

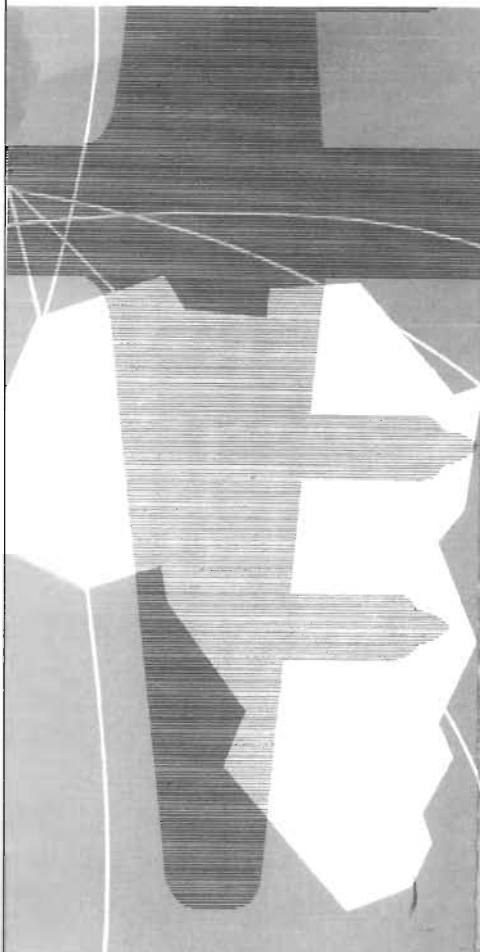
# CAMEO




The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle

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**ROUTE MAP**




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JUNE 2005



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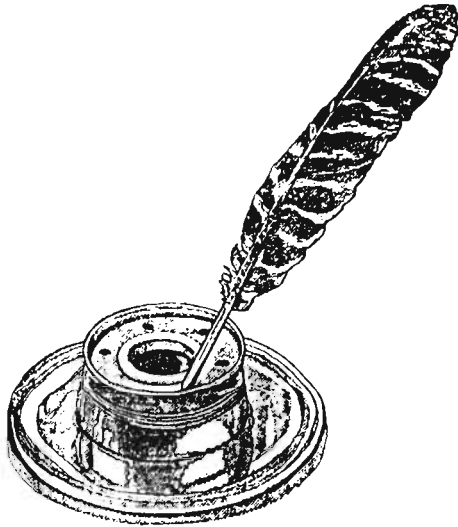
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## Contents

Editorial	2
Letters to the Editor:	3
Maddocks, Pellman, Hearl, Ince, Simmonds, Knight, Miller	
Bookshelf:	5
<i>Togo - Overprints on stamps of G. Coast 1915 - 30</i> by Peter Duggan	
<i>Wartime Air Mails and Postal Censorship</i> , ed. by John Daynes	
Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals	6
Cameroun - Early Air Mails etc. (a Correction) <i>by Bill Mitchell</i>	7
Togo Mail collected by SS <i>Anversville</i> <i>by Bob Maddocks</i>	8
German Togo PS opt. by British <i>by John Mayne</i>	9
The Dutch Motor Vessel <i>Kota Agoeng</i> <i>by Jeremy Martin</i>	9
Red Cross Internee Mail into Gold Coast <i>by Jeremy Martin</i>	10
Sierra Leone Air Mails August - October 1939 <i>by Peter Richards et al.</i>	11
Cameos with Double Perforations <i>by Oliver Andrew</i>	18
West African Currency Board 1/- Note <i>by Bob Maddocks</i>	21
Ascension Manuscript 'ASI' <i>by Jeremy Martin</i>	21
Re-use of Boxed Registration Handstamp <i>by Colin W. Spong</i>	22
Vingt Vues de Sainte-Hélène <i>by Bob Deakin</i>	23
War War War! <i>by Bernard Hughes</i>	24
Mails for Ascension 1875 <i>by Trevor Hearl</i>	25
Air Mail to the Gold Coast Prior to 1936 <i>by John Rawlins</i>	26
A Second Cover to the Gold Coast via Dakar <i>by Peter Wingent</i>	27
Gambia: Some Errors of Design 1966 - 1986 <i>by Oliver Andrew</i>	34
Gambian Abbreviated Dent <i>by Oliver Andrew</i>	36
Grand Popo Cancel Used at Anecho <i>by John Mayne</i>	37
Ocean Mail by RMS <i>St Helena</i> to Tristan <i>by Bob Maddocks</i>	38
Gold Coast Censorship during WWII <i>by Michael Wright</i>	41
The Briars Handstamp and Other Markings <i>by Stefan Heijtz</i>	45
Designer etc. of the Nigeria 1936 Definitives <i>by Tony Plumbe</i>	46
British West Africa Route of WWII <i>by Jack Ince</i>	47
Nigerian Misperforate from 1978 <i>by Tony Plumbe</i>	49
Early Air Mail from St Helena <i>by Stefan Heijtz</i>	50
New St Helena Instructional Markings <i>by Barry Burns</i>	51
The Post Office of St Helena in 1889 <i>by Robert Johnson</i>	53
Sierra Leone Kunso Post Office <i>by Frank Walton</i>	55
St Helena ½d 'Badge' with Inverted Watermark <i>by Bill Thorpe et al.</i>	56
Nigerian Trade Stamp Used for Postage <i>by Ray Harris</i>	56
Benin - Lagos <i>Vapew</i> Service <i>by John Mayne</i>	58
Missent Ascension Mail 2004/5 <i>by Barry Burns</i>	60





## Letters to the Editor

*Should anyone wish to reply to any of these letters, please do so through the Cameo editor in the first instance to enable a consolidated follow-up to be published in conjunction with the study editors as appropriate.*

*Correspondence on any subject is always most appreciated. Any form of contact is welcome, whether by letter, telephone or email.*

*The joint editors' addresses are listed on the front page of all Cameo issues.*

*Barry Burns*

### **Insufficiently prepaid for transmission by air**

*Ed. - In reply to the letter from Bob Maddocks in Cameo January 2005 p252, Frank Walton contacted Bob enquiring of the country and year of the Post Office Guide mentioned, and the dates of the regulation. Bob replied as follows:*

Dear Frank,

The Post Office Guide used as my reference is that of Nigeria (including British Cameroons) for 1957, and also for 1963. The rule is based on the provisions of the Universal Postal Convention as adopted by all members of the UPU, Nigeria being one, of course, since WWI. However, on air mail matters such as this, I wouldn't know exactly when the criteria of 75% pre-paid air mail postage became enshrined in UPU status. I don't have access to these for check purposes - pre or post WWII?

I think it would be applied equally in Sierra Leone, Gold Coast and the Gambia, the other British West African colonies - perhaps at varying times of introduction? I am not 'au fait' with the regulation, if in force, today given that perceived practice in the UK and USA for example, is for short paid international air mail items to be returned to sender to make up the difference before reposting.

Bob Maddocks  
Oswestry

### **The 5d 'Badge' printings of Ascension**

Dear Barry,

Congratulations on the interesting article and illustrations on the five penny 'Badge' printings of Ascension (*Cameo* October 2004 p208 and 217). I have one copy of the described first printing and two of the second. The immediate thing that stands out is the relative paleness of the pale purple in the centre of what is presumably the first printing, compared with the second. It is only when you hold them up to

a really good light that the distinction between the apparently olive and apparently deep yellow-green colours on the second printing really stand out.

Adrian Pellman  
Oxfordshire

### **Nichols & Erridge, and anti-slavery patrols**

Dear Barry,

Thanks for the valuable information, bringing out some first class historical evidence, in the articles on Erridge & Co., and Bob Maddocks' on the anti-slavery patrols in *Cameo* October 2004, p222 and 204. I was only recently trying to discover more about Erridge & Co, and believe they managed the abortive flax industry for the Colonial Fibre Co. 1874-81. Erridge were agents for this company and then, in 1880-81 took over the mills themselves - but still failed (quoting Ken Denholm's unpublished history of the flax industry). But Erridge was in business there in other ways I think. William Erridge was a Shipping Agent in 1874, a Committee Member of the Benevolent Society, and the Church Society, and a JP, so must have been a well-established citizen and businessman by then. I've never heard of Nichols except in this context. We've hardly scratched the surface of St Helena history!

Trevor Hearl  
Cheltenham

### **The 'British West Africa Route' of WWII**

Dear Editors,

Thank you once again for the latest issue of *Cameo*, i.e. January 2005. Its arrival is comparable to the appearance of a long-awaited oasis in a vast desert.

Thank you for adding at the end of Bob Wilcsek's article p266-8 references to my earlier articles on Pan Am's FAM 18 and FAM 22. May I add reference to an earlier article by me introducing the inauguration of FAM 18 which appeared in *The Airpost Journal* in September 2000, a copy of which

is in the WASC library? Since this did not call at any West African airport, I did not at the time seek to have it published in *Cameo*.

Jack Ince  
Stirling, Canada

### **First Day Covers of Nigerian 1973 Defs.**

Dear Rob/Barry,

I was just, as it happens, writing up my Nigerian 1973 Definitive First Day Covers when I saw Michael Wright's article in *Cameo* January 2005 p301. So I thought I would send in a summary of my findings, which contains some information not previously reported.

The issue date of a first day cover for the new currency stamps was 1 April 1973 which was a Sunday. The 'TECHNICAL DATA CARD' insert states that all stamps are gauge 13.3 x 13. In fact all are perf. 14. As Michael Wright stated the printing processes named are Photogravure for 1k, 2k, 5k, 10k & 50k with Delacryl for the rest. The 1k, 5k & 50k were new colours; thus the 2k and 10k were not new issues. The 'Delacryl' printings of the 1k, 2k, 5k and 10k were issued later.

My first cover with these stamps has the 25 mm cancellation as described by Michael.

My second cover has a 30 mm cancellation 'FIRST DAY OF ISSUE / 1APR 1973 / LAGOS G. P. O.' with the '1' close to 'APR'. It appears to be Neville Jones type 'SPEC 16'.

My third cover also has a 30 mm cancellation similar to the foregoing, but with the '1' spaced further apart from 'APR'. The loom on the 35k is lake-brown as opposed to chestnut previously. These first three covers have the original issue of stamps - except for the shade of the 35k that is.

On my fourth cover we have the appearance of the 2k and 5k in Delacryl as stated by Michael. Because of the dates of issue and earliest recorded dates of use of these stamps we can only presume that this, therefore, must be a back-dated cover. The N2 is a deeper shade of green and the 25k has a more intense black.

My final and fifth cover now has the 1k, 2k, 5k and 10k in Delacryl and the anomalous N1 in photogravure. The 20k has blue liquid, which Gibbons states is only found on the watermarked issue with the earliest date of use known as September 1979. The 2k, 3k & 5k are all much deeper colours, and the N2 is a much paler green.

The cancellation for these last two covers is 28 mm as mentioned by Michael; the lettering is smaller round the edge and larger in the middle with a dash before the '1'.

Tony Simmonds  
Maidenhead

### **Togo mail collected by Belgian ship**

Dear Rob,

Regarding John Mayne's article in *Cameo* January 2005 p282, I can confirm that the vessel *Anversville* was in fact chartered by Elder Dempster and was permitted to call at Gold Coast on the return journey - and also Sierra Leone (ref. CMB100 A Century of Commitment to Shipping (Uitgervi) Lannoo nv Tielt). So far I have found she left Liverpool on this particular voyage on 29 May 1915 and returned on 4 August 1915. Other dates and ports of call are still to be sourced.

John Knight  
Southend

*See also p8 - Ed.*

### **Bathurst to London with French Censor**

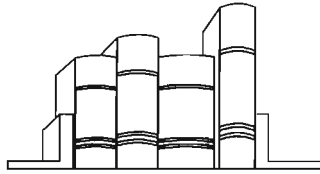
Enjoyed the current *Cameo* (January 2005) as always. The cover on p262 was censored in Casablanca - YA601 listed only struck in red. Also of interest is the 'OPENED BY...' part label on the other side. This looks to me like one of those only used in Bermuda suggesting that this route was followed.

Chris Miller

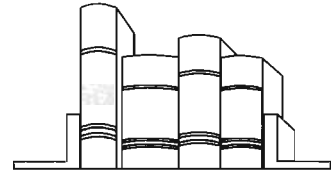
*Acknowledgements also to Graham Mark who telephoned the editor with the same information about YA601.*

WASC Study Editors are also available for queries and to help edit articles


- Airmails - Barbara Priddy
- Ascension - Bernard Hughes
- Biafra - Dudley Prestedge
- Cameroons - Marty Bratzel
- Gambia - Oliver Andrew
- Ghana - Ian Anderson
- Gold Coast - Peter Newroth
- Lagos - John Sacher
- Maritime - John Knight
- Nigerias to 1914 - John Sacher
- Nigeria post 1914 - Tony Plumbe
- St. Helena - Bernard Mabbett
- Sierra Leone - Philip Beale & Peter Rolfe
- Togo - Jeremy Martin



## Bookshelf




*Distribution of West Africa Study Circle publications has been changed. Please send orders and payments to the Treasurer (address on contents page). Authors will distribute their own new publications to members, whilst distribution of purchases from older stocks is arranged via the Treasurer.*

 *Togo - Overprints on Stamps of the Gold Coast 1915 - 1920* by Peter Duggan. West Africa Study Circle, 2005. 136 A4 pages, 15 in colour. Price £27, US\$51 for WASC members, otherwise £35, US\$66.50. Post and packing: UK and Europe £3; Overseas air mail £8, US\$ 15. Reviewed by John Wilson.

I had waited for publication of this book with great anticipation and on reading it I was not disappointed. The 'local' and 'London' overprints on stamps of the Gold Coast have confused collectors over the years, and the stamps themselves very much underrated, except by 'we few, we happy few, we band of Brothers' who have studied them for the last 30 years or so.

Peter Duggan, by dint of exemplary scholarship and boundless enthusiasm has produced the definitive analysis of these two stamp issues and in his writing has covered every possible aspect of a complicated subject. Describing not only the overprints themselves, but the printing technology of the time, the various papers used and the clear reasoning behind his conclusions, Peter has given the Study Circle and the wider collecting world an easy to understand reference work which will enable anyone to identify and accurately position almost any of the overprinted stamps in his or her possession. His discovery that, contrary to previous beliefs, there were three distinct settings of the Accra overprints, will send collectors scurrying to re-examine (and possibly re-write) their collections, and the inclusion of large illustrations of each individual overprint on all sixty positions in the pane of stamps is a powerful aid to identification.

With sixteen chapters and five appendices, there is scarcely a question that this publication cannot answer, and I urge anyone with an interest in West African collecting to have a copy on their bookshelves. For those who want to take a closer interest in the overprinted stamps of the Gold Coast, there can be no better reference, and I suspect that Peter Duggan's book is certainly going to be consulted by expert committees when considering the authenticity of rarities from this issue. Rarities there are; how many of our members have seen or possess, for example, the 'small F' variety of the inverted overprint on the one penny value? This is a fine piece of scholarship, and the Study Circle is to be congratulated on supporting its publication.

 *Wartime Air Mails and Postal Censorship* edited by John Daynes. 400 A4 pages, **Price £30 for WASC members only until 1 October**, otherwise £45. Post and packing: UK £6, Europe £9, USA surface mail £15. Cheques should be made payable to J.A. Daynes. Orders or further information (please enclose SAE) to: John Daynes, 25A Mill Road, Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex CM0 8PZ, e-mail [john@daynes55.freemove.co.uk](mailto:john@daynes55.freemove.co.uk). Reviewed by Keith Fitton. *This review appeared with a recent issue of the Journal of the France & Colonies PS, and is reproduced with John Daynes' permission - Ed.*

From the outset of World War II, the Overseas Mails Branch (OMB) of the Post Office published a weekly cyclostyled report on developments in the fields of postal censorship, air mail and surface mail services. There are 277 issues in an unbroken run from September 1939 to the end of 1944 week. John Daynes has edited these to record only the censorship and air mail services sections. Each edited report averages one - two pages of A4 size, closely typed - a total of 400 pages.

The reports make fascinating reading and are extremely detailed in content. The first paragraph usually covers changes in the rules regarding censorship; for example, that for week ending 11 November 1939 (Report No. 9) updates the list all those countries in Europe, from which mail is sent to the UK or vice versa, where the censor requires the first class mail to be submitted to him. In later years, there were often no important changes to the arrangements but in April 1941 (Report No. 83), the censor requested that all registered first class mail to Hong Kong be submitted to him in London for inspection.

The second main section of each report is dedicated to changes in the arrangements for air mail. Each report is invariably separated into three mini-reports: on Empire Air Services, Air Mail Services in Europe and the North Atlantic Air Service. Thus in the report for week ending 15 June 1940 (report No. 40), we read that, following the declaration of war by Italy, the Empire Air Mail services have been suspended; that alternative routes across Africa are being explored; that air mail for Australia and New Zealand is being sent by the North Atlantic Air Service due to leave Lisbon on 20 June to connect with the SS *Monterey* leaving San Francisco on 25 June and expected to arrive in Auckland and Sydney on 12 and 15 July respectively; that the South Atlantic Air Service is operating from Toulouse rather than Marseilles and that the London - Paris service did not operate on 10 and 11 June being replaced by a BOAC service to Tours on 12 June. In the report for the following week, the establishment of the Horseshoe route is detailed.

The final report for week ending 30 December 1944 (Report No. 277) gives dates of dispatch of ordinary air mails to India, East Africa etc.; dates of dispatch and receipt of airgraphs and air letters by geographical location; dates of receipt of the same in India and the Middle East; details of flights to Sweden and Lisbon and dates of dispatch and arrival for mail, at both ends, flown to and from UK across the Atlantic.

This is a comprehensive volume of information which will be of great value to those with an interest in UK censorship, air mails from UK during WWII to destinations world-wide and to UK from the same destinations. John Daynes has obtained copies of all these 277 reports and, after months of effort, Royal Mail has given approval for them to be reproduced. Since there is likely to be only a single opportunity to reproduce these reports, orders should be placed as soon as possible with payment. Availability is expected around mid 2005 just in time for the joint meeting between the Forces Postal History Society and the British Aerophilatelic Federation at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo on 2 July.



## Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals

*Members are invited to contact either editor by e-mail, post or telephone when they notice any article they feel might be of interest to other members.*

### **Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society** Volume 55 No. 1, March 2005

*Airmail Letter Rates from French Equatorial Africa and France 1930-45* by Bob Picirilli, p5-12

*A Register of the 1920 Bisects of Dahomey* by Bill Mitchell, p34

*Togo: the 1921 Mandate Issue - More Earliest Recorded Dates* by Bill Mitchell, p34

*Togo in World War I - The French Occupation Issues* by Jeremy Martin & Bill Mitchell, p35

*Report of Meeting London 24 November 2004 - 'Africa by Air'* by Barbara Priddy, p38

### **The Canadian Philatelist** September - October 2003

*Philatelic Treasures - Early Gold Coast Mail* by Peter Newroth, p278, p279-281

### **The Canadian Philatelist** December - November 2003

*Philatelic Treasures Part II - Gold Coast's First Stamps* by Peter Newroth, p356-357

### **The Canadian Philatelist** March - April 2004

*Philatelic Treasures Part III - Gold Coast Victorian Keyplates* by Peter Newroth, p87-89

### **The Canadian Philatelist** May - June 2004

*Philatelic Treasures Part IV - Gold Coast Keyplate Early Postal Markings, Forgeries and Bisects* by Peter Newroth, p170-171

### **The Canadian Philatelist** January - February 2005

*Philatelic Treasures Part V - Gold Coast Universal Unified Keyplates* by Peter Newroth, p18-20

### **Postal Order News** January 2005

*Postal Orders of Independent Nigeria* By Michael St J Wright, p7-15 (Copy in WASC library)

### **Bulletin COL.FRA** No.110, December 2004

*Cameroun: Pénurie de Figurines en 1921* by Dudley Cobb, p2-4 (This is a translation into French of the *Cameo* articles by Rob May & Dudley Cobb in the July 2002 and June 2004 issues on the Stamp Shortage of 1921 in Cameroun)

**Continental Railway Journal** No. 141, Spring 2005

*Railways of Togo* by John Middleton, p321-324 (Photographs from 2004 visit, and brief history)

*Nigeria*, p344 (Recent report of 'River' class 2-8-2s)

**The London Philatelist** Volume 114 Number 1325, May 2005

*Display Cards & Colonial Issues of King Edward VII* by Colin Fraser & Richard Maisel, p123-136



## **Cameroun - Early Air Mails and the Aéromaritime Coastal Service (a Correction)**

**Bill Mitchell**

With reference to my article in *Cameo* 64 (January 2005), I have to apologise to readers for a mis-reading of one of my sources (Pierre Saulgrain, 'Le Service Postal Aérien dans les Pays d' Expression Française') which affects my remarks on the first scheduled flights from Alger to Brazzaville and from Alger to Tananarive, but fortunately not the main thrust of my article.

As his title indicates, Saulgrain's scope is world-wide, and he adopts the only practicable method of setting out his flight details, which is to devote a section to each French territory separately. This means that trans-Africa flights are recorded more than once (once for each colony traversed), and the most comprehensive listing for the flights in question is to be found in the section dealing with the starting-point, which in this case is Algeria. In this section, Saulgrain departs from his normal practice of recording flights in chronological order by listing in one sub-section the trial and inaugural flights for the Alger - Congo service, which cover a period of six months (7 September 1934 to 7 March 1935). Because of this, no 1935-163 is followed by 1934-164, and this can cause confusion (as indeed it has). The flight numbered 1935-211 which I interpreted as being the first regular flight on the Alger - Brazzaville service (27 April to 9 May 1935) is listed in its proper place with other flights of that year on page 36. However, further reading has revealed the section devoted to the opening of the Alger - Congo service on pages 30 and 31, and this shows that the inaugural flight (1935-163) actually took place on 2 to 7 March, a couple of months earlier; the entry concludes 'This flight marks the official opening of the Alger - Congo service alternating with flights undertaken by the Belgian company SABENA which ensured a postal service to the Belgian Congo. (This Belgian service began on 23 February 1935; Saulgrain gives it the Algeria number 1935-204.) To add to the confusion, Saulgrain apparently repeats the 2 to 7 March flight under dates 2 to 9 March, no 1935-206 with the comment 'opening of the regular service Algeria - Congo by Régie Air Afrique'. (Incidentally, there is no 205!)

