

CAMEO



The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle



VOLUME 18 NUMBER 2
WHOLE NUMBER 101

JUNE 2017

THE NIGER TERRITORIES



“Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East” envelope from Akassa with a very fine strike of the triple oval datestamp in violet of the 2nd May 1890, bearing Great Britain 6d cancelled at Liverpool by 466 oval. Endorsed “Over ½ oz” and taxed 6d accordingly. A fine and rare cover ex Porter collection, listed by Ince & Sacher page 120.

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Front Cover

Gold Coast QV halfpenny Postal stationery postcard, uprated to 1d for postage to Germany, sent from Saltpond on 7 November 1894. Endorsed with manuscript *by SS Angola* it apparently missed that boat and arrived in Liverpool for onward trans-shipment only on 15 December 1894. A boxed handstamp TOO LATE, applied in the Gold Coast, is seen here, for the first time recorded using red ink.

Editor's Notes

Paul Redhead's excellent article in this issue on forgeries of Nigerian stamps and postmarks emphasises how much of a gift to the forger and fraudster is the unregulated worldwide on-line marketplace. The buyer's knowledge is our best defence but, as the depth of the forgers' scientific knowledge increases all the time, so must the philatelists'. The technical equipment the RPSL Expertising Committee can now bring to bear in support of their expert certificates is remarkable.

Whilst such equipment is currently beyond the pocket of (and skilled use by) most philatelists it is useful to know its potential. I would therefore like to highlight the forthcoming International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately at the RPS, London on 13-15 October 2017 at which WASC member Gary Wayne Loew will be speaking on the Saturday on the subject "Ink Study of the Gambia 2½d Perforated Cameos of 1880-1897". The Friday session is an open house for all RPSL Fellows, Members and their guests whilst the sessions on Saturday and Sunday 14-15th are open only to pre-registered delegates at a cost of £100.

The next issue will be edited by Barry Burns, datelined October 2017, and the copy deadline is 1 September



Rob May

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Editorial Policy

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.

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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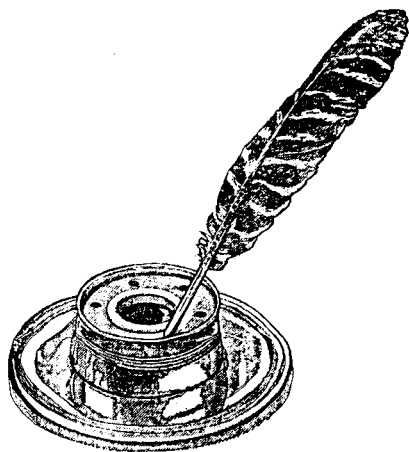
From 2016, until further notice, a subscription of £10 per annum will provide all members with an electronic copy of *Cameo* via the WASC website three times a year. Alternatively members can choose to receive a printed copy of *Cameo* by post for £20 per annum. The cost of postage to overseas members unfortunately means that those who prefer to receive *Cameo* in print format will need to pay WASC a further charge of £7.50 to Europe or £12.50 to the rest of the world. There is no entry fee. The subscription term is for calendar years.

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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



Appreciation

Dear Barry and Rob,



In 2008 Ghana Post delved into their stock of unused back issues and had them overprinted to create a series of provisional definitive stamps. The selection of sheets was fairly random using commemorative issues from as far back as Christmas 1983 and re-denominating some obsolete definitives. Unsurprisingly, there are no records of the numbers of each produced.

These stamps were circulated locally in Ghana and unknown to most dealers at the time which has made them sought after today. Stanley Gibbons lists 17 stamps between SG3736a and SG3736q (two of those with double surcharge varieties) and many are without prices as they have simply not traded publicly.

3736q has a GH¢1.30 overprint on the C60 Larabanga Mosque definitive. Not reported before (fig 1) is a similar GH¢1.30 overprint on the C80 Fort Sebastian stamp from the same 1991 set. This discovery, made by Nicholas Pertwee, clearly also has a double surcharge.

Do members know of any more examples that have not yet been listed?

Ian Anderson
Edinburgh



Kosso Town, Sierra Leone

Dear Barry and Rob,

In the 100th *Cameo*, January 2017, Barbara Priddy refers, on page 62 of her article *RAF West Africa Forces Handstamps*, to uncertainty of the location of Kosso Town. There is a place of this name, map reference north 8 23' 12" west 13 8' 51", about three miles north west of Hastings.

Barbara subsequently informed me that MU 176 arrived at Hastings from Bo, but did not know of a Bo connection. The caption to photo 1.60 in *Sierra Leone Narrow Gauge* by Philip Beale and Vic Mitchell mentions a Rest House at Bo. This was established for use by Army personnel during World War II, so clearly there was a military presence at Bo.

John Hossack
Leighton Buzzard



Cameo 100 – Censor 3326

Dear Rob & Barry,

Thank you very much for this excellent journal. I have a censorship point for your interest. On p58: British censor resealing tape 3326 is illustrated. We have only one record of this censor, before seeing this cover, which is dated 11 Mar 43 UK to USA, surface mail, censored at Liverpool.

Best wishes for the next 100!

Graham Mark
Editor of CCSG Bulletin

Access to the internet?

Then visit the West Africa Study Circle Web Site at: <http://www.wasc.org.uk>
Webmaster is Ray Harris - contact: harris6@which.net

There are now direct links to our advertisers and other websites
Other recent additions include documents by WASC members including information on
Air Routes and Nigerian Postmarks, with extra material frequently added

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 126 whole no 1442, Jan-Feb 2017

pp2-13, *The Culture of the Duplicate Letter*, by Allan F. Westphall

pp14-19, *GB Provisional Labels Revising Compensation Rates*, by Steven Harrison

volume 126 whole no 1445, May 2017

p158, *The Culture of the Duplicate Letter*, by Yamil H Kouri

pp166-171, *Cote d'Ivoire's Troubles and Perseverance in Organising the UPU Congress*, by Marc Parren.

Stamp Collector's Connection, January 2017, whole no 8s

pp59 - 67, *Orville Wright, Commander Geordi La Forge and Captain Nikolai Pulinš*, by Gary Wayne Loew, concerning the 1933 Latvia to Gambia flight attempt.

African Postal Heritage Papers

Simon Heap was recently alerted to this website which has a lot of papers on stamps of Dutch/German colonies: <http://www.ascleiden.nl/news/launch-african-postal-heritage-papers>



WWII Air Services Calling in West Africa

Barbara Priddy

As a result of a query from Frank Walton, Barbara sent the following excellent brief resumé of key dates:

I extracted from the CAIS Reports, for my own ease of reference, all the services that called in West Africa.

With regard to Sierra Leone after June 1940 there is a void in air mail to UK until the middle of 1942, when the BOAC Lagos-UK service started accepting civilian mail homeward bound. Mail to the east was carried on the BOAC Freetown - Khartoum services 28 April-30 June 1941, and on the PAA-Africa Bathurst-Lagos service from 26 November 1941. In February 1942 this became the Bathurst/Freetown - Accra service and from 30 August 1942 was operated by the RAF.

In 1943 BOAC again operated the Freetown-Khartoum service from 20 March to 11 July, and Aeromaritime operated a Dakar-Lagos service from 25 May, although from July onwards the call at Freetown was omitted (allegedly: the service is shown as calling at Freetown in 1944).

Further French services, some with unbelievable routes, are shown in 1945.

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 – John Russell
- Ghana – Ian Anderson
- Gold Coast – Peter Duggan
- Maritime – John Hossack
- 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
- Togo – Jeremy Martin
- Tristan da Cunha - Richard Moss

**Publications Committee Chairman
is Rob May**

Auction Report

John Sacher West Africa Sale 13 December 2016

Jeremy Martin FRPSL and John Hossack

This sale, held at Spink in London was of John Sacher's collection of pre-UPU postal history of West Africa and consisted of 731 lots. Up to 20 people were in the room, including three members of the West Africa Study Circle (the two authors and John Powell), as well as auction agents. There were also on-line and telephone bidders. This report is from Jeremy in respect of the morning session, up to Lagos, and John in respect of the remainder of the sale.

Prices realised include the buyer's premium of 20% plus VAT at 20%, adding a total of 24% to the hammer price. Estimates are either shown in brackets or after the price realised.

The Gambia

- ◇ The first item, lot 1167, a 1651 manuscript of a journey up the River Gambia soared to £7,192 (est. £500-600). All the early letters sold, mostly around estimate.
- ◇ An 1859 cover to the Bahamas with a red BATHURST/ PAID/ GAMBIA on the reverse, lot 1182, fetched £1,054 (£1200-1500). Later pre-stamp covers were sold at or slightly below estimate.
- ◇ Then came the imperforate 6d Cameos. Lot 1194, a cover of 1869 with a pair of 6d went for £14,880 (£10000-12000). A single 6d on an 1870 cover, lot 1195, sold for £11,160 (£5000-6000) and lot 1196, an 1874 6d on an 1879 cover made £6,200 (£6000-8000).

There were 42 lots in this section with just three unsold.

Gold Coast

Jeremy's main interest was this section.

- ◇ The 1771 entire from Cape Coast Castle to London seemed cheap at £1,116 (est. £1000-1200). Again, later covers sold for around estimate.
- ◇ Nearly all the pre-stamp handstamps sold close to estimate.
- ◇ Lot 1252, CAPE COAST CASTLE / PAID with a fleuron, a not very clear 1868 strike, fetched £558 (£1000-1200).
- ◇ The only known example of GOLD COAST / PAID dated 1869, lot 1262, went for £2,604 (£1000-1200).
- ◇ The following lot was a fine example of the ACCRA / PAID datestamp which reached £2,976 (£1500-2000) A less fine example, lot 1264, did not sell in the room but was subsequently purchased for £1,240 (also est. £1500-2000).
- ◇ The 1877 Accra bisect to make up the 2½d rate to the USA, lot 1268, sold for £3,100 (£2500-3000). Lot 1271 was also a cover to the USA with a bisected 1d for the 2½d rate made £4,340 (£2500-3000).
- ◇ The first 6d stamp issued in 1875 is difficult to find on cover. A single, lot 1276, reached £5,208 (£1200-1500), whilst a strip of three, lot 1277, made £6,200 (£5000-6000).
- ◇ In the Ashanti War section, the 1874 Dugdale cover sold for £520 (£600-800). Prices in this area do not seem to have increased over the years.

Of the 97 lots only 6 were unsold at the time of writing (January 2017)

Lagos

There were 60 lots with only two unsold.

- ◇ The first lot, 1312, was an 1849 missionary entire to London which made £1,364 (£600-800). Other early letters tended to sell around or slightly below estimate.
- ◇ Lot 1323 with B / LAGOS on an 1862 envelope to Tenerife reached £471 (£150-180) whilst the previous lot with a poor example of the same strike made £68 (also est. £150-180). A fine example of the double-ring datestamp POST OFFICE. LAGOS / WEST COAST OF AFRICA fetched £744 (£500-600).
- ◇ The crowned circle handstamps sold well. Lot 1338 made £2,108 (£1200-1500), 1339 reached £2,604 (£1200-1500) and 1340 yielded the same off a higher estimate (£1500-1800).
- ◇ An 1874 registered letter with the first issue 4d and 6d adhesives, plus REGISTERED LETTER, lot 1351, made £3,224 (£2000-2500) and so did lot 1353, a similar cover but with 2 x 3d and a 4d adhesives, (£2500-3000)

Oil Rivers

Sixteen lots of which 2 were unsold.

- ◇ The earliest known letter from Oil Rivers; an entire of 1751 rated '5' to the UK, sold for £4,960 (est. £2000-2500)
- ◇ An entire letter of 1786, rated '5' deleted and marked '1/3', with SHIP and CARRICKFERGUS handstamps made £2,728 (£1500-1800)

Sierra Leone

This section of 123 lots included many highlights. A breakdown of the lots shows:

	Number of lots	% sold	% sold at or above low estimate
Early material including soldier's letters, missionary mail and ship letters	41	100	85
First date-stamps, 1854-1859	11	90	90
Stamp period	45	85	57
Incoming mail and transit mail	26	90	80
Total	123	92	74

1594	Entire to the UK 1786, rated '3', '5' and '10' with unframed DEAL / SHIP LRE mark. Maybe the earliest privately-owned letter from Sierra Leone	Sold £4,960 (est. £1500-1800)
1595	Early internal mail, written in French to the Governor of Sierra Leone 1792.	Sold £2,852 (£600-800)
1596	Soldier's mail entire to the UK 1794. Rated '2'. Unframed LONDON / SHIP LRE	Sold £2,480 (£600-800)
1597	Entire from Bananas to UK, 1795, rated '10'	Sold £2,728 (£500-600)
1599	Entire to UK, marked 'soldier's letter', rated '2', '8' and '2/4'. LONDON SHIP LETTER mark on the reverse.	Sold £2,232 (£1500-1800)
1607	Missionary entire to the UK, 1831, rated '1/8'. STH SHIELDS SHIP LETTER mark on reverse; one of only two known	Sold £1,612 (£700-900)
1618	1840 entire to UK, forwarded with attachment of 2x 1d blacks tied by Maltese cross. SHIP LETTER mark.	Sold £9,920 (£8000-10000)
1646	Envelope to UK 1860, with 1859 6d dull purple, first recorded use	Sold £4,960 (£2000-2500)
1647	Similar but dated later in 1860	Sold £3,224 (£1000-1200)
1650	Quadruple rate cover to UK 1865, bearing 4 x 1865 6d grey-lilac	Sold £1,984 (£800-1000)
1654 and 1655	Both 1872 double rate covers to France	Sold £2,976 each (£1500-1800 each)
1665	1876 envelope to France franked with 1872 upright watermark 1d, 2d and 4d, plus 1876 ½d	Sold £2,976 (£1500-1800)
1669	Internal mail 1877, with registered mark (Walton 535.01), franked with 1873 upright watermark 1d and 2 x 2d magenta	Sold £2,852 (£1500-1800)
1672	Envelope to the USA 1877, with registered mark (Walton 535.01), franked with 1874 6d reddish lilac plus 1876 1½d and 4d pair.	Sold £2,480 (£2000-2500)
1673	Envelope from Sherbro to London 1879 with PAID-AT-SHERBRO mark. Paid by 1874 6d reddish lilac and 1876 ½d pair	Sold £2,480 (£1500-1800)
1678	1862 cover to Germany rated 10 and 28. Fine strike of SAVED-FROM-THE-WRECK / OF-THE-CLEOPATRA. (The Cleopatra was lost on 19 August, wrecked off the coast of Sierra Leone, on her sixth return voyage with mails from West Africa to Liverpool)	Sold £4,960 (£2000-2500)
1692	incoming mail from Barbados with contents, 1787. Endorsed <i>p the ship Polly / Capt Spelling</i> . Maybe the earliest letter into Sierra Leone that is in private ownership.	Sold £4,960 (£1000-1200)
1697	Incoming envelope 1874 from Straits Settlements to Sherbro via Marseille and London.	Sold £2,728 (£1000-1200)
1714	UK to Casamanca River, WCA in 1864. On the front is the only recorded MISSENT-TO / SIERRA-LEONE mark in red. Manuscript <i>Missent to Loanda</i> and Sierra Leone double arc datestamp on reverse.	Sold £1,736 (£800-£1000)

Spink are to be congratulated on a superb catalogue for John Sacher's outstanding collection. Many lots were described as ex-Ashanti, Sir Adrian Cadbury, Danson, Hinde, Sanderson etc. Now they will also be shown as ex-Sacher.

The Stefan F. Heijtz Collection of St Helena PH

Sale at Grosvenor; Part 1

Barry Burns FRPSL

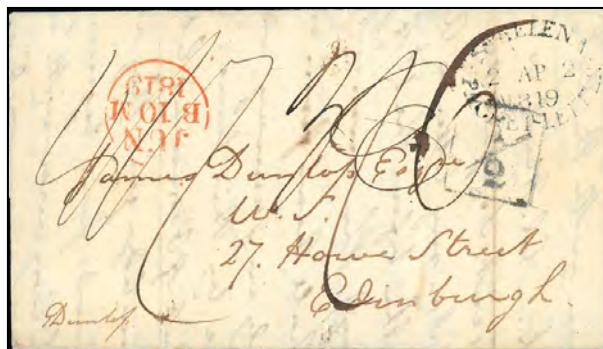
Stephan Heijtz FRPSL, although best known for his Falkland Island interests, has formed very important collections in several other areas. His International Large Gold Medal collection of St Helena Postal History is being sold by Grosvenor Philatelic Auctions Ltd. over two sales - the first of which was held in London on 27 April 2017.

There were 155 Lots, mainly comprising single items, so this was an auction appealing to the collector rather than the 'trade' to break up. Several WASC members were in the room, but most lots were sold via the book, agents, telephone and live internet.

This first sale had very strong Early and Pre-Stamp Mail, Forwarding Agents, and Official Mail, together with interesting items from most other areas up to the 1930s. Generally, the very early items sold well but the forwarding agents and official mail less so, with a good number of unsolds on the day. Nevertheless there was keen bidding for the more important and attractive items and, to this observer at least, it seems that this latter quality is much sought after these days. As an example Lot 2662, a Packet Letter of 29 March 1817 sold for £3,684 on an estimate of £1,500-£2,000, whereas the following lot with a weaker impression of the PACKET-LETTER handstamp but the latest recorded use, failed to sell on an estimate of £1,200-£1,500.



