

Peter Rolfe Kenilworth Display: Sierra Leone

WW2 Censorship and Military Mail

When I learned that Jeremy was bringing some Sierra Leone censorship items, I thought it might be interesting to show Peter's examples alongside them.

As I am by no means an expert in the field, I have made use of Jeremy's *West African Censorship* book, along with the Daynes & Lutwyche monograph on Air Letters and Honour Envelopes (so don't blame me for my mistakes!).

This handout aims to be a brief summary of the topics, intended primarily for those of us who, although not experts, have nonetheless acquired censored and military items over the years, possibly without fully appreciating all of their features.

PQ, 12.8.25

WW2 Civilian Censorship

Three main groups of civil censorship handstamps were introduced in 1939. Type 1 is an unframed "Passed By Censor", which comes in various sizes; type 2 a boxed Passed By Censor with a number from 1-12; type 3 consists of Censor plus a number (again 1-12) enclosed in a small oval. Type 1 peters out after May 1940, but types 2 and 3 continue into 1942. A rule of thumb I learned once at Salisbury is that, in general, the higher numbers are scarcer.

The type 5 unframed Crown over Passed over QQ/1 or QQ/2 made a fleeting appearance in July-August 1942, but was supplanted by the Type 4, in which these elements were enclosed in an octagonal frame. Numbers QQ/1 through to QQ/5 are known, of which no.4 only appeared in 1945.

The QQ code was just for Sierra Leone and appeared in handstamps and tapes.

The first type of tape simply bore the words "Opened By Censor", printed in black on white paper. This came in four different fonts, designated types 1a - 1d. Occasionally handstamps of types 2, 3 or 8 (type 8 was just Q.Q. followed by a number) were applied on top of the tape, and these are highly rated in *West African Censorship*.

Tape type 2 is printed in red on blue paper. It is inscribed "Opened By Censor" in much larger letters than type 1, above a small "H. Ltd.". This has also been found struck with handstamps of types 2, 3 or 8. Type 2 tapes were used between November 1941 and the end of 1942.

After this point, the tape inscriptions were altered to read P.C. 90 / Opened by Examiner / QQ/number. There were three formats, types 3-5, all printed in black on cream paper. Types 3 and 4 exist with type 8 handstamps struck underneath the tape.

WW2 Military Censorship

The two main types of RAF marking were the trapezium (type R10), used during 1942, and the square (type R11), used from 1942 onwards. Both exist with a wide range of censor numbers and struck in various colours.

The three main army types were the triangle (types A200/201) 1940-42, crown over circle (type A500) 1942-44, and the crown over shield (type A600) 1944-5.

The main naval type was the tombstone, type N100.

Military Envelopes

Standard British air mail letter cards and air letters were used from 1 October 1941, alongside examples printed locally in West Africa. The first local type (WA.01) was printed at Cape Coast, but its use in Sierra Leone (as with several of the later types) has not been recorded by Daynes & Lutwyche. A Forces Letter Card with a distinctive diagonal red cross (type WA.02) was used 1942-43, unfortunately the postmark date is not clear on Peter's example. Later types (WA.03-WA.09) were inscribed Army Form W.3077.

From 1943 onwards, privilege air letters were issued once every four weeks to service personnel. These were exempt from unit level censorship, but could still be inspected by a base censor. They bear a bold triangle on the front, an honour certificate on the back, and, apart from a provisional overprinting on a standard issue air letter, are inscribed Army Form W.3077.A (types WA.10/11).

When air letters were produced for civilian use in 1944, the printers used the military design, and the initial run included the Army Form W.3077 inscription.

Active Service Honour Envelopes were printed in green and inscribed A.F. W3078 in the upper left corner. All the examples recorded by Daynes & Lutwyche come from a single W.A.P.S.S. printing dated 1/43 (type WA.20)

Postmarks

Two Field Post Offices operated in Sierra Leone. FPO 41 had two different datestamps: with and without serifs in the 41 (Walton 301.01-.02). The FPO 537 datestamp is sans-serif (Walton 302.01).

Between 1910 and 1929, Garrison Mail postmarks were used at an office located at Wilberforce Barracks. Single circle postmarks appear from July 1945 onwards, i.e. after the war in Europe and Africa had finished (Walton 320.04). Recent research by Crabtree indicates there were two devices, with slight differences in the alignment of the lettering. By 1959 there was a forces counter at the GPO Freetown (Beale).