It should be noted that the dates I attributed to the later flight (27 April to 9 May 1935) are incorrect. Reading the entry again, I find that at Bangui on 1 May some mail was transferred to a trial flight from France to Madagascar, and it was Tananarive that was reached on 9 May. Saulgrain does not give the date of arrival at Brazzaville, but it was probably on 2 or 3 May - the journey from Alger normally took five or six days.

The dates I quoted for the first scheduled through flight to Tananarive are correct.

The second, third and fourth sentences of the last paragraph on p257 should be amended to read:

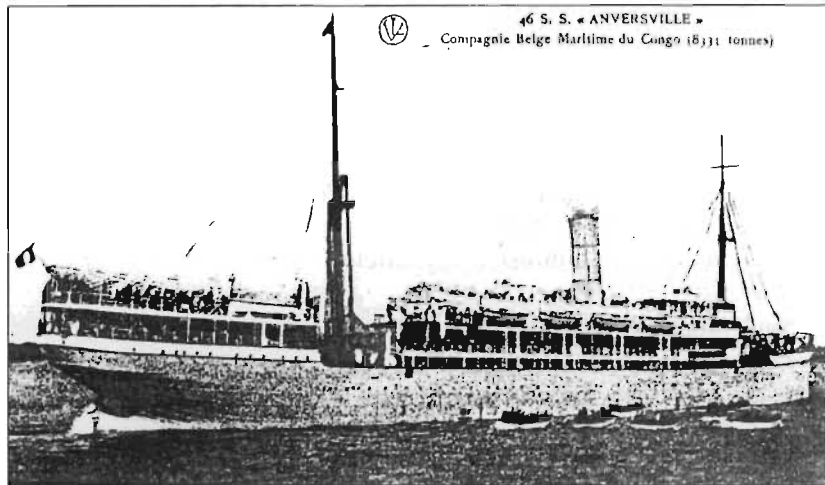
This service was itself in its infancy and was also completed in two stages. The first regular service from Alger to Brazzaville via Bangui was on 2 to 7 March 1935, and the first through flight to Tananarive followed on 9 to 17 November of the same year. These flights are listed by Saulgrain as Algeria numbers 1935-163 and 1935-219 respectively.



# Togo Mail Collected by Belgian Ship *SS Anversville* July 1915

Bob Maddocks

In *Cameo* January 2005 p282 John Mayne showed a Togo to England cover postmarked 'Lome 13.7.15' and which had been superscribed by the sender 'S.S. *Anversville*'. As, however, he could find no evidence that this particular vessel had ever called at Lome at or around this time, he concluded that this cover had no doubt been passed to neighbouring Gold Coast for collection by another mail ship.



The *Anversville* (the second of that name) belonged to the Compagnie Belge Maritime du Congo, originally formed in 1895 with considerable assistance and interest of the British company Elder Dempster & Co. Ltd., Liverpool. Following the outbreak of WWI, her home port of Antwerp was soon besieged by the Germans and was surrendered to them on 9 October 1914. The *Anversville* and her sister ships *Albertville* and *Elisabethville* were able to switch to United Kingdom ports. Sometime in 1915, in conjunction with Elder Dempster & Co., they began a temporary accelerated Belgian mail service between Hull, Falmouth and the Congo with regular sailings every four weeks. A round trip took about 41 days, and listed ports of call were Falmouth, La Rochelle-Pallice, Tenerife, Dakar, Conakry, Grand Bassam, Banana, Boma, N'okui and Matadi. (Ref. 1) According to one passenger's account, the first sailing to the Belgian Congo since the outbreak of war and by this service was that of the *Albertville* on 9 March 1915 from Liverpool. (Ref. 1)

Reverting to the *Anversville*, I refer to the mention made in my book on the Cameroons Expeditionary Force (Ref. 2) that this vessel arrived off Douala, Cameroons on 16 June 1915 carrying (British) troop reinforcements. It is assumed that she had been on charter to the British Government yet may well have also been on a sailing to the Belgian Congo for in less than 20 days later she was announced as being due again at Souellaba Point (off Douala), this time homeward bound. In this respect C.E.F. General Routine Order No. 291 of 3 July refers. The *Anversville* left on 8 July 1915 with servicemen invalided out and those on recuperative leave from the Campaign. She also carried homeward mail, which had closed at Duala Post Office at 7 am that morning.

I have no information as to which ports she called at on that particular homeward trip but in the light of John Mayne's cover of 13 July 1915 it certainly is most probable that the *Anversville* did indeed call at Lome. There, logically too, she would have embarked both mail and British servicemen from military occupation duties in Togoland, also captured from the Germans.

#### References

- 1 *African World* December 1915 (publication details not to hand, seen in Cape Town library)
- 2 Maddocks R.J., *The Postal Arrangements of the Anglo-French Cameroons Expeditionary Force 1914-1916*, Author, Oswestry 1996

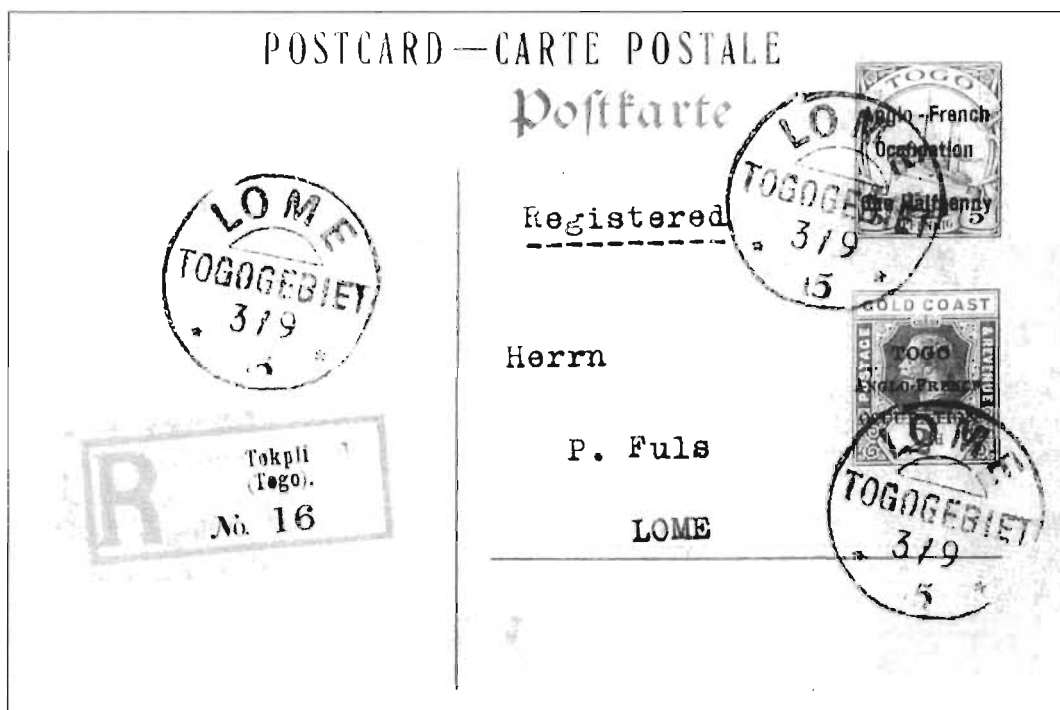
See also letter from John Knight, p4 - Ed.

# German Togo Postal Stationery Overprinted by the British

John Mayne

I report a 5pfg single card sent internal Registered Post albeit a philatelic example but uprated by Gold Coast 2d value Accra overprint, both cancelled Lome 03.09.1915. A further ½d postage should have been paid, to meet the external registered rate.

Of additional interest is the German two line Registered label for TOKPLI amended for use at Lome, not recorded by Martin and Walton. Although Tokpli Post Office opened 4 February 1907, mail from here in the German period is not readily found, the German cancel is rated at Euro 400 on cover by the 2003 ARGE catalogue, and registered mail is thought more difficult as perhaps suggested by the low number of the label no. 16.



❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

## The Dutch Motor Vessel *Kota Agoeng*

Jeremy Martin

On her way from Holland to the Netherlands East Indies, the MV *Kota Agoeng* caught fire and put in at Colombo, Ceylon. Salvaged mail received labels explaining the damaged state.

The cover illustrated in Fig. 1 was datestamped at Accra in June 1937, the date is not clear. It probably picked up the Dutch vessel in Genoa, Italy. A type 1 label was applied in Colombo and there is a Batavia backstamp of 15 September 1937. Items are known forwarded from Batavia on 15 September.

The information about the ship is taken from *Maritime Disaster Mail* by Norman Hoggarth, FRPSL and Robin Gwynn, FRPSL, FRPSNZ and published 2003 by the Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund.

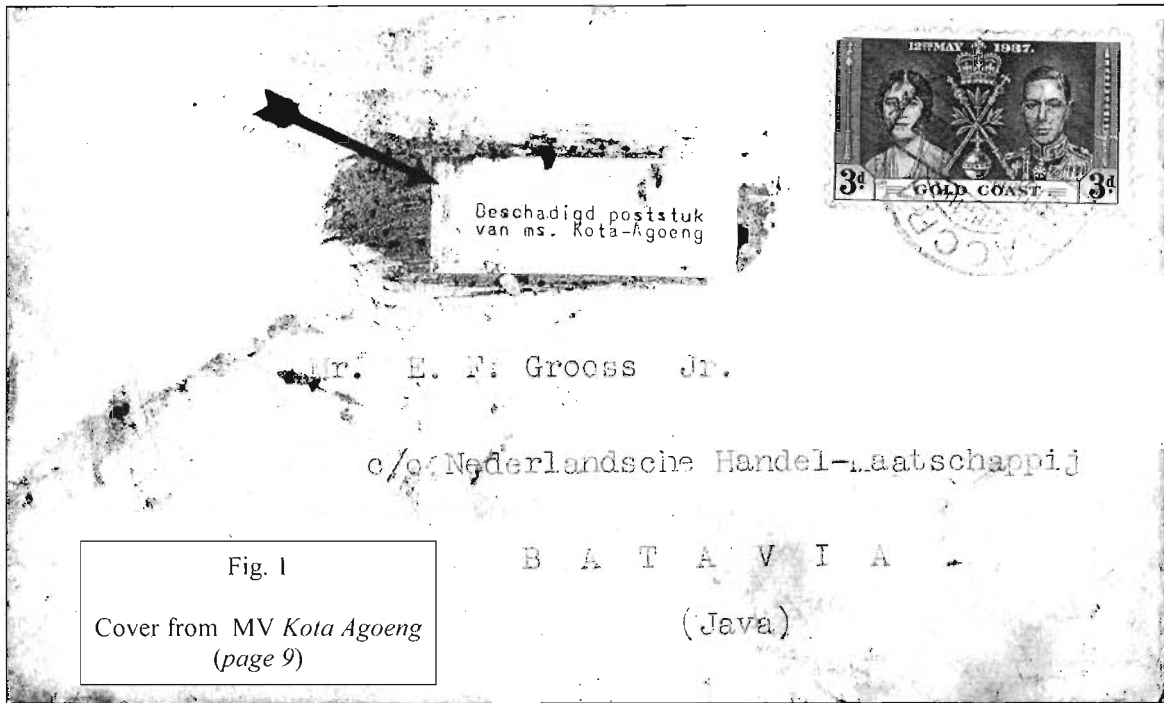


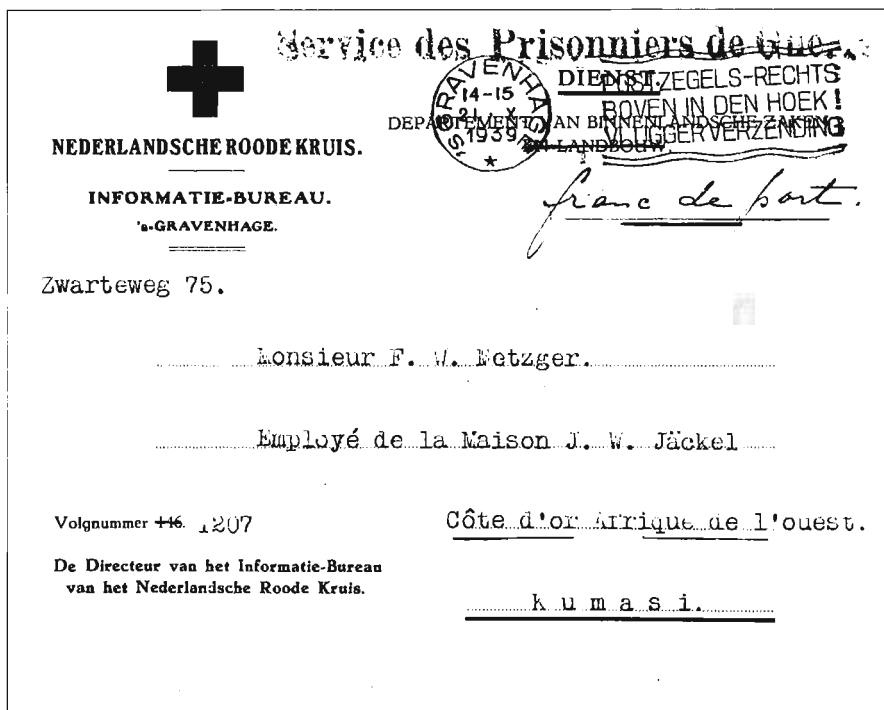
Fig. 1  
Cover from MV Kota Agoeng  
(page 9)

## Red Cross Internee Mail into the Gold Coast

Jeremy Martin

The cover illustrated below is from the Red Cross, The Hague, Netherlands. Dated 21 October 1939 it is addressed to a Monsieur F.W. Metzger at Kumasi. His name suggests he may have a German connection, and may have been interned.

A red Gold Coast type 1A censor cachet number 10 was applied. Any further information would be welcomed.



Cover (at 75%) with Gold Coast Type 1A censor cachet number 10 (very faint, across address)

# Sierra Leone Air Mails August - October 1939

Peter Richards, Frank Walton, Barbara Priddy and Peter Wingent

*Peter Richards submitted the first part of this article in 1998 and, although not published at the time, has brought responses from Frank Walton, Barbara Priddy and Peter Wingent- Ed.*

On 16 July 1939 the Elders Colonial Airways (ECA) seaplane which was used to fly the mail between Freetown and Bathurst struck an object in Bathurst harbour and sank. On 25 August the German Air Mail service to Europe from Bathurst was suspended so that, on the outbreak of the Second World War, Sierra Leone had no air mail service. However, since 1937 the French airline Aéromaritime had been flying from Dakar down the West African coast, stopping at Conakry in French Guinea and in his book Phillip Beale states that:

*The Post Office Report records that from September 3rd (1939) a special service by launch, runner and motor was established to Conakry. Eventually by October airplanes were flying there and continued doing so until the fall of France in June 1940.*



Fig. 1 Cover to UK at 1/- rate sent 30 September 1939

I have in my collection two covers addressed to the UK dated 30 September 1939 (Fig. 1) and 21 October 1939, both endorsed 'by Air Mail' and both at the rate of 1/-. I can find no mention of a 1/- air mail rate at this time but the covers would suggest that it was applied to any air mail items that had to go as far as Conakry by surface mail. I have a third air mail cover, also addressed to the UK, of 24 October 1939 that bears the rate of 1/3d which was presumably applied once the mail was flown all the way from Freetown although this pre-dates the date which Phillip Beale gives for the introduction of this rate by two months. As 21 October 1939 was a Saturday, I would suggest that it is likely that the air mail rate from Sierra Leone to the UK was increased from 1/- to 1/3d on Monday 23 October 1939. Can any reader forward details of a possible First Day Cover?

Frank Walton added that Official records for the period are incomplete, but reported three items from 1939:

- 1 26 August 1939 air mail to Birmingham with civil handstamp Type 6. It has George VI definitives of ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d, 3d and 4d, totalling 1/-, all on the back. It is not registered and, although probably sent (but not censored) philatelically, the rate seems to fit Peter's theory.
- 2 20 October 1939 Cline Town to Manchester air mail registered at 1/3. This is from Nigel Lutwyche's collection, and is written up as 'underpaid?'.
- 3 2 November 1939 surface mail cover correctly rated 2d.

Barbara Priddy recently responded at greater length: There are a number of covers at the 1/- rate from this period, and we need to consider two parts; the route and the rate.

### 1 The route.

A letter from the Freetown GPO of 4 August 1939 to GPO, London is the first to confirm that Elders Colonial Airways service was suspended on 19 July and that, "*Until such time that an alternative all air service can be arranged, air mail correspondence from Sierra Leone for Great Britain is being forwarded, as opportunity offers, by sea routes to Conakry, Dakar or Bathurst for onward transmission by air.*"

A letter from the London GPO of 18 August confirms that the same routes were being used in reverse for outward-bound mail. A Freetown GPO letter of 14 August requests London to circulate air mails for Freetown to Conakry until further notice, as a special overland service between Freetown and Conakry would operate in connection with the (Aéromaritime and Air France) service until such time that a direct service to Freetown was re-established. Telegrams of 25 and 26 August between London GPO and Freetown GPO show the overland service to have started by 21 August. A Freetown GPO letter of 12 September states that the overland service had been discontinued as arrangements had been made for Aéromaritime to call at Freetown from 3 September: the dispatch had left to schedule but the Sierra Leone PMG had been unable to obtain any information as to whether the dispatch had been forwarded from Dakar or whether the service had been suspended. He suspected the latter - and he was quite right! The Air France service to Dakar was soon resumed, and the next information comes from a Paris GPO telegram of 22 September informing London that the Aéromaritime service had been resumed on 18 September. However it was apparently not calling at Freetown, as a letter from Freetown GPO of 30 September states that the service would begin calling at Freetown from 2 October, i.e. on the northbound flight. It is therefore just possible that the overland service to Conakry was resumed during the last two or three weeks of September. A letter from Freetown GPO to London GPO of 12 October states that no direct air mails were received from London by the first service on 4 October, nor on 11 October, but that air mails from Great Britain were received in Freetown on 11 October à découvert in transit through Dakar. The wording of the letter does not make it clear whether à découvert mails from Great Britain were received on 4 October or not. Another letter from the Freetown GPO, of 3 November, informs London that commencing Friday 3 November 1939 the timetable would be altered, so that Aéromaritime called at Freetown Saturday southbound and Wednesday northbound.

### 2. The rate.

The Freetown GPO letter of 14 August also says 'The inclusive Air Mail postage rates for Air Mail correspondence posted in Sierra Leone and addressed to places in Great Britain are 1/4d per half ounce for letters and 6d each for postcards'. My first cover at the 1/- rate is dated by the senders 29 September 1939 and cancelled Freetown 30 September, presumably carried on the first northbound flight of 2 October. One cover from 6 October and two covers from 7 October, (flight of 9 October); one cover from 14 October (flight of 16 October); one cover from 19 October, 'posted on steamer' (flight of 21 October) - all at the 1/- rate, and one from 21 October at the 1/3 rate, endorsed 'Per Air Mail 21/10/39' (Fig. 2 - joyfully discovered in the last WASC auction). The rate had changed for this flight - the letter of 3 November also informs London that 'the air mail postage rate for letters posted in Sierra Leone for Great Britain was raised to 1s.3d per half ounce and postcards to 8d each, as from the 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1939' - but the news had not reached the sender of the cover 'posted on steamer'. Two of the covers seem to have been delayed: one of the 7 October ones was readdressed and reposted in Aberdeen on 18 October, and the 14 October cover was endorsed by recipient in Southampton 'Recd 1<sup>st</sup> post Oct 25<sup>th</sup>': but the delay may have been at either end.

*continued on p14*

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*continued from p12*

My thanks to Peter Wingent for copies of all the documents referred to above.

