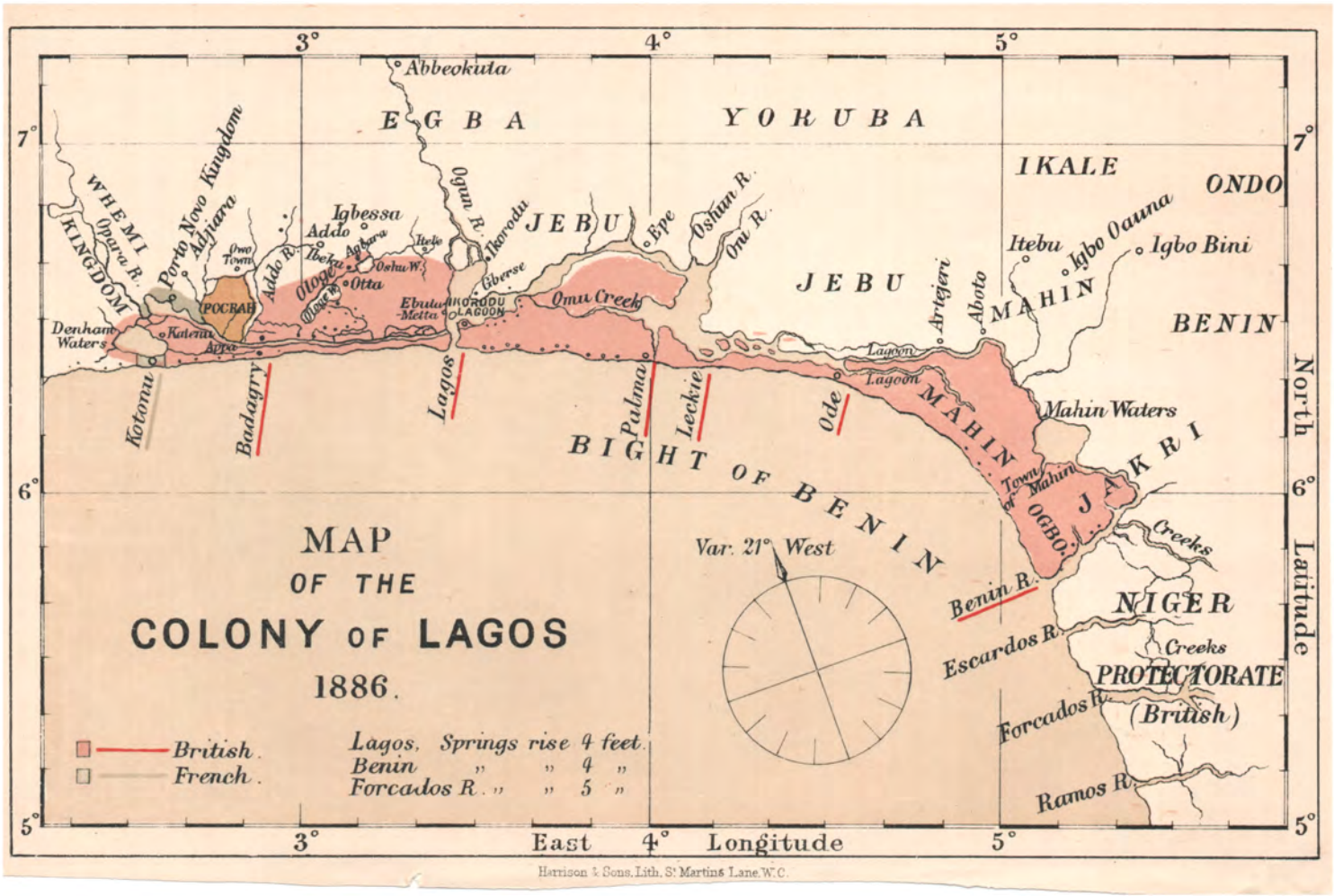
The Lagos General Post Office

Lagos has been a commercial and administrative centre for hundreds of years. This display starts with a brief history of Lagos before focusing on its postal services and, in particular, the cancellations used at the Lagos General Post Office (GPO).

Lagos history

Lagos nowadays is the name given to a Nigerian State which runs along the coast of Nigeria for approximately 115 miles from its Western border with Benin (formerly Dahomey) to Agerige in the East. During much of the 19th century Lagos town was restricted to Lagos Island, which was an important trading centre occupying a strategic position beside the only reliable channel between the Atlantic and a network of lagoons which run from Cotonou in the west to the mouth of the Benin River in the east. The lagoons, sheltered from the wilder ocean waters, provided an important means of transportation before and after colonial times.



Lagos history continued

From the time of the 1833 Abolition of Slavery Act in Britain, the British government was increasingly concerned to stop the trade, and Lagos Island, as an important slave-trading centre, came under increasing pressure. In 1851 Britain bombarded Lagos, and though they replaced the Oba with a man they hoped would be a more compliant ally and installed a consul, slaving continued. In 1861 Britain annexed Lagos which became a British colony.

Although there was no immediate drive to expand the colony, one thing led to another, and British influence spread inland, signing ‘protectorate’ agreements with local rulers. By 1906 Lagos held sway over territory stretching over 120 miles inland.

Lagos merged into an expanded Southern Nigeria on 1 May 1906, which in turn merged with Northern Nigeria to form one nation of Nigeria in 1914. Administratively Nigeria was divided into provinces, and Lagos became part of the Province of Lagos Colony.

Meanwhile Lagos town outgrew the limited space of the Island and gradually absorbed settlements across the water on the mainland side of the Lagos lagoon: Ebute Metta, Yaba, Ikeja etc were all swallowed up by the expanding city.

From independence, while Lagos was still Nigeria’s capital, it was administered separately from Western State, as a Federal Territory, then in 1967 Lagos State was formed, encompassing more or less the same area as the old Lagos Colony.

