

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

The Gambia is a narrow strip of land 450 kilometres long and approximately 16 kilometres wide situated on the west coast of Africa. The country is surrounded on 3 sides by Senegal and the River Gambia flows down the complete length of the country into the Atlantic Ocean. The capital Banjul (formerly Bathurst) is located approximately 12 kilometres up the river from the open sea. The geographic co-ordinates of the country are 13° 30' N and 14° 17' W and it is classed as a tropical country. The river is navigable for vessels with a maximum displacement of 3000 tons for 240 kilometres inland up to the town of Kurba and is about 25 kilometres wide at its mouth narrowing to 5 kilometres adjacent to Banjul.



The Gambia

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

1865 - 1872

IMPERFORATE UNWATERMARKED PAPER PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSING



First recorded use was on 18 March 1865. There were 2 consignments: 2 February 1865 (44 4000, 44 4000), 10 March 1870 (44 3100, 44 3100). 21 July 1871 (44 4100, 44 2000).

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1880 - 1881 ISSUE

W.M.K. CROWN CC (UPRIGHT) PERF. 14 (LINE & COMB PERF.)

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSING



There were 3 consignments as follows: 1st - 20 October 1880 (upright watermark and line perforated), 2nd - 31 May 1881 (upright watermark and comb perforated), 3rd - 21 March 1887 (only the 1d value was reprinted on Crown CC paper).

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

History

European exploration began in 1482 when a Portuguese expedition commissioned by Prince Henry the Navigator and led by Ca Di Mosto entered the Gambia river mouth. The English first traded with the Gambia in 1587 and began to explore the river in 1618 establishing a fort on a small island in the estuary in 1661, this was called James Island after King James II, a prominent partner in the Royal Adventurers. They were succeeded by the Royal African Company which continued to trade for nearly a century without much success due to harassment from other European powers and pirates. From 1763 to 1783, Gambia formed part of the British Colony of "Senegambia" an area covering Senegal and the Gambia. It was not until 1783 that Senegambia was partitioned under the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, the French retaining Senegal and the British retaining the Gambia. Little occurred until the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, when James Island was re-occupied to suppress the actions of the slave traders. Captain Grant was sent out from England for the purpose and subsequently found the fort, built in 1661, in ruins. He negotiated with the local chief Kombi for cession of the detached sandbank known as Banjul Island and renamed it St. Mary's Island. This settlement was later named Bathurst in 1816 after the Colonial Secretary at that time - Henry, 3rd Earl Bathurst (1762-1834).

Postal Introduction

Gambia's Post Office was established in 1858. Previously until 1850 mail was placed aboard any vessel sailing to Europe. Representations by the Governor of the Gambia in 1850 to commence a regular service were only heeded in 1852, the rate being 11. per half ounce. This rate was changed in 1857 by the British Post Office to 5d per half ounce to fall in line with rates applied to other British West African colonies.

Postage stamps were first issued in 1865 with the introduction of 4d and 6d stamps. 6d covered the half ounce rate to the United Kingdom and 4d the half ounce rate to West African colonies and other specific areas. Registered letters initially attracted a further 5d per letter but from 1870 this was reduced to 4d per letter.

Gambia joined the Universal Postal Union in 1879 with a subsequent revision in the postal rates.

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

Crown August 1874

IMPERFORATE W.M.K. CROWN CC

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSING



First recorded use for 4d was August 1874. No known date recorded for first use of 6d. There was 1 consignment received on 23 January 1874: 4d 5100, 6d 5100.

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1880 - 1881 ISSUE

W.M.K. CROWN CC (UPRIGHT) PERF. 14 (COMB PERF.)

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSING



1d Orange

The above sheet comes from the 3rd consignment issued on 30 May 1881 with an Upright watermark and comb perforation. There were 58500 1d stamps issued in this consignment.

Note: The printer's dots on each side of the sheet which are a guide for the embossing press and the double perforation on the right hand side of the sheet which passes through to the bottom of the sheet. This is termed "Punch down".

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

Profile of this Exhibit

This study is of a reasonably comprehensive nature covering the period from 1869 through to 1949.

The stamps of Britain's first and smallest West African possession display splendid variety and diversity. The postal history offers plenty of scope from the renowned "Cameo" designs to small village post marks and various river boats using travelling post offices along the river Gambia.

The first stamps issued in 1869 used a design based on Cayton post stationery issued in 1857 and apparently Mr William Wyon, who was the Chief Engraver for the Royal Mint, was involved with the final design of the Cameo.

The Cameo design was in production from 1869 right through to 1893 which indicates its popularity. These stamps were withdrawn from sale on 01 May 1888 and the Victorian Key Plate design was introduced on 2 May 1898 thus bringing to close the life of one of the simplest and most beautiful stamps ever designed.