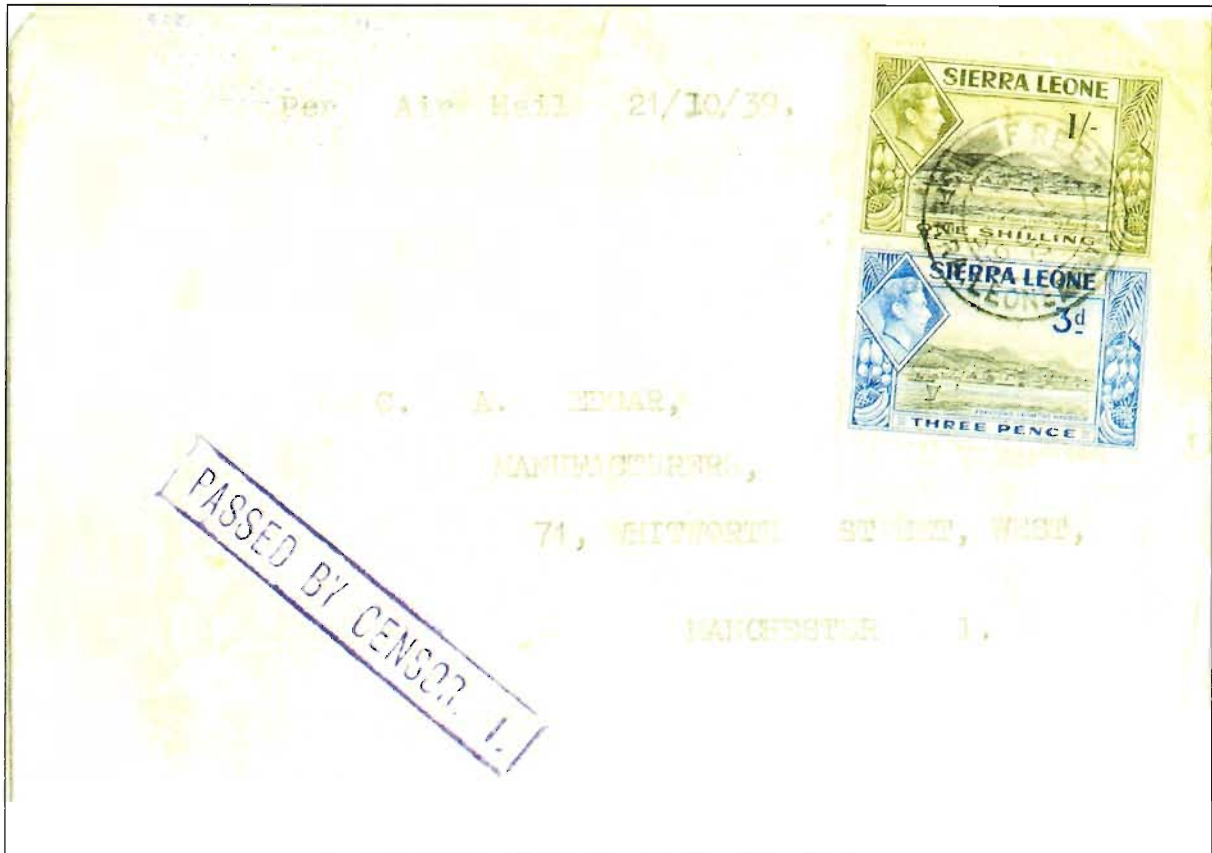


Fig. 2 Cover to UK at 1/3d rate sent 21 October 1939

*In order to complete the picture, I sent a copy of the above article to Peter Wingent, and he replied as follows - Ed:*

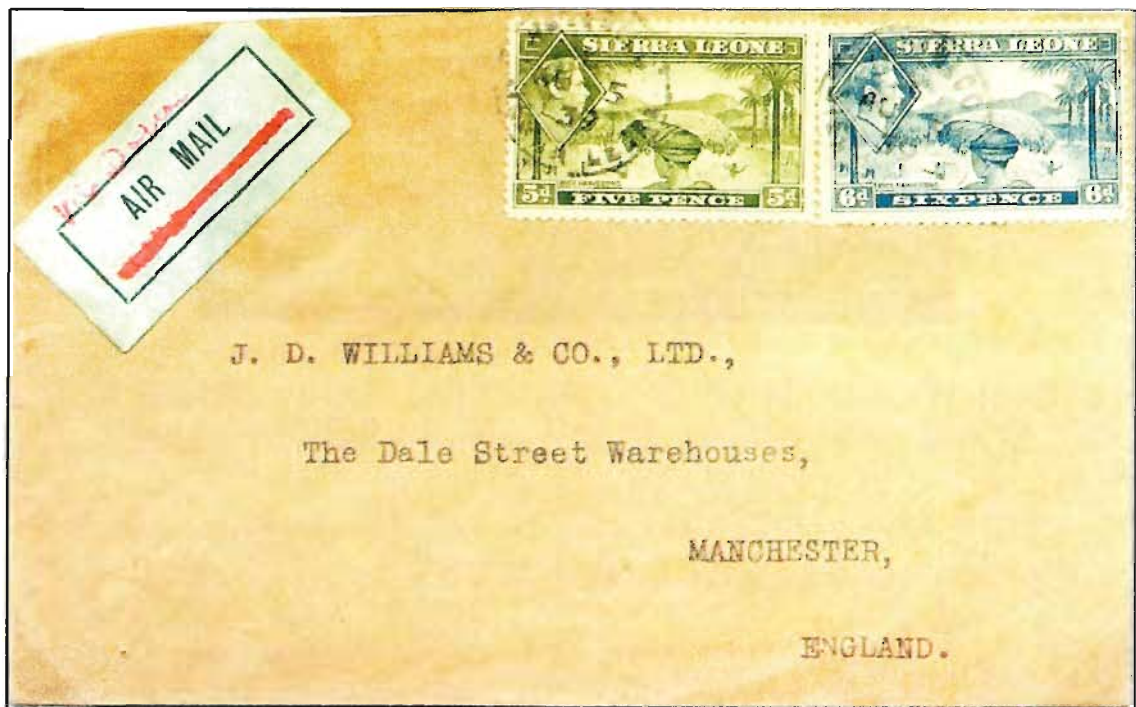


Fig. 3 Air Mail via Dakar sent 5 August 1939

Many thanks for your letter and for giving me the opportunity to add to the discussion on this most interesting period of air mail developments in Sierra Leone. Firstly, Barbara has accurately and succinctly summarised the series of letters which I obtained from Post Office Archives many years ago.

The above cover (Fig. 3) is an early example of mail forwarded as described in the Freetown GPO letter of 4 August, and the main point is that it is franked 11d (not 1/-). It is datestamped Waterloo 5 August 1939 and was backstamped Freetown the same day. The air mail label is the type used for the Elders / DLH service with the "Bathurst - Stuttgart" routing instruction deleted and "via Dakar" added in red pen. I have no documentary evidence to confirm the existence of an 11d per half ounce rate, which could only have been in force from 19 July to 11 August at the most, and with only an example of one cover, it is far from conclusive. I wonder if any WASC members can provide further examples?

From shipping movements given in "Lloyd's Daily List" I believe the cover was carried by the Elder Dempster ship *Gambian* which sailed Freetown 7 August and arrived Dakar 10th. Scheduled to be flown by Air France from Dakar to Paris, departing 15 August and to arrive Paris 16th. Probably flown to London the next day.



Fig. 4 Cover to Germany at 1/1d rate via Conakry

The Sierra Leone air mail rate to the UK became 1/- per half ounce, but 1/1d per half ounce to France and Germany. I have two covers addressed to Germany routed via Conakry at this time. One is franked 1/1d and the other 2/2d, the latter being clearly double the minimum rate. The rate to the UK via Elders' feeder service was 1/4d per half ounce, which was then reduced to 1/- and the rate to France and Germany had been 1/5d and thus was also reduced by 4d to 1/1d.

The single rate cover (Fig. 4) is datestamped Freetown 24 August, and the double rate cover (Fig. 5) is datestamped Pendembu 22 August and backstamped Freetown 24 August. Both would have been sent overland to Conakry and were scheduled to depart from there on Sunday 27 August via Aëromaritime to Dakar and from there by Air France and to arrive London 31 August. They probably reached Germany just before war was declared.



Fig. 5 Cover to Germany at 2/2d one ounce rate

I already have a table which summarises what I believe were the dispatches and routings of Sierra Leone air mail from the beginning of September 1939 which may be of interest:

Summary of air mail from Sierra Leone (September & October 1939)		
<i>From Freetown</i>	<i>Arrived London</i>	<i>Routing from Freetown</i>
3 September	unknown	Via Aéomaritime to Dakar, then Air France to Paris
SERVICES SUSPENDED		
17 September	10 October	Probably by sea to Dakar, then Air France to Paris
24 September	2 October	Overland to Conakry, Aéomaritime to Dakar, Air France to London
2 October	8 October	Via Aéomaritime to Dakar, then Air France to Paris
9 October	16 October	Via Aéomaritime to Dakar, then Air France to Paris
16 October	24 October	Via Aéomaritime to Dakar, then Air France to Paris

*Information in the table was obtained from Post Office Archives, London  
Details of subsequent services in October not found*

The cover below (Fig. 6) is an example of a 1/- per half ounce rate cover, date stamped Freetown 21 September 1939 and sent by the dispatch of 24 September as shown in the above table.

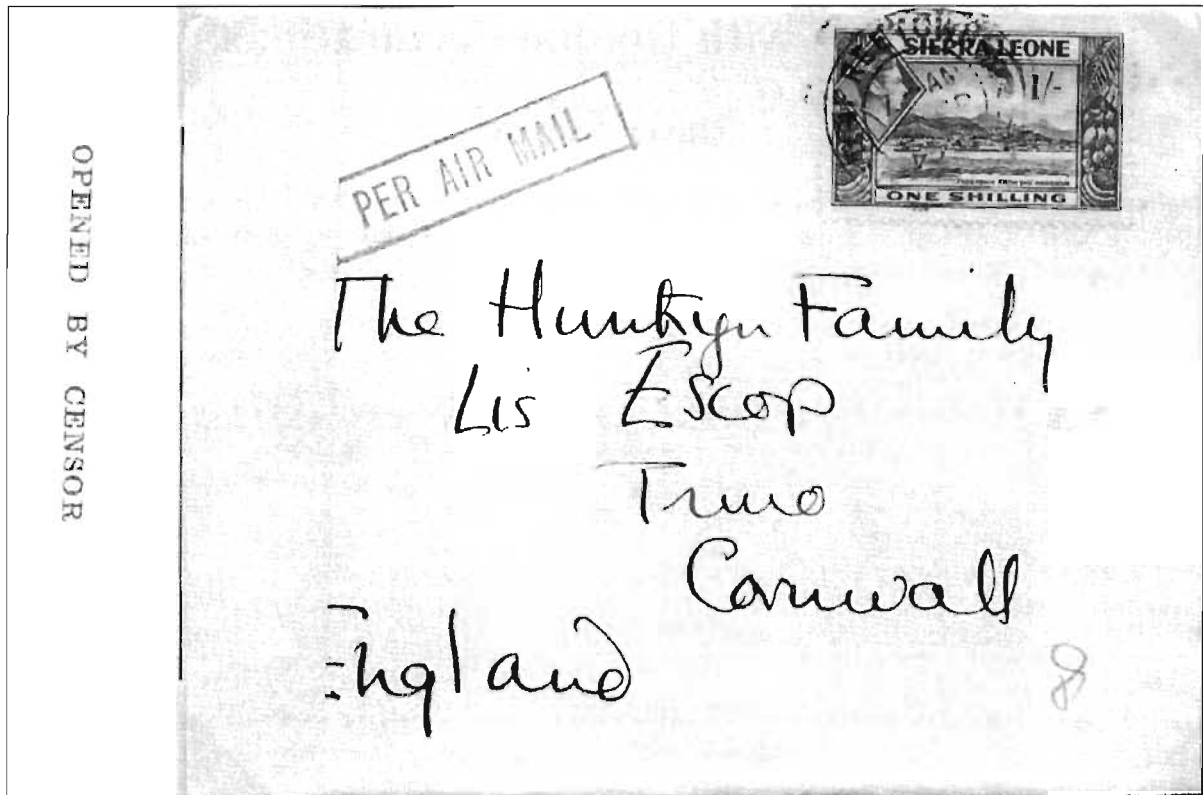
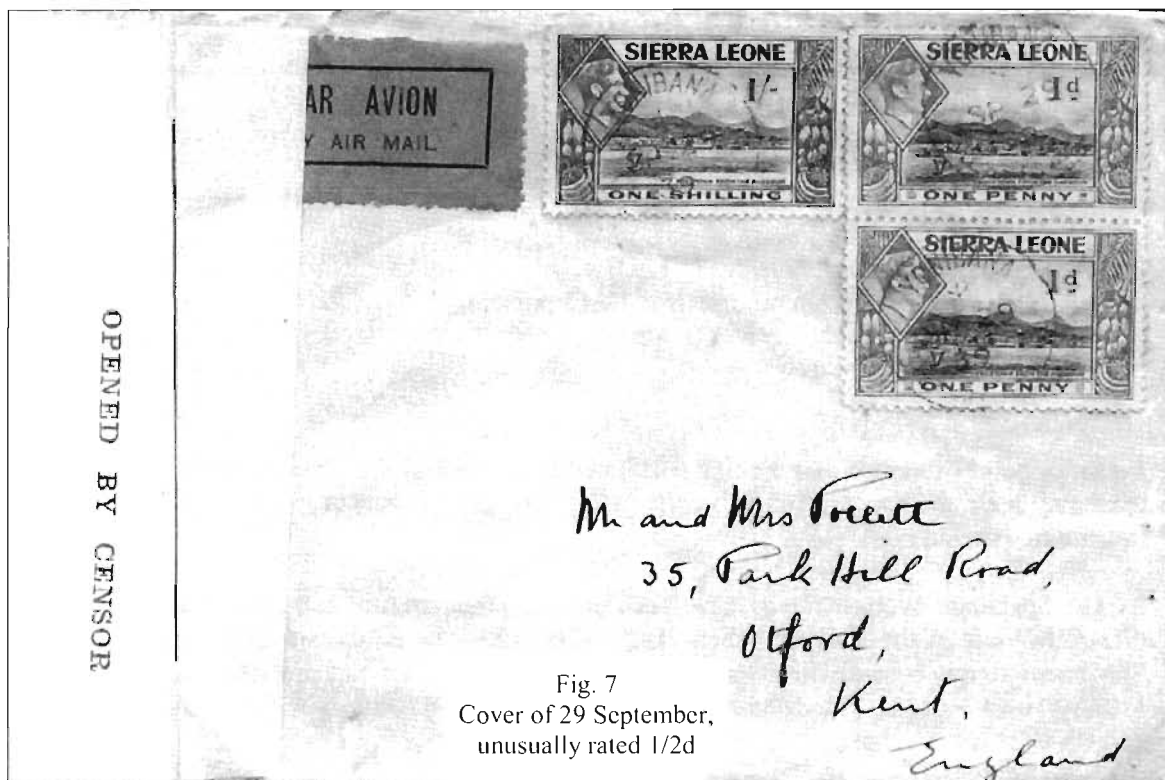


Fig. 6 Cover to UK sent 21 September 1939 at 1/- rate

The cover shown in Fig. 7 has always puzzled me because it is franked 1/2d when the rate was still 1/-. It is dated stamped Yonibana 29 September, and backstamped Freetown 30 September and so was flown by the first Aéromaritime service. There was never a 1/2d rate and the only possible, but unlikely, explanation I can offer is that the PO clerk charged the 1/- air mail fee and added to it the 2d surface rate.

One final comment. It is interesting that Peter Richards possesses a cover which is franked 1/- and dated stamped 21 October - the date the rate was raised to 1/3d, as per Barbara's cover of 21 October! (Fig. 2)



# Cameos with Double Perforations

Oliver Andrew

A small number of these are recorded in *The Stamps and Postal History of The Gambia*. (Ref.1) Since then others have been recognised, so it may be worthwhile describing them more carefully, and what is known - or can be guessed - about their causes.



Fig. 1 1880 Halfpenny with vertical and lateral displacement

Those recorded are:

1880	½d	M	sheet	top and sides	row 1	comb	
	½d	M	single	top and sides	?	comb	
	2d	U	single	bottom	?	line	1st printing
	3d	U	single	top and sides	No 3	comb	
	4d	?	?	'sides only'	?	?	
	6d	M	single	?	?	?	Specimen
	1/-	M	single	?	?	?	Specimen
	1/-	M	single	'sides only'	?	?	treble perf.
1883-93	½d	M	single	sides (+ top?)	No 4	comb	Specimen
	½d	M		bottom row Nos 11-15 points-up		comb	treble perf.
	6d	M	single	sides (+ top?)	?	comb	

Notes

1 'sides only' examples may be line perforated (I've not had the opportunity to examine them), or they may have the top or bottom struck twice, too; though that is much harder to detect, as the illustrations should make clear.

2 The Specimen overprints may have been done in an attempt to authenticate faked double perms., though in view of the above numbers, such fakes cannot be common. They were perhaps used as Specimens simply because they were imperfect examples not acceptable to the Gambia Post Office or to the Crown Agents. The 1885 ½d is overprinted with Samuel type D12, which looks genuine enough.

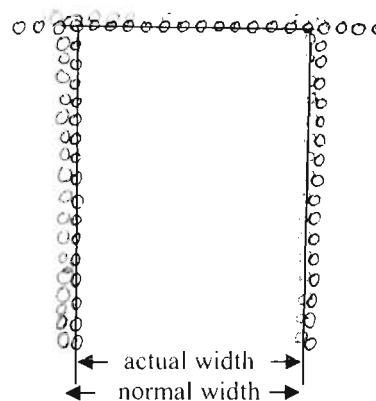
3 Of those I have examined, the 1880 ½d sheet (Fig.1) shows one vertical (top row), and one lateral displacement (between rows one and two). The 1893 6d appears to show simultaneous vertical and lateral displacement. All the others show vertical displacement only.

4 All examples that I've been able to plate are from the top row, the exception being the 1886 treble-perforated ½d bottom row in the Taping collection in the British Library. It is from a "points up" sheet, i.e. one inserted bottom-up into the right-hand side of the machine; so that the perforation strikes are still the first ones to be made. It is from the first printing.

5 The 1893 6d illustrated (Fig. 2) seems to be an example where the two strikes are further apart than the others known, up to 1 mm in fact. The 1 mm strips have been removed, leaving the stamp a millimetre narrower than normal. Right and left sides have been perforated by different strikes: the side perforations are not opposite each other. Unfortunately, this stamp is from the 1893 plate, and is not plateable.



Fig. 2 1893 6d (narrow)



What is the origin of this error? In September 1880, De La Rue bought the Napier perforating machines from Somerset House. (Ref. 2) Peacock, the Somerset House superintendent of the Perforating Room, had recently (before 1878) introduced two improvements, so that sheets were fed continuously into the machine. There was no longer a tympan, a plate under the sheets, carrying them along. Instead, the sheets were gripped at the sides, and advanced by set intervals under the perforating head. A template, between the sheets and the perforating head, acted as guide, and as a 'stripper', for removing the sheets from the perforating pins. It's possible, though unlikely, that De La Rue bought the old technology. They must have adapted the machines to the small Gambian sheets, though the details are not clear.

Between the old line-perforator, and the new comb machines, De La Rue introduced new guide dots on the Gambian sheets, at the top and the bottom of the right-hand margin. These are clearly to help the positioning of the sheets in the new machine. Curiously, they are so close to the vertical perforations, especially in the case of the bottom dot, that it's clear that both pins could not be present all the time that the sheet was going under the perforating head, without being themselves struck by the pins. This odd positioning may have been due to some configuration of the printing plate.

Several details, such as how the continuous feed was adapted for the small Gambian sheets, whether they were pinned through the template or not, what alerted the operator to a faulty strike, etc. are not known. And stamps even from the full-size sheets are known with double perforations. One possible modus operandi would have been this: packets of up to six sheets were pinned together, through the guide-dots, and placed in the perforating machine. For the first two strikes, the top pin was absent; then for the last two strikes, the top pin was in place, but the bottom pin was removed. Pinned only at one corner, it would have been quite possible for a sheet or sheets to slip or swivel, and be perforated less than perfectly. Swiveling on the fulcrum of one pin would mean that the stamps furthest from that pin would be affected most. This is indeed the case with the sheet of the ½d: the double effect diminishes from left to right. Only the top row was affected, since the pressure of the first strike would help the gum stick (lightly) to the sheets underneath; for subsequent strikes, sheets would be less likely to slip. And, as O'Hara (Ref. 3) says, the absence of the top pin for the first strike might have allowed the sheet to 'bow' upwards, when the operator would have had to repeat the strike.

Double perforations, however caused, are probably much commoner than might appear. The illustrations will make it clear how difficult it is to identify single stamps - many must simply appear to line-perforated.



Fig. 3  
3d elongated perforation holes

Careful inspection of these features may turn up more examples:

- elongated holes and sharp points (see 3d, Fig. 3)
- apparent line perforation when the shade would lead one to expect comb.
- odd dimensions, as in the 6d (Fig. 2)

My thanks are due to WASC members Charles Leonard and Robert Schneider.

#### References

- 1 Andrew J.O. (Ed), *The Stamps and Postal History of The Gambia*, Christie's Robson Lowe with the West Africa Study Circle, 1985
- 2 Simpson R. & Sargent P., *Stamp Perforation - The Somerset House Years 1848 - 1880*
- 3 O'Hara B.I., *The 1883 - 97 Issue of the Gambian Cameos*



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SG 31k	1935 2d Silver Jubilee. VFUM corner example with R10/6 'kite and vertical log'	£58	
SG 36a	1936 1½d perf 12½ x 13½. VFM	£35	
SG 61	1946 4d Victory. VFU block of 4, one with R6/3 'Meteor' left of central tower	£12	
<b>St. Helena</b>			
SG 99e	1938 ppc of Longwood bearing 1937 1½d deep carmine-red, tied. A little gum staining around edges of adhesive	£65	
			SG 125f 1935 2d Silver Jubilee. VFUM corner example with R10/1 'diagonal line by turret' £70
			SG 139 1938-44 5/- chocolate. VFUM 'blank' Plate block of 4 £60
			<b>Sierra Leone</b>
			SG 128 1912 £1 black & purple on red paper. VFM £95
			SG 155-67 1932 set of 13. VFM £100
			SG 168-80 1933 Wilberforce set of 13. VFM £425
			<b>Somaliland</b>
			SG 87k 1935 2a Silver Jubilee. FUM corner example with R10/6 'kite and vertical log' £55
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# West African Currency Board One Shilling Note

**Bob Maddocks**

By 1912 United Kingdom silver had become the most important single means of payment throughout British West Africa. It surpassed, in Nigeria in particular, the native forms of legal tender such as manillas, brass and copper rods, and cowries. It was therefore considered appropriate by the Home Government and Colonial financial authorities to establish in that year the West African Currency Board (WACB) based in London with its first branch in Lagos. Others were to follow in the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia. The issue of the new British West Africa silver coinage was legalised in June 1913. The first currency notes of the £1 and 10/- denominations were introduced in Nigeria in 1916. A 2/- note was also issued but was strongly disliked by most people - strangely enough, so was the 2/- coin right up to the time of Nigeria's Independence.

This 1/- note illustrated (Fig. 1, below) was printed in 1918/19 for the Board by the Bank of England and it, too, was given short shrift by the populace of Nigeria. As the constituent colonies gained independence the WACB helped to establish and then give way to national note issuing authorities, withdrawing its own notes and coin before finally liquidating itself in the late 1960s.

Manillas, incidentally, as illustrated on the QE ½d stamp of Nigeria remained in circulation in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria until the end of March 1949 by which time many millions of all kinds had been redeemed since October 1948 by the Nigerian Government for scrap metal. The cheapest were valued at 24 to the shilling coin. For some expatriates the small manillas, highly polished and silver plated were used to grace their dining tables as napkin rings.

Fig. 1 (at 85%)  
WACB One Shilling  
note of 1918/19



## Ascension Manuscript 'ASI'

**Jeremy Martin**



Looking through an old-time pre WWI collection recently, I came across this curiosity. It was an 1881 GB 1d lilac with 16 dots in each corner [Die II] with an Ascension cancellation and thus catalogued by SG as Z7. The date seems to be February [19]00.