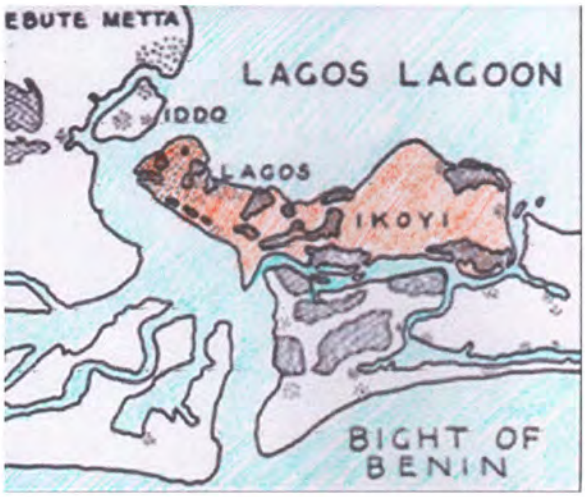
Today Metropolitan Lagos expands to the north well beyond the boundaries of Lagos State.

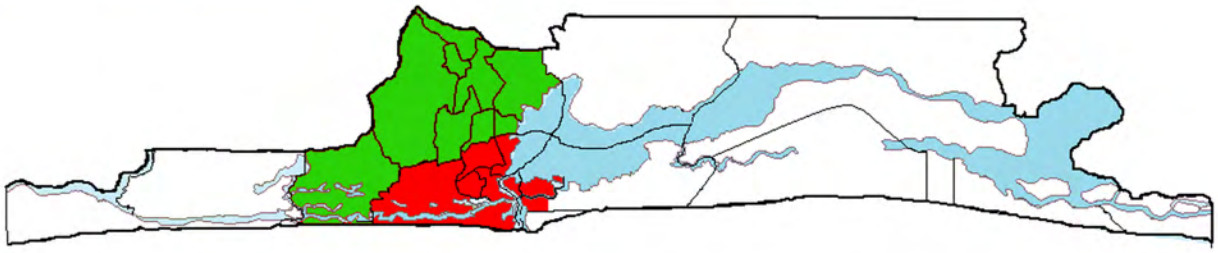
The maps on the next page give an idea how Lagos has changed over the past 200 years.

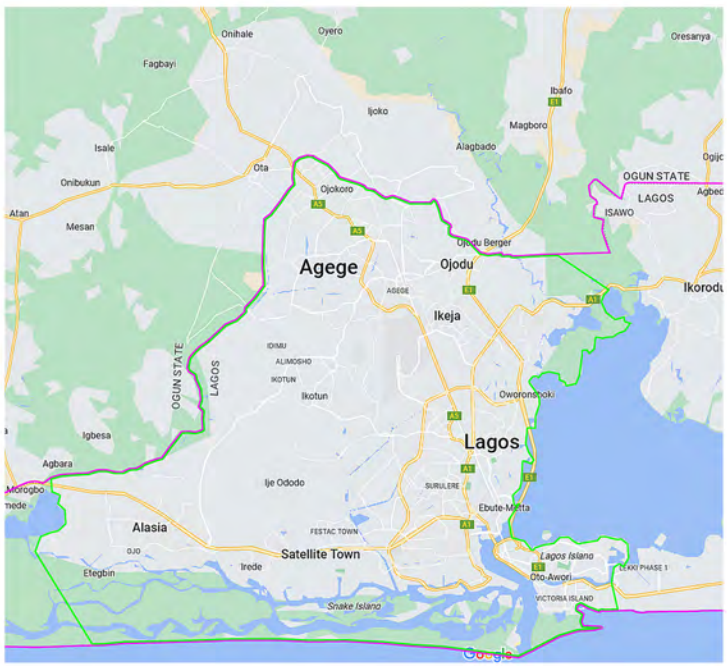
Lagos maps

On the right, modern Nigeria, showing 36 states plus FCT, with Lagos State in the lower left corner. Below shows Lagos Island c 1800 (in orange). Grey areas are swamp.









The map above shows modern Lagos State. Red shows the LGAs (Local Government Areas) of the initial city of Lagos, green the LGAs of Lagos Metropolitan Area.

The map on the left shows built-up areas in grey, extending beyond both the Metropolitan Area (thin green line), and the boundary of Lagos State itself (purple line)

The Lagos postal service

From 1849 mail services to Lagos, previously unscheduled, began to take place approximately monthly, via naval packet to Sierra Leone. In 1852 a fairly regular monthly contracted ‘packet service’ began, calling at Lagos en route for Fernando Po.

Lagos mail was handled by a ‘packet-agent’, initially the British Consul. In 1858 permission was given to sell British stamps to pre-pay postage, and the first pre-paid postage was collected in Lagos in 1859, after the arrival of the first Lagos canceller in March that year. The first Lagos Postmaster was appointed in July 1862, and the Lagos Post Office became officially independent of London GPO control 11 months later.

Post Office services up to 1887 were conducted from the Lagos Customs and Treasury offices (in Balogun Street?), followed by relocation to Glover Memorial Hall on Marina in 1895. All those buildings have long since gone, though a modern Glover Memorial Hall building exists in a new location in Customs Street.

Lagos GPO has been based on Marina ever since, from 1913 in a series of purpose-built premises.

Originally a smart example of tropical architecture fronting onto the ocean the GPO building today looks rather shabby, and reclaimed land carrying the Lagos Island Ring Road stands between it and open water.



Lagos GPO buildings



The Post Office building at the corner of Balogun St and Marina, with the tracks of the old Lagos steam tramway visible in the foreground

Glover Memorial Hall, built in 1887 in honour of the second governor of Lagos Colony, Sir John Hawley Glover.





An imposing classical facade for the Lagos GPO building on Marina before it was replaced with the modern building shown on the next page

Lagos GPO buildings continued



The postcard above shows the view from the sea. Lagos GPO is to the left of the REA tower. The mid view comes from a 1970s postcard when the building was new and smart. Below, copied from Streetview c 2020, shows the buiding looking tatty, with concessions at street level. It faces reclaimed land dominated by storage and the elevated ring road.





