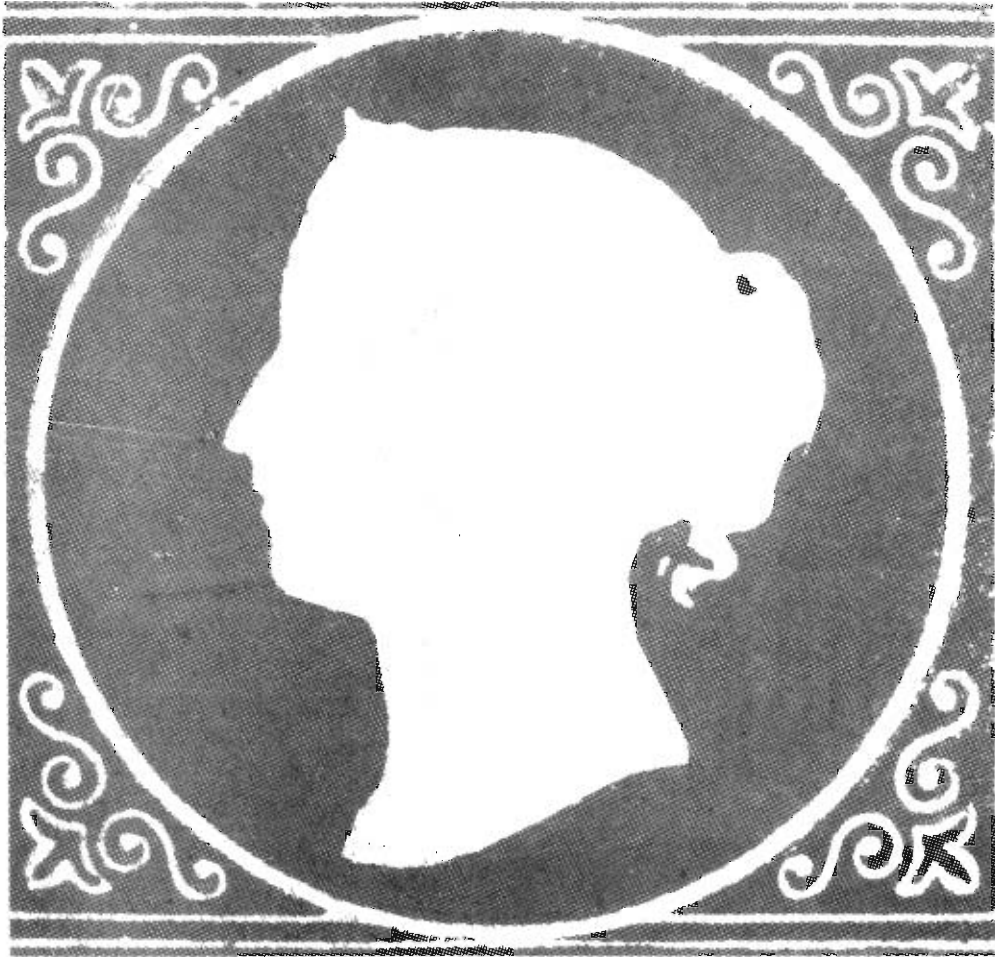


# C A M E O



JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

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EDITORIAL

What better place to start the editorial than on the Paris-Calais Boat Train? Besides sightseeing, sampling excellent food and wine and observing the traffic jam (brought to a fine art by the French), I also took the opportunity to visit many stamp dealers, an open air stamp market and a postcard fair.

First, one should say that it is possible to find postal history bargains, not so easy for stamps. One Paris dealer seemed to be charging about twice the U.K. catalogue price for fairly ordinary Togo stamps. However, an unused German Togo letter seal seemed reasonably priced.

In postal history, the price structure starts at 5 francs (9 francs = £1) for fairly ordinary material. The normal seems to be 15 francs and upwards and some dealers appear to start at 15 francs for everything. An envelope from a French serviceman in the Gold Coast in W.W.II with an RAF censor cachet did appear reasonable at 15 francs.

The open-air market was fascinating for the wide variety of stamps and postal history on display. Postcards were, by and large, expensive by U.K. standards and this applied to whether they were used or unused.

Now to other matters. Suggestions have been made as to how CAMEO can be improved and members will see that we are starting a regular article on Auction Realisations. We propose to include a Wants section if members wish to avail themselves of this facility; also a Question and (hopefully) Answer corner.

By the time this CAMEO has been issued, a regional meeting will have been held in Salisbury. Could I suggest that members in other parts of the country try and arrange similar meetings? These can be helpful, particularly for those who find it difficult to attend London meetings and, of course, can only benefit the Circle and all concerned.

I have to report that there is no sign of a new editor.....

This issue of CAMEO includes an Index for the first ten Journals. Volume 2, whole number 11, due out at the end of January 1980, will include the second part of the G.P.O. Records listing as well as articles on American Forces in Ascension in W.W.II, Nigerian military postal history (recent), an unusual Second World War St. Helena cover and Togo post offices and postal services.

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"THE POSTAL HISTORY AND HANDSTAMPS OF BRITISH WEST AFRICA"By C. McCaig published by Robson Lowe Ltd. at £3.75

This booklet contains a series of articles published in The Postal History Journal, an American production, between 1974 and 1975. Each area is given a separate section and a feature is the reproduction of many rare covers and interesting early letters. For many of our members a copy of this work may be their only opportunity to see examples of many rare cancellations and handstamps. Undoubtedly, every member interested in postal history should obtain a copy.

Mr. McCaig, well known to us as a former President of the Circle and an expert on so much of the area we study, gives a brief historical introduction to each section and the period covered is from the earliest recorded mail to a date soon after 1900. The Circle has published Studies of some aspects of the postal history but, with the exception of Mr. Sacher's booklet on Lagos, we have never attempted the lavish illustration of covers that Mr. McCaig achieves. It is fascinating to see such marks as the Accra Unpaid on cover, which is probably unique. How many I wonder have seen the British Fernando Po c.d.s. on cover? Here is your opportunity. In all, nearly 100 covers are illustrated.

Mr. McCaig discusses the use of the early markings including such items as the Gambia Received cancellation and the Unpaid cancellations of the same Colony. These latter might have been used to indicate Underpaid mail as well as Unpaid mail so permitting their use on stamps. It has occurred to the writer that the demise of the Received cancellation, coinciding as it does almost exactly with the opening of the up river Post Office of Georgetown, MacCarthy Island, may show that it was partly used to mark mail handed in at Commissioners' Offices outside Bathurst on arrival at the main Post Office. The difference between the date on a letter and the date of posting would then be obvious.

We must hope that Mr. McCaig can find the time to continue this invaluable series by publishing further Studies on the Twentieth Century.

P.O. Beale.

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THE BRITISH WEST AFRICAN AUCTION SCENE  
JANUARY - MAY 1979

M.P. NICHOLSON

Harmer's British Africa sale of 9/10th January was undoubtedly the most important sale of the last five months. Included in the Cambia section were numerous complete sheets of 15 of the 1880 and 1883-93 values that realised up to five times catalogue. Prices for the 'sloping value' stamps were, however, amazingly low. Two uncatalogued varieties SG 69 (1906 ½d on 2/6d) with bent frame or broken E fetched £65 and £50 respectively. Three small postmark collections all sold well being knocked down at double the estimated value.

