

CAMEO



The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle



VOLUME 15 NUMBER 2
WHOLE NUMBER 92

JUNE 2014



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West Africa Study Circle

President: Ray Harris

Joint CAMEO Editors

Barry Burns
20 Tanton Rd., Stokesley
MIDDLESBROUGH TS9 5HP
☎ 01642 710636
barry.burns1@virgin.net

Robert May
Longdown Farm Cottage, Cadshen
PRINCES RISBOROUGH
HP27 0NB, UK
☎ 01844 344336
robert.may@cantab.net

Hon. Secretary

Philip Quirk
157 Balden Rd., Harborne
BIRMINGHAM B32 2EL, UK
☎ 0121 428 4656
philip.quirk@btopenworld.com

Hon. Treasurer

Ian Anderson, 57 Manse Rd.,
EDINBURGH EH12 7SR
☎ 0131 334 7866
ghanastampman@aol.com

Hon. Membership Secretary

Peter Duggan, 75 Alexandra Rd.,
READING RG1 5PS
☎ 0118 966 3220
togostamps@gmail.com

Hon. Auctioneer

John Smith, 52 Eastway
GREASBY, Wirral CH49 2NT
☎ 01516 786201
stamps.johnsmith@btinternet.com

Hon. Advertising Manager

Peter Rolfe, 14 Aughton Road,
Birkdale, SOUTHPORT, PR8 2AF
☎ 01704 563575
peter.rolfe@btinternet.com

Acting Librarian & Bookseller

Ian Anderson, 57 Manse Rd.,
EDINBURGH EH12 7SR
☎ 0131 334 7866
ghanastampman@aol.com

North American Representative

Dr. Martin Bratzel, 1233 Virginia Ave,
Windsor, Ontario, N8S 2Z1, Canada
marty_bratzel@yahoo.ca
☎ (0015) 199 481968

Webmaster

Ray Harris
harris6@which.net

Web Site: <http://www.wasc.org.uk>

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Front Cover

QV 1d Postal Stationery Card of Gold Coast.
Used in 1896 from Cole Bros. of Accra to promote sales of
current Gold Coast stamps (see letter on page 51)

Editorial

I would take this opportunity to highlight to members that Ian Anderson has taken over the WASC Library from Oliver Andrew with immediate effect (see the index page) and will stand down as our Treasurer at the next AGM in November 2014. Ian will be a hard act to follow but any successor can be sure that the accounts will be in good order when they are handed over. Anyone wishing to volunteer for this position should send an e-mail to the Secretary, Philip Quirk, please.

This has been an unusually difficult issue to produce and I apologise both for its late delivery and to members who have not had e-mail replies from me. Microsoft recently stopped supporting windows XP so I changed from that to Windows 7 and from Outlook to Live Mail in March. That proved to be a bit of a marathon but worse came a few weeks later when I detected a bot virus during a routine scan, ran the MSE cleaner and found that the end result was that I had no Windows 7 any more! Halfway through compiling *Cameo* I had to rebuild all my software again in order to finish it. Thank goodness I back up all my data files but the domain provider took some convincing to give me back my e-mail account after it had been swamping them with spam!

There are some nasty minds out there in cyberspace, but we can't do without it these days.

The next issue will be edited by Barry, datelined October 2014, and the copy deadline is 31 August

Rob May



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The editors have the final say over content in *Cameo* in the interests of balance and relevance to the readership. Space in each *Cameo* may be limited as compared with the volume of material submitted by all the authors. The editors retain discretion over punctuation, spelling, grammar, use of colour for illustrations and whether to reduce the size of illustrations to fit the space available, but should not change wording, delete text or delete illustrations without full knowledge and permission of the author. If the editors consider amendment or deletion of text or removal of illustrations to be necessary they will discuss it with contributors. If contributors are then unhappy with proposed changes they can withdraw their items.

Rob May / Barry Burns

Scope

The West Africa Study Circle studies the postage stamps and postal history of The Gambia, Gold Coast/Ghana, the Nigerias, Sierra Leone, Cameroons & Togo together with the islands of St. Helena, Ascension, Tristan da Cunha & Gough and the British Postal Agencies in Madeira, Tenerife, St. Vincent and Fernando Po.

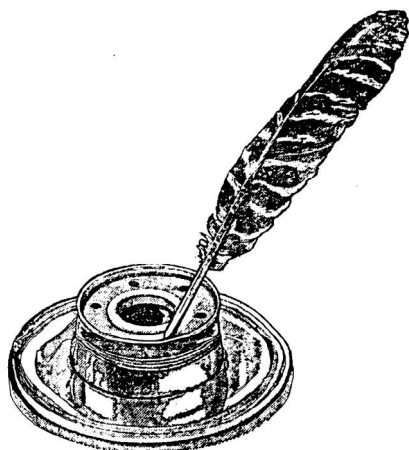
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Advertising Rates

Black & White	Full page	£45	Half page	£27.50
Colour	Full page	£90	Half page	£50

Printed on archival quality paper to ISO 9706 by Quoin Publishing, 17 North Street, Middlesbrough TS2 1JP
www.quinpublishing.co.uk



Letters to the Editor

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

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

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

Rob May & Barry Burns



George Josephus Cole and other Coles in West African philately

Dear Rob,

I illustrate (*ed –see front cover*) a card I have owned for some years which bears the commercial cachet of Cole Brothers, Merchants, ACCRA, West Africa. The message on the reverse reads:

“Messrs. Cole Bros., merchants and importers Oni House, Accra, West Africa, are prepared to supply postage stamps, post cards and Registered envelopes of the Gold Coast to stamp dealers and others at a commission of FIVE 5% on receipt of Post Office order the value. Signed Cole Bros., 27th January 1896.”

In “*Postal Services of the Gold Coast to 1901*” John Sacher details the career of Elkanah Rowland Cole, of Sierra Leone, who became Gold Coast colonial postmaster on 21 December 1892. He was charged with trying to increase the commission on stamp orders from 2½% to 5%. When he recommended Cole Brothers be appointed official stamp vendors, the Governor refused. Cole then countered efforts to remove him on grounds of colour prejudice and instead retired aged 54 on 1st November 1899 on a pension of £200pa.

John Mayne
Bridgnorth



Gold Coast PSC from Oagadougou

Dear Rob,

In his short article on pages 34 and 35 of Cameo for January 2014 (whole no. 91) John Mayne gives a fascinating insight into the difficulties in communicating with the outside world faced by travellers in the interior of West Africa towards the close of the nineteenth century.

John is quite right in saying that in 1886 there was no postal service from Ouagadougou. In a lengthy paper “*Les origines du Service des Postes et Télégraphes au Soudan Français (1880 –1910)*” published in Bulletin 24/25 of the Société Internationale d’Histoire Postale (Grenoble, 1977), Constant Bouérat includes a four-page list of French Sudan post and telegraph offices open in that period; Ouagadougou is noted as having been opened as late as 1897, some eleven years after John’s postcard was written. Bouérat notes just seven post offices as having been opened in French Sudan in or before 1886.

The Dalley catalogue of French African colonies states that French Sudan became Senegambia and Niger on 1 October 1902 and Upper Senegal and Niger on 18 October 1904. As John says Ouagadougou is in Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso. Upper Volta was hived off from Upper Senegal and Niger on 1 March 1919; it ceased to exist as a separate territory again on 7 September 1932 but was reconstituted on 4 September 1947. It became fully independent on 5 August 1960.

Bill Mitchell
East Sheen



German images of Togo and Kamerun

Dear Rob,

I was surprised by the cover illustration on the last January 2014 Cameo. I have in my collection a set of 12 postcards printed for a German company, Kupferberg Gold by Kunstdruckerei Künstlersund Karlsruhe one of which bears an identical image, without the border design drawn around the book illustration which Chris Jackson sent you. Two of the postcards depict scenes in Togo and the other ten are of scenes in Kamerun.

John Mayne
Bridgnorth



St Helena Postcards (Innes & Jackson) - Help Wanted

Dear Barry,

I have a listing of the St Helena picture postcards produced by A.L. Innes and T. Jackson on my home page (www.hahnstamps.com). The articles already published by Scavaril and Lampart of SHATPS and Richardson of WASC - the latter in *The St Helena and Ascension Supplements* numbers 33, 34 and 37 have been used in compiling my list. I have been collecting these for over six years, and am now aiming to produce a catalogue listing all of the cards produced by these publishers.

If any members of the WASC have any cards not included in my list I would be delighted if they can contact me, giving details of their cards. Colour scans of both sides would be of great interest, preferably at least 300dpi. The catalogue will be published either as a booklet or as a series of articles in *Cameo* and/or *South Atlantic Chronicle* (SHATPS - St Helena, Ascension & Tristan da Cunha Philatelic Society).

Any information will be gratefully received, and due acknowledgement given when published. My contact details are:

Seerosenstr. 12, D-72108 Rottenburg, Germany

Tel. 00 49 7457 7831

E-mail hahnstamps@t-online.de

Klaus Hahn



Update of "The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region Prior to 1914" by Jack Ince and John Sacher

Dear Barry,

Twenty years after publication of our book, I am preparing an update, which will be made available hopefully by next year. I have accumulated a considerable amount of data and a few relevant articles, etc. over the intervening years, but would be extremely grateful if owners of copies of the book who have kept notes and images of items that need altering, correcting and adding would be kind enough to let me have copies. If new images are being prepared, tiffs at 300dpi would be best, otherwise whatever is available. I can be reached at johnsacher@clara.co.uk, or if a CD would be easier for substantial sized images at South Eggardon House, Askerswell, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 9EP.

John Sacher
Dorchester

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

- Airmails – Barbara Priddy
- Ascension – Bernard Hughes
- Biafra – Tony Plumbe
- Cameroons – Marty Bratzel
- Gambia – Oliver Andrew
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- Gold Coast – Peter Duggan
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- Maritime – John Knight
- Nigerias to 1914 – Simon Heap
- Nigeria post 1914 – Tony Plumbe
- St. Helena – Bernard Mabbett
- Sierra Leone to 1961 – Frank Walton
- Sierra Leone post 1961 – Peter Rolfe
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is Rob May**

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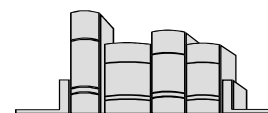
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including information on
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Nigerian Postmarks
with extra material frequently added**



Sources

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For all WASC book orders and payments please contact the Treasurer (address on contents page). Authors will distribute their own new publications to members, whilst distribution of purchases from older stock is arranged via the Treasurer.

 *Pan American Airways 1939-1944* by David Crotty, paperbound, published by the author, 2013, 442pp, colour-illustrated, ISBN 9-781493-552160. Available from www.createpace.com/4166958. Price US\$70.00 plus postage. Or on Amazon (price about \$40 plus shipping at the time of writing).

*Ed—this book has generated contention in the electronic environment since it was published. Two book reviews have appeared in the *Airpost Journal*, one by Ken Lawrence praising this new book and a more critical one by WASC member John Wilson. As David Crotty's own article and advertisement appeared in the last *Cameo* we hope that editorial balance will be served by publishing John Wilson's review of it now.*

This book may be an honest attempt to present an account of Pan American Airways operations in the years given in its title, but despite careful reading, I have difficulty in deciding what the book is intended to be. Is it a history of Pan American Airways? Is it a postal history reference? Could it be both of these?

If it is to be a history, then the subject has been covered by distinguished authors in the past, most notably Bender and Altschul (Ref 1) and Daley (Ref 2), both works displaying the highest levels of academic research and writing. Neither of these landmark historical texts is cited in this book and it offers little of historical note.

To be a postal history reference work, it is important that it is accurate, and well referenced itself. For an airmail collector holding a cover and trying to analyse how, when and by what route it travelled, does this book assist? No, because although there are pages and pages of "facts" there are no attempts to explain either why the air routes were established or what type of mail was being carried and when. So what does this book contain?

The bedrock (by weight and volume) of the 442 pages is 350 pages of flight tables transcribed from documents held at the University of Miami. These are the actual flight summaries prepared by Pan American Airways staff. They are the epitome of what researchers consider "primary source documents", that is to say, records written or compiled at the time by people who are recording facts, with no reason to alter them in any way. David Crotty must have taken hundreds of hours to copy the details from these documents and transcribe them into printed tables. The question is: why do that? It immediately degrades the data from a primary to a secondary source because of the possibility of transcription errors. Additionally, no amount of transcription can convey everything that is contained in the original documents, including such things as handwritten notes, comments or explanations. For any researcher, possession of a primary source document is a pearl beyond price and it must not be degraded.

Are there errors of transcription in this book? Yes; many.

The bigger question is: why copy all this data when the original documents are available in free-to-download format on the web site of the West Africa Study Circle www.wasc.org.uk ? Not only there, but the Richter Library is also in possession of the scanned documents and will provide scans of them to researchers. I know this since I provided them on a pro bono basis, believing that it is a basic tenet of academic research that original sources should be made freely available to other researchers, not bound into a book and sold for profit.

Other than these pages of tables, and by the author's own statement, much of this book is a compilation of his own previously published articles. Chapter 1, for example, is a virtual reprint of an article published in the August 2012 (*American*) *Postal History Journal*, and Chapter 2 is a reprint of two articles published in *Air Post Journal* in 2007 and 2012.

Both chapters discuss previous sources of information and a selection of printed wartime timetables. None of this is of any relevance once we have the actual flight records, so they add nothing to the book. Chapter 3 is devoted to the "Trip Summaries" but is basically a re-run of much of the previous two chapters and, like most of the book, is incoherent. This chapter could have explained the development of Pan American's Atlantic routes as shown by the source documents, but wanders off in several directions without ever reaching any conclusions. References to the listings of previous sources from Chapter 1 are liberally sprinkled with mentions of "LATI substitute", Bathurst, and "randomized schedules" (whatever they might be). "Mail picked up in Gambia" (which is both incomplete and incorrect) is mixed up with "Days of delay for transatlantic crossings in 1942." The chapter title is "What we didn't know, we didn't know", but "What we didn't know, we will invent" would be closer. As an example of this the author asks a question about the route from Lisbon to Natal, saying, "Could this possibly be a new "V" route"? Where this came from is a mystery, but the Lisbon-to-Natal route was the normal southern route used by Pan American. This "V" route is sheer fantasy.

Chapter 4 seems completely out of place, being a virtual transcription of a report compiled by a Pan American traffic expert. It is a mixture of simplified maps of Lagos and Fisherman's Lake and a vast array of statistics about "ton-miles," complex cruciform explanations of the "five shuttle" system (?) and absolutely nothing that would help the postal history researcher or collector. As an aside on transcription errors, Crotty has copied the report author's name incorrectly and repeated it throughout the chapter. Is this "picky"? No, because if a name prominent on the title page of a report is transcribed incorrectly, then it causes concern about other errors (and I can see, from my own researches, that there are many).

Chapter 5 is an amalgam of a fine book written by Tom Culbert (*Pan Africa: Across the Sahara in 1941 with Pan Am*), information from Peter Berry (The Boeing 314 Clipper) and special mission data that was covered by me as long ago as the January 2012 issue of "*Cameo*" (Ref. 3). Added to these is information from the Pan Am archive relating to the operations of C-54 aircraft on the route across Africa to India. Sounds messy? It is. Comprehensible? It is not.

Throughout this book, there are frequent errors both of fact and interpretation which cast a cloud of doubt on the accuracy of the entire text. Statements are made which are totally wrong, locations of documents are incorrect, references are given bearing no relationship to the text and the writing style is incoherent. This is repeated throughout the entire book, and in my first submission of this review I listed literally dozens of errors between the Preface and page 7 (of 442). Space does not permit these to be printed here but I am happy to provide the details on request.

Just one example:

"A number of Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) documents have surfaced that have been discussed in numerous papers." David Crotty does not tell us where.

"These provide an insight into what PAA may have wanted to do and what they were ordered to do. They provide little information as to what actually happened".

This is a crazy statement. The CAB dockets are the legal framework granting permission to an airline to fly. They contain precise details of the application, the route, the terminal points, the intermediate stops, what can be carried or not carried, and they are signed off by the President of the United States. Unless you have studied and understood the CAB Dockets you have missed the most significant primary source documents relating to airline operations across the world. How can anyone say "*They provide little information...*"?

If a postal historian knows his subject, analysis and description of a typical cover will indicate how far his knowledge extends. The book illustrates some covers, but their descriptions indicate a lack of understanding.

In the section covering Route 6 (the so-called FAM-22 route), a cover is shown on page 234 that was posted in Philadelphia on 19 December 1941 and transited Leopoldville on 14 January 1942. This is described as a “possible Charter 8 cover.” On the same page we find the actual flight data taken from the PanAm records and see that on 14 January the flight left Khartoum to go to Leopoldville, arriving there on the 15th. Not only does this contradict the cover’s date in Leopoldville, the aircraft was flying in the wrong direction to have carried it! Careless.

On page 236, we find a cover sent from New York on 8 January 1942 to South Africa with a transit strike of Leopoldville on 20 January. This is described as a “possible Trip 6003”, in other words, a cover carried on one of the so-called “FAM-22” flights of the “Capetown Clipper”. On the same page we have again the actual flight data from the PanAm archive which reveals that this flight did not leave Lagos for Leopoldville until the 24 January. By the author’s description, this cover arrived in Leopoldville four days before the aircraft left Lagos. Careless.

On page 245 we have a cover described as: “Cover carried from Palestine through Africa. Jerusalem Dec. 5, 1944, Miami Dec. 28, 1944. Possible last westbound trip before China Clipper crash.” This sounds exciting . . . except that the actual flight data for the China Clipper shows that the last flight of China Clipper before its fatal crash at Trinidad arrived in Miami on 4 January 1945. This cover shown on page 245 arrived in Miami before the China Clipper came in. Careless.

On the book as a whole? For all the apparent time and effort expended in its production, this book is a disaster. Virtually every page has errors. The whole work is so confused and incoherent that it is impossible to read. I can only repeat my comments on the original article that is reprinted as Chapter 2 in this book;

“Full marks to the author for enthusiasm but I personally cannot see what has been achieved by this text. The reader has not been taken down a path of discovery, rather has been led into a forest of repetitive patterns and left without a guide or any exit conclusion that would cause him or her to say, “From reading that I learned something new that will help me in my collecting and broadened my understanding.”

My view is unchanged. This book simply makes matters worse. This is the danger of what are known in the trade as “Vanity Publications” whereby anyone who wishes to produce a book can write whatever they wish, true or false, accurate or not, and bypass any peer review or critical examination prior to publication. In this book, the reader is not simply led into a forest, he could well be in “The Slough of Despond” (for those who know their Pilgrim’s Progress). Do not waste good money on it.

References

1. Bender, M. and Altschul, S.: *The Chosen Instrument*. Simon & Schuster, New York (1982).
2. Daley, Robert: *An American Saga, Juan Trippe and his PanAm Empire*. Random House, New York (1980) ISBN-10: 039450223X, ISBN-13: 978-0394502236
3. Wilson John, “Pan American, FAM-22, Special Missions, 1942 and 70 years of misunderstanding.” *Cameo*, January 2012.



For a supportive review of this book by Ken Lawrence see the *Airpost Journal*, published by the American Air Mail Society, “*APJ book Review*”, Vol. 85, No. 2, February 2014, page 78 onward.

Ken Lawrence has also written the following e-mail message to a list of aero-philatelists to ensure they are all aware of a further useful publication. This book is out of print but second-hand copies may be found on Amazon and other book sales sites such as www.abebooks.com

 *The United States Post Office in World War II*, Collectors Club of Chicago edition 2002. Review by Ken Lawrence

This is the US Postmaster General's 1951 report to President Harry S. Truman. Postal historians have used it ever since - in the early years mostly as photocopies and privately-printed editions - but they became increasingly obsolete as military records were de-classified and new information became available. Also the absence of illustrations limited its usefulness.

In 2002, under the editorship of Dr. Lawrence Sherman, the Collectors Club of Chicago published a magnificent new edition, which included the complete original text re-set in pleasant fonts, embellished by 300 pictures (stamps, covers, contemporaneous photographs of postal operations, and so forth) including some colour plates, and with 24 chapters called Modern Commentaries by experts in each of the respective aspects: rates, censorship, military mail, POW mail, internee mail, postal concentration centres, interrupted mail, V-mail, parcel post, etc. Authors of those new chapters are Ted Bahry, Russ Carter, George Cosentini, Norm Gruenzer, Stan Jersey, Dave Kent, Al Kugel, Ken Lawrence, David Leeds, Richard Martorelli, Dann Mayo, James Noll, Jerry Santangelo, Larry Sherman and Steve Suffet.