Lot 2662



Lot 2663

I am illustrating just a few of the interesting items here. Note that the buyer's premium is 22.8%, which I have included in the realisations (*in italics*) quoted in this report. The full catalogue can be downloaded at:

<http://www.grosvenorauctions.com/PDFs/115/catalogue-115.pdf>

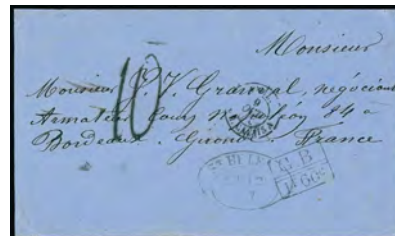
and the prices realised (NOT including the premium) at:

http://www.grosvenorauctions.com/auctions/prices-realised-summary?Sale_no=115

Lot 2653 The earliest known postally handled letter from St Helena, 1703 Ship Letter entire addressed to John Moore, Merchant, in Mincing Lane, London, endorsed from "Ship Anna at St. Hellena/August ye 13th 1703" and directed by "The Mary/Capt. Ogle's/Ship" with "OC/27" receiving Bishop mark.
Est. £3,000-£4,000 (£3,684)

Lot 2659 1815 Ship Letter entire headed from "H.M.S. Northumberland/St. Helena Oct. 22nd 1815", the vessel which had just brought Napoleon Bonaparte to Saint Helena, to Middlesex showing framed "FALMOUTH/SHIP LETTER" and oval "10 o'clock/DE 5/1815 F.N.B." in red, with m/s rating "1/8", being 1s. inland rate + 8d. ship rate, this having being increased in 1815.
Est. £600-£800 (£1,719)

Lot 2691 The latest recorded example of the "ST. HELENA" oval datestamp, 1870 (Sept. 10) good strike, unusually in black, on unpaid Solomon Moss Gideon & Co. envelope to France, charged "10" (décimes) for 8d. rate to France + 2 décimes French charge for non-prepayment and showing scarce boxed "G.B./1F.60c." accountancy mark, with London Oct. 8 transit, Bordeaux Oct. 11 arrival datestamps.
Est. £800-£1,000 (£884)



Lots (left to right) 2653, 2659, 2691

Lot 2706 Thomas Baker, “FORWARDED/BY T. BAKER/SHIPPING AGENT/ST. HELENA” framed cachet type FAC.3, The unique example on 1836 (June 18) entire letter from Canton, China to Edinburgh, Scotland with framed “INDIA LETTER/DEAL”, light additional “½”, transit and Dec. 4 arrival c.d.s.'s, charged “1/6”, inland rate + 4d. India Letter rate. Ex Art Groten and George Montrose collections. Est. £4,000-£5,000 (*unsold*)

Lot 2714 1856 (Sept. 4) OHMS envelope to Ireland franked at left by 6d. blue, good margins just clear at lower left, cancelled in red with oval despatch datestamp, marked “3” for British share, with Carlow Oct. 17 arrival backstamp. Ex John Ayre. B.P.A. certificate (1956). Illustrated on p. 29 of *Saint Helena: Postal History and Stamps* by Edward Hibbert (1979). Around 15 covers bearing the first issue have been recorded, only three dating before the arrival of the 1d. and 6d. values in 1863. Est. £4,000-£5,000 (£4,912)

Lot 2716 1863 (Aug. 29) envelope to Canada West, bearing 1856 6d. blue vertical pair, 1863 1d. lake type B (long bar) and 4d., just touched, tied by slightly smudged oval datestamps, unusually in black, rated “1/4” and “1” representing the division between Britain and St. Helena of the 1s.5d. rate to U.S.A. and Canada, and with Sept. 25 Paid Devonport Cape Packet and next day London Paid transit and Hamilton Oct. 8 arrival datestamps. Ex Art Groten, Don Lampart and George Montrose collections. Spectacular and important, just two covers bearing the first imperforate issues are known, the other with pen cancellations. Est. £10,000-£12,000 (£11,052)



Lots (left to right) 2706, 2714, 2716

Lot 2719 1880 (ca.) envelope from the USA addressed to “Capt. A.R. Heyer/Bark Wanderer/St. Helena/ Atlantic Ocean” bearing 2c. Jackson, 3c. Washington, 5c. Taylor pairs (2), some imperfections, all pen-cancelled, one 5c. pair tied by June 20 Boston Paid despatch c.d.s., showing St. Helena type 1 July 22 arrival c.d.s. and marked “110”(c.) in red for 11d. British share. There were frequent alterations to the postal charges from the USA to St. Helena, the official rate being 27c. from 1877 to 1885, the cover therefore overpaid by 1c. The bark “Wanderer” left New Bedford, Mass., in June 1878 on a four year maiden voyage. Between 1878 and 1924 she carried out over twenty whaling expeditions. Est. £400-£500 (£430)

Lot 2724 8d. Rate to France, 1867 (July 29) envelope to Paris endorsed “Voie Anglaise”, paid at double rate by 4d. carmine and 1s. deep yellow-green, both type A, perf. 12½ with cross cancellations, and showing latest known use of double oval “POST OFFICE/ST. HELENA” dated handstamp type PO 1 in grey-blue at right, with red “PD”, transit and arrival datestamps. Believed to be the only surviving example of the double 8d. rate, in use from 1863 to 1870.
Est. £3,000-£4,000 (£3,316)

Lot 2743 Soldiers’ Concessionary Mail, 1895 (May 22) envelope to London endorsed from a Gunner in the Royal Artillery St. Helena Detachment, countersigned by commanding officer, showing Detachment and Commanding Officer’s handstamps and franked 1884-94 1d., with despatch c.d.s. and backstamped June 10 Plymouth Ship Letter, same day arrival c.d.s.’s. Ex Edward Hibbert.
Est. £1,000-£1,200 (£1,290)



Lots (left to right) 2719, 2724, 2743

Lot 2755 Airmail, 8½d. Imperial Rate, 1936 (Dec. 6) R.N.E. St. Helena crested envelope commercially used to England franked by 1923 ½d. and 8d., marked “7gr.” and with airmail etiquette at left, sent by Lt. Stone from the Marine Regt. to his mother in Southsea. Rare. The Airmail Service via South Africa was introduced in June 1936, the airmail fee of 6½d. (for 10g.) added to the postage rate.
Est. £600-£800 (£675)

Lot 2757 1870 (Jan. 12) registered Packet Letter cover to London showing first type straight line “REGISTERED” marking in red and numbered “33” in m/s., the packet rate paid by 1s. deep yellow-green type B (thick bar), the registration fee by 4d. carmine type B, with ‘sunburst cork’ cancellations, oval despatch and Feb. 8 London registered oval datestamps in red. The first type registered marking very scarce, known on just seven covers between 1869 and 1879. Ex Art Groten.
Est. £1,200-£1,500 (£1,412)

Lot 2765 1901 Netherlands 5c. reply card, reply half addressed to Amsterdam but unaccepted with type 2 “9 FE/01” despatch c.d.s. and framed type 3 “T/c” tax mark (“10” in m/s.) in black and type 1 circular censor cachet in violet (initialled “F.W.A.”) at left, Mar. 11 arrival c.d.s. above, lengthy message headed “Deadwood Camp St. Helena 25 Jan. 1901”. Very rare, the failure to accept the Dutch card unjustified under UPU regulations.
Est. £500-£600 (£798)



Lots (left to right) 2755, 2757, 2765

Lot 2768 Consular Cachets, 1899 (Apr. 17) printed envelope to France showing fine strike of French Consulate “AGENCE CONSULAIRE DE FRANCE/À/STE. HÉLÈNE” double circle cachet in violet, franked at ½oz. foreign rate by 1896 2½d. ultramarine, the cover with Segonzac May 11 arrival backstamp, opened for display and trimmed.
Est. £1,200-£1,500 (£1,290)

Lot 2772 “RETURNED/LETTER” very scarce type 3 handstamp on 1900 (Oct. 12) envelope registered to Lydenburg, Transvaal, franked at 4½d. foreign registered rate by 1890-93 1d. (2), 2½d., showing ‘cork’ cancellations, large “R” in circle and type 3 registration oval in violet, type 1 circular censor mark in violet initialled “EW” (Ernest Bowe Walton, 1875-1918), the 2½d. additionally tied by magenta Pretoria triangular Press Censor cachet, but undelivered with Lydenburg Postmaster’s note dated “23.9.01” and a busy range of transit backstamps.
Est. £200-£300 (£282)

Lot 2773 “RETURNED/LETTER” type 6 framed handstamp in black, THE UNIQUE EXAMPLE, on 1933 stampless envelope to Jamestown sent from Belgium, sent from Brussels Nov. 10, with despatch c.d.s. and large “T”, London “5D/F.B./K” charge mark obliterated, St. Helena Dec. 10 arrival, m/s. notation “unknown/unclaimed”, and attempted return to Paris via Brussels with machine mark on reverse. The envelope headed from the “LIGUE CONTRE LE POURBOIRE” (League Against Tipping), considered humiliating by adherents to this unsuccessful pressure group, which seems also to have disapproved of payment of postage.
Est. £400-£500 (£430)



Lots (left to right) 2768, 2772, 2773

Lot 2782 Telegrams, 1901 (ca.) Eastern Telegraph Co. Ltd. envelope, printed in red, addressed to “Gravett/Deadwood/St. Helena” and showing fine strike of type 1 “CENSOR/PRISONERS OF WAR” circular mark in violet. The first telegraph cable between Cape Town and Saint Helena was completed on Nov. 24 1899, that between Saint Helena and Ascension on Dec. 15 1899, the service operated by the Eastern Telegraph Company which controlled almost 50 per cent of the world’s submarine cables.
Est. £100-£150 (£393)

Lot 2788 1898, “THE CASTLE/14 NOV 98/ST HELENA” triple oval datestamp type CH 3 in violet on OHMS envelope to California, with type 2 despatch c.d.s., transit backstamps and Olive arrival of Dec. 30, slight creasing and flap missing but rare.
Est. £500-£600 (£553)



Lots 2782 (left)
& 2788 (right)



Lot 2792 1891 (Jan. 8), Type PO 2 “POST OFFICE/(crown)/ST. HELENA”, very fine strike in violet on stampless manila official envelope to the Netherlands, endorsed “OHMS” with despatch c.d.s., Amsterdam Feb. 13 arrival on reverse, the addressee name partially obscured.
Est. £400-£500 (£430)

Lot 2797 1901 (July 31) long “OHMS” (deleted) envelope improvised use to Cape Colony franked by 1893 ½d. green (2), showing fine strikes of Broad Bottom Camp type 2 circular cachet in violet initialled “GADB” (Staff Interpreter G.A. de Beer) with additional strike on reverse dated in m/s., Cape resealing label tied by triangular Press Censor cachet dated and initialled.
Est. £80-£100 (£332)

Lot 2798 1901 (Dec. 9) envelope underpaid to the Netherlands bearing 1894 2d. yellow and 1897 ½d. green with ‘triangles in circle cork’ cancellations, with “PASSED BY/CENSOR/DEADWOOD” triangular cachet in violet initialled “EW” (Ernest Bowe Walton) and framed “T/c” type 3 tax mark in black with m/s. “25”, Dutch “T” in oval and added postage due 5c. and 10c. (pair) stamps cancelled Erp Jan. 11 1902, heavy vertical fold but a most characterful cover.
Est. £200-£300 (£344)



Lots (left to right) 2792, 2797, 2798

Lot 2801 1902 (May 3) 1d. postal stationery reply card outward half unusually used registered to Germany with added 1893 ½d. green pair and 1902 1d. carmine cancelled by three fine strikes of ‘Maltese cross in circle cork’ type 03.19, showing type 3 registration oval in black, type 1 circular “CENSOR/PRISONERS OF WAR” mark in red initialled “VA” (William Waldemar, Baron Von Ahlefeldt Ludwigsburg, known between Mar. 16 and May 8 1902) and Memel May 29 arrival. The card written and signed by Col. Adolf Schiel (1858-1903), commander of the German Commando of Johannesburg, captured at the Battle of Elandsplaagte, as well as the autograph of interned Boer General Piet Cronje (1836-1911) who had surrendered at the Battle of Paardeberg.
Est. £200-£300 (£491)

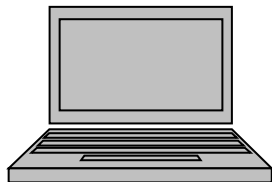
Lot 2804 1916 (Apr. 28) “POST FREE/PC./PRISONERS OF WAR” large red handstamp with censor’s m/s. endorsement on photographic picture postcard of Longwood Old House, sent stampless with despatch c.d.s. from “St. Helena 28/4/16” noted “Service Prisoners of War” to St. Louis, Missouri, locally redirected, the prisoner en route from Cape Town to Gibraltar.
Est. £400-£500 (£491)

Lot 2805 1916 (Nov. 20) “PASSED/40/CENSOR” circular handstamp type 3 in blue, double strike overstruck by St. Helena type 5 despatch c.d.s. on envelope to South Africa, redirected from East London to Venterstad, franked by War Tax 1916 1d.+1d. Very rare, Mabbett notes “One copy of this censor mark is known on a cover to South Africa, with a second example being struck on a cover from South Africa to St. Helena, so it is possible that this censor mark was applied in South Africa rather than St. Helena”, the doubt over usage disproved by the placement of the markings on this cover.
Est. £300-£400 (£332)



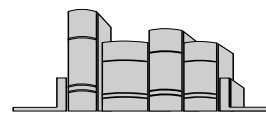
Lots (left to right)
2801, 2804, 2805





Sources

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Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue, French Colonies, 1st edition 2016.
xxv+517pp. ISBN-10 0-85259-974-9; ISBN-13 978-0-85259-974-7.
Price £34.95. Review by Michael Round

This important new catalogue arises from the splitting into two of the old SG 'Part 6' catalogue - *France (including French Colonies)* (7th and last edition 2009). I reviewed the new title for both *Stamp Lover* (magazine of the National Philatelic Society) and the *Journal* of the France and Colonies Philatelic Society of GB, and am most grateful to CAMEO editor Rob May for inviting me to comment on those parts of it relevant to WASC members. UK members generally absorb SG's Commonwealth coverage with their mothers' milk, though overseas readers may not be quite so intimately familiar with it. WASC members with interests lying mainly in French West Africa will perhaps be more accustomed to the French equivalent of SG, namely Yvert and Tellier. How do catalogues compare?

SG's "plus" points include exact dates of issue, carefully named colours and – where known - the names of designers and printers, features which cannot be said to appear in Yvert or any rival French catalogue. For Foreign countries, SG's layout is slightly different from their Commonwealth: airmails, officials, charities (semi-postals) and postage dues all appear chronologically within each country's main listing, rather than in distinct "back of the book" sections as with Yvert and Scott.

The exceptions are stamp booklets and those mostly unissued 'Vichy' items of the 1940s, each of these categories being duly separated. For the Vichy's, this is an improvement on the wholesale listing of every colonies' such issues at the back of the old 'Part 6', but still possibly unhelpful to new collectors (who might otherwise overlook them). Consistency is also tricky: some items (as in, for example, Dahomey, French Guinea and Sudan) were actually issued after all, and therefore appear in the main listing. That is where they all should be, issued or no.

An ideal world would offer "one country, one catalogue." Scott in the USA and Michel in Germany both oblige, listing pre- and post-independence material together, though perhaps in not as much detail as SG or Yvert. Ironically, because of convoluted politics and SG catalogue policy, the Francophone countries of most interest to WASC members – Cameroun and Togo – are inconveniently split among several SG volumes: the *Germany* catalogue for the German Colonial period, this new *French Colonies* volume subsequently; then, for post-independence issues – and in simplified form only - currently just *Stamps of the World*. In addition, Cameroun's joining the Commonwealth in 1995 qualifies their recent issues for inclusion in SG's "part-work," the *West Africa* volume that most of us know intimately.

French Colonies is a bulky volume of 517 pages, but for anyone collecting French West Africa as a whole it is a valuable resource, not just for designers' and printers' names, dates of issue and accurate colour-names, but also for its insight into UK pricing as opposed to US or European. Mint are largely similar, but used are hugely higher – partly through genuine scarcities, and partly through determined lobbying on the part of one particular dealer.

This is not only unique among SG's own worldwide catalogue prices, it is so among other French Colonies catalogues too: neither Yvert, Maury/Dalai, Michel nor Scott maintain such huge price differentials. Perversely perhaps, French catalogues routinely underprice used *vis-à-vis* mint, and their true value may lie somewhere in between them and SG – in mid-Channel, so to speak.

High prices are certainly justified for those real used scarcities familiar from wants-lists everywhere: the Revolution omnibus (1939), Secours National (1941), Entr'aide (1944) and Oeuvres Sociales FoM (1950),

most North African charities, colonial 20c, 40c, 60c, 1f20 and 3f60 definitives of the late 1940s, and practically any Postage Dues – but collectors have long considered most SG used prices far too high. Supply and demand may play a part: used Spanish and Italian Colonies, for instance, are far, far scarcer than French Cols but are priced much lower. Perhaps no-one collects them.

A few comments on individual colonies follow. **Cameroun** listings start with the *Corps Expéditionnaire* overprints on 1915; the *Occupation Française* overprints on Congo could usefully mention that the gum on these is usually tropicalised (a useful expertising test). Typically, if startlingly so, are mint/used prices for the 1925 1c (SG 68), at 30p/£4.25, the contemporary postage due 2c (SG D88) at 45p/£4.50, and the 1939 2c Lamido Woman (SG 119) at 35p/£5.50! The ‘27-8-40’ overprints in black on the 2c and 4c (SG 153a,155a) are essays, but presumably too firmly spot-welded onto the investor market ever to be so downgraded, officially. The ‘1941’ Airs (SG 190c/m) are helpfully footnoted as not being on sale locally until 1946. Most values of the 1946 pictorials (SG 232/50) are listed perf 12½ (normal) and a recently discovered variant, perf 12 (long side) x 12½ (short). Reprinting of these long-lived definitives produced dramatic shade differences, too, mostly coinciding with the change of perf. A 15f shade is listed, but as yet no other.