A good postmark collection of the Gold Coast fetched £550, well over estimate but the rest of the section had little of outstanding interest.

In the Oil Rivers/Niger Coast section only 10 of the 26 lots sold, 10 lots of proofs and all the colour trials failing to find buyers.

Togo seems to be in the doldrums with some really rare stamps going at ludicrous prices:

SG3a 10pfg wide setting opt. inverted used  
 cat. £2250 realised £1050

10 1mk wide setting mint cat. £2000 realised £360

11a 2mk wide setting 'OCCUPATION' double used  
 cat. £4000 realised £420.

Warwick and Warwick continue to provide excellent selections of British West Africa material. Perhaps the two most interesting lots of the last six months were both Niger Coast.

In the auction of 10th January 1979 a previously unrecorded example of SG 20c was sold for £230 (estimated at £300). The March auction saw a pair of SG 7b, of which only two unsevered pairs, and no singles, are known. However, since the stamp was misdescribed as SG 7aa, the writer was able to buy it himself for £360. This stamp has remained unpriced for years and recent estimates of its worth have varied between £1200 and £4000.

All the major auction houses have had many interesting covers for sale. For example:

S.G. sale of 10 May 79 Ascension 1915 July 18.  
 Censored envelope to Kent, 1d stamp, tied by  
 Ascension c.d.s. Central filing crease. Est. £45.  
 S.G. sale of 8 Feb 79. Gambia 1883-93 series ½d  
 (2) and 2d (2) on registered cover from Bathurst  
 to Richmond, England endorsed 'per S.S. "Dahemi"  
 via Marseille/if she calls; if not, by first  
 steamer'. One adhesive missing. Est. £30.

Robson Lowe sale of 11 Apr 79 Niger Coast 1891 (16th April)  
 envelope to London endorsed 'R. Niger. W.C.Africa. No local  
 stamps' showing oval framed 'THE NIGER TERRITORIES/POST/  
 OFFICE/AKASSA' Est. £100.

The popularity and availability of material from  
 British West Africa varies greatly from country to country  
 but general interest, and therefore, prices, spiral ever  
 upwards. However, it is still possible to pick up real  
 bargains, like my S.G. 7b from Niger Coast, since Circle  
 members should be in a position to know the true scarcity  
 of their material. Good hunting.

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DISA '79 INTERNATIONAL - cum NATIONAL EXHIBITION    J.R. MORRIS  
HELD AT CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, FROM  
30TH MARCH TO 7TH APRIL, 1979

There were three South African members as well as  
 Mr. Bernard Mabbett, of Norfolk, who exhibited at DISA '79.  
 Two Societies of the "Mother City" combined to organise  
 what was to be the biggest exhibition ever held in South  
 Africa. Situated at the magnificent Good Hope Centre,  
 designed by the late P. Nervi, the internationally acclaimed  
 engineer and architect, 1240 frames displayed some 20,000  
 pages of stamps. Sixty different countries as well as 50  
 different themes or topics were reflected in the facets  
 of this philatelic diamond. The size of this Exhibition  
 may be considered small when compared to the massive shows  
 held in England and Europe, but DISA '79 was 50% bigger  
 than anything previously attempted in South Africa. Our  
 old friend, Mr. Robson Lowe, chaired a truly international  
 jury which consisted of nine overseas jurors, of which six  
 were from Great Britain and 15 distinguished South African  
 philatelists. Now to the exhibits.

- 1) Mr. H.P. Mervis, Bramley, Johannesburg.  
 "St. Helena Pictorials of K.E. VII and K.G.V."  
 (Awarded a Silver-Gilt in the International Class). The first 20 pages showed die proofs and these were followed in the second frame where we saw some excellent essays, specimens and both the accepted and rejected colour trials. The artist's sketch of the "Badge Issue" caught the eye as well as the "torn flag" variety in blocks of four in the 1/-, 15/- and £1. Mr. Mervis also showed a Malta collection which gained a Silver-Gilt in the National Class. Prime items seen were pre-stamp covers including one to Malta in 1646; die proofs and colour trials; "War Tax" varieties; and an interesting "Via Brindisi" steamer label cover of which Robson Lowe remarked it was only the second one he had seen in over 51 years!!
  
- 2) Mr. B.J. Mabbett, Norfolk, England. "Mail connected with St. Helena during the Anglo-Boer War". (Silver-Bronze in the International Class). The many censor marks and initials reflected the history of the Boer prisoners in the camps on this historical island from the period 1900 to 1902. It was obvious that a lot of research had gone into this exhibit and I am told the whole interesting display was assembled at a relatively low cost. This was a specialised study of a particular aspect of a sad war that nobody really won or lost. But nevertheless an aspect highlighted by a fascinating exhibit.
  
- 3) Mr. P.B. Levine, Bellville, Cape Town. "Gold Coast". (Silver-Bronze in the National Class). Among the pre-stamp covers we noted one to London dated 1842. A comprehensive display of the Victorian issues followed where we saw an 1876 1D bisected on cover with both halves shown and a clean example of the 1889, 20/- green and red fiscally used. Postal stationery filled six pages and then some interesting postmarks continued the display. Notable items were the manuscript cancellations, "Seepost" marks and the first flight covers.
  
- 4) Mr. J.R. Morris, Beacon Bay, South Africa. "Gambia - Victoria and Edward". (Silver with Felicitations in the National Class). It was great fun exhibiting this facet on my collection at DISA as it was the first time it had been displayed. The collection opened with a Ship Letter, dated 30th August, 1844,

from London, sent to the Commander of the Troops at Bathurst. Various, imperforate Cameos followed where one saw an 1869 6D with the earliest recorded date on the "deep blue", 19th April, 1869. Strips of five of both the 4D and 6D forgeries were shown. A mint, aniline 1/- violet could be seen as well as the complete issues of the "1886" and "1898" on cover. The Edward period was highlighted by a cover showing a 1D on 3/- Provisional dated 11th April, 1906, which was the second day of issue.

THE G.P.O. RECORDSJ.J. MARTIN

In 1972, the Circle published a study by Mr. Beale 'The Post Office Archives and the early Postal History of West Africa' which, on pages 8 - 10, gave details of various records available for research.

Recently, I visited Post Office Records at St. Martins-le-Grand to study, in particular, Post 29 which comprises Packet Minutes 1811-1900 and 1900-1920. I felt members would be interested to see a list of the titles that are held.