Civil Censorship

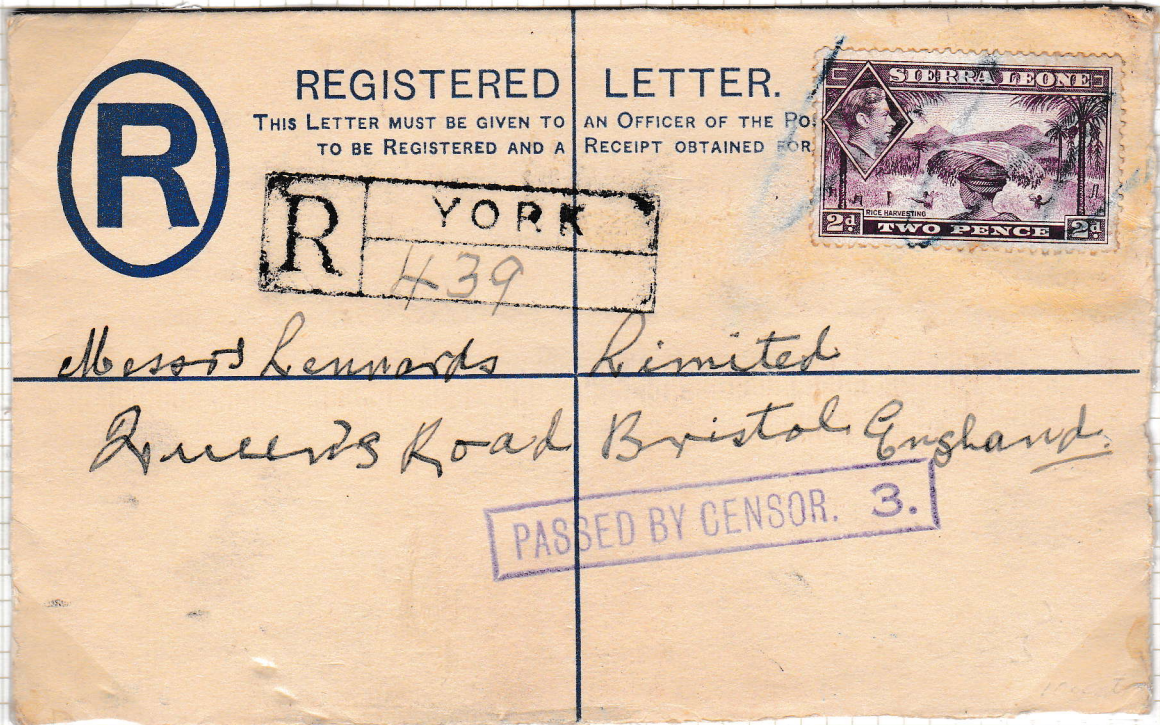


SIRROD 17 LINE TYPE 1a

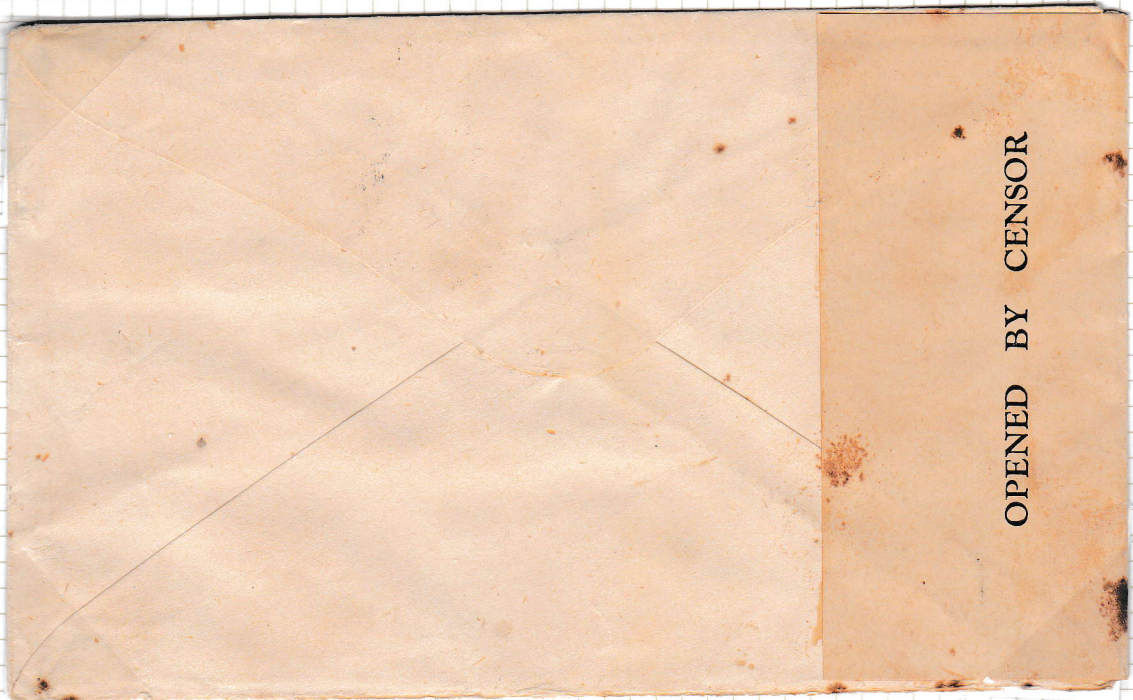
30 SEP 39 10 10 20

Civil Censorship
Type 1 handstamp
55 x 3½ mm
30 Sep 1939

Type 2 Label no. 3. Registered at York but no York postmark.
Backstamped Waterloo 0C 12 39 and Registered G.P.O. 13 0C 39.



Saved Type 2 No 3 Registered York Oct 30



Type 2 Label no. 3. Freetown 18 0C 41.
Censor tape type 1d. 52x3mm.

18 0C 41

H.C.L. Mission
Kailahun S.L.
BOARD S.S.
AMERICAN-WEST AFRICAN LINE, INC.
17 BATTERY PLACE, NEW YORK CITY



PASSED BY CENSOR. MAINE.

Sister Mary Rosanna Jr.