The Victorian Key Plate issue was only in use for less than 3 years when Queen Victoria passed away on 22 January 1901.

A new issue with the portrait of King Edward VII was issued on 13 March 1902 and these stamps also used a Key Plate design and were printed using Crown CA paper. In March 1904 new values were added to the previous issue and over the next 2 years up to February 1906, the existing and new values were reprinted on paper with a Multiple Crown CA watermark.

King Edward VII died on 6 May 1910 and a new issue of stamps displaying the effigy of King George V were only issued for sale on 1 September 1912. These again used the same plates of the Key Plate design.

Sometimes in 1921 the paper was changed to the new watermark - Script CA and placed on sale by January 1922, this issue had a very short life as they were withdrawn on 31 December 1922.

The Key Plate design of King George V was superseded by the 1922-1927 "Elephant and Palm" issue. There were 18 values and the beauty and scope of this issue is exceptional. The shades from one of the outstanding points of interest in this issue but their description is inevitably difficult. There are also numerous various perforations which provide the philatelist many hours of work.

All stamps of King George V were demonetised and ceased to be valid for postage on 1 April 1939.

A new definitive set was issued on 1 April 1938 depicting King George VI and using a similar "Elephant and Palm" design as the 1922 issue.

Like other Colonies, Gambia issued stamps to celebrate the 1945 victory, the 1948 Silver Wedding and 75th anniversary of the UPU in 1948.

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1880 ISSUE

W.M.K. CROWN CC (SIDEWAYS) PERF. 14 (LINE PERF.)

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSING



Following the admission of the Gambia to the Universal Postal Union on 1 January 1879, the Crown Agents ordered on 14 February 1880, orders for 3 new values: 1d, 1d. 2d, 3d and 4d.

There was 1 consignment with the sideways wmk. issued on 4 June 1880.

Note: The striping label to the top of the 6d Deep Blue and also to some extent on the 6d Blue.

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1880 - 1881 ISSUE

W.M.K. CROWN CC (UPRIGHT) PERF. 14 (COMB PERF.)

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSING

1d VALUE DOUBLE EMBOSSED AND INVERTED EMBOSING



Double Embossed

Inverted Embossing

Ex Water

The process of embossing the Cameo stamps has led to some interesting variations. These include: 1. Minor mis alignment of the embossing in relation to the central (up to 0.5mm, misaligned); 2. Double embossing where the 1st pass of embossing in the press was obviously misaligned with the 2nd pass embossing so as to produce a double embossed stamp; 3. Inverted embossing, where the sheets have been incorrectly entered into the press.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



This issue of the Crown was the first printed with the 1883 issue stamp which was the first to be used in the government's numerous stamps and various forms.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



18 Dark Blue-Green

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of 180.

This sheet is from the 4th printing of the 18 value delivered on 24 March 1883
2nd Comb Points Down. 15000 stamps were printed within this delivery.

Note: The slope to the top of stamp 1 and the 'Long Tail' to the bottom of 14 of Gambia of stamp 2.

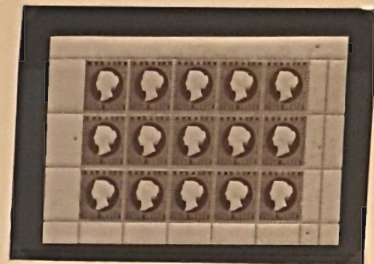
GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



48 Dark Brown

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of 180.

This sheet is from the 3rd printing of the 48 value delivered on 29 August 1888.
1st comb points down. 7500 stamps were printed within this delivery.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
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GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



14 Pink Carmine

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of 180.

This sheet is from the 1st printing of the 14 value delivered on 6 July 1887
2nd Comb Points Down. 30000 stamps were printed within this delivery.

Note: The black mark the absence of the dot in the top of the hair bun, and the white dot under the 'Y' of 'ONE' in stamp 3 which is a constant bar.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



60 Bronze Green

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of 180.

This sheet is from the 2nd printing of the 60 value delivered on 11 December 1889
1st Comb Points Down. 30000 stamps were printed within this delivery.

Note: The dot mark and the near absence of the dot in the top of the hair bun. There is a definite indication of the sloping tail in row 1 stamp 1 & 5.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



Note the sloping top to the 60. Deep Bronze Green, this occurred on stamps 9/11 and 9/15 of each sheet for all values but is most prominent on the 48 and 60 values.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



28 Orange

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of 180.

This sheet is from the 4th printing of the 28 value delivered on 3 December 1887
1st Comb Points Down. 40000 stamps were printed within this delivery.