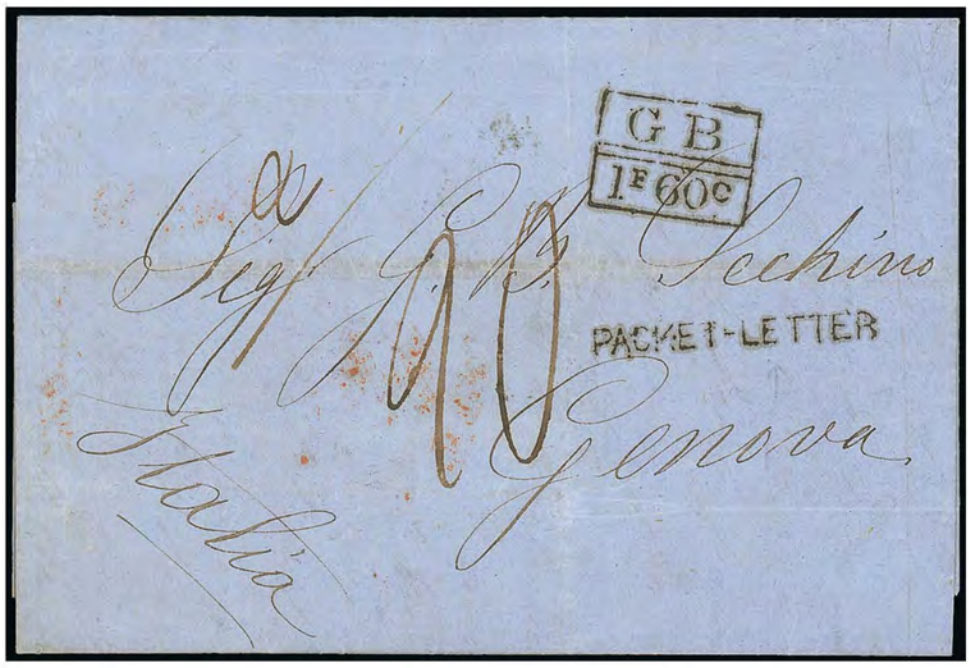
The cancellations - an introduction

This presentation concentrates on Lagos General Post Office. I have somewhat arbitrarily included all cancels shown in Proud under ‘LAGOS’, and a few other cancels which were not clearly applied at some other place. Thus LAGOS ON BOARD is described, but LAGOS HARBOUR is not, and nor are LAGOS BO, LAGOS BBO, or any of the mobile or TPO cancels. Given the size of the postal operation in Lagos, which was also a major outlet for mail going abroad by ship and air, it is highly likely that some cancels showing simply ‘LAGOS’ were applied elsewhere, such as Ikeja, as transit cancels.

In describing pre 1914 cancellers I have used the numbering given in Ince and Sacher (IS), cross referenced to the types illustrated in Proud. I have added L or S after ‘IS’ to make it clear whether the canceller is Lagos (IS-L) or Southern Nigeria (IS-S). To save space, I have also often used the term canceller to include handstamps.

Mail 1852 to 1859

Up to 1852 mail services were patchy, depending on passing ships or (from 1849) an unreliable naval packet service. In 1852 Britain instituted a monthly packet service, carrying mail to and from Plymouth. Mail was then forwarded, with postage collected at destination. IS report ‘Apart from the substantial Secchino correspondence to Genoa, mail to and from Lagos prior to the British occupation in 1861 is very rare.’ Here's an example from the 2016 Spink sale of John Sacher’s collection. Sent on 8 February 1859, rated "20", showing framed "gb/1f.60c", straight-line "packet-letter" and, on the reverse, London (11.3), Paris (12.3) and arrival (14.3) datestamps.



The first handstamps

In 1859 the first handstamps were sent out from Britain, but it was not until 1874 that the first Lagos postage stamps came into use. Meanwhile, although British stamps were authorised for pre-payment of postage from April 1858, no Lagos covers have been recorded pre-paid this way: known covers were all sent to be paid for on arrival. However, they could now start their journey bearing the impression of a Lagos handstamp.

Three handstamps are known. The earliest, IS-L 2 (Proud D1), a CDS with code B, was sent in February 1859 and is first seen on a cover dated February 1860. See image below.

The Impression books show the same canceller with codes A and C, but those codes have not been seen on mail (the code C image in Proud comes from the Impression books). Examples exist in black and blue/black Last recorded date is November 74



This image, from the 2016 Spink sale of John Sacher's collection, is the earliest known use of IS-L 2. code B, with handstruck "d6" and, on reverse, "liverpool/br. packet" (12.3) and arrival (13.3) date stamps. The cover includes an original letter from Samuel Crowther.

Crowther was a remarkable man, born in Oyo state, enslaved when he was 12, liberated mid-Atlantic, and then settled in Sierra Leone. He became an Anglican missionary (taking the surname Crowther), translated the Book of Common Prayer into Yoruba, and rose to become Bishop on the Niger. He died in Lagos in 1891, aged 82.

The first handstamps continued

The cover below shows IS-L 2, this time in blue. Sent on SP 10 62 to Tenerife, it bears a charge mark of 8R, '4d' in pencil, and on the reverse a Tenerife CDS dated 30 SEP 62. With a journey of 20 days, the letter was presumably dropped off at Tenerife by the mail packet en route for Plymouth.





The wax seal on the reverse (shown below the cover) shows the name of the sender, Pedro Martins Jambo. Jambo was born in Bahia, Brazil, and was a slave trader. In the 1850s he attempted to settle in Lagos, and knowing of his activities elsewhere on the coast, at Ouidah (to the west of Colonou), the authorities began moves in 1854 to expel him.

The Portugese legation in London appealed, on the grounds that he was legitimate trader in palm oil, and that the authorities simply wanted to preserve a British monopoly. Although the minister stated 'The fact that he trades in palm oil doesn't prove that he is not also a slaver', the date on this letter suggests that he was still resident in Lagos in 1862.