The curiosity is the manuscript 'ASI', presumably Ascension Island, inscribed in black ink. *The illustration is at 150%.*

# Re-use of the Boxed Registration Handstamp

Colin W. Spong

*This article is published to ascertain if this boxed 'R' mark is known used in West Africa. I have not reproduced the covers which accompanied the article, but the handstamps from them are illustrated - Ed.*

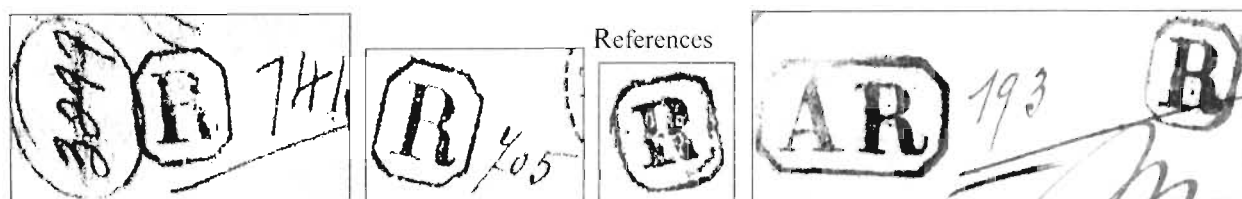
In the June 2002 Newsletter (No. 15) of the Study Group for Airmail Rates in French Colonies, Michael Ensor raised a query concerning a boxed R marking. In correspondence with Michael and other France & Colonies colleagues concerning this mystery Censor handstamp that appears (so far) on covers from French West Africa and Madagascar, and exchanging photocopies, something else of great interest was noticed on at least eight covers from Roy Reader's collection. (French India, New Caledonia (2), St Pierre & Miquelon (4) and Wallis & Futuna).

On these covers it was noted that they were not a censor boxed 'R' but most interestingly the 'R' markings were Registration handstamps of the first type, called Griffes. These were in service throughout the French Colonies from approximately 1890 - 1932, struck either in Black or Red ink. The various types of Etiquettes or Labels replaced these handstamps in the Colonies.

It would appear that this handstamp was being used again during the period of World War II due to the shortage of Registration etiquettes in a number of post offices owing to wartime conditions. They are usually struck in Black ink and from information so far recorded they have been observed for Colonies in the West Indies, Pacific and Indian Ocean. Are there any from French West Africa? I think it would be a useful if we were to record these early handstamps being used once again and publish the results in our journals. (i.e. *France & Colonies Journal and Philatelist*, *IO*, and *Cameo*.)

Covers with the boxed 'R' handstamp:

- Fig. 1 Wallis & Futuna Islands dated 26.09.44 to the United States Co, New York. R(egistered) 741 - there is another figure 3297 crossed out but this could be a USA packet or bundle number?
- Fig. 2 St Pierre & Miquelon dated 11.02.43 to M. Edmund Queroy (A US philatelist/stamp dealer), New York. R(egistered) 705.
- Fig. 3 French India air mail dated 27.04.40 to M. Paul Le Tauchen? Cannot read address but letter returned due to wartime conditions. R(egistered) No.20. This is also marked in French Recommandée / Registered.
- Fig. 4 Madagascar Surface mail dated 01.02.45 to M. Le Directeur de l'Hotel Terminees, Antsirabe. Boxed AR handstamp and R(egistered) handstamp No 193.



Figs. 1 - 4, left to right, showing boxed 'R' handstamps from above covers

Correspondence with Michael Ensor, Bill Mitchell, Barbara Priddy & Roy Reader  
Blanc, Jack. *Provisional Registration Procedures 1942-9*, L'Echo de la Timbrologie, November 1984  
(Translation by E. Reader)  
Dubois, Jean-Claude. *Marques et Etiquettes de Recommandation*. Col. Fra Bulletin. No. 20, p.3-16, 1982; No. 25, p 2-8, 1984  
Desnos, Jacques. *Madagascar: Les Marques pour Objets Recommandés des Origines à 1958*. Col. Fra. Bulletin No 42, p8-15, 1988.

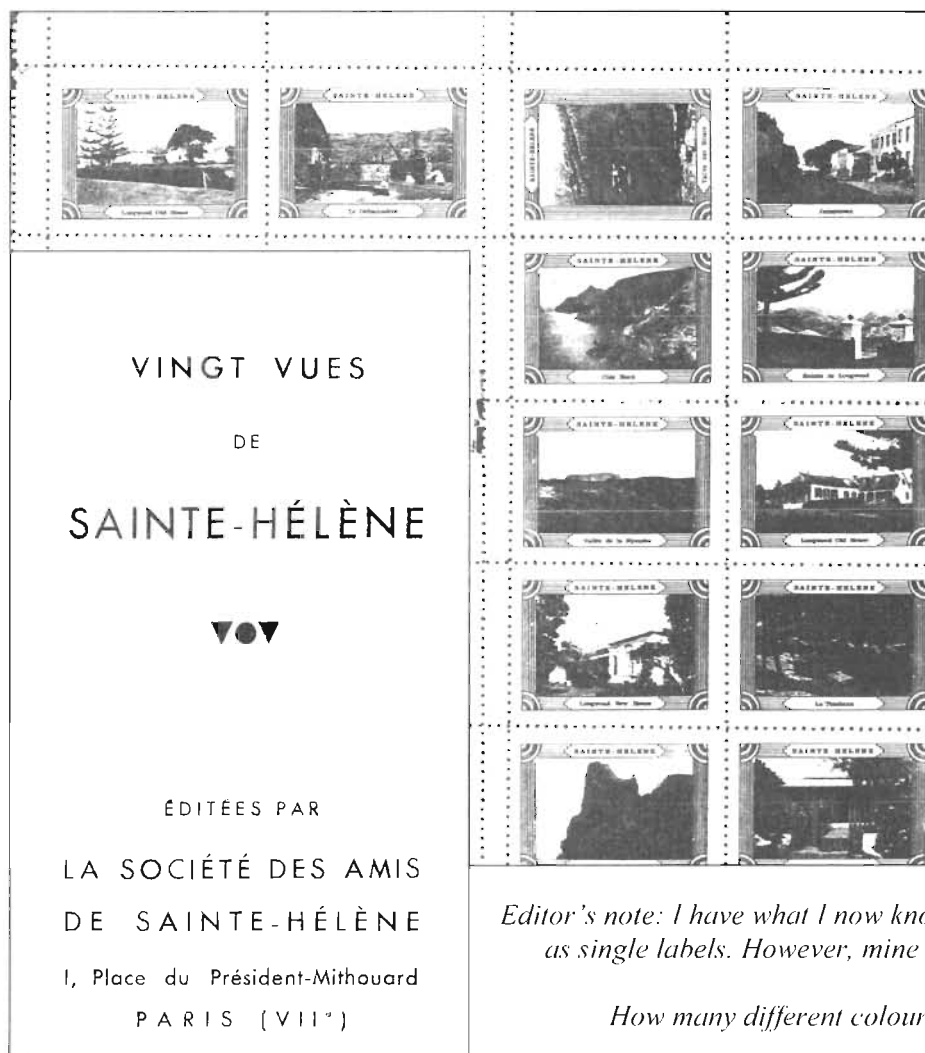
1892 French Colonial Registration Handstamps Usage During WWII					
TYPE	Colony	ERD	LRD	Colour	From
Griffe: Octagonal Boxed R	French India	27.04.40		Black	Pondichery to Marseille? France
	Madagascar	01.92.45*	00.00.52*	Black	Mananjary to Antsirabe
	New Caledonia	18.07.40	28.11.42	Black	Noumea to Brisbane, Australia. Noumea to London, UK
	St Pierre & Miquelon	10.07.42	11.02.43		St Pierre to New York, USA St. Pierre to New York
	Wallis & Futuna	26.9.44?			Wallis to New York

\* latest seen at the Paris Autumn Salon 2004



## Vingt Vues de Sainte - Hélène

Bob Deakin



I illustrate (*at 70%*) this sheet of 20 labels, each showing a different view of St Helena. It is printed in green on gummed cream paper, and is included in a folder probably produced during the 1920s by 'The Friends of St Helena Society' in Paris.

It carries the printer's imprint:

A. Breger Frères,  
Imprimeurs,  
9 Rue Thénard,  
Paris V.

*Editor's note: I have what I now know to be a 'part set' of 18 as single labels. However, mine are printed in brown.*

*How many different colours are out there?*

# War War War!

**Bernard Hughes**

The October 2004 *Cameo* has three articles relating to Ascension and St Helena which all tie in with various wars.

## 1. The Congo Incident of 1964

As I'm the owner of the cover illustrated, I was fascinated to read support for my theory that there were postal delays from Ascension in 1964, and that they tie in with military action connected with the Civil War in the Congo. I had thought this was just the Belgian exercise to rescue the hostages, but it seems to have been much more widespread. By the sound of it, many 1964 covers may be worth checking for dates. I look forward to reading Robin Taylor's planned monograph on the events of 1964!

## 2. World War II

The MV *City of New York* handstamp article surely reflects the outbreak of World War II. 'SEAPOST' Paquebot markings addressed to South Africa exist mainly on covers sent by passengers on this vessel on the voyages which reached Trinidad on 28 December 1939 and 29 April 1940 - perhaps there were an unusually large number of South Africans traveling to the USA as a result of the outbreak of war, anxious to let their families know they had crossed the Atlantic safely. The MV *City of New York* was the largest vessel operated by the American South African Line (the American Flag Service) - and the only one with a SEAPOST facility - between 1926 and 1942, when she hit a mine and sank off the American coast. Her voyages from about 1935 onwards (but not earlier) were 'direct' from New York to Cape Town, which included a stop at St Helena. Thus this SEAPOST cancel is found on St Helena covers as well. Postage is based on the postal rate at the port where the mail is put on shore - for St Helena covers this would be South Africa. This is, referring to John Cooper's article on correctly rated Silver Jubilees, a possible correct use of St Helena 1½d stamps on their own - and they are certainly known on covers with the SEAPOST marking. (Another correct use of 1½d stamps from both Ascension and St Helena would be postcards outside the British Empire). I do not think Jeremy Martin's illustration reflects a stamp removed - 1½d would be correct for Trinidad. The *City of New York* sometimes called at Ascension on the return voyage from Cape Town to New York via Trinidad. This was the normal homeward leg. After Cape Town, she went as far north as Mombasa and Zanzibar before returning home. Some specimen itineraries can be found on:

[www.timetableimages.com](http://www.timetableimages.com).

On Ascension stamps, the SEAPOST marking is best known for bogus Coronation FDC's purporting to be dated '12 May 1942' (the stamps were actually issued on 19 May) but it has long been established the vessel was near New York at this time, and the date on the SEAPOST cancel is entirely spurious.

## 3. Spanish Civil War

The 1937 air mail cover from St Helena - I'm sure it is right to say this went 'little faster than surface mail!' But the sender may have thought it would be quicker. Usually there would be little time saved, since the Union-Castle mail to South Africa was about 2 weeks before the mail to England. Via air mail, a letter would take about a week to get to Capetown, and wait for the next flight, which took 12 days to England. This isn't very quick! Once the Empire Flying Boats went the whole way between England and South Africa (later in 1937) it will have been a bit quicker, but perhaps the St Helena air rate was by then defunct as both South Africa and England - but not Ascension and St Helena - joined the All Up Air Scheme, reducing air mail to 1½d.

The surface mail route was normally a simple timetable to follow. Union-Castle Round Africa vessels going eastward took mail from Capetown to England, while westward route vessels took mail from England to Capetown, in each case via St Helena and Ascension, and on a four week timetable. The fast ships taking the direct route between Capetown and Southampton did not stop at the islands. But disaster - in the form of a floating mine laid by one of the sides fighting it out in the Spanish Civil War (1936 - 1939) - struck the *Llandoverly Castle* off Port Vendres on 26 February 1937. Though the vessel was not lost, she was damaged by the explosion and was unable to complete her eastward route through the Mediterranean and round Africa - she was due at Capetown around 6 April 1937, and hence St Helena five or six days later. The surface mail from St Helena to Capetown

(taken by the *Garth Castle* on 31 March and reaching Capetown on 7 April) was unaffected by this.

In the end, the Union-Castle Line agreed to divert one of the fast direct line vessels from Capetown to Southampton to call at St Helena and Ascension, but perhaps the sender of the air mail letter did not know this, or it was only decided after he sent the letter. Had he left it for the surface mail, the *Balmoral Castle* would have brought the letter - she called at St Helena on 11 April and Ascension on 13 April (Fig. 1) before reaching Southampton on 24 April. The air mail letter arrived on 19 April - so the extra 6½d saved just five days. But if the *Balmoral Castle* had not been diverted, the next surface mail on the *Llandaff Castle* did not sail from St Helena until 15 May, reaching Southampton on 30 May. This may have been what the sender feared.



Fig. 1  
Cover (at 70%) postmarked 12 April 1937  
sent on *Balmoral Castle* departing Ascension on 13 April

## Mails for Ascension 1875

Trevor Hearl

The Post Office Circular for Monday 13 September 1875 included, amongst many other notices, this one concerning future Mails for Ascension. The text has been transcribed (as the original was not very clear), but to the same formatting, and reproduced at 90%.

# POST OFFICE CIRCULAR.

MONDAY, September 13, 1875.

### ASCENSION

The Mails for Ascension have hitherto been despatched from England by each of the three Packets sailing monthly for the Cape of Good Hope, for delivery by the first homeward Packet touching at the Island, but as only one of the Packets calls at Ascension on the homeward voyage, it is found that the practice of sending the Mails from England three times a month to the Cape is in two cases attended with no advantage whatever.

For the future, therefore, Mails for Ascension will be made up in London only once in each month, viz :-  
Viâ Southampton on the morning of the 15th, with a supplementary despatch viâ Plymouth the same evening.

These Mails, instead of being carried on to the Cape, as formerly, will be landed at St. Helena, for return thence by the first homeward Packet.

# Air Mail Services to the Gold Coast Prior to 1936

John Rawlins

*This article by John Rawlins, and the reply by Peter Wingent which follows, were first published in Air Mail News (Vol.43 No.170 August 2000 and Vol.44 No. 173 May 2001 respectively). They are reproduced here with the permission of its editor Richard Saundry and the two authors - Ed.*

There was no official air mail service to the Gold Coast until the introduction of the link with Nigeria, via Egypt and Khartoum on 9 February 1936. From 31 March 1926, however, mail for the Gambia, Sierra Leone, (but not the Gold Coast), French Guinea, and the Belgian Congo could be sent by the French Air Mail service, Toulouse - Casablanca - Senegal. Onward dispatch was by steamer.

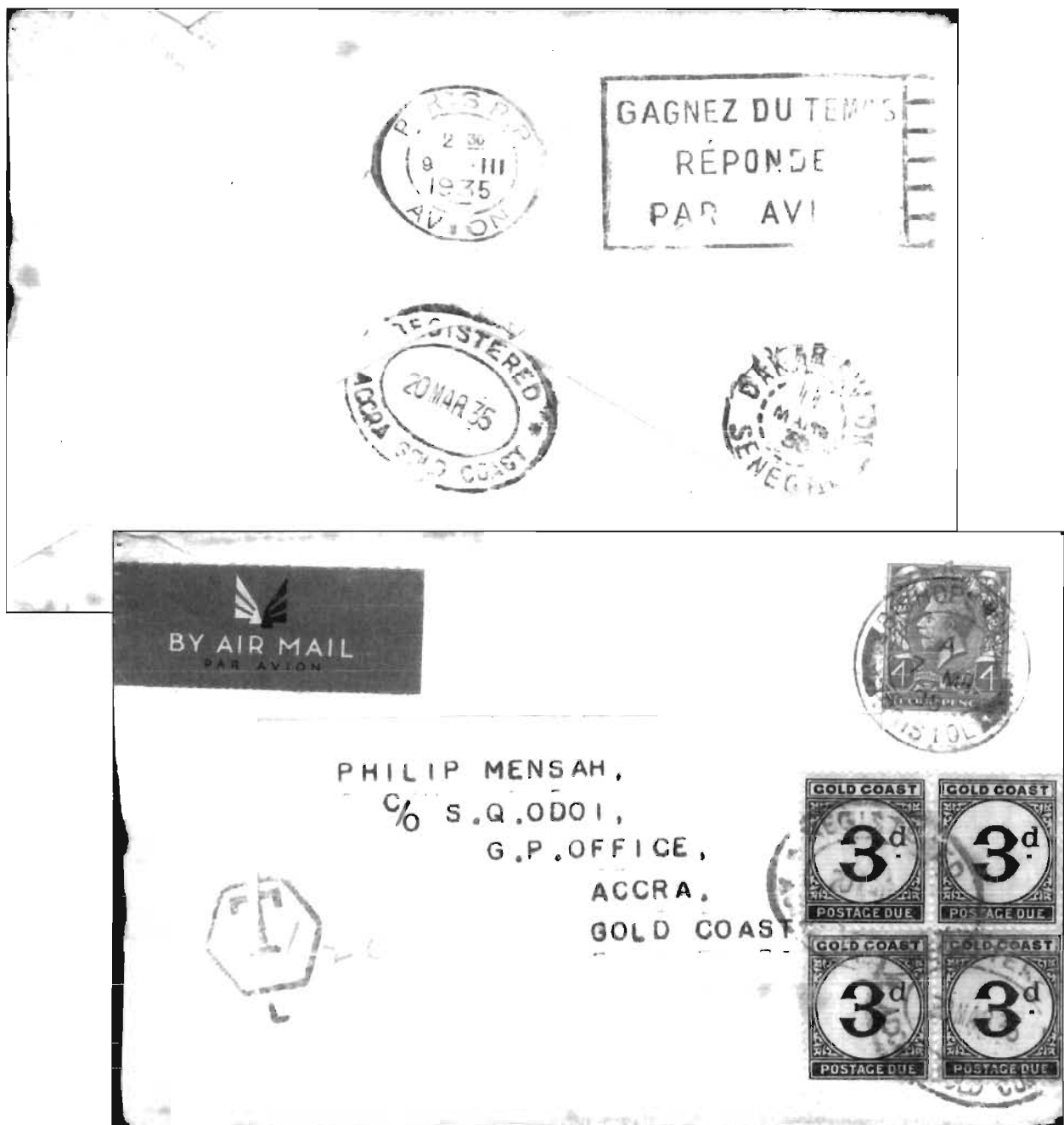


Fig. 1

Back and front of air mail cover from Bristol 7 March 1935 to Accra with Paris and Dakar transit datestamps, and arrival c.d.s of 20 March 1935

Initially the Air Fee was 8d for letters weighing up to ½oz.; 10d up to 1oz; 1/2d. up to 3½oz and 6d for each additional 3½oz, together with Imperial or Foreign postage. After several changes, on 2 January 1935 rates were reduced to 9d per ½oz, inclusive, to the Gambia and Sierra Leone, and 10d per ½oz, inclusive, elsewhere. At no time was there any mention of an Air Mail service to the Gold Coast.

The Spring edition of the 1932 Air Mail leaflet, distributed to all main post offices in the United Kingdom, and freely available on request, announced that the public could elect to send mail part-flown to countries not normally served by Air Mail, through the expediency of sending it via a nearby country, for onward transmission by surface means. For mail addressed to foreign destinations one penny was charged over and above the air mail charge to the point of disembarkation. No extra fee was to be charged for mail addressed to countries in the British Empire.

The cover, shown in Fig. 1, was posted in Bristol 7 March 1935, and ordinarily it should have been endorsed 'By Air to Senegal.' Since the 4d postage stamp paid for at least one quarter of the correct air mail postage, it was forwarded by air to Paris (9 March 1935) and Dakar, Senegal (11 March). The onward journey by sea to Accra took a further nine days. A surcharge of 120 gold centimes (equivalent to 1/-) represented twice the deficiency of 6d, suggesting the correct postage rate should have been 10d, i.e. the rate by air from Britain to Senegal, rather than the expected rate of 9d for air mail service to either the Gambia or to Sierra Leone.

This particular air cover is believed to be the only recorded example of a cover flown from Britain to the Gold Coast by the Senegal route.

Barbara Priddy, however, tells me that in 1935 there was another partially flown air mail route this cover could have been carried: by the Regie Air Afrique, and Sabena trans-Saharan route to Gao, and then by the shuttle service to Cotonou, and onwards rail and road connection along the coast to Accra. Covers flown this latter route are known from Belgium in February 1935.

Sources

Post Office Archives, Post 50/2 'Overseas Air Mail' leaflets, Post Office Circulars

## **A Second Cover to the Gold Coast via Dakar**

**Peter Wingent**

I was very interested to see John Rawlins' cover from Britain to the Gold Coast highlighted in the 'Cover of the Quarter' feature in the August 2000 issue of *Air Mail News* (Vol. 43, No. 170, pp. 91-93). John believed this to be the only recorded cover to the Gold Coast to have been flown via Senegal, prior to the opening of the Aéromaritime service in March 1937 from Dakar to Cotonou, which called at Takoradi, thus providing the Gold Coast with its first direct air mail service.

I hope I will not disappoint John too much by showing (Fig. 2) a copy of a second cover flown this route. It pre-dates John's by just over three months, having been posted at Ipswich on 19 December 1934. It is backstamped Paris F/Avion 22 Dec. and Dakar/Senegal on 24 December, proving without doubt it was flown from Toulouse to Dakar by the once-weekly Air France service. Like John's cover, it would have been sent by sea from Dakar to Accra, but was not backstamped upon arrival at Accra.

A comparison of the franking on the two covers is intriguing. John's cover was posted with a 4d stamp attached and charged one shilling postage due upon arrival in the Gold Coast, whereas mine is franked 3d and remained uncharged! The only possible explanation I can offer is that my cover was most definitely sent unsealed, proved by the facts that the cover had not been torn open on any of its sides and the flap still had its original gum. This makes me wonder if unsealed letters could be sent at a cheaper rate. I vaguely remember this was possible in the 1950s but I have never seen a cheaper unsealed rate advertised by the British Post Office in the 1930s. There was an air mail rate advertised, however, in the contemporary Air Mail Leaflets of 4d per half ounce to Senegal, French Guinea, the Gambia and to Sierra Leone for printed

papers, commercial papers, and samples. There is no statement that superscription was necessary for such mail, although one would expect it to have been. I wonder if this has any relevance, which I doubt, and whether any member can provide a far more convincing explanation than mine.

