

COURT LIFE IN KANO: THE EMIR RECEIVES



THE POSTMARKS OF Northern Nigeria

by H. G. PORTER.

When the first series of postage stamps were issued, Lokoja was the only Post Office possessing a cancellation stamp. This was the rubber hand stamp used by the Royal Niger Company when they opened Lokoja Post Office about September 1899 and as it did not bear the Niger Company's name, it remained in use until the regulation postmarker arrived from England. The early stamps of the Protectorate will be found cancelled in violet thus :—



Type 1.

Jebba and other offices had no postmarkers at all, and the stamps had to be cancelled by hand with pen and ink. Both red and black inks were used, but the red certainly predominates. The cancellation generally consisted of the words POST OFFICE JEBBA and date, sometimes P.O. JEBBA and date, and not infrequently with the additional cancellation in violet of the Lokoja rubber stamp referred to above, shewing that the mails were despatched from Jebba via Lokoja.

These manuscript cancellations are perfectly legitimate postal defacings and are very interesting indeed. The earliest cancellation I have seen is that of Jebba dated 25/4/1900.

Ibi, situate on the southern bank of the River Benue about 150 miles south of Yola on the same river, is another office using the pen and ink defacings. Ibi was perhaps the finest of all the trading stations as it lay on the routes of several caravans from the north and was the headquarters of the Royal Niger Company, having a population of about 4,000. The earliest cancellation I have of this office is dated 15/5/1901.

Egga Post Office is supposed to have been opened in 1903, but it certainly was operating in 1900, the earliest recorded date so far seen being 28/9/1900.

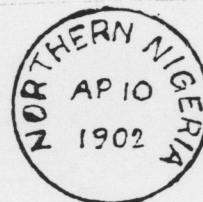
The following offices have been noted using manuscript cancellations—all on the Queen's Head issue of 1900—EGGA, EWANAGA, IBI, JEBBA, LOKOJA. BIDA,

** OR AKWANAJA OR AKWANEWA. SITUATE ON THE RIGHT BANK OF THE RIVER BENUE, ROUGHLY HALF WAY BETWEEN IBI AND LOKOJA ON THE BORDERS OF FUNSILAND, 100 MILES FROM THE NIGRA. WAS ONCE A DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS BUT TODAY (1936) IS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE.*



Type 2.

The coloured cancellations appear generally to have dropped out of use, but blue cancellation is known.



The first regulation steel postmarker to be used was a single lined circular dating stamp about 25 to 26 m/m diameter, bearing the words NORTHERN NIGERIA and without any name of post office. The year in the centre of circle will be found placed over and below the month, shewing the type to be of the removable pattern. Specimens will be found where the name of post office has been added in ink and sometimes the date in centre has been added in ink.

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Type 3.



Type 4.

Between 1903-4 postmarkers bearing the name of each post office were brought into use. These consisted of a large double ringed circle about 28 m/m diameter with the name of town between the two rings and a small Maltese Cross at the base, the date being in two lines across the centre. In most post offices the date is sometimes reversed, making the Maltese Cross appear at the top of circle, but this is probably the result of carelessness when setting the date stamp.

About five years later a similar dating stamp was employed (type 4); it was identical in pattern to the earlier type but the wording was in slightly larger capitals, making the inner ring slightly less in circumference. Most offices used both types.

The principal Post Offices such as Lokoja and Zungeru will be found with dating stamps also varying slightly from the foregoing, sometimes the year is in two figures only. The differences are very slight and do not call for a special type numbering.

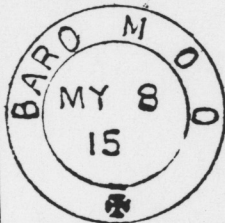
Types 3 and 4 were used by the following:—AMAR, BARO, BAUCHI, BAUTCHI, BIDA, DEKINA, EGGA, IBI, ILORIN, JEBBA, JEGA, JEMAA, KATSENA, KANO, KADUNA, KATAGUM, KEFFI, KONTAGORA, LOKO, LOKOJA, LOKOJA T.O., MAIDUGERI, NAFADA, NARAGUTA, PATEJI, SOKOTO, YOLA, YELWA, ZAMA, ZARIA, ZUNGERU, ZUNGERU M.O.O.



Type 5.

About 1910 a slightly different type was introduced, the words NORTHERN NIGERIA were omitted and the name of Post Office was in larger capitals.

Used by:—CHOIWA, EGORI, ILORIN, JEMAA, KABBA, KADUNA, KADUNA P.O., KATAGUM, KATSINA, LOKO, MINNA, NAFADA, NARAGUTA, RAHAMA.

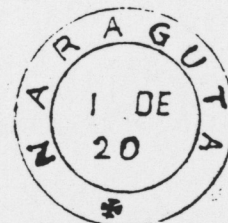


Type 5a.