It is hardbound and heavy at 500-plus pages, but well-indexed and cross-referenced with appendices that include the original POD-Army and POD-Navy agreements, wartime postal instructions and geographical references for Army, Navy, Coast Guard and Marine post offices (but not locators for the individually numbered APOs and FPOs; readers will need another source for these).

Everyone who writes about and exhibits US WWII mail ought to have access to this book.

 *The Postmarks and Postal History of Independent Cameroun – 1960 to Date*, by M.P. Bratzel, Jr., Michael St. J. Wright and Marc Parren. viii + 58 pages (8½ x 11 inch) perfect bound plus searchable DVD with 500+ additional pages, ISBN 978-0-9694026-8-8. Due August 2014.

Price – \$75 USD plus postage or equivalent in Sterling or Euros. Cheques and PayPal accepted.

To pre-order or for further information – Contact Marty Bratzel at 1233 Virginia Avenue, Windsor, Ontario N8S 2Z1 Canada or by email at marty_bratzel@yahoo.ca

This publication:

- Thoroughly researches and documents the postmarks and postal history of Cameroun 1960 to date.
- Complements earlier publications about the country under the prior German, British, and French administrations.
- Draws upon all relevant published literature.
- Builds upon extensive information obtained through first-hand visits to, and discussions with postal officials in Cameroun.
- Lists each post office in Cameroun, taking into account name and spelling changes and, to the extent possible, giving the date of opening for each.
- Clearly and accurately illustrates 2,000+ different postmarks and gives the recorded earliest and latest dates of use for each.
- Includes 13 detailed maps showing the location of each post office in Cameroun and connecting postal routes.
- Color photos depict approximately 100 post offices, postal personnel, and postal operations.
- Color illustrations of numerous envelopes, postal forms, and documents representative of postal operations.
- Fully documented with 162 references.

Printed volume – introduction, background, overview, and summary

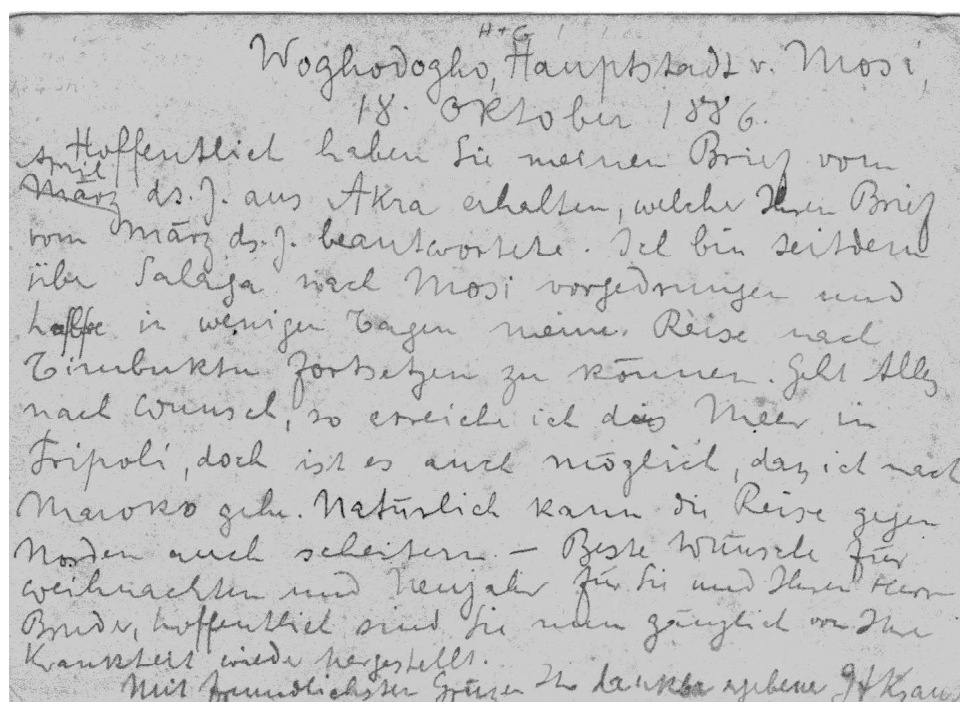
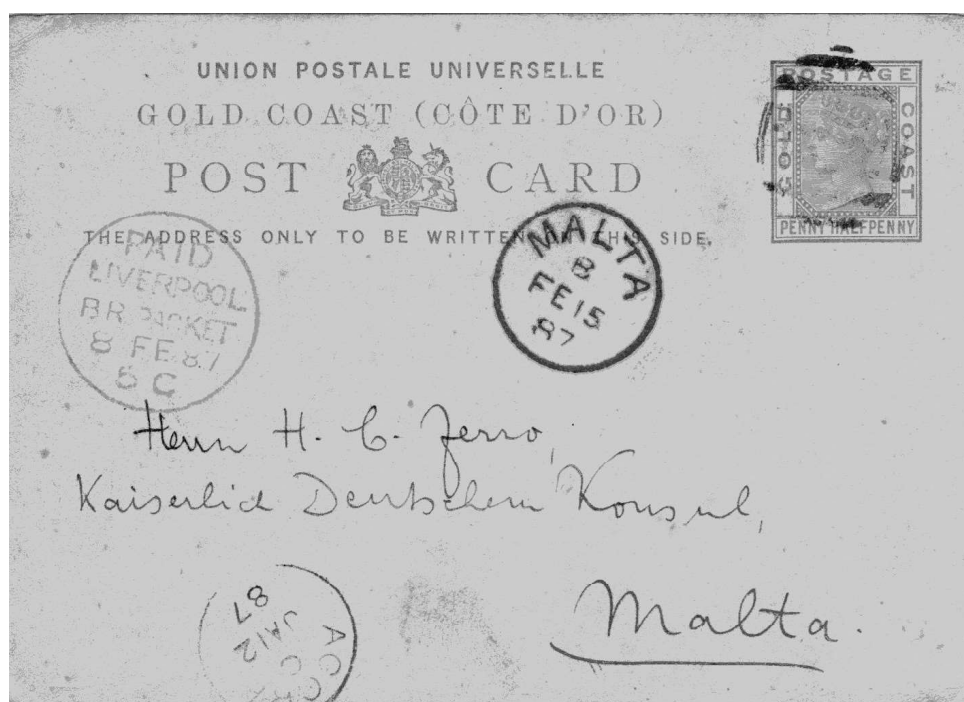
DVD – postal establishments, illustrations of postmarks with reported dates of use, photographs, and selected postal history material.

A Postcard from the Early Exploration of the Upper Volta Region of French West Africa in 1886.

Peter R.A.Kelly.

This article is also to be published shortly in the France & Colonies Philatelist. It follows the short article by John Mayne in Cameo 91 (pages 34-35) after which this card changed hands

A recent acquisition shown below brought into focus the early days of exploration in the upper Volta region well before it fell under the effective control of France and colonisation.



The message translates as:

Woghodogho, principal town of Mossi

18 October 1886

“Hopefully you received my letter of April this year from Akra answering your letter of March this year. Since then I have been up to Salaga and then travelled to Mosi and I hope to pursue my journey to Tombuktu in a few days. If everything goes as I wish, I could reach the sea at Tripoli but it is also possible that I could proceed to Morocco. But the trip to the north could also fail.

Best wishes for Christmas and New Year to you and your brother; hopefully you have recovered from your illness by now.

With kind regards, your grateful J.A.Krause.”

The postcard, that is illustrated opposite, was written by Gottlob Adolf Krause, a German explorer at Ouagadougou as it is now known but expressed phonetically as Woghodogho, on 18 October 1886, addressed to the German consul at Malta. It is written on a 1½d postal stationery card of the Gold Coast. No postal service of any kind existed in Ouagadougou or, for that matter, in any other part of the Mossi kingdom and the card was carried back down to the coast by some means and entered the Gold Coast postal services at Accra on 12 January 1887, some three months after it was written. From Accra it was carried by the British and African Steamship Company *s/s Roquette* (J.C.Hely, Commander) that sailed from Lagos, Nigeria on 8 January 1887 and called at Accra around 12 January, reaching Liverpool on 8 February. It reached its final destination at Malta on 15 February.

Whilst this is undoubtedly an intriguing use of a Gold Coast postal stationery card, the real interest lies in the date and place of despatch and the message on it. This makes it a formidable postal precursor.

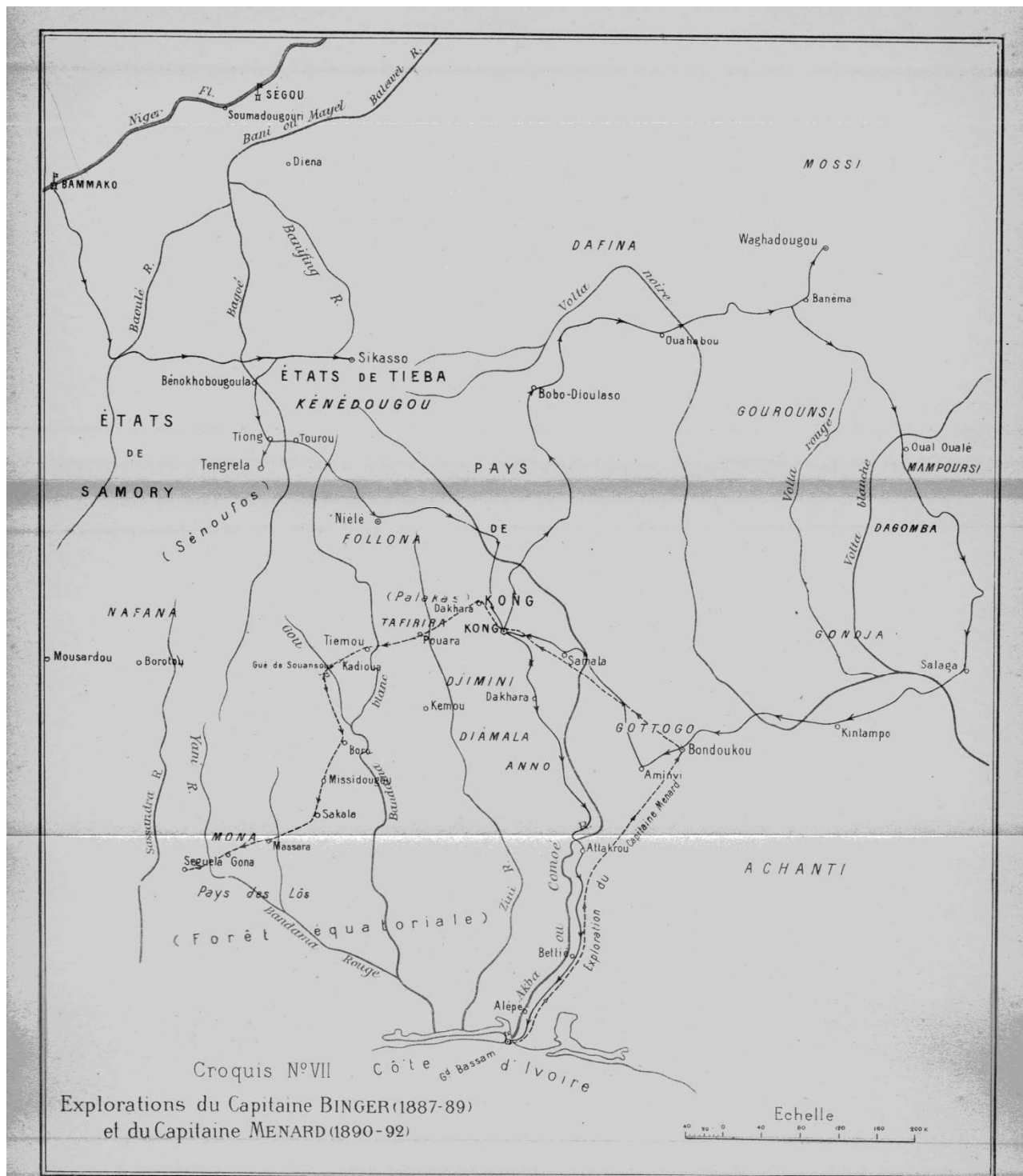
Since the early days of exploration by Barth and Nachtigal the Bobo and Mossi people had been little troubled by European efforts of colonisation in the region and did not owe allegiance to any European power. The Berlin Conference of 1884-5 regulated European colonisation and trade in Africa and allocated territories to the various major powers. The principle of effective occupation stated that the rights acquired by the powers were dependent on their ability to actually enter into possession of the territory. This required them to be able to prove that they had Treaties with local leaders, an established administration and sufficient police to maintain law and order. The actual delimitation of the frontiers between the powers took much longer and, in the case of the Ivory Coast and Volta remained partly unresolved until 1898.

As far as the Bobo and Mossi people and the Kingdom of Kong were concerned the interior remained untouched in 1886 when Krause wrote his postcard. Krause was there as an explorer who was the first to have a more or less correct idea about the course of the Volta River. He was accepted in Ouagadougou but made no attempt to enter into any kind of Treaty on behalf of Germany.

The interior of this region remained untouched until 1887 when Binger began to explore the countries in what is now Ivory Coast and Volta (Burkina Faso today) resulting in Treaties signed in Bonduku in November 1898 and Kong in January 1899 (Ref 1). Binger was in Ouagadougou in June 1888 (see map opposite). The Treaties signed were of great importance because they allowed the link to be established between French Soudan and the Ivory Coast. The area as a whole was not finally subdued until a series of expeditions had taken place culminating with the capture of the warlord Samory.

Gottlob Adolf Krause (1850-1938)

Born in Germany, Krause devoted the greater part of his active life to travels in Africa and, as an academic, the study of languages and culture of different African groups. After having served in the German army, wounded during the Franco-Prussian war (1870-1871) he carried out a number of visits to Tripolitania and the Fezzan that brought him to the attention of the Deutsche Afrikanische Gesellschaft who assisted him financially in studies on the Saharan touaregs. The German policy of colonial expansion was taking shape in the early 1880s and increasing pressure was placed on African experts to assist with “imperial purposes”. Krause was invited to lead an expedition into the Niger basin in 1884 and, after several short excursions,



Map showing the route of expeditions by Captain Binger (1887-1889) and Captain Menard (1890-1892) whereby Treaties were signed with native rulers of the Upper Volta region

discovered that the purpose of the expedition was the expansion of the German colonial empire. He was opposed to this concept and returned to Germany in 1885. He subsequently (and now we are into the period of this postcard) returned to Africa the following year and spent five years in the hinterland of the Gold Coast later returning to Tripoli at the time of the Turco-Italian war. Krause remained an unrelenting critic of German and Italian colonial policies and spent his retirement years in Switzerland.

The postcard.

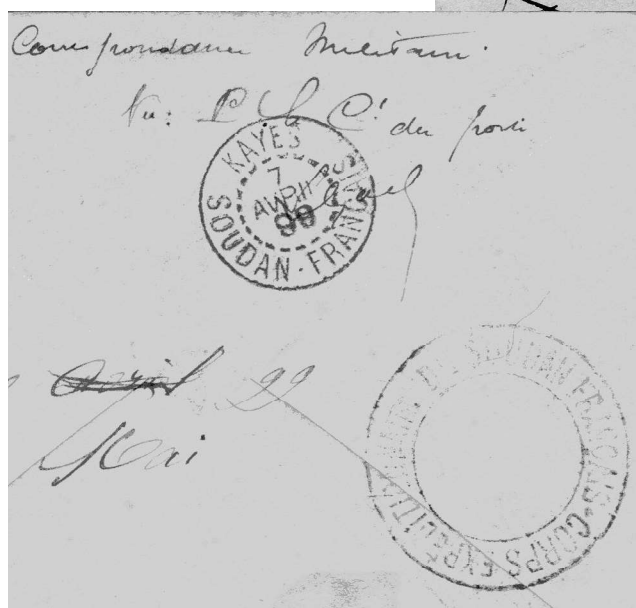
Returning to the card itself we know that Krause was in Ouagadougou in October 1886 and he mentioned his intention to travel on to Tombouctou. Given the overt hostility shown to non-believers wishing to enter Tombouctou it was important to try to find out how far he got. A footnote in M Delafossé's seminal work *Haut Sénégal Niger* published in 1912 was helpful in this. (Ref 2: Author's translation):

".....Ouagadougou had already been visited in 1886 by the German explorer G.A.Krause who, coming up from the Gulf of Guinea, managed to get as far as San, Dienné and Bandiagara (all in French Soudan) travelling alone and carrying all his light baggage himself. After reaching Douentza, on the route to Tombouctou he turned back and returned to the Mossi, crossing the Gourounsi and reaching Kintampo via Sati in 1888. One must give credit to this modest explorer who was the first to acquire a more or less detailed idea of the course of the Volta River....."

The first postal services at Ouagadougou.

In 1897 and 1898 two important events took place. First of all, opposition was dented considerably by the capture and destruction of the believed-to-be impregnable city of Sikasso and the defeat of warlord Bademba with the heavy defeat of his army. This sent ripples of concern throughout opposing forces but left Samory still determined to maintain his power and influence against the French. He was still well armed with considerable backing and his sofa army. In May 1898 Samory was cut off from communication with the Gold Coast and he was pursued vigorously, with a number of confrontations, before being captured finally in October 1898. Permanent military posts were set up at Bobo Dioulasso and Ouagadougou and the scene was set for a relatively peaceful occupation. A post office service was opened in Ouagadougou on 12th February 1898 and at Bobo Dioulasso on 5th June 1899. These offices dealt with military mail mainly to begin with and then increasingly civilian mail as the process of colonisation developed (Ref 3).

16 March 1899
Ouagadougou to Pontivy,
Morbihan



m/s and h/s 'Corps Expeditionnaire du Soudan'
m/s 'Correspondance militaire / Vu P le Cdt du
Poste / Signature'

Transit: Kayes, Soudan Francais 7 April.

Soudan Francais / Ligne M N° 1 2 May

Mailboat Stamboul Dep: Dakar 2 May.

Arr: Marseille 13 May

Received at Pontivy 15 May.

References

1. Gatelet Lt. *Histoire de la conquête du Soudan Francais (1878-1899)* Berger Levrault, Paris 1901.
2. Delafosse M. *Haut-Sénégal Niger* G.P. Maisonneuve & Larose, Paris 1972.
3. *Essai de nomenclature des obliterations du Soudan Francais*. Bulletin Col.Fra Hors Série N° 10-1. 2000



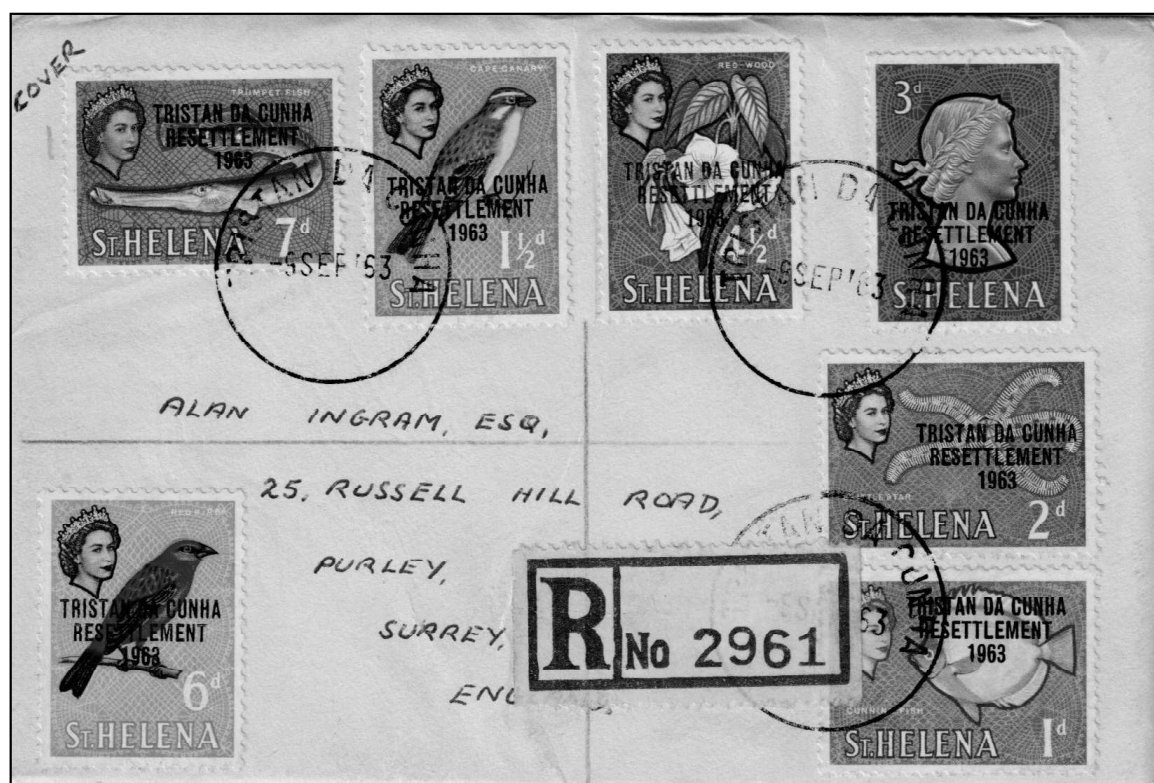
Tristan da Cunha Registration Mark Type 4

Richard Moss

When the advance resettlement party returned to Tristan on 9 April 1963 they took supplies for the Post Office which re-opened on their return. These included a new series of definitives, a new postmark and an emergency supply of registration labels WITHOUT the source, Tristan da Cunha, printed on them.