1811-1900

<u>Reference</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
61	1494E/1854	Uniform 6d postage rate established with Colonies.
108	5320/1863	West Indies, Mexico, Porto Rico, Cape of Good Hope, Natal, Ascension and St. Helena. Postage rates revised.
110	8040/1863	Cape of Good Hope, St. Helena and Ascension mail service. Contract with Union Steamship Co.
133	1065R/1866	West Coast of Africa mail service. Contract with African Steamship Co.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
188	599Y/1873	West Coast of Africa. Packets detained at certain ports for fixed time on homeward voyage.
197	298A/1875	Gambia. Money Order service established.
250	575D/1878	Ascension and St. Helena mail service revised.
255	98E/1879	Newfoundland, West African Colonies, etc. Entry into Postal Union.
281	219F/1880	West Coast of Africa mail service. Timetable second half 1880.
289	448F/1880	African Steamship Co. and British and African Steam Navigation Co. Timetables 1881.
289	454F/1880	Eastern, African and West Indian Colonies. Bulk rates of accounting reassessed.
295	66G/1881	Sierra Leone. Allowance paid to Colonial Postmaster as Post Office Agent discontinued.
300	209G/1881	Sierra Leone - Gambia Money Order service.
308	366G/1881	Grand Bassam. Special conveyance of French mails from Cape Coast to Axim.
317	142H/1882	West Coast of Africa mail service. Timetables 1882.
325	346H/1882	West and South West coast of Africa. Timetables 1883.
342	236I/1883	St. Helena mail service.
349	358I/1883	St. Helena mail service.
354	93K/1884	St. Helena and Ascension mail service.
355	93K/1884	St. Helena and Ascension mail service.
360	265K/1884	Ascension and St. Helena mail service.
375	263L/1885	St. Helena. Treatment of Official correspondence.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
399	74M/1886	St. Helena. Parcel post established.
403	227M/1886	Ascension. Parcel post established.
405	289M/1886	West and South West coast of Africa. Timetables 1885-86.
418	429M/1886	Cape of Good Hope - St. Helena parcel post established.
418	461M/1886	East and West Coast of Africa. British Post Offices.
440	284N/1887	Gold Coast Colony. Imperial die used for embossing registration envelopes.
449	420/1888	West Coast of Africa. Parcel post established with British Colonies.
453	1070/1888	Gambia. Ordinance regarding Customs Law.
455	1700/1888	Lagos - Gold Coast parcel post service.
459	3180/1888	Togo. Entry into Postal Union.
467	5580/1888	Gold Coast Colony. Ordinance of inland postal service.
468	6360/1888	Sierra Leone. Ordinance of parcel post.
482	249P/1889	Ascension and St. Helena. Parcel post rates reduced.
501	456Q/1890	St. Helena. Postage rates with U.K. and Cape Colony.
501	12R/1891	St. Helena and Cape Colony. Postage rates reviewed.
519	332R/1891	West Africa and Bermuda. Reduced postage rates.
520	355R/1891	Gold Coast - Germany parcel post service.
546	287S/1892	Ascension. Registered letter service.
551	409S/1892	St. Helena. Postage stamps sold to dealers. Effect of commission on Postmaster's pension.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
567	476T/1893	West Africa. Parcel post between British and German possessions.
606	31X/1897	St. Helena and Ascension. Entry into Postal Union.
606	49X/1897	Nigeria. Money Order service.
622	15Y/1898	Sierra Leone. Express delivery for letters and parcels.
632	152Y/1898	West Coast of Africa mail service.
633	152Y/1898	West Coast of Africa mail service.
642	306Y/1898	Sierra Leone. Insured parcel service.

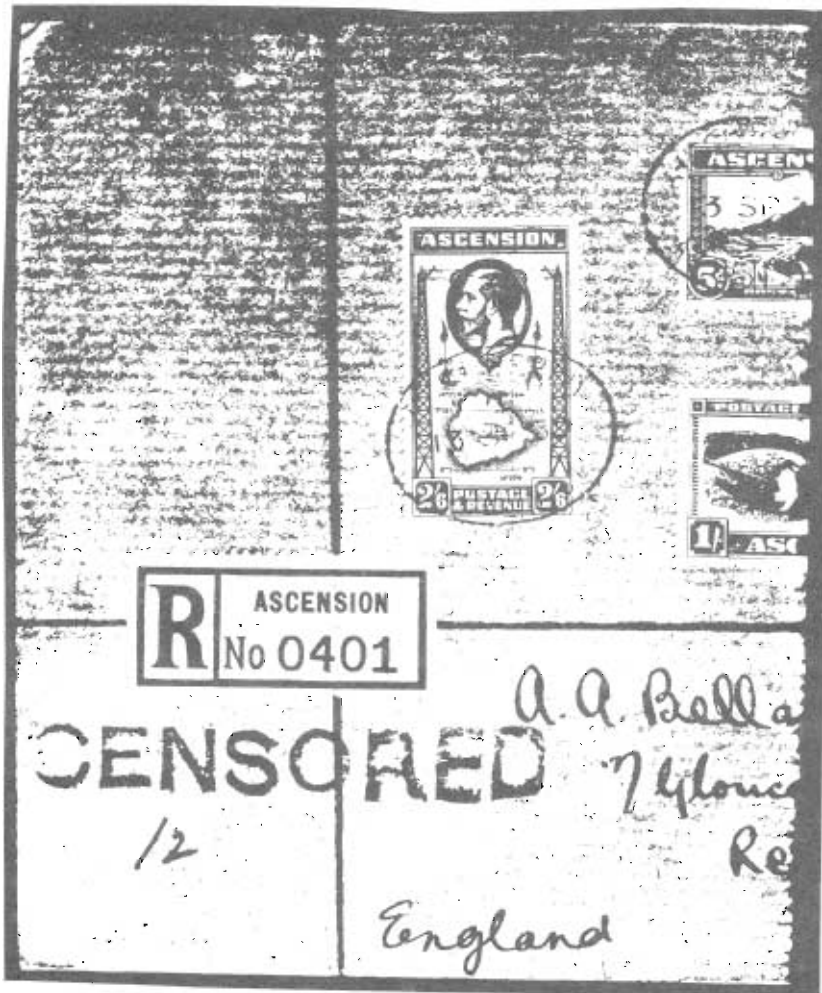
To be continued.

Post Office Records welcome visitors. Their office is open to the public from 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

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Mr. Attwood has shown your Editor five Second World War covers, all censored from Ascension. Brief details are undernoted together with some queries from Mr. Attwood.

- (i) Cover to England with straight-line CENSORED in red. Dated 13 SP 39 \*Mayo Type I (illustrated)



- (ii) Cover to England, illustrated, with Mayo Type II 'Passed by Censor' in black. Franked 1d black and green plus 2d black and red-orange for a 3d rate. Dated 29 ? 40.



- (iii) Cover to England (not illustrated) with violet rectangular censor cachet (Mayo Type III). Date not clear. Based on colour and perforation of stamp - 3d black and grey perforated  $13\frac{1}{2}$  - year somewhere between 1941 and 1944.

(iv)



Cover to England (illustrated three-quarters size) with  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d black and vermilion. Stamp cancelled by pencilled cross.

Mayo Type III censor cachet in red with initials. Also Sierra Leone censor cachet QQ/2 in violet (Mayo Type IV) which has been recorded between June 1944 and April 1945. Based on the colour and perforation of the stamp, year between 1940 and 1943.

Why was the 1½d stamp to Captain Perkins, R.N. only cancelled by a cross in pencil? Why did this cover only have a 1½d stamp, whereas the other three non-registered had stamps totalling 3d?