~~179 Somerset St.~~

~~Bangor Me.~~

St. Edward's
Convent

~~St. Xavier's
Convent~~

VJA

Bar Harbor, Maine

Ledgeslow, Ave.

Type 2 label no. 3. Freetown 21 07 41.
American-West African Line envelope.
Redirected from Bangor ME to Bar Harbor, ME,
Censor tape type 1b 48x3mm sans serif.

OPENED BY CENSOR

Type 2 Handstamp no. 10.
Makene FE 27 40 to USA.
Unclaimed, returned to Freetown
Returned Letters Branch 24JU40.

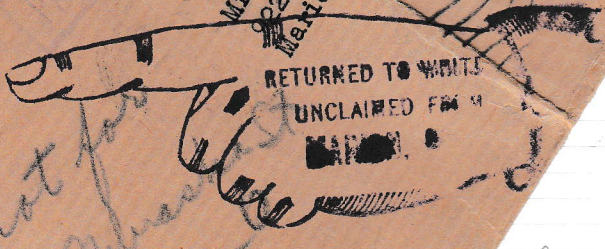


APR 1 1940

13



Mr. Clarence Huffman, jr.
221 Harmon Street,
Menton
Indiana, U.S.A.



RETURNED TO WRITER
UNCLAIMED FROM
MAY 1940

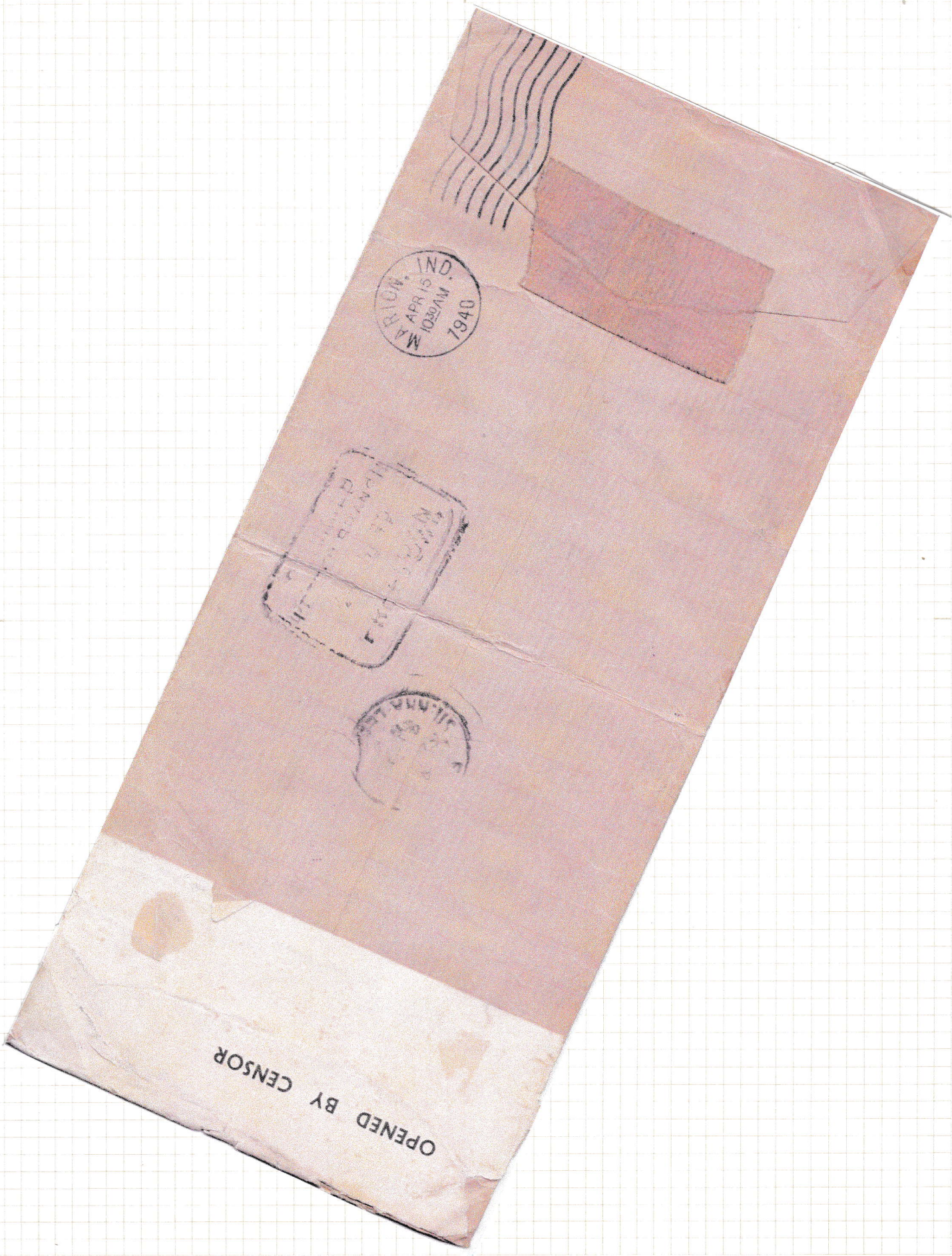
R. JAMES DECKER
Makeni, Sierra Leone, W. A.

not for
2103507

Postmark MAKENE FE 27 40

Cancel - 10 - TYPE 2 HANDSTAMP
and Taper Type 12

Various US postmark markings



OPENED BY CENSOR

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



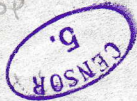
Mrs. Q. C. Twin.