The lowest recorded number in George Crabb's 1980 handbook (Ref. 1) is '2459' and the highest is '2948'. The next number recorded was 3006 which was written in manuscript on the covers, indicating that due to heavy demand for covers the labels had run out, and one has to presume that the last label would have been numbered 2999 or more likely 3000. In 2009 Robin Taylor returned to the subject in his *Monograph 20* and the highest numbered label was still recorded as 2948.

In March 2014 I purchased the illustrated cover, so the last recorded number is now 2961, UNLESS YOU KNOW BETTER!



So, please have a look at your covers. You may have one with a blank registration label number lower than 2459 or one higher than 2961. I would be very interested to hear from anybody who has numbered covers outside this known sequence.

Pre-WWII U.S. air mail to West African destinations

Peter Wingent

Whilst examples of air mail letters sent from the U.S.A. to African destinations during WWII are fairly easy to find, my experience has been that such covers posted prior to WWII are less common and, in particular, ones addressed to West Africa. Recently, I was lucky enough to obtain three such items which provide an interesting variety of rates and routes.

The first, shown in fig. 1 with back-stamps superimposed, was posted in New York on 10 May 1938 and is inscribed, "*from France or Belgium.*" Thus the letter was intended to be flown by the joint Air Afrique/Sabena service, operating from Europe to the Belgian Congo, which at this time was flown on alternate weeks by the two airlines. From the end of May 1937, when the Aéromaritime service was extended from Cotonou to Douala, mail to French Cameroun could be flown all the way to Douala. The U.S. Post Office announced the availability in "The Postal Bulletin" of 8 June 1937, an extract from which is shown in fig. 3.

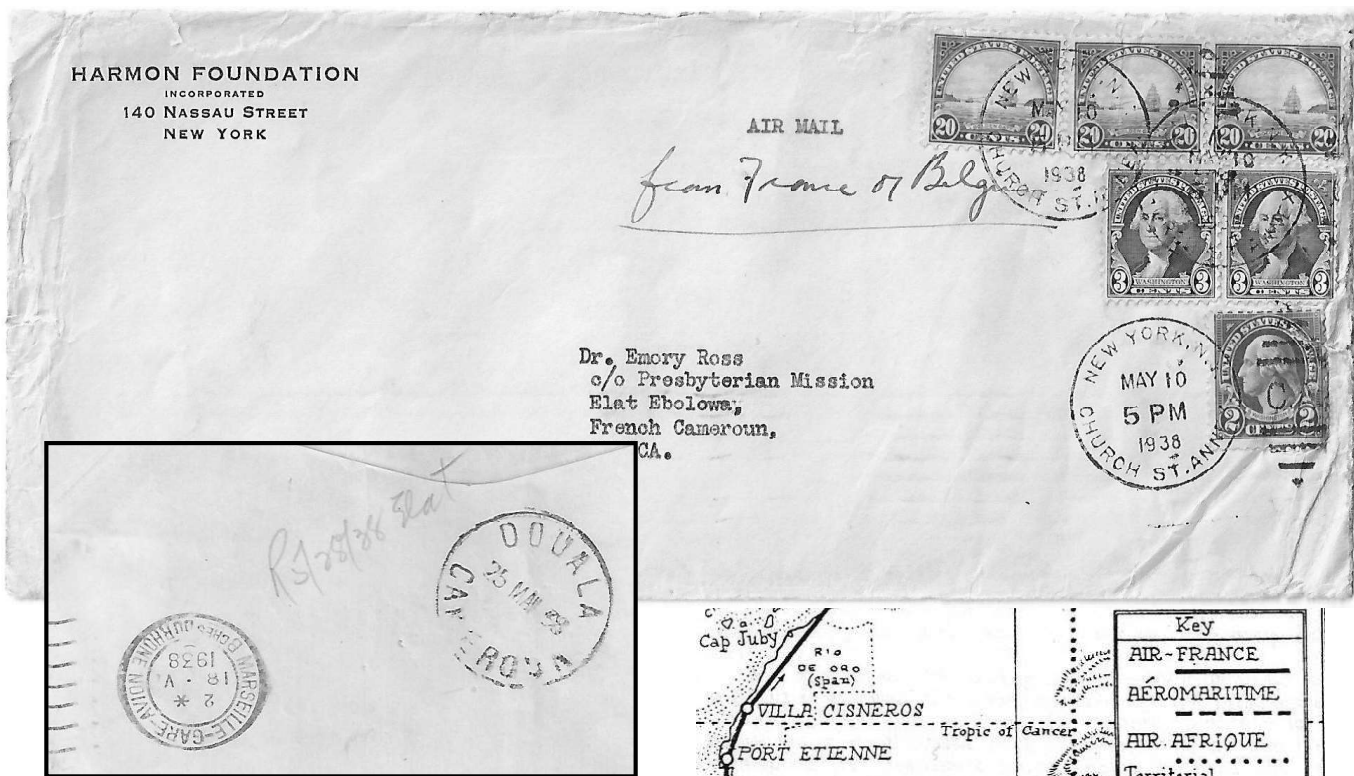


Figure 1

Itinerary of the cover:

New York ~ Southampton (Ref. 3):

Queen Mary (Cunard Line) sailed 11 May; arrived 16th.

Croydon ~ Marseilles:

Flown by Air France via Paris on 18 May.

Marseilles ~ Niamey:

Flown by Sabena; dep. 22 May, arr. 24th.

Niamey ~ Cotonou (see fig. 2):

Flown by Aéromaritime feeder service on 24 May.

Cotonou ~ Douala (see fig. 2):

Flown by Aéromaritime service on 25 May.

Douala ~ Ebolowa:

Train to Eséka, then by road, arrived 28th.

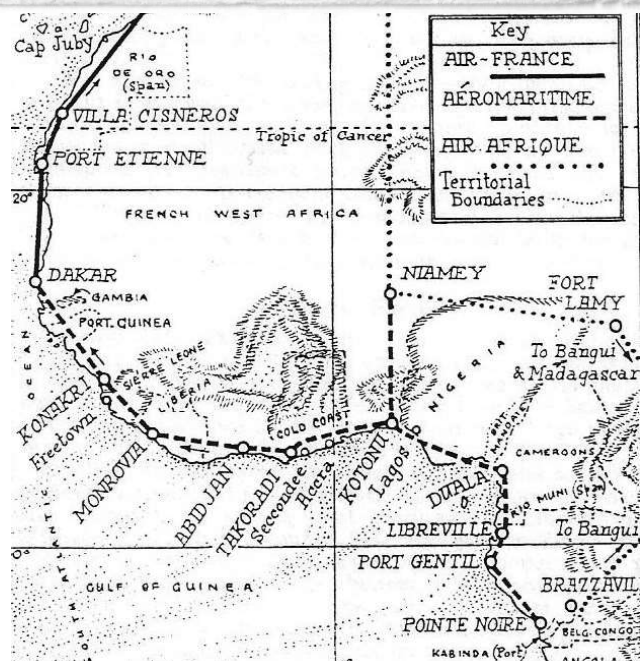


Figure 2 (Ref. 2)

(For those readers wishing to consult any U.S. Postal Bulletin, "The Digitized U.S. Postal Bulletins and PL & Rs" (Ref. 1) is highly recommended.)

AIR-MAIL SERVICE—FRANCE TO AFRICA			
The air-mail service from France to French West Africa and Liberia, announced in the POSTAL BULLETIN of April 19, has been extended from Cotonou (Dahomey) to Duala (French Cameroons), Port-Gentil (Gabon), and Pointe-Noire (Moyen Congo). Connection is made at Cotonou with the service from France and Belgium via Niamey. Mail leaving Marseille on Saturday is due at Duala Wednesday and at Port-Gentil and Pointe-Noire Thursday. This new service is of advantage for the dispatch of mail for Gabon and for the west zones of French and British Cameroons and of Moyen (Middle) Congo. The air-mail fee therefor is 23 cents per half-ounce, in addition to the ordinary postage. Articles should bear the blue "Par Avion/By Air Mail" label and be marked underneath the label "From France."			
Cameroons-----	23 cents per ½ oz----	Lv. Marseille Sat. Ar. Duala Wed.	"From France."
Page 5.—			
French Equatorial Africa.	23 cents per ½ oz----	Lv. Marseille Sat. Ar. Port-Gentil and Pointe-Noire Thur.	"From France."
J. W. COLE, Acting Second Assistant Postmaster General.			

Figure 3

The air mail rate to French Cameroun and AEF advertised in the Postal Bulletin of 8 June 1937, shown in fig. 3 is 23¢ per ½ oz. However, this was very quickly reduced to 20¢ per ½ oz., a rate which was announced in a Bulletin dated 22 July 1937; the reduction being explained as, "*In consequence of simplifications in the air mail service from France and reduction in the transportation charges made by the French Postal Administration.*"

Throughout the 1930s, the U.S. Post Office charged air mail fees for carriage by air from London to destination which were in addition to ordinary U.S. postage and internal air fees, which are explained as follows:

From 1 March 1928 to 13 June 1940 ordinary foreign postage was 5¢ first oz.; 3¢ each additional oz.

There was an additional charge if carriage by air within the U.S. was required but in August 1932, a combined charge for both the air fee and ordinary postage was introduced which was 10¢ first oz; 15¢ each additional oz.

On 23 Nov. 1934, the combined air and ordinary fee was reduced to 8¢ per oz., which applied until June 1940.

AIR MAIL SERVICE TO NIGERIA									
This Office has been informed that a weekly air mail service will be established, beginning on February 13, between Khartoum (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan) and Kano (Nigeria), connecting at Khartoum with the planes which leave London every Sunday. The schedule of the new route will be as follows: Thursday.... Lv. Khartoum (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan). Thursday.... Ar. El Obeid (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan). Thursday.... Ar. El Fasher (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan). Thursday.... Ar. Geneina (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan). Friday..... Ar. Fort Lamy (French Equatorial Africa). Friday..... Ar. Maidugari (Nigeria). Friday..... Ar. Kano (Nigeria). Articles mailed in this country for delivery in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, French Equatorial Africa, and Nigeria will be accepted for dispatch by this route if prepaid the following air-mail fee shown below, in addition to the ordinary postage and the registration fee, if applicable: <table> <tr> <th>Country of destination:</th><th>Per half-ounce</th></tr> <tr> <td>Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.....</td><td>11 cents</td></tr> <tr> <td>French Equatorial Africa.....</td><td>13 cents</td></tr> <tr> <td>Nigeria.....</td><td>16 cents</td></tr> </table> The articles should bear the blue "Par Avion/By Air Mail" label and be marked in addition "From London" underneath the label.		Country of destination:	Per half-ounce	Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.....	11 cents	French Equatorial Africa.....	13 cents	Nigeria.....	16 cents
Country of destination:	Per half-ounce								
Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.....	11 cents								
French Equatorial Africa.....	13 cents								
Nigeria.....	16 cents								

Figure 4

The cover in fig. 1 is franked 68¢ and weighed between 1 and 1½ oz. As it was posted in New York, only the ordinary foreign postage was due which was 5¢ first oz. + 3¢ additional oz., added to which 3 x 20¢ per ½ oz. air mail fee makes the total of 68¢.

The second cover, posted at Whittier on 6 April 1939 (see fig. 5), is addressed to Bozoum in French Equatorial Africa but was not sent via the services advertised in the Bulletin shown in fig. 3. Instead, it was flown by Imperial Airways' West Africa service from Khartoum which opened in February 1936. Mail via this route to AEF was charged a cheaper rate of 13¢ per ½ oz., as advertised in the U.S. Postal Bulletin of 11 Feb. 1936, shown in fig. 4.



Figure 5 (Backstamps read Bangui 19 April & Bozoum 27th)



Itinerary of the cover:

Sent by road from Whittier to Los Angeles (approx. 15 miles).

Los Angeles ~ New York:

Flown by American Airlines daily service: dep. 16.30, 6 April; arr. 11.55 on 7th. (Ref. 4)

New York ~ Southampton:

Europa (Nord Deutscher Lloyd) sailed 8 April; arrived 13.00 on the 13th. (Ref. 5)

Southampton ~ Khartoum:

Flown by Imperial Airways service KS94 (S23 *Challenger*) (Ref. 6) dep. 06.30 on 14 April, arrived 16.00 on the 16th.

Khartoum ~ Fort Lamy:

Flown by Imperial Airways service KL168 (DH86 *Demeter*) (Ref. 7) dep. 06.00 on 17 April, arrived Fort Lamy same day.

Fort Lamy ~ Bangui (see fig. 6):

Flown by Sabena on 19 May.

Bangui ~ Bozoum (see fig. 6):

Sent by road (approx. 350 miles) taking 8 days.

Figure 6

Although inscribed "*Jusqu'à Fort Lamy*," and paid only to be flown as far as there, the cover must have been flown by Sabena from Fort Lamy to Bangui because the journey by road is approximately 800 miles and definitely could not have been completed in just two days.

The 21¢ franking comprises 8¢ per oz. combined U.S. internal air fee and ordinary foreign postage, plus 13¢ per ½ oz. air mail fee from the U.K. to French Equatorial Africa.

The third and final cover is shown in fig. 7 and is addressed to Sierra Leone. It is back-stamped Freetown, 22 July 1939 and Makeni 25 July. When it was posted in Tucson on 3 July 1939, the Elders Colonial Airways service from Bathurst to Freetown was still operating. The last southbound service was on 8 July. The following week the aircraft arrived at Bathurst from Freetown one day late on the 16th, but could not return due to breakdown and the service was terminated. The Tucson Post Office would have thought the letter would be carried by the D.L.H. service from either Marseilles or Frankfurt to Bathurst and then by the Elders' feeder service. The latter was first advertised in the U.S. Postal Bulletin of 19 August 1938, shown in fig. 8 and again in a Postal Bulletin dated 16 March 1939, shown in fig. 9. Both Bulletins state the air mail fee, in addition to ordinary postage, was 30¢ per ½ oz. The cover was flown from Tucson to New York and thus the U.S. combined internal air fee and ordinary postage of 8¢ per oz. should have been charged in addition to the 30¢ air fee. It is therefore puzzling why the cover is franked 45¢. If any reader can offer an explanation, I would be delighted!



Figure 7

Itinerary of the cover:

Tucson ~ New York:

Flown by American Airlines daily service: dep. 20.15, 3 July; arr. 11.42 on 4th. (Ref. 8)

New York ~ Southampton:

Queen Mary (Cunard Line) sailed 5 July; arrived 15.00 on the 10th. (Ref. 9)

Croydon ~ Dakar:

Flown by Air France, Croydon – Paris – Marseilles – Dakar:

dep. 17.00 on 11 July to Paris, Paris – Casablanca on 12th, Casablanca – Dakar on the 13th (arrived 14.45). (Ref. 10)

Dakar ~ Freetown:

Abosso (Elder Dempster Line) sailed 20 July, arrived 22nd. (Ref. 11)

Freetown ~ Makeni:

Sierra Leone railway via Bauya Junction (arrived 25th).

Although the U.S. Postal Bulletins state that air mail from the U.K. to Sierra Leone would be flown from either Marseilles or Frankfurt by D.L.H., the Freetown arrival date proves that the letter could only have been routed via Dakar. This is because the only ship to arrive at Freetown on 22 July and to have called at either Bathurst or Dakar was the *Abosso* and she had called at Dakar, but not at Bathurst (she is not recorded as calling at Bathurst in the Gambia Shipping Intelligence records for July 1939 (Ref. 12)).

**FIRST ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, August 18, 1938.**

AIR MAIL SERVICE TO SIERRA LEONE

The Postal Administration of Great Britain announces the establishment of through air-mail service to Sierra Leone, leaving London every Wednesday and arriving at Freetown the following Saturday afternoon.

The air-mail fee applicable to articles for this service is 30 cents per half ounce, in addition to the ordinary postage. The articles should bear a blue "Par Avion/By Air Mail" label on the address side, and be marked underneath the label "From London."

Accordingly, in the Foreign Air Mail Service leaflet, Part 3, item "Sierra Leone," the following new information should be added: Column 2, "30 cents per half-ounce;" column 3, "Lv. London Wed.—Ar. Freetown Sat.;" column 4, "From London."

Figure 8

AIR MAIL SERVICE TO SIERRA LEONE AND PORTUGUESE GUINEA

The weekly air-mail service to Sierra Leone announced in the *POSTAL BULLETIN* of August 11, 1938, is now available from France as well as from London. Dispatch is by French planes to Marseille or British planes to Frankfurt (Germany), thence by German planes to Bathurst (Gambia), from which place British planes operate to Freetown (Sierra Leone), with an intermediate stop at Bolama (Portuguese Guinea).

Departure from either Paris or London is on Wednesday, with arrival at Bolama and Freetown on Saturday.

The air-mail fee of 30 cents per half ounce (in addition to the ordinary postage) applies to articles to be dispatched by air from either London or Paris to Portuguese Guinea or Sierra Leone. Articles should bear the blue "Par Avion/By Air Mail" label on the address side, and be marked underneath the label "From Europe."

The air-mail service to Sierra Leone and Portuguese Guinea by French planes to Dakar and thence by the ordinary means is discontinued.

Accordingly, on page 7 of the Foreign Air Mail Service leaflet, the items "Portuguese Guinea" and "Sierra Leone" should be changed as follows:

Portuguese Guinea.....	30 cents per ½ ounce..	Lv. London or Paris Wed.....	"From
		Ar. Bolama Sat.....	Europe."
Sierra Leone.....	30 cents per ½ ounce..	Lv. London or Paris Wed.....	"From
		Ar. Freetown Sat.....	Europe."

AMBROSE O'CONNELL,
Second Assistant Postmaster General.

Figure 9

References:

1. www.uspostalbulletins.com/Home.aspx
2. *The Aeroplane* magazine, 19 January 1938 edition, p.74.
3. *The Times*, 'Mails and Shipping' column, 12 & 17 May 1939 edition.
4. *Bradshaw's International Air Guide*, July 1939 edition, p. 163G.
5. *The Times*, 'Mails and Shipping' column, 10 & 14 April 1939 edition.
6. Imperial Airways' aircraft movement chart, April 1939.
7. Ibid.
8. *Bradshaw's International Air Guide*, July 1939 edition, p. 163G.
9. *The Times*, 'Mails and Shipping' column, 6 & 11 July 1939 edition.
10. *Bradshaw's International Air Guide*, July 1939 edition, p. 149D.
11. *The Times*, 'Mails and Shipping' column, 22 & 24 July 1939 edition.
12. *Gambia Government Gazette*, 15 August 1939 edition, p. 277.

Wartime trans-Atlantic services from West Africa.

The later years.

John Wilson

For the last few years much work has gone into understanding the routes by which airmail was carried between West Africa and the United States. Such mail includes that in transit through West Africa from points further East, all the way to and from unoccupied China, as well as the various countries in the Middle East. Most research effort has focused on the year 1942, since that is the year when, following America's entry into World War 2, all trans-Atlantic services were in a state of some confusion. Hopefully most of that confusion has been logically explained, assisted in no small measure by having access to actual records of Pan American Airways flights held at the University of Miami.