Middle-period omnibus issues seem to be illustrated for every colony, a great convenience. But in order to find out what **Dahomey**’s (and many other colonies’) earliest issues look like, you have to refer to the preliminary General Colonies listings then that for Anjouan (in the Comoro Islands). The later (1912) “narrow” and “wide” spaced surcharges are clearly listed, though the footnote describing the difference unfortunately misprints the actual measurements: “15mm” should read “1.5mm” and “25” “2.5”. The 1913 pictorials are noted as being on ordinary or chalk-surfaced paper. Contemporary listings for other colonies are more specific: rightly so, for not every value appeared thus, and in fact the Dahomey 2c may not exist on chalky paper at all – oddly so, for it is common on chalky paper when overprinted for Togo. Those Vichy items resembling previous definitives with ‘RF’ removed are cross-referenced via footnotes in the main listing, but prices do not match: the footnote has the 50c and 60c redrawn definitives (SG V14/15) at £2.50 the pair but the Vichy section itself has them at £8.75! Similar discrepancies prevail further on. Three 1913 booklets are listed, at £500-650 each, even when tropicalised (the way they generally come).



Figure 1: The importance of careful colour-naming: 1917 15c and the 1927 15c stamp of the same design

Portuguese-colony collectors generally consider Guinea as the least interesting of them: many French-colony enthusiasts feel the same about **French Guinea**. SG may do, too: there is no explanatory footnote to the 1912 “narrow/wide” surcharges, no illustration of the 1906 ‘Palmiers’ pictorials, nor any cross-references to Vichy items.

Mint prices among the early issues have risen closer to the equivalents for used: the 1904 ‘Fulas Shepherd’ set, for instance (SG 18/32), is now £375M/£425U. The 1913 pictorials bear a (misspelt) footnote referring to “Valeur d’Echange” overprints, while the basic listing shows the importance of careful colour-names: SG themselves forwarded onto me a collector query confusing the 1917 15c (in carmine and dull purple) with the 1927 (magenta and plum) (Figure 1)

Again, three early booklets are listed, at £300-£1,300 – a respectable rise from ‘Part 6,’ where they were £110-275.

SG’s **French Sudan** listing incorporates **Senegambia and Niger** and **Upper Senegal and Niger** en route – unlike Yvert, which places each component separately in its overall A-Z coverage. Alphabetical cross-references in SG under S and U may have been useful to new collectors. The old (1932) but much treasured Yvert Specialised catalogue listed the first overprints in three different vertical spacings – ostensibly 15.5, 16.5 (the norm) or 17.5mm between lines, though in reality the lettering is so irregular that accurate measurement is difficult to achieve. Most collectors and modern catalogues ignore them, SG included. A good shade of the 1914 30c is listed (SG 67a), one of only a few. Those of us familiar with the thousands of existing but still unlisted shades elsewhere among Colonies as a whole will have to stay patient – though a catalogue actually listing them all would be bulky indeed.

The first issues of **French West Africa** as a whole were actually the 1944 surcharges on Senegal and Mauritania, valid throughout the whole region. Scott, alone among catalogues, recognises this. Collectors may try assembling sets postmarked in every component colony, and will find – as with the later FWA pictorials – that Senegal postmarks are the easiest to find, Upper Volta and Mauritania by far the hardest. With its shade and perf variations, and relative usage among the component colonies, the 1947 set alone (SG 34/56) is worth the attention of an entire study group. Used prices are a painful if accurate reflection of those values which are truly scarce. FWA's last issue, the re-inscribed 'Communication' pictorial (SG 126) is also rightly priced highly, used: I haven't seen one in 40 years.

SG's chronological listing of most sub-sections thrusts the Parcel Post issues of **Ivory Coast** into prominence, dubious pedigree notwithstanding. Famously, they include an item of which only one copy was probably ever printed, the 1f on 10c in surcharge Type I (just once per sheet, and only one sheet produced). This is SG P27d, and priced – reasonably, in British Guiana 1856 1c terms – at just £49,000. A snip! The main listing closes with the few items issued in 1959-60 under the Autonomous Republic period.

Mauritania gives full-listing status to those debatable Postage Dues, the 1906 'Palmier' pictorials overprinted with T in triangle, pricing them (used only) at £65-700 and warning of forgeries. Equally charitably, they allot a used price to the scarce 1f50 brown-red of 1940 (SG 100a) – charitably but accurately, for this was not unissued, as I used to think, rather "issued but overlooked at the time," hence the standout price (£140 M or U). An estimated 4-5,000 were apparently sold.

Specialised overprint varieties on the first issue of **Niger** relate to the space between 'du' and 'Niger', sometimes 3mm as opposed to the normal 2½ mm. (Annoyingly, rogue 2¼ mm versions also exist.) SG ignores them all. Niger's endless definitives of 1926-40 (SG 29/72) are among those few that have no price for the complete set, presumably through inadvertence.

Senegal's first surcharges (SG 1/7, though encompassing 35 items) were among that era's philatelic scandals (Guadeloupe provided another): nice if you already own them, but otherwise best ignored wholesale. SG does not yet mention the existence of three types of centre to the 1914 'Market' design: listing them all would fill a lot of space (as the Maury catalogue proves) but an interim footnote would be helpful. Despite Senegal's comparatively busy postal usage, the 1935 low-value definitives are priced highly used: the 1c is 35pM/£3U, and at £6.75U the later 3c (SG 141) is more costly than any other in the set, top values included.

Togo listings start with the 1914 overprints: the basic German Colonial stamps are illustrated but confusingly for new collectors (if not WASC members!) show German East Africa stamps instead. Careful WASC research into actual dates of issue from 1921 produces cautious listings in SG, many dates marked as "earliest known." The story continues... The 1941 20f is engagingly mis-described as "blown-black"(!) – and a few perf variations appear amid the 1947 pictorials. The accompanying (actually 1954) 500f Air (SG 191), a handsome engraved stamp of the kind that attracted me to French Colonies in the first place, now stands at £75M/£80U. The listing ends with the World Refugee Year issue of 1960, finding room *en route* for both the 'République Autonome' set of 1957 and the re-inscribed 'République' set of 1959. The 500f value here is typical of those superbly engraved and popular 'Bird' thematics emanating from other (mostly independent) colonies at this time: the 'Autonome' version (SG 213) is priced at £23/£55 while the 'République' follow-up (SG 235), considerably for impecunious thematicists, is just £14/£5.25.

Last and possibly least in the affections of many collectors is **Upper Volta**. As with French Sudan and Niger, there is a long-standing but little-regarded variant among the first surcharges, not mentioned in SG or Yvert. Every so often, the 'T' of 'Haute' sprouts a middle arm, as if part of an 'F'. The later colour-changed and surcharged issues of 1922-28 are, as with other colonies, often mounted by collectors in strict catalogue order. They tell a better story in the album (here as with other colonies too) if displayed chronologically (surcharged and un-surcharged mixed), to show the progressive devaluation of the French franc – and attempted UPU-compliant colour-coding - that prompted them all.

This catalogue contains much of value, and even the non-West African colony listings provide us with a valuable overview of stamp-issuing patterns French Empire-wide. One ponders SG's next step forward: the half-dozen or so French 'DOM/TOMs' (*Départements/Territoires d'Outremer*: French Antarctica, Polynesia, New Caledonia and so on) currently account for half this catalogue's bulk, and it remains to be seen whether SG will follow Yvert in hiving them off into a separate volume. The torso, happily containing everything a Francophone WASC member would require, could then turn out much cheaper. Meanwhile, members seriously interested in SG *French Colonies* should snap it up. Hard-copy catalogues tend to sell out quickly, and a new edition – whatever the format – is highly unlikely any time soon.

Nigeria 2017; Legal Challenges to the N50 Stamp Duty

Eddy Akpan

Nigerian press reports have highlighted two challenges to the collection of N50 stamp duty under the Stamp Duties Act 2004. The challenge at the highest level of the Nigerian Courts - the Supreme Court - is by the Lagos State Government claiming that it ought to be the collector and recipient of this tax, rather than the Federal Government, and that it is owed all the tax collected from stamp duties collected within Lagos by the Federal Government since 2004.

Of greater philatelic relevance is a claim that has been heard in April 2017 in the Federal High Court in Abuja between the Nigerian Bottling Company (NBC) and NIPOST (also against a private firm, Kasmal International Services, which was trying to enforce on behalf of NIPOST). The Court stopped NIPOST from collecting any further N50 stamp duty, holding that it does not enjoy that power under any extant law in Nigeria, including the Stamp Duties Act 2004.

According to the judge, “whereas the Act recommended 2 kobo stamp to be affixed on certain categories of documents, NIPOST lacked the power to arbitrarily increase the amount to N50 without firstly securing an amendment of the Act through the National Assembly..... Section 89 of the Stamp Duties Act which recommended the use of adhesive 2 kobo stamp on certain categories of receipts and documents is the law in force. The NIPOST.... acted unlawfully, illegally and ultra-vires by unilaterally increasing the 2 kobo stamp to N50 under the guise that 2 kobo stamps are no longer in circulation in Nigeria. Under section 89 of this Act, the NIPOST has no power to compel the plaintiff (NBC) to affix N50 stamp on its receipts and other documents”.

He also said “NIPOST is not a tax collecting establishment and as such, cannot exercise any power not expressly donated to it by law.” The President Muhammedu Buhari led administration had expressed its determination to generate over N5trillion from stamp duty tax, so there may be only a hiatus until the Government amends the 2004 Act.



Statistics for NIPOST in 2016

NIPOST generated N8.83billion revenue in 2016 as reported by the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics. At N400 to the £1, this equates to £22m per annum. Of that total 46.34% was generated from Stamp Duty (now at risk - see above). EMS/Speedpost generated 15.38% (N1.36bn) and parcel deliveries generated 8.23% (N727m). That does not leave much earned from domestic and international mails.

The report continues with mail volume statistics and reports on the post office network. NIPOST handled a total of 33.6m mails of which about 7.7m (23%) were international outbound and 4.9m (15%) inbound. The remaining 21m mails were domestic.

There remains a remarkably large post office network compared to the number of letters and parcels handled. In 2016 NIPOST had a total of 1858 post offices and postal agencies; comprising 106 head post offices, 12 branch offices, 963 counter extensions and local post offices, 20 sub post offices, 304 postal agencies and 376 post shops.

Rob May comments that if you divide the number of letters by the number of post offices and assume they are all open for 255 days a year, the average throughput is 70 letters per day. But if most of the international mail is allocated to the head post offices, the average for the rest falls to just 47 letters per day!



East African Censor Mark used in Nigeria

Ray Harris

In a *Cameo* of 1988 an article by Alan Brown (Ref.1) drew attention to the use of an East African Army censor mark on a Nigerian internal cover, from Ibadan to the Education Office in Lagos, whence it was forwarded to the area Headquarters of the R.W.A.F.F. (Royal West Africa Frontier Force). Until now it is the only use recorded in Nigeria of that mark and is listed in our Censorship book (Ref.2). The cover illustrated here shows a second use of the same handstamp, 10 days later than the first. The cover was sent by Captain A. V. Lawes of the R.W.A.F.F. from Field Post Office 46 on 27 September 1941 to Cambridge.

In his article Alan Brown suggests that the handstamp had been brought back from East Africa where it had been allocated to a Nigerian unit in Ibadan. It seems likely on the latest evidence that the unit was in Lagos (FPO46) and the handstamp was used there. The original letter passed initially through the mail system without censor, as it was internal within Nigeria, but on being redirected to RWAFF it was censored when it reached the unit.



References

- 1 Brown A., "East African Military Censor Used in Nigeria", *Cameo*, Volume 3 no. 8, p207, WASC, July 1988
- 2 Martin J.J., Walton F. and Harris R., *West African Censorship (Third Edition)*, p99, WASC, Princes Risborough, 2014



Unrecorded Cork Cancel of St Helena

Ron Collin

I illustrate what appears to be an unrecorded cork cancel for St Helena. Three examples are shown here, and I would be interested if any readers have seen similar examples?



A 1911 Timber Licence from Southern Nigeria

Taddeo Papi

The following article first appeared in *The Revenue Journal* March 2015 and is reproduced here with permission of the author and of the editor of that Journal

At the beginning of the twentieth century, wood was one of the most exported goods from West Africa. Exotic species such as mahogany, cedar, iroko and teak were much in fashion in Europe, and the prices paid for these varieties were very high. As forestry and the timber trade expanded in the British-controlled areas of West Africa, so legislation and a system of taxation grew up to capitalise on this area of commerce.

Last year I was lucky enough to acquire a Timber Licence issued in 1911 in Southern Nigeria, probably one of very few to survive and certainly the only such document I have ever seen (figure 1). The licence grants to Messrs Bey and Zimmer of Hamburg the use of a piece of land along the river Osse, north of the city of Benin. Included with the licence is a hand-drawn map of the area and an "Oath for proof of instrument" signed by a local interpreter, since the native tribesmen most probably did not speak English.

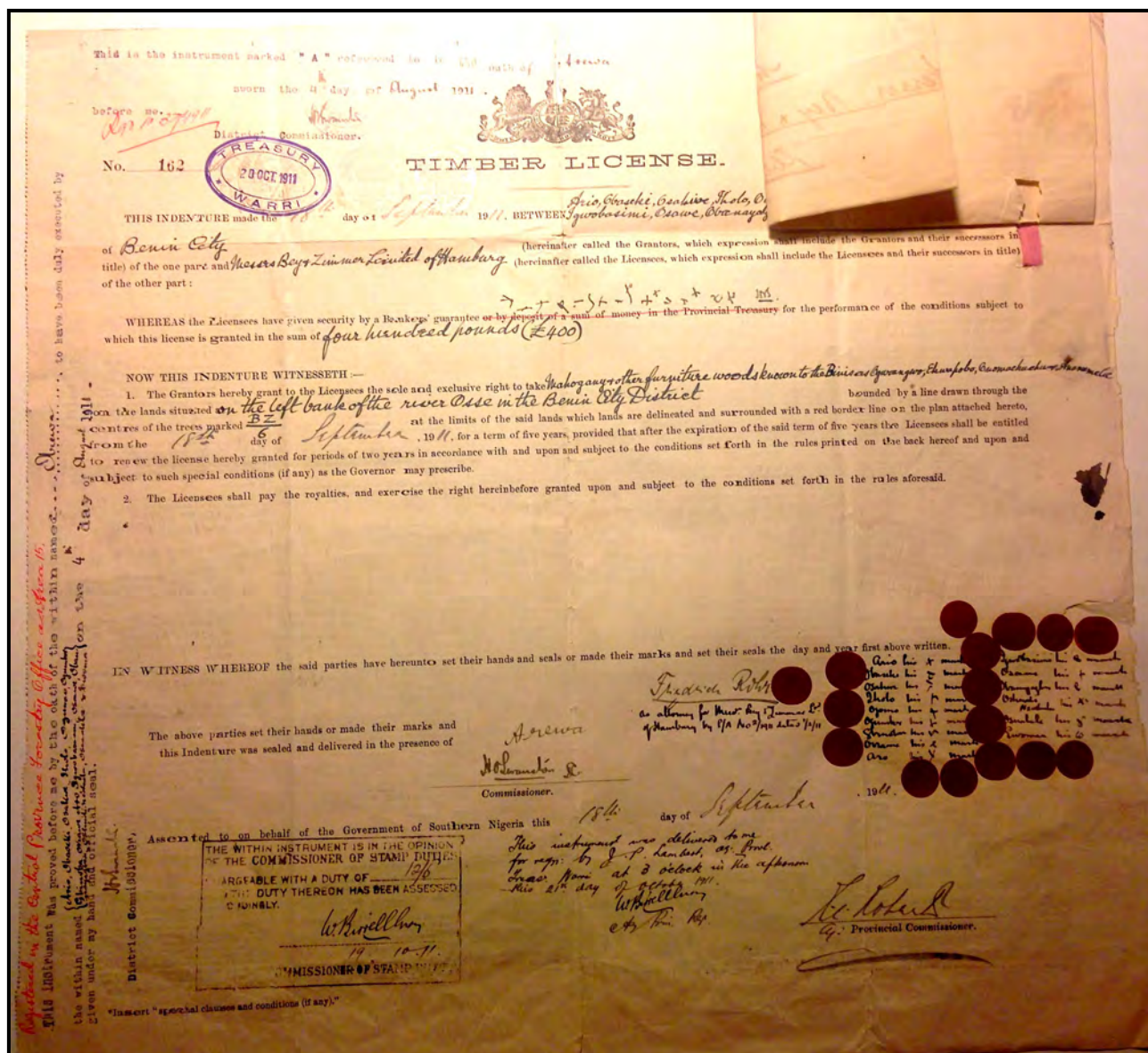


Figure 1

When I first read the licence, I felt like I was travelling back in time. I had no difficulty imagining Bey & Zimmer's attorney Mr Friederich Rohr and his interpreter Arewa lined up alongside the District Commissioner, while opposite them stood the local tribesmen Ario, Obaseki, Osakwe, Holo, Ogumo, Ogumbor, Gbinoba, Oviame, Aro, Igwobasimi, Osawe, Obanayagbon, Ohudi-Neshelo, Osnalele and Ewoma, each doing their best to get the most out of the deal.

The agreement was drawn up and signed by all parties on 18 September 1911, with each of the tribesmen signing with the letter X. Bey & Zimmer managed to negotiate a licence for a period of five years, but the tribesmen required a bank guarantee of £400 before the enterprising Europeans could place their hands on their precious trees.