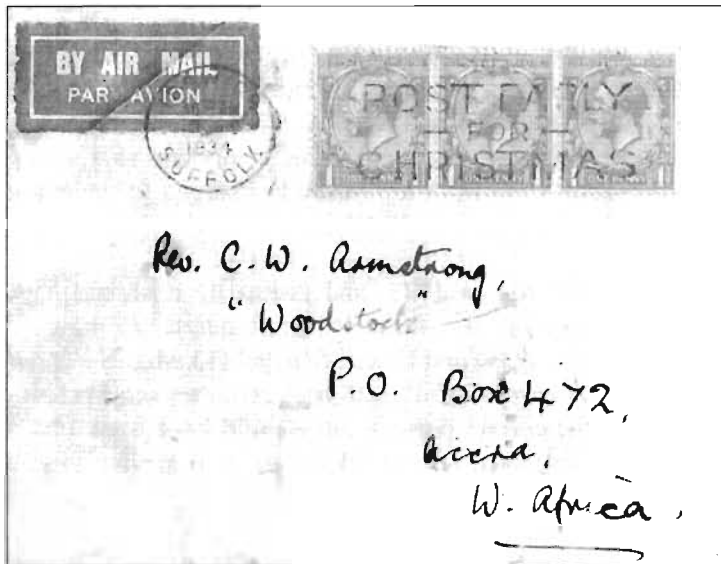


Fig. 2  
Commercial cover  
(at c. 80%)  
from the UK to Accra,  
sent by air from  
Toulouse to Dakar

I have two more covers from the United Kingdom which were flown to Dakar for onward transmission by sea to destinations which, at the time, were not advertised by the British Post Office. Thus, they fall into the same category as the two covers to the Gold Coast. They are illustrated (Figs 3 and 4). Both are franked 1/2½d, which was the correct rate at that time. It comprised 1/- per half ounce air mail fee, plus 2½d for the first ounce ordinary postage to foreign destinations.

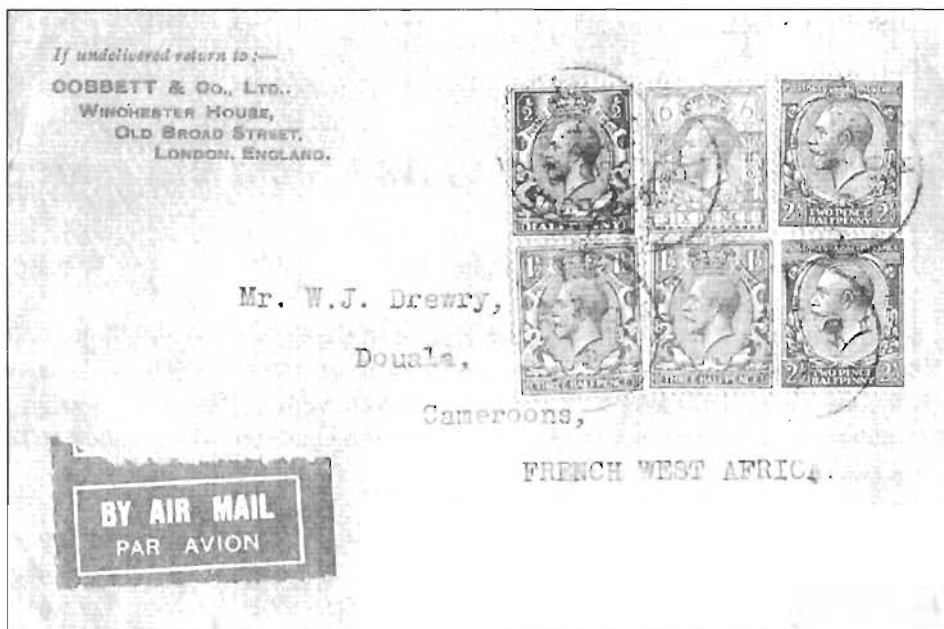


Fig. 3  
Cover datestamped London 9 April 1930, backstamped Dakar Avion 14 April

As John Rawlins correctly intimated in his article, until February 1936, when Elders Colonial Airways' Khartoum to Kano feeder service commenced, the only air mail outlet for letters from the UK to the Gold Coast, and other West African destinations, was via Dakar. As this had been available from March 1926, it begs the question why, over a period of almost ten years in length, do so few examples of covers flown via this route exist today? I think the best way to answer it is to provide a few quotations from the large amount of correspondence I obtained from Post Office Archives, London, many years ago.

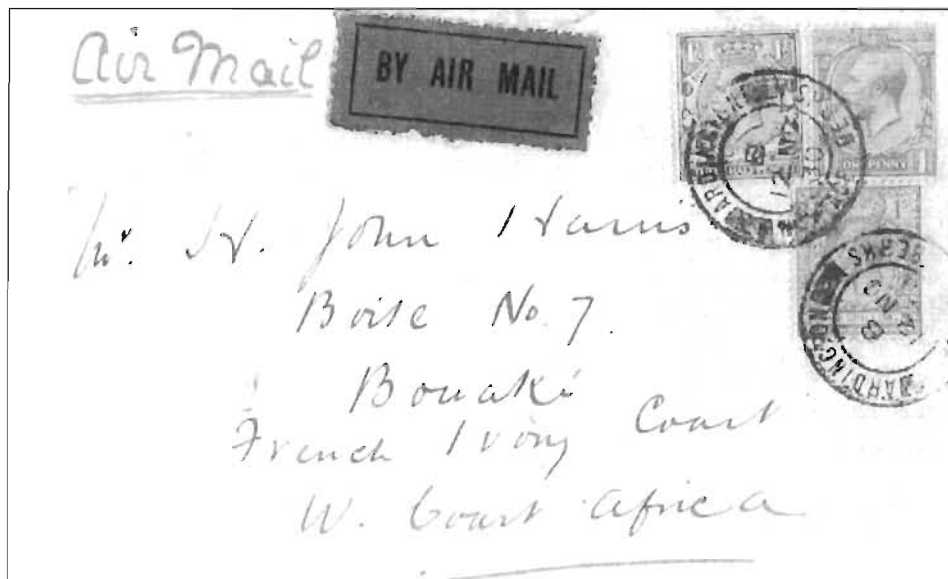


Fig. 4

Cover datestamped Ardington 12 November 1930,  
backstamped Dakar Avion 17 November & Bouaki 27 November

First, it should be remembered that the service was advertised continuously over this period only for mail to Senegal, French Guinea, the Gambia and Sierra Leone. In Air Mail Leaflets from March 1926 to October 1929, the Belgian Congo was also included in the list and from 25 August 1935, air mail to the Ivory Coast was officially accepted via the route.

In a memorandum dated 10 August 1928 from N.S. Davis (PMG, Sierra Leone) to Brigadier-General J. A. Byrne (Governor of Sierra Leone), Mr. Davis, referring to the French air service, stated:

*The quantity of mails received is trivial and those despatched inconsiderable. As regards the former, this service offers little advantage for correspondence which is posted within a day after the closing of the mail despatched from Liverpool on Wednesday, and further, the saving in transit by air is largely nullified by the irregular departure of steamers from Dakar. I imagine that the delay which has thus resulted has deterred the public from using this facility in the contrary direction...*

A Mr. Edward Martin (his rank/position is unknown to me; perhaps of Elder Dempster Lines), whose address was 'White Hall', Kensington Gardens Square, London W2, wrote to a Mr. Handley (presumably the GPO) on 23 February 1931, in which he said:

*...it appears that the forwarding of letters by air mail to Sierra Leone can often result in delay. Letters addressed to the Gold Coast would, of course, be liable to further delay. For instance, the ships on the 'Creeks' service take eleven days between Freetown and Accra, a journey which is performed by 'Lagos Express' steamers in four days. An air mail letter might therefore go to Dakar by air, wait any time up to thirteen days for a steamer to Freetown and then suffer further delay waiting at Freetown for a 'Lagos Express' mail steamer to the Gold Coast.*

Mr. Davis (PMG, Sierra Leone) wrote on 7 January 1933 to the Secretary, GPO, London, enclosing a detailed record, for the period from 30 December 1931 to 21 December 1932, of every ship which had arrived at Freetown from Dakar and whether or not mails (both ordinary and air) were carried. His analysis showed that 93 ships had arrived from Dakar during the period and of these, ordinary mail was received from 38 of them, but air mail from only 27. Using these figures he contended:

*It is, I think, that the failure of the Dakar Office to forward air mail letters by the first available ship not merely neutralises in a very large number of instances the acceleration obtained by the Air service, but actually involves longer transmission than if dispatched by ordinary mail. In the*

*circumstances, it is hardly surprising that very little use is made of this Air Service for letters, etc., from London.*

The record contained the exact number of air mail letters which arrived on the 27 occasions during the period and the total amounts to 526, which works out to be approximately 19 or 20 letters every two weeks.

From these figures and the preceding statements it suddenly becomes very clear why so few examples of such mail are to be found today. In addition to the unreliability of sending mail by air, compared with the fast, regular and reliable steamer service provided by the Elder Dempster Line, one must also remember the comparative costs. By surface route, the cost to Empire destinations was 1½d for the first ounce, 1d for each additional ounce, and to foreign destinations it was 2½d for the first ounce, 1½d for each additional ounce; far cheaper than the air mail fees and, until 23 February 1931, when combined air mail fees were introduced, senders of letters had to pay both!

For those interested in a complete listing of the air mail rates over the period, they are tabulated below:

<i>Places advertised</i>	<i>Air fee</i>	<i>Ordinary fee additional or combined postage</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Senegal, French Guinea, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Belgian Congo	8d up to ½oz 10d up to 1oz 1/2d up to 3½oz 6d each additional 3½oz	+ ordinary	Air fee applied from 24 March 1926 (Applied to letters, postcards, printed papers, commercial papers and samples)
As above	10d up to ½oz 1/- up to 1oz 1/4d up to 1½oz 1/8 up to 7oz 6d each additional 3½oz	+ ordinary	Air fee applied from 27 May 1926 (Applied to same items as above)
As above	1/- per oz	+ ordinary	Air fee applied from 1 April 1928 (Applied to same items as above)
As above (but Belgian Congo removed from list of places at some time between October 1929 and Spring 1930)	Letters and postcards: 1/- per ½oz  *Printed papers, etc.: 4d per ½oz	+ ordinary	Air fee applied from 1 August 1929
Senegal and French Guinea  Gambia and Sierra Leone	Letters and postcards: 11d first ½oz 9d each additional ½oz  10d first ½oz 9d each additional ½oz	combined	Applied from 23 February 1931
As above	Letter rates unchanged Postcards 5d to all places	combined	Reduced rate for postcards introduced 8 August 1932
As above, plus Ivory Coast	Rates to Ivory Coast same as for Senegal and French Guinea	combined	Air mail accepted to Ivory Coast from 25 August 1934
Senegal, French Guinea and Ivory Coast  Gambia and Sierra Leone	Letters: 10d per ½oz Postcards: 5d  Letters: 9d per ½oz Postcards: 5d	combined	Applied from 2 January 1935

\* The rate of 4d per ½oz for printed papers, commercial papers and samples remained unchanged after this date and so to save space, it has not been repeated for each new entry

Apart from a philatelic first flight cover from Britain to Sierra Leone, posted 30 March 1926, I have two other covers, seemingly commercial, dispatched from Britain during this period. The first, (Fig. 5), took 13 days from date of posting to arrive at Bathurst, which was much the same transit time as the steamer service. It is correctly franked at the 10d per half ounce combined air mail rate.

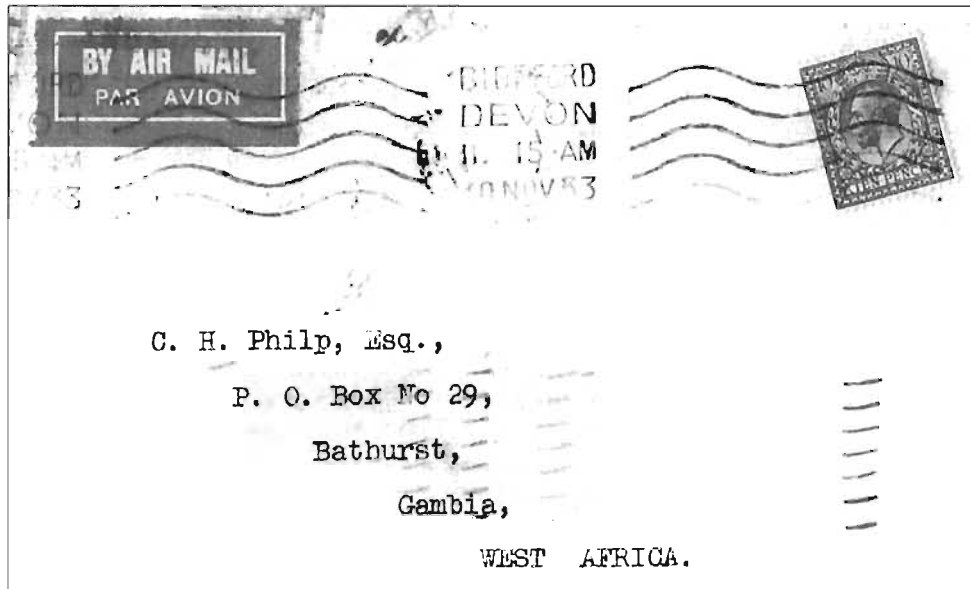


Fig. 5  
Cover datestamped Bideford 30 November 1933,  
backstamped Paris 1 December, Toulouse 2 December, Dakar 4 December and Bathurst 13 December 1933

The second shown, (Fig. 6), sent to Freetown, took only 7 days and at last provides an example of acceleration in transit time through the use of the air service. There must have been a rare intermediate steamer connection at Dakar. It is correctly franked at the 9d per half ounce combined air mail rate.

Fig. 6  
Cover  
datestamped Keswick  
24 May 1935,  
backstamped  
Paris 25 May,  
Dakar 27 May  
and  
Freetown 1 June 1935



Finally, Barbara Priddy has informed me she has seen two philatelic items, a cover and a postcard, both from the UK addressed to towns in Nigeria, which were flown to Dakar then sent on by sea. The cover was posted in London on 30 October 1930 and arrived Lagos 22 November. The card was posted in London on 4 December 1933 and arrived Lagos on the 27th.

These items reminded me of a letter of complaint sent to the GPO, London, in March 1935 by a disgruntled sender whose air mail letter to Nigeria had taken longer to reach its destination than if it had been sent by ordinary surface mail. The internal memo, responding to the complaint, from the Assistant Controller to the Postal Services Department (Mails Branch) contains some pertinent and interesting observations:

*There is no advertised air mail service to Nigeria, and it appears that the item, bearing an air mail label but no superscription, was forwarded from the Foreign Section with air mail correspondence for Dakar (although underpaid for that service) to Paris on 26 January, whence it arrived in Dakar on 28 January in due course. It was unfortunate that the incidence of the connecting steamer services between Dakar and Lagos resulted in considerable delay occurring in Dakar.*

*If the letter had been forwarded from this country by ordinary service per SS Adda from Liverpool on 23 January, it would have reached Lagos on 7 February, i.e. 7 days earlier than it appears to have done via Dakar.*

*It is difficult to know how best to dispose of unsuperscribed air mail correspondence addressed to places for which there is no advertised service, although normally it should be diverted to the ordinary mails. [Peter Wingent's underlining for emphasis]... The transmission time by steamer between Dakar and Lagos appears to vary between 11 days (Dutch and German packets) and 16 - 19 days (Elder Dempster), whereas the overall time of transmission by sea this country to Lagos is about 15 days.*

Thus the cover and the card seen by Barbara, both taking 23 days from posting to arrival in Lagos, would also appear to have been delayed through having been sent by air mail!

[Peter Wingent has recently forwarded the following update to the above article - Ed.]:

I have now obtained another cover, reproduced as Fig. 7. It is to the Gold Coast, datestamped Norwood / S.E. 19, 15 December 1933 and is backstamped Paris 16 December and Dakar 18 December. I cannot explain how the 11d franking was calculated. As I stated in the original article, the British Post Office did not advertise acceptance of air mail to the Gold Coast at this time.



Fig. 7

Peter's recent find, a cover to Gold Coast, discussed above and opposite

The following extract from the November 1933 Air Mail leaflet shows the rates and destinations available:

## LETTER AIR MAILS.

5

### (B). COUNTRIES OUTSIDE EUROPE.

**N.B.**—The rates shown in Columns 2 and 3 apply also to Printed Papers, Commercial Papers and Samples, except where the sign \* appears in column 2, in which case the special rates quoted on page 10 apply.

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION	RATES OF POSTAGE					Latest times of posting unregistered correspondence in the Air Mail Letter Box outside the G.P.O. London. (For latest times of posting elsewhere, enquiry should be made at the local Head or Branch Office.)	Approximate time of transmission, acceleration afforded, and general observations.
	LETTERS.				POST- CARDS.		
	First HALF OUNCE.	Each additional HALF OUNCE.					
1.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	5.	6.	
<b>AFRICA—NORTH</b>							
Algeria ...	}	0 6½	0 4½	0 3		6.30 a.m. weekdays.	1½ days to <b>Algiers</b> : 1 to 2½ days' gain.
Morocco ...						10.45 a.m. weekdays.	
Tunis ...						6.30 a.m. weekdays.	
<b>AFRICA—WEST</b>							
French Guinea. ...	}	0 11	0 9	0 5		8.0 p.m. Fri. Supplementary mail 7.30 a.m. Sats.	2 to 3 days to <b>Dakar</b> : 6 to 9 days' gain. Normally several days' gain to <b>Sierra Leone</b> , etc.
Senegal ...							
Gambia ...	}	0 10	0 9	0 5			
Sierra Leone							

The Paris and Dakar backstamps prove the cover was flown by Air France from Toulouse to Dakar. It would then have been sent by sea to Accra.

I wonder if further items will come to light. (This is an oblique invitation to members to send copies of any such covers they hold to Rob May or Barry Burns for publication in *Cameo*, or to Richard Saundry for *Air Mail News*.)



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# Gambia: Some Errors of Design 1966 - 1986

Oliver Andrew

As early as 1922, for the Elephant-and-Palm design, ('Can an elephant really hold its trunk in the manner depicted?'), the design of Gambian stamps has raised some comment. Leaving aside such trivial ones as the Lady Wright's cordage not joining the mast, one can still find enough of these to make a little display, ranging from wishful thinking, via artistic license, to outright mistakes. For the sake of compactness, I've not described them fully, but give simply the SG number. After 1983/84 mistakes of spelling and captioning become so frequent that over fifty are listed in SG Part I. Oh, it was all much easier in the days of the Key Plates!

## Wishful thinking.

SG 205 and 227. There is no definite record of the Emerald Cuckoo in The Gambia before 14 July 1981. Its inclusion in early books is based on a record of skins for sale in The Gambia in 1892. But it's a pretty bird.



SG 471. Of course The Gambia has a national football team. But equally of course, they didn't reach the finals in Spain in 1982 (or any others).

SG 441 and 442. It has been claimed that the Carthaginians (who were Phoenician colonists at Carthage) sailed down the West African coast as far as Sierra Leone in c. 500 BC. Herodotus reported that an Egyptian fleet had circumnavigated Africa in c. 600 BC, adding that he himself did not believe that story as the sailors claimed to have had the sun due north of them at one point. Well! Both stories are discounted by modern historians.

## Artistic license.

SG 510 - 513 show the annual migration of the Osprey. Its breeding range does not extend south of the USSR, but the artist needed the dark background to contrast with the bird.

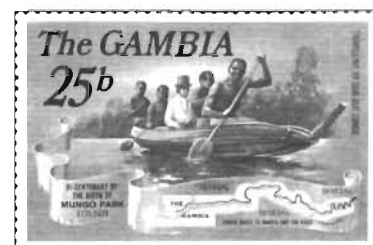
SG 559 issued in November 1984 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Deutsche Lufthansa mail service. But the *Graf Zeppelin* illustrated did not cross from The Gambia to South America until Nov/Dec 1935.

SG 522 issued to celebrate two hundred years of manned flight, shows a Montgolfier-built balloon. But the first men to fly in one were Pilatre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes, whose portraits appear here on the commemoratively drawn balloon. And the cover shown as background is of course a 'Ballon Monte' from the siege of Paris, 1870/71.

SG 634 - 639 and 679 - 684. The Gambia issued twelve stamps for the reappearance of Halley's Comet in 1986, but only the 10d shows the comet itself. The 2d shows another comet altogether. These stamps were designed for the thematic/topical market, mainly American. So the more subjects that could be squeezed into the design, the more profitable. At this point 'artistic license' has become 'commercial rip-off.'

## Mistakes.

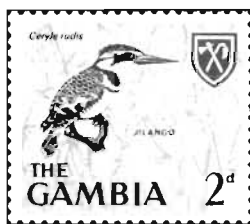
SG 285. Mungo Park's journal makes it clear that he did not follow the River Gambia as far as the Barokunda Falls, but went overland from Pisania to Tambacounda.



SG 395 The central strip of the Gambian flag represents the river (blue) between rice fields (white). On pillows and shorts here, it has been misplaced. Old pedants like me would like a hyphen in 'pillow-fighting' too.

More flags are wrong on SG 501 and 506, though with more excuse. Gambian canoes often have flags painted on the sides, sometimes flags of more than one country. Most often it's the Senegalese flag. The large sailing-canoe on SG 501 is flying the Gambian flag; on the bows, the artist has intended to depict the Senegalese flag, but has omitted to put the star in the central, yellow, panel. So it's become the Malian flag. Ditto on SG 506.

SG 233 - 245. In the Linnaean system of scientific nomenclature for all living things, species are referred to by two names; the generic name, and the specific name, e.g. *Homo sapiens*. It is the universal convention to write the generic name with an initial capital letter as in SG 236 and 239, but not SG 240 and 245. This 1966 set seems to have been done at random.

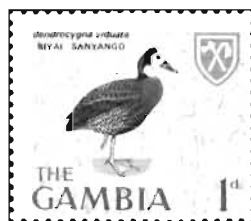


Correct convention (left)  
Generic name with capital letter  
SG 236, 239

Incorrect convention (right)  
Generic name without capital letter  
SG 240, 245



Another Linnaean convention concerns subspecies, a much less clear-cut concept than species, many being unidentifiable in the field. Just like philatelists, ornithologists disagree about the significance of certain differences, of colour for instance. The rules here are as follows: if there are no subspecies, only the generic and specific names are given, as in SG 234 *Dendrocygna viduata*, and not as in SG 235 *Melittophagus bullocki*, where there are several subspecies. The Mandinka names are confusing too: on SG 243, Yirri kongkonna means any woodpecker (yirri = wood, kongkong = to tap), not just this species (Cardinal Woodpecker).