When asked recently by John Powell to help in analysing airmail covers from Gold Coast to the United States in 1943 and 1944, it became clear that there is still a lot of confusion (to say the least) about how airmail was carried after 1942. Very recent studies of the Pan American "Trip Summaries" and supporting documents have shown that we could clarify the position in the period from mid 1943 through to the end of the war. It would be wonderful to have a simple calendar showing exact dates and routes, but in wartime nothing is ever certain, and changing conditions on the battle fronts caused unexpected changes in routes for mail. As Barbara Priddy, Peter Wingent and I have concluded, there was an element of "Mail to be sent; throw it on to the next plane heading in more or less the right direction". Here is a first attempt at resolving John Powell's plea for help.

A comprehensive overview of American involvement in wartime airmail carriage, and one that must be read at every opportunity is Richard Beith's article from *Cameo*. (Ref 1)

My own article (Ref 2) in *Cameo* (January 2012) goes into more detail of the Pan American Airways mail carrying operations to and from West Africa in 1942, but a summary of the Boeing 314 flights is given here:

19 Dec. 1941 to 3 Feb. 1942.

Single round trips between US and Lagos. Although Miami was the "Africa Gateway" for airmail, such mail was carried between Miami and Trinidad by Pan American regular South American services. Mail from West Africa was off loaded at Trinidad for examination before being sent on to Miami.

7 Feb. 1942 to 6 Jun. 1942.

Between Natal and Lagos (with the Boeing A314 making two shuttle flights) with the Natal to Trinidad and Trinidad to Miami sections utilising aircraft engaged in the regular Pan American mail service to South America.

Until June 1942 there was no land airstrip at Fisherman's Lake, so the existing coastal and trans-Africa services of Pan American Airways (Africa) using DC-2 and DC-3 aircraft could not connect with the flying boats at Fisherman's Lake.

15 Jun. 1942 to June 1943.

Between Fisherman's Lake and Natal (with the Boeing A314 making five shuttle flights), with other aircraft, and significantly other airlines, to carry their contract mail between points in West Africa – for example SABENA between Leopoldville-Lagos-Accra, with PAA (Africa) and later USATC on the routes to Fisherman's Lake.

Beginning in May 1943, with the ending of the Allied military operations in North Africa and the emphasis moving to the invasion of Italy, the need for the carrying capacity of the Pan American flying boats across the South Atlantic was diminishing. This coincided with the availability of land based aircraft such as C-54 (DC-4) and C-87 (Converted Liberator) cargo carriers that could fly the South Atlantic route either direct from Miami (C-54) or via Ascension Island (C-87) into the Air Transport Command (ATC) base at Accra. This allowed Pan American to release some of the flying boats and return them to Pacific service, with the remaining aircraft carrying on the CAB certified mail and passenger carrying routes to the UK and Europe, as well as the "LATI substitute" route between Europe and South America.

The table below shows that transition using data from the BOAC movement charts. The full serial numbers of the aircraft e.g. NC-18604 are truncated to the last two digits for clarity.

Month	Aircraft on regular FAM-18 and LATI substitute								Special Missions.
	reg.	reg.	reg.	reg.	reg.	reg.	reg.	reg.	Registration No.
Aug 42	02	03	04	05					06, 09, 11
Sep 42	02	03	04	05					06, 09, 11
Oct 42	02	03	04	05					06, 09, 11
Nov 42	02	03	04	05					06, 09, 11, 12 (Note 1)
Dec 42	02	03	04	05					06, 09, 12
Jan 43	02	03	04	05					06, 09, 11, 12 (Note 2)
Feb 43	02	lost	04	05					As above
Mar 43	02		04	05					As above
Apr 43	02		04	05					As above
May 43	02		04			09	11		Note 3
Jun 43	02		04		06	09	11		12 (Note 4)
Jul 43	02		04		06	09	11		Note 5
Aug 43					06	09	11		
Sep 43					06	09	11	12	Note 6

Note 1 Return of NC-18612 to special mission duty after end of Route 6 flights Miami-Leopoldville. Route 6 should not be confused with the US Post Office mail contract of FAM-6, which is the mail route from Miami to South America.

Note 2 Special missions carried on with these aircraft until June 1943.

Note 3 First transfer of aircraft from special missions to regular service duty.

Note 4 Final special mission (SM91) flight. 06, 09, 11 aircraft now flying regular FAM-18 and LATI substitute routes.

Note 5 02, 04, 05 aircraft transferred out of Atlantic Division after July 1943.

Note 6 These aircraft continued on the Atlantic certificated services until 1945.

From July 1943, mail that had been carried by the special mission flights must therefore have been transferred to other aircraft, and although no documentary proof has been found, probably because the services were by now fully militarised, West African mail was probably carried by the ATC aircraft flying through Accra back to Miami. However, Barbara Priddy has carried out a long study, recently published in "Air Mail News" (Ref. 3) covering the flights of American Export Airlines (AEA), and this has implications for some West African mail out of Bathurst, and see ref 1.

Prior to the discovery of actual Pan American Airways flight records (Trip Summaries) it had been assumed that because there were regular Boeing 314 flights from Lisbon to the United States calling at Fisherman's Lake, mail out of West Africa would be assembled at Fisherman's Lake for onward carriage. Study of the flight records, each of which shows the weight of any mail picked up (but not dropped) at any point, reveals that the CAB certificated mail service flights did not pick up mail at Fisherman's Lake except for very small quantities presumably generated by the American staff located there. This applied to the entire period from January 1942 through to the end of the war, but ONLY to certificated flights, not to the special missions flown until June 1943. You can check these details by using the "Trip Summaries" original documents on our own web site (www.wasc.org.uk)

As an overall summary therefore, we can be reasonably sure that from December 1941 through to June 1943, West African airmails were carried by the aircraft of the “Special Missions”, and after July 1943 by the militarised ATC services operating out of Accra and later Dakar. How mail was transferred up and down the West African coast all the way from Leopoldville via Lagos to Fisherman’s Lake, and through the various West African countries is a separate subject currently under consideration for future articles.

This was, of course, wartime. Inevitably there will be covers out there that do not fit the general pattern due to misdirection or as mentioned above, the tendency to throw bags of mail on to the next available aircraft. It is worth repeating that the so-called FAM-22 flights out of Leopoldville which carried little mail probably fall into this category. For some writers this is controversial but the documentary evidence I analysed in Cameo in January 2012 (Ref. 2) should be clear to anyone who goes back to read it again.

References.

1. Beith, Richard, ‘*The United States involvement in West African Aviation and their contribution to the carriage of mails, 1941-1945*’, Cameo, January 2009
2. Wilson John, “*Pan American, FAM-22, Special Missions, 1942 and 70 years of misunderstanding.*” Cameo, January 2012
3. Priddy, Barbara, “*The Other Company Concerned. American Export Airlines and the carriage of Westbound Transatlantic mail during World War II*”, Air Mail News, Journal of the British Air Mail Society, digital edition February 2014.



Nigeria 1956 Royal Visit Forgery

Dr. Simon Heap

I want to thank Rob May in writing, as well as alert WASC members to a forged Nigeria Royal Visit 1956 Inverted Overprint (SG81a), which I got at the very reputable Provincial Philatelics auction in Oxfordshire a few months ago after looking for one for many years. Rob, who was at the same auction, expressed worries about the overprint’s position on the stamp and brought his copy to a WASC meeting in London. The position was actually similar but it was the faulty letters illustrated below which were of more concern. Note particularly the damaged R I immediately had it expertised at the Royal, and got back a certificate indicating it was forged. Provincial returned my money promptly.



King George V Postage & Revenue Key Plate 20

Frank Walton FRPSL

Despite the relatively high print runs, examples of some Sierra Leone key plates are more difficult to find than others. Altogether, there were 18 different George V key plates used for printing Sierra Leone stamps (1a, 1b, 3-13, 16 and 18-21). Over the years, I have managed to pick up examples of all but two of these, namely 9 and 20. Figure 1 shows a top right corner block of four of the 1d violet stamp which was printed between 1924 and 1930. Peter Fernbank's wonderful book (Ref. 1) tells us that this has to be from Plates 7, 9, 12, 13, 18, 19 or 20. But which one? The lack of a plate number in the top margin narrows the options to Plates 9, 12 and 20 as the others have a plate number present above the penultimate stamp in the top row (Ref. 2). The next clue is the sheet number of '01303'; this is really helpful as the leading '0' tells us that this came from a print run in excess of 10,000 sheets. Of the six possible 1d printings, only two were for a requisition of at least 10,000 sheets: 28 July 1928 (10,185 sheets) and 20 August 1929 (10,045) (Ref. 1). Both of these printings utilised Plates 18 & 20 in a 240-set format. Hence it is possible to positively identify the block as having been printed from Plate 20.



Figure 1. Sierra Leone 1d violet from Plate 20



Figure 2. Nigeria 1d red from Plate 20.
[Digitally cropped. Courtesy of Peter Fernbank.]

One very noticeable feature of this block is the damaged Jubilee line above the corner stamp. This damaged state isn't listed in Peter Fernbank's book, so I asked him whether he could add any information. By return of email, Peter sent me an image of a part-sheet of the Nigeria 1d red from the right pane of Plate 20 (Fig. 2). There are several constant marks, such as the small dot outside the base of the right-hand Jubilee line of the corner stamp on both blocks, confirming the allocation to Plate 20. Figure 2 shows the top Jubilee line of the corner stamp to be showing signs of wear. Unfortunately there were many printings of the Nigeria 1d red from Plate 20 (17 printings between August 1927 and January 1931, Ref. 3), so it is not possible to establish when this damage occurred.

If any member has other similar positional blocks from Plate 20 it would be most interesting to see them as it may help to pin-point the date of the damage.

References

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2. Peter Fernbank FRPSL, *King George V Key Plates of the Imperium Postage and Revenue Design*, 2nd edition, p77, BWISC, Alicante, Spain, 2013.
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French Postal Activity in Spanish Equatorial Africa 1887 -1906

Bill Mitchell

A long-standing dispute between France and Spain over the territory of Rio Muni, now known as continental Equatorial Guinea, was settled in 1900 when France finally accepted (in a very truncated form) the Spanish claim to the area. Agreement on the boundary with the French colony of Gabon took some time and the French eventually withdrew in 1901, closing their three post offices (at Bata, Benito and Campo) in the territory. But this was not quite the end of the story. Some time ago I illustrated in *Cameo* a Gabon stamp, first issued in 1904, clearly postmarked CAMPO GABON FR. 12 AOUT 06 and suggested several possible explanations for this (Ref 1). For ease of reference the stamp is illustrated again (Figure 1). Thanks to a fellow collector of the stamps and postal history of French Equatorial Africa, Wolfgang Strobel of Bonn, I now have what is very likely the true explanation. As the stamp is off cover, its provenance cannot be verified beyond doubt.



Figure 1

A few historical notes are necessary to make this explanation clear. Way back in 1777 Portugal ceded certain trading rights on the West Coast of Africa to Spain in exchange for territory in Brazil. These rights extended from the delta of the River Niger to what is now Port Gentil in Gabon, but Spain chose to interpret this Pardo Treaty as conferring rights over the hinterland as well as on the coast, a total of some 800,000 sq. km. in all. Not surprisingly, Spain did nothing to develop the territory it claimed, enabling France to get a foothold in the area in 1839 when it settled freed slaves on the coast near what soon became Libreville. This is to the north of Port Gentil and so in what was, strictly speaking, the Spanish sphere of influence. See footnote A.

Despite Spanish protests, French influence in the area was gradually extended until the winter of 1884-85, when the Conference of Berlin is credited with awarding 180,000 sq. km. (only) of territory to Spain. I have been unable to trace verification of this, but what is certain is that, by a joint protocol signed in Berlin on 24 December 1885 (Ref. 2) France and Germany agreed that the boundary between the French colony of Gabon and the German protectorate of Kamerun, which had been declared on 14 July 1884 (Ref. 3), should be the River Campo, which happened to be the northern boundary of the territory apparently awarded to Spain only a few months earlier. So Spain was eliminated from the mainland of equatorial Africa. The area was administered by France as part of Gabon, which was incorporated in French Congo in 1888, only to be re-constituted in 1904; it was not long after the 1885 protocol, on 16 November 1887, when the three French post offices referred to above were authorised.

Spain persisted in its claim, and eventually France accepted Spanish sovereignty over a tiny area of 26,000 sq. km. by the Paris Convention of 27 June 1900 (Ref 4) and, as already noted, France evacuated the area in the following year after new boundaries had been agreed. Naturally, their three post offices were closed.

A totally unexpected development was the discovery by Wolfgang Strobel of a further boundary commission not mentioned in any of my sources (ref. 5); it is now known that more Franco-Spanish delimitation operations were carried out in the north of the territory in the summer and early autumn of 1906 (my stamp, remember, is dated 12 August). So, although documentary confirmation has not so far been traced, it is very likely that postal facilities were made available at Campo for use by personnel engaged in these negotiations. It seems unlikely that there was a formal re-opening; it seems more likely that a member of the French contingent acted as postal agent and was supplied with stamps and ancillary material, including this French post office date-stamp.

The principal sources for the philately of the period of French administration are an article by P-L Pannetier and a COL.FRA Bulletin Hoes-série by Claude Dauthuille. Pannetier's work is now over 50 years old and in need of updating and his article is limited by a cut off date of 1893 (Ref. 6). There is no narrative in Dauthuille, published in 2005 (Ref. 7) - his book consists of the texts of official documents relating to the posts of French Equatorial Africa and its cut-off date is 1903. A projected volume 2, to cover the years 1904 – 1913, has not yet appeared.

Pannetier tells us quite a lot about the post offices opened by the French in Rio Muni, although it is obvious that there were gaps in his knowledge. He says that until 1887 the only post office in Gabon was at Libreville and that in the previous year, mindful of the requirements of the UPU, the responsible government departments in Paris had sought local reaction to the suggestion that it should be supplemented by further post offices along the coast at places frequented by foreign paquebots. A negative report was prepared, dated 31 December 1886, which was duly submitted to Paris. However, the energetic Lieutenant-Governor, Noel-Eugène Ballay (See footnote B), had ideas of his own and decided to create an interior postal service which was put into effect by an arrêté of 4 July 1887. This provided for stocks of stamps to be held along the coast (this very likely mindful of Paris's enquiry of the previous year) at Cap Lopez, Mayumba and Loango, and at Lambaréné and N'Djolé in the interior. Note that there was no mention of the three places (Bata, Benito and Campo) in Rio Muni. Paris also over-ruled local opposition, which was presented with a fait accompli by a dépêche ministérielle of 16 November 1887. This provided for the manufacture "au compte du Budget local du Gabon" of date-stamps ("des timbres à date) for 15 places, including the five authorised by Lt-Governor Ballay and the three in Rio Muni. Pannetier calls these 1887 offices "petits bureaux". He records that the date-stamps were manufactured by a Paris company, Maison Dubettier, and notes that in the normal course they would have reached Gabon towards the end of the first quarter of the next year, 1888.

He goes on to say that the offices at Benito and Campo were closed in December 1889 (he is more precise about Benito, "now of no commercial importance", closed by a décision of 5 December 1889). The decision to close the post office at Benito may have been precipitated by a dépêche ministérielle (Dauthuille calls it a "Circulaire ministérielle) of 14 November 1889 asking the Lt-Governor, M. de Chavannes, to consider whether it would be in the interests of the colony for postal services to be developed there and at Loango, which were both ports of call (both outward and return) of French paquebots, so as to provide the same services as were available at Libreville. Chavannes replied in 1890, favourably as regard Loango (already open) but reported that the Benito post office had been closed, as above. Pannetier gives some interesting details about Benito. A Catholic mission had been relocated to Bata and a military post, consisting of a corporal and two tirailleurs, had been closed. Shipping was likewise relocated to Bata, where there was a French post commanded by a European but no French commercial undertakings, only a branch of the German Woermann shipping company. There were no European residents at Benito (Feuilles Marcophiles 217, pages 15-18).

Pannetier then prints a long report, dated 25 May 1890, on the postal service in Gabon for the period 1 January 1889 to 1 May 1890. It notes that for small offices, which now only included Bata in Rio Muni, the role of postmaster was undertaken by the senior administrative official ("chefs de service ou du poste" – the poste being the place not the mail) who was apparently also the local customs officer. The Report notes that the Bata office, on the Côte Nord, was among those empowered only to sell stamps and to receive and forward mail (FM 217, page 18). Later, in a lengthy section dealing with the transmission of the posts, the report notes that for points on the Côte Nord, including Bata and Campo (Benito is not mentioned), a vessel named the *Sergent Malamine* left Libreville on the 11th of each month; Bata was also served fairly regularly by the steamship *Eloby* of the Woermann company (FM 217, p 20).

Pannetier next records the receipt at Libreville on 6 September 1891 of "matériel" (new date-stamps, apparently) for Benito as well as Bata, implying a re-opening of the former post office, probably on or about 17 October. An associated "instruction" of that date includes Bata among the post offices empowered to accept registered mail. (FM218, p17).

The final year of his study, 1893, contains two relevant references. An arrêté of 19 April contained rules for the sale of postage stamps and “autres figurines postales”, which I presume means postal stationery, in the Colony. Batah (sic) and Benito were among the offices whose “agents” were required to pay for their stock in cash, reimbursing themselves out of sales. As will become apparent, I have evidence that a post office was operating in Campo at this time, but it is not mentioned in the arrêté. And, last of all, by a décision of 24 June, Benito was empowered to provide a registration service. Pannetier concludes from this that its commercial importance had increased in the four years since 1889 when it had no European residents at all. (FM 218, pp17-18)

Claude Dauthuille takes up the story from here. Still in 1893, a Circular of 9 December drew attention to the rules relating to the opening of correspondence (undeliverable items, presumably). This could only be done by the agent in charge of the posts and at destination, never “en cours de route”, and delegation to a subordinate was expressly forbidden. The agents at Bata and Benito were among those named (Ref. 7, p81); Campo was not included. Shortly after this, on 5 January 1894, the Colony’s internal postal service was re-organised. Bata and Benito (again there was no mention of Campo) were among the places enabled to exchange sealed mail bags (“dépêches closes”) among themselves and with Libreville. To Libreville the mail was carried by the schooner *Ogowé*. This vessel was scheduled to leave Libreville two days after the arrival of the “paquebot postal français” and to arrive back at Libreville to connect with the departure for France of “la voie Portugaise”. Alternative arrangements were available to the agent at Bata when speedier onward despatch would result (Ref 7, pp81-82).

Next comes an arrêté of 24 January 1894 which names Bata and Benito (yet again there is no reference to Campo) among those places empowered to accept parcels for destinations in France, the French colonies and foreign countries empowered to accept them; parcels for internal destinations were also accepted. There were some restrictions. Insurance (déclaration de valeur) was excluded and there were limits on weight, size and dimension. A nice exception permitted acceptance of canes, umbrellas and tubular objects less than 1.06m in length. The *Ogowé* was again the vessel named for the Libreville – Benito – Bata postal service (ref 7, pp83-84).

Last of all is a décision of 14 December 1899 (Ref 7, pp 99-100) which, inter alia, laid down the itinerary of the cutter *Cygne* serving the north coast of the Colony. This left Libreville on the day following the arrival of the Chargeurs Réunis paquebot, calling at Cap Estrurias, N’Domo (sic – probably N’Dombo), Benito and finally Batah (sic), on the return journey omitting Cap Esturias and arriving back at Libreville on 19th of each month to connect with the Fraissinet service to France which left on the 20th.

That is all I have found in the literature in my possession. There are some glaring omissions. While the décision closing the post office at Benito in December 1889 is reproduced by Dauthuille, not by Panettier, that for Campo at about the same time has not, apparently, been traced, nor has any record of the re-openings of the two post offices been found. Most importantly, there is no documentary record of the closure of the three Rio Muni post offices on the hand over to Spain in 1901. Since neither Dauthuille nor Pannetier extend up to the year 1906 I have nothing to indicate what arrangements were made for the post at the time of the second Boundary Commission. Surely there must also be more Official Reports awaiting discovery.

When these details are collated they show that there is no problem as regards Bata and Benito post offices. The former was open continuously from 1888 until the French withdrawal in 1901. As for Benito, as Pannetier says, the inference to be drawn from the receipt of a date-stamp in September 1891 is the re-opening of its post office. By way of confirmation I have a record of four examples of this cancel dated 1 September 1893, 26 November 1897, 13 June 1901 and another of 1901, date uncertain, but probably early July as this letter was handled at Bata on 8 July. The last two are very late use as the territory was handed over to Spain on 14 July (Ref 8). Incidentally, my records suggest that Benito is the scarcest of these three cancels.