The back of the cover to Captain Perkins, R.N. shows the address of the sender as "Surgeon Captain H. Perkins, Ascension Island". Is it possible that serving officers were allowed half the normal postal rate?

The route from Ascension via Sierra Leone to the U.K. is interesting. An apparent military cover with a civilian censor cachet!

- (v) Cover (not illustrated) to England with Mayo Type III red cachet with initials. Not date cancelled. Franked 1d black and yellow with 2d black and red-orange. Based on the colour and perforation of the stamps, year between late 1942 and early 1944.

Why was the stamp not postmarked? It is interesting to note that the Type III cachets in red include the censor's initials but the Type III in violet does not.

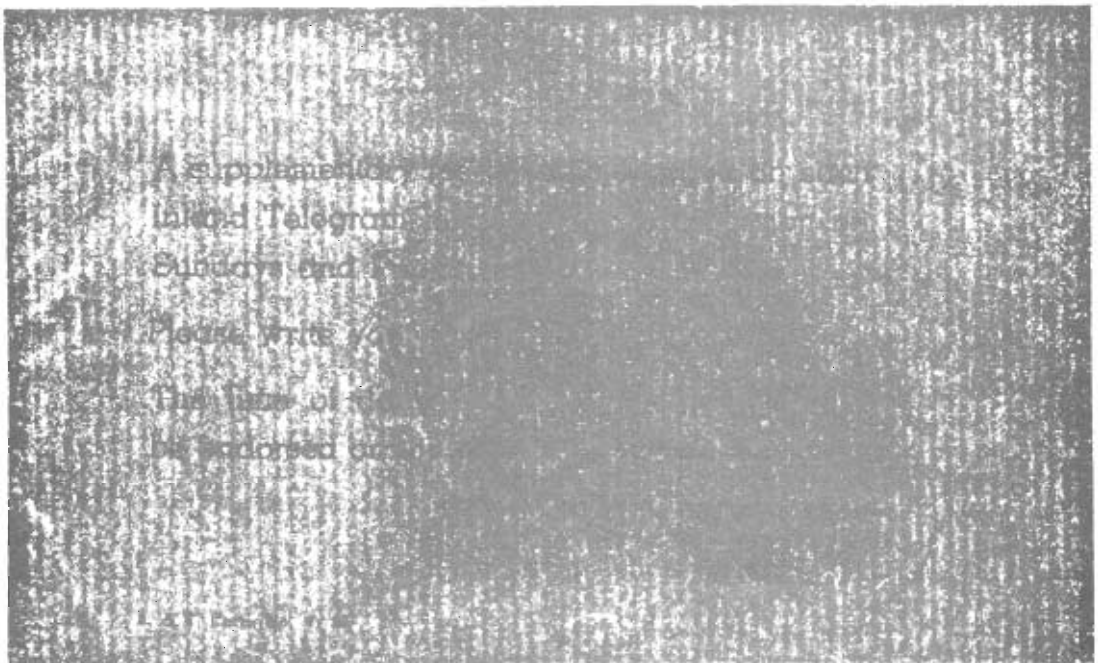
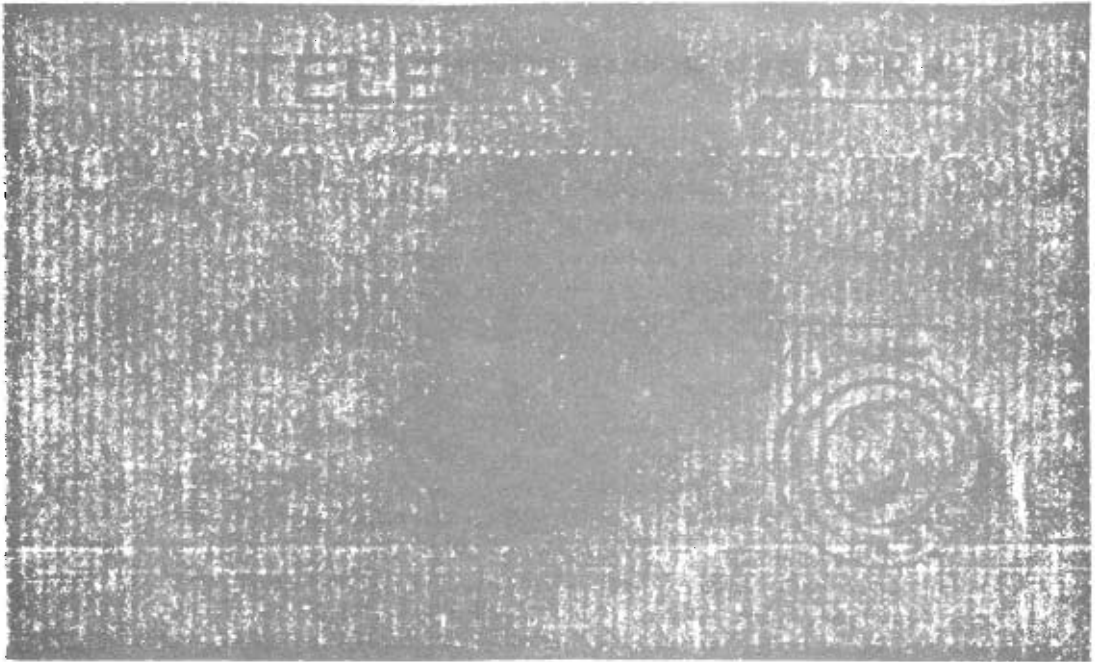
- \* British Empire Civil Censorship Devices, World War II. Section 1. African Colonies and Occupied Territories.

Comments to J. Attwood, 26 Valley Road, Kenley, Surrey,  
CR2 5BQ, England.

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THE BIAFRAN CONFLICT

At the Circle meeting in London in May 1979, Archbishop Patterson showed two items which were of particular interest.



The first was a Telegram form (brown paper so it does not reproduce very well). The Telegram service had almost certainly broken down - this was sent in April 1969? - and the P.O. made use of the Field Telegraph or, more probably, passing cars or P.O. lorries to carry the message.

In case the reverse does not reproduce clearly, the instructions read:

"A supplementary fee of 6d is charged on each Inland Telegram tendered for transmission on Sundays and Public Holidays. Please write your telegrams clearly. The time of delivery of this telegram should be endorsed on the receipt."

The second item was a letter written on July 12th 1968 from a member of the Biafran Army, Degema, c/o 52 Bde. Enugu.

"Since we ran away from Degema almost a month ago I should have written to tell you where I am. It was God's work that I was saved as I have already been surrendered by the enemy. My God asked me not to yield and as such I was saved. Our B.H.Q. now is at Abua 18 mls East of Ahoada.

We have been told here that Onitsha, Awka, Nssukka and some part of Enugu are all rid of the enemies. In this sector, we are not doing well. Our officers are all afraid and we suspect that our Bde commander is a saboteur. If other sectors are progressing what then shall we not meet up to expected (sic).

I close here as I am called out for our duty."

Despite the war news given, the letter was not censored.