The first handstamps continued

IS-L 1 (Proud PD1) was sent to Lagos in February 1860, but is not known in use at Lagos until December 1971. It is an undated indicator that postage has been paid, so usage information relies on covers bearing some other indication of despatch.

Pre-paid postage for mail sent from Lagos to countries other than Britain became obligatory in March 1859, but prepayment for mail to Britain was optional until the first Lagos postage stamps became available. Postage due or paid pre-1874 was indicated on the envelope by accounting marks. IS give a date of 10.12.1871 for the first use of IS-L 1 as handstamp, and 25.10.75 for its first use to obliterate the new postage stamps. Examples are known in black and red.



The cover image above comes from the Sacher collection, ex the "Nuttall" correspondence to Manchester, marked "per Lagos S/S", showing IS-L 1 and the IS-L 2 cds alongside dated August 1892, red crayon "5" over "2/7", straight-line "registered" h.s., "paid/liverpool/br. packet/4e" c.d.s. (3.9) and "registered/liverpool" double-ring d.s..



The example on piece may well come from a letter to the same Mrs Nuttall, to judge from the fragment of the address shown. The IS-L 2 cds shows it was sent on January 4th 1892 and the red BP PACKET stamp shows that it took four weeks to reach Liverpool.

The first handstamps continued

IS-L 3 (Proud D3). This unusual datestamp is said to have been ordered by the acting Postmaster JB Carroll. Known only as a handstamp, and generally used with blue/green ink. Recorded use dates are from 22 11 69 to 8 2 73.

The example below takes the form of a double page of flimsy foolscap carefully folded and stuck down on the reverse. The sender is a M. F G Carrena, and in it he writes (in French) to his bankers, Pastre Freres of London, asking them to pay £35 owed by the sender to two British merchants. Pastre Freres were part of the Anglo Egyptian Bank, which was eventually absorbed into Barclays.

The letter is dated 12 December 1869, and the cds reads 12 DEC 69. The London arrival cancel is dated JA 15 70, and the bank has noted arrival on 15 JAN 1870.



Finally, IS mention type **IS-L4** which was reported (but not illustrated) in the Robson Lowe Encyclopedia, but of which no verified examples have since been seen.

The first true Lagos cancellers

Although handstamps could also be used to cancel stamps to prevent their re-use, and IS-L 2 was used as a canceller for a bried period after Lagos received its own stamps, the first instrument designed primarily as a canceller was **IS-L 5** (Proud D5 and D6) sent to Lagos in 1873. This simple CDS is known with code A and with code B.

IS-L 5 with code A is known used as a handstamp and as a canceller. Code A exists in at least two distinct forms: one **(IS-L 5A)** is 20mm in diameter, with the L and S 16mm apart, and the O almost perfectly round (use dates 23 MY 73 to 22 FE 89 - see **1** and **5** below).

The other (**IS-L 5B**) is 21mm in diameter, the L to S is 17.75mm and the O slightly oval in shape (**2** and **6**). IS-L5B is much scarcer (use dates 14 MY 84 to 24 MY 86). Proud D6 is a reasonable drawing of IS-L 5A, but while D7 gives an oval O, the L to S is only 16mm.

IS also mention a version 22mm across, recorded in use 1883/4 (not seen by me), but an example of IS-L 5A *with an oval O* is shown below (**8**). Given the 16-year use history of IS-L 5 it would not be surprising if several copies of this CDS existed. I've not seen examples cancelling a stamp between late 1875 and mid 1887, which is consistent with the use of killer obliterators from 1876 onwards (see next page).

I**S-L5 with code B** is known only as the IS-L 5A type (**3**), and only used as a canceller, between 16 JU 74 and 30 OC 75. Despite this limited date-range it is not uncommon. Examples also exist which are missing the central date information (**4**). IS speculate that the undated cancel was applied as a security measure on letters received, pending the application of a dated CDS to the cover when the bag for the mailboat was made up. The code letter was clearly removable, as the example with B reversed (**7**) shows.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

The ‘killer’ obliterators

I**S-L 6** (Proud K1) was the first of the ‘killer’ obliterators, known in use from FE 76 to AP 82. The main purpose of ‘killers’ was to make sure that the stamps on mail could not be re-used. Mail with killer cancels generally also has a CDS applied elsewhere on the envelope to show where and when the letter had been posted.

The example below, from the John Sacher sale, showing red crayon "5", handstamped with IS-L 5A, dated JA 26 77, with red "paid/liverpool/br. packet/3a" (1.3) datestamps with arrival c.d.s. on reverse. The single stamps show IS-L 6 on a range of values.





IS-L 7A and **IS-L 7B** (Proud K3 & K4 and K2 & K5) were killer cancels with 9 and 8 bars respectively. Examples are shown on the next page. Proud’s 2 images for each type suggest that there was more than one canceller in use for each of the types identified in IS. Over- and under- inking can make it difficult to be sure of the dimensions, outline, or even the number of bars on a given example.

Known dates derive from covers which usually also carried a CDS. For 8 bar: 30 JY 80 to 8 AU 00. For 9 bar: 13 MY 87 to JU 25 98,

The 9 bar type was used from around 1905 onwards, at both Lagos and Ibadan to cancel loose letters which made it into the sorting office without a CDS.

The ‘killer’ obliterators continued

The card below shows a clear example of the 8 bar killer cancel IS-L 7B) on a UPU formula Lagos postcard to Danzig (then in Germany). The killer obliterates the ‘stamp’ while a strike of the IS-L 5A CDS shows DE 30 85. The card went via SS Mandingo to Britain, and then on to Danzig, arriving on 3 February 1886.



The cover below shows a rather more typical killer strike, in which the impression is not as clear as one might like. The CDS, (IS-L 9A) shown lower right, is on the reverse. The upper stamp shows a heavy strike - was this the same instrument or another one?