Unlike Bata and Benito, the post-1889 position for Campo is anything but straightforward; indeed its existence has been questioned. Bob Maddocks, who has personal knowledge of this area and who has

studied its postal history in great depth has argued forcefully in our correspondence that there was only one Campo, the Campo in Kamerun. I have great respect for Bob Maddocks' views but this is one suggestion that I find difficult to accept. I have no problem with his statement that there was greater commercial activity on the north (Kamerun) bank of the River Campo than on the Gabon bank to the south; there seems to be ample evidence of this. No do I have any reason to doubt his statement, in a letter to me dated 30 June 2009, that before colonial territorial claims were settled (in late 1885) there was an "open house" trading station for all comers at Campo which, the context makes clear, can only have been on the northern, Kamerun, bank. I can also accept that, in this early period, that may have been the only centre of European commercial activity at the mouth of the River Campo. But I have recorded five examples of Campo/Gabon cancellations dated January 1893(?) to January 1894 in addition to mine of 1906, and this suggests settlement and postal activity of some kind on the south bank. As the 1888-1890 report shows, there was a regular shipping service along the coast of Gabon, terminating at Campo, so this seems a natural point for the existence of postal facilities of some kind. It may be relevant that the Germans did not open a Kamerun post office at Campo until 1 June 1906 (Ref 9), five years after the French evacuated Rio Muni so it may be (this is speculation, of course) that one of the consequences of the 1885 Franco-German protocol was an arrangement that the French would provide postal services for both communities. The use of the French Campo postal service by a German resident in (or transiting) Campo in 1896 is documented by Brian Lythgoe (Ref 10). The only alternative available to German personnel was Kribi in Kamerun, whose post office opened on 10 August 1894 (Ref. 11). This required the use of a runner and took two days (Ref 12). A south-bound ship, when available, would have an obvious attraction.

Other authorities note the existence of a post office at Campo at least some of the time. The UPU Dictionary of Post Offices includes it in its edition of 1888 but not in its next, 1895, edition (Ref 13). Jean Wall lists it under a cancel type of Gabon dated 1890 (Ref 14). A special Gabon-Congo issue of the COL.FRA Bulletin (Ref 15) has this entry: - *CAMPO seen 1886, ceded to Kamerun 1912* (but the second part of this statement is quite wrong).

In the absence of primary documentary evidence of French postal arrangements, the next best thing is a contemporary map. The best of these was published at Madrid in 1903 by none other than the leader of the Spanish contingent in the 1906 Boundary Commission, Enrique d'Almonté (Ref 16). Curiously, this does not name either the French / Spanish or German settlements; on the German side it contents itself by naming warehouses, for instance *Factorei Küderling*. On the south bank it is more specific. It marks 100 houses ("casas"), the native village and nine farmsteads ("caserios") together with the barracks ("cuartei") which may have included traders' premises. In his account of his experiences (Ref 17) d'Almonté wrote that he

"visited the [Spanish] military detachment at Campo on the mouth of the River Campo or N'Tem. The next day he crossed the river together with the chief of the detachment and visited the German place Campo. There he met his German colleague Foerster with whom he had to undertake the delimitation works."

I am indebted to Wolfgang Strobel for this summary.

A further map finally locates French Campo by name. Bob Maddocks referred me to the account of his experiences by Anthony Cottes, d'Almonté's French counterpart (Ref 18). I have not been able to examine the copy held by the British Library, so I am grateful to Mrs Patricia Koumi of the Library's Humanities Reference Service for the following account in a letter of 16 May 2011:

"There are two small-scale maps on pp. 17 and 25, entitled "Itinéraires généraux de la Misson Cottes" and Itinéraires de la Misson Cottes, région antérieurement occupé par la Commerce étranger". Both maps show a "Poste administratif ou militaire allemande / espagnol" on either side of the mouth of the River N'Tem or Campo. Another map over pp.58-59 entitled "Itinéraires de la Misson Cottes à travers la Guinée Espagnole" shows a place name "Campo" on the south side of the river".

It is certainly curious that no documentary reference to postal services at Campo in this period has surfaced to date, and the evidence I have collated is certainly circumstantial, but I have no doubt in my own mind that the French did have some postal facilities there, probably no more than an agency, in 1888-89 and from at least 1893 to 1901.

Examples of the cancels of these post offices are very scarce. In his article, Pannetier records four different types used in the “petits bureaux” two of which, his types II and IV, were sent to the three post offices in Rio Muni. Type II dates from the earliest days (late 1888); it is inscribed GABON FR. in the lower segment; as this was the colony name at the time of their manufacture. Type IV, first used in 1891, is inscribed CONGO FRANCAIS, reflecting the absorption of Gabon into Congo. The two types are illustrated here (Figs. 2 & 3 – ref 19).

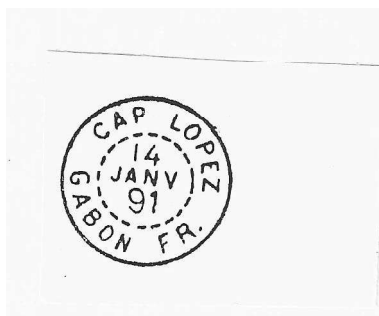


Figure 2: type II cancel

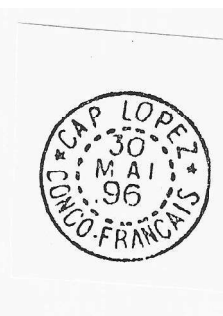


Figure 3: type IV cancel



Figure 4

The lettering of type II is unusual. Pannetier has named the manufacturer as Maison Dubettier of Paris and I infer that this may mean they were not a usual maker of postal cancellers. Pannetier prints a table of the cancels known to him (FM 218, p18), which includes types II and IV for Bata and Benito but type II only for Campo. However, the type IV cancel of Campo, dated 2 April 1896, illustrated on page 297 of *Cameo* 59 (Ref. 10) shows that it was also used there. I have a note of, but have not seen, another hopefully better example dated 7 February of the same year. So an “X” needs to be added under Campo in the type IV column in Pannetier’s table.

Now for a curiosity. Stone (Ref 19, pages 11 and 13) records and illustrates the cachet of Benito reproduced here as figure 4. No explanation or comment is given other than a brief “seen 1909”, which is clearly wrong. It is surely an administrative, not a postal, cachet.

A brief note of the early days of the posts under the Spanish administration may be of interest. I am indebted to Janet Richardson, the Secretary of the Spanish Study Circle, for most of what follows. The post offices at Bata and Benito were soon re-opened. Bata was the official capital of Rio Muni but the Colony was administered from Santa Isabel, on the island of Fernando Póo. At first stamps of Fernando Póo were used without overprint, with definitives following on 1 July 1902. Before these were delivered a provisional issue, of uncertain status, appeared in which the stamps of Fernando Póo were overprinted BATA diagonally usually, but not always, from bottom left to upper right. There are two known types of the overprint, applied using handstamps made of cork or wood. No document authorising these overprints has ever been found.

The stock of Fernando Póo stamps available for use on the mainland must have been very small because, as early as October 1901, the 10 centimos value, the most in demand (for postcards), was exhausted and a supply was created by surcharging other Fernando Póo stamps with a boxed HABILITADO / PARA / 10 CENTS / BATA in red. Wolfgang Strobel has kindly sent me a photocopy extract from the catalogue of a Heinrich Köhler auction of 13-14 March 2008 which included lot 977 – a set of 12 illustrated postcards each bearing one of these stamps tied by a CORREO / 19 NOV 01 / BATA date-stamp and addressed to Madrid, some having Cadiz transit marks on the reverse. This was a complete set excluding of course the 10 centimos of which there was no stock by that time. As noted above, a definitive issue appeared on 1 July 1902.

Acknowledgements

My indebtedness to Wolfgang Strobel is, I hope, evident. Bob Maddocks has kindly provided much background information – and food for thought! Any errors of interpretation are my own.



Figure 5: type IV cancel of Bata (courtesy of Rob May)



Figure 6: Type IV cancel of Benito , photocopied from an unknown auction catalogue so regrettably I am not able to give an acknowledgement

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Footnotes

A. An attractive example of early photogravure was issued by French Equatorial Africa in December 1938 in anticipation of the centenary in the following year. The design features Commandant, later Admiral, Louis-Edouard Bouët-Willaumez, who was actively engaged in anti-slavery operations in the area at the time. The stamps are SG 97 –100, Yvert 66—69 and the common design is illustrated as figure 7.



Figure 7



Figure 8

B. Ballay went on to become the Governor-general of French West Africa. He is well illustrated on a 1954 stamp of that Federation, illustrated as figure 8. This stamp is SG71, Yvert 50.



Gold Coast and Togo conundrum, 1911

John Mayne

Mail to and from German Togo is recorded via Liverpool and British ships, dropped at Gold Coast ports, from 1884, when a mail link opened, until the outbreak of war in 1914.

An item from Switzerland, shown as figure 1, is a puzzle which Peter Duggan and I have been unable to solve. The Swiss PS card was posted on 16 January 1911, endorsed “via Liverpool” and is struck with a Dodowah canceller dated either 3 or 13 Feb 1911 and Quittah on 10 Feb 1911. Quittah was probably the port of arrival of this card into Gold Coast, which means that the Dodowah canceller is probably a very worn strike of 13th February. The question is then why the card was sent 20 miles inland to the West, when it should have been conveyed a short distance along the coast and over the border to the East? There are no postal markings on the reverse and thus no Togo arrival mark.



Figure 1: Swiss PSC addressed to Lome, Togo, with transit postmarks of Qittah and Dodowah in February 1911



Figure 2

Figure 2 shows another postcard from Switzerland posed 2 June 1901 following a more conventional route into Togo via the port of Accra.

Interestingly Peter Duggan has told me he once visited Dodowa when he called on an important chief whose uncle had been knighted. The small Fiat car in which he and his companion travelled had insufficient power to negotiate a hill so Peter had to walk. In the evening, at dinner, the chief's niece in traditional African school tunic entertained them by playing Chopin!

The Gold Coast type Cancels of Togo

John Mayne

Ed—The article “The Gold Coast-type Cancels of Togo, 1916 to 1950?” by John Mayne and Bill Mitchell published in Cameo in October 2013 (Ref 1), developed an article Bill Mitchell originally wrote in the Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society (Ref. 2). A further article on this topic by John Mayne appeared in the F&CPS Journal in September 2013, which is now reproduced with permission of the editor of that Journal with the benefit of new images provided by the author

Many years ago I was a guest of Michael Ensor when we gave a joint display to the Southern Group meeting of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society. This gave us the opportunity to share information, or more rightly Michael Ensor to enlighten me. I will concentrate on the cancel for Agomé Palimé, type 011.02. The first time I saw this cancel it was on a cover owned by Michael which was posted on 3 November 1922, addressed to Groves & Lindley of Huddersfield. Postage of 50c, the standard letter rate, was met by a 50c value (SG49). My photocopy of this cover will not reproduce to a sufficient quality as the colour of the paper of the envelope is very dark. I have since acquired two covers and seen no others.

Figure 1 shows registered mail with a manuscript registered endorsement Palimé No. 84 which is addressed to a post inspector at Osnabruck, Germany, and may be philatelic.



Figure 1

Sent by Hermann T Kwami from Palime, Togoland, its postage and registration fee were met by a 75c value on the face (SG33) and a 25c stamp on the reverse (SG27), both cancelled AGOME PALIME 15 February 1922. It was routed by the normal route via Lome and reached Cologne and Osnabruck on 8 March 1922.



Figure 2

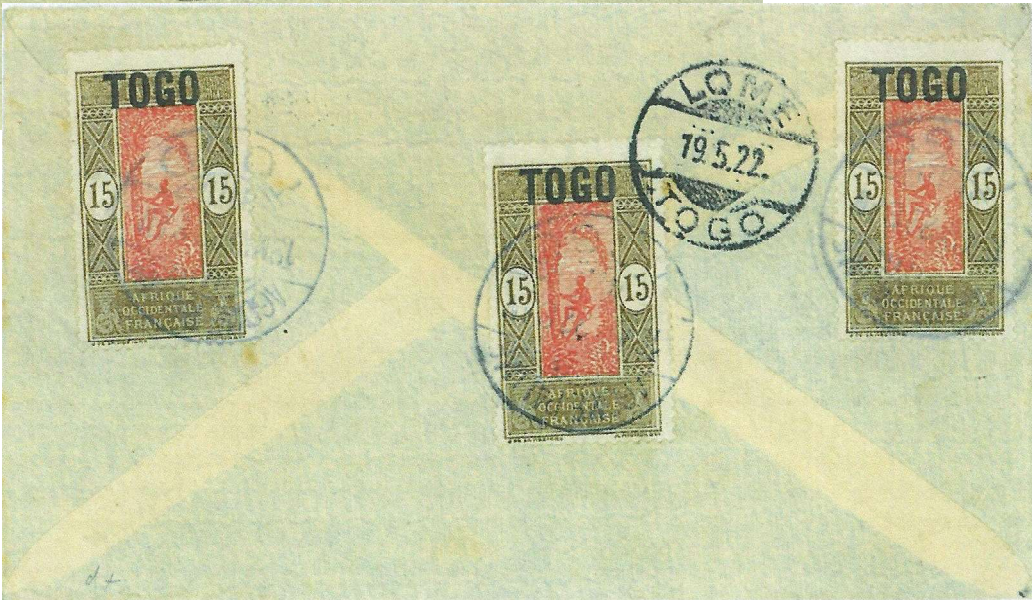


Figure 2 is a cover posted 19 May 1922 and has four examples of the 15c adhesive (SG42) from the second Dahomey overprinted issue, one on the face and three on the reverse. The 50c rate is over-paid. The name of the sender is not shown and the addressee is not seen on philatelic mail. It is sent to Germany, with no arrival marking but with a transit mark of Lome on the same day as posting.

I have seen and sold onward several examples of this cancellation on single stamps, which do deserve a premium. I list the ones I have acquired over the years. Some dates are not too clear, the cancel being to my mind over-crowded and not always easy to define. The overprinting on the first issue is invariably stronger than the postmark and tends to obscure it.

First Dahomey overprints with four lines		Second Dahomey overprints with one line	
SG23 5c	24.02.1922	SG40 5c	unclear
SG26 20c	unclear	SG41 10c	—09.1922
SG27 25c	unclear	SG42 15c	25.04.1922
SG28 30c	unclear	SG42 15c	—12.1922
SG 29 35c	04.02.1922	SG44 25c	09.07.1922
		SG44 25c	08.08.1922
		SG49 50c	22.12.1922

Little research has been undertaken into these postmarks, other than by a few members of WASC and F&CPS. When I visited Michael he kindly copied for me a work by Langlois & Bourselet covering the postmarks of French West Africa of which Togo was never officially a part. Writing in 1937 they mistakenly thought this AGOME PALIME cancellation was of German origin, giving an example dated 14 October 1921. Michael had ringed their illustration and moved it alongside the only other British cancel illustrated, that of Agbéluvhoé.



St Helena 1871 Manuscript Cancellation

Kevin Darcy

I recently purchased the illustrated outer wrapper from a small auction house in Canada. The enclosure has been removed. It was sent from the Island 6 July 1871 and has a London receiving mark for August 1871 (day unclear) on the back. The front has been endorsed 'Paid', a practice which was not usual at this time.

Even more unusual however is the 6/7/71 manuscript cancellation. It was the custom at St Helena to cancel the adhesive with a cork dumb canceller, and apply the date-stamp clear of this. Perhaps the postal official had no dumb implement to hand so cancelled the stamp with the date? Despite collecting St Helena for many years, none of Bernard Mabbett, Barry Burns or myself have seen another from here. We would be interested if other readers could report any in their collections.



Gold Coast QV Three Pence Damaged 'R'

Robin Davis FRPSL

I illustrate a scan of a Gold Coast 1889 QV 3d stamp (SG 15/15a) which has a thickened 'R' in THREE. If you look at the value tablet it appears that either:

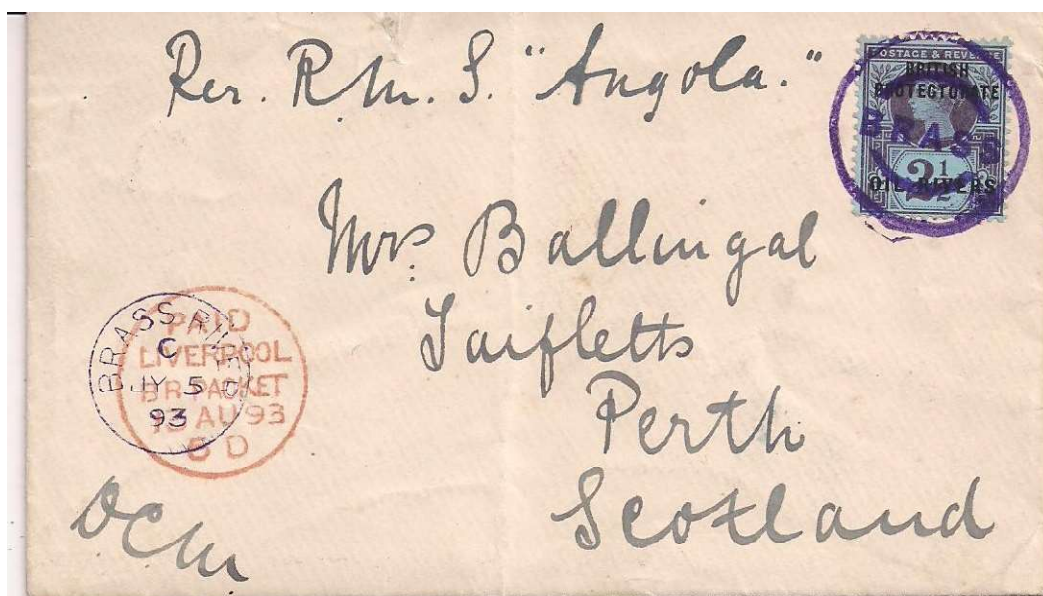
- When the duty plate was being produced the engraver made a mistake with the word 'THREE' in that he engraved a letter 'P' rather than an 'R' and then corrected his mistake by changing, very badly, the P into an R, or
- The 'R' in the word 'THREE' of the duty plate became damaged during the printing process and a very quick running repair was made.



I have sent Ian Anderson a scan of the stamp and he has never seen the like of it before. So the question is - have any other members who collect Gold Coast seen this before or have any comments? The stamp belongs to Richard Lewis and I would like to thank him for bringing it to my attention via Richard Berry.

Comment by Rob May—with this level of magnification it looks to me as if a normal R has been over-laid with a P from a larger fount in the same shade of bistre. Whether that is something that can be done with Photoshop software I leave other members with better IT skills to advise.

GERALD RITCHIE BODILY



Niger Coast Protectorate: 5th July 1893 cover to Perth endorsed "Per R.M.S. Angola bearing 1893 2½d tied by a superb strike of the double ring Brass parcel cancel (type PP1) in violet with Brass River datestamp at left and Perth arrival mark at back. Exceptional quality. B.P.A. certificate.

P.O.BOX 475, RICHMOND, SURREY TW9 3DN

Tel: 0208 255 1219

Email rbcollect@yahoo.co.uk

Postal Rules of the Oil Rivers Protectorate

Dr Simon Heap

Ince and Sacher lay out the postal rules of Fernando Po and Lagos in their book. In the case of the Oil Rivers Protectorate, however, though six sets of Rules were sent “for guidance of vice consuls in regard to organisation and administration of Post Offices in the Protectorate... no copy appears to have survived but presumably they were not too dissimilar in content to the rules sent earlier when the agencies at Fernando Po and Lagos were opened in 1859” and 1862 respectively. (Ref. 1)

The rules for the Oil Rivers Protectorate have now been found.

In the Foreign Office’s printed *Correspondence Respecting the Oil Rivers Protectorate*, one letter is from T. V. Lister of the Foreign Office to the Post Office, dated 14 October 1891, which states: “The Marquis of Salisbury directs me to state that Major MacDonald, Her Majesty’s Commissioner, has reported that he is prepared to establish local post offices, but, before doing so, he is desirous of being furnished with Rules and Regulations for his guidance as to their management and administration.” (Ref. 2)

Sir Arthur Blackwood, Secretary of the Post Office, replied that it was “desirable for Oil Rivers Protectorate to have uniform rates in both direction and therefore adopt UK rates.” (Ref. 3) Two enclosures in that piece of correspondence entitled, *Memorandum for the Guidance of Vice-Consuls Making Up Mails at Post Offices in the Oil Rivers Protectorate*, are reproduced as figures 1 and 2 below.