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EXTRACTS FROM A DIARY KEPT DURING THE WAR IN THE  
GERMAN CAMEROONS

In November 1978, your Editor met Brigadier A.B. Clough, C.B.E., M.C., S.G.M., who, as a Royal Engineer's Lieutenant, had served in the Cameroons campaign. Brigadier Clough was first commissioned in 1909 and in March 1914 was sent by the War Office to Naragua, near Jos in Northern Nigeria, to survey mine leases.

When war was declared, the Mines Survey Section was ordered to proceed to Lagos as quickly as possible.

During the rest of 1914, Brig. Clough kept a diary and has given permission for extracts to be published in Cameo. The extracts chosen will, it is hoped, be of interest to members.

Sept 12, 1914	Arrived at Lagos
Sept 18	Gen. Dobell and his Staff have now arrived on the APPAM
Sept 23	Arrived at the mouth of the Cameroon River at 10.30
Sept 27	The report about the surrender of DUALA is true
Sept 28	The unhappy (German) prisoners..... are to be transported to DAHOMEY
Oct 8	Shifted over (from DUALA) to BONABERI after seeing the first train leave (DUALA) for JAPOMA. BONABERI is quite a small place, the terminus of the Northern Railway.
Oct 9	Mail went out today
Nov 1	Resumed duties in DUALA and started off a new map showing the district EDEA-JAUNDE
Nov 4-10	The mail seems to have gone wrong as we have not had any letters for a long time.
Nov 12	Kentish went off with B.H.Q. on the expedition to BUEA. His job is to report on the railway from VICTORIA to BUEA.
Nov 13	Matherson arrived from the Gold Coast on the ABINSI. A mail also arrived and I spent the afternoon in the Post Office sorting letters. Sixteen letters and fourteen papers is not too bad. (These were personal ones)

- Nov 14           A large box came from Sierra Leone containing KAMERUN stamps which were taken from the Professor Woermann when she was captured. I had orders to open this box and count the contents. Inside I found the supply of stamps for a year, all values from 5 Pfennigs to 5 marks representing a total value of over £3,000. Have not heard whether it is intended to surcharge them and issue them for use or whether the stamps will be destroyed.
- Nov 19           Sent off two of the West Indian Signallers to do duty at VICTORIA
- Nov 24           Sir Frederick Lugard, Governor of Nigeria, arrived at the Base in the KARIMA and came up the river (to DUALA) in the IVY escorted by the ALLIGATOR and CROCODILE
- Nov 26           Prepared maps of the KRIBI district and took them round to the French H.Q. Having had some R.E. Xmas cards prepared in the Drawing Office, I sent them home so as to be there in time for Xmas Day
- Nov 30           Very busy in the Drawing Office preparing maps for the Northern expedition. B.H.Q. left DUALA for MUJUKA
- Dec 2            Sent off the mails
- Dec 8            Mails came in and I got a good bag of letters from home.

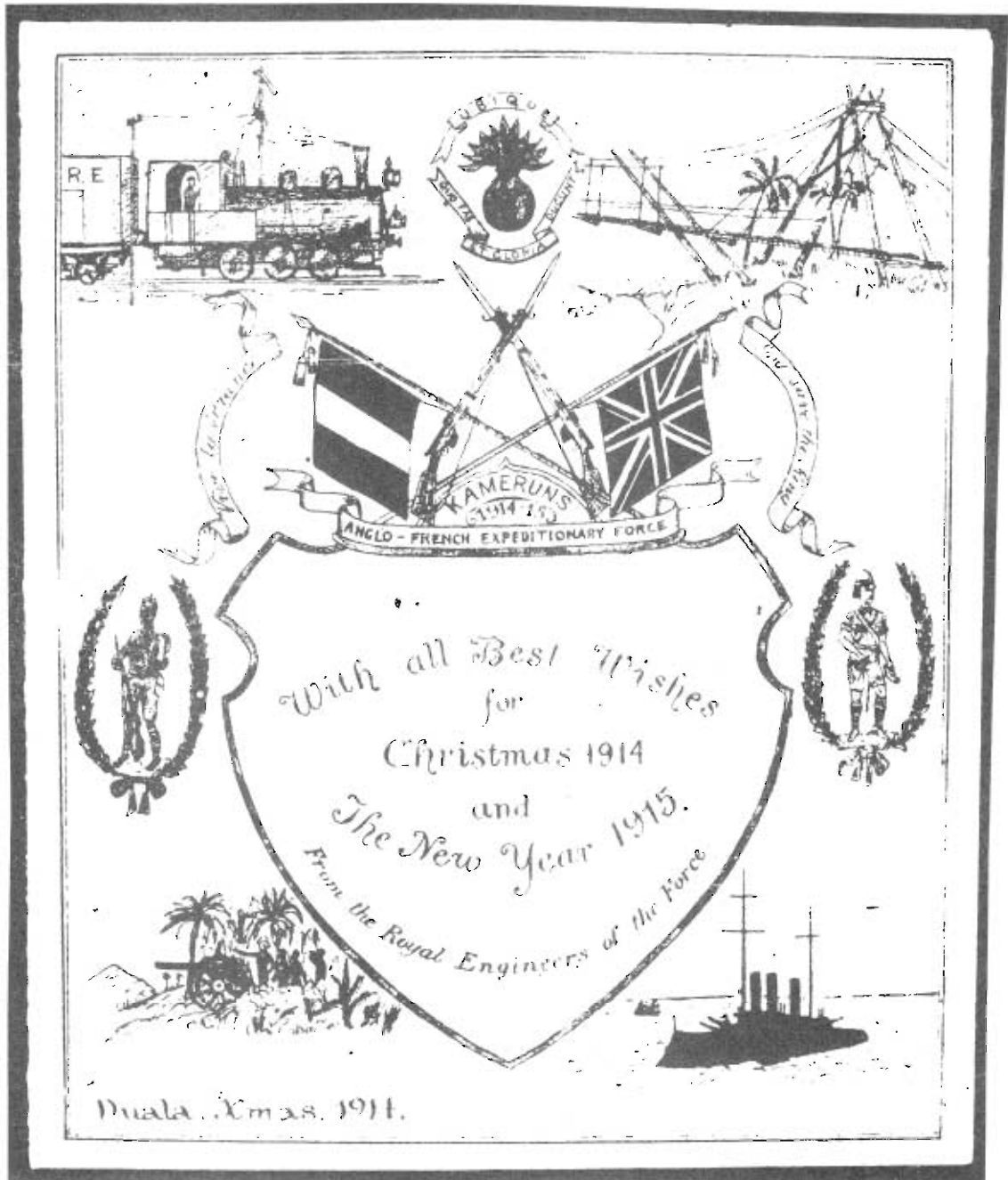
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Brig. Clough's main diary ended on December 10th, 1914 but he was in the Cameroons until the end of 1915. Unfortunately, his correspondence from this period has not survived so there were no campaign covers to study.

With regard to the C.E.F. overprinted stamps, Brig. Clough believes these were sold from Military H.Q. He does not remember buying them from a Post Office. He bought seven sets up to 1/- / 1 mark. He also was able to purchase one set of Anglo-French Occupation of Togo stamps up to the 1 mark value. It is not clear how these came to be sold in the Cameroons.