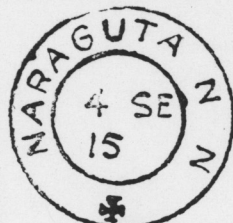
5a. This was a double ringed circle similar to type 5, but the name of Post Office was in widely spaced capitals.

Used by:—ABINSI, ANKPA, BARO M.O.O., BENUE BR, LAGOS, MINNA, NARAGUTA, YELWA, ZARIA.

Other post offices will be found with cancellations of this type, but owing to the specimens being badly struck the postmarks were illegible.



Type 5a



Type 6.

About 1911-12 a similar canceller to type 5 was in use, the circle being about 28 m/m diameter, but the letters N N were added after the name of Post Office in each case. (type 6).

Used by:—EPU, KADUNA, LOKOJA, NARAGUTA, OFFA, RAHAMA, ZUNGERU.

Evidently types 5 and 6 were made so that the type could be inserted at will, as examples are known where the name of Post Office has been omitted altogether. Yelwa is known with the letters put round the circle upside down proving that the type was interchangeable.

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Type 7.

About 1908 yet another type was introduced. This was a double ringed circle about 28 m/m diameter as before, but the name of Post Office was in large size capitals conforming to the upper radius and the words NORTHERN NIGERIA in smaller type in the lower half. Two dots—one at each side—separated the upper and lower segments.
Used by :—BARO, ILORIN, MINNA.

Between 1914-1917 a still larger cancellation was used. The diameter of the double ringed circle was approximately 30 m/m and the letters were slightly larger in proportion. Generally the cancellation is similar to type 4. (type 8)

Used by :—BAUCHI, BIRNIN-KEBBI, JEBBA, JEMAA, KADUNA, KANO, LOKO, NARAGUTA, ZARIA, ZUNGERU.



Type 8.



Type 9.

A double ringed circle about 29 m/m diameter lettered OFFICIAL PAID at top and the name of post office underneath. The date is in centre in two lines.

Used by :—LOKOJA, ZARIA, ZUNGERU.



Type 10.

An oval cancellation lettered MARINE DEPARTMENT as illustration. This has been noted on piece bearing the 6d. value M.C.A. watermark of the 1906/9 issue.

MANUSCRIPT CANCELLATIONS. As in the case of the Queen's head issue referred to earlier, specimens of the King Edward stamps will also be found with pen and ink cancellations, shewing that steel dating stamps were not available for use at the time. Of these manuscript cancellations, all of which are on piece, the following offices have been noted :—

BADEGGI, JEBBA, KADUNA P.O. AND ZARIA.

Evidently *some* of the postal assistants were very painstaking when stamping mail, as interesting specimens have been observed where the date has been added in ink owing to imperfect stamping of the steel postmarks.

The amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria into the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria brought many interesting varieties of postmarks. Covers will be found bearing Northern and Southern Nigerian stamps used together; Northern Nigerian stamps will also be found used with Lagos and Nigeria issues.

Northern Nigeria: Its Posts and Postage Stamps

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The following Southern Nigerian cancellations will be found on the stamps of Northern Nigeria.



A single lined circle varying from 21 to 22 m/m diameter, (type S.N.1).
Used at :—FORCADOS RIVER "A", SAPELE "A".

Southern Nigeria, Type 1.



A single lined circle about 23½ m/m diameter, (type S.N.2).
Used at :—AKASSA "A".

Southern Nigeria, Type 2.



A single lined circle about 24 m/m diameter with small Maltese Cross at base, (type S.N.4).
Used by :—NIGER TRAVELLING POST OFFICE. "A".

Southern Nigeria, Type 4.

A single lined circle about 24 m/m diameter with large Maltese Cross at base, (type S.N.5).
Used by :—ONITSHA "A".



Southern Nigeria, Type 5.



A single lined circle varying from 23½ to 25 m/m diameter.

Used at :—ABA, ABEOKUTA, BENIN CITY, BRASS, BURUTU "A", CALABAR "A" "B", DEGEMA, IBADAN, IDAH, IGBEIN HILL (ABEOKUTA), IKOM, JEBU-ODE. OKON.

Also at :—FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE.

Southern Nigeria, Type 7.



Type 7.



A double ringed circle about 28 m/m diameter.

Used at :—ASABA, BONNY, EKET, EPE, IBADAN, IFON, LAGOS, OPOBO, OSHOGBO "A", TRAVELLING POST OFFICE "A" "B" "C", CAPE COAST, GOLD COAST. BUGUMA.

Southern Nigeria, Type 8.

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Southern Nigeria, Type 8a.

A double ringed circle but with Maltese Crosses in place of the intersecting dots.

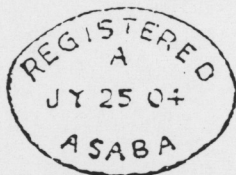
Used at :—AHOADA, EBUTE METTA, LAGOS B.O., ONITSHA, SAPELE.



Southern Nigeria, Type 11.