Killers, CDS and CTO

Through most of the period 1876 to 1895 killer cancels were applied to the stamps and a CDS was applied elsewhere to show posting details. There are examples of the CDS applied to the stamp during this period but they are not common. By 1894 the practice of providing CTO (cancelled to order) stamps to satisfy collector demand appears to have been well established, and whole sheets were converted to ‘used’ with strikes of whatever CDS was to hand (killer cancels would be understandably less popular with collectors wanting clear copies). CTO was widely used on Oil Rivers and Niger Coast stamps, but was also practiced at Lagos. A particular example of this concerns the ‘half-penny on 4d overprint (SG 42).

Used examples are common, and most of them carry an IS-L 8 cancellation. However, although covers with SG42 are scarce, all the examples I have seen, on cover or piece, bear killer cancels, with a strike of IS-L 8 elsewhere to show date.

It is highly likely that all or almost all SG42s bearing a CDS (see example on page 16) are CTO. This would be consistent with the large number that have survived, and also has implications for dating. Dates shown on a CTO are not necessarily the date when the canceller was applied. Niger Coast examples sometimes show dates before the stamp concerned was issued.



The cover image above, courtesy of Tony Plumbe, carries 10 copies of SG42, paying for a Registered letter to London (2d for Registration, 3d for the letter). The orange 3 shows the amount due to the colony. The stamps are obliterated with 9 bar killer cancels. The reverse bears a CDS (IS-L 8) showing journey time to Liverpool of 31 days.

The other small Lagos CDS cancels

IS-L 8A and **IS-L 8B** (Proud D8). Both IS types are 21mm diameter, but differ in the distance between the corner of the L of LAGOS and the top left-hand corner of the W of W. AFRICA. In 8A the distance is 4mm, in 8B it is 3 to 3.5mm. The Proud image would seem to be 8B.

Known use dates are 2 JY 87 to OC 16 96 for 8A, and 31 AU 91 to DE 3 96 for 8B. 8A is also known with the code letter A lying sideways. The cover shows of IS-L 8A, used as handstamp in association with 8 bar killer cancels, on a cover to London via Liverpool. The CDS from the rear of the cover is shown alongside. Beneath the CDS is an example of IS-L 8A on a loose stamp and a drawing of the cancel.



Below are a drawing and three examples of IS-L 8B, one of which (on the SG 42) is almost certainly CTO usage. The right-hand stamp shows the A sideways variant of IS-L 8A.



The other small Lagos CDS cancels cont

IS-L 9A and **IS-L 9B** (Proud D10 to D15). A detailed account of the IS-L9 cancellers is given in *Cameo* #104 p113 (June 2018) '*Reflections on the use of letter codes in Lagos cancels*' By Paul Redhead and Svein Vikhamar. We concluded that there were at least 5 visually distinct type 9 cancellers, separable by diameter and letter code, and that there were probably others too which could not be reliably told apart. That is not surprising given that type 9s were in use for 8 years in a busy post office.

We assigned A and B cancels from 1895 up to mid 1889 to IS-L 9A. They are over 23.75mm in diameter, while those from January 1890 to December 1904, (assigned to IS-L 9B) are usually below 23.6mm, and can be as low as 22.8mm. The L to W distance (between the corner of the L of LAGOS and the top left-hand corner of the W of W. AFRICA) tends to be a little less in the pre-1890 examples but this is a less reliable difference. The canceller without letter code is not known before March 1904. Code B can be found in its normal position facing right, or facing left, or on its back or on its front.

The cover below took 5 weeks to travel to New York via Liverpool. The loose stamps are IS-L 9A (Codes A and B). A is quite scarce. The 2 drawings show the differences between IS-L 9A and IS-L 9B, examples of which are on the next page.









IS-L 9A



IS-L 9B

The other small Lagos CDS cancels cont

The images below show examples of IS-L 9B: Code A, Code B, and no code. The cover shows an example of B facing downwards. The reverse of the cover carries a London CDS, showing that it took 23 days to get from Lagos to London. Next to it are examples of B facing left and B facing up.



A



B



No Code



B Down



B Left



B up

Last in this group of smaller Lagos cancels is **IS-L 12** (Proud D6). It is fairly common, but both authorities mention that it may have been used primarily, if not exclusively, to obliterate stamps used on telegraph forms. There are plenty of examples from the 1950s onwards of instruments from Telegraph and Savings Bank counters being used to cancel mail, so dual use is quite possible, though I've not seen this cancel on cover. The examples below show IS-L 12 on a range of values, and one, to the right, missing time information