At Jabassi, up river from Duala, some Kamerun stamps were found. These had apparently been immersed in water and sheets and part sheets were all stuck together. These were brought to Brig. Clough in Duala but were not fit to be used.

Below is illustrated the 1914 Christmas card referred to in the diary.



GAMBIA: AN UNRECORDED POSTMARK?C. LEONARD

Charles Leonard has written to your Editor: I have had in my collection a proof strike (presumably) of a BATHURST date-stamp dated "13 AUG 27".

I had never thought much about it, assuming that it had never been issued, or possibly belonged to a Bathurst other than in the Gambia. Then, over Christmas 1978, I had the opportunity to look through John Forrest's collection again and spotted just a single part-strike dated "2 MAY 46".

I have never seen another example and wonder if some of our Gambia expatriates can tell me more about its usage.

Photostat examples are enclosed of:

- (a) The proof strike;
- (b) John Forrest's example superimposed on the proof strike.



(a)



(b)

In the early 1880s before the great "Scramble for Africa" had begun the British government could not be persuaded to show much enthusiasm for the West Coast of Africa. Not so many years before it had come close to pulling out altogether and it was now concerned to spend as little money as possible in an area that had no obvious strategic or commercial value. The trading interests saw things rather differently: especially in view of increasing French competition they urged the authorities to improve colonial administration and to take more of the Coast under British protection.

There is no particular significance in the date 1883 except that it marked an outburst of discontent among those who lived in and traded to the Gold Coast and Lagos and who were suffering under official penny-pinching. In December of that year the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and a group of merchants in the City of London sent formal complaints to the Colonial Office about the state of the Gold Coast administration, suggesting that the clumsy amalgamation with Lagos (effective since 1874) was a hindrance to commercial expansion. Soon afterwards the inhabitants of Lagos were to make their own grievances known to London.

The result was a steady flow of correspondence and memoranda into the Colonial Office, some of which were immediately published as one of the Command Papers submitted annually to Parliament. The state of communications in West Africa was of course part of the problem, and hidden away in the vast accumulation of official "Bluebooks" can be found the occasional fragment on the organisation of the postal services.

On 9th January 1884 a public meeting was called in Lagos to protest against alleged failures of government; a report was printed in the Lagos Observer (17 January) and along with a petition from the inhabitants it began its slow passage through official channels. (It is an interesting comment on the early social history of the Colony that the meeting brought together "native" and "Mohammedan" as well as European traders.) Colouring the whole protest was the feeling that Lagos was the loser in the amalgamated administration, but immediate discontent was directed towards local officialdom: "the Colony was apparently drifting into a state of chaos", and there was inefficiency in all departments - sanitation, customs, police, public works, law courts and of course the Post Office. (Cmd. 4477 No. 16).

The Postmaster's worst offence was in the inadequate arrangements for moving mail between the town and the steamers lying at anchor outside the bar. There was often a delay of two days after the arrival of the mail boat until the post was brought in by the branch steamer along with the other transhipped cargo. Letters had to be collected from the Post Office, and there might be no announcement that they had at last arrived. The out-going mail was frequently sent off long before the steamer was due to depart. The result was that merchants could not collect their letters and write their replies in time to catch the return mail; some claimed to have suffered financial loss on that account.

The government had once maintained a steamer on which mail could be more promptly transhipped. (The Ekuro, which had been built for service over the Lagos bar, but had been transferred to Accra - see below.) The Colony's estimates once included £45 a month for this service, but the item had been withdrawn long since. Frank Hood, agent for Banner Brothers and secretary to the protest meeting, offered on behalf of the steamship company to land the post promptly at £10 a mail.

There was also a string of minor complaints. Junior officials often refused to transact certain classes of business when the Postmaster was absent; the inhabitants hinted that he might be asked to refrain from going to look after his other affairs during advertised opening hours. There had been trouble over the application of the newspaper rate; one aggrieved customer had obtained the Regulations from London, but his complaints still had to go as far as the Postmaster General before the Lagos office gave in. The clerks often sent messengers back with letters said to be insufficiently prepaid, with the result that the senders missed the mail. The inhabitants' petition declared that "the post office needs thorough reform." (Cmd. 4477 No. 27).

The Lieutenant Governor reported on the complaints to the Colonial Office in May 1884. (No. 45). The Lagos departments of course defended their record - with the exception of the Post Office. The acting postmaster ("G.J.C.") declined to answer for the inefficiencies since they predated his appointment which had been at the end of November in the previous year. The Post Office was not really responsible for the inadequate transit arrangements. The out-going mail was sometimes closed two days before the steamer left, but the only solution was for the government to reintroduce the bar steamer. G.F.C. apologised for the chronic disputes over prepayment: the letter scales newly imported from England were too small for the heavier postal items, and the parcel scales were "in a disordered state".

In 1884 the Accra government reported on the long list of complaints against its administration. (No. 51). It was Governor Samuel Rowe however who took it upon himself to raise the question of mail services to West Africa and to suggest improvements. He pointed out that the Ekuro had been withdrawn from Lagos because it was needed for service as the "colonial steamer"; a replacement was badly needed, and when it was provided the older vessel could return to its original duties. In justifying the cost of his colonial steamer Rowe stated that it reduced transmission time between Accra and Lagos to 48 hours, when the ordinary boats, with transshipment, took anything from five to seven days.

A more general problem was the unreliability of the passing mail-boats, which were liable to arrive on any day of the week. The Governor offered an interesting comparison:

Plymouth to West Africa: often as much as 28 days to Accra, rather less if fewer coastal calls were made; no fixed day of arrival.

Liverpool to Bonny: the same company's "direct" service had been known to make the voyage in 17 days 16 hours.

He suggested an approach to the shipowners, asking for at least one direct steamer a month from Plymouth, to call at one of the Atlantic islands and Freetown only, and pledged to arrive at Accra on a set day - estimated time 17 days. In November 1888 he was given permission to take the matter up. (No. 57).

The Colonial Office also gave Accra some modest encouragement to improve inland communications; it decided that many of the complaints received from Lagos were exaggerated but ordered that essential improvements should be made. It was Bismarck, the German Chancellor, however, who put the British government's thinking out of joint. From the end of 1883 the Cabinet had reluctantly agreed to a policy of extending British influence in West Africa, if only to keep the French in check. Then the Germans unexpectedly took a hand by annexing Togo and the Cameroons. This action combined with strategic developments elsewhere in the continent meant that the formal share-out of all West Africa became inevitable, and with it the development of more formal colonial control. Lagos reverted to self-administration in 1886 and began to extend its influence in the Yoruba hinterland.

Published sources take our knowledge of the postal problems no further, and it would be interesting if Circle

members could throw light on the practical effects, if any, of the complaints of 1884-84. The covers described in Mr. Sacher's booklet (BWASC 1978) suggest that there was little improvement in the West Africa-United Kingdom service in the years immediately following. The Lagos bar must have remained a problem, of course, right up to the end of the century and the start of dredging operations.