Note: The thick neck and the absence of the dot in the top of the hair bun. There is a slight indication of the sloping tail in row 1 stamp 1.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE

WMK. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS)
PERF. 14

PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO
BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING
AND RELIEF EMBOSING



36 Pale Grey

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of 180.

This sheet is from the 3rd printing of the 36 value delivered on 11 December 1889
1st comb points down. 7500 stamps were printed within this delivery.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE W.M.K. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS) PERF. 14 (23MM PERF.) PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO. BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSSED DOUBLE EMBOSSED VARIETY



2c Orange

The sheet of 10 stamps above shows the two individual embossings in the 8th issue stamps numbers 1, 8, and 11 where the original embossing is shown from below the second embossing. The displacement difference probably towards the right-hand corner where an stamp 10 is only discernible with a strong light and magnification.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 ISSUE THE 1883 ISSUE W.M.K. CROWN CC W.M.K. CROWN CA COVER FROM BATHURST TO CASSEL, GERMANY BEARING 12 OF THE 1883 CROWN CC ISSUE AND 14c OF THE 1883 CROWN CA ISSUE 4c REGISTERED RATE TIED BY TYPE 14 CDS ON 27 NOVEMBER 1887



On Reverse BATHURST GAMBIA 27 NOV 87 WATERVILLE STRANGER 88 13 DEC 87 BATHURST DEPART 75 13 DEC 87 CASSEL 3 ARRIVANT 6 18 DEC 87

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

24 MARCH 1883 PRINTED BY MESSRS DE LA RUE & CO. LONDON 14c POST CARD



Type CP 9

Other postcards with a face value of 1d were delivered on 24 March 1883. Reply cards with 1d + 1c were also delivered on the same day.

Type 14 cds BATHURST 17 APRIL 1888 LIVERPOOL 2 MAY 1888 W.M. GERMANY 4 MAY 1888

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE W.M.K. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS) PERF. 14 PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO. BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSSED



2hd. Deep Bright Blue

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of fifteen.

This sheet is from the 8th printing of the 2hd delivered on 6 July 1887. 1" comb points down. 30000 stamps were printed within this delivery.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

27 AUGUST 1883 PRINTED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO. LONDON 1 1/2d POST CARD WITH 1 1/2d REPLY LEAF QUEEN VICTORIA ISSUE



Type CP 2

The Gambian Government ordered international postcards on 14 February 1883. These were 1 1/2d single leaf cards with no reply card attached and were delivered on 4 June 1883. Reply postcards, 1 1/2d + 1 1/2d (as above) were delivered on 27 August 1883. There were 3,002 of these reply post cards issued in three consignments.

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

THE 1888 ISSUE W.M.K. CROWN CA PERF. 14 PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO. QUEEN VICTORIA STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN



In 1888, the British and French Governments agreed to define the border between Gambia and Senegal. This was settled in 1888 and the Gambia then became a Crown Colony. As early as January 1888, Messrs De La Rue had offered to supply keyplate stamps for the Gambia with temporary overprint marked 'DUTY' but there was no result from these negotiations. Eventually the stocks of existing stamps would last for many years due to an overprint. De La Rue tried again in 1884 to supply the same keyplate stamps even offering free key plates if the Gambia accepted. It was only in 1886 when De La Rue stated that the Gambia stamps were too worn to be used that the Crown Agents asked De La Rue to make new plates using the keyplate design. These new standard keyplate design stamps were placed on sale in the Gambia on 2 May 1888. There were 7 consignments in total and an overall total of 342000 stamps of this issue printed.

GAMBIA

WEST AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

THE 1883 - 1887 ISSUE W.M.K. CROWN CA (SIDEWAYS) PERF. 14 PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO. BY DUAL PROCESS OF FLAT PRINTING AND RELIEF EMBOSSED



1j Bright Violet

Printed in sheets of 180 stamps which were cut twice vertically and three times horizontally to form sheets of fifteen.

This sheet is from the 8th printing of the 1j delivered on 5 December 1883. 1" comb points down. 30000 stamps were printed within this delivery.

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

13 DECEMBER 1882 PRINTED BY MESSRS DE LA RUE & CO. LONDON 14c OVERPRINT ON 1 1/2d POST CARD



Type CP 3 overprinted on CP1 Post Card

On 14 April 1882 the rate was reduced from 1 1/2d to 1d and post cards already in stock were apparently overprinted locally in the Gambia using a handstamp; consequently there are numerous overprint varieties due to the position of the overprint on the post cards.