Post Office of the OIL RIVERS PROTECTORATE.				Correspondence with the UNITED KINGDOM.			
LETTER BILL.							
Mail from _____		for _____					
Stamp of the Dispatching Office.		by the ship “_____”		Stamp of the Receiving Office.			
Dispatch of the _____		189 .		Arrived the _____		189 .	
I.—REGISTERED CORRESPONDENCE.							
Number of Registered Articles _____							
II.—CLOSED MAILS.							
Origin.	Destination.	No. of Closed Mails.		Origin.	Destination.	No. of Closed Mails.	
		Sent Single.	In-closed.			Sent Single.	In-closed.
OBSERVATIONS.							
Dispatching Officer,				Receiving Officer,			

Post Office of the OIL RIVERS PROTECTORATE.				Correspondence with the _____ Post Office.			
VERIFICATION CERTIFICATE							
for the correction and verification of errors and irregularities of every kind observed in the Mail from the _____ Office							
for the _____ Office.							
Despatch of the _____ 189 .							
ERRORS OR IRREGULARITIES. (Failure of the Mail, failure of Registered articles or of the Letter Bill, Mail broken open, Mail torn, in a bad state, &c., &c.)							
ERRORS OF ACCOUNT DURING STATISTICS.							
Numbers of the Tables of the Letter Bill.	Description of the Correspondence.	Declaration of the Dispatching Office.	Verification of the Receiving Office.	Cause of the Correction.			
Seen and accepted.							
_____ 189 .				_____ 189 .			
Receiving Officers.				The Chief of the Dispatching Office.			

Figures 1 & 2 Specimen forms attached to the *Memorandum of Guidance to Vice Consuls...* (much reduced). A registered letters list form was also attached but is not reproduced here.

The mails for each post office should be made up in bags addressed to the Liverpool Post Office and the bags used for the outward mails will be stencilled on the reverse side with the Liverpool address so that they may be turned inside out and used for the homeward mails.

The letters should be divided into several bags, the paid letters being sent in separate bundles from the unpaid and insufficiently paid, and the letters for the UK separate from those addressed to countries beyond. Each bundle should be wrapped in paper and have a docket attached describing the contents, such as “Paid letters for the UK” or “Paid Transit Letters for Countries beyond the UK”.

Three pages of letter bills, verification certificates and registered letters list enclosed.

Registered letters should be entered separately on the Registered letter list and be enclosed with the list in an orange-coloured bag, which, after being tied and sealed, should be placed in the bag containing ordinary correspondence. The total number of registered letters should be advised in the space provided for the purpose on the letter bill, and when none are sent the word “Nil” should be written in this space.

The paid printed papers should likewise be tied separately from the insufficiently paid.

All correspondence should be impressed with a date stamp of the Dispatching Office.

Any errors or irregularities detected in examination of the mails from this country should be at once reported to the Dispatching Office on a Verification Certificate Form.

Each office should be provided with a seal bearing the name of the Office and the bags should be securely tied and sealed before being despatched.

Rates of postage chargeable in the UK on correspondence for the Oil Rivers Protectorate will be as follows:

For letters: 2½d per ½oz

For post cards: 1d each

For reply post cards: 2d each

For newspapers/books/printed papers/commercial papers/patterns: ½d per 2oz, with minimum charge of 2½d for commercial papers and 1d for patterns.

The fee for registration of all classes of correspondence will be 2d for each letters or packet. On registered correspondence, the postage and fee must always be paid in advance.

Letters must be sent forward, whether the postage is fully paid or in part, or wholly unpaid. Anything purporting to be a postcard, but not bearing a stamp valid in the Protectorate, should be sent forward as an unpaid letter. A postcard to be sent as such must be at least partially prepaid; so must newspapers, books, printed papers, patterns. Such articles, if not partly prepaid, should be detained and returned, if possible, to the sender. If partly prepaid they must be sent forward.

Unpaid and insufficiently paid correspondence received in this country from the Oil Rivers Protectorate will be charged double the deficient postage on delivery; and the same course should be followed in the case of such correspondence received in the protectorate from England and other countries.

References

1. Jack Ince and John Sacher, *The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region*. London: RPSL, 1992, p.155, with rules in Appendices 16A and 16B.
2. Despatch no. 65, T. V. Lister, Foreign Office (FO) to Post Office, London, 14 October 1891, in National Archives, FO 881/6351, *Correspondence Respecting the Oil River Protectorate* [FO 6351, June 1893], p.50.
3. Sir Arthur Blackwood, Post Office, London, to FO, 20 October 1891, in National Archives, FO 881/6351, *Correspondence Respecting the Oil River Protectorate*, p.52A.

Troubles at the Lagos Post Office in 1901: Stolen Money, Staff Wounding and Robbery

Dr. Simon Heap

In two previous issues of *Cameo* (Refs 1 & 2) I have described the life of Lagos Postmaster George Cole and his death in 1901, but now I have found some more information about the Postal Department's poor state and a huge robbery which hit the department just weeks before Cole's demise.

The first incident happened on Monday afternoon of 3 June when J. S. Coker, a messenger in the Post Office with about nine month's service, stabbed Mr Peter Punshon Williams, the Money Order Clerk of the same department, "in the back with a sharp knife inflicting a very serious wound." (Ref 3) The *Lagos Standard* newspaper reported that:

It is stated that Mr Williams did not provoke the boy Coker but it would appear that there has grown out of the money stolen bad blood, there is no doubt that the department requires some weeding, at least, for the present till the stolen money is found or the case disposed of. (Ref 4)

So some money had already been stolen when the second incident occurred on the morning of Monday 1 July 1901. Two Post Office clerks were given bags of money to take to the Bank of British West Africa to pay into the Government account. On reaching the bank, one of the bags said to contain £197 in gold became missing from the table where the bags were placed, and the missing bag could not be traced. (Ref 5)

The Commissioner of Police offered a reward of £10 for information that would lead to the discovery of the thief or thieves. A week later, it was reported that "*The Government money... has not been discovered but the police are busy tracing the thief and during last week more houses than one of the Post Office employees were searched.*" (ref 6)

The *Lagos Standard* commented that:

This is not the first time that money bags have been stolen from people who go to pay or receive pay at the Bank. One would have thought that, considering the interests of the Government, in the institution a detective or plain clothes police would have been appointed to that place before now. (Ref 7)

A month later, it noted that "*All sorts of rumour is afloat with reference to the money of the Post Office stolen from the Bank and this is a curious commentary upon the ability of the Police Department.*" (Ref. 8) In early 1902, in its look back on the year just gone, the newspaper summed it up as, "*The robbery at the Post Office by which the sum of £197 was spirited away in broad daylight, and of which there has been no trace up to the present moment.*" (Ref 9)

References

1. Heap S., "Postmaster George Cole and the Reorganisation of the Lagos Post Office, 1901", *Cameo*, Volume 14 pp13-14, WASC, January 2013
2. Heap S., "The Obituary of Lagos Postmaster George Josephus Cole", *Cameo*, Volume 15 pp31-32, WASC, January 2014
3. News, notes and comments, *Lagos Standard*, 5 June 1901, p.2.
4. News, notes and comments, *Lagos Standard*, 5 June 1901, p.2.
5. Epitome of news, *Lagos Weekly Record*, 6 July 1901, p.3.
6. News, notes and comments, *Lagos Standard*, 10 July 1901, p.2.
7. News, notes and comments, *Lagos Standard*, 3 July 1901, p.2.
8. News, notes and comments, *Lagos Standard*, 7 August 1901, p.2.
9. 1901 Retrospect no. 2, *Lagos Standard*, 8 January 1902, p.3.

Nigerian Postal Conditions 2014

Eddy Akpan and Rob May

During the past few months WASC member Eddy Akpan has sent Rob May a number of press releases and some of his own photographs illustrating the issues facing NIPOST and Nigerian philately today.

Like national post offices all round the world the Nigerian post office is facing a sharp reduction in the use of the letter post, in competition with e-mail, social media and mobile telephony. The recently-privatised Post Office in Britain is transforming into a handler of commercial advertising flyers and packages of goods bought on line in order to continue to be able to justify its unique role to guarantee six days a week delivery to every address in the UK. The Nigerian Post Office does not have that same commitment and therefore its staff are looking for other revenue sources. Philately is one such project.

In February 2014 Mrs E.U.A. Dikibo, General Manager (Marketing) for NIPOST at Abuja wrote a short paper headed "PROPOSAL ON REDUCING EXCESS STAMP STOCK THROUGH PHILATELIC CLUBS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS" addressed to sub-marketing officers in Calabar and elsewhere, which starts by saying:

"Having observed the ugly trend of decline in patronage of Postage Stamps, it became obvious that advancement in technology has been a major factor; people prefer sending messages electronically rather than through the post.

The low demand [for] postage stamps occasioned by non-strategic re-positioning of the product (stamps) makes it very imperative for us to devise other channels of disbursing the product (stamps), hence the idea of forming philatelic clubs in primary schools."

The target she set for the NIPOST teams is to interest 30 pupils in 20 schools per territory with the intention to sell each of them 200 unused stamps from normal stocks per annum. At an average cost per stamp of N50 this assumes that the pupils will be able to afford to spend N10,000 per annum of this hobby. Nigeria's economy is currently in the strongest growth in all of Africa but I wonder if the cash is yet available to enough families to achieve this plan.

A dispassionate observer would worry about Nigeria's hitherto conservative stamp issuing policy. The annual output of new stamp issues from Nigeria is currently far less than 200 designs a year, which is one of the attractions it holds for overseas collectors: - stamps issued Nigeria have so far remained **postage** stamps rather than thematic labels for the collector market. It is therefore to be hoped that NIPOST can achieve this annual target by selling stocks of obsolete commemorative issues from their stores. It is also worth conveying to the Nigerian Philatelic Service just how difficult it is for overseas collectors to access the purchase of new stamp issues from them. We are willing customers ready to pay hard cash for the export of Nigerian stamps at face value plus postage, but we are not being well served! In fact it appears to those outside Nigeria that there may no longer be a functioning Philatelic Bureau at all.

Another issue which is harming the reputation of the Nigerian post office is the non-arrival of postal packets, or their arrival without valuable contents. One such case was recently the subject an article in a journal called Punch Nigeria which is copyright, so I will summarise it. A female student at the University of Lagos (UNILAG) was engaged to a man currently living in America who, probably unwisely, sent her an engagement ring, a Blackberry Z10, a Play Station, a chocolate bar and a magazine in one package by signed for, tracked post. The package arrived at the UNILAG post office but she says it was there for two weeks before they told her it was available for her to collect. When she opened it she found only the Play Station, chocolate bar and magazine inside. She alleges that the crime was committed at the UNILAG post office but the manager of that post office denied tampering with the packet. The student complained to the university security and says she was then physically threatened by an official of the post office. Frustrated, she reported the loss to the Sabo Police station and after taking a statement the police asked her for N5000 before they would investigate the case. When asked about these complaints by the journalist, the various officials involved said they are continuing to investigate.

That is a sad tale, but the sadder thought for postal historians is “Does any national postal service have much of a future when DHL and other worldwide parcel carriers can get their deliveries to customers on time and without loss of the goods in transit?”



Eddy at the counter at Ugep PO

Eddy has sent Rob a number of photographs of Nigeria post offices during his recent visits in the Niger Delta area. The first three photos are of larger offices in colonial era buildings constructed in very similar style.



Calabar PO



Oron PO



Uyo PO

Smaller post offices come in a number of more recent styles



Ugep PO



Eket PO, which is to be demolished for road widening



Itigidi PO



Instead of delivery the usual method to receive mail is in a secure, rented box. These ones are at Oron.



At Eket, Eddy found this EMS delivery bike. The box has no lid. He wonders what condition the special post would be in by the time it has been through a tropical rainstorm!



At Mayne Avenue St, Calabar, a street post box has become a litter bin.

It is located outside the fence of the Government Science Secondary School, which has an active stamp club. Nigeria's Postal heritage is fading despite NIPOST promoting philately.

NIPOST publishes an internal magazine called *The Post News*. In early 2013 it was announced that 130 Post Office refurbishment and construction projects were planned for the period January to September 2013. It mentioned that there is a National Mail Route Network which delivered about 82% of items within the advertised mail transit time. "However... due to the security challenges and lack of proper addressing and street naming across the country, it was difficult to deliver mail items within the set delivery targets".

Privatisation of NIPOST primarily as a retail bank and a courier logistics company is being canvassed but is being obstructed by laws passed in various state legislatures which restrict and tax private courier services moving packets between states. Free movement is further hindered by Police and Customs

Checkpoints. In a speech to the 3rd Nigerian Courier Summit in 2013 the Minister of Communications Technology said that the government is fast-tracking the approval of a national Addressing System as well as a Postal Reform Bill.

The need for a new role for the Post Offices is clear from another article published in Nigerian Punch in May 2014 entitled “*Lonely NIPOST in a bustling city*”. The reporter describes the marina area of Lagos as a commercial nerve centre and one of the busiest parts of Lagos, except that the general Post Office remains almost empty. Queues around the counters have disappeared. The reporter found the same at the post office in the Obalende area, Agege Post Office and the GPO on Airport Road in Ikeja. The few customers in each were only using the parcel delivery service.

The reporter carried out random street interviews and found residents saying that they had not needed to use the Post Office for up to ten years because private courier companies, the Internet, and mobile telephony had made NIPOST irrelevant. One interviewee said she now sent parcels through private transport carriers as well as the established courier companies because they provide official documentation and deliver within 24 hours. She lost confidence in NIPOST when a parcel went missing in their care. NIPOST offers EMS (Expedited Mail Service) which is an express registered mail service. However, it is reportedly no quicker than the private couriers for parcels deliveries within Nigeria.

The demand for post office box rentals, both personal and business, has also declined as the volume of letters has declined. The reporter concluded that NIPOST is fighting a battle to survive in the face of electronic communications but unfortunately when Post Offices are visited, their atmosphere conveys bureaucracy and decay. Now that the Nigerian economy is booming the Government may find privatisation very expedient, rather than continue to promote marginal revenue gains through philately or continue to refurbish a limited number of Post Office premises when the services they provide are becoming less relevant to the public.



Lagos Pillar Box, 1950

Dr. Simon Heap

In his article entitled ‘An appeal for beauty’, Edward Duckworth, the editor of the *Nigeria* magazine, complained of the “unrestricted bill-posting in Lagos has now assumed such proportions that no wall is safe from the vandals; they usually work at night.” Duckworth photographed a particularly grimy part of Lagos: a pillar box in Tinubu Square with the wall of the Central Police Station behind, both “plastered with dance, fun fair and obituary notices.”

Source:

E. H. Duckworth, ‘An Appeal for Beauty’, *Nigeria*, 34 (1950), p. 223.



Fisherman's Lake – Into the unknown

John Wilson

Ed—this article will also appear in the Air Post Journal shortly or contemporaneously

I was prompted to write this because, as I read the journal of Spencer Garrett, the Pan American Traffic Manager at Fisherman's Lake, I was reminded of my own time in the early 1960s when I lived and worked in the Niger Delta, where conditions were much as the Pan American men had to endure as they built and operated Fisherman's Lake only twenty years earlier. 100 degree heat and 90% humidity; where your shoes turned green with mould overnight, and you needed at least four changes of clothes every day. And boy, did it rain; every single damned day.

The Pan American wartime operations at Fisherman's Lake in Liberia stand as a tribute to the sheer "get-up-and-go" which typified the energy within not only the airline but in the American people. A recently located archive written by the Pan American Airways Traffic Manager actually stationed at Fisherman's Lake in 1942, coupled with the correspondence of the civil engineer who built the flying boat terminal and the land airfield close by the lake provides a primary source record of events at this remotest of remote outposts.

In July 1941, a telegram (Ref. 1) from Atlantic Division manager John C. Leslie to PanAm Vice-President Harold Bixby says (in typical telegram unpunctuated language):

"Hope you soon able indicate when we may discuss Liberia with Firestone, particularly whether practicable construct base Fisherman's Lake, which you will find on National Geographic map near Robertsport between Monrovia and Sierra Leone border."

That's how much (or little) the PanAm top brass apparently knew about Fisherman's Lake on 17 July 1941. Using a National Geographic map for a site location tells its own story, but it was not long before Fisherman's Lake became a pivotal point in the trans-Atlantic routes of Pan American Airways. The matter was not yet settled, however, because a handwritten reply (Ref. 1) from Bixby to Leslie reads:

"Dear John.....

"If we have to go to Liberia – which is certainly indicated – where can we set up a base? Mr. Firestone does not think that Fisherman's Lake is good at all times of the year and even if we went there how would passengers go on to a proper connecting point for the African land plane services?"

The reference to "Mr. Firestone" is interesting in that it shows an existing relationship between Pan American Airways and the Firestone Company's operations in Liberia. Harvey Firestone himself had flown on the first Liberian mail carrying flight from his rubber plantation near Monrovia to Cape Palmas 250 miles away, on the 28th of February 1936 (Ref. 2), so was actively aware of the use of air transport. It may well be that Firestone's advice to avoid Fisherman's Lake was intended to promote a Pan American airfield closer to his Harbel plantations. We shall never know, but PanAm were certainly planning something for Liberia, and that included Harbel.

What did Liberia have apart from a terrible climate, poverty and disease? One word – rubber. The American government was already aware that the supply of natural rubber from the Far East might be in jeopardy due to the actions of Japan in Indo-China, and as early as 1 May 1940 a memorandum (Ref. 3) from Secretary of State Sumner Welles to the President says:

"The materials which are of greatest concern to us at the present moment are tin and rubber....which would be difficult to secure if hostilities broke out...or if there were any interruption to shipping over the very long supply routes from the Netherlands Indies and British Malaya."

The subject remained under discussion, and on 24 March 1941 a note from US Ambassador Steinhardt to the Secretary of State (Ref. 4) says:

“This morning I was given the opportunity, by invitation of the Japanese Ambassador, to talk with Matsuoka (Japan Foreign Minister) for an hour. Matsuoka was emphatic in stating that under no circumstances would Japan attack Singapore or any of the American, British or Dutch possessions.....”

Oh, really? The same note goes on:

“Matsuoka characterised as “ridiculous” any fears which were expressed in the United States over interference with supplies of rubber and tin...”

Oh, really? Fortunately no-one believed Matsuoka, and US attention was focusing on alternative supplies of, particularly, rubber. Since American consumption of rubber was estimated to be 150,000 tons per quarter (Ref. 3) there was no possibility of shipping it from anywhere by air. However, it was obviously prudent to keep good relations with Firestone and his plantations in Liberia.

On 4 July 1941, Boeing 314 NC-18604 under the command of Captain Gray left North Beach en route to West Africa via the southern route through Natal and across to Bolama. The flight schedule shows the route as North Beach-San Juan-Trinidad-Belem-Natal-Bolama and return. This was modified to include a call at Bathurst, and a memorandum attached to the schedule signed by John C. Leslie tells Gray to:

“use his delay in Bolama to make a non-stop visual survey of the route between Bolama and Monrovia”

The flight crew included Captain Bill Masland who, in his book (Ref. 5) tells what happened after a long delay at Bolama:

“What Harold (Gray) was after soon became evident; he was looking for someplace suitable for a seaplane base. As we bore on down the African coast he inspected every likely-looking body of protected water.”

Gray inspected a location close to the Harbel plantation of Harvey Firestone but rejected it in favour of Fisherman’s Lake. Masland was surprised because, as he said, there was nothing there; Monrovia was more than fifty miles down the coast and there were no roads or any means of transport except by water. However, Fisherman’s Lake was the chosen location and that was that!

Matters were moving quickly, pushed along by the “African Agreement” between the US and British Governments which led to the setting up of Pan American Airways (Africa), the trans-Africa operations and the trans-Atlantic Ferry services. Only two days after the memorandum about Fisherman’s Lake we have an agenda dated 19 July 1941 discussing the “South Atlantic Transport Service” using not the Boeing 314 but the Sikorsky S-42B, but by the end of July following detailed engineering analysis, the S-42B proved to be unsuitable and the decision taken to use only the Boeing 314 aircraft on the route. But to where?

From a later letter signed by John Leslie summarising the position in 1941 we learn that the original intention was to use Bathurst, Gambia as the PanAm flying boat terminal, and in fact BOAC did use Bathurst for their own Boeing 314 aircraft throughout the war. However, Leslie writes that:

“PAA Africa decided to abandon its Bathurst cantonment and simultaneously the Atlantic Division decided to undertake the Fisherman’s Lake project. A complete pre-fabricated cantonment was already approaching Bathurst by steamer, likewise some thirty-five construction men on a separate vessel. By mutual consent between PAA-Africa and the Atlantic Division it was decided to divert the Bathurst materials and men to Fisherman’s Lake...”