References:

"Further correspondence respecting the affairs of the Gold Coast" Cmd. 4477 HMSO 1885 in British Parliamentary Papers 1884-85 Vol.LV.

J. Sacher The Postal History of Lagos BWASC 1978.

(The street map of Lagos reproduced by Mr. Sacher is accessible in full-size form in Cmd. 4477. The copy submitted to the Colonial Office shows the location of every publicly maintained street lamp!)

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GOLD COAST 'NSABA' MANUSCRIPT CANCELLATION

By courtesy of London Stamp Exchange Auctions, we are able to illustrate the cover which graced the front of their March 9th 1979 auction catalogue.



The cover was franked with a QV 2½d, two QV ½d, an Ed VII ½d and an Ed VII 1d making the 5d rate to Germany. The stamps had been cancelled in manuscript in red ink 'Nsaba 3/IV 03'.

The cover was received at Winneba on April 4th, Accra April 5th and Waibungen in Germany on April 23rd 1903.

What interested your editor was the manuscript date '3/IV 03' written in Continental form. Was this, perhaps, the influence of German and Swiss missionaries in the area?

Catalogued as lot 645, estimated at £300, the cover realised £275.

N.B. The 1971 Danson sale included some manuscript cancellations. These were Dodowah '14.10.1901' and '4.2.02' (illustrated) and Nsaba 1904 and Mampong 1910 (not illustrated).

"VICTORIAN LAGOS"

By M.J.C. Echernó, 1977

Extract published by permission of MacMillan, London and Basingstoke.

(See also CAMEO 9 for another extract).

".....the same planlessness plagued other aspects of Government business in Lagos, the mail service for example. One Lagosian who signed "A Comet" reported in the Eagle (June 30, 1883) - a Lagos newspaper - that "after incessantly haunting the Post Office for letters week after week at the sound of every signal and without any success, I at last received on 4th June, 1883 a letter at the Post Office which was dated Brass Dec 29, 1882."

According to another letter published in the Record of May 1898: "The unique manner in which our mails are dealt with, I am sure, is without parallel. The boat *Calendulas*, was due to arrive at Lagos on May 30, 1898 but the latest time set for receiving mail for this ship was advertised as 5 p.m. Thurs, March 26, some two months in advance.

The staffing for this Postal Service was partly responsible for this inefficient system. In a letter of June 30, 1883 to the Eagle, a correspondent noted that "the

number of staff (Postmaster, Clerk and Messenger) which, almost simultaneously with the cession of Lagos, was considered sufficient to discharge the duties appertaining to that office.....is the same today (when) commercial men are to be counted by the hundreds, the settlement having arrived at that degree, that it has been proverbially denominated the "Liverpool of West Africa".

By 1898, the structure of posts within the Post Office Dept. was as follows:

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Maxm. Salary p.a.</u>
Postmaster	Not given
Chief Clerk	£150
Fourth Class Clerk	£ 56
Fifth Class Clerk	£ 48

"It will thus be seen" as the Record argued in May 1898 "that in the Lagos arrangement no provision is made for the posts which carry large money responsibilities, while the clerk who has the greatest burden of such responsibility does not receive a salary equivalent to the pay attaching to a sorter in Sierra Leone".

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NOTE - by J.F. Ince

The closing date for mail for the Calendulas, namely March 26 against an arrival date of May 30, 1898, could very probably have been a misprint in the "Record", for May 26 i.e. four days prior to arrival date.

In January 1894, the General Post Office in England had announced that "mails for Accra, Lagos, Brass, Bonny, Opobo and New Calabar are despatched regularly by the direct steamers leaving Liverpool on alternate Wednesdays counting from the 31st January, for the South West Coast of Africa. These vessels afford a quicker means of Transit to the places in question than the Saturday packets from Liverpool".

The regular sailings from Liverpool on alternate Wednesdays (and alternate Saturdays) surely would preclude mail being received for despatch two months in advance of a sailing, when several other ships would be leaving in the interim.

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A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF POSTAL USAGE  
OF THE OIL RIVERS AND THE NIGER COAST  
PROTECTORATE STAMPS

M.P. NICHOLSON

This analysis must be sub-divided into two distinct periods; 1892-1899 and 1900 onwards. The reason for this is that usage of Niger Coast stamps continued in the new state of Southern Nigeria until the issue of Queen Victoria stamps in March 1901. In addition, Niger Coast stamps were re-issued in 1902-03 to replenish stocks while awaiting the arrival of the Edwardian series.

Prior to the foundation of Southern Nigeria, I have seen stamps used in 14 different post offices but, due to the opening of various new offices during the period 1900-1902, I have seen evidence of usage at 21 different offices.

<u>1892-1899</u>		<u>1900 onwards</u>	
Bonny	16.2%	Akassa	15.4%
Old Calabar	15.6%	Asaba	9.5%
Old Calabar		Old Calabar	8.7%
River	15.1%	Old Calabar	
Benin	9.6%	River	8.6%
Opobo	8.7%	Forcados	8.3%
Paquebots	7.7%	Sapele	8.3%
Brass	6.0%	Bonny	7.9%
Forcados	5.3%	Brass	7.7%
Warri	4.1%	New Calabar	6.3%
Sombreiro	4.0%	Burutu	3.1%
Sapele	3.3%	Agberi	2.7%
Qua Iboe	2.4%	Opobo	2.3%
Buguma	1.5%	Warri	2.3%
Bakana	0.4%	Idah	2.0%
New Calabar	0.1%	Travelling P.O.	2.0%
		Sombreiro	1.1%
		Benin	0.8%
		Degema	0.8%
		Egwanga	0.8%
		Qua Iboe	0.8%
		Lagos	0.4%

As one can see, there are some really rare cancellations to be found on these stamps, especially in the post-1899 period. It is worth remembering that usage under the Southern Nigerian administration is roughly 10 times less than that in the Oil Rivers and Niger Coast hence, when comparing the two lists, it is important to realise that one will see roughly equal numbers of Buguma 1892-99 and Akassa post 1899!

"ST. HELENA - POSTAL HISTORY AND STAMPS" by EDWARD HIBBERTPublished by Roson Lowe Ltd. at £15.00

April 1979 will certainly be regarded by St. Helena collectors as the most important date since the Colony's first stamps were issued back in 1856. This is the date the long awaited Specialists Handbook was published. Long awaited because, apart from a number of articles, the only reference book previously available was produced by Melville 67 years ago. Apart from being grossly out of date, Melville's work was vague at best - inaccurate at worst.

Not so with Edward Hibbert's book. Its 208 pages contain 235 half-tone, 120 line illustrations and 4 pages in colour. The main text starts with the establishment of the first Post Office in 1815, (the year Napoleon landed there in exile) and goes through to the stamps of 1971 (commemorating the 150th death Anniversary of the great man).

The book is particularly rich in Postal History information. Handstamps, cancellations and Boar War censor marks are lavishly illustrated and classified. Some of these items are now extremely scarce, if not unique and a lifetime of collecting may be too short a period to even see some of them.