Type 14 cds BATHURST 13 DECEMBER 1882 LIVERPOOL 2 JANUARY 1883 W.M. GERMANY 4 JANUARY 1883

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

THE 1888 ISSUE W.M.K. CROWN CA PERF. 14 PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO. QUEEN VICTORIA STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN THE MALFORMED 'S' VARIETY



A unusual variety is found on stamp '2d' of the left hand pane. It consists of a malformed 'S' in the word POSTAGE in the right hand pane. The 'S' looks like a reversed 'Z'. There was an attempt to repair the 'S' and stamps were issued with this repair. The malformed 'S' occurs on all values and the normal 'S' occurs on the 1d, 1d and 2hd values only. This has been fully corrected with the delivery of the 2nd consignment.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE 1902-1905 ISSUE
W.M.K. CROWN CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING EDWARD VII ISSUE

10s
5s
2s 6d
2s
1s 6d
1s
6d
3d
2d
1d

Black and Green on Yellow
Black and Green on Orange
Purple and Brown on Yellow
Green and Green on Yellow

Specimen Catalogue Type 210

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
AUGUST 1906
W.M.K. MULTIPLE CROWN CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING EDWARD VII ISSUE

10s
5s
2s 6d
2s
1s 6d
1s
6d
3d
2d
1d

Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green
Black and Green

These stamps were issued after the change to red ink from Crown CA to Multiple Crown CA. They were issued commencing August 1906 up to February 1908.

There is a cancelled form called the "Green" form which after its issuance in U.S. stamps it is a cancelled stamp in the same sense as before the 17th of October 1906 in all other cases on the 17th of October 1906. The 1d value stamp.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 SEPTEMBER 1912
W.M.K. MULTIPLE CROWN CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING GEORGE V

10s
5s
2s 6d
2s
1s 6d
1s
6d
3d
2d
1d

Black and Green on Yellow
Black and Green on Orange
Purple and Brown on Yellow
Green and Green on Yellow

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
9 APRIL 1902
PRINTED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
ORDINARY 10 POST CARD SPECIMEN
KING EDWARD VII ISSUE

Type CP 7

10 of these Specimen cards were issued

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
10 APRIL 1908
W.M.K. MULTIPLE CROWN CA
PERF. 14
THE 1908 PROVISIONAL ISSUE
OVERPRINTED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTER IN THE GAMBIA

10s
5s
2s 6d
2s
1s 6d
1s
6d
3d
2d
1d

The 10s and 1s stamps were the result of a genuine introduction of the postal requirements during March 1908. It remains for 6 months to supply a special order for stamps from the UK. The Postmaster of the Colonies made special application at the end of March 1908 to the Governor of the Colonies for the commencing of 2000 of each of the current 10s and 1s stamps. Some of these provisional stamps commenced on 10 April 1908 and were withdrawn from circulation on 25 April 1908.

Only 2000 of the 10s value and 4000 of the 1s value were actually sold and the remainder were destroyed.

Note: The "Green" form is indicated on the 1d value stamp, a scarce stamp.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 SEPTEMBER 1912
W.M.K. MULTIPLE CROWN CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING GEORGE V

10s
5s
2s 6d
2s
1s 6d
1s
6d
3d
2d
1d

Black and Green on Yellow
Black and Green on Orange
Purple and Brown on Yellow
Green and Green on Yellow

Note: The "Spk A" cancel stamp indicated on the 1d stamp is a yellow value stamp. Its position is shown on all the 1d stamps (same as the 1d stamp) which were issued.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE 1902-1905 ISSUE
W.M.K. CROWN CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING EDWARD VII ISSUE
INTER COUNTRY CANCELLATIONS

Cancellation of Freetown, Sierra Leone - 30 September 1907 on Gambia stamp

Cancellation of Bathurst, Gambia - 22 October 1902 on Sierra Leone stamps

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 OCTOBER 1908
W.M.K. MULTIPLE CROWN CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING EDWARD VII ISSUE
COLOURS CHANGED

10s
5s
2s 6d
2s
1s 6d
1s
6d
3d
2d
1d

Black and Green
Red
Greenish Blue
Purple on Yellow

Black and Red on Yellow
Orange and Purple
Dull and Bright Purple

Brown and Blue
Pink Sage Green and Carmine
Black on Green
Violet and Green

Purple and Bright Blue on Blue
Black and Red on Blue
Yellow and Green

The new colour scheme was in conformity with the agreements made by the LPU.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 SEPTEMBER 1912
W.M.K. MULTIPLE CROWN CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING GEORGE V