38 Pinfield Road.

Hunts Cross.

Twickenham

England.



Written in England.

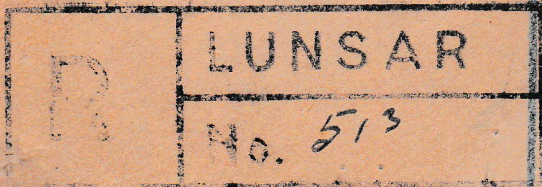
Tape type 1a

OPENED BY CENSOR

Type 3 Handstamp no. 5.
Freetown 22 NOV 39 to UK.
Censor tape type 1a 50x2 1/2 mm.

The School of Accountancy,
2, West Regent Street,

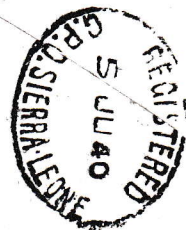
Glasgow, C.2,
Scotland.



Small Date Time No 10 JUL 40 LUN SAR

Type 3 Handstamp no. 10.
Registered Lunsar 1 JUL 40
via Port Loko and G.P.O. Freetown
to Glasgow

From:) A.H. Dumbuya,
C/O S.L.D.C.,
P.O. Box No7,
Marampa Mines,
Freetown.

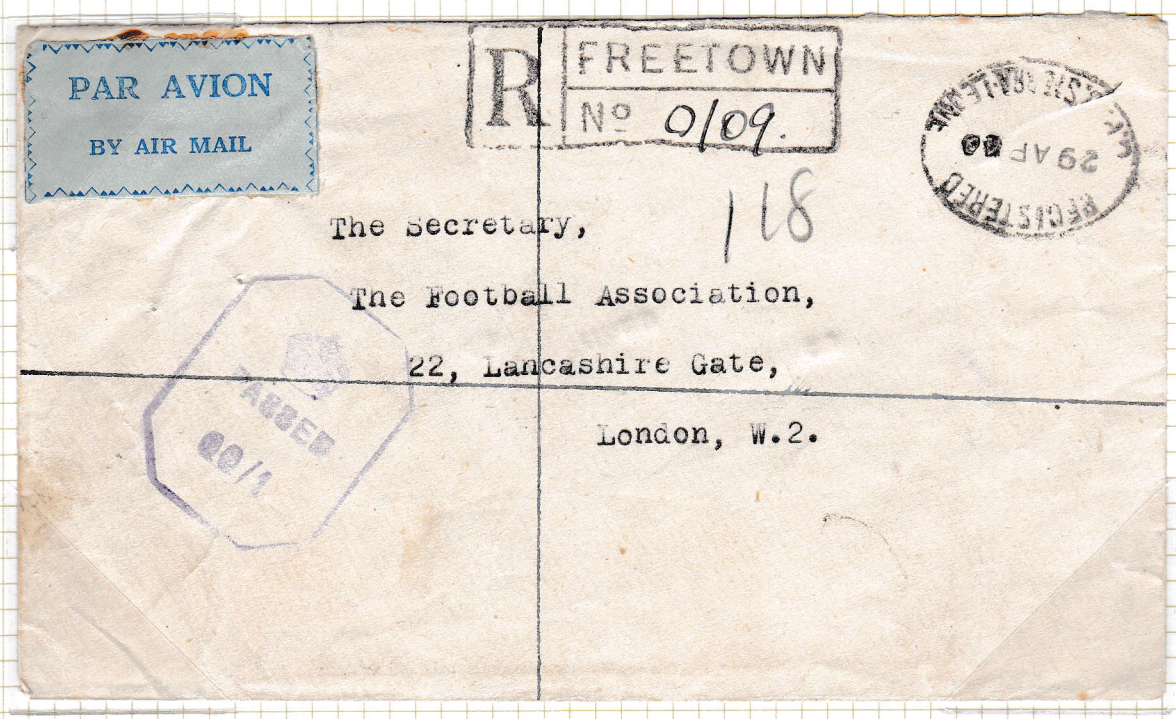


15th Feb 1943 from ^{Civil Control} Crown / Passed / QQ
Type 4 QQ1

Type 4 Handstamp 1943 = 1944-QQ1



29th April 1944



Edwards 1 AUG 1942
Lotts 22 MAY 1945

18th SEP 1944

TYPE 4 - QQ/2

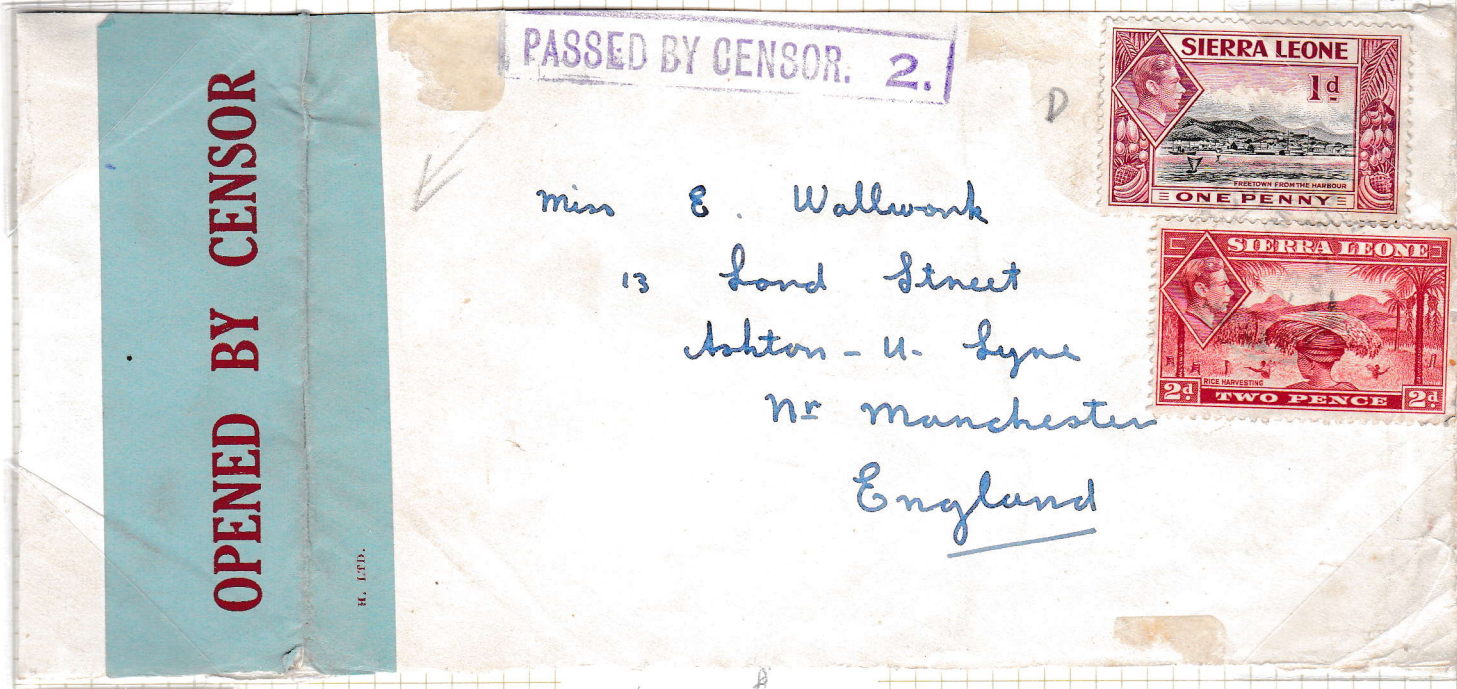
Type 4 Handstamp QQ/2 1944



