ...

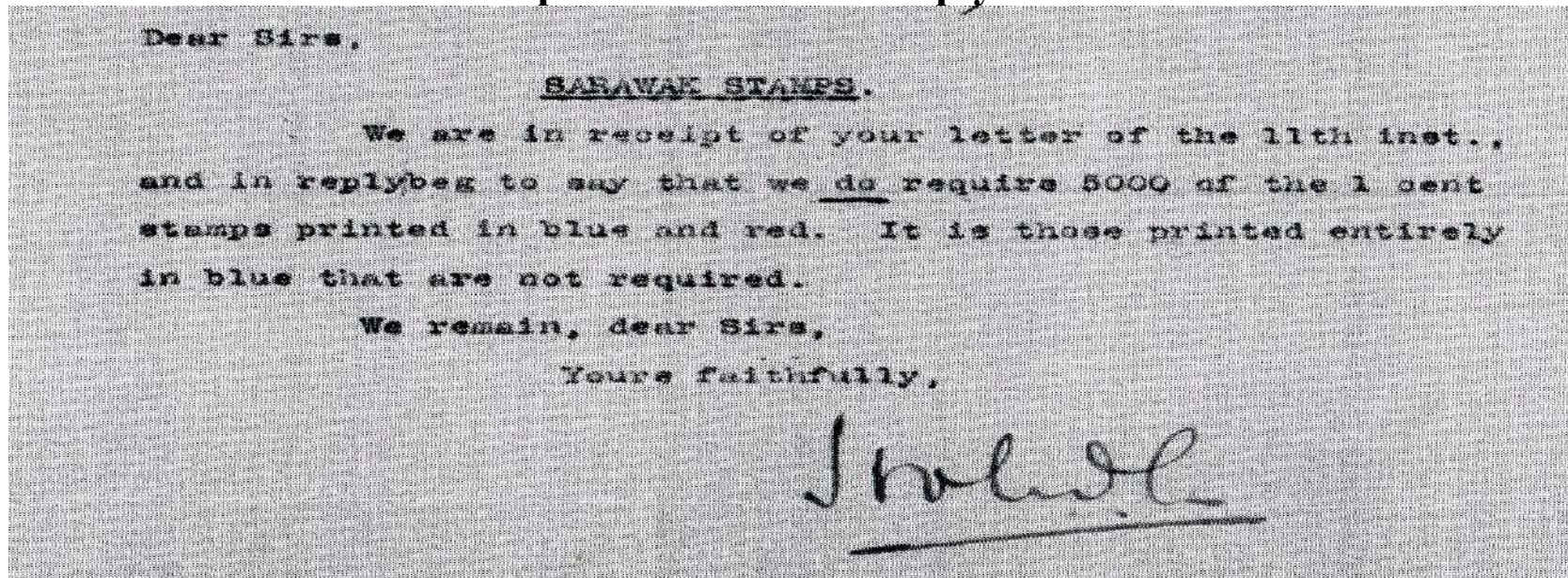


... Not This One ...



De La Rue replied the next day that they would 'put in hand' 5000 stamps of each value with the exception of the 1 cent, which they assumed was no longer required. They also assured Holt the 1 cent stamps delivered (*from the October 1917 order*) were printed in blue with the duty in red.

15th April 1918 – Holt's Reply to De La Rue



**The Colour Issue Finally Resolved ...??
Well ... Not Quite!!**



A Replacement Shipment

At the end of April the Government of Sarawak sent a cablegram to Holt:-

“Six parcels postage stamps posted February Twelfth supposed lost repeat order urgent”

Holt passed this information on to De La Rue on 30th April requesting the order of 6th February be repeated.

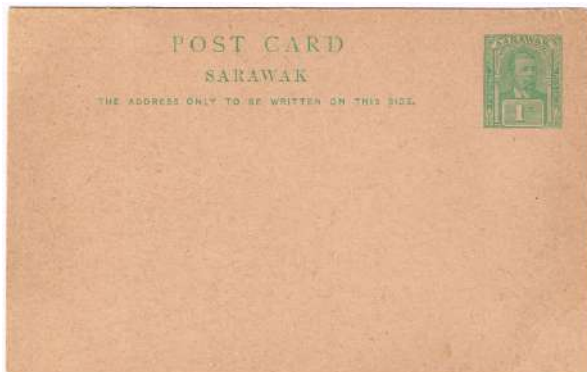
Then, on 8th May, another cablegram from the Government of Sarawak:-

“Instruct De La Rue print one cents blue supersubscribed red as before one cent postcards to match 29th October cancelled”