10s
5s
2s 6d
2s
1s 6d
1s
6d
3d
2d
1d

Orange and Purple
Dull and Bright Purple
Brown and Blue


Pink Sage Green and Carmine
Dull Sage Green and Carmine

Black on Green Paper
Black on Green
Black on Blue
Violet and Green

Purple and Blue on Blue
Black and Red on Blue Paper
Yellow and Green
Green and Red on Pink Yellow Paper

NOTE: The "Spk A" stamp on the 1d stamp is a green paper.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
22 MARCH 1927
W.M.K. MULTI SCRIPT CA
PERF. 14
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
STANDARD KEY PLATE DESIGN
KING GEORGE V



Red Green Orange Red Blue Green and Blue Green
Red Bright Blue Orange and Purple Red and Bright Purple
Brown and Red Pale Sage Green and Green Black and Red

These stamps were issued due to a change in watermarked paper from
W.M.K. Green Co. to W.M.K. Green Co.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 SEPTEMBER 1922
W.M.K. MULTI SCRIPT CA
PERF. 14
RECESS PRINTED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
'ELEPHANT AND PALM' ISSUE
KING GEORGE V



Green Deep Green Brown Bright Blue
Red Orange Yellow Bright Blue
Red on Yellow Sage Green Green
Purple on Yellow Blue


GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
12 MAY 1927
W.M.K. MULTI SCRIPT CA
PERF. 11 x 17 1/2 COMB
RECESS PRINTED BY BRADBURY WILKINSON & CO.
'CORONATION' ISSUE
GEORGE VI



Yellow Green Green
Blue

Due to the short notice provided compared to the printing of the Silver Jubilee issue, the printing
of this Coronation issue was shared between Messrs. De La Rue & Co. and Bradbury Wilkison,
the latter printing the Gambia issue.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
10 FEBRUARY 1922
WATERMARK
PRODUCED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
'ELEPHANT AND PALM' ISSUE
IMPERFORATE PLATE PROOF
KING GEORGE V



Set frame and value letter imperforate plate proof without head,
should or crown in black on thin white wove paper, non-marginal sides.
Proved approximately 10 February 1922

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 SEPTEMBER 1922
W.M.K. MULTI SCRIPT CA
PERF. 14
RECESS PRINTED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
'ELEPHANT AND PALM' ISSUE
KING GEORGE V



Purple on Yellow Brown Purple on Yellow Buff Blue
Purple on Blue Deep Green
Bright Amber Red Red Green on Yellow
Sage Green


GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 SEPTEMBER 1922
W.M.K. MULTI CROWN CA
PERF. 14
RECESS PRINTED BY MESSRS. DE LA RUE & CO.
'ELEPHANT AND PALM' SPECIMEN ISSUE
KING GEORGE V



Red on Yellow Purple on Yellow
Purple on Yellow Green on Yellow

Specimen Overprint Type D10a on 6d and 10d values.
Type 12a on 1r and Type D10 on 5r value.
The D10 overprint in purple is the only one on a LPU specimen.
All printed on yellow MCA watermarked paper.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
15 MAY 1926
W.M.K. MULTI SCRIPT CA
PERF. 11 x 12
RECESS PRINTED BY BRADBURY WILKINSON & CO.
'SILVER JUBILEE' SPECIMEN ISSUE
KING GEORGE V



Deep Blue and Scarlet Brown and Deep Blue
Light Blue and Olive Green Blue and Purple

Published Specimen Issue Type 20 in extended semi-circle with 67 holes.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
1 APRIL 1926
W.M.K. MULTI SCRIPT CA
PERF. 12 x 12
RECESS PRINTED BY BRADBURY WILKINSON & CO.
GEORGE VI



Black and Emerald Green Purple and Brown Brown Lake and Bright Carmine
Brown Lake and Scarlet Brown Lake and Vermilion Blue and Black (2 1/4c) Blue and Black
Lake and Scarlet (1 1/2c) Light Blue and Grey Blue Sage Green and Purple Brown (13.5 1/4c) Olive Green and Dove

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
APRIL 1926
W.M.K. MULTI SCRIPT CA
PERF. 12 x 12
RECESS PRINTED BY BRADBURY WILKINSON & CO.
GEORGE VI



Dark Blue and Violet Chocolate and Light Blue (28 1/2c w)
Carmine and Blue Sage and Old Green
Vermilion and Purple Blue and Vermilion Orange and Black

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

8 AUGUST 1948

WMK. MULTI SCRIPT GA

PERF. 13½ x 14 COMB

RECESS PRINTED BY MESSERS DE LA RUE & CO.

VICTORY OMBUS ISSUE

GEORGE VI



Black



Blue

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

24 DECEMBER 1948

WMK. MULTI SCRIPT GA

PERF. 14 x 15 COMB 11½

PERF. 11½ x 11 COMB 11

PHOTO-GRAVURE PRINTED BY WATERLOW & SONS (11½)

RECESS PRINTED BY BRADBURY, WILKINSON & CO.