Fromed QQ/2 FREEBORN 18 SP 44

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND, 2000

Censor Tape type 2. Two shades of blue.
Light blue date unclear.
Dark blue 12SP42.



42
2
H. LTD.



Censor Tape type 3
QQ/16
14 SP 42

OPENED BY EXAMINER
QQ/16

Wt 9948/L58 20M 4/42

Rec'd 9/10/42



Mr. G. H. Mallory,
4, Britannia Terrace,
Salisbury by the Sea,
England.

P.C. 90

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND, 2000

Censor Tape type 4.

QQ/33

24 FEB 44

**OPENED BY
EXAMINER QQ/33**

From:- H.C. Elliott, Street,
8, Smythe Street,
Freetown.

AIR MAIL



MESSRS THE TURNER, TANNING MACHINERY CO. LTD.,
BRAMLEY,
LEEDS.

P.C. 90

Censor Tape type 4.
QQ/36
9 FE 44.

OPENED BY Y
EXAMINER QQ/36

R. C. Colebough

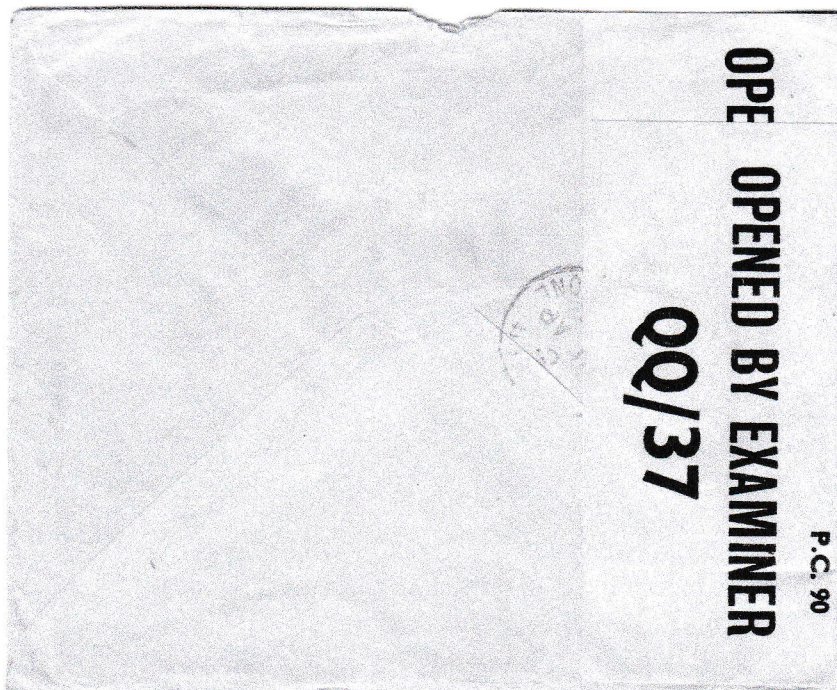


Mrs N. Colebough.
8 Pettingell Terrace
Daltry Street
Heale Road.
Hull
East Yorks

P.C. 90
C. 90

England.