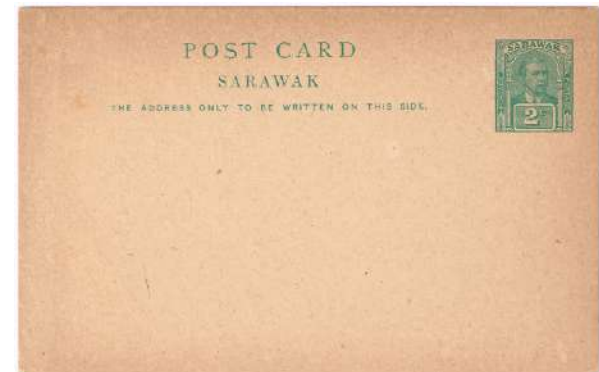
Holt passed this information on to De La Rue asking if the instructions were clear (!).

De La Rue’s response on 9th May:-

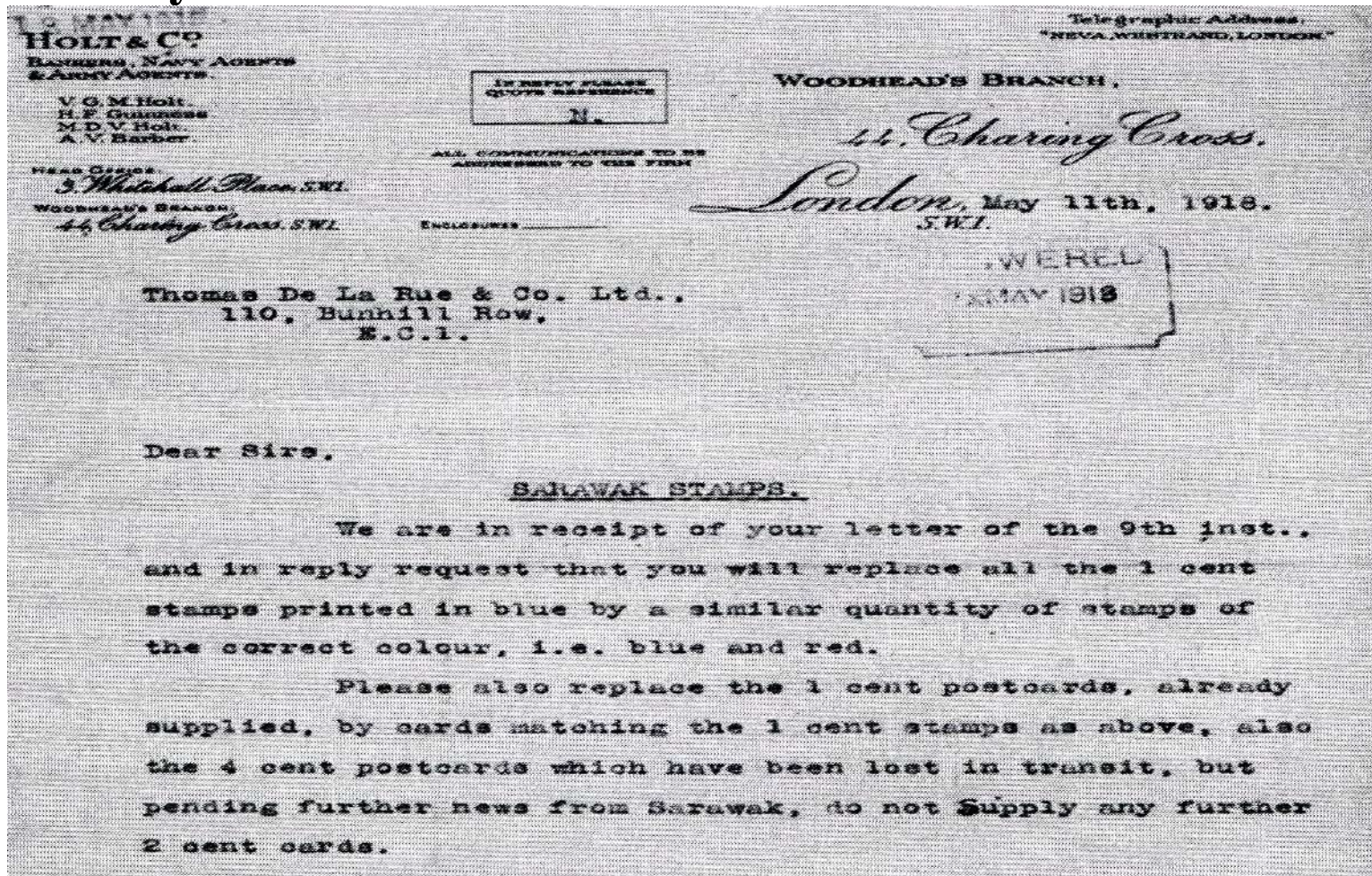
“The reprint of 1 cent stamp will be in blue with the duty in red”



“With reference to the 1 cent postcard, these were printed in green ... We raise this question as the 1 cent and 2 cent cards are both printed in green”



11th May 1918 - The 'Birth' of the 1c Blue & Red Postcard



“We are in receipt of your letter of the 9th inst.. and in reply request that you will replace all the 1 cent stamps printed in blue by a similar quantity of stamps of the correct colour, i.e. blue and red.