SG 234



SG 235



SG 243

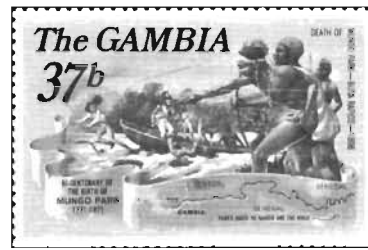
### Spelling.

A fertile spot indeed for errors! Examples seen before the change of philatelic agency, are:

SG244	Musophuga	should read	Musophaga
SG286	Busa	should read	Bussa
SG 375	guineenis	should read	guineensis
SG 510-12	Haliatus	should read	Haliaetus (more Ospreys!)

SG 244

Musophuga should be  
Musophaga



SG 286

Busa should be  
Bussa

It would be taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut to list all the spelling mistakes and incorrect captions that have appeared on Gambian stamps since 1984, since in fact The Gambia gave its contract to a philatelic agency in New York, which raised the number of issues put out annually from thirty five or so to several hundred. Clearly the demand for quantity was a severe blow to the quality.



## Gambian Abbreviated Dent

Oliver Andrew

I recently acquired a Gambia KE VII 2½d (multiple CA watermark) with a dented frame. Closer inspection and enlargement at 300% showed that the dent was not the usual one, being less deep and perhaps slightly longer. Checking with the article in *The London Philatelist* for June 2000 by Richard Maisel and James Podger, and correspondence with the latter, showed that my example was the 'abbreviated' dent, the first Gambia example, I believe, to be recorded. It is cancelled with an oval Registered mark of (19)05, and must therefore have come from the delivery of 12 July 1905. At 1000% magnification, that used by Maisel and Podger, this Gambian example seems deeper and longer than theirs, and the dent affects the bottom of the coloured line as well as the top. But in any case, it does nothing to solve the mystery of how two flaws can have appeared at the same place on the same stamp, *alternately*.

Illustrated are the 'normal' flaw (Fig. 1), and the 'abbreviated' version (Fig. 2).

Fig. 1

'Normal'  
dent at  
c. 200% (above)  
and  
c. 500% (below)



Fig. 2

'Abbreviated'  
dent at  
c. 200% (above)  
and  
c. 500% (below)



# Grand Popo Cancel Used at Anecho

John Mayne

The Anglo - French Occupation of Togo 1914 - 1922 by Jeremy Martin and Frank Walton (Ref.1) lists the cancel for Grand Popo with 'Grand' excised used at Anecho and states two examples are recorded, one on a document. Page 20 gives 8 October 1914 as the only known use, presumably on cover, but gives no information as regards the issue on which it is recorded.

I hold a cover from Anecho of 24 September 1914, with Dahomey 10c and 25c values cancelled by excised cancel. No registration labels are recorded at Anecho before April 1915 and the manuscript 'No 21' is taken to be a registered number; 35c was the standard registered mail rate for mail within the French area. This brings forward the earliest date for Dahomey issues used unoverprinted.

Charles H. Greenwood - *Togo - The Stamps of the British and French Occupations* shows the notice issued at Porti Novo on 8 October 1914 detailing the stamps overprinted by the French. Jeremy states page 34 they were available that day. The first date of use of the German Anecho cancel after 26 August recorded by Jeremy page 46 is 16 October 1914.

The front with unoverprinted German issues *Cameo* Volume 7 Number 2 Whole Number 55 p82 posted Anecho 22 August 1914 before Germany surrendered on 26 August brings the date forward by some weeks but also begs the question what is the official date for the start of the occupation, is it 7 August when Lome fell or 26th when the Germans surrendered.

Overprinted German yachts were available in the British sector officially from 24 September but it is recorded they were sold at Lome Post Office 17 September for four hours before instructions arrived from Accra Post Office to close and remain closed for another week. I have not seen any authority confirming British issues were valid in the French sector, and vice versa, but I hold stamps cancelled by Post Offices in the 'wrong sector'. Covers are more elusive.

I report a cover (*at 70% - Ed.*) from Anecho with excised Grand Popo cancel of 12 October 1914 on British yachts, one SG 27(b) (dropped 'y' variety) and two SG 28, meeting a 2½d rate, the British and French standard letter rate to Foreign countries, 2½d and 25c respectively. The use of these issues on 12 October is earlier than the mid - October date suggested by Gibbons, and the earliest date I have seen. The cover also carries the Anecho cancel of that date. Sent to Porto-Novo to a Government Official it is backstamped by a complete Grand Popo strike the same day, and Porto Novo cancel a day later.



## Reference

- 1 Martin J.J. & Walton F.L., *Togo : The Postal History of the Anglo-French Occupation 1914-1922*, p50, WASC, Sheffield 1995

# Ocean Mail by RMS *St Helena* from Cape Town to Tristan da Cunha

Bob Maddocks

From 2 to 14 April 1993 I made the round trip voyage from Cape Town to Tristan da Cunha and back in RMS *St Helena*. Unusually this was her second visit of the year. Normally, the vessel was scheduled to visit the island once annually, usually each February, but on this year's voyage she had been unable to discharge her passengers and cargo because of extremely adverse weather conditions at Tristan. Given that the cargo of building materials, especially cement, was urgently needed for the reconstruction of the island's only landing stage and, moreover, that the Administrator was overdue in resuming his duties after furlough in England the *St Helena* had to try again. This voyage, too, was almost similarly in thrall to the weather. Of the three days the ship lay off Tristan, it was only on the day of arrival - 7 April - that passengers were able to go ashore and then only for less than five hours before the weather closed in. Cargo discharge into the island's launches was intermittent and hazardous for the crew, with most part having to be offloaded onto a South African fishing vessel for landing later as conditions permitted after our departure. This was done whilst both vessels were sheltering from spectacular thunderstorms and raging seas in the lea of Inaccessible Island.

Of the mail for Tristan, most had come aboard at Cape Town in bags made up and sealed there. Others had been flown in from London bearing the seals of the London Foreign Section. There were also bags from the Island of St Helena which had been collected when the ship had called there on 20 March, outwards from the UK (Fig. 1 - a five label montage).



Fig. 1  
Mailbag labels - destination Tristan da Cunha from London F.S., St Helena and Cape Town

At Tristan the mailbags were collected by the Island Postmaster in his white Land Rover and driven all of 200 yards to the Post Office. After the bags had been recorded and opened, the contents were taken into the nearby Public Hall. There, tables had been set up for the islanders' mail to be sorted according to the family names - all seven of them! Once the mail was ready for distribution an external bell was rung to notify the villagers. Post Office staff then called out the individual names of the addressees to come forward for their respective mail. Certainly very much a social feature of island life on what are known as 'ship days' which are, of course, infrequent on this, the loneliest island. All other matters were put aside as the islanders retreated to their homes to immerse themselves in the welter of news received from outside, no matter how outdated. The photographs shown in Fig. 2 were taken in the course of my visit.

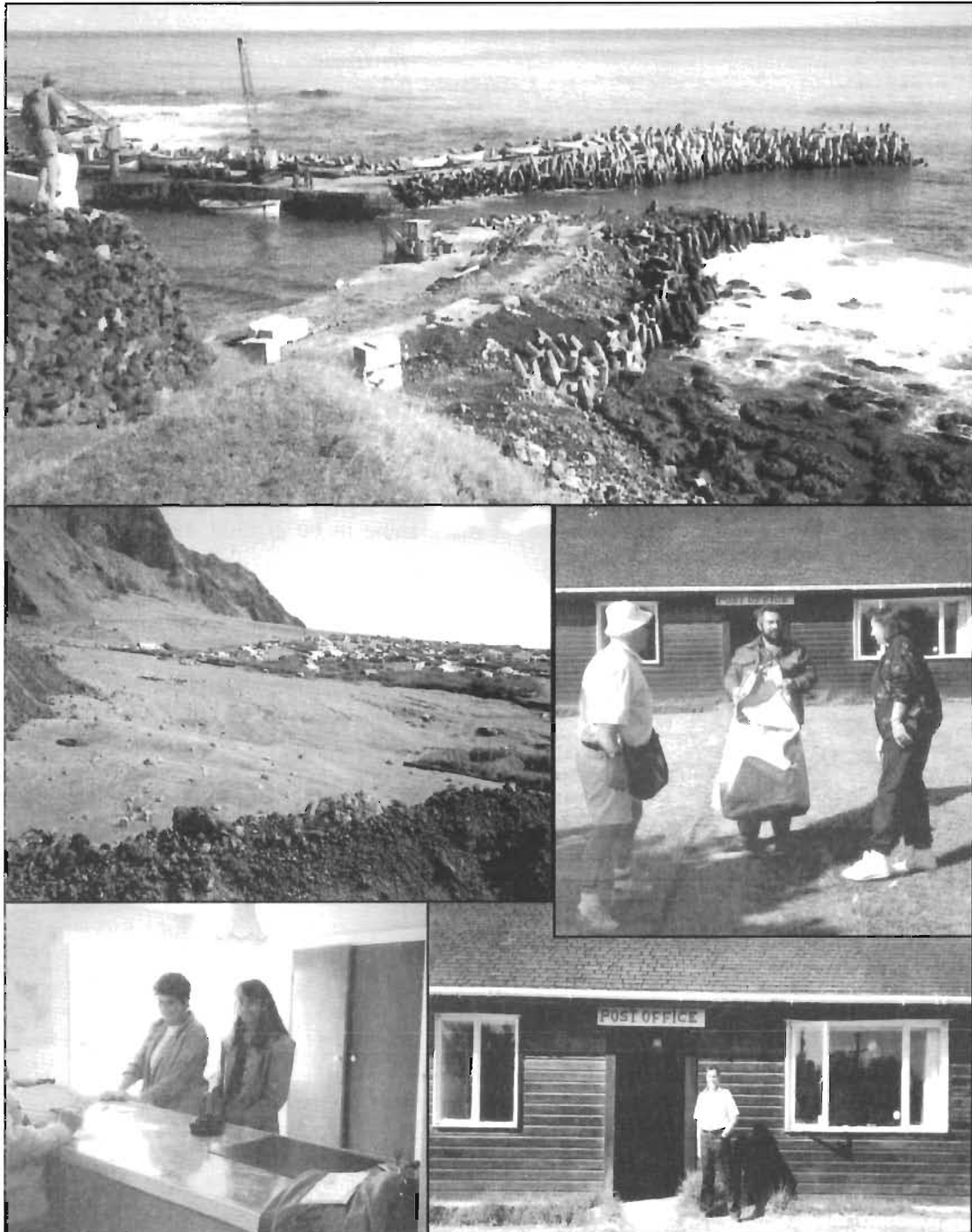


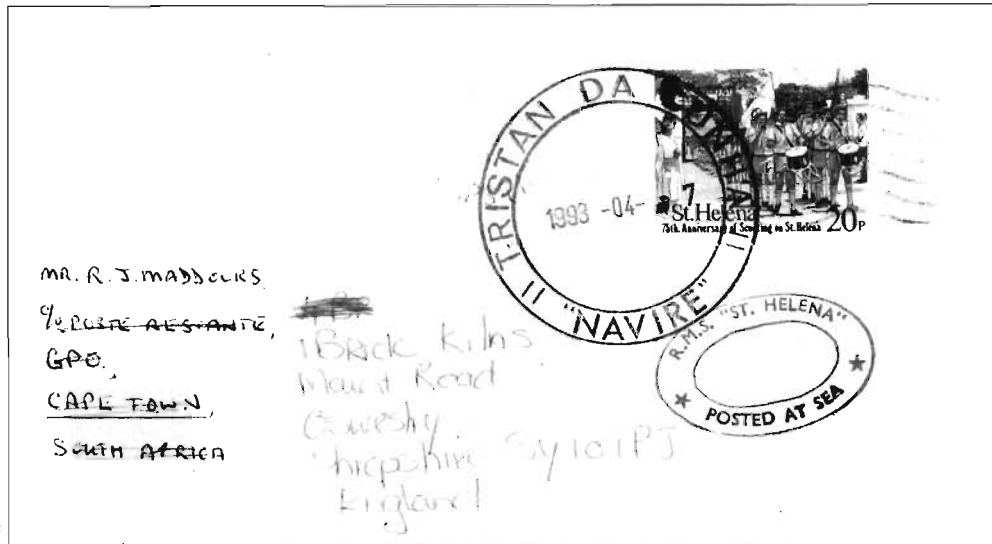
Fig. 2 Views of Tristan - April 1993

Anti-clockwise, from top: the Island's only landing place for longboats and launches; the settlement of Edinburgh (population 300) viewed from edge of 1961 lava flow; Post Office counter staff; Post Office, and Postmaster with mailbag

On the outward leg, I posted at sea the following mail at the Purser's Office where both St Helena and Tristan stamps were on sale. The first (Fig. 3) was before the ship entered Tristan waters, being an envelope addressed to Cape Town. The stamp was cancelled on the date of our arrival at the island with a large 45mm Tristan datestamp ||TRISTAN DA CUNHA|| / "NAVIRE"/ 1993 - 04 - 07 (Hosking 2703). It did not, however, get onforwarded to Cape Town by our returning vessel since it was backstamped some 9 weeks later at Cape Town on 16.6.93 and then was redirected to England on 18.6.93.

Fig. 3

Cover posted on RMS *St Helena* and landed at Tristan where Hosking 2703 Paquebot mark applied



The second item (Fig. 4) was a postcard (hence the lower franking) to

England. The stamp was cancelled by a 25mm straight line 'PAQUEBOT' handstamp (Hosking 2647 of Ascension). This card, according to the ship's schedule and the date of a transit postmark, must have been included in mail put aboard the *St Helena* for her return voyage. It is unexplained how the Georgetown, Ascension Island postmark of 1.5.93 and Paquebot mark came to be applied. Perhaps certain mail was landed there and flown on to the UK?

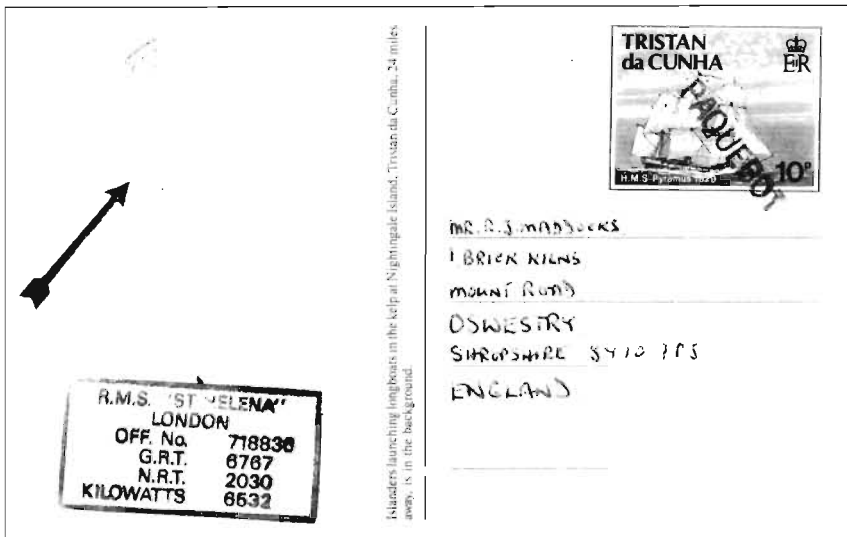
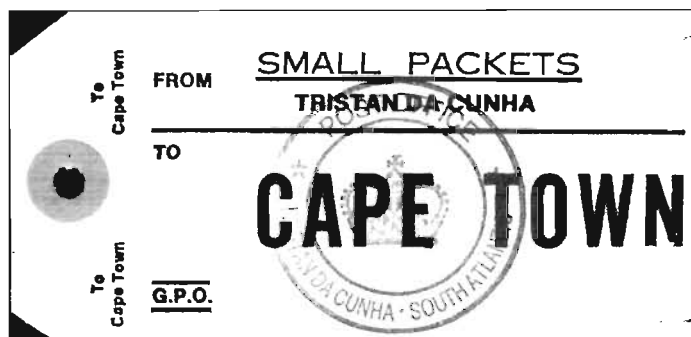


Fig. 4

Postcard (at 80%) posted on RMS *St Helena* and landed at Ascension Island where Hosking 2647 Paquebot mark and Georgetown transit of 1.5.93 applied

Presumably sent onward by air from Ascension

Finally shown (Fig. 5, right) is a Tristan da Cunha to Cape Town Small Packets bag label.



# Gold Coast Censorship during World War II

Michael Wright

*I have been studying files in the Public Record Office at Kew and found considerable, albeit fragmentary, information on censorship at the Gold Coast during the Second World War.*

*One file (DEFE 1/262) is entitled 'Gold Coast Reports'; in fact it covers only the first few months of the war, but this does cover the start-up. The first report in this file to the London authorities, on special notepaper headed CENSOR'S OFFICE / ACCRA is dated 11 October 1939 and reads:*

## MONTHLY RETURN OF GENERAL MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE IN CONNECTION WITH THE GOLD COAST CENSORSHIP SCHEME (REGULATION 172)

Sir,

1. On the outbreak of war censorship was imposed in this Colony as follows:

a) Inland Correspondence	Free from Censorship
b) Inland Telegrams	Free from Censorship
c) Inland Radio Telegrams	Certain classes prohibited
d) Foreign Radio Telegrams	Prohibited
e) Foreign Telegrams	Complete Censorship
f) Foreign Mails	Complete Censorship
g) Press	'Voluntary' submission system
h) Broadcasting	Government controlled wire rediffusion system
i) Film	Controlled by Government officials

2. On the 13 September the system of complete censorship imposed on foreign mails was modified by the Gold Coast War Committee in the following manner:

- a) No incoming mails are now censored unless addressed to suspected persons.
- b) Outgoing mails for neutral countries are completely censored.
- c) Outgoing mails for the British Empire are censored at the discretion of the Censor who, in exercising his discretion, takes into account the identity of the sender.
- d) The majority of letters and postal packets leaving the Gold Coast bear the name and address of the sender plainly marked on the outside of the envelope or wrapping.

## WEEKLY AND QUARTERLY RETURN (REGULATION 134)

3. Weekly returns in respect of telegraph traffic have been forwarded regularly since the outbreak of war. A Quarterly return (giving details of the staff) is forwarded separately herewith.

## INFORMATION OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST (REGULATION 171)

4. Cases of irregular censorship by Lagos and other places have already been reported. There has been nothing else to report under this regulation.

5. Breaches of censorship regulations, information regarding contraband cargoes, offences against economic and financial security, and items of seditious propaganda from abroad have been reported to the local Departments concerned.

6. A rigid censorship has been maintained on all foreign telegraph traffic. Normal telephone communication with French Togoland has been suspended at the request of the French Postal Authorities.

7. The postal arrangements of the Colony have been revised for censorship purposes. All incoming and outgoing foreign mails are concentrated at two offices - Accra and Sekondi - where adequate censorship staffs are available.

8. Internees' censored correspondence addressed to European countries is forwarded in a special bag to the Postal Censor, London, for disposal.

9. It has not yet been possible to find a reliable person who could be trusted to censor letters addressed to Syria and other places and written in the Arabic language, until suitable local arrangements are made it will be necessary to continue to send such correspondence to the Postal Censor, London. The same procedure is being adopted in respect of other uncommon languages.

10. From the 3rd to the 13th September the percentage of incoming and outgoing British Empire and foreign correspondence examined was 95%. Since the latter date the percentage of British Empire correspondence examined has been 20, while a complete censorship has been maintained on correspondence addressed to other countries. The results of this examination for the month of September are as follows:

ITALIAN CORRESPONDENCE [not copied]

SWISS CORRESPONDENCE [not copied]

GERMAN CORRESPONDENCE

a) Outgoing Mail - From internees and Persons on Parole. It is obvious that little value can be attached to comments made in such letters. With only two exceptions, however, the remarks and general tone of the letters show that the men and women consider themselves very well looked after. Many of them have described in detail the rations which they are receiving and one man even added that he could only wish that at home his people were getting as much good food. The feeling of many seems to be that with Poland overrun, the war is as good as over.

b) Incoming Mail - From Germany. No letter of real interest has been received that was written after the outbreak of war and the following remarks refer to letters written in the second fortnight of August. Perhaps the most interesting point is the tremendous contrast between family letters of the Germans and the Swiss. The latter people seem to be well informed and fully alive to the dangers and probability of war; the former, on the other hand, seemed completely ignorant of what was going on and war looked upon as quite impossible. Many people commented on the German-Russian anti-aggression pact, the feeling being, apparently, that it was a tremendous diplomatic coup which made war quite impossible. Only one man suggested that this pact might have disadvantages, he said "Various opinions are expressed about this pact, but I think we must admit that on the whole it seems definitely to Germany's advantage." As to be expected, most letters keep scrupulously to family matters, but a few contained remarks which one would have been surprised to see a year or two years ago.

11. The above information has been gleaned from Airmail correspondence. Surface mails from Europe, containing letters written since the outbreak of war, have not reached this Colony.

12. Close touch has been maintained with the local Security Service, a member of which is on the Censorship staff.

13. The Censorship Scheme in this Colony is working smoothly. There is very little delay to traffic and no complaints have been made by the Public.

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your obedient servant

J.O. Reilly CENSOR, Accra, Gold Coast

The Controller, Postal and Telegraph Censorship, LONDON, England.

*Similar reports up to the one for May 1940. This began:*

In order that no information regarding the recent movement of battalions of the Gold Coast Regiment should be disclosed, there has been a complete censorship of all airmail correspondence during the latter part of May. A complaint was made to the Regimental Headquarters that some indiscreet members of the

Forces were giving away information as to the Regiment's supposed overseas destination and many civilians were quoting this in their letters. Members of the Forces themselves were also offenders in this direction. I understand that this warning was communicated to the troops and no further indiscretions were noted in their correspondence, although the same cannot be said for civilian members of the public who continued to hazard guesses as to the destination of the Regiment, date of departure and method of transport.