Gbangbaia 4s. airmail rate to U.S.A.
Censored and LATE.



Censor Tape type 5
QQ/37

WV
T
19
Coosa (part)

EXAMINER 1243

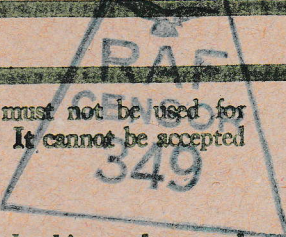
F. 773078.

J. & Co. Apsey.

ACTIVE

SERVICE

[Crown Copyright Reserved.]



Envelope must not be used for
duables. It cannot be accepted
ation.

[Up to three letters may be forwarded in
this Cover, but these must be all from the
same writer. The cover should be addressed
in such case to the Base Censor.]

Correspondence in this envelope need
not be censored Regimentally. The
writer is liable to examination at the
Base Censor.

SIERRA LEONE

Address:—

Mr. & Mrs. F.B. Dawson,

13, Covingham Road,

Wembley Park, Middlesex,

ENGLAND.

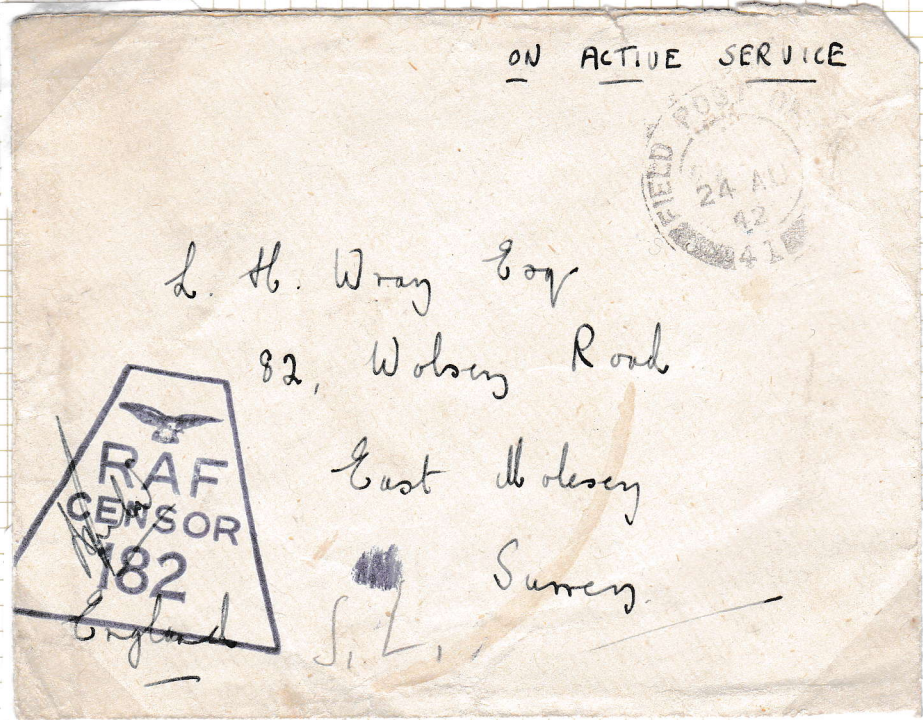
A following Certificate must be
sent to the writer:—

I declare on my honour that the contents
of this envelope refer to nothing
concerning and family matters.

J. Fullin.

6/920

RAF Trapezium mark type R10. FPO 41 19 FG 42 sans-serif.
UK-printed Honour Envelope



ON ACTIVE SERVICE



L. H. Wray Esq
82, Woburn Road
East Molesey
Surrey



D.K., FPO 41 24 AV 42 serifed 41. Earliest recorded date.

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND, 2000



M1-170
 TYPE A
 15 JY 41
 T100
 TYPE
 15 JY 41
 TYPE
 20 MR 41



Army Censor type A200 triangle,
 FPO 41 15 JY 41 sans-serif. Earliest recorded date
 Bo 20 MR 41.

BY AIR MAIL

AIR MAIL
LETTER CARD

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS CARD
WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL



Post to Mrs

*Law Hengest
Belstone
Okehampton
Dorset
England*

WHEN FOLDED THE LETTER CARD MUST CONFORM IN SIZE AND SHAPE WITH
THE BLUE BORDER WITHIN WHICH THE ADDRESS ONLY MAY BE WRITTEN

British Air Mail Letter Card
FPO 41 with serifs 30 APR 43
Weak crown over circle Army
censor mark, type A500.

FORCES LETTER CARD.

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS CARD WILL BE
SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

Air Mail



Mrs A Conie

87 Bolton Road

Silsden

Keighley

GT. BRITAIN

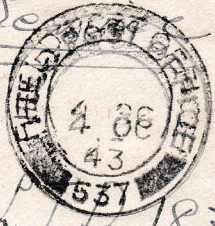
WHEN FOLDED THIS LETTER CARD MUST CONFORM IN SIZE AND SHAPE
WITH THE BLUE BORDER WITHIN WHICH THE ADDRESS
ONLY MAY BE WRITTEN.