Please also replace the 1 cent postcards, already supplied, by cards matching the 1 cent stamps as above. Also the 4 cent postcards which have been lost in transit, but pending further news from Sarawak, do not supply any further 2 cent cards.”

The Two Colour Postcard is Prepared for Printing

On 13th May De La Rue responded to Holt's letter by confirming the order for the 1c stamps and 1c postcard, but asked for the authority to print the postcard in blue ...

“... as it is unusual to print the stamp on postcards in two colours”

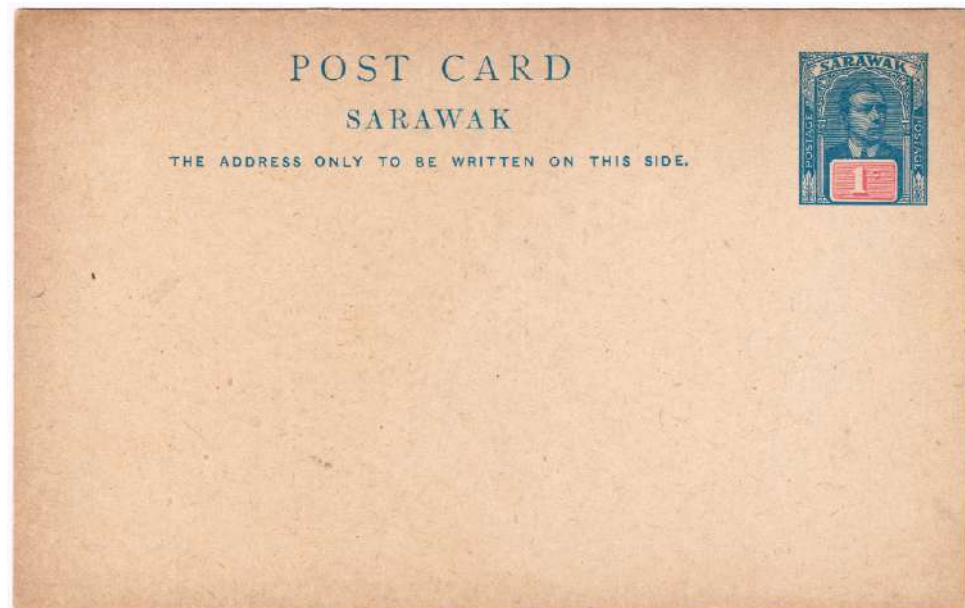
After consulting with the Postmaster General (F.G.Day) in Sarawak Holt responded on 1st June:-

“With reference to your letter of the 13th inst. We have now received cable advice from the Sarawak Government that the 1 cent postcards should be printed in blue and red to match the stamps of that denomination.”