A fee of £5 sterling for the execution of the licence was paid using five £1 Postage and Revenue adhesives of King Edward VII (SG 44). These were affixed to the document and cancelled by the District Commissioner, who charged the document a further 12/6 as registration fee and delivered it to J P Lambert, the provincial treasurer at Warri. The document then received the "Commissioners of Stamp Duties" seal, and "Southern Nigeria" embossed revenues denominated 2/6 and 10/- to prove the further payment.

It was registered on 21 October 1911 as #32/1911.



Figure 2 five £1 adhesives paying licence fee

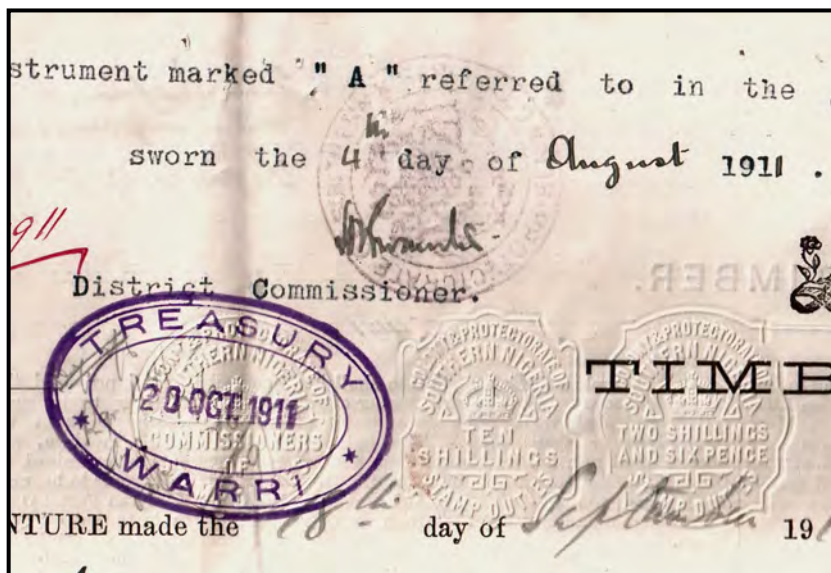


Figure 3
Embossing seal for
"Commissioners of Stamp Duty"
with Warri Treasury cancel,
together with Southern Nigeria
blind embossed revenues
for 10s and 2s6d

From a philatelic point of view it is interesting to note the use of both adhesive and embossed revenues on the same document (Figures 2 & 3). When I wrote the short booklet on the 1916 Nigeria revenue keyplate issue (Ref 1), I investigated the simultaneous use of embossed revenues, adhesive revenues and postage-revenue stamps fiscally used for the short period between 1916 and 1921.

I supposed that around 1921 the only city to have embossing machines was Lagos, whilst the other smaller towns probably used adhesive stamps alone (either dedicated Revenue issues or dual-purpose Postage and Revenue stamps). This document disproves this theory since evidently at least one machine was already operating in Warri as early as 1911.

The reverse of the document details various useful pieces of information relating to the timber business, including conditions under which local landowners could fell trees for their own use or export, terms for the payment of duties and the vernacular names of the most sought-after woods. It also sets out the following fees:

Fees to be paid on Application for a Timber licence: £3
Fees to be paid on Execution of a Timber licence: £5
Fees to be paid for the felling of each tree:
Cedar or mahogany: 56/-
All other species: 20/-

What surprises me reading the conditions for the felling of trees is the attention the British administrators paid to the maintenance of a healthy stock of trees and their tireless efforts to avoid the ruin of forests. Only trees above a certain girth could be felled (the reverse of the licence details the fines for ignoring such measurements), and anyone felling trees had to plant new trees to sustain the forest.

Unfortunately the reality of the timber industry in Nigeria was rather different. The Southern Nigeria Colonial Reports for 1913 make it clear that once the local population understood the possibilities of such commerce, trees were cut carelessly in disrespect of the laws and fines in force. In the words of the then Governor General, Fredrick Lugard:

“the Chief Conservator reports an appalling destruction of most valuable forests, which the protection afforded by existing legislation has been powerless to arrest. The matter is one which very urgently calls for effective action since a few more years of this wholesale destruction will (...) result not merely in the effacement of forests, which would take decades to replace, but in the impoverishment of agricultural lands, the denudation of hill sides and the conversion of the rivers into torrential streams, whose beds would run dry during a great part of the year”.

The only other Nigerian revenue documents I have seen from this period are two birth certificates from the end of the 19th century and some Bills of Exchange. This timber licence, bearing witness to the taxation of a major industry, is the only high-value revenue document I have ever seen from this area. The number of timber licences issued in 1911 is not known, but a note in the Southern Nigeria Colonial Reports for 1913 says that 36 were issued that year, making this document a very rare specimen.

Reference

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UPU Presentation Packs, Brussels Congress 1952

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

John Powell and I visited the British Library Philatelic Collections in November 2015 to study material in some 20 boxes of Crown Agents correspondence files which had recently come to light. Some was of West African interest.

In box 9, file G41, I came across this letter from the Crown Agents to Messrs' Waterlow & Sons Ltd. It is reproduced overleaf in full (reduced from A3)

I do not believe that much has been written about Presentation Packs in *Cameo*. I think it would be of interest to list the known packs and their contents. For example, for Sierra Leone I have presentation packs issued for the 1969 UPU Congress in Tokyo and also the 1974 Congress in Lausanne.

My thanks to Paul Skinner, Curator of the British Library Philatelic Collections, for allowing me to take a copy of this letter. It is copyright to the British Library and reproduced here with their permission.

G9/1257/2.

24th January, 1952.

Gentlemen,

For the attention of Mr. Fiches.

In confirmation of our telephone conversation we shall be obliged if you will proceed with the production of sets of Colonial stamps for presentation to the Universal Postal Congress as follows:-

350 large manilla envelopes each containing

65 small glassine envelopes each containing

1 set of the current issue of each Colony.

The printing on the large envelopes should be as follows:-

CONGRES POSTAL UNIVERSEL

BRUXELLES - 1962

(Imperial Cypher and Crown)

TIMBRES - POSTE.

ENSEMBLE DES TERRITOIRES, ETC.,

BRITANNIQUES D'OUTRE - MER.

Each glassine envelope should bear the name of one of the 65 territories in English, in accordance with the attached list.

The stamps will be available from our Examiner at your works. We propose to supply more than 350 stamps in each case to allow for possible waste in tearing. Any good stamps not used should be returned to our Examiner with certificates accounting for stamps defaced in tearing which may be destroyed.

The quotations in your letters HE/HRW/APR dated 6th and 11th December, refer.

Two spare sets of envelopes, without stamps, will be required for our records.

The Congress is to be held in Brussels during May and the work will be required to be completed before then. It is hoped that you will be able to expedite matters accordingly.

We are, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servants,

for the Crown Agents.

Messrs. Waterlow & Sons Ltd.,
26 & 27 St. Winchester Street,
LONDON E.C.2.

RT

Figure 1 letter dated 24 January 1952 from the Crown Agents to Waterlow & Sons Ltd (box ref 09/1257/2).

Mail Route from French Guinea to Togo in 1906

John Mayne

The cover shown here as Figure 1 is a recent acquisition for me. It is from a German merchant, A. Eichbrunn with branches at Boké and Rio Nuñez, French Guinea and is sent to the Lome, Togo office of another German merchant, Wallbrecht, marked 'Privat' for the head of that company. Correct postage of 25c has been met by a 25c 'tablet' of French Guinea, cancelled Conakry 6 February 1906.



Figure 1

Raymond Salles (Ref 1) lists French ships operated by Fraissinet et Cie of Marseilles and Chargeurs Réunis of Bordeaux calling at Conakry and Freetown on or about the 25th of each month on Southbound trips. Ulrich Czimmek (Ref 2) shows Woermann ships called at both ports but lists no ship in these waters at that date.

The letter is backstamped at Freetown on 7 February, just one day after posting in Conakry. I wonder if there was a daily feeder service between Conakry and Freetown so that this letter and others could be carried more quickly by a British vessel? I do not think British ships called at French ports. Is that so? Is any member able to confirm a feeder service?

Other backstamps show this letter reached Accra on 18 February before transfer to Kwitta on 23rd and thence by land to Lome Togo on the next day.

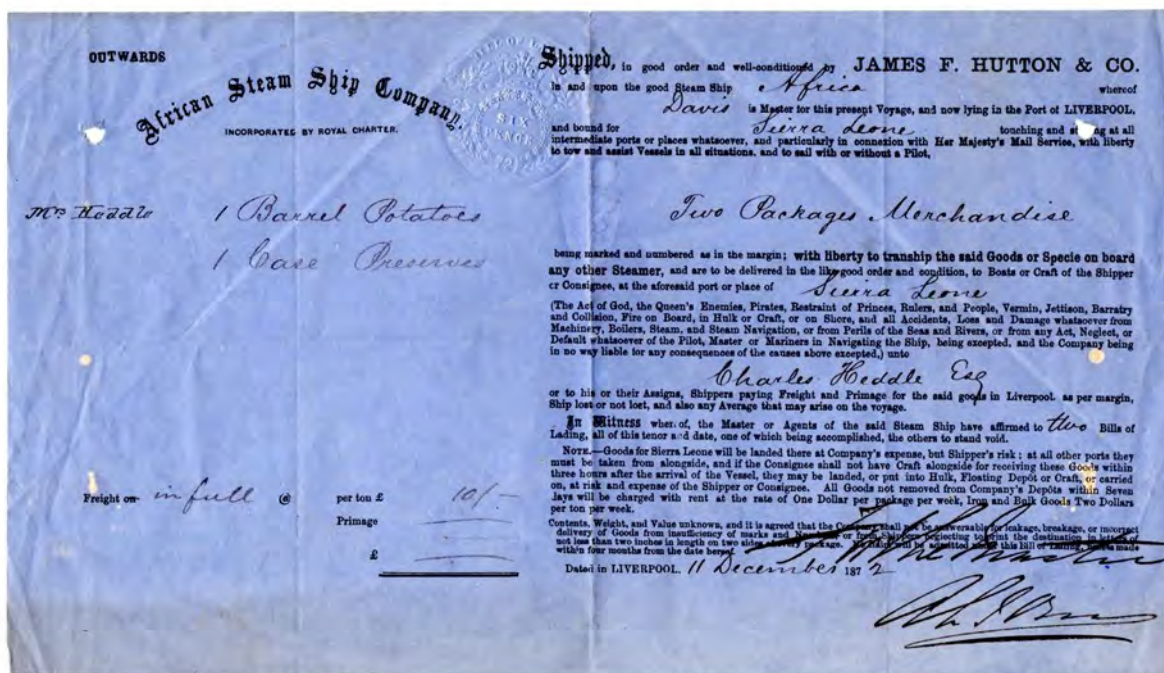
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- 1 Salles R, "La Poste Maritime Française", volume III
- 2 Czimmek U., "Die Deutsche Seepost Hamburg-Westafrika".

African Steamship Company Bill of Lading

John Hossack

Recently, Philip Beale kindly sent me this Bill of Lading from the African Steam Ship Company. It was issued as a receipt for certain goods, namely a barrel of potatoes and a case of preserves, to be sent from Liverpool to Sierra Leone. The cost of transport was 10/- while the administrative fee was 6d, shown on the embossed stamp. This was dated 23 August 1872, presumably when the cargo space was booked.



The merchandise was to be carried on the company's SS *Africa*. She left Liverpool on 12 December 1872 under Captain Davis, arriving at Freetown on 28 December (Ref. 1). The items were addressed to Charles Heddle, a prominent businessman in Sierra Leone (Ref. 2) who, hopefully, received them in good order on their landing at Freetown.

From 1852 the African Steam Ship Company held the contract with the Post Office to carry the packet mails (Ref. 3). This expired in October 1872 and there was no contract until March 1873 (Ref. 4). The new contract was between the Post Office, the African Steam Ship Company and the British and African Steam Navigation Company which had entered the West African trade in 1870 (Ref. 5).

The voyage described here was during the non-contract period when mail was carried as ship letters, though of course this had no effect on other merchandise.

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- 1 Tabcart, C., *British West African Mail Packets to 1900*, p. 143, WASC 2015
- 2 www.sierraleoneheritage.org/sites/monuments/heddle
- 3 Tabcart, C., *British West African Mail Packets to 1900*, p. 51, WASC 2015
- 4 Beale, P. O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone*, p. 19, RPSL 1988
- 5 Tabcart, C., *British West African Mail Packets to 1900*, p. 151, WASC 2015



Cameroun in World War II – Internment Camps and Internees (Continued)

Marc Parren, Michel Collet and Marty Bratzel

This report is a follow-on to the article in the January 2017 issue of *Cameo* about the internment camps at Batschenga and Mokolo, Cameroun and the internees who were housed there during World War II (Ref. 1). Collaboration has its rewards. Ten additional covers and post cards are now to hand.

A recently published book contains welcome details, and we have located some information in the *Journal officiel du Cameroun*. Together, these provide additional insight but also raise further questions, including questions asked by a Circle member. We also accessed two web sites that provide useful information about wartime French naval personnel.

Free French Naval Personnel

The web site ALAMER is dedicated to maintaining records of the crew of naval, commercial, fishing and pleasure craft during World War II, 1939-1945 (Ref. 2). The site is easily searchable, for example, by entering the name of a ship or a crewman. The vessel records are extensive; however, the personnel records are, in places, rather sketchy.

The web site maintained by La Fondation Charles de Gaulle contains an alphabetical list of 14,711 personnel who served in the Free French naval forces / Forces Navales Françaises Libres, or FNFL (Ref. 3). The data base includes each sailor's grade, commencement date with the FNFL, naval postings, and more. The list is easily navigable. Both sources were utilized in the analysis of covers and cards presented below.

German Internees and Internment Camps

An *arrêté* / order in the *Journal officiel du Cameroun* dated March 25, 1940 provides insight as to where internees were held early in the war and what they were doing (Ref. 4). At this date, the only internees in Cameroun were German. The order refers to *fonctionnaires civils et militaires commandant les unités de travailleurs constitués par les ressortissants ennemis*, that is, civilian and military officials commanding the workers units comprised of enemy nationals.

The order goes on to state that the units were at Batschenga, Akom-Etan and Ndoungué. Batschenga was the tobacco plantation near Nachtigal. Akom-Etan is today part of the regional municipality of Mbalmayo, about 50 kilometres south of Yaoundé. Ndoungué could be either near Nachtigal where the military Camp Ornano was later constructed, or a station stop on the Chemin de Fer du Nord, about 10 kilometres south of Nkongsamba. We are inclined to believe that the worker unit was at the former.

French Internees and Internment Camps

Simonnet (Ref. 5) reported that six assembly camps were opened to house French nationals after Cameroun rallied to de Gaulle on August 27, 1940: at Yaoundé, Akometam [that is, Akom-Etan], Akonolinga, Ayos, Batouri, and Batschenga, the last being the main camp. Both civilian and naval personnel were interned.

Based on information previously presented, there were two camps or sites at Batschenga: one for naval and merchant marine personnel and one for civilians. According to reports by the International Red Cross, previously discussed, in September 1941 the civilian camp at Batschenga housed only Italians and only later, by November 1942, were French civilians also interned there. Available information also leads to the conclusion that naval personnel were interned only at Batschenga and Mokolo. From this we can conclude that only French civilians were interned at the other five camps named above.

Between February 10 and February 25, 1941, Lieutenant Guy Thulot, commander of the 2nd Bataillon de Fusiliers Marins (BFM), which was responsible for surveillance along the sea coast of Cameroun and French Equatorial Africa, scoured all six camps, looking for men who might serve the cause of Free France (Ref. 5).

Nearly 120 sailors were interviewed. Thulot was deeply disappointed, as most wanted to "follow Pétain, waiting for North Africa to march." Other internees, some of whom had been in Cameroun for several years, had no desire to leave the rather comfortable camps they were now settled in.