2. It has been observed that headed notepaper supplied by Elder Dempster Lines Limited for the use of passengers on board still carries the names of their passenger vessels. It is recommended that the Company be approached with a view to the abolition of headed notepaper for use on their ships during the present hostilities.

The staff return was in a form giving Rank, Name, Nature of Employment in peace time, Salary per annum and Duties. The Censor was J.O. Reilly, the Deputy Postmaster General; he was unpaid, as were many other government officials who no doubt had to add their censorship responsibilities to their regular duties. Twelve Assistant Censors fell into this category; four of these were postal censors, a Police Officer C.I.D. (Capt. A.D. The O'Morchoe) two Assistant Controllers of Posts (N. Smith and H.R. Senior) and an Assistant District Commissioner (R.S. Crabbe) with special responsibilities for French and German and a Government Forestry Officer (G.S. Cansdale) who covered native languages as well as French and German. Responsible for the Cable Office were the Assistant Controller of Posts (C.D. Brokensha), the Chief Accountant and an Accountant at the G.P.O. Accra (E.A. Martin and C.G. Folwell) and an Assistant District Commissioner (J. Duncan) with responsibilities for French and German. A District Commissioner (J.R. Miller) dealt with telegrams, the Assistant Colonial Secretary (H. Cooper) covered the Press.

The Senior Assistant Controller of Posts (J. Rothwell) covered Takoradi Radio. With him were three retired officials each paid £150 a year: A. Mends (African Assistant Controller of Posts and G.M. Gunn and W.F. Creppy (African District Postmasters). Other Assistant Censors in the Cable Office were five wives of colonial officials paid £45 a year and an Assistant Master, Achimota College (E.A. Chapman) responsible for native languages paid at 1/6d an hour. Five wives of colonial officials worked as Examiners in the postal section for £60 a year and seven more - plus two wives of bank managers - for 1/6d an hour. Finally an 'Office Assistant Secretariat' was used as an unpaid Examiner for Italian, and yet another wife as Typist and Secretary for £96 a year.

A small organisation chart showed that in the Postal censorship four Assistant Censors and nine Examiners worked in the G.P.O. Accra and 2 Assistant Censors and six Examiners worked at the P.O. at Sekondi. Within the Telegraph censorship the Accra Cable Office employed nine Assistant Censors, Takoradi Radio employed four and Keta 'For French Togoland' one. There is the additional comment that Telegrams sent by landline to and from the Ivory Coast were not censored. All these officials, and the Assistant Censor employed for Press Censorship came under the one Censor. The same chart also covers the fact that Film Censorship was 'under the control of a separate Committee of Government Officials' and for Broadcasting Censorship 'This is a Government station under the direct control of Government Officials. All news broadcasts are submitted to the Information Officer before being broadcast'.

Extract from the Gold Coast Gazette, Extraordinary, No.61 of Friday 1st September 1939 (p689).

#### CENSORSHIP RULES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF PERSONS CORRESPONDING WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES

In order to make the Censorship of postal articles, which is rendered necessary in the present emergency, as effective and economical as possible, the public is earnestly invited to conform to the following rules in regard to correspondence with places abroad:

- 1) The name and address of the sender should be stated either on or within the envelope.
- 2) Private correspondence should be conducted in English, if possible; the language should be plain and the letters as clearly written and as brief as possible.
- 3) In the event of war, business correspondence should be conducted, if possible, in languages other than those of enemy countries.

- 4) When an uncommon language is employed, the name of the language used should be endorsed on the envelope.
- 5) The envelope should contain no lining paper or empty sheets.
- 6) Firms and individuals should refuse to act as intermediaries or agents for the receipt and transmission of postal correspondence on behalf of persons in foreign countries.
- 7) Enquiries as to missing officers and men should contain all necessary particulars, i.e. Surname and Christian name. Regimental number. Regiment, corps, etc. Date or approx. date of casualty.

The following must not be stated, even if known: Number of the battalion, battery, etc. (nor, in the case of Royal Engineer and Royal Army Service Corps units, the number of the company). Number of Air Unit. Place of Casualty. Failure to comply with these rules may lead to the delay or return of the correspondence.

Note: Shippers and importers are notified that shipping documents will be examined with special expedition, whether incoming or outgoing, if their envelopes are endorsed with the words SHIPPING BUSINESS. It must be understood that incoming shipping documents may be delayed through no fault of the censorship.

#### CENSORSHIP RULES REGARDING CODE, CIPHER AND PLAIN-LANGUAGE TELEGRAMS.

It is hereby notified for public information that commencing forthwith and until further notice the use of code and cipher for inland and overseas telegrams is prohibited.

Telegrams written in French or English only will be accepted.

Arrangements will be made later to extend to telegrams originating in and/or addressed to British territory facilities for the use of certain commercial published codes.

The use of codes will not, however, be allowed in any radio telegram exchanged with ships at sea.

Telegrams must bear the surname of the sender at the end of the text included among the words which are charged to the sender and signaled forward.

Abbreviated addresses will not be accepted either as the address, or as the name, of the sender of a telegram unless such an address is included in the list of Registered Abbreviated Addresses held by the Censor.

#### APPOINTMENT OF CENSOR AND ASSISTANT CENSOR UNDER REGULATION 5(1) OF THE DEFENCE REGULATIONS, 1939.

The Governor has been pleased to make the following appointments:

Assistant Censors:

The District Commissioner, Ho.

The District Commissioner, Keta.

Mrs. Melville Richards

Mr. L.P. Wallis.

*(Also listed, but not repeated here, are those already detailed on p43, paragraphs 3 & 4 - Ed.)*

Gazette 13th March 1943 No. 20 p154 GN No. 294 File No. S.0003/S.F.19.

#### NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF CENSOR UNDER REGULATION 5(1) OF THE DEFENCE REGULATIONS 1939.

It is hereby notified for general information that His Excellency the Governor, in exercise of his powers under Regulation 5 (1) of the Deface Regulations, 1939, has been pleased to appoint James Rothwell, Esquire as Censor, and to cancel the appointment of Censor and Assistant Censor in respect of which notice was given in Gazette No. 61 of the 1st September, 1939.

Gazette 1st September 1945 p421 GN 1217.

It is notified for general information that all forms of censorship in the Gold Coast ceased with effect from 23rd August 1945.

GCCENSHP



# The Briars Handstamp and Other Markings

Stefan Heijtz

Barry Burns' report on the use of this marking in 1935 on a telegraph form, in the October 2004 issue of *Cameo*, p240 and the fact that this marking was recorded in Bernard Mabbett's book, (Ref. 1) something I hadn't noticed, reminded me that I too have an example very similar to the one illustrated by Barry. It is exactly the same form and in addition to the ST HELENA/THE BRIARS/26 AUG 37 marking, it also has a regular postal c.d.s. ST HELENA/AU 28/37 (Fig.1 ). The reason for the postmark may very well be the fact that it is a telegram addressed to the Postmaster of St Helena. The message refers to the fact that Crown Agents' stock of Coronation stamps is exhausted and that the sender urgently needs some! A number of other markings (some previously unrecorded) have been found among the documents which came from the clear out of the St Helena PO some years ago. Most of this material was handled by either Argyll Etkin Ltd. in London or Cavendish Auctions in Derby, as some of you will know. (*Illustrations are not to scale - Ed.*)

POST OFFICE ST HELENA Crown marking (type PO4) has also been found on a letter which arrived in the Post Office late 1917 or early 1918 (Fig. 2)

COLONIAL TREASURY/ST. HELENA/RECEIVED/12 NOV 1934 has been found on a letter (Fig. 3)

The French Consular marking AGENCE CONSULAIRE DE FRANCE A STE HELENE (see Mabbett p18) has also been found on a letter dated 9 June 1914 (Fig. 4)

A previously unrecorded consular handstamp has been found: KAISERLICH DEUTSCHES/KONSULAT/ AUF/ SANCKT HELENA on a letter dated 22 April 1911 (Fig. 5)

PUBLIC WORKS OFFICE/ST HELENA 6 APR.1927 has been found on a letter (Fig. 6)

THE CASTLE / ST HELENA (type CH4) has also been found dated 2 JAN 1907 on a PO circular (Fig. 7)

The Eastern Telegraph Company also used another marking at St Helena which predates by some 20 years the Briars marking: THE EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY/LIMITED/ST. HELENA/ 23 APR. 1914/STATION (Fig. 8)

## Reference

1 Mabbett B., *St Helena: The Postal, Instructional and Censor Markings 1815-2000*, p34, WASC, Dronfield, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 2002



# Designer, Proofs and Specimens of the Nigeria 1936 Definitives

Tony Plumbe

Nigeria's first pictorial definitives reflected the colonial nature of the country with an emphasis on natural resource production and communications. There are several intriguing philatelic aspects and questions associated with the issue. The first concerns the designer who is not identified in the SG catalogues and usually thought to have been an in-house artist of De La Rue. Shown as Fig. 1 is the 5/- stamp mounted on a card with Mrs Kenneth Cooper on its reverse that is endorsed in manuscript 'This 5/- stamp is my original design Joan Bryan Cooper'. Similar pieces also exist for the 1d and 2d values. The second word of the name may have been misread by your reporter. The only Joan Cooper with Nigerian associations whom I know was a cataloguer at the library of the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology (now Ahmadu Bello University) in the late 1950s: she had artistic talents. Was that Joan Cooper the designer? Other questions also arise. While these pieces appear to be family mementoes, are they possibly forgeries or an after dinner prank? Do similar pieces exist for values other than the 1d, 2d and 5/-? Did Joan Cooper design the whole set?

Die proofs of the vignettes of the higher values exist in black and white mounted on thin quadrille paper endorsed 'appd for Die, initials (?JCP), 30/7'. That for the 5/- value is shown as Fig. 2 and the others were equally exquisite when last seen in the late 1970s. Unfortunately those for the 2/6d, 10/- and £1 values were stolen in a London burglary a decade or so ago and have not as far as I am aware re-surfaced. Black and white photographic proofs from the De La Rue archives exist of the whole design for each value and are dated 11.5.35 amended from 18.5.35 in red manuscript. These formed Lot No. 553 and were described as essays in the 25 May 2004 Grosvenor Sale of the collection of Neville Jones. As far as I am aware they are also unique. In his recording of the De La Rue archives, Philip Beale recorded that Die Proofs struck in black showing the three different frames, an imperforate rejected essay dated 21.3.35 showing the ship of the ½d value facing left and an approved such essay dated 19.6.35 showing the ship facing right, an imperforate proof of the 1/- dated 30.7.35, and imperforate proofs in the final colours of the ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d, 3d, 4d, 6d, 1/-, 2/6, 5/- and £1 (dated variously 17 June - 19 August 1935) all exist and had been offered for sale (Beale, 1977). If a member should own these, would it be possible to illustrate them in *Cameo* as I think the only other source is a microfilm record in the National Postal Museum?

Lastly, there are two types of Specimens both recorded in Samuel (1976) but not commented upon. The first and much the most common is the perforated arc with 65 holes classified as Type D20 and used by De La Rue between 1936 and 1940. This occurs on all values of the set. While this Specimen perforation has been frequently forged, I have yet to see examples on the 1936 Nigerian definitives. Do they exist? Given the date of issue, one would expect 423 examples of each value to have been supplied to the Crown Agents and 395 examples to have been sent to the UPU for distribution. The second type of Specimen cancel is a violet straight-line rubber cachet measuring 10.5mm x 2mm that was originally recorded as Type 15 by Samuel but reclassified as Type 15a in the 1984 Supplement (Bendon et al, 1984) (see Figs. 3 and 4). Philip Beale also recorded these as comprising Page Nine of the De La Rue archive (Beale, 1977). They are not recorded in the later work by Bendon (1988) on UPU Specimen stamps. This second cachet is known applied on the ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d, 4d, 6d and 2/6d values. It was applied vertically or diagonally up or down only to perforated copies of the stamp placed in the De La Rue file. The surviving examples derive from an album that was damaged by fire when the De La Rue works was bombed in 1940. They are probably best termed printer's reference copies. Just how many examples were originally filed and how many survived the 1939 - 1945 war is unclear. Does anyone know? Again forgeries would be easy to create.

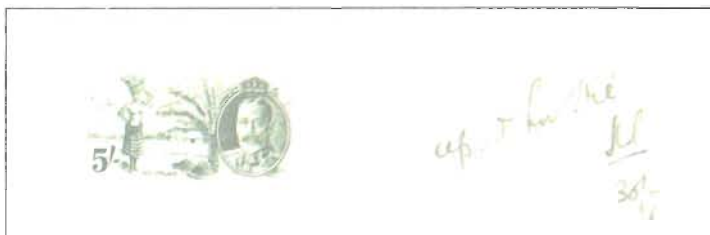
## References

- Beale P.O., The De La Rue Archives: Nigeria, *Cameo*, Volume 1 p106, WASC, January 1977
- Bendon J., *UPU Specimen Stamps*, James Bendon, Limassol Cyprus 1988
- Samuel M., Bendon J. & Latto C., *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857-1948 - A Supplement*, RPSL, London 1984
- Samuel M., *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857-1948*, RPSL, London 1976



Fig. 1 (above)  
5/- stamp on card, signed Joan Bryan (?) Cooper

Fig. 2 (below) Die Proof of vignette for 5/- value



Figs 3 and 4  
Type 15(a) violet SPECIMEN handstamp



## British West Africa Route of WWII

Jack Ince

With reference to Bob Wilcsek's article in *Cameo* January 2005, p266, I illustrate the face (Fig. 1, below) and reverse (Fig. 2, p49) of an unusual FAM 22 cover with a directional label I have not previously seen.



# HARMERS

ESTABLISHED 1918

## All World Auction at Harmers of London on June 14th., 2005



1961 St. Helena Tristan Relief Fund set to be offered in Harmers June 14th. "All World" auction.

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*continued from p47*

The label reads: "By B.O.A.C. to Lagos, Nigeria, / via Calcutta and Cairo and thence / by P.A.A. to destination".

Enquiry to date tends to confirm my view that it was probably printed at the Canadian Mission Press at Chengtu, Szechwan circa 1943.

I shall be glad to learn if any member has seen a similar label.

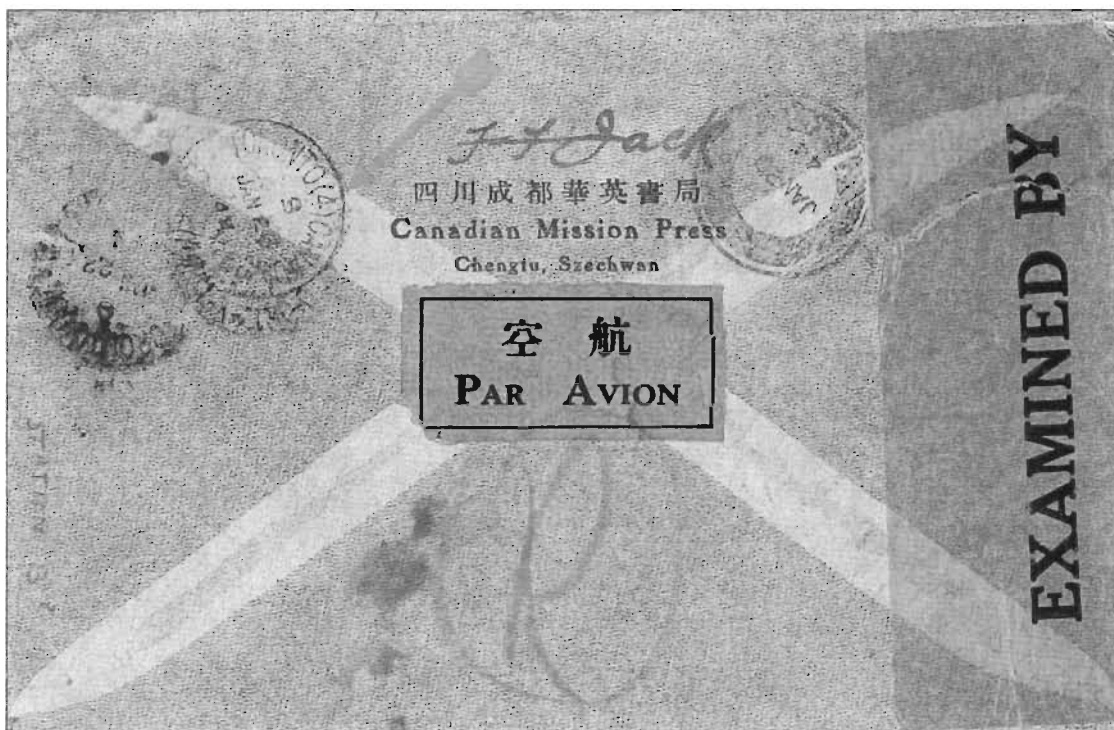


Fig. 2  
Reverse of the 'By B.O.A.C. to Lagos...' cover illustrated on p47

## Nigerian Misperforate from 1978

**Tony Plumbe**

Mint imperforate and misperforated Nigerian stamps and miniature sheets abound from the period 1986 - 1994, and are generally believed to have a source from within the printers. The printers were, however, apparently having difficulties with their perforator and their checking of printed sheets before 1986. Illustrated at Figure 1 is a used pair with double and shifted perforations of the 18k value of the Global Conference on Technical Co-operation between Developing Countries. This was issued in April 1978. The attached lower stamp of the pair is unaffected. The postmark tying the two stamps is dated '7 JU ??' (probably 1978) but unfortunately the city name is indecipherable. The item turned up in Canada in January 2005.



Fig. 1

# Early Air Mail from St Helena

Stefan Heijtz

Some of you will have seen the little piece on this topic that I wrote in the October 2004 edition of *Cameo* (p217) and, as usual when one states that something is the earliest recorded, earlier examples appear! The example recorded in October 2004 was a registered cover postmarked on 31 March 1937. So below are three further examples of early airmail covers from St Helena and it seems like the airmail rate was added per 10 grams whereas the ordinary postage was calculated by the ounce!



Fig. 1 (left)

8½d  
air mail rate  
to UK

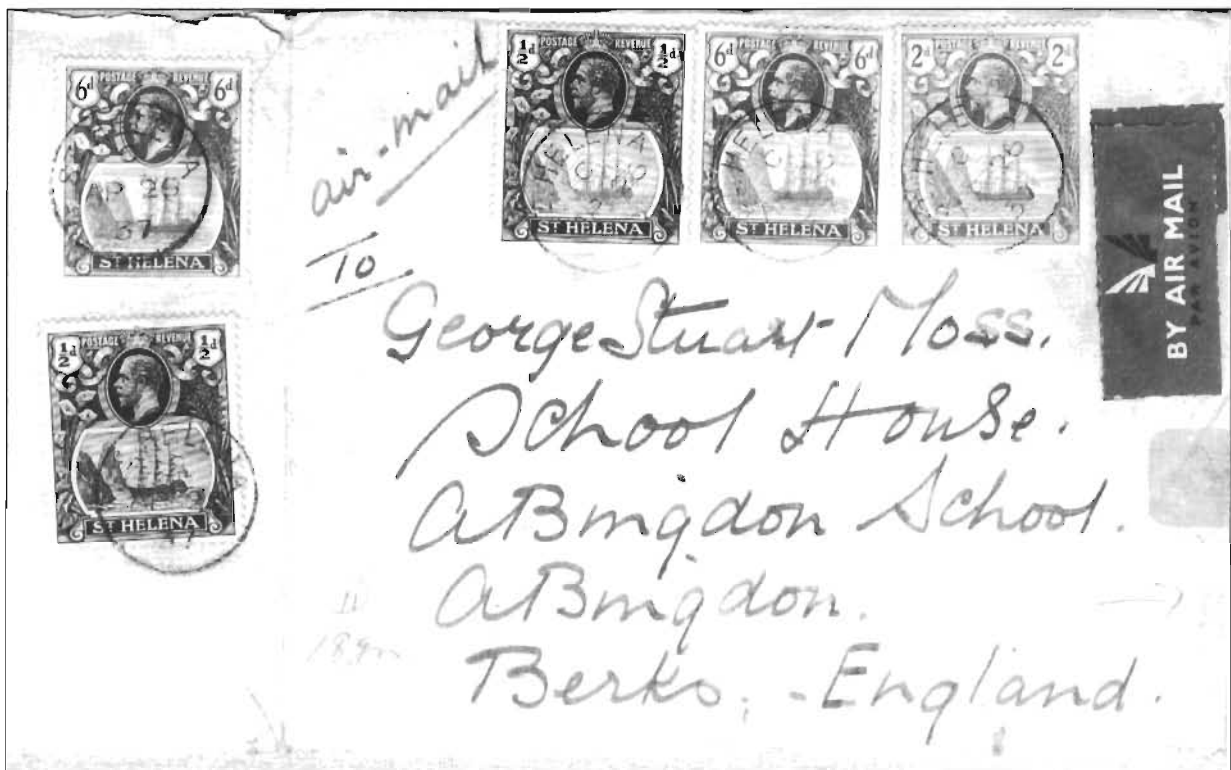


Fig. 2 (below)

1/3d  
double letter  
air mail rate  
to UK

Fig. 1: Cover to England with 8½d postmarked JU.21.36 and with Government Crest on the flap. The rate is 2d ordinary postage + 6½d air mail fee to the UK. This could very well be the earliest possible example of air mail from St Helena since this service was introduced in June 1936 (exact date unknown).

Fig. 2: Cover to England with 1/3d postmarked AP.26.37 and a pencil note '18 gr.', sent by Mrs. E.J. Moss, Farm Lodge, Island of St Helena. The rate is 2d ordinary postage for one ounce + two times 6½d air mail fee per 10 grams to the UK. Very interesting from the double air mail fee point of view.

Fig. 3: Registered cover with 11½d postmarked DE.4.36 and a pencil note '7 gr.', Union-Castle Line on the flap. The rate is 2d ordinary postage + 3d registration fee + 6½d air mail fee per 10 grams to the UK.

None of the above examples have any transit or arrival markings. Any more out there?



Fig. 3  
11½d registered air mail rate to UK  
All 3 illustrations shown at 90%



## New St Helena Instructional Markings

Barry Burns

The St Helena Postmistress, Beverly Francis, has kindly provided strikes of these two instructional markings, both of which I believe have not previously been recorded.