Even before this, a PanAm construction team was en route to Liberia, headed by Civil Engineer Jim Adams, and letters in his own archive show that he travelled from the United States aboard Special Mission flight 03 under Capt. Gulbransen, leaving North Beach on 23 August 1941, arriving at Bathurst on the 27th. His journey did not end there because he was headed for the Firestone plantation at Harbel where he was to build an airfield, eventually named Roberts Field. Jim Adams' handwritten log gives details of that trip and also reveals that his original destination was Bathurst, presumably to build the PAA(Africa) cantonment, but as Leslie has told us, plans had changed and Adams had to make his own way to Liberia via Freetown in Sierra Leone. He did this by hitching a lift on a British Royal Navy corvette "HMS Asphodel" (he called it "Aspholet" in error) which took him as far as Freetown where he arrived on 31 August. The final journey by local boat took him to Liberia and by 18 September he had arrived.

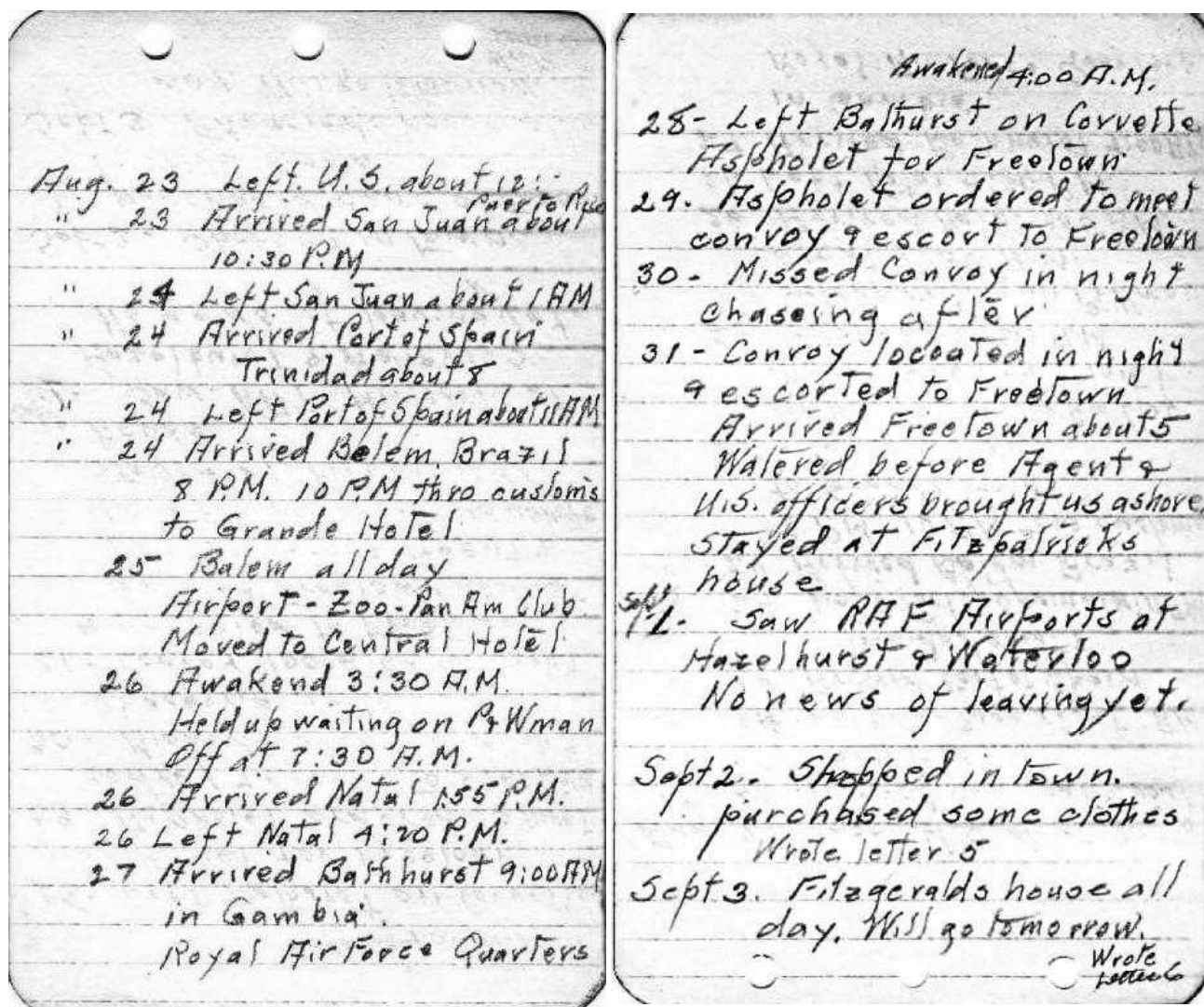


Figure 1: pages from Jim Adams' diary

The runway at Roberts Field had to be carved out of virgin bush, and two photographs from Jim Adams at figures 2 and 3 illustrate the conditions in Liberia. Jim is on the right of the picture.

Despite the difficulties of operating thousands of miles from home, and with every bit of hardware having to be brought in from America, Adams and his team built the airfield at Harbel and he reported in a letter home dated 18 January 1942 that the first PAA Africa C-47 had just landed and taken off from his new runway. This was the first aircraft ever to use Roberts Field. His task at Fisherman's Lake was even harder, because he had to operate almost by remote control. Until he built the Clipper base and land airstrip there was simply no way in and out except by water and the intermittent arrivals at the lake of the Boeing 314 Special Missions.



Figure 2



Figure 3

Adams reports in a letter dated 20 September 1941 that he was expecting a Clipper to bring the crew going to build Fisherman's Lake facilities to arrive "next week". This was Special Mission 04 leaving North Beach on 27 September, duly delivering the "crew" and basic supplies direct to Fisherman's Lake, where there was no-one to greet them apart from missionary Father Sims who used his own small boat and local knowledge to guide the mighty 314 to a safe mooring. As Captain McCullough says in his flight report for SM04 (Ref. 1):

"No help could be expected from ground personnel for there were none".

The same flight report describes the situation at Harbel:

"A short detour was made over the landing field being constructed at the Firestone plantation ten miles from the mouth of the Junk River. A large force of men were at work; brush had been cleared over the whole field and cutting of trees on the main N-S runway was in progress."

Construction of land facilities at Fisherman's Lake was helped enormously by the fact that the main buildings arrived as pre-fabricated sections, and this is shown in photographs of the almost finished buildings (figure 4). Great location!

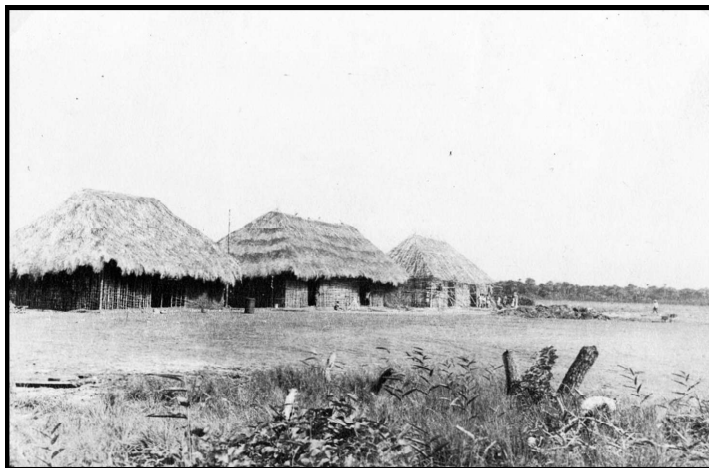


Figure 4

One major task was the construction of a long earth ramp extending out across the shallows of the lake to the deep water mooring for the Clippers, and this required use of heavy equipment brought in by sea. The ramp was built alongside and replacing a native wooden causeway as can be seen below.



One building that was not pre-fabricated was the passenger terminal, since that had not been needed for the original destination of Bathurst. This meant construction had to be a mixture of American ingenuity and local materials and methods. The result was not pretty but did the job. Passengers arriving from North Beach or Treasure Island in Miami must have had quite a shock, but the C-47s of Pan Africa still kept coming.



Passenger terminal and warehouses, Benson Field

PAA Africa C-47 in from Roberts Field at Benson.



Before we go on to the actual traffic information provided by Spencer Garrett it is worth recalling the details of the special mission operations that were flown by the Boeing 314 Clippers in 1942. Initially these trips were single flights North Beach to Lagos and return, calling at Fisherman's Lake on both outward and return flights. From SM13 leaving North Beach on 4 February 1942 the aircraft began to include two "shuttle" flights between Lagos and Natal, Brazil, with cargo from the shuttles being offloaded at Natal and carried back to the United States by Pan American regular South American services. This pattern was used so as to maximise the trans-Atlantic carrying capacity of the Clippers and not waste their load capability on the Natal to US stages. The calls at Fisherman's Lake served little purpose except for refuelling, because there was no way that cargo or passengers could get to Fisherman's Lake except by sea.

Pressure was on to get the airstrip at Fisherman's Lake into operation but it took Jim Adams and his crew until June 1942 to get what became Benson Field up and running. This was a major step forward which allowed PAA Africa to extend their C-47 flights that had been turning round at Bathurst to finally carry cargo, passengers and mail to Benson to connect with the Boeing 314 Clippers from America.



Here is what Jim Adams had to face at the runway site for Benson.
You can barely make out the tractor, but this was the runway centre line.



Jim also had to build the "road" from the lake to the airstrip, but it was not Route 66:

Spencer Garrett writes:

“For the first few months I was at Fish Lake, there was nothing but a path from our compound out through the jungle to Benson. It meant an “on-foot” transfer like something out of a movie to see the passengers trekking along the path and disappearing into the jungle followed by a stream of natives carrying their baggage, mail and cargo on their heads. A road (?) was finally completed which made the trek a lot easier. Small tree trunks were laid across some of the muddier spots.”

Once Benson was open, and starting with Special Mission 34 leaving North Beach on 15 June 1942, the Clippers could increase the number of shuttle flights to five between Natal and Fisherman’s Lake because they no longer needed to fly the leg to and from Lagos. Cargo from Lagos and the other West African locations including Roberts Field, could now be carried by the C-47s to Benson and loaded on to the Clippers at Fisherman’s Lake. The traffic statistics in Spencer Garrett’s files (and remember he was the Traffic Manager at Fisherman’s Lake) clearly show the effect of opening the runway at Benson.

Month	Passengers	Kilos cargo	Kilos mail
May	42	0	0
Jun	141	18,698	864
Jul	337	6,925	1,433
Aug	302	35,905	1,123
Sep	410	87,308	1,927
Oct	389	114,699	1,742
Nov	324	105,039	1,454

Garrett’s notes to these statistics tell us that these were all westbound loads leaving Fisherman’s Lake, and the load weights were the actual loads put on board at Fisherman’s Lake. The runway at Benson was opened mid-June as the “five-shuttle” system came into operation, and the Boeings on each special mission left Fisherman’s Lake five times on each mission. In line with the fact that “Capetown Clipper” NC 18612 was part of the special mission operations (Ref. 6) we find that the flights to Leopoldville were instructed as follows:

“....airplane No. N 18612, Boeing 314A, will proceed to Natal after fulfilling her commercial mission to Leopoldville....departing New York May 28th, and will then shuttle between Natal and Lagos, making as many trips as is consistent with the safe operation and maintenance of this aircraft before returning to New York for overhaul”.

This is in the mission order for Route 6 flight 6011, and it seems fair to assume that NC-18612 “Capetown Clipper” increased the number of shuttles between Fisherman’s Lake and Natal after the Benson runway opened in mid-June. Full operation of the system is shown in the statistics for July onward when Garrett was recording almost one flight each day leaving westbound from Fisherman’s Lake to Natal. The main cargo travelling into Fisherman’s Lake from the United States was military hardware for onward transmission, but the Clippers would return virtually empty unless a cargo could be found. What better way to fill the available space than rubber from Firestone?

Garrett lists 1387 bales of rubber loaded May through September totalling 71,779 kilos (each bale weighs 51kg.) increasing to 97,257 kilos in October alone and 99,144 kilos in November. The increase was due entirely to the availability of the C-47 service from the Firestone plantation shipped through Roberts Field, and this may have had an influence on the decision to change the base from Bathurst, and the importance of completing the two bases, Roberts and Benson in the fastest possible time. The rubber shipments were not of significance to US consumption but better than flying the planes back to America empty, since PanAm were presumably paid on a “weight carried” basis and there was little else they could find to fill the planes’

empty cargo hold.

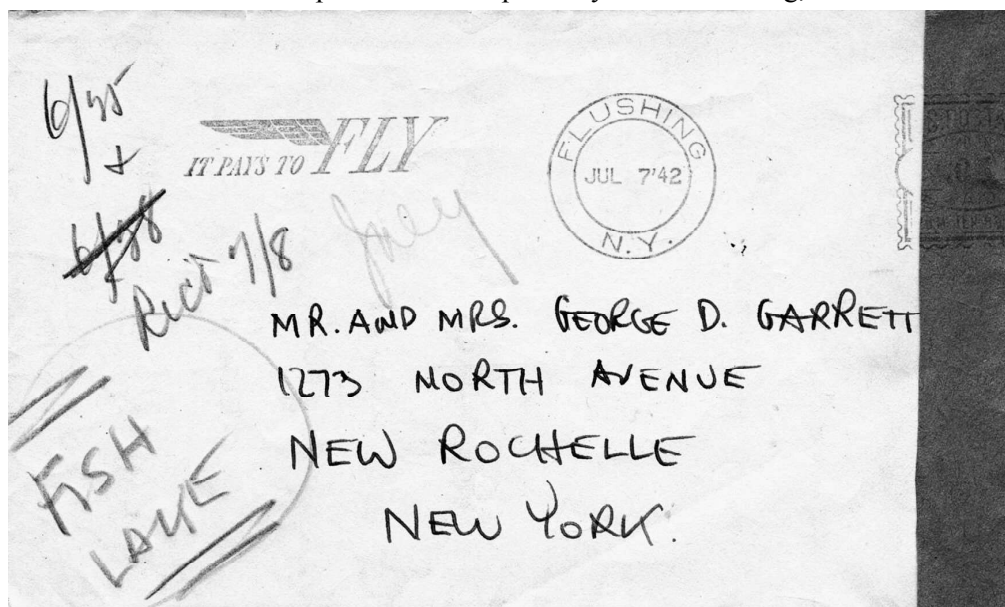
The other cargo included something that certainly was of significance, particularly to the electronics industry, and that was mica. PanAm carried almost 54,000 kilos of this out of Fisherman's Lake up to October 1942, and between June and November almost 2000 passengers passed through the "Passenger Terminal" on their way back to the States. Many of these would have been ferry pilots who had delivered aircraft to the Middle East and Russia. Spencer Garrett writes:

"Out of Fish Lake to the States on the 314s, our cargo was mostly bales of crude rubber we received from the Firestone Plantation. They came up on the C47s and quite often I'd set up a C47 to make several shuttles between ROB and FSH to bring up loads of rubber."

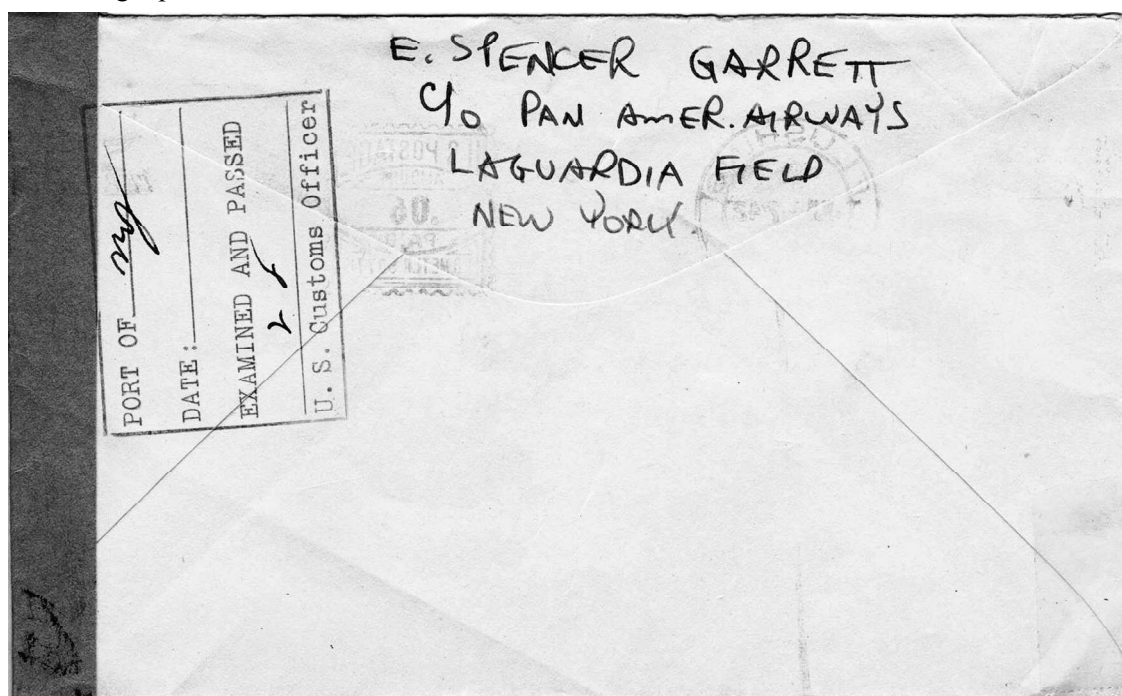
This was a truly impressive performance by the planes and crew of Pan American, and until we had access to the records in the Richter Library, now clarified even more by the almost chance acquisition of accurate data from the actual Pan American Traffic Manager, we had no idea just how much was achieved. It is humbling to read the letters and reports of Jim Adams and Spencer Garrett, highlighted even more by almost 100 original photographs of their work. But I am a postal historian and must address the question of air mail carriage by Pan American special missions.

The question of how airmail was carried across the Atlantic in 1942 has been the subject of discussion for many years, but was hampered by the lack of primary source documents. Bob Wilcsek wrote a landmark article (Ref. 6) in 1999, in which he analysed the topic using cover evidence. Fifteen years later thanks to the emergence of primary documents, including Garrett's archive, Bob's analysis has proved to be remarkably accurate. In a later article (Ref. 7), I proposed that the majority of airmail between the United States and West Africa, and hence also to points East, was carried in 1942 by the Pan American Special Mission flights. Spencer Garrett's statistics seem to confirm this analysis. For the five months June to October 1942, the mail off-loaded from the arriving Clippers from America and recorded as "Eastbound Loads", i.e. placed aboard the C-47s for sending down the coast to Bathurst, Accra, Takoradi and Lagos, then onward was 17,774 kilos. That's just over 39,000 lbs of airmail carried by the Special Missions. Less mail is recorded in the other direction, i.e. Fisherman's Lake to America, but nevertheless it still amounted to almost 19,000 lbs of airmail June through November. How else this mail could have been carried across the Atlantic in 1942? These totals of course make no distinction between civilian and military APO mail.

As for mail in and out of Fisherman's Lake, it is unlikely that we will find much in dealers' stocks because from Spencer Garrett's letters included in the archive, we see that mail from him (and presumably other PanAm crew) was simply given to the Clipper crews who posted it in America when they arrived. Most of the covers show that the letters were put into the US postal system at Flushing, New York as shown here:



This letter was carried by a returning Clipper to New York as shown by the US Customs inspection stamp on the re-sealing tape on the reverse side. Letters inside are dated 25 and 28 June.



This convenient arrangement for mail obviously did not continue because later letters show the use of APO 606, listed as being at Accra although the mail came from Fisherman's Lake, and Garrett writes:

"We had no regular postal facility at Fish Lake. Personal mail we sent was addressed to final destination without postage and put in a special company pouch to North Beach. It was delivered to the company mail room, metered with postage and sent to final destination as regular mail. Such envelopes showed return address as c/o PAA, La Guardia Field, Jackson Heights, N.Y. Mail coming to us was sent with domestic postage to the company mailroom where it was placed in the appropriate special pouch to Fish Lake. Eventually we used an APO and we showed the APO as the return address.....then forwarded via PAA to Fish Lake. All such mail was subject to censorship by U.S. Customs at Miami or New York. In August an AAF officer was assigned to Fish Lake and he censored our outbound mail."