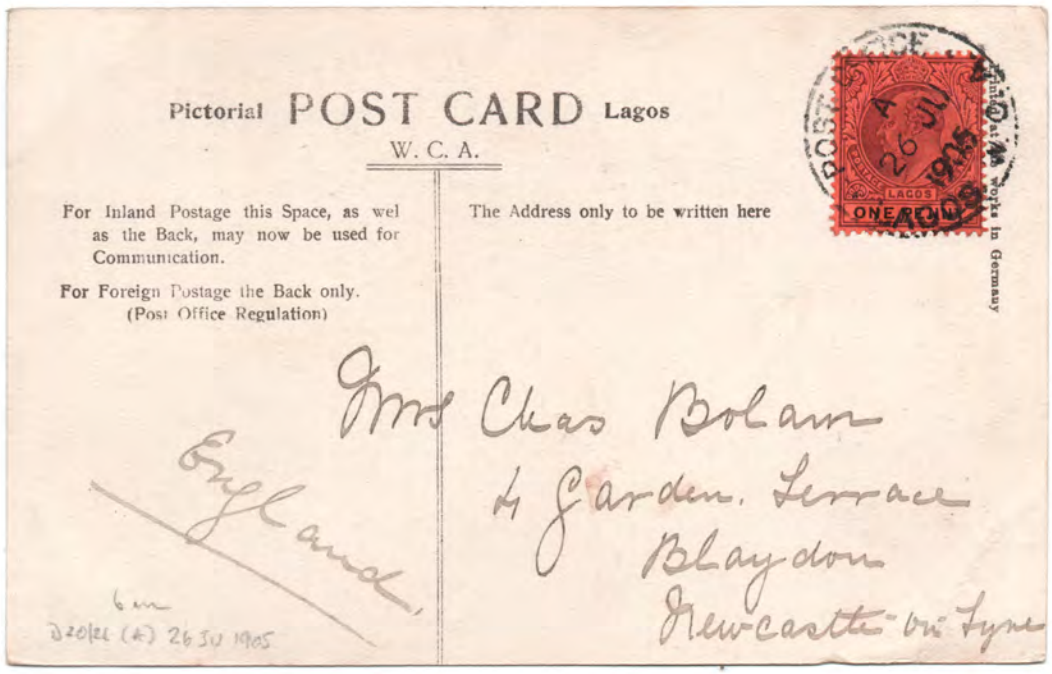


The IS-L 15 cancellers

IS-L 15A (Proud D18-D21). The IS-L15 'family' of cancellers (see IS-L P15B and IS-L R15B below), came into use in late 1904 (1905 for 15A), as the IS-L 9 cancellers were being phased out. They are larger, and contain a code letter which probably indicated the time of day. Code letters from A to F and no code are known.

There were several 15A cancellers: IS mention diameters from 27.5 to 29.5mm, though the range I've seen only covers 27 to 28mm. Another feature of difference, not mentioned by IS but clear from examples (and shown in Proud) is the distance between the foot of the P in POST and the tip of the L in LAGOS. This is either 8mm or 6.5mm. Both were is use in December 1905, though only the 6.5mm continued to January 1906.

IS-L 15 cancellers or the closely related !S-L 13 and 17 were also introduced to a number of other offices in Lagos Colony: the Branch Post Office at Catholic Mission Street, at Abeokuta, Badagry, Ebute Metta, Epe, Ibadan, Shagamu, Otta etc. The card below shows the 6.5mm variety, code A. The front shows a Calabar chief. Below it are examples of other code letters for the 6.5mm variety





6.5mm L-P



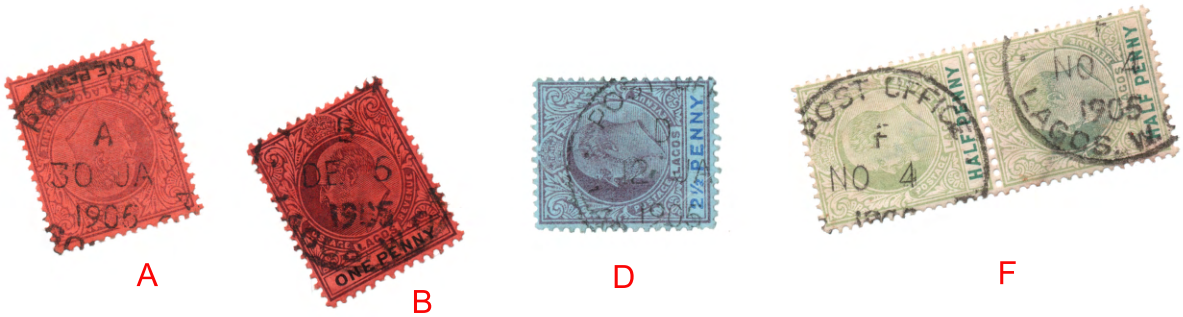
8mm L-P



The IS-L 15 cancellers continued

The card below shows an example of the 8mm variety, code C, used to cancel a philatelic item sent to Germany (the front features a scene from neighbouring Dahomey). Below it are some more examples of IS-L 15A showing different code letters.

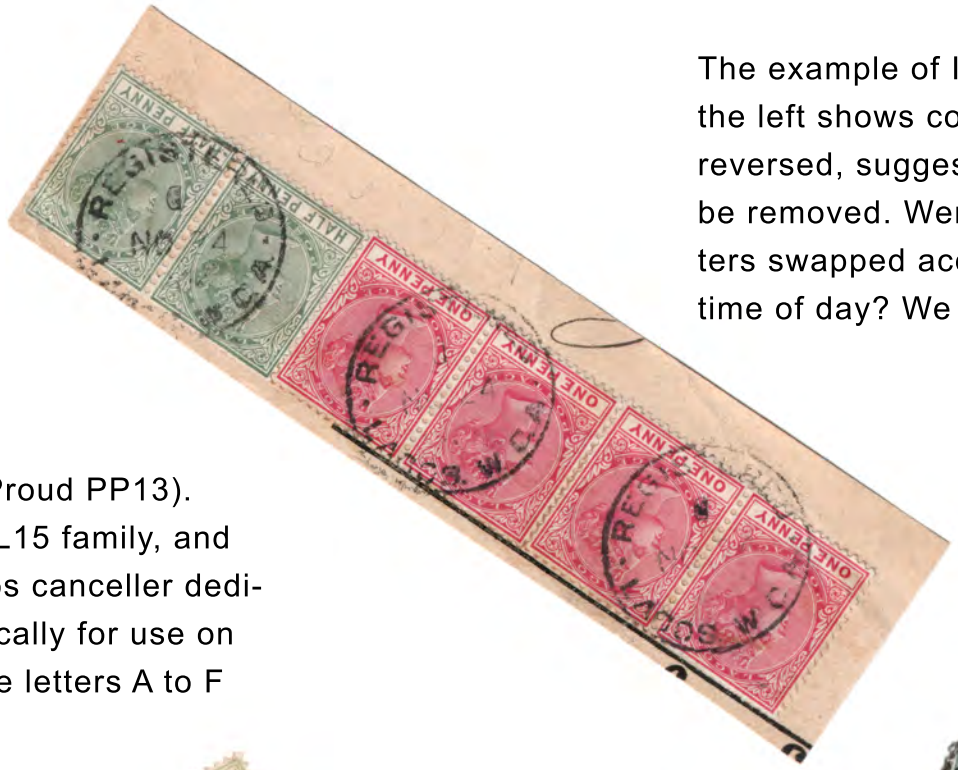




IS-L R15B (Proud R8). From the IS-L15 family, and the first Lagos canceller dedicated specifically for use on registered mail. Code letters A to F and 'no code' are known (only F in IS' time). Usage carried on to late 1906. The examples below continue on the next sheet.



