JIPEX – 1936

By Tom Reyman

The Johannesburg International Philatelic Exhibition or JIPEX was conducted from November 2 through 14 in 1936. The motivation for the exhibition, which was organized by the Johannesburg Philatelic Society, was to be a celebration of the British Empire. Johannesburg is the largest city in the country now known as the Republic of South Africa but in 1936 was the Union of South Africa. The "union" name is derived from the fact that the country included the former British colonies of Cape of Good Hope, Natal, Bechuanaland, Zululand, Transvaal, and Orange River Colony.

For the exhibition, the organizers produced a variety of special covers and postcards for the event. Two examples of the covers containing the overprinted souvenir sheets are shown here with the ½ pence green stamps and the one pence red stamps. These covers were postmarked on each day of the exhibition. Both of these example covers were postmarked on November 13 and are both registered mailings to the same recipient, B.P. Stewart. The souvenir sheets themselves are unusual in that they include advertisements, and the printings are in English and Afrikaans languages. Many printing flaws have been found in the souvenir sheets themselves leading to additional philatelic interest in the varieties.

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