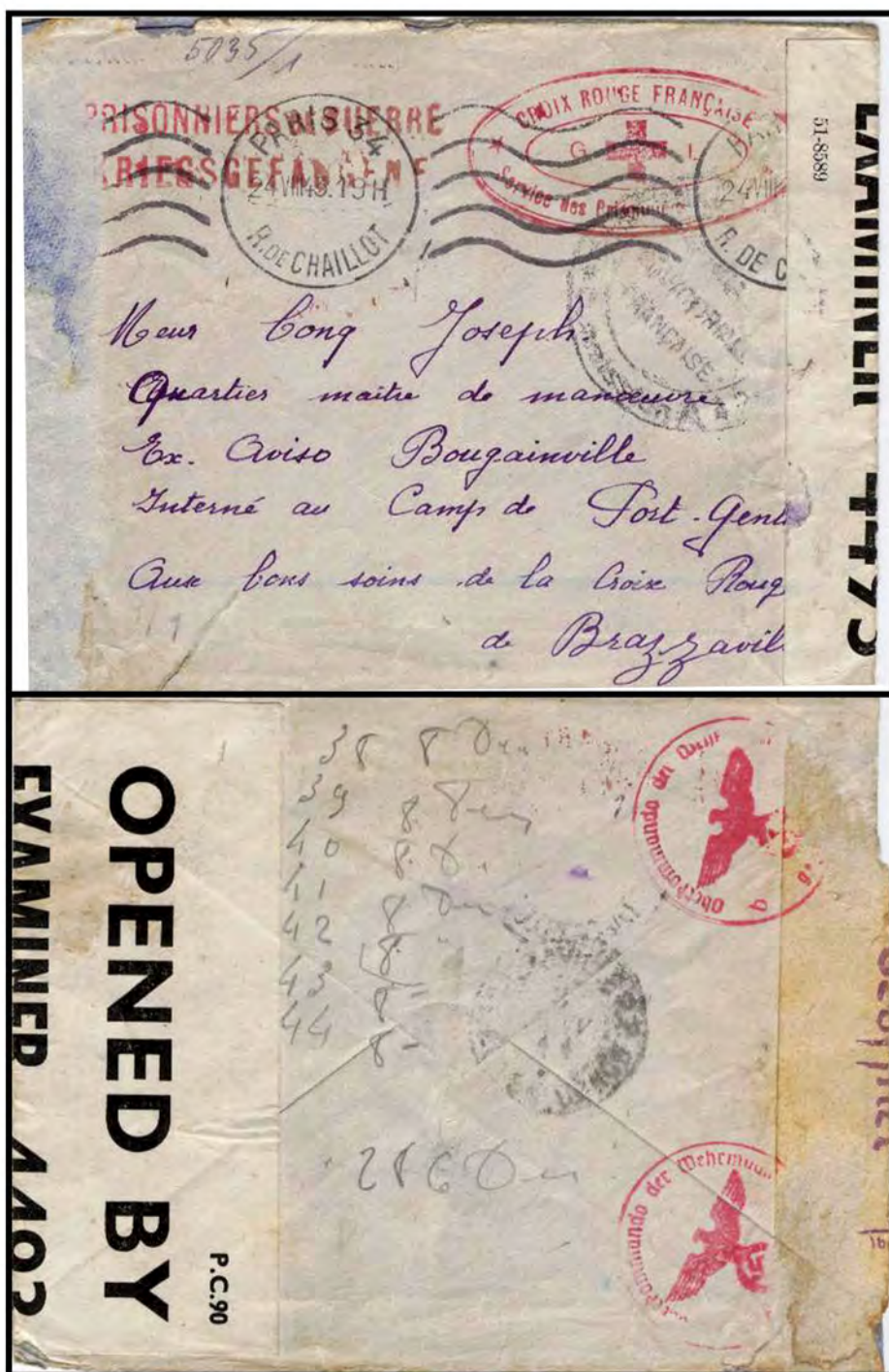


Figure 1

Cover postmarked Paris 34, R. de Chaillot, August 24, 1943 to a former crewman of the *Aviso Bougainville*, interned at Port-Gentil, Gabon, backstamped Brazzaville R.P. Moyen Congo January 3, 1944. The cover was sent through the auspices of the French Red Cross and the Red Cross office in Brazzaville.

After posting, the cover was censored in Berlin (letter b in the cachets), as this office was responsible for all POW and internee mail to Allied camps from March 1941 onward. The manuscript notation 5035/1 on the front at the top left indicates the censor number and that the cover contained only one sheet of paper.

The letter was next censored London, as indicated by the PC90 Opened by Censor 4493 printed on the resealing tape. The Commission A postal control cachet was applied upon arrival in Brazzaville.

Nonetheless, during his visits, Thulot managed to recruit 12 sailors: five from the merchant marine previously aboard the *Touareg* and the *Cap des Palmes*, and seven from l'Aviso *Bougainville*. After the *Bougainville* was beached near Libreville on November 9, 1940, the crew had been imprisoned, billeted during transit at Douala and guarded by men of the 1st BFM, before being transported to Batschenga. Fraternization among the marines took place during which time some went over to the "Gaullists" (Ref. 5).

Italian Internees

After Italy declared war on June 10, 1940, Italian residents in French Cameroun were interned. We were asked, where were the Italians initially interned? Were they briefly released after the armistice was signed with Germany on June 22, then re-interned after Cameroun rallied to de Gaulle on August 27, or did they remain interned throughout this unsettled period? And, were any transferred, along with German internees, to British authorities in Nigeria in late June / early July 1940? At present, we have no answers to these questions. We know only that Italians were housed at the Batschenga civilian camp at the time of the first Red Cross visit on September 15, 1941.

Bougainville Internee

Jennings (Ref. 6) reported that, in March 1943, after Allied liberation of French West Africa and North Africa, POW camps (not civilian internment camps) in French Equatorial Africa and Cameroun were closed. Vichyites were asked to choose between returning to France or Algeria or joining Fighting France. How, then, does one explain the cover depicted in Figure 1, opposite?

The cover, previously discussed (Ref. 7) by one of us (Marc), is postmarked Paris August 24, 1943 and was sent through the auspices of the Red Cross to a former crewman, quartermaster Joseph Conq, of the Aviso *Bougainville* interned at Port-Gentil, Gabon. The cover is backstamped Brazzaville January 3, 1944 and, presumably, reached its destination a few days later, more than four months after posting.

One plausible explanation is as follows. Internees had been offered the two options noted above. This sailor apparently chose neither, preferring to remain interned. Presumably he had been housed at either Batschenga or Mokolo, along with other crew of the *Bougainville* but, after March 1943, with considerably fewer interned military personnel in French Equatorial Africa and Cameroun, it would make sense for the authorities to transfer and consolidate remaining internees at fewer camps. Certainly, less manpower and fewer resources would be required to staff and operate them.

It is possible that he had been interned at Port-Gentil earlier on but, after the Gabon campaign of November 1940, there had been no desire to leave Vichy troops or crew in the territory where, even as internees, they could pose a threat. Jennings (Ref. 6) and Simonnet (Ref. 5) give no indication that crew from the *Bougainville* were interned anywhere but in Cameroun.

The two web sites introduced above were searched for the name Joseph Conq. The searches found two different sailors with that name, but neither was the sailor who was interned at Port-Gentil. The one Joseph Conq was on the *Savorgnan de Brazza* and subsequently had other postings during the war. The other Joseph Conq was elsewhere.

Touareg Internees

Additional information is now available about the *Touareg*, a merchant steamship of the Compagnie de Navigation Fraissinet, Marseille (Ref. 2). The *Touareg* arrived at Pointe-Noire on August 21, 1940 and was caught up by the events of the following week surrounding the rallying of A.E.F. to de Gaulle. On August 30, General Larminat authorized the *Touareg* to transport military personnel, civilians, and civil servants who wished to leave A.E.F. The ship arrived at Port-Bouet, Ivory Coast, on September 13 with 450 passengers plus crew.

On September 16 the *Touareg* was intercepted by the British cruiser HMS *Dragon* and diverted to Takoradi, Gold Coast. On October 10, the ship arrived at Keta, Gold Coast, close to the border with Togo; 162 passengers and 88 kroomen disembarked and were taken to Lome.

The *Touareg* was then escorted by HMS *Dorsetshire* to Douala, Cameroun, where the commander, three officers, and 21 crew rallied to Free France. Presumably the remaining crew were interned at that time in Cameroun. The *Touareg*'s subsequent contributions to the war effort are summarized in Ref. 2.



Figure 2

Cover postmarked February 14, 1942 from Salon de Provence in unoccupied France via Cotonou and Lagos to Douala, Cameroun, forwarded to Batschenga.

One cover, depicted in the earlier article as Figure 3, was addressed to Arthur Moutier, a cook aboard the *Touareg*. That cover, postmarked Salon de Provence October 17, 1941, was routed by Lisbon and South Africa, finally arriving at Douala and forwarded to the internment camp at Batschenga.

Depicted in new Figure 2 opposite, is another cover to Moutier postmarked about four months later Salon de Provence February 14, 1942 with intended routing via Portugal and Angola. However, the cover followed a different route. There are no Portuguese transit marks. The cover was back-stamped Cotonou, Dahomey on March 2, about two weeks after posting, where it was opened and resealed, with the tape tied by two strikes of the elliptical cachet Ouvert / par les / autorités de controle. The word Militaire has been excised from the resealing tape.

The letter was next opened and resealed at Lagos, receiving the triangular L-7 reader's mark and a rectangular cachet (largely obscured) tying the resealing tape. The envelope was opened a third time at Douala, where the circular A-3 reader's mark was applied. The resealing tape, tied with two cachets Ouvert / par / l'autorité militaire, largely overlaps the Nigerian tape and cachet. At Douala an FNFL cachet was added and the cover forwarded to the camp at Batschenga.

Another cover, depicted in the earlier article as Figure 4, was sent to an internee named Neimari at Batschenga Nachtigal. The address on that cover referred to the steamship *Touareg*. Depicted in new Figure 3, overleaf, is a formula post card, intended for family correspondence, from René Neimari at Batschenga to a relative in Corsica. The stamp is not postmarked and there are no camp or postal control cachets. The message is dated October 8 and a manuscript notation on the front at the top left indicates receipt on November 5, 1941.

Other Internees

Five of the seven covers and post cards presented below were sent to or from people discussed in the previous article. All are courtesy of Michel Collet.

Léon Pagés

A cover and a post card depicted in the earlier article were respectively to and from Léon Pagés who was interned at Batschenga. A second post card (not shown here) sent by M. Pagés is virtually identical to the one previously illustrated as Figure 1 – the same Nachtigal postmark dated October 15, 1941, the same circular Camp de Batschenga cachet in violet, and the same Commission B postal control cachet. The only difference is that the previous card was to his grandmother, whereas this card is to his parents.

Depicted in Figure 4 is a letter sent by M. Pagés to his family in Nice. The cover, postmarked Nachtigal July 21, 1942, was opened and censored at Yaoundé, then opened and read again presumably at Dakar, Senegal, date unknown, where the Commission A postal control cachet and the oval Ouvert / par les / Autorités de Contrôle cachets were applied. But the letter could not be forwarded onward, so the cover was handstamped *inacheminable* and returned to Cameroun. However, rather than being returned to the sender, the letter was held at Douala.

Two and a half years later, the *inacheminable* marking was crossed out and the cover was backstamped Douala December 28, 1944 and sent on its way. The Douala postmark is atop both censor tapes, indicating that censorship had been undertaken earlier. A manuscript notation on the back indicates receipt in Nice on June 4, 1945, almost three years after posting. Perhaps M. Pagés had already returned home?

Also of interest is that the postage stamps originally affixed to the cover are missing. The stamps were definitely present when the cover transited Yaoundé – the Commission B cachet overstruck where one of the stamps had been. Either the stamps fell off on their own accord or, more likely, they were deliberately removed, probably at Dakar – the Commission A cachet is struck where the stamps had been, after their removal. The absence of the stamps drew the notation *timbres volés* / stamps stolen, probably added after receipt in Nice. The notation on the back *tous des salauds* / all bastards may have been a political commentary.

The same Douala December 28, 1944 machine backstamp was also found on a cover originally postmarked Bonaberi à Nkongsamba April 27, 1942. That cover, too, was censored, probably at Dakar, and received the identical *inacheminable* handstamp as the cover sent by M. Pagés. It is likely other such covers exist. From this, perhaps we can conclude that a quantity of returned mail was stored at Douala, then released at the end of December 1944 for onward transport and delivery.

CARTE POSTALE

EXPÉDITEUR

Neimari René
Centre de Rassemblement
Batschenga
via Nachtigal
Cameroun

DESTINATAIRE

Neimari Hélène
à Minelli
près Bastia
CORSE
FRANCE



ATTENTION:

Carte exclusivement réservée à la correspondance familiale

Il est permis d'écrire ci-dessous une correspondance de caractère familial de sept lignes, mais il est strictement interdit d'écrire entre les lignes ou de donner des nouvelles qui n'auraient pas ce caractère; il est indispensable d'écrire très lisiblement pour faciliter le contrôle.

8/10 Bonne Santé. Recus messages de Juin via Brazzaville. Bonnes nouvelles assez fréquentes de Douala. Ai écrit juillet, Août, Septembre et pense qu'elles te sont parvenues. Ce jour j'achète un message croix rouge et souhaite arriveri rapide. Pas de soucis. Pense à tout. Tout à toi

Signature:
Neimari

Figure 3

Formula post card sent by René Neimari, interned at the Centre de Rassemblement, Batschenga via Nachtigal, Cameroun to a relative – possibly his wife – in Corsica.

The stamp is not postmarked and there are no camp or postal control cachets.

The message is dated October 8 and the card was received on November 5, 1941.



Figure 5

Cover from Mme. Clémencey at Bafia to her husband Maurice at Batschenga.
The cover has no stamps, postmarks, or any other notations.

A commercial cover shown in the earlier article as Figure 5 was addressed to M. Clémencey at Batschenga. Depicted here in new Figure 5 is a cover to Maurice Clémencey with a return address of Bafia. The only marking is a Commission B postal control cachet applied at Yaoundé. There are no stamps, no postmarks and no annotations, for example, that the cover qualified for postage-free transport.

The manuscript notation at the top right indicates receipt on May 9, 1943. A virtually identical cover (not shown), addressed in the same hand and received May 19, identifies the sender as M. Clémencey's wife.

Chauvin (Ref. 8) explains the absence of stamps, postmarks, and other annotations through another, virtually identical, cover to Clémencey from his wife at Bafia that bears a manuscript receipt notation of February 16, 1943. That cover, with a Commission B postal control cachet, was opened and resealed, with the resealing tape tied by four strikes of the oval Ouvert / par / l'autorité militaire cachet.

Chauvin explains that there were two separate camps for civilian Vichy sympathizers: the men at Batschenga and the women at Bafia. Mail between the camps was apparently transported by courier in an administrative bag, outside of postal channels, with censorship exercised en route at Yaoundé. It is not clear which site at Batschenga that Clémencey was interned at.

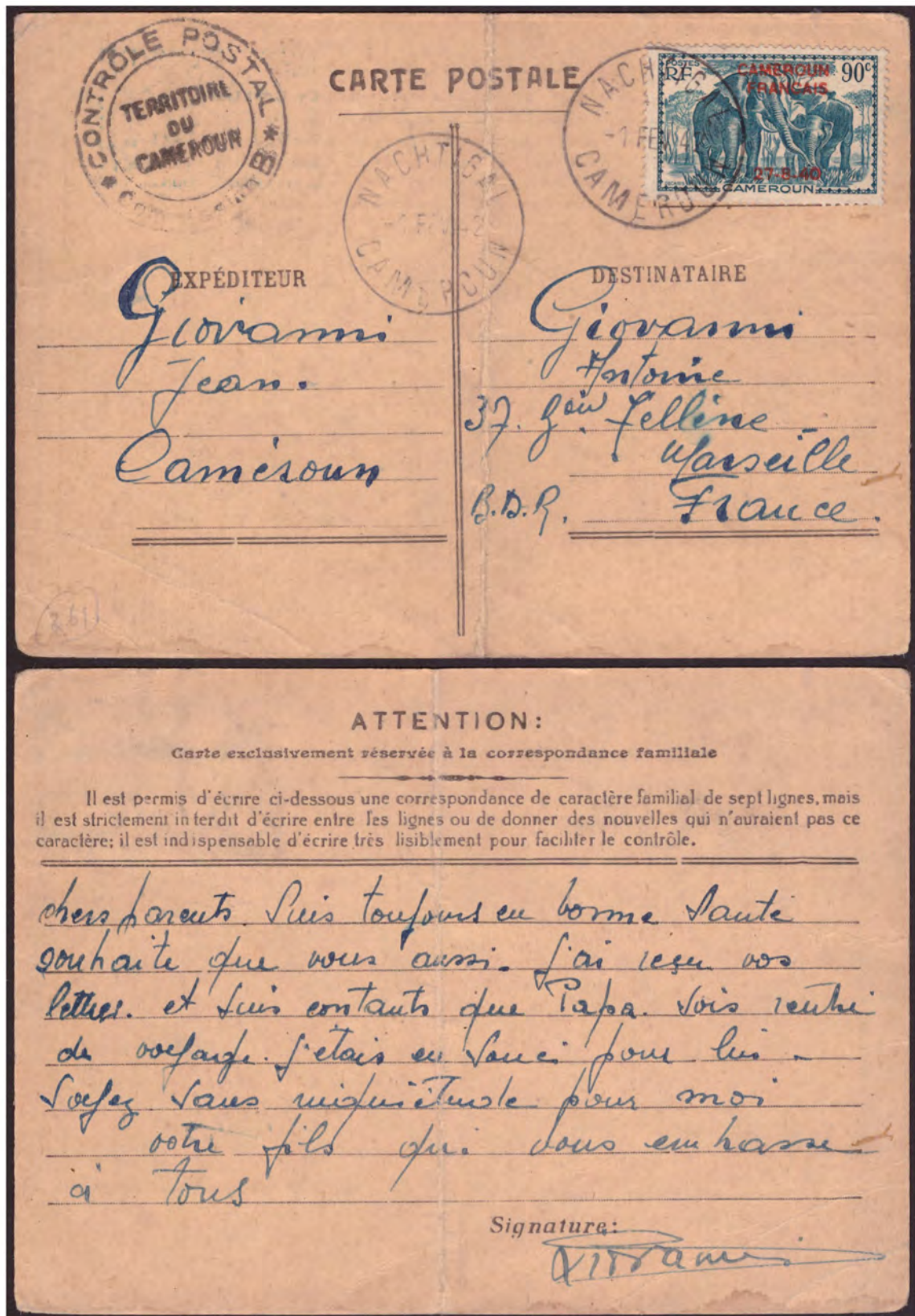


Figure 6

Formula post card from Jean Giovanni to unoccupied France,
postmarked Nachtigal February 1, 1942.
Possibly the sender was the same person assigned to the Caserne Surcouf in London in 1943.

Both web sites noted earlier were further searched for the various names on the correspondence discussed above and/or in the earlier article. Regrettably, there were no hits. However, the name on the formula post card depicted in Figure 6, Jean Giovanni, was found on both sites. Postmarked Nachtigal February 1, 1942 and with a Commission B postal control cachet, the card is quite similar to the two sent by Léon Pagés and the one sent by René Neimari.