The IS-L 15 cancellers continued



The example of IS-L R15B to the left shows code letter D, reversed, suggesting it could be removed. Were code letters swapped according to time of day? We don't know.

IS-L P15B (Proud PP13). From the IS-L15 family, and the first Lagos canceller dedicated specifically for use on parcels. Code letters A to F are known.



A



B



D



E



C



F

Official Paid

IS-L O10 (Proud PD3). This scarce handstamp was used on offical mail instead of a postage stamp. Use dates are known from May 1890 to September 1905. Single examples have also been reported with a code letter (E or F). See also an image of this handstamp on piece in IS (p46).



Lagos joins Southern Nigeria in 1906

The Protectorate of Southern Nigeria came into being on 1 January 1900, administered from Old Calabar. Lagos remained a separately run 'Colony and Protectorate', but it was only a matter of time before it joined the larger territory. When the merger was effected in May 1906, Lagos became the administrative centre for the 'Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria'. New cancellers were introduced al Lagos, but the old instruments continued in use for some time - IS-L 15A for instance was in use up to early 1907. Lagos postage stamps continued in use, in Lagos and elsewhere in Southern Ni geria, until stocks ran out.

IS-S 6A (Proud D24 – 28) was introduced at Lagos and Calabar in early 1907 (pre-1907 forged examples exist), and at other offices from 1908 on. Cancel diameter is 25mm, or 24.5mm for the later 'no code' examples. Code letters A to F and none are known. Codes C, D, E are scarce and known only from early 1907. Were they CTO, or time codes not used thereafter ? A, B, and 'no code' are common. Single examples in blue and in violet have been reported.

Only one of Proud's images shows the dot between SOUTHERN and NIGERIA, (it did not always print as the canceller became worn). The width of LAGOS varies between 14.2 and 15mm., and for the later 'no codes' it is closer to 13mm. This suggests several cancellers in use - but it would be surprising if there were not several instruments in a busy office. The example below shows an early use of IS-S 6A, on this cover 'SALVED FROM S.S.JEBBA'. Further examples of IS-S 6A are shown on the following sheet.



IS-S 6A continued

The top postcard shows IS-S 6A (no code) used as a transit cancel. The recipient, H.C. Edwards, worked for Paterson Zochonis in Abeokuta, and was a member of a postcard exchange club - the Cosmopolitan Card Club. *Cameo* v97 p48 contains an article *H Edwards, CCC postcards and Paterson Zochonis,* giving further details. The card is from a fellow member and shows a picture of the town square in Bad Warmbrunn. The lower card is philatelic (no message on reverse), and shows use on outgoing mail. Examples of other code letters are to the right.






B


C


D


E


F

The IS-S 7 cancellers

IS-S 7A and **7B** (Proud D30 – D34) were introduced to cancel general mail at Lagos in 1909 and continued in use until 1917, when they were replaced with similar cancels showing NIGERIA at the foot rather than SOUTHERN NIGERIA.

There were several IS-S 7 cancellers. 7A shows the year as 2 digits, 7B as 4. The 2 digits of 7A are central, suggesting that these were not cancellers in which the 19 is simply too faint to see. IS give three diameters for 7A: 26mm, 27mm and 28mm. My examples measure 27mm, 27.5mm or 28mm. Although the three Proud images are all about 27mm diameter, they show small differences in letter shapes, and there are certainly differences in the diameter of the inner circle, which varies between 18.5mm and 19.5mm for the 28mm examples. Clearly there were several similar 7A cancellers.

7B diameters measure 27.5mm / 18mm (outer / inner circles) - although IS give only 26mm as diameter. Proud's images shows different shapes for the S of LAGOS, though that is not an easy distinction to use in practice.

The card below, from the Edwards CCC correspondence, was sent from Algeria and features a photo of Old Algiers (and a French 5c stamp). The Lagos cancel is IS-S 7A, outer 28mm, inner 19.5mm. The two images to the right show examples of 7A which are also 28mm diameter but with 18.5mm inner ring.