Parcel post cancellation used at Lagos. *CALABAR.*

As regards registration cancellations, Northern Nigeria offices do not appear to have had special registration dating stamps in use, all registered correspondence examined bearing the ordinary postal cancellations. The following Southern Nigeria registration cancellations will be found on Northern Nigeria Stamps :—



Registration Type 1.

A small oval cancellation with the word "Registered" at top and name of town at bottom, with date in centre surmounted by letter "A".

Used at :—ASABA "A", BURUTU.



Registration Type 3.

The size is larger than Type 1 and the lettering is larger.

Used at :—BENIN CITY "A", BRASS "A", DEGEMA "A", FORCADOS "A", IFON "A", SAPELE "A", WARRI "A".



Registration Type 2.



Registration Type 5.

A single lined oval with "Registered" at top, and name of Office and "SOUTHERN NIGERIA" at bottom, date in centre. Size of oval approximately 32 m/m by 26 m/m.

Used by :—CREEK TOWN "A", CALABAR "A", LAGOS "A", also with SIERRA LEONE registration.



Registration Type 5a.

A single lined oval similar to last but slightly larger, size 33 by 26 m/m. Two dots appear at the sides intersecting the words. The lettering LAGOS SOUTHERN NIGERIA is slightly smaller and of more open type than the previous canceller.

Used by :—LAGOS.

The stamps of Northern Nigeria remained current in the New Colony of Nigeria for some time until exhausted. The following cancellations belonging to Nigeria proper will be found :



Nigeria Type 1.

A double ringed circle with name at top and NIGERIA below, separated by two small Maltese Crosses.

Used at :—ABEOKUTA, DEGEMA, IBADAN, KADUNA, KANO, LAGOS, MAIDUGERI, NAFADA, PORT HARCOURT, SOKOTO, TRAVELLING POST OFFICE, WARRI, ZUNGERU.



Nigeria Type 3.

A single lined circle about 29 m/m diameter.

Used at :—VICTORIA, CAMEROONS.



Nigeria Type 5.

A similar type to the foregoing but with the word DATE inserted in centre.

Used at :—ABA POST OFFICE.

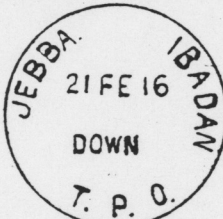
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Nigeria Type 8.

A small single lined circle about 24 m/m diameter. This was left by the ex-German postal authorities.

Used at :—BUEA, KAMERUN.



Nigeria Type 17.

A single lined circle used by the Travelling Post Office carrying the mails between Jebba and Ibadan.

JEBBA-IBADAN T.P.O. DOWN.
IBADAN-JEBBA T.P.O. UP.

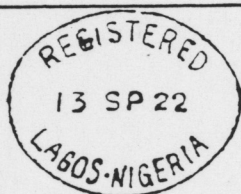


Cameroons.

A double ringed circle about 25 m/m diameter left by the German Postal officials.

Used at :—DUALA.

Northern Nigeria



This is a Nigeria canceller, consisting of a small oval with word NIGERIA in place of SOUTHERN NIGERIA.
Used by :—LAGOS, ZARIA.

Registration Nigeria Type 1.



SHIP-LETTER CANCELLATIONS

These cancellations seem to be particularly scarce, although thousands of stamps have been examined the only ones so far noted are the Deutsche See Post Linie, Hamburg, and the Plymouth Paquebot Cancellations with seven horizontal lines.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF POST OFFICES in operation in Northern Nigeria at one time or other :—

	<i>opened</i>	<i>closed</i>		<i>opened</i>	<i>closed</i>		<i>opened</i>	<i>closed</i>
Abinsi			Guidan	1904		Lokoja	1899	
Amar	1903	1904	Ibi	1901		Lokoja T.O.		
Ankpa	1910		Illo	1903	1910	Maifoni	1903	1904
Badeggi			Ilorin	1903		Maidugeri	1910	
Barijuko	1903		Jega			Magumeri	1904	1910
Baro	1909		Jebba	1900		Minna	1910	
Baro M.O.O.			Jemaa			Mutum Biu	1910	
Bautchi (renamed			Kabba	1910		Nafada	1910	
Bauchi)	1903		Kaduna	1910		Naraguta... ..	1910	
Bida	1903		Kaduna P.O.			Offa	1911	(?1910)
Birnin Kebbi	1910		Kano	1903		Pateji	1903	
Boussa	1903	1910	Katagum... ..	1903		Rahama		
Choiwa			Katsena (later			Sokoto	1903	
Damjiri	1903	1904	spelt Katsina) 1903			Yelwa	1903	
Dekina	1903	1910	Keffi	1903		Yola	1903	
Egga	1903		Kontagora	1903		Zaria	1903	
Egori	1910		Kukawa	1904	1910	Zama		
Epu			Lau	1903		Zungeru	1902	
Gando	1903	1910	Loko	1903		Zungeru M.O.O....		
Gujba	1903	1910						