According to the web sites, Jean Giovanni was previously in the merchant marine. He joined the FNFL on July 1, 1943 and, the next day, was assigned to Caserne Surcouf, the Free French naval barracks on Clapham Common, London. The name is not uncommon but, quite possibly, the Giovanni who sent the post card in Figure 6 in 1942 was the same who later was assigned to London.

Another Cover – Unknown Sender

Another cover addressed to Nice is postmarked Nachtigal August 13, 1941 and has a clear Camp de Batschenga cachet in violet. Since the cover is similar to other correspondence already illustrated, it is not depicted here. The cover was opened and resealed at Yaoundé and again at Dakar. The back of the cover has not been seen. We have the name of the recipient but not the sender.

Batschenga Indigenous Guard

An *arrêté* / order in the *Journal officiel* (Ref. 9) reports the creation on March 1, 1942 of a detachment of indigenous guard under the command of the commandant of the Centre de Rassemblement at Batschenga. The detachment consisted a sergeant, two corporals, and 37 guards. From this, we can perhaps infer that, previously, security of internees was provided, in whole or in part, by non-native personnel and that, by creation of an indigenous detachment, other military personnel were freed up to contribute elsewhere to the war effort.

Summary and Conclusions

From the additional information now to hand, we have a better picture about internment camps and internees in Cameroun. German internees were constituted into work groups at four locations. In late June / early July 1940 the Germans were transferred to British authorities in Nigeria (Ref. 6).

The treatment and disposition of Italian internees between June 10, 1940 and September 1941 remains to be determined.

Two internment camps were located at Batschenga. One site housed naval personnel from the *Bougainville* and merchant mariners from the *Touareg*, *Cap des Palmes* and the *Albi*. The number of mariners interviewed by Thulot is not inconsistent with the number of internees presented in the earlier article.

Also, crew from the *Bougainville* may have been transported to Cameroun in mid-to-late November 1940, earlier than the mid-to-late December 1940 date previously suggested. They were billeted in transit at Douala prior to arrival at Batschenga. However, at least one crewman was still hospitalized in Libreville on November 26.

Italian and, later, French civilians were housed at the other site at Batschenga, and only French civilians were held at the other five “secondary” internment camps. Also, Vichy French women were interned at Bafia.

When those “secondary” camps were closed is not known, but some, if not all, possibly by November 1942, since French civilian internees were now housed at Batschenga by that date. Closures and transfers may have been for reasons of economy. However, the Bafia women’s camp remained open, at least during the first part of 1943.

In March 1943, 102 internees from Cameroun were “repatriated” to North Africa (Ref. 8). However, when the Batschenga military site was closed, some remaining naval internees were apparently transferred to Port -Gentil, Gabon and, possibly, elsewhere in French Equatorial Africa. Other explanations are, of course, possible.

There may be additional information in the *Journal officiel*, but a detailed search is not, at present, possible.

As always, further information and insight is welcome.

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Garoua, Cameroun - Mystery Postmark

Rob May



Figure 1 (reduced to 80%)

The postmark on this cover (fig 1) is not recorded by Bratzel, Kraja & Maddocks (ref 1). I contacted Marty Bratzel to record it and ask if he knows what “PNA” in this postmark stands for. He doesn’t know.

The cover has no other markings and the stamps of French Soudan were not valid in Cameroun. The cancellation is undated but those stamps were first issued in 1931. The 80c rate does not correspond to any 1930s postal rate in or from Cameroun. If the letter was carried to France it should have been taxed, but it isn’t: it is possible it may have been stopped at Garoua. Any ideas, or better still facts, will be welcome.

Reference

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Forgeries of Nigerian Stamps

Paul Redhead

This work-in-progress collates published and unpublished information relating to forgeries of stamps and cancellations from the earliest Lagos issues onwards. It is intended to make collectors aware of the range of forgeries they may encounter, but not to provide a study of how those forgeries were made, or to provide a complete survey of the forgeries which exist.

Forgery has been a feature of philately since the introduction of the penny post in 1840, and probably before that. The earliest forgeries were made to defraud the post office, but as stamp collecting became popular from the 1850s on, forgers began turning out material aimed at collectors too. Forging in its widest sense was in full flow well before the end of the 1800s. As Varro Tyler writes in the introduction to his highly enjoyable 'Philatelic Forgers' (Ref 1), the range of dubious philatelic activity was considerable, from the printing of stamps in quantity to add to dealers' all-world packets to the production of highly convincing rarities designed to part rich collectors from their money.

Lagos stamps do not seem to have featured in the considerable output of the Spiro Brothers (see the Spud papers 1881 - now available on CD from J&H Books), and the earliest forgeries reference I have seen comes from 1903 (Ref 2), which mentions the Niger Coast ½d overprint on 2½d (SG65) as amongst the confections of a Boston-based forger named W.R. Thomas.

By the time Ince and Sacher (Ref 3: in the rest of this article I use their postmark type numbers) wrote their authoritative '*Postal Service of the British Nigeria Region*' in 1992 a range of forgeries of the Nigerias had been documented, encompassing work by Sperati, Oneglia / Panelli, Fournier and Madame Joseph, and ranging in quality from risibly poor to dangerously good. The majority of the forgeries were done to fool collectors, but in the 1980s a range of stamps and later, meter marks, were crudely copied for use on letters connected with advance fee fraud.

Unless stated otherwise, the examples shown are from my own collection. I'm most grateful for help received from Tony Plumbe, Ray Harris, Rob May and Simon Heap, and from the RPSL Expert Committee (abbreviated RPSLEC hereafter), who kindly allowed me access to their records. It may be reassuring to know that, although this article focuses on forgeries, most of the Nigeria material submitted for expertisation has been deemed genuine.

Lagos forgeries



Figure 1

The example on the left is the “packet filler”, the middle stamp is genuine and the example on the right is a Panelli forgery

The 'Packet fillers'

The quality of these is so poor that it is likely they were produced as 'packet fillers' for dealers selling whole world assortments. I've not seen a reference to them elsewhere apart from a picture in an 1935 article by Porter (Ref 4) which purports to illustrate the (genuine!) first Lagos set, but I imagine that examples of all 6 of the first Lagos set were produced. It's not known who made these crude copies.

The Panelli / Oneglia forgeries

Ince & Sacher describe these as follows: *All values of (the 1876-79) issue were forged by Panelli using line engraving... Generally, the watermark has been impressed and the letter of 'LAGOS' are malformed, especially 'G' and 'S'.*

I have a Panelli example with perf 11 as well as others with the expected p14. Tony Plumbe (personal communication) confirms that these forgeries exist with different perforations, and 'watermarks' of varied quality. Cancels are generally indistinct, and perhaps other forgers were involved.

Panelli forged the 1d value of the 1882 set (Ref 3 and Tony Plumbe personal communication), and Ince & Sacher also mention Panelli forgeries on the high values of the 1884-86 set SG 25 - 29. Varro Tyler (Ref 5) goes into more detail on the differences between forged and genuine SG25. He states that this forgery was produced by lithography, probably by the Italian forger Oneglia then retailed by Panelli. The watermark was actually produced using grease. IS describes the forgeries as 'poor' but until you look closely at the letters of 'Lagos' and 'Postage' they are convincing enough. However, Queen Victoria appears to smile rather more than she does on the real thing, perhaps because, in the forgery, the outline of the queen's forehead, nose and neck is a solid line whereas in the real stamp the outline is created by small gaps in the horizontal shading lines.

Figure 2 is a bit of a mongrel: a Panelli-like Lagos image on the front, while the back shows a Nieuwe Republiek stamp. An economy-minded forger recycling his waste perhaps?



Figure 2

The Sperati forgeries



Figure 3

The stamp on the left is genuine, and on the right is a signed Sperati forgery. The Specimen example in the centre is genuine, for comparison.

'We would warn collectors against clever forgeries of Nos 27 to 29 on genuinely watermarked paper' states the Stanley Gibbons catalogue, referring to the famous forgeries produced by Jean de Sperati. Sperati took low values of stamps with correct paper and perforations, and successfully bleached the colour before printing his own high quality versions of the more valuable stamps. Detailed descriptions of how he did this, and of the minuscule differences which tell the forgeries apart from genuine copies, are given in Ref 6 and summarised on p75 of Ince & Sacher (Ref 3) who advise 'They are of high quality and these values should only be acquired with an expert certificate.'

Continuing, perhaps optimistically, they state "Identification can often be made by the fact that reverse of the stamp carries in a light rubber stamp impression the words "Sperati reproduction" enclosing a manuscript number, either "12" or "59". However Sperati did not sign all of his output and, according to Varro Tyler (Ref 5), 'he also signed most of his productions in easily erasable soft pencil.'

The RPSLEC have seen other forgeries of these high values including one of SG28 in which the value tablet of a cheaper stamp (?SG18) has been bleached out and 'FIVE SHILLINGS' printed in its place, and a re-gummed example of the 10/- from which a fiscal cancel has been removed.

Forgeries of the 1904/6 set high values

The half-penny value (SG54) has a very similar coloured frame and head to the high values. It proved possible to bleach out the green 'HALF PENNY' value tablet and replace it with, for example, a blue 'FIVE SHILLINGS'. However, as Ince & Sacher point out, the impression of 'HALF PENNY' is usually still evident.

This forgery was worrying enough that "While Lagos stamps generally continued to be used by the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria until exhausted, the ½d value was withdrawn in 1908" (Ref 3, p95). The 2/6 example at figure 4 is kindly supplied by Tony Plumbe. The RPSLEC records include a number of similar efforts to produce fake 10/- values.



Figure 4

Postmark forgeries

While the production of a convincing forgery of an engraved stamp is a complex and expensive business, forging postmarks is a lot easier. There are two circumstances where this would be worthwhile: to 'convert' a low value mint stamp into a higher value used one, and to hide the fact that a stamp has been used fiscally or an overprint has been forged.



Figure 5

Examples of stamps converted from a less valuable mint example to used are not uncommon. Often the fake cancel is itself 'bogus' in that it does not correspond to a canceller in actual use at the time.

Higher values of all Lagos stamps from the 1887 set onwards are worth more used and are therefore susceptible to this 'uplift'.

In the two forged postmarks shown as figure 5 the cancels are adaptations of actual cancels with impossible dates or wrong date formats.

The story of the Madame Joseph cancels is told in detail in several publications, most recently by Brian Cartwright in Madame Joseph Forgeries and Madame Joseph Revisited (Ref 7). The forger known as Madame Joseph was responsible for a forgery of a Lagos IS9 cancel, Code B, dated NO 15 1901, which has an extra dot at the foot of the F of AFRICA (Ref 7, p66)

Oil rivers and Niger Coast forgeries

SG 1-6, the surcharged provisionals and the bisects

It is easier to add a fake surcharge than it is to forge the entire stamp, and surcharges applied locally tend to be variable and crude, making it less easy to develop clear criteria to separate real from fake. Thus it is not surprising that these sought-after items have been widely forged.

The Scott 2015 catalogue section on provisionals starts with the warning "Dangerous forgeries exist of all surcharges" and the RPSLEC records confirm that. A detailed study of these forgeries is beyond the scope of this article, though most are too poorly executed to confuse, or to excite much interest. Porter's 1958 article in *The Philatelist* (Ref 8) provides a good survey.

The 'British Protectorate / Oil Rivers' overprint has been forged, not only *en route* to forging provisionals, but to produce copies of SG 1-6. Fournier's proof images (see below) include the overprint, and Porter shows examples, including a dangerously good one of the reversed overprint SG2a.



Figure 6

The left stamp is a very crude forged overprint of which there are many available on-line, the middle stamp is slightly more convincing and on the right is a more sophisticated example, a forgery of SG30 probably by Fournier. This is identifiably forged because:

the cancel is Bonny River though these provisionals were mostly used at Old Calabar; the date of 22 May 94 is earlier than the issue date given for this particular overprint (28 November 1894), and is mentioned in Porter as usual on this forgery; the type face used matches very closely Fournier's own illustration of the surcharge; and finally, the overprint has been done twice, once in black and then partly gone over in blue to produce an unconvincing shade. The horizontal bar remains in black.

The definitive reference work is John Sacher's 2009 supplement to the London Philatelist *'The Oil Rivers and Niger Coast Surcharged Provisionals and Bisected Stamps'* (Ref 7). It is copiously illustrated and provides an excellent guide to the topic. Appendix A contains detailed comments on individual stamps, and Appendix B describes the known variants of the SG65 overprint.

To quote from Ince & Sacher (Ref 3, p247): "*Most of the surcharged forgeries and the forged overprinted stamps were sufficiently crudely produced to be readily identifiable, while in many cases, in order to produce used copies, forgeries were cancelled by British cancellers.*

However, forgeries of the surcharges by Fournier are of a high quality effected on genuinely overprinted stamps. These are, however, confined to the Old Calabar Provisionals of December 1893 producing values of ½d and 1/-, 5/-, 10/- and £1. Forged examples of the August 1894 Old Calabar provisional - type 17 (SG65) are usually found with the canceller dated 11 AU 94 which is also a forgery. These are on SG54a (pale blue). It is recommended that these provisionals only be purchased with an expert certificate."

Tony Plumbe (personal communication) also warns that there are excellent and often undetected forgeries of SG65. Porter's article suggests distinguishing features of the forged SG65, and, as with all these provisionals, it pays to check whether any cancel shown is consistent with the documented places of issue

and use dates. Simon Heap has sent me an image of a convincing forgery of SG65 let down by overlying a '96 Opobo River cancel. Proof images of the Fournier overprints are available online at:

<http://www.oocities.org/claghorn1p/FournierAlbum/036/036.htm>.

Jack Ince wrote a letter to *Cameo* (Ref 10) pointing out key differences between the Fournier proof images and genuine overprints. The *Gee-Ma Forgeries* (Ref 11) includes a couple of images of other high quality forged overprint proofs.

In Ref. 9 at pp 11-15 John Sacher points out the difficulties caused by intense collector interest at the time and the impact this had on the local production of 'rarities' for collectors. The dividing line between genuine and philatelic use is often unclear, and the latter shades into dubious practices such as the provision of post-dated cancelled-to-order (CTO) sheets 'Indeed practically all the other used examples of SG 17 and 17a are too early on 27 July 1893 at Old Calabar, either post-dated CTOs or just wrong.' (Ref. 9, p66)

Postmark forgeries

Figure 7



Un-overprinted GB stamps were in use in the Protectorate up to and beyond 30 September 1892. Scarce, therefore valuable, and distinguished only by the canceller used, they should be approached with much care. The RPSLEC has seen forged cancels, and on eBay I have seen a GB stamp with a forged Bonny River cancel (NO 26 94).

A second use of forged cancels is in the manufacture of fake provisionals. At its simplest this turns a mint provisional into a used example, but it can also add credibility to a forged overprint given that provisionals were used at particular offices for limited dates. Sometimes a heavy cancel hides the inaccuracy of an underlying 'overprint'. Fortunately (as in the SG30 illustrated) the forged cancel often does not accord with known usage.

Finally, cancels may themselves have specific value. As described in Ince & Sacher, many postmarks come in a variety of colours and time codes. Because some of these were in use for a very limited time they are highly sought after, and forgers have stepped in to meet the demand. Figure 7 shows a crude forgery of the rare Forcados River C in red.

"Madame Joseph" is known to have forged an Opobo River cancel, IS type 1A, Code A of DE 19 96, (Ref 7, p66) and Robson Lowe (unpublished - see note 1) identified a series of forged Niger Coast cancels from the 1950s called 'Bournemouth Forgeries' which included Forcados IS type 1A Code A OC 3 01 and Sapele IS type 1A Code A JY 20 04. Unfortunately I have no further information on the Bournemouth forgeries.

A further complication is the fairly widespread existence of CTOs: where known these are mentioned in the Ince & Sacher tables, but without dates. On occasion cancels occur earlier than the date of stamp issue, as in Figure 8. The stamp was issued in June 1898, the cancel is 2 AU 94. Was this a mistake by the counter clerk or a post-dated CTO?



Figure 8: SG71 with forged postmark pre-dating the stamp

Forged pieces and covers

More trouble to fabricate, forged covers are rare (though philatelic covers are another matter). The RPSLEC have seen forged pieces and covers seeking to add substance to forgeries of bisects, and in *Cameo* (Ref 12) Jack Ince described an 1899 cover bearing an impossibly early Akassa cancel.

Northern Nigeria forgeries

Forged stamps

In another article (Ref 13) Porter shows two forged examples of the QV 1s value. "These are easily

detected, the green colours are badly faded and the overprint 'Northern Nigeria' differs from the original... all copies examined bore postmarks never in use in Northern Nigeria.

He also mentions a forgery of the £25 revenue stamp. *'There is an exceedingly dangerous forgery of this stamp. It has been made by fading out the name and value of a genuine Colonial stamp (in all probability the Leeward islands 1s value and... printing in the new name Northern Nigeria and value £25 and this work has been excellently performed. In the specimen examined the forgery was apparent only by the fact that the paper was chalk surfaced whereas it should have been ordinary unsurfaced for a genuine stamp'.*

In *Cameo* (Ref 14) Jeremy Martin shows a purported Northern Nigeria £5 value (which never existed) which, from his description is of similar poor quality to the 1s mentioned above, not least because it bears a Belize date stamp. Cruder examples of forged £25 values have appeared on eBay too.

Borgu label forgery

In *Cameo* (Ref 15) Ray Harris wrote a detailed article about a 1d local Borgu stamp. Given that the stamp was a typewritten locally produced item, it is perhaps not surprising that at least one forged version has turned up on eBay, alongside a few modified 'trials' on Niger Coast stamps.