De La Rue wrote to Holt on 7th

June :-

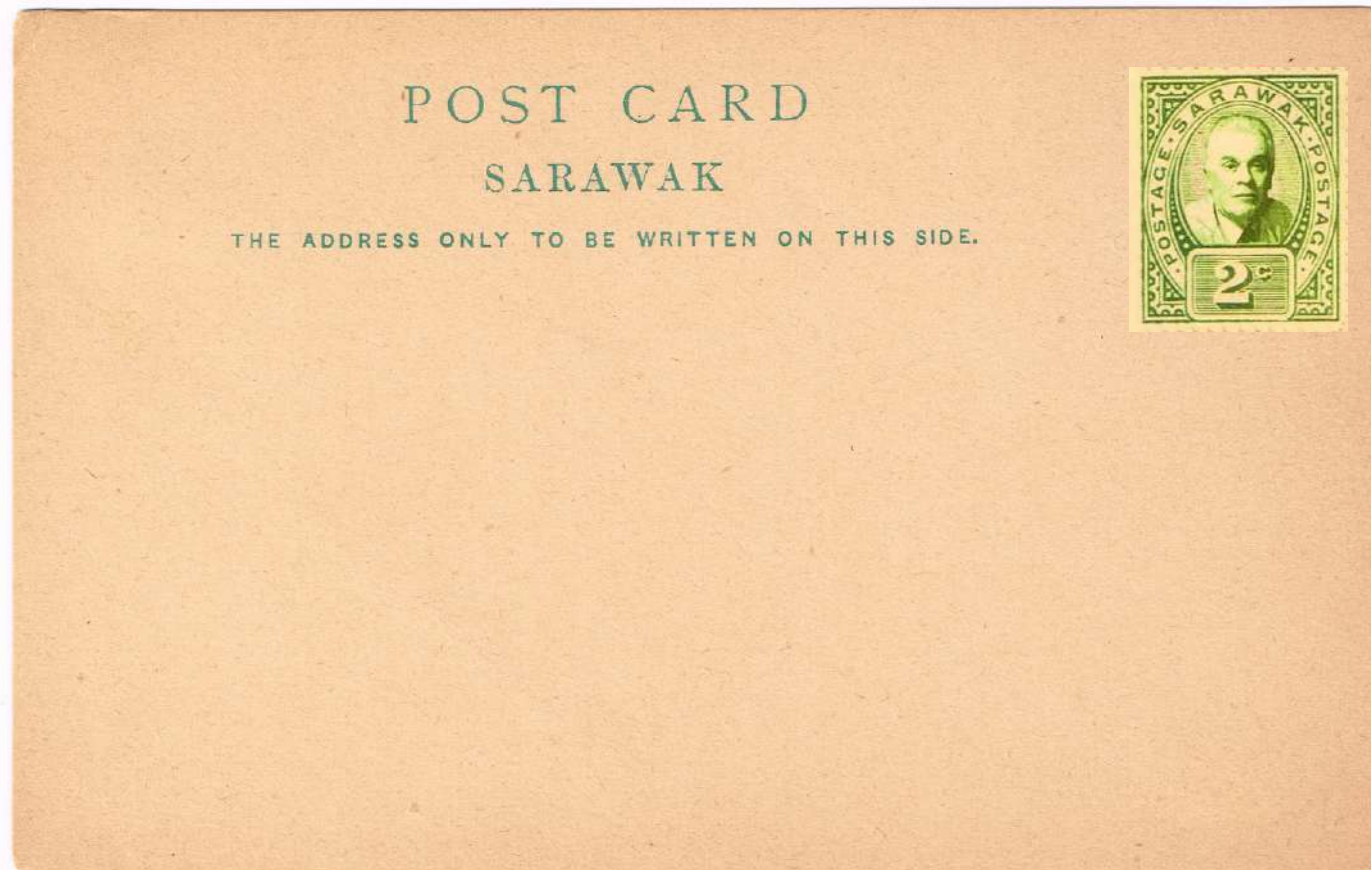
“In reply to your letter of the 1st instant, we will put in hand the two plates necessary for the 1 cent Sarawak Post Cards to be printed in two colours. The cost of the plates will be £5 and the cards 38/- per 1000”



From 1st August 1918 all stamps and postcards of the previous Rajah were withdrawn from circulation and could no longer be used for postal purposes

Sarawak Government Gazette #244; 16.08.1918; Notification No. LXXXIV., 1918(P403⁽²⁾)

Thank You for Listening!



**... BUT
There is a Postscript!!**



The December 1918 Postal Exchange

The De La Rue archive doesn't refer to the printing or delivery of the 1c and 4c Postcards ordered on 11th May until December, when the reaction of the Sarawak Postmaster General to Holt on receiving the package of Postcards is 'interesting'!

“I received three packages containing postcards from Messrs. De La Rue & Co. No advice of despatch of the above packages was received here.

A mistake has again been made. The postcards just received were to replace those sunk in the parcel mail from London on the 12th February 1918 vis:-

‘1000 of 1cent, 1030 of 2c and 760 of 4 cents.’

Messrs. De La Rue have however sent 2050 of the 1 cent and 770 of 4c, but none of the 2 cent value. If they had sent 2050 of 2 cents and none of the 1 cent, it would not have mattered so much, as we use few of the latter. As it is I must convert the 1 cent cards by putting a one cent stamp on them or by surcharging them 2 cents which will add considerably to the loss already sustained by Government in printing these cards.

Also it might be pointed out to Messrs. De La Rue that whereas 2000 postcards of 1 cent have cost £3.16.0., 1000 of 1 cent and 1000 of 2 cents would only have cost £3.3.6., a further loss of 12/6 which will fall on the Post Office.”

When passed by Holt to De La Rue on 17th for comment the response on the 19th December was :-

“... if you kindly refer to our letters of the 9th and 13th May and your replies of the 11th May and 1st June respectively, we think you will agree that your orders have been correctly carried out.”

Lucky De La Rue kept an archive!

Postcards to look out for!

If the Sarawak Postmaster was serious when he said:-

“...As it is I must convert the 1 cent cards by putting a one cent stamp on them or by surcharging them 2 cents which will add considerably to the loss already sustained by Government in printing these cards.”



Do any used examples exist?