Diagonal red cross WA 02.02 overlay invert
Date 16 SP, almost certainly 1942.
Army Censor No. 3024.



On Active Service

England



Lea & Perrins, Ltd, 183,
Midland Road Worcester
England



537 Sierra Leone

Field Post Office 537

4 DEC 43 - Censor No 3426

FPO 537 4 DEC 43. Not recorded without code.
Army Censor No, 3426.

Naval Handstamp

Naval Handstamp Type N150 Tombstone.

Received slogan without cds portion

In 18 18



In 308 9 MARCH 45



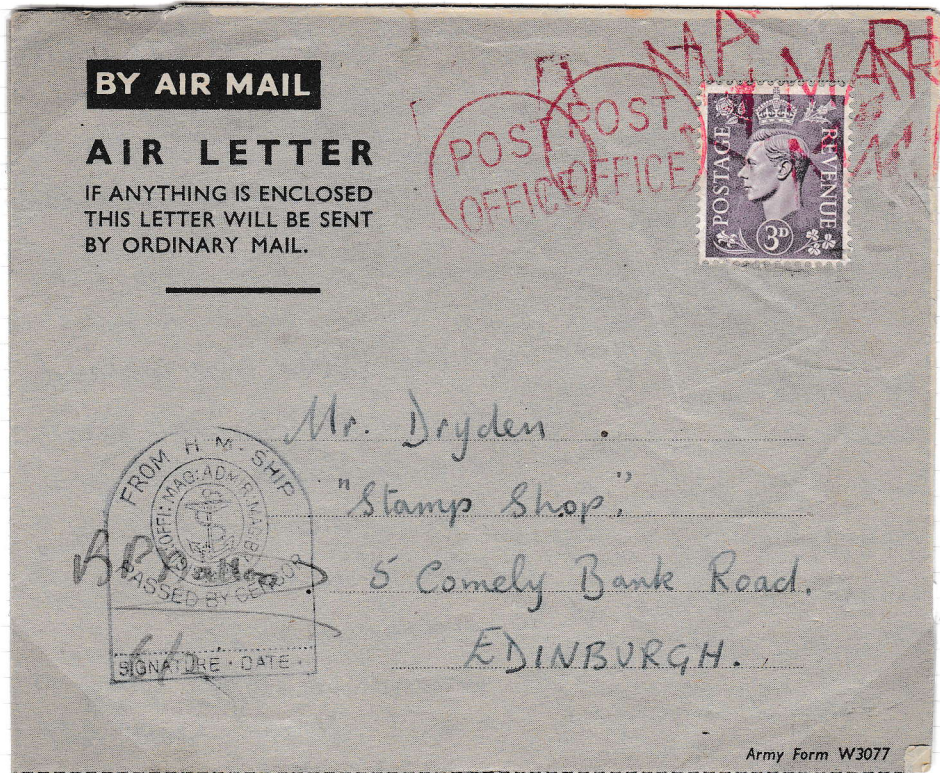
1942-50 Army Form W3077 - LEE TYPE KI

SUB-TYPE

A1/Va

ISSUE REF.

51-8073 (3)



CANCELLED POST OFFICE MARITIME MAIL
CENSOR MARK TYPE N.109 DATED 6/2 1945

SUB-TYPE

AAA/1

ISSUE REF.

T51-9200



POSTMARK FIELD POST OFFICE 41 20 AP 43 (WALTER TYPE 301.61)
CENSOR MARK TYPE A500 (NO. 3074)

1946 ARMY FORM W3077A - LEE TYPE PKI

Issue Ref. 51-8474(2)

BY AIR MAIL

AIR LETTER

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS LETTER WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