**MISSENT TO ST HELENA  
STHL IZZ**

The 'Tax' mark measures 38 x 15 mm, and can be distinguished from Mabbett Type 6 by the smaller overall size and heavier lettering, and by the wider, more rounded 'C'.

The 'Missent' mark measures 60 x 8 mm, and now includes the Postcode.

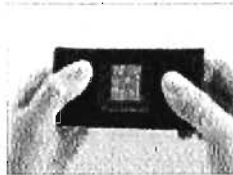
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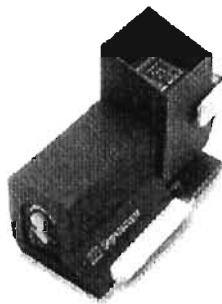
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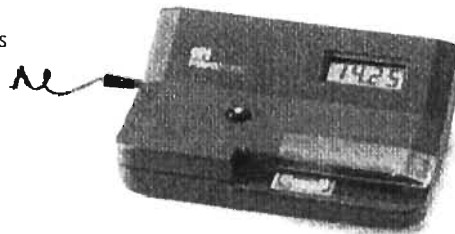
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# The Post Office of St Helena in 1889

Robert Johnson

I have selected a few more letters from the Government Archives in St Helena to follow on from the letters which were reproduced in *Cameo* Vol. 8 No. 1, October 2003 at page 38. The intention is to show what the Post Office in Jamestown did on either a regular basis or as opportunity demanded. The letters now reproduced relate to the latter and show the importance and authority of Royal Navy ships or foreign warships when they called at St Helena.

All the letters are incoming letters and no copies of the replies were found. All incoming letters received the c.d.s. of St Helena for the day of receipt [see page 45 of Vol. 8 No. 1].

## Letter No. 106

“Raleigh”, at Saint Helena  
9<sup>th</sup> January 1889

Sir,

I am directed by the Rear Admiral, Commander in Chief, to request that in the event of the mail steamer leaving Cape Town on the 16<sup>th</sup> instant, calling at Ascension after leaving here, that the rear Admiral’s despatches and mails for the “Raleigh” may be sent on to her in Ascension instead of being taken out here to be sent on in HMS Wye to Sierra Leone. The bags would be addressed to the care of our naval Agent who has been communicated with on the subject.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servant, Frank E.G. Dent, Secretary  
[To] The Postmaster General, Saint Helena

## Letter No. 107

HMS “Raleigh” at St. Helena  
9<sup>th</sup> January 1889

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday’s date. Your kind offer with regard to officer’s letters would be very convenient to us, and a man will be sent at the times mentioned.

Mails for Ascension may be sent on board at any time that is convenient to you, before 5.0pm on Saturday.

I have the honour to be Sir, Your obedient servant, W.H. Hawkes, Captain

[To] S.P. Young, Acting Postmaster, St Helena

## Letter No. 108

The Postmaster, Saint Helena

Will you please note that all mails or parcels for HMS Raleigh addressed either direct or to my care, which arrive here on 21<sup>st</sup> instant, are not to be landed, but sent on direct to Ascension by the same mail steamer.

The Admiral intends to wait the arrival of the steamer at Ascension.

[signature illegible] Capt., Naval Agent

9<sup>th</sup> January 1889 [St Helena c.d.s. JA 10 1889].

## Letter No. 109

Admiral’s office Simon’s Bay

Friday [it is not clear whether in fact this letter was written off Jamestown - the St Helena c.d.s. is JA 11 1889 but in my view it must have been].

Dear Sir,

The Admiral desires me to inform you that it is his intention to leave this tomorrow afternoon at 4pm instead of 6 and requests that everything you may have for Ascension, may be sent on board by 3pm.

Our mails will be sent to you by the same hour.

Believe me, Yours truly, Frank Dent, Secretary

### Letter No. 112

General Post Office, London

20th December 1888 [St Helena c.d.s. JA 21 1889]

Sir,

I beg leave to acquaint you that, according to a communication received from Paris, the Bordeaux - Irun Travelling Post Office will despatch on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January, 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of March next, mails for the French War Ship "Caledonien" at St. Helena, to be embarked at Lisbon on board the packets conveying the British mails to the Cape.

I have to request that, on the arrival of the mails at St. Helena, you will be so good as to have them sent to the French Consulate for delivery thence to the "Caledonien", which is expected to call at St. Helena during the first fortnight of April.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servant, Edw. H. Rea

[Note: Edward Hugh Rea is shown in Whitaker's Almanac for 1888 as being an Assistant Secretary in the Postmaster General's Office in London i.e. not in the Secretary's Office and not in the Foreign Branch and this would tie in with requests from foreign authorities for special dealing with military and naval mails. Mr. Rea received a salary of £1,200 pa or about £75,000 in today's terms so he held not an unimportant position in the Post Office. There were three Assistant Secretaries another of whom was the better known F.E. (Frederick Ebenezer) Baines]

*To be continued*

*A copy of the above text was forwarded to Geoffrey Osborn, an authority on Royal Navy Officer's letters, and Geoffrey kindly forwarded information of the two ships mentioned, HMS Raleigh and HMS Wye, and also an illustration of a cover from St Helena of 1875. They are reproduced below, with thanks. - Ed.*

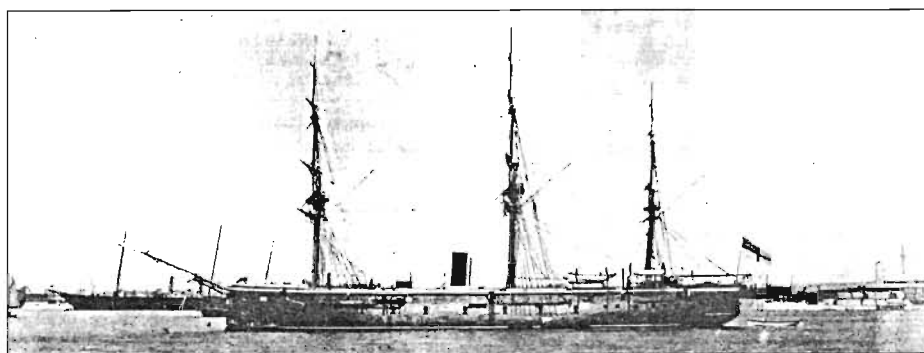


Fig. 1

HMS Raleigh with her fore funnel lowered

HMS *Wye*, 1370 tons was constructed by Osbourne Graham at Sunderland in 1873, and purchased 17 December 1873. She was sold 3 April 1906 to Adrienne Merveille of Dunkirk.

The cover illustrated (Fig. 2) is from Midshipman Arthur H.S. Elwes who was serving in HMS *Topaze*, but the envelope flap is embossed H. M. S. IMMORTALITÉ. However these two vessels, both wooden screw frigates, were together at St Helena from 14 - 21 April 1875 when they left in company for Ascension Island.

The Union Steam Ship Company's *Anglian* from Cape Town, calling at St Helena, landed the mails at Plymouth on 11 May. A Portsmouth backstamp is dated 12 May.

Fig. 2  
 Cover (at 90%)  
 from St Helena to  
 Portsea, Hampshire  
 1871 1/- deep green  
 paying 1/- Packet Letter rate  
 St Helena c.d.s. for  
 AP 21 1875



## Sierra Leone Kunso Post Office

### Frank Walton

Further to the earlier article in *Cameo* (Ref. 1), I have now unearthed a further example of the scarce Kunso office on a censored cover to New York, dated 30 November 1914. This extends the period of use by two years. The envelope has a printed return address of SUPERINTENDENT / AMERICAN WESLEYAN MISSION / KUNSO, SIERRA LEONE, WEST AFRICA and is addressed to Miss Ruth Smith at Falconer, New York. Our member Don Carter has been able to add further information from his father's notes from the period when he was a missionary in that part of Sierra Leone:

*According to my father, Rev J. Hal Smith served the Wesleyans from June 1906 to August 1908 and died in a gun accident in April 1915. Rev Smith had spent many years in Africa prior to this in the service of the CMA and he married Mrs. Anna Bordman of New York in 1906. Mrs. Bordman came out in 1902, then her husband died and she continued with the work a widow. At that time they moved to Kunso and he was appointed the Superintendent of the field until 1908 at which time they accepted work with the UBC mission in Sierra Leone.*

Since Rev G.H. Clarke was also from Falconer, New York and was at Kunso at this time I have an idea that Miss Ruth Smith may have been a sister to Hal Smith. When he was with the UBC mission he may have contacted her through the Kunso mission or perhaps Rev Clarke knew her and the Smith family back in Falconer. This could be the reason for the cover. Perhaps Clarke was trying to recruit Miss Smith or simply corresponding with her as an old friend.

#### Reference

1 *Cameo*. Vol.7 No. 5, p265-267

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# St Helena ½d ‘Badge’ with Inverted Watermark

Bill Thorpe et al.

*Cameo* Volume 8 No. 4, October 2004 p198 suggested that at least four sheets of this variety must have existed. I have been in discussion with several other members and acquaintances, and have been able to compile the following diagram, which shows the known incidences from each identifiable position.

In order to preserve their anonymity each contact has been identified by a letter, and the number of examples shown, for example, as ‘A 2’ indicating two copies recorded by person A. The sheet was printed in five rows of 12 columns, with each stamp position identified as a number 1 - 60.

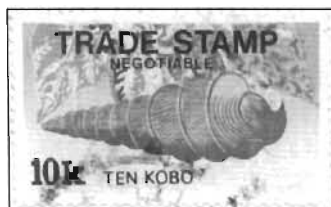
1 A 1 B 1 C 1	2 A 2 C 2	3 A 1 B 1	4 A 1 B 1	5 A 1	6 A 1	7 B 1	8	9 A 1	10	11 A 1 C 1	12 A 1
13 C 2	14 C 1	15	16 A 1	17 A 1	18 A 1	19	20	21 A 1	22 A 1	23	24
25	26	27	28 A 1	29	30	31	32 A 1	33 A 1	34 A 1	35	36
37 A 1 B 1 C 1	38 A 1 B 1 C 1	39	40	41 C 1	42 B 1 C 1	43 B 2	44 B 1	45 A 1	46 A 1	47	48
49 A 1 B 1 C 2	50 A 1 B 1 C 2	51	52 B 1	53	54 B 1	55 B 2	56 B 1	57	58	59 A 1	60

This shows that 4 examples are known from positions 2, 49 & 50, thus proving that at least four sheets must have been printed with the watermark inverted. Further incidences are welcome - please report either to myself or Barry Burns.

## Nigerian Trade Stamp Used for Postage

Ray Harris

In a recent purchase of off paper Nigerian stamps from the 80s and 90s was the item illustrated here.

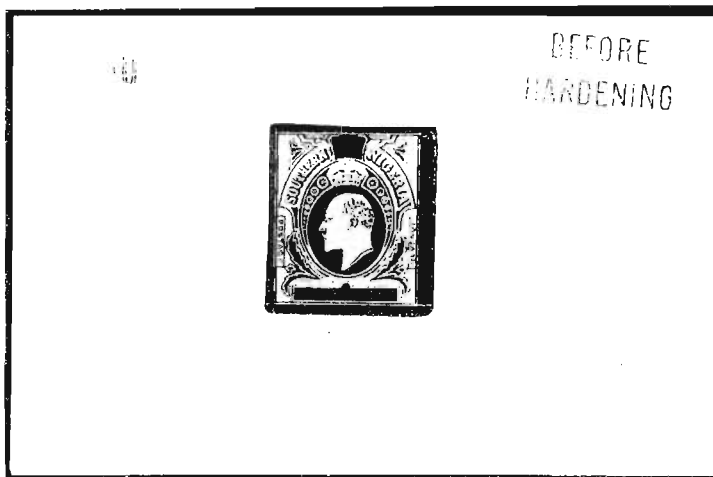


It is perf. 14, has the normal NIGERIA watermark and appears to have gone through the postal system. The cancellation, approximately a 30mm circle has some illegible text. It is possible that it is not an ordinary canceller, some ink blotches give it a somewhat toothed effect. Nigeria issued in 1987 a stamp with the periwinkle design; although the subject is the same this design is more stylised. 10k would have been a standard rate for a low value stamp in the 80s.

Does anyone know the origin of this stamp?

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| <b>ASCENSION.</b> 1938 3d in corner Plate '1' block of four. Unmounted mint. Rare. £300                                | <b>ST HELENA.</b> 1930 PPC to South Africa bearing ½d Badge pair, one with 'tom flag'. Rare commercial usage. SG 97b. £225       |
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| <b>NIGER COAST.</b> 1893 1/- on 2d (Type 11 in violet). The scarce Setting 'A'. Very fine mint. SG 37(A). £300         | <b>ST HELENA.</b> 1922 8d Badge corner Plate block of four with 'broken mast'. Very fine mint (variety unmounted). SG 105a. £120 |
| <b>NIGERIA.</b> 1936 set of 12 perforated 'SPECIMEN'. Very fine mint. SG 34s/45s. £125                                 | <b>ST HELENA.</b> 1925 8d Badge (pale shade) corner Plate block 'cleft rock'. Very fine mint (variety unmounted). SG 105c. £120  |
| <b>NIGERIA.</b> 1938/51 set of 15 perforated 'SPECIMEN'. Very fine mint. Rare set complete. SG 49s/59s. £150           | <b>ST HELENA.</b> 1927 2/- Badge corner Plate pair with 'cleft rock'. Very fine mint. SG 108c. £200                              |

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# Benin - Lagos *Vapeur* Service

John Mayne

*This article was originally published in the Journal of the France & Colonies PS, March 2005, and is published here with permission. I apologise to the author and our readers, however, for the very poor quality of the illustrations (at 80%) - all our scanners seemed to dislike these cards! -Ed.*

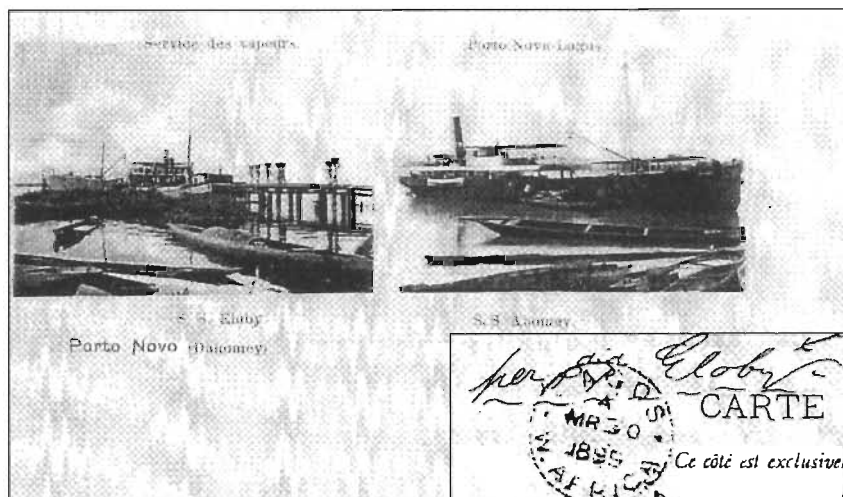


Fig. 1, left  
unused postcard of  
SS Eloby & SS Abomey

Fig. 2, below  
postal stationery card  
'per SS Eloby



This piece is a supplement to the article by Bill Mitchell and Laurence Lambert *French West Africa - Benin - The Early Years* in *Journal* 230 of December 2003.

Members know from previous articles of my interest in Togo 1884 to 1922; I do however from time to time stray across the borders into Dahomey and Gold Coast!

I hold items from Togo 1884-1914 passed by hand to Dahomey for collection by Chargeurs Réunis or Fraissinet et C<sup>ie</sup>. I also hold mail from Togo to Lagos which passed through Dahomey - this I thought passed by hand throughout its journey. The article by Bill and Laurence stated that mail was carried amongst the lagoons *by pirogue* - dug-out canoe - and this partially explained how mail passed so quickly.

At the International Postcard Fair in August I bought a mint postcard (Fig. 1) illustrating two ships, SS *Eloby* and SS *Abomey*, which operated a *Vapeur* Service between Porto Novo and Lagos. This was news to me! I suspect the card was printed in the early 1900s. The purchase coincided with the arrival of Lugdunum Philatélie auction catalogue, which showed a Benin 10c single postal stationery card (Fig. 2) from Porto Novo 28.3.1898 to the wife of M.A. Denton, Governor of Lagos (I hold Togo cards to the same address!), and endorsed *per SS Eloby*. The illustration is from a copy provided by the auction house, to whom I am indebted.

John Garner has written about the *Vapeur* service in the Mekong Delta in Indo-China, but I had not appreciated that a similar service operated in this area of West Africa. I believe a service may have operated in Senegal but I have seen nothing to confirm that.

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# Missent Ascension Mail 2004/5

Barry Burns

It was widely reported in the UK press that some mailbags containing Christmas Mail for Ascension Island had been missent to Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. Having previously met the Ascension Island Postmistress, Iva Henry, I sent an e-mail asking for any information and, hopefully, an example or scan of the missent mail. I was delighted when she sent the following message and a couple of covers (in return for a small donation to the Island's Tsunami appeal) which I can illustrate below.

*...Yes, we have had problems from the end of October/early November (2004) with Royal Mail. They apparently had made some changes to their sorting processes and totally disrupted the service to Ascension Island. Our mail was going to Asunción in Paraguay and Georgetown in Guyana. We are getting the mail returned to the UK (as we have no direct flights from those countries) but it is taking a while...*



Fig. 1 (top right)

Cover from UK 30.11.04 missent to Georgetown, Guyana with boxed (33 x 12 mm) MISSENT TO / GUYANA in black

Fig. 2 (above)

Reverse of cover from UK missent to Asunción, Paraguay with double circle (41 mm) c.d.s. of 22.11.04 in black, and Georgetown, Ascension Island receiving c.d.s. of 25.01.05  
Front of cover has missent to Guyana mark, similar to Fig. 1, so this well travelled cover visited both Paraguay and Guyana!

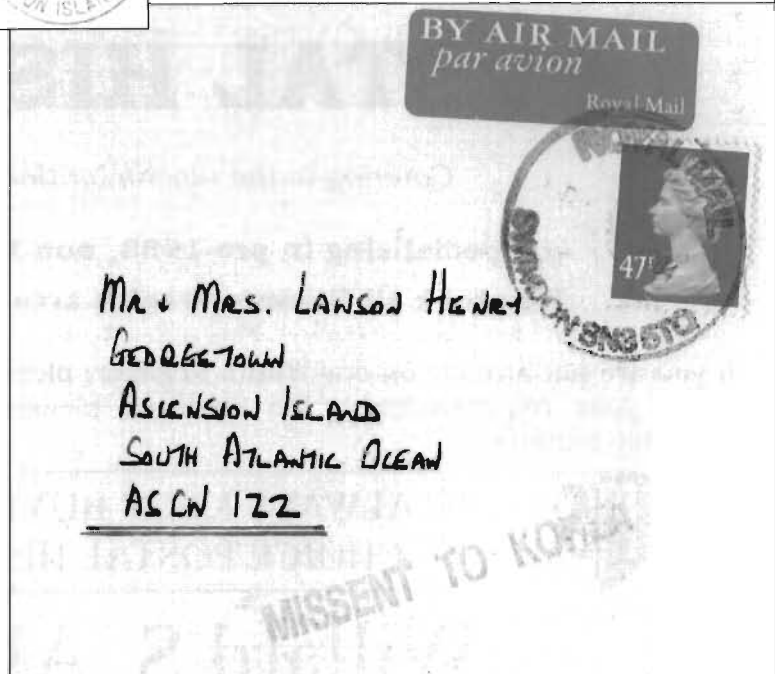


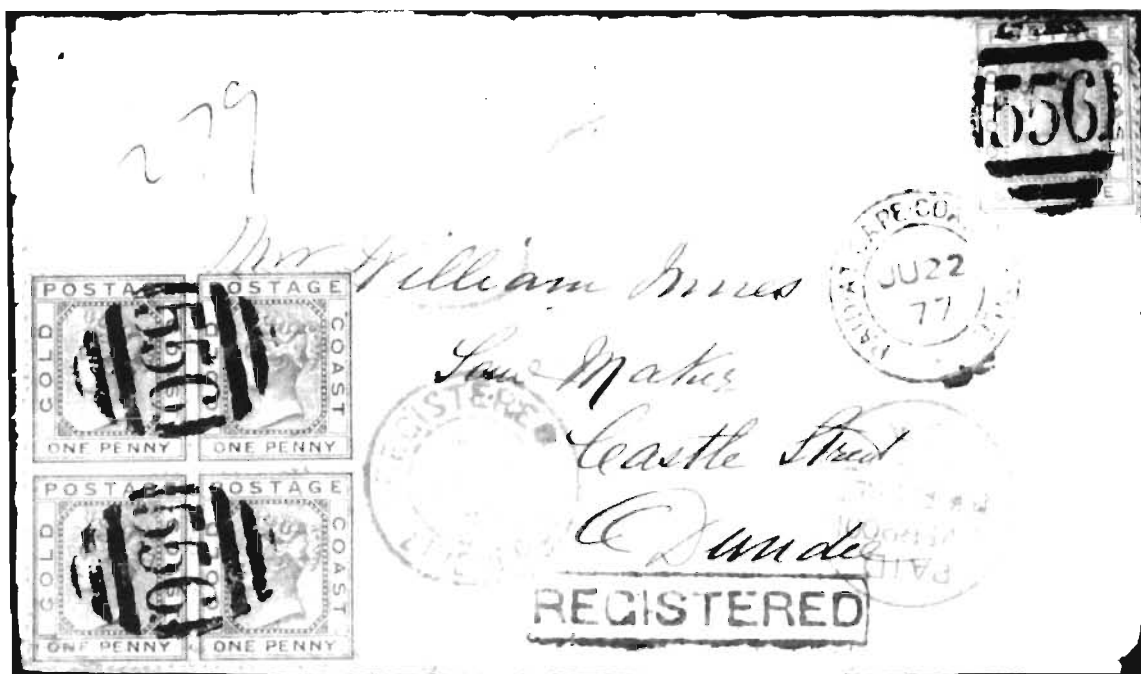
Fig. 3 (above right)

Cover from Swindon, UK, clearly addressed correctly, but for some reason sent to Korea (presumably South!), and receiving the 53 mm straight line MISSENT TO KOREA in violet

*All 3 illustrations shown at 80%*

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