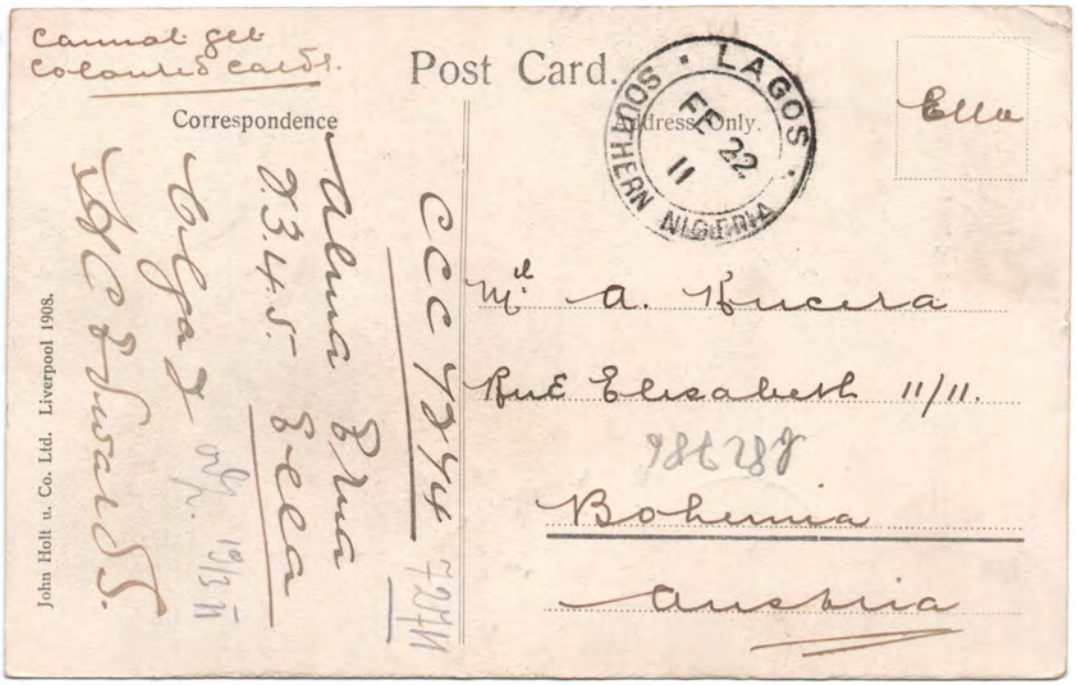






The IS-S 7 cancellers continued

The card below was sent by Mr Edwards to a CCC correspondent in Bohemia which was at that time part of Austria (and now in the Czech Republic). The card features a black-and-white photo titled ‘Seeing off the Steamer - Onitsha’, and carries 2 X 1/2d stamps (SG33b) cancelled Igbein Hill FE 21 11. The Lagos transit cancel is IS-S 7A 27.5mm diameter (inner ring 18.5mm). The 2 stamps to the right show another variant of IS-S 7A, with a 27mm outer ring diameter.







The cover below, sent to Zinder in Niger, shows IS-S 7B, with the 4 digit year. Mailed on FE 24 1914, the reverse carries a Kano (RH2d) cancel: ?? MR 17 and a Zinder cancel dated 12 MAR 17. The 2 stamps to the right show other examples of IS-S 7B.







Registered ovals

Following a Southern Nigeria pattern, Lagos adopted oval registered cancellers to use on stamps and to show transit through the GPO.

The first type, **IS-S R14A** (Proud R9), was used from early 1907, and has code letters A-E or none. The cancel is 24.5mm 'tall' and 31.5mm wide **without 'flanking dots'** (dots just inside the perimeter a little above the central axis). This canceller was only in use for about 3 years, though examples do exist after the introduction of type R14B.

Code A and 'no code' examples are quite common, other codes are scarce (and no example of C has been reported).

The cover below was sent by Charles Ungebauer, a German merchant trading in Lagos (who also happened to be a member of the Cosmopolitan Card Club). Simon Heap's article '*Charles Ungebauer; a German trader in Lagos'* Cameo v98 p71 describes his activities and unhappy end. The cover was sent to Brussels on 16 August 1907. Backstamps show it reached London on 13th September, and arrived Brussels the same day. The registered label was presumably added at London.



Registered ovals continued

The examples of **IS-S R14A** below show a range of code letters. Several examples of the same date have been seen for the scarce B and F variants.



B



D



E



No code



F

IS-S R14B (Proud R12 – R16) was introduced in early 1910 and carried on in use until at least 1922. As the number of Proud types suggests, there were several instruments. All are c. 26mm 'tall' but the width ranges from 31mm to just under 33mm, with mean value 32mm. There is no clear difference by diameter in usage dates. Oddly, no examples have been reported between 1912 or 1913. **All have flanking dots** (which may be very faint) and no code. Proud mentions forgeries dated 7.8.13.



IS-S R14B continued

The three examples on piece below (and LH one which is a scan from a cover) give some idea of the variety of canceller widths and how wear affected it over time.



Parcel cancels

IS-S P8 (Proud PP14) This large (30mm) cancel is difficult to find clear examples of (in the nature of the uneven surfaces presented by most parcels?), so perhaps it is not surprising that the image in Proud is not accurate: especially the missing dots between PARCEL and POST, LAGOS and SOUTHERN, SOUTHERN and NIGERIA. The latter dot is also missing from the IS drawing. Known use dates are from January 1907 to September 1915. The ekd in IS is given as 1904 - impossibly early, and probably a typo for 1907.







Parcel cancels continued

IS-S P9 (Proud PP3) This cancel is undated, and there is no confirmed pre-1914 usage,. It known on S Nigeria stamps as well as Nigeria ones, but of course S Nigerian stamps continued in use for a time after amalgamation. Seen in black and violet.



IS-S P10 (Proud PP15, JP5) Included here because the cancel shows SOUTHERN NIGERIA, though no pre 1914 usage known (known dates: June 1919 to October 1923). The images in Proud, Jones and IS all differ. Jones' is incomplete and Proud shows side dots, whereas IS (and egs seen) have (tiny) crosses at the side. The drawing at left is a composite from seen examples.



Official Paid

Proud **PD4** – an OFFICIAL PAID handstamp with LAGOS SOUTHERN NIGERIA and date at foot. It is scarce, and is not mentioned in IS. An example in red with smaller letters has been reported. Use dates 1907 to 1916. Proud has a good image on p181.



One Nigeria, from 1914

Southern and Northern Nigeria amalgamated on 1 January 1914 to form one Nigeria. At first the new state used pre-1914 cancellers, but new instruments were soon introduced.

Difficulties with multiple cancellers of the same general design, which produce identical or almost identical cancels increase, and in practice attempting to discriminate on the basis of tiny differences in cancels, which are anyway potentially worn or distorted, is not possible. Thus only differences which seem to be reliable (consistent and measurable) are worth assigning to separate types. That process inevitably remains somewhat subjective.

The period covered by Ince and Sacher ends, and this account now switches to the type numbers used in Jones' *The cancellations and postmarks of Nigeria 1914-1960.* Proud type numbers are in brackets.

J1 (D37) came into use shortly after amalgamation. It has widely spaced letters and is similar to the Northern Nigeria JN4, but without a Maltese cross at the foot - Proud's D38 is most likely an incomplete drawing of JP5 (see later). Use dates May 1914 to October 1916.

Jones mentions a version in which LAGOS is close-spaced, dated MY 5 14 Not seen by me but entirely possible if the canceller design allowed letters to move (as is the case with JN4).

Examples of J1 are shown below.