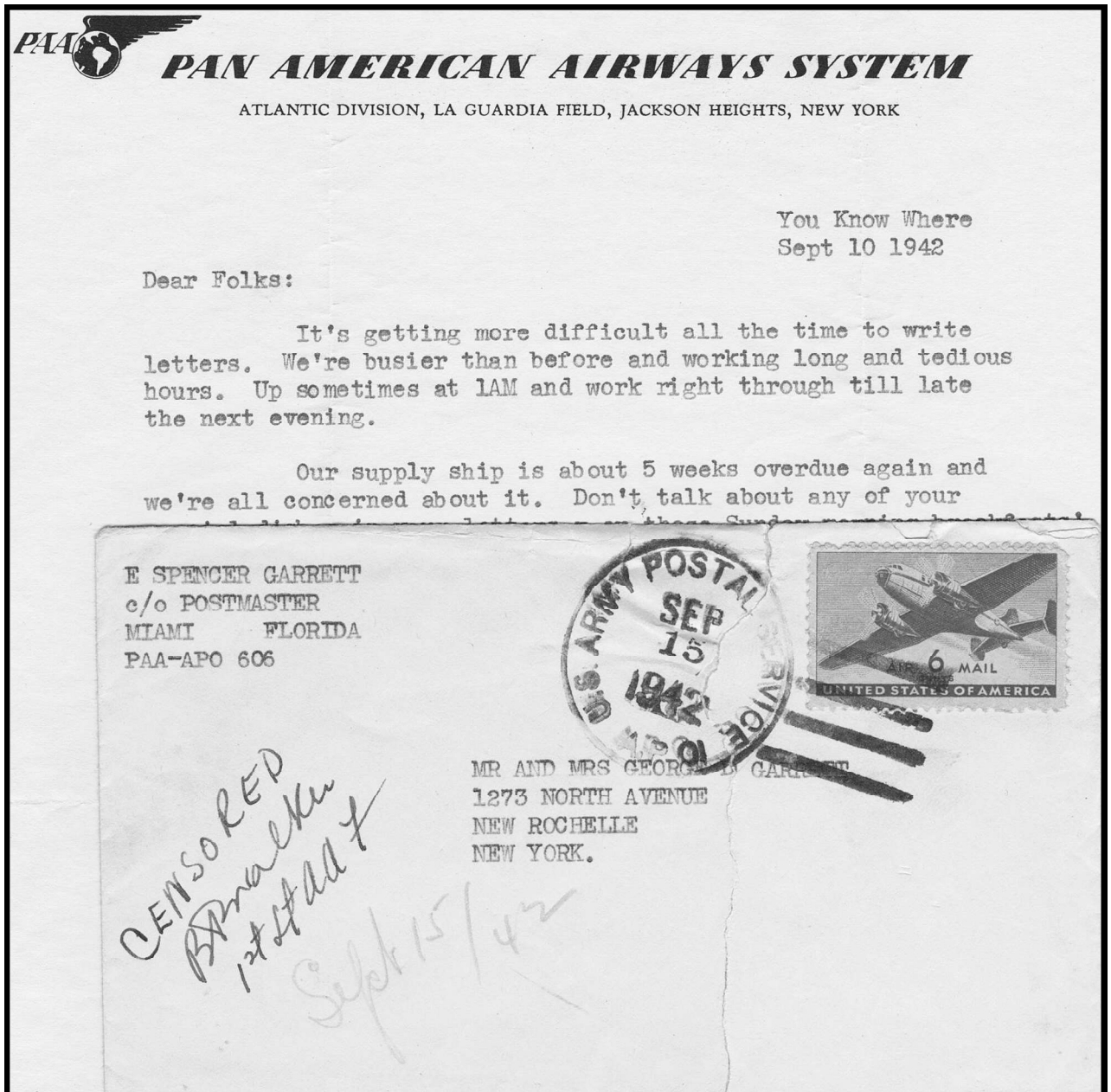
Fortunately the Garrett archive has a cover and letter illustrating this censorship at Fisherman's Lake (shown facing page). The letter is dated 10 September and was censored by an AAF 1st Lt. before being sent on via the APO system. Garrett's return address is APO 606 even though there is a listing for APO 605 at Monrovia.

So, my thanks to Spencer Garrett for providing a wealth of first hand information about Fisherman's Lake, and to the subsequent owner of the archive, the late Dr. Gale Raymond, a prominent member of the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group. I hope I have brought life to a previously little-understood chapter in the wartime history of Pan American Airways. My thanks also go to Jim Adams' son, who kindly allowed me access to his father's correspondence and photographs.

Footnote:

I should record that the previous owner of the Garrett archive was a personal friend of Spencer Garrett's with whom he made a pact that whichever of them passed away first would donate their archives to the survivor. Dr. Gale Raymond had an even more amazing life than Spencer Garrett, as revealed in a three page eulogy published in the journal of the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Circle. Too long to reproduce here, it is nevertheless worth noting that Gale Raymond had been a WW2 aerial gunner, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross, went on to be a USAF Intelligence officer, gaining a Doctorate in geography

and geosciences and seven different USAF air crew wings. Wounded in Korea he then entered the dark world of covert operations, posing as a disabled "tourist" in Libya, Laos (where he was again wounded), Timor, Sri Lanka, Dahomey and the Maldives. Reading the account makes modern life seem very pale by comparison. What a man. I am immensely privileged to be the latest owner of the archive. I have already made arrangements to pass it on to the Richter Library when I am no longer around.



References.

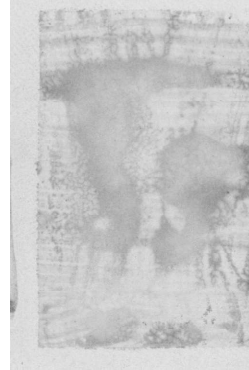
1. ASM 0341, Richter Library, University of Miami.
2. "Firestone Non-Skid", house journal of Firestone Co., June 24, 1936.
3. United States Foreign Relations, 1940, Vol. II, 811.24.
4. United States Foreign Relations, 762.94/484.
5. Masland, William M. "Through the back doors of the world in a ship that had wings", (Vantage Press, New York, 1984).
6. Wilcsek, Bob, "FAM-22: The first six months" Air Post Journal, January 1999,
7. Wilson John, "Pan American, FAM-22, Special Missions, 1942 and 70 years of misunderstanding." Air Post Journal, December 2011.

Bradbury Wilkinson Photographic Archive (Sierra Leone)

Continuing from Cameo 91, January 2014, page 7, here are all the black & white photographic images for Bradbury Wilkinson designs of Sierra Leone stamps.



17. 5. 33.





Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals

Members are invited to contact either editor by e-mail, post or telephone when they notice any article they may feel might be of interest to other members. Articles which we hope to reproduce in *Cameo* at a future date are not usually listed here.

London Philatelist, Volume 123, no. 1415, May 2014

pp160-161, Steve Jarvis FRPSL, *The De La Rue Collection on the RPSL Website*.

pp162-163, Frank Walton FRPSL, *Perkins Bacon Engraving Books*

Air Mail News, Volume 56, no. 224, February 2014

Barbara Priddy, *The Other Company Concerned—American Export Airlines and carriage of Westbound Transatlantic Mail during World War 2*. This 44 page article was published only on CD-R as an appendix to the electronic version of Air Mail News. Repeated with some amendments in the CD-R for the May 2014 issue of Air Mail News.

Air Mail News, Volume 56, no. 225, May 2014

Richard Beith, *The United States involvement in West African aviation, 1941 – 45*, 28 page article published on CD-R as an appendix to the electronic version of Air Mail News.

Civil Censorship Study Group Bulletin, volume 41, No. 2, April 2014

Pp69-70, Dann Mayo, *WWII —Nigeria Censor Wax Seal*

Germania—Journal of the Germany & Colonies Philatelic Society, volume 49, No. 1, February 2013

Pp46-49, Wilf Vevers, *The German Atlantic Expedition 1925 –1927*



Requests for help from members

Ed—unusually, we have three senior members seeking guidance from other members in the last few months. I have brought them together into what could become a new section of Cameo as and when required.

John Sacher FRPSL wrote in the *London Philatelist* of April 2014 (Volume 123, No. 1414)

Prepaid Mail through a Third Country before the General Postal Union, to or from West Africa

In 1991 and 1992 I wrote a series of articles which included rates and examples of letter mail through third countries to and from British colonies and Liberia, for which the Treasury in London had also helped to draw up postal regulations (Refs 1 to 4). The articles covered letter rates for the USA, France and some for Holland and Italy. Since then I have been trying to find regulations and examples to fill gaps for these countries and to add Switzerland, Canada, the West Indies, Straits Settlements, the North German Confederation and Württemberg. These are the only places for which I have seen items of mail.

Additionally, I have been trying to do the same for French colonies in West Africa, where most of the relevant mail is to France through the United Kingdom, although there is some with Italy, Switzerland and the USA; also for Portuguese colonies, including mail for the Cape Verde Islands, where mail seems to be mostly with the USA and France, but even Demerara features. Further, there is mail between the USA and Spanish Corisco. Michèle Chauvet's excellent book (Ref 5) fills in some of the French rates but, as far as I can tell, not all.

When I was researching for *The Oil Rivers and Niger Coast Surcharged Provisionals and Bisected Stamps* which was published as a supplement to *The London Philatelist* (Ref. 6), I asked members of RPSL and WASC for assistance with scans of any material that might be relevant. I received many responses including from two philatelists with substantial collections of which I was unaware. This was an amazing level of help, some by internet and some on CDs. Without it I doubt that I would have completed the study. Once again I am asking for such help, even if you only have one item. Of course this time material could be in so many different collections apart from ones of West African colonies or Liberia—France, German States, Holland, Italian States, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the USA and more distant British, French, Portuguese or Spanish colonies. I am also seeking more of the Regulations.

Please contact John Sacher ideally by e-mail to johnsacher@clara.co.uk, if you can help.

References

1. Sacher J.S., "5o What?", *London Philatelist*, Volume 100 p144, RPSL, June 1991
2. Sacher J.S., "5o What? 50 Gold Centimes and More", *London Philatelist*, Volume 101 p123, RPSL, May 1992
3. Sacher J.S., "Before the General Postal Union", *London Philatelist*, Volume 101 p289, RPSL, October 1992
4. Sacher J.S., "Liberia: the Early Post Offices and Stamps", *London Philatelist*, Volume 101 p329, RPSL, November 1992
5. Chauvet M., *Les Colonies Francaises, Tarifs et Service Postal 1848-1878. Les Colonies d'Afrique*, Bruns et Fils, France, 2009
6. Sacher J.S., *The Oil Rivers and Niger Coast Surcharged Provisionals and Bisected Stamps*, Supplement to *London Philatelist*, Volume 118, March 2009.



Frank Walton FRPSL wrote to several WASC members including Barbara Priddy whose response is also published here:

Airmail: Freetown to Cote d'Ivoire Aug 1954

I've had a cover sitting in my 'must find out about that one day' pile for some while now... It is dated 23 August 1954 and is paid 3d + 6d + 4d for registered airmail from Freetown to Abidjan, Ivory Coast. The registration fee was 4d at this date, so postage was paid at 9d. I've got no firm rates tables covering this – can you help please? Happy to send scan if you'd like to see it.

Barbara Priddy replied:

I have checked my WAAC timetables, but unfortunately I haven't got 1954: in 1952 they weren't flying to Abidjan, but in 1958 they were. If they were flying to Abidjan in 1954, they would have carried this cover, if not then the French service was certainly flying. I would assume that 9d was the local foreign airmail rate: I have a table of air surtaxes the other way, compiled by John Parmenter from Lignes Aeropostales Liste AV1 at the UPU in Berne, which gives the surtax (not including the basic postage, which from Derek Richardson's Tables of French Postal Rates was 30fr up to 20g) from AOF to Sierra Leone from April 1952 to August 1958 as 8fr per 5g, if this is any help (probably not, but I thought I'd tell you anyway).



Calabar to Cameroun in 1943 – the Travels of an Interesting Cover, from Marty Bratzel

Ed - Marty Bratzel has sent this to me as a request for help. In his own words "The subject is largely foreign to me, so I would appreciate your observations and insight to provide additional details, confirm / refute my observations, correct factual mistakes, and extend my speculation. I suggest co-authorship, then publish in Cameo for others to take pot-shots". He over-estimated my knowledge; I am as puzzled as he is!

The cover pictured opposite was offered on eBay with competition among three bidders. The final sale price was \$62.76 USD. Any insight from those knowledgeable on the subject would be appreciated.

It is interesting for several reasons. At the same time, several questions are unanswered. The cover, addressed to Ebolowa, Cameroun, was posted at Calabar on February 26, 1943. The sender affixed an air mail label and franked the cover with 1/3 postage, presumably sufficient to cover air transport. [Question – what were postal tariffs for surface or air from Nigeria to Cameroun?] However, for air mail, the cover would have had to travel first by surface to Lagos for transport by air to Douala. Consider geography. Lagos is approximately 360 miles west-northwest of Calabar, and Douala about 115 miles southeast of Calabar. With no airport at Calabar, air mail makes no sense. Apparently the postal officials at Calabar agreed, and the cover was sent by ship to Fernando Po, an island about 95 miles south of Calabar with ship connections to Douala, which is about 75 miles to the east-northeast. The Santa Isabel transit postmark is dated three days later, March 1, 1943. The cover also has a Douala machine transit postmark dated March 17, 1943. From Douala, the cover would have travelled by rail to Yaoundé, then by road to Ebolowa.

But, how did the cover get from Santa Isabel to Douala – direct by ship or indirect by ship to Lagos? The 16-day transit time between Santa Isabel and Douala provides little, if any, help.



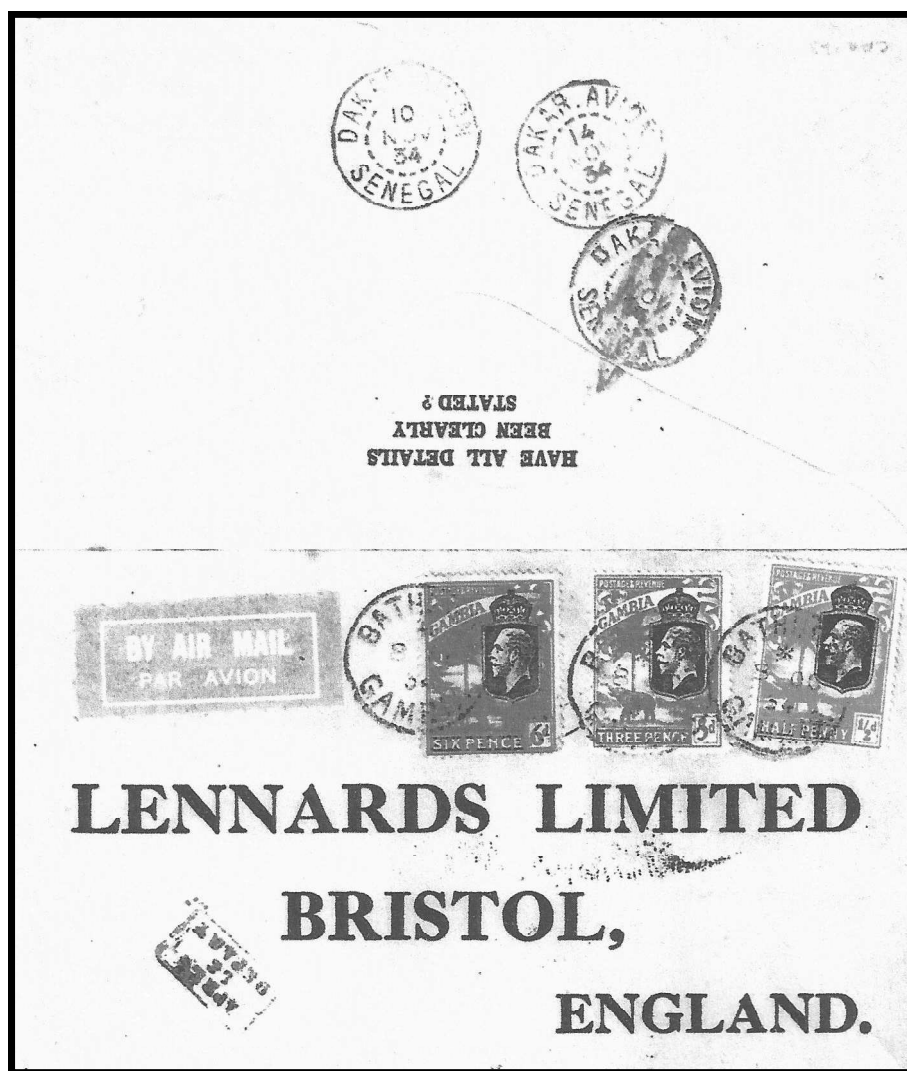
Consider now postal control and censorship. The tape and the Commission A cachet confirm that the cover was opened and resealed at Douala. The bright blue rectangular cachet on the back confirms postal control at Santa Isabel, but there is no evidence that the cover was opened there. The mystery deepens. On the back of the cover, under the resealing tape applied at Douala, there appear to be remnants of resealing tape, or perhaps some or all of the tape is still present – it is difficult to tell from the electronic scan. Interestingly, the Santa Isabel postal control cachet, the Douala postmark, and the Calabar postmark are all atop this residue. Although not clearly visible in a printed illustration, the three aforementioned marks are fully present underneath the tape applied at Douala. So, was the cover censored and resealed at Calabar before postmarking, or is the residue indicative of something else, for example clear cello tape?

To add to the mystery, the cover has two semi-circular postal control marks, one in black and one in violet. Why two, and where were these marks used and applied? One could perhaps infer that one was applied at Calabar and the other at Lagos.

Gambia 1934 Airmail cover “Après le Départ”

John Mayne

Another version of this article first appeared in the Journal of the France & Colonies PS in September 2013



At a West Africa Study Circle meeting in 2013, Philip Beale showed mail from the Gambia which included the air mail cover shown opened out here, details of which he has kindly allowed me to pass on including this image. It was posted on 8 October 1934 to Lennards Limited of Bristol, a shoe manufacturer/wholesaler.

Postage of 9½d was paid and the letter was routed from Bathurst via Dakar, Senegal, back-stamped Dakar.Avion/ Senegal with three different dates, 6th, 10th and 14th November. A boxed three line Après/ le/ Départ strike was applied to the face suggesting this was a letter that arrived late for the French airmail service from Dakar. Philip Beale notes that the German airmail service from Gambia via Stuttgart started on 10 November 1934 and that, for a letter posted in early October sea mail to the UK would also have been quicker.

I don't recall seeing any other mail originating from British colonies in West Africa with an Après/ le/ Départ marking but other members may know differently.

To commemorate the start of the Great War 100 years ago, there will be a presentation and exhibition at Trinity College, Oxford titled:

*'The Start of the Great War in West Africa
& its philatelic consequences'*

By Chris Jackson and Malcolm Nickolls

The exhibition (of British Togo stamps) will be open from 11am to 5pm on both Saturday 20th & Sunday 21st September 2014. There will be a slide presentation on both days at 3pm lasting 30 minutes.

(The exhibition is free but there will be a small charge for entering Trinity College, Oxford. Besides the exhibition, the college is well worth a visit with attractive grounds, a beautiful hall and a Chapel completed in 1694 with superb carvings by Grinling Gibbons)

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GOLD COAST. 1921 5/- green and red/pale yellow with watermark inverted. Very fine mint. SG 82fw.	£375	ST HELENA. 1938/40 set of 14 perforated 'SPECIMEN'. Very fine mint. SG 131s/140s.	£400
GOLD COAST. 1935 1d Jubilee corner Sheet No block of six with 'lightning conductor'. Very fine mint. SG 113c.	£160	SIERRA LEONE. 1963 11s on £1 showing the rare wide setting (21mm). Unmounted mint. BPA Cert. SG 269.	£750
NIGER COAST. 1893 ½d on 2½d (Type 9 in vermilion). Very fine mint. Scarce. SG 31.	£450	SIERRA LEONE. 1963 3/- on 3d block of four showing '1895' for '1859'. Unmounted mint. Rare. SG 282a.	£400

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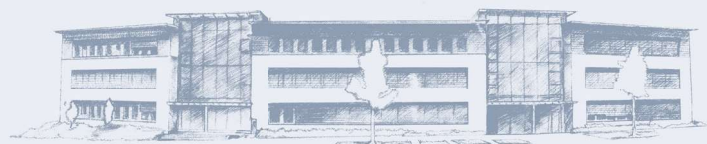
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