ROYAL SILVER WEDDING OMBUS ISSUE

GEORGE VI



Black



Mauve

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

10 OCTOBER 1948

WMK. MULTI SCRIPT GA

PERF. 13 x 14 COMB 11½ & 11

PERF. 11 x 11½ COMB 11 & 11

RECESS PRINTED BY WATERLOW & SONS (11½ & 11)

RECESS PRINTED BY BRADBURY, WILKINSON (11 & 11)

75th ANNIVERSARY OF UPU - OMBUS ISSUE

GEORGE VI



Blue-Black



Deep Blue



Magenta



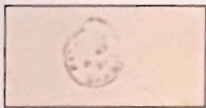
Violet

Trans-Atlantic Air mail

Deutsche Lufthansa service, England to Gambia 1937



Route: London to Frankfurt by Imperial, Frankfurt to Bathurst by Lufthansa. Dispatch Brighton 29 July 1937. Frankfurt 9 August on flight L207 arriving Bathurst 6 August.
Rate: No correct rate paid.
Features: Despite an Imperial Airways service via Lagos and Accra, German service was reliable and generally quicker than the Imperial route via Khartoum.



West African Airmail

German service from Gambia to Europe 1938



Route: Bathurst to Frankfurt on Lufthansa flight L-524 from South America. In Bathurst 26 February 1938, Frankfurt 27 February, arrive Hønsborg 28 February.
Rate: 1/20 d. paid. This was the correct foreign rate until 30 October 1937 after which the rate was reduced to 1/10d. Despite the "philatelic" appearance, this may have been a genuine error on the part of the sender.
Feature: Residents of the Gambia were fortunate in having a regular German Lufthansa service on the route from South America to Germany. This cover took only three days from posting in Bathurst to arriving at its destination in Denmark.

West African Airmail

Gambia to Sierra Leone extension June 1938



Route: Bathurst to Freetown return first flight of service from Freetown to connect with the German service from Bathurst. Flight left Bathurst 26 June 1938, arriving in Freetown the next day.
Rate: 3 1/2 d. rate Gambia to Sierra Leone.
Feature: Special flight cacher, used on subsequent flights after deletion of word "First". This air service operated by Elder Colonial Airways Ltd. between Bathurst and Freetown via Cona Bolama and Bossa, which started on 24th June 1938, proved uneconomical, and was suspended in July 1939. Shortly thereafter of course, the German service to South America closed at the end of August 1938 as the onset of war.

West African Airmail

German service to Gambia 1937



Route: Blackpool to Bathurst via Frankfurt. Dispatch 17 September 1937.
Rate: No inclusive fee. Additional surcharge toward VIII 1d stamp. Bottemley was a collector.
Features: Cover carried by Lufthansa flight L201 on Frankfurt to South America service, leaving Frankfurt on 23 September, arriving in Bathurst 24 September 1937.

West African Airmail

German service to Gambia 1938



Route: Liverpool to Bathurst via Frankfurt, forwarded to Freetown by sea. Dispatch 1 April 1938, arrive Bathurst 6 April 1938.
Rate: No inclusive fee.
Features: Cover carried by Lufthansa flight L227 on Frankfurt to South America service, arriving in Bathurst 4 April 1938. Addressed to the wireless office of the S.S. "Agapa" the forwarded to Freetown. No arrival information at Freetown.

West African Airmail

Gambia to Sierra Leone extension June 1938



Route: Bathurst to Freetown return first flight of service from Freetown to connect with the German service from Bathurst. Flight left Bathurst 26 June 1938, arriving in Freetown the next day.
Rate: 3 1/2 d. rate Gambia to Sierra Leone. However the Sunday applies the 1/10 International rate after adding 1d for registration.
Feature: Special flight cacher, used on subsequent flights after deletion of word "First". Mr. Ed. Ardin was still generating flight covers from Bathurst in December 1939 when the Pao America Clipper flights were established.

Trans-Atlantic Air mail

Deutsche Lufthansa service, England to Gambia 1937



Route: London to Frankfurt by Imperial, Frankfurt to Bathurst by Lufthansa. London 3 November, Frankfurt 6 November, Bathurst 6 November.
Rate: Correct rate was 9d but underpaid. No charge raised.
Features: Flight was delayed. Aircraft "Brindar" returned to Marseille because of weather, resulting in 10 hour delay.



GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY

AIR MAIL SERVICES



From Bathurst, Gambia posted on 25 June 1938
Backstamped Sierra Leone 27 June 1938
No arrival backstamp in England

The above letter from the Gambia was sent on 25th June 1938 using the 1st airmail service from the Gambia via Freetown, Sierra Leone to England.
The addressee was a keen philatelist and the "R" are numerous covers either sent or received by him. He was the General Manager of UAC in Bathurst, The Gambia.

West African Airmail

Gambia to Sierra Leone extension June 1938



Route: Bathurst to Freetown return first flight of service from Freetown to connect with the German service from Bathurst. Flight left Bathurst 26 June 1938, arriving in Freetown the next day.
Rate: 3 1/2 d. rate Gambia to Sierra Leone.
Feature: Special flight cacher, used on subsequent flights after deletion of word "First". This weekly air service operated by Elder Colonial Airways Ltd. between Bathurst and Freetown via Conakry, Bolama and Bossa, which started on 24th June 1938, proved uneconomical, and was suspended in July 1939. Shortly thereafter of course, the German service to South America closed at the end of August 1939 at the onset of war.

World War 2 Airmail
India to Gambia via Lagos

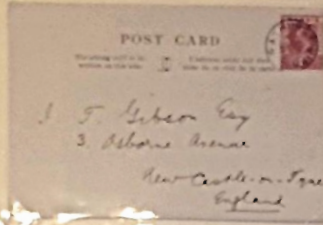
Airmail cover from Bathurst to Bathurst via the "Humber" and across Africa routes. Dispatch Bathurst 30th January 1942, received in India, transit station of Kano (late not clear) and Lagos on 10th February 1942. Reaching Bathurst (Bathurst) via Kano-Lagos-Bathurst. The journey pre-dates the May 1942. Historical note: Gambia (Bathurst) via Kano-Lagos-Bathurst.

Rate paid 2 Pounds 9th Pence, which does not accord with Bayle's information.

Original letter in duplicate for most weather holding sheets still enclosed - presumably not of much importance to I.A.C. in the Gambia!



GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE RIVER GAMBIA



Bathurst (Gambia) - view of the River Gambia by the river bank.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY

THE RIVER GAMBIA



The General Post Office - circa 1935



Christmas Feast - Card posted 5 January 1930

West African Airmail
"Star Leader" accident 1946

Aircor York "Star Leader" owned by British South American Airways crashed shortly after takeoff from Bathurst on the 7th September 1946 with the loss of all on board. Airmail letters, most addressed to Jamaica, were recovered and forwarded. The flight was a "special" direct to Jamaica. Remains of passengers and crew are interred in a communal grave in Bathurst.

Cover from London addressed to Jamaica, recovered from sea and forwarded.

Rate paid: Correct 1/6d



Loss of the S.S. communication - Press and Broadcast Station - P.A.S. 1908.

Loss of the S.S. communication - Press and Broadcast Station - P.A.S. 1908. Loss of the S.S. communication for South and Central America and the West Indies.

The Postmaster General announces that the S.S. communication for South and Central America and the West Indies posted in the United Kingdom on the 24th of September and part of the communication posted on the 25th and 26th of September has been destroyed in the accident to the British West African Airways aircraft "Star Leader" by which mails were conveyed.

ORIGINAL POST OFFICE. 11 September 1946.

Divisional Controller's Office, London Postal Station.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE RIVER GAMBIA



Above - View of the River Gambia - May 1906. This postcard was addressed to India. Note the railway tracks used for efficiency of loading.

Left - S.S. Sands loading cargo at Kintao - December 1911. This port is 150 miles up river from Bathurst. It was renamed Kintao and a Postal Agency was opened there in February 1924.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE RIVER GAMBIA



Mr. Mansfield's boat at Upper River Gambia. Boat is estimated approximately 240 miles up river from Bathurst.



This post office in Bathurst opened on 10 November 1821 and the completion of 21 April 1922 above it apparently the earliest known date of operation for this post office.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
AIR MAIL SERVICES

Round the World with a stop at Bathurst, Gambia.



New Zealand 11 October 1935
California, USA 6 November 1935
Gambia 4 May 1936
Hong Kong 17 July 1937

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE RIVER GAMBIA



River Steamer and lighters loading at Basse which is 242 miles from Bathurst



View of McCarthy Island which is approximately 150 miles from Bathurst

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY

THE RIVER GAMBIA



Village of Kunt-Ca which is situated 100 miles up river from Bathurst. The postcard was a Bathurst one dated 23 July 1907 and was sent to Marseilles, France. The village was later renamed Lunta-Ca as indicated on O.V. 34 above - c. 29 April 1917



The village of Fatumbina is 275 miles up river from Bathurst. There is no post office here and the nearest post office is at Fatuba which is the last post office in the Gambia at the east end of the river

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICE

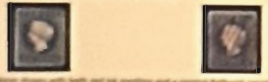
The country is dominated by the river which is approximately 300 miles from the mouth of the Atlantic Ocean and approximately 20 miles wide from each bank over the complete length of the country.