FORCES MAIL

Affix 3d. British Stamp here

SIERRA LEONE
8th JUNE 1946
POSTAGE & REVENUE

GARRISON MAIL

168

Second fold here

Army Form W3077A

To open cut here

The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:—

I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

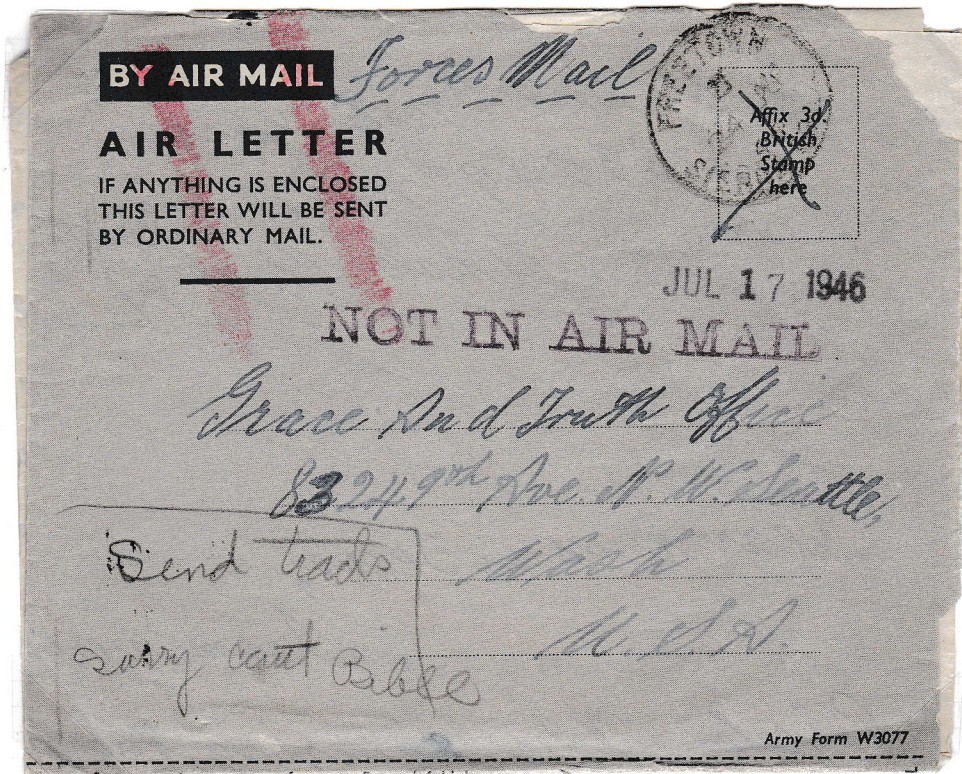
Signature }
Name only }

POSTMARK GARRISON MAIL 28 NO 46

British Privilege Air Letter

PRINTED AND MANUFACTURED BY THE ROYAL PRINTING WORKS, WARREN STREET, LONDON, W. 2.

LEE TYPE AAA II



POSTMARK FREETOWN D 24 JU 46

From February 1945 air letters to UK were free,
but supposedly not to USA.
This item appears to have gone by surface but was not charged.
The postmark is a poorly struck 035.37, Freetown B

BY AIR MAIL

AIR LETTER

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED
THIS LETTER WILL BE SENT
BY ORDINARY MAIL



On Active Service H.M.T. "Thysville"
During WW2

Mrs. Hunsel-Hungge
Van G. Du Gony
Belpaestra, 72 Berchem
Antwerp
Belgium

Postmark FREETOWN B 1 MAY 46 035.37

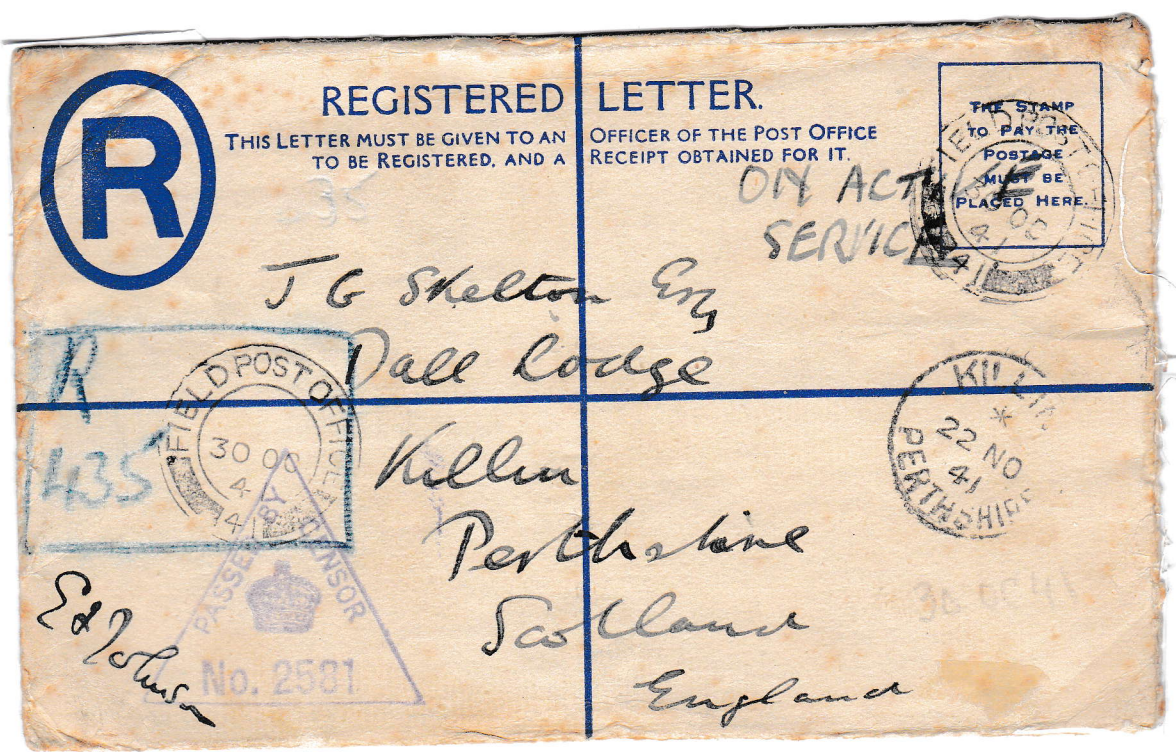
On Active Service H.M.T. "Thysville"
During WW2 was operated by the Belgian Govt.
in exile on charter to the Allies.
Bought by MoD in 1947, scrapped 1953.

WW2 Forces Post Offices

FPO
B 2222
FPO
537
9 AP 45



1941 FPO 41 registered to KILLIN



November 1945 Forces mail, reg. to UK.
3d registration Fee.
FPO 41 and Garrison Mail cds.



The boxed registration marking was originally employed on the Freetown - Bo T.P.O. but was reused at the Garrison Branch Office.