Figure 9: Madame Joseph forged postmarks

Madame Joseph forged cancels

Madame Joseph produced three forged Northern Nigeria cancellers. Probably the best known is shown at

the right of figure 9 showing a bogus Northern Nigeria hand-stamp of AU 14 1900, applied to SG5 to double its value. The other two are: Lokoja type 2 dated MR 22 12, which looks suspiciously crisp and lacks the dot after Lokoja; and Minna type 5, dated JN 16 1913 (shown above left), which also makes an appearance illustrating the 1930s article by Porter on Northern Nigeria postmarks!

Other forged cancels

Ray Harris illustrates and discusses a forged Lokoja oval cancel on SG6 in *Cameo* (Ref 16), and has shown me a cover bearing an example of the type 2A Zaria cancel which has been hand-converted into 'ZANIA' in an effort to produce a unreported variant of the well-known 'ZANA' cancel.

Southern Nigeria forgeries

Forged stamps

According to Ince & Sacher (Ref 3, pp374-375) the Queen Victoria issue high value stamps were forged by a number of 'practitioners' including Sperati, generally by bleaching the frame, or both frame and head, from low value stamps then printing new colours and values. In general the end results, including the Sperati copies, were not dangerously good. They are described in more detail by Robson Lowe (Ref 17)

Porter's article 'Southern Nigeria Forgeries' (Ref 18) states: *'In most of the forgeries - between the oval and the frame design - there are generally tiny dots, blobs and lines of colour corresponding to the frame colour...these are not found on genuine stamps.'*

Illustrating other differences by example of the 5s, Porter continues: *'The letters - particularly the words 'Southern Nigeria' - are thicker and not so heavily shaded as in genuine stamps, the figure 5 and the value in words are also thicker. On the other hand 'Postage Revenue' are in thinner type, the Queen's head is blurred and heavily shaded.'*



Figure 10: forged KEVII £1, showing crude general impression

The horizontal lines of shading in the frame are uneven and do not extend far enough to the outer frame border. The colour is more of an orange-yellow than yellow.'

As figure 10 shows, the general impression is cruder, and as Ince & Sacher summarise (Ref 3 p374), forgeries show features such as:

'Poor definition generally; washed out appearance of colours; lack of or incorrect watermark; use of UK cancellers, usually with only part showing; indecipherable Postage/Revenue panels. ' They also mention that Sperati forgeries may have forged cancels of the wrong size and a date prior to the introduction of the canceller type (Is this the forged Lagos cancel mentioned in Proud (Ref 19) *'known with dates 1903/1905?'*).

High value stamps of the 1903, 1904 and 1907 Southern Nigeria issues were also forged. Ince & Sacher (Ref 3, pp374,380) mention that Sperati reproduced the £1 value, and Porter's article (Ref 18) describes forgeries of the 2/6, 5s and £1 values in some detail. Most examples are unconvincing, especially with a genuine one for comparison, but he cautions that some, made as above by bleaching, are good. However, even with these, the fine engraving lines and the quality of the lettering is not as good as genuine examples. The diagnostic features mentioned in the preceding paragraph also apply to the later issues. Otherwise-good forgeries of the crown CA issues are let down by use of the retouched head plate which only appears on genuine Multiple crown CA stamps. Porter mentions a forged Abeokuta cancel used on some examples (Ince & Sacher type 13A, Code F My 6 12). More examples of these forgeries are illustrated at :

<http://www.oocities.org/claghorn1p/SouthernNigeria/index.htm> .

Forged Die Proofs

Tony Plumbe (personal communication) has examples of two forged die proofs, one showing the King's head, the other the frame of the £1 value. Both have a 'SPERATI REPRODUCTION' cachet on the reverse. Sperati die proofs are also mentioned by Robson Lowe (ref 17: pp320-22).

Forged cancels

There are three known Madame Joseph cancels for Southern Nigeria: a Registered oval for Idah type R15, code A dated OC 18 13; a registered oval for Lagos, type R14B (dots at sides) code A dated AU 7 13; an Abeokuta c.d.s, type 6A, no code dated AU 31 08.

There are also cancels used to 'convert' mint stamps into more valuable used stamps. The cancel used is often bogus, but as the image on the right shows, not always. However the genuine version of the cancel on this stamp was not used until January 1907. Simon Heap has an example of the £1 with the same canceller dated AP 10 04. Ince, writing in *Cameo* (Ref 16:-V3 p16) describes the same type 6A forged cancel, on the 2/6 and 5/- (SG17 & 18), using dates ranging from 1902 to 1905, and including an example from Brass, again with an impossibly early date.



Figure 11

Nigeria from 1914

Forged stamps

There are no mentions in the literature of entirely forged stamps until the sudden rash of crudely printed copies produced from the 1970s onwards, generally to be found on letters associated with the notorious 419 scams. Several articles have appeared in *Cameo* describing these forgeries. Michael Wright gives an overview in *Cameo* (Ref 20) -Vol 7 p96, including a list of stamps forged. The earlier forgeries, starting with the 2/6 Kobs (SG 229) were lithographed, later ones generally were photocopied. The forgeries are very easy to spot: colours badly out of register, ragged perforations (often at p11 rather than 13 or 14) made using a sewing machine, or simply cut out of the sheet, and the inevitable forged cancels. However, the production quality of some of the genuine stamps was poor enough to make confusion possible.

Large numbers were produced but so many were destroyed by recipients and latterly by postal authorities that they now command higher prices than the real examples.

Since then, other similar forgeries have turned up (e.g. SG501, SG615, SG721, SG739, SG768). Below are shown a few examples of the forged stamps. The pair on the left and the Catfish (bottom right - courtesy of

Rob May) are lithographed, so colours are solid but colour edges are ragged and overlap. The others are photocopied and very grainy, with dots of colour in the margins. More recently scammers have turned to forging meter marks (Ref 21). Forged meter marks tend to be at an angle to the envelope and look as if they've been produced by hand-stamping rather than a meter machine (Ray Harris personal communication).



Figure 12: examples of postal forgeries (both of the stamp and the postmark) mainly for use on fraud mail

There are a number of post-independence varieties listed in Gibbons, and the RPSLEC has seen an example of the 1963 Scouting miniature sheet - red omitted (SG134ab) from which the red colour had been bleached to convert a sheet valued at £1.75 into a rarity catalogued at £1200.

Forged Royal Visit overprint

Large numbers of the QE 2d black and ochre were overprinted 'ROYAL VISIT 1956'. A very few were produced with the overprint upside down, and as RPSLEC records show, several examples have turned up forged. See Simon Heap's account in *Cameo* (Ref 22).

Forged watermark variety

In *Cameo* (Ref 23), Barry Burns illustrated a highly dangerous forgery of a sideways watermark on the GVI 1/3 definitive SG57ab, first described in *Sixth Sense* (Murray Payne, August 2005). He commented *a brilliant job, involving re-backing, which would have passed all but properly-rigorous examination...*

Forged cancels

Madame Joseph's output included two Lagos Registered ovals, both dated 6 MY 35, which were used on fake first day covers (see below). The cancels differ slightly in the thickness of the lettering, but in both the number 6 is almost a third larger than the '35'. There's also a Kano c.d.s (Proud type D13) dated 16 NO 36, in which the letters of KANO are slightly closer together than in the genuine cancel. (Ref 7, p69). Inevitably, there are false cancels used to convert mint to more valuable used. One such recently offered on eBay is illustrated as figure 13.

Ray Harris has provided details of Nigerian cancels forged by Robert George and sold by him under the name of 'hootstein' on eBay in 2008. George forged cancels on a range of Commonwealth stamps, not least Nigeria (Lagos, North, South and post 1914).

As an article by Charles Freeland (Ref 24) describes, Robert George copied cancels from the illustrations in Proud, often with a slight change to the date but otherwise 'as is', including idiosyncrasies in the Proud images. The article :
(available online at http://www.bwisc.org/Bulletins/b217_200806.pdf) describes how to distinguish these cancels from genuine ones.

Ray Harris identified five examples of forged cancels of the Nigerias offered by 'hootstein' on eBay in the first half of 2008. In addition to the tell-tales from Freeland's article he mentions (personal communication) that the ink used is denser and 'bleeds' more than found in real cancels.



Figure 13; Madame Joseph Forged postmark of Lagos

Ray has sent me a press report which states that George was caught and sent to prison for forgery in 2010. He got 18 months, a reflection of the scale of his fraud (£30,000 worth sold to one collector alone) and the fact that he had eight previous convictions for similar offences.

Forged first day covers

FDCs for the 6 May 1935 Silver Jubilee issue were forged using the Madame Joseph fake cancel mentioned above. I have not seen examples but it is likely that they are addressed to the City Stamp Shop, 1 St. Swithin's Lane, London EC4 which was the outlet for many of the Madame Joseph forged first day covers.

The other possible forged first day cover involved a fake Lagos cancel on the 1937 Coronation issue. Demand for Coronation first day covers from Colonies such as the Gilbert and Ellis islands far outstripped supply, and Birmingham-based dealers, Harris and Whitehurst, augmented their meagre allocation with covers bearing real stamps and forged 12 May 1937 cancels. To spoil a good story, the highly entertaining Robson Lowe articles in which he exposed their work (See ref 1, p148) do not include Nigeria in the list of countries the duo had forged, though Gold Coast covers formed part of the evidence which secured convictions in the prosecution which followed the Robson Lowe campaign.

Biafra

Biafra seceded from Nigeria on 30 May 1967. Civil war followed, and Biafra finally surrendered in January 1970. CTOs and stamps unavailable for postal use in Biafra itself are described in the Stanley Gibbons catalogue, but interim postal arrangements, overprints and scarce printers' errors also offer scope for forgery to add to the interest of collecting. However, the author has no expertise in this field.

In conclusion...

Compared with some countries, Nigeria has not suffered heavily from philatelic forgery although, as this inevitably incomplete account shows, there are enough examples out there to require continued care: the more valuable the item the more one needs to be on guard. Cancels are a particular problem, especially if only a little of a strike is visible. They can also be very difficult to expertise, though ink analysis can help.

Online auctions are a mixed blessing: they have provided convenient access to a steady stream of philatelic material but they have also made it less easy to check before buying and have brought into the marketplace vendors who often have less knowledge than the 'old fashioned' dealer. As the instance of 'hootstein' illustrates, they also provide another outlet for the unscrupulous.

A development to be viewed with concern is the ease with which modern reprographics can be used to produce replicas, as evinced by the steady stream of copies and fantasy stamps coming out of Taiwan. Fortunately these are not of high enough quality to be easily mistaken for genuine. However, it is ever-easier to produce good quality copies, and hence forgeries. One thing remains constant: a collector's surest protection is caution combined with knowledge, and it is hoped that this article will contribute to that knowledge.

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Gold Coast: Obuassi Manuscript Tax Mark

Jeremy Martin FRPSL



Figure 1

The Empire postcard rate in 1911 was ½d. The postcard shown at Figure 1 from Obuassi was stampless so a red manuscript T 1d was applied; twice the deficiency. In the UK the card received a Chatham datestamp and a black 1D cachet.

The earliest recorded T handstamps for Obuassi are in the period 1937-56 (Ref 1). I cannot recall seeing a similar manuscript mark before.

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Cameroun: Displaced Overprint on the 75c 'Corps Expéditionnaire' of 1915

Michel Collet

In 1915, fifteen Gabon postage stamps of three designs (Fig 1) were overprinted *Corps Expéditionnaire / Franco-Anglais / CAMEROUN* at Libreville for sale at the French military post office at Duala. A single three-line setting of twenty-five positions was used on all fifteen values in 5x5 panes of the same size. The twenty-five overprints can be plated fairly easily, with a little practice. Dudley Cobb presents an effective method in his study of this issue (Ref 1).



Figure 1

The three Gabon stamps with the same overprint, position 12 (column 2) of the 5x5 pane

Three noteworthy varieties have so far been reported on the *Corps Expéditionnaire* overprint:

- 1 Basic 10c stamp, reading "AFRIQUE EQUATORIALE / GABON", instead of the normal which all read "CONGO FRANCAIS / GABON" (Fig 2). For obvious financial reasons, I have been unable to amass sufficient copies of this stamp! But examination of some plateable scans points to a single pane being their origin.
- 2 35c with double overprint (Fig 3). In 2011 I managed to reconstitute a single 5x5 pane of these double overprints, using examples offered for sale during the past 20 years (Ref 2).
- 3 I am now able to present numerous examples of a variety on the 75c that is uncatalogued, but mentioned by H.G. Porter in 1956 (*The Philatelist* no 22/9), and by Dudley Cobb in 2004 (Ref 1). This is a straight vertical displacement upwards. Each stamp lost (at top) the first line of its overprint, and received (at bottom) the first line of the overprint belonging to the stamp beneath. The exception is the five stamps of the bottom row of the pane for which there is no line of overprint at the bottom of the stamp (fig 4). With the eight stamps to hand, I reconstituted the complete pane. The result is shown in Figure 5.



Fig 2: basic 10c stamp reading
Afrique Equatoriale/ Gabon
Position 22 (column 2) -
Roumet Auction



Fig 3: 35c with double overprint.
Position 22 (column 2)



Fig 4: 75c with overprint
displaced upwards
Position 22 (column 2)
Last row in the pane

The "narrow" stamp at position 7 (column 2)

One of the eight copies of this variety that I have examined is rather unorthodox: it can be plated at position 7, but as seen in the reconstituted pane in figure 5, it is slightly narrower than the others. The ends of the downward strokes of the two "p" of "Corps Expéditionnaire" which should appear at the top, are missing. Perhaps the stamp was damaged or torn and the top was clipped and re-perforated to enhance its appearance and market value.

Acknowledgments

This article was previously published in French, in Col-Fra bulletin no 158 (2016). It goes without saying that scans of any other displaced overprint on the 75c that readers may own or come across, would help this research. Thanks are extended to Martin Bratzel and Dudley Cobb for timely assistance, and to Dudley for his translator's note.

Fig 5
75c Displaced overprint; reconstitution of the pane by Michel Collet, November 2016 (approx 120%)



The stamps used for reconstituting the pane

For each stamp of positions 1-20 in the pane, we have to plate two positions of the overprint, and only one for stamps of positions 21 to 25 (the last row in the pane)



Stamp position 22 (column 2)
Overprint position 22



Stamp position 13 (column 3)
Overprint positions 13 and 18



Stamp position 5 (column 5)
Overprint positions 5 and 10



Stamp position 12 (column 2)
Overprint positions 12 and 17



Stamp position 18 (column 3)
Overprint positions 18 and 23



Stamp position 4 (column 4)
Overprint positions 4 and 9



Stamp position 9 (column 4)
Overprint positions 9 and 14



Narrow stamp, position 7 (column 2).
Overprint positions 7 and 12

A disturbing old forgery



Back in 1956, this stamp was presented by H.G. Porter as an example of the displaced overprint variety (in *The Philatelist*, no 22/9). It has reappeared occasionally in sales. Dudley Cobb, in his 2004 study, illustrates it as a clear forgery. After thorough examination, I confirm that it can't be plated and has no place in the reconstituted pane. It is disturbing, however, because the postmark seems to be authentic...or very well imitated? At this point, I cannot answer and the question remains open.

The "narrow" stamp Comparison with a "normal" stamp

Normal stamp - position 9

Narrow stamp - position 7



References

- 1 Cobb Dudley, "Cameroun in the Great War, Vol 1 - The Military Handstamps and the Early Overprints", pp24-33 (in English), Author, France, 2004
2. Collet Michel "The double overprint on the 35c Corps Expéditionnaire", *Cameo*, whole no 86, Volume 13 pp69-73, WASC, June 2012, also in French in Col-Fra Bulletin no 138, 2011.



A Dumb Postmark used at Wellington, Sierra Leone?

Philip Quirk

The scans show a 1981 De Laurence cover. Bearing a Wellington registration label, it passed through Freetown on 3 October. The 26mm diameter postmark dated 2 OC 81, applied to cancel the stamps and also over the envelope flaps, is unusual as it has no discernable inscription apart from the date.

Presumably it was applied at Wellington, an agency in the Peninsula near to Freetown. Wellington used a standard type 42 postmark until at least 1974, and had acquired a single circle device with short, thin side-arcs by 1990, both inscribed with the office name. I have not seen this type of marking before - are there any further examples out there?



Fig. 1: Reverse of cover (full size)



Fig. 2: Front of cover (reduced)

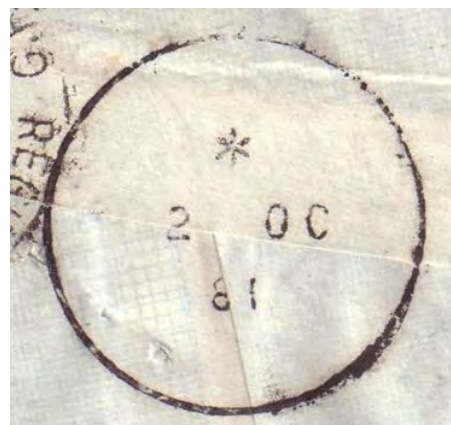


Fig.3: Dumb postmark (enlarged)

Sierra Leone B.B.W.A. Registration Label

Philip Quirk

At a recent WASC meeting, Peter Rolfe showed a 1985 cover from Freetown with a strange registration label, inscribed 'J.M.', which had been overwritten F/T101 in manuscript. Such recycling of presumably obsolete labels was common at this time, but the original meaning of J.M. was unexplained.

A second cover carrying a set of initials on its registration label has now come to light. Posted in 1958 and franked by meter RN8, the label is inscribed B.B.W.A. (Fig. 1). Actual size images of the label and the embossing on the flap of the envelope are shown in Figures 2 and 3.