To maintain communication, the Government provided river boats, the first being the "Wiltonford", a wooden paddle steamer introduced in 1941.

When replacement vessels were acquired and introduced over the next 10 years and in 1944 the "Mansfield" (Wooden Steamer) was purchased and was able to navigate as far as the last administrative village near the Senegambian border. From 1950, she operated a weekly mail and passenger service to Banjul and Fatick.

In 1951, the "Mansfield" was replaced. This vessel was a wooden petrol driven triple screw of 70 tons and subsequently replaced in 1954.

Although the earliest official cancellation was dated 20 March 1952, it is apparent that was carried by boat from earlier years. It is considered that the early cancellations may have been used on river boats and possibly cancelled using red ink markings, as shown below.



Note the use of blue ink shown with both red ink markings and a normal red ink cancellation.

In 1952, a much larger vessel, the "Prince of Wales" was introduced. This was a triple expansion turbo screw steamer of 400 tons.

This vessel carried the first mobile post office from Banjul (1952) and the first canceller used was a letter box canceller. This type canceller was used for some years. It was only used for 10 months and is quite rare.

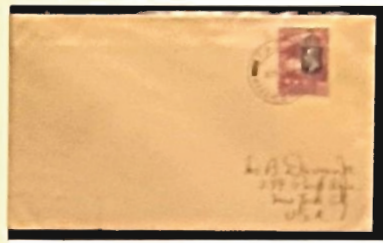
From January 1953, a mobile ring canceller (TRC) was introduced and evolved in various forms. Different dies and later stages, actually 28 different formats, used 1953 when a standard format was adopted.

In 1954, a 2nd wheel was introduced and this also had a mobile post office on board. This necessitated a 2nd canceller with "TRC No. 2".

The Travelling Post Office on the River Gambia operated until 1984 when the last vessel used was not reported.

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY
THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICE



River Gambia 1st T.P.O. No. 2 - 20 July 1954

The Travelling Post Office was introduced on 27 March 1952 by the Government of the Gambia in order to meet the needs of the people of the Gambia. These are shown below. The first canceller used was a letter box canceller. This type canceller was used for some years. It was only used for 10 months and is quite rare.

GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY

THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICE & RIVER TRANSPORT



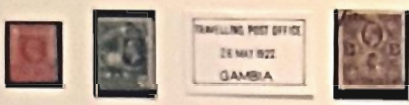
Registered letter posted on the boat with TRC registration label and cancelled with TRC Gambia registration canceller issued 9 February 1953



View from Gambia - Steamer loading cargo

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY
THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICE



The first TRC was used from March 1952 and is a fine type canceller as shown. These cancellations are rare as they were only in use for 10 months. A similar canceller was used in Sierra Leone.



Mr. Thomas Kite for the River Gambia - 1st Bathurst 8 September 1952. This vessel was used for the Governor of the Gambia in 1953 and used as a mobile administrative office along the river.

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY
THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICE



Posted on the TRC River Gambia - 1st TRC No. 2 - 18 April 1957. Your vessel was posted during the week of the West 1957.



Posted for Bathurst 2nd Lady Steamer on the River Gambia 1st TRC No. 2 - 2 June 1955.

GAMBIA

CROWN COLONY
CANCELLATIONS



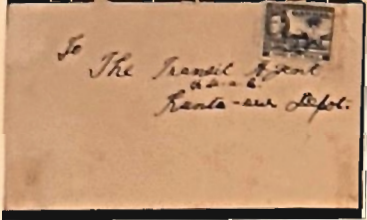
The triple ring cancellation was in use from 23 May 1940 to 5 September 1940 in use and from 23 August 1940 to 28 November 1940. The above cover is dated 12 October 1940. This cancellation was promoting the use of telegrams instead of post at the beginning of World War 2.



GAMBIA
CROWN COLONY
THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICE



Letter to England posted on 25 August 1926 with TRC No. 2 cancellation.



This letter has an interesting history. When the MV 'Lady Darnley' left Bathurst on 1 March 1946, the postmaster, Mr. Faye, discovered he had forgotten his date stamp canceller. Mail for intermediate ports received the 'W' used for registered mail. Mail for Bathurst and overseas was cancelled at Bathurst on the return journey.

E.P.G. No. 2
TYPE 3a (continued)



E.P.G. GAMBIA Registration Label (1946)