The stamps are covered in some detail but, as one would expect, still leaves room for further study. I particularly like the 'relative scarcity' guide which puts the true value of the first issues into perspective. No doubt the standard catalogues will be amended and corrected in due course.

The book contains 21 appendices giving additional information to previous chapters but I feel it would have been better if these appeared with the main text. Apart from this, I find the book very well written and equally well produced. Good quality paper has been used, making it an ideal reference work.

A couple of years ago, I had taken on the task of compiling a similar handbook myself. It was while receiving information that I first heard of Edward Hibbert (and indeed the Study Circle). Naturally I dropped the idea, but from the amount of work I had done I can appreciate the tremendous amount of time and devotion this book has demanded. Mr. Hibbert has done us all proud.

I sincerely hope the handbook will be well received and acclaimed by the Philatelic world. To the St. Helena collector it is a must - to the specialist, it is a wonderful stepping stone in the fascinating world of further study.

Roger B. West.

ST. HELENA: A COMMENTARY ON RECENT AUCTION SALES

E.V. HIBBERT

Robson Lowe's British West Africa sale held on 21st December, 1978 contained over 100 lots of St. Helena, with an impressive selection of essays and proofs, many from the De La Rue collection. The prices realised for these unique items were very high, but they surprised even the auctioneers for most of them went for many times the estimates. As one dealer remarked, "St. Helena has taken off". The fact that no fewer than 15 Lots in the St. Helena section of this sale went into four figures gives some idea of the importance of the material and the competition which bidders had to face for items which are not only unique but which may not be seen again in a sale room for very many years.

Roger West has already commented on some of the Lots and there is no need for me to say any more except that every St. Helena specialist should obtain a copy of this important catalogue, if he has not already done so.

I will just add a postscript about the one cover and one postcard in the sale. An 1895 soldier's letter to England from Gunner Fitzgerald bearing two ½d stamps to make up the 1d rate for a soldier's letter, which was counter-signed by B.M. Bateman, above a rubber stamp "Captain R.A./Commanding St. Helena Det. R.A./St. Helena", realised £320 (est. £200). At least one other similar soldier's letter is in existence, bearing a 1d stamp, with similar signature. It is now known that he is not, however, the officer whose initials J.H.M.B. appear in Boer War censor marks on letters of 1900. That officer's surname may be BEASLEY.

The postcard was a 1901 1d reply paid card to Berlin, which was stated to show a light circular "Prisoner of War/Censor/Deadwood Camp" mark. So far as I am aware no such



mark exists, in spite of the reference to a circular Deadwood Camp mark on page 412 of Robson Lowe's Encyclopaedia (Part II). The censor mark on the postcard was not a clear impression, but it was undoubtedly the circular Broad Bottom Camp mark, with the initials A.W.P. as part of the handstamp (BW.2A). The censor A.W.P. was the censor for P.O.W. mail to Germany. This card fetched £80.





There were some fine Boer War covers in Harmers' sale on 21st February, 1979, which fetched high prices. A 1901 cover to South Africa with a very clear impression of the circular Broad Bottom Camp mark, with the initials of a censor not yet identified, fetched £310 (estimate £50 - £60).

There were well over 100 lots of St. Helena in Harmers' 'British Africa' sale of 10th January, 1979. Apart from a ½d emerald with double surcharge (which fetched £400), the main interest in this sale was a marvellous collection of King George V Colony's Badge Issue, and its main varieties. Many of these were in blocks of four and fetched several times the estimates, indicating the popularity of this issue and the growing realisation of the scarcity of some of the varieties.

The table below shows the prices realised for some of these Lots.

The prices shown are for mint or unused blocks of four (with one stamp showing the variety in the last three columns) except where indicated:-

	=	horizontal pair
M	=	single mint stamp
U	=	single used stamp
	=	stamp used on piece

<u>S.G.No.</u>		<u>Normal</u>	<u>Cleft Rock</u>	<u>Broken Mast</u>	<u>Torn Flag</u>
92	4d		£105	£100	 £ 80
93	1/6				 £130
94	2/6				 £175
95	5/-				 £195

<u>S.G.No.</u>		<u>Normal</u>	<u>Cleft Rock</u>	<u>Broken Mast</u>	<u>Torn Flag</u>
96	£1	⊞ £1400 ⊞ £ 500 M £ 185			£875
97	½d		£ 30		£ 80
98	1d		⊞ £ 30	£ 35	
99	1½d		£ 85	£ 60	
99a	1½d		£220		£105
99b	1½d	⊞ £ 60 M £ 44 U £ 55	£525		
100	2d		£ 55	⊞ £ 55	
101	3d		£ 50	£ 65	£ 80
103	5d		£ 90	£ 90	
104	6d		£150	£ 55	£ 95
				(Torn)	
105	8d		£150	£120	£100
		Var. Grey & Bright Violet			⊞ £ 90
106	1/-		£155		M £155
107	1/6		£170	£160	
108	2/-		£165		
		Torn flag repaired			£100
109	2/6		£200	£190	
110	5/-		⊞ £110	⊞ £220	
111	7/6	M £ 44 △ £ 55			
112	10/-	M £ 44 △ £ 42			M £175
113	15/-	M £360 ⊞ £2600 △ £600			

It is interesting to compare these prices with the numbers of stamps of each value which were invoiced. Some varieties do not exist, e.g. the Cleft Rock and Broken Mast on the 1/6, 2/6, 5/- and £1 Multiple Crown, and the Torn Flag on the 5d, 1/6, 2/-, 2/6 and 5/- Script. There was a block of four of the 2/- including stamp no. 42 with no Torn Flag.

An interesting item was the block of four of the 1½d carmine-rose showing the Torn Flag variety. This shows that the 1½d in a carmine-rose shade was issued before 1926, when the Torn Flag was repaired. As there were only two invoices of the 1½d it seems likely that the stamps invoiced in 1923 included stamps of rose-red and carmine-rose shades, and the 1½d stamps invoiced in 1937 included a darker shade of carmine-red. If there was a mistake in entering up the De La Rue Day Book, which on examination appears to be possible, then there was another invoice of 1½d stamps in 1936.

Mr. John Marriott, writing in 'The London Philatelist' (March-April 1979, Vol. 88, p.50), considers that the 1½d carmine-red, which has a brownish gum, "are climatically affected examples of the carmine-rose, or even of deeper shades of the rose-red, and not therefore a true shade variety worthy of catalogue status. It would also seem that the date of issue of the 1½d carmine-rose should be amended to 1937".

I myself have at least four distinct shades of the 1½d, including a very deep shade of carmine-red. Other readers may be able to throw some more light on the various shades of the 1½d and the dates of issue. I have never seen a dated example of the deep carmine-red shade earlier than 1938.

ST. HELENA - INVERTED & REVERSED WATERMARKS     ROGER B. WEST

I recently acquired a mint copy of the 1922 1d green with inverted watermark. I believe certain values of the Badge Issue also have inverted or reversed watermarks. These items appear to be outside the scope of the catalogues, etc. I would be most grateful to hear from anybody who can give me additional information about any such watermark varieties.

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J.J. MARTIN.

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