Figure 1: Freetown to Toronto registered cover, 7 September 1958 (reduced in size)

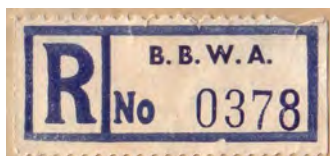


Figure 2
B.B.W.A. Registration label



Figure 3
Embossing on envelope flap
'Bank of West Africa Limited'

In his spreadsheet of Sierra Leone meter marks (Ref.1), Frank Walton allocates RN8 to the Bank of West Africa, and this agrees with the embossed oval inscription on the envelope flap, but not entirely with the initials on the registration label. The answer came from a book held in the WASC Library, detailing the history of the Bank of British West Africa Ltd (Ref.2, pp.207-8). The management felt that the name of this long-established bank, founded in 1893, would become a liability in a post-colonial marketplace, and a proposal to change the name to "Bank of West Africa Limited" was approved in June 1957. Clearly, existing stocks of B.B.W.A. registration labels were still being used up a year later.

The use of registration labels inscribed with the initials of a company or organisation is unusual. According to Mackay, normal UK practice was that "firms and organisations despatching more than the minimum number of registered packets qualified for labels inscribed with the name of the post office and having a distinctive sub office indicator." (Ref.3, p.358). This occurred to some extent in Sierra Leone, where, for example, the Bank of Sierra Leone used 'Freetown 68' labels and the Philatelic Bureau 'Freetown 89' (Ref.4, p.41). However, a few UK organisations were given labels with their own initials, one example noted by Mackay being 'HC. N. Z.' for the New Zealand High Commission in London (Ref.3, p.359). The Bank of British West Africa must have been a similar exception in Sierra Leone.

What about the ‘J.M.’ label reported by Peter Rolfe? Companies large enough to have their own registration labels printed are likely to have made use of a meter franking machine. Referring again to Walton’s spreadsheet, meter RN82 belongs to ‘J.L. Morison, Son & Jones (S.L.) Ltd.’ From my online research, this appears to be a subsidiary of a large, international, trading company, and it could be a plausible source of ‘J.M.’

References

- 1 Walton, F.L. unpublished spreadsheet.
- 2 Fry, R., *Bankers in West Africa*, Hutchinson Benham Ltd, London, 1976
- 3 Mackay, J.A., *Registered Mail of the British Isles*, self-published, Dumfries, 1982.
- 4 Walton, F.L. & Quirk, P.G., *Sierra Leone Registration*, WASC 2010.



WWI Gold Coast Censor: a Possible Artefact

John Mayne

Martin & Walton’s *Togo Postal History 1914-1922* (Ref 1), states that the 28mm diameter handstamp “Passed by Censor” with crown, type 203.01, whilst normally found on mail from Gold Coast, is also recorded on mail from Togo, probably applied in Accra. The earliest date they recorded is 6 December 1916 and the latest is 19 February 1917. The same handstamp is recorded by Ensor (ref 2) with a date range of 8 December 1915 to 29 June 1917.

Martin Walton & Harris (Ref 3) refers to this handstamp under Gold Coast giving dates of 8 December 1915 (as Ensor does) but a later last known date of 9 January 1918, extending its use by a further six months.

With no official direct mail service from Togo until after the war, the logical assumption is that any Togo cover bearing this handstamp was routed via Gold Coast, censored en route. However, no mail addressed to Dahomey, Nigeria or Cameroon was routed via Accra.



Figure 1

There is an abundance of early philatelic mail from British-occupied Togo but examples of fabrication are rare. This cover, offered in a German auction, was sent from Anecho on 3 May 1917 to Accra. Backstamps show it passed via Lome on 4 May to Accra, arriving on 8 May: a logical timescale. Correct postage of 25c at the French foreign letter rate is met by Togo 5c and 2 x 10c overprints on Dahomey. There are four strikes of the correct German Anecho cancel and there is no suggestion these have been forged. It is very rare to find such mail with the Accra censor hand-stamp. On close examination the fourth Anecho cancel has been struck after and over this handstamp and the address also appears to be written over the censor handstamp.

There are no details of the sender of the reverse flap but there is an unidentifiable broken wax seal. Whether the address is a genuine one, I don't know, and comments will be welcome.

To me, this suggests that a plain envelope was carried from Accra to Anecho with the censor hand-stamp already on it, to be correctly franked, cancelled and posted back to Accra. An artefact, possibly created by the censor! I wonder if other similar covers exist in members' collections?

References

1. Martin J.J. & Walton F.L., *Togo: The Postal History of the Anglo-French Occupation 1914-1922*, WASC, Sheffield 1995
2. Ensor M. (Ed), *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast 1901-1957*, WASC, Dronfield 1998
3. Martin J.J., Walton F.L & Harris R., *West African Censorship*, WASC, Princes Risborough 3rd Edition 2015



Sierra Leone 5s 1d Air Mail Rate to USA from 1942

Frank Walton RDP FRPSL

For many years now, collectors of West African war-time air mails have been musing over a handful of covers from Sierra Leone to the United States of America that are franked at a rate of 5s 1d (Refs 1 & 2). These all appear completely commercial – but an official announcement of this rate has never been discovered.

Figure 1 illustrates an announcement from *The Sierra Leone Royal Gazette* of 12 February 1942. Sadly this doesn't exactly define the rate – but it very clearly alludes to it. The notice announces that an air service from Sierra Leone to Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Liberia, America and Europe “commences forthwith”. Tantalisingly the rate to non-West Coast Countries “may be obtained at the Post Office counters”.

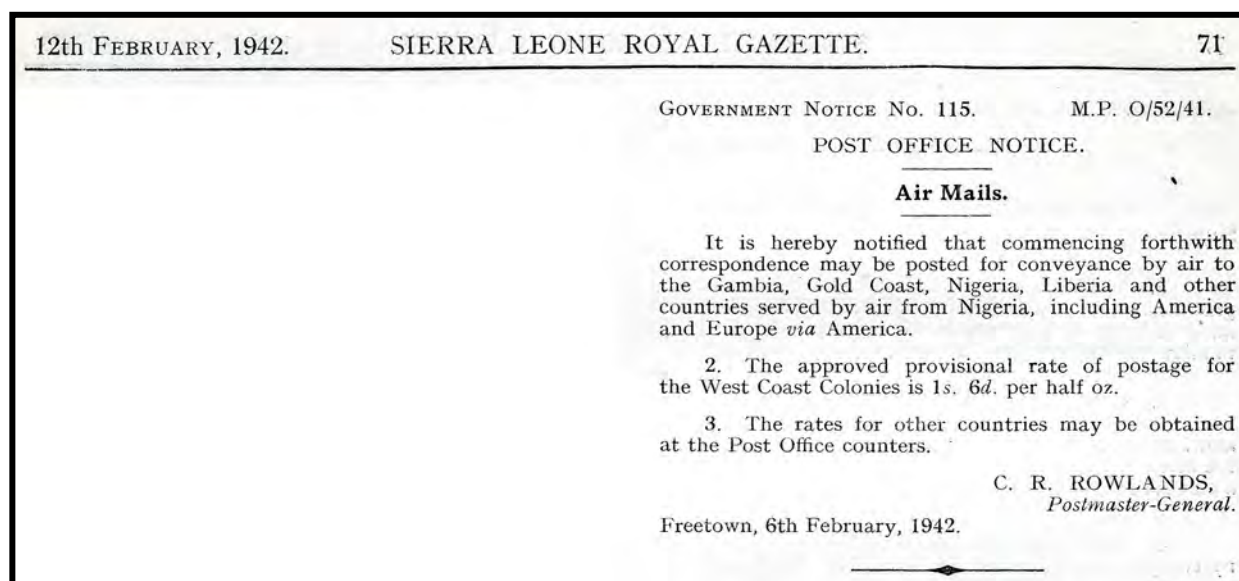


Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 2 shows a cover from Freetown dated 21 Feb 1942 destined to the USA. There is no arrival datestamp, but Figure 3 shows a backstamp at Lagos on 25 Feb 1942 clearly showing the routing. This is the earliest cover that has come to light so far that used this service.

References

- 1 Richard Beith & Nigel Lutwyche, "Sierra Leone 5s 1d Rate to United States", *Cameo*, Vol 6 No. 1 p42, January 1998.
- 2 Richard Beith & Peter Richards, "1940s Sierra Leone Airmail Rates", *Cameo*, Vol 6 No. 2 p87, July 1998.



The Beginning of the Lagos Government Steam Launch Mail Services, 1899

Dr Simon Heap

After my recent article on postal information in the *Lagos Government Gazettes* of 1903 in *Cameo*, Vol 18, no 1, whole no. 100, pp.10-14, I was contacted by fellow WASC member John Mayne as to when the Mail Launch Services began.

Overleaf is the notice by Mark Kerr, the Acting Colonial Secretary of Lagos Colony, declaring its start in mid-October 1899.

It is hereby notified for general information that arrangements having been made for conveying the Mails to the Eastern and Western Districts by Government Steam Launch, a few passengers can be conveyed by the Launches to Badagry, Ikorodu, and Leckie from these places to Lagos

The following charges will be made for such passages

Fares to and from Badagry	Saloon, 10s
Fares to and from Badagry	Deck 3s
Fares to and from Ikorodu	Saloon 5s
Fares to and from Ikorodu	Deck 1s 6d
Fares to and from Epe	Saloon 10s
Fares to and from Epe	Deck 3s

Each Saloon passenger, will be permitted to take 56 lbs luggage, and each Deck passenger 28 lbs.

For each additional 10 lbs or part thereof, a charge of 3d will be made.

Tickets may be obtained at the Office of the Master of Government Vessels, where passengers luggage will also be weighed. Saloon passengers will not be guaranteed, and will only be issued at the discretion of the Government.

No cargo will be carried on the Government Launches engaged in this service.

Appended is a list showing days and time of sailing:

MONDAY – to Badagry

Leave Government Vessels wharf Lagos, 8am, arrive Badagry 4pm.

TUESDAY – From Badagry

Leave Badagry 7am, arrive Lagos 3pm.

THURSDAY – To Ikorodu and Epe

Leave Government Vessels wharf Lagos, 8am, arrive Ikorodu 10.30am. Leave 11.30am arrive Epe 6pm.

FRIDAY – From Epe direct

Leave Epe 8am, arrive Lagos 3pm.

Source: 'Government notification', *Lagos Government Gazette*, 14 October 1899, p. 425.



Bigger Uniforms for Larger Nigerian Postal Staff, 1926

Dr Simon Heap

In the mid-1920s, the British colonial government in Nigeria had to face the problem of clothing plumper postmen and chubbier counter staff. In the case of the latter, was this a sign of sedentary office work, or just increased appetites and better wages to pay for extra food from street vendors or meals at home?

The issue also reveals where uniforms were made, as well as the hierarchy in the postal department, but in a counterintuitive way to what might have been expected: lower grade staff's uniforms from the UK and the option of senior grade staff having their local tailor involved.

Here is what page 14 of the *Annual Report of the Posts and Telegraphs Department for the Year 1926* reported:

The staff entitled to uniforms (Engineering Staff, Mail Boarding Officers, Travelling Post Office Clerks, Messengers and mail runners) were again regularly and punctually supplied during the year with their half-yearly issue. It is interesting to note that the subordinate grades are increasing in physique as it has been necessary once again to increase the girth of shorts and trousers – at an extra cost of a few pence per garment. Uniforms for the subordinate grades are obtained from contractors in England, the experiment tried in 1925 of local manufacture in bulk not having proved successful. The more senior grades are however permitted to have their uniforms tailored locally.



WWI Diversion of Censorships: a Request for Information

Graham Mark

This article is abridged from an article first published in the Civil Censorship Study Group Bulletin January 2017 and is reproduced with permission.

In section 282 of Farquharson (Ref 1) we can read

Owing to the unrestricted submarine warfare commenced by the German Government in February, 1917, neutral ships became unwilling to call at United Kingdom ports and obtained under certain conditions permission to call for the examination of their cargo at Halifax, Nova Scotia ; Kingston, Jamaica ; and Freetown, Sierra Leone. Although it was in every case made a condition of such permit that mails should not be carried, it was nevertheless necessary to arrange for the examination of the shipping documents, &c., carried by permission in such ships. Officers were therefore detailed to undertake the duties which had previously been performed at Falmouth and Kirkwall.

At Kingston and at Freetown this duty was undertaken by the Naval Control Officers, but at Halifax, Nova Scotia, where the large majority of such ships called for examination, an officer, who had previously acted as Censor at Falmouth, undertook this duty, being assisted by a Canadian officer lent by the Deputy Postmaster General, Ottawa (para. 441).

In August, 1917, the available staff at Freetown, Sierra Leone, was found insufficient for the work of this special censorship and, at the request of the General Officer Commanding, two officers of the Postal Censorship were sent out to assist.

When ships commenced to call at the port of New York, and the centre of gravity of this work therefore shifted to the control established by the United States Government, the British Naval Control Officer and the Postal Censorship representative were moved from Halifax to New York to assist the Customs officers there.

Freetown Sierra Leone

Martin & Walton (Ref. 2) shows some possibilities. At p113, “Sierra Leone WWI tapes” (CCSG calls them labels), types 2 and 3 have recorded dates of use only in 1917 and 1918, but without any indication whether any of the examples were used on transit mail. Labels type 2 are definitely UK-style with both London and Liverpool number recorded, and the main lettering of type 3 is not unlike British type 6. Can West Africa collectors please look through their WWI material to see if any of the covers with these censor labels were transit mail rather than terminal? If those labels (tapes) were on covers from Sierra Leone to UK or unoccupied Europe, it is likely they were censored in Britain, but if transit mail they are likely to be used by the officers sent out from UK.

References

- 1 Farquharson LtCol ASL, *Report on Postal Censorship during the Great War (1914-1919)*, War Office 1920, National Archives, Kew, ref DEFE1/131
- 2 Martin J.J., Walton F.L & Harris R., *West African Censorship*, WASC, Princes Risborough 3rd Edition 2015

1906 Cover from Northern Nigeria Found Open on the Greenock & Ardrishaig Packet

Patrick Frost and Rob May

At a recent SPH conference Patrick Frost showed, as part of his Scottish postal history, the intriguing cover shown here as figure 1. He has allowed me to illustrate it, with a combined write up, in *Cameo*.



Figure 1
Front and reverse (shown as if opened out; i.e. reverse inverted)

Patrick Frost's text reads:

"1906 officer's letter endorsed "no stamps available" posted from Lokoja during the suppression of the Satiru Rising, handstamped OFFICIAL PAID / LOKOJA. Despite this, it was charged 2d, twice the 1d Empire rate, on the Plymouth & Bristol TPO. Found open and officially sealed on the Greenock & Ardrishaig Packet steamer *Grenadier*."

Patrick maintains that this cover belongs firmly in his Scottish postal history collection because this is the only cover he has ever seen officially resealed on the Greenock & Ardrishaig Packet.

Rob May has added:

Ted Proud (Ref/ 1) has a paragraph about this minor military action:

Early in 1906 a quarrel between some Hausa traders and the Jukon inhabitants of Abinsi developed into a battle, and the Jukon called the Tiv tribe for assistance. The Tivs attacked and overwhelmed the Hausas, carrying off a number as slaves and sacking and burning the Niger Company's store. A strong expedition was subsequently sent against them to which the Tivs offered little resistance. The troops were then sent towards Sokoto where, joining more troops, they marched against the rebellious forces in the village of Satiru and by the 10 March were completely in control. This rebellion was notable for the loyalty shown to the British by most of the chiefs and people in the surrounding areas, throughout the period of conflict.

The OFFICIAL PAID / LOKOJA postmark has Proud index number PD2 which he records in use between 18.2.08 and 7.6.19 (Ref. 2). On the other hand, Ince & Sacher record earliest use on 20.2.06 (Ref. 3), which may be based on this cover. They do not list it (or any other Satiru cover) in their Appendix 19: Officers mail but, as this cover is not endorsed "on active service", it could logically be excluded from that appendix even if known to those authors. They record at Appendix 18 that this action was recognised by one of many bars to the Africa General Service Medal awarded to members of the Northern Nigeria Regiment after 1900. Ince & Sacher briefly refer to the Satiru action at page 497, thus:

Jun/Feb 1906/07.....

Two smaller expeditions under Lt Chapman and Lt Worsley between 12th November 1906 and 17th February 1907.

The initials below the words "no stamps available" on the front of this cover seem to be SC (possibly Lt. Chapman?).

Finally we could question why this letter was taxed by the GPO sorter. As stated above, this letter is not marked "on active service" so postage should certainly have been prepaid. On the other hand the Lokoja postmark does read "OFFICIAL PAID". This letter is clearly addressed to a civilian and the official postmark is not struck at the front top right where the adhesive should be. The sorter therefore seems to have taken a view that this was not official mail, but can any member explain the rules for free postage on official mail during this period?



Gold Coast New Postmark Discoveries

Philip Levine FRPSL

I can report several postal markings that are not recorded in the five philatelic references listed:

- ◇ The Gold Coast The Post Offices/Agencies and their Cancellations 1875-1957, Mackin MT (1990)
- ◇ The Postal History of Gold Coast, Proud EB (1995)
- ◇ The Postal Services of the Gold Coast 1901-1957, Ensor M (1998)
- ◇ The Postal Services of the Gold Coast to 1901, Sacher J (Ed) (2003)
- ◇ Gold Coast Postmarks 1875-1957, Anderson I (2012)

Salt Pond 'Too Late' instructional mark in red. Illustrated on the front cover of this issue of *Cameo*

Anfoe Tsebi type 19 postmark thought to be previously un-recorded on cover. (Figure 1)

Kpandu type 19a postmarked 19 December 1939 (Figure 2)

Kisi type 19a postmarked 5 July 1937 (Figure 3)

Ntonso type 18 postmarked 31 January 1927 (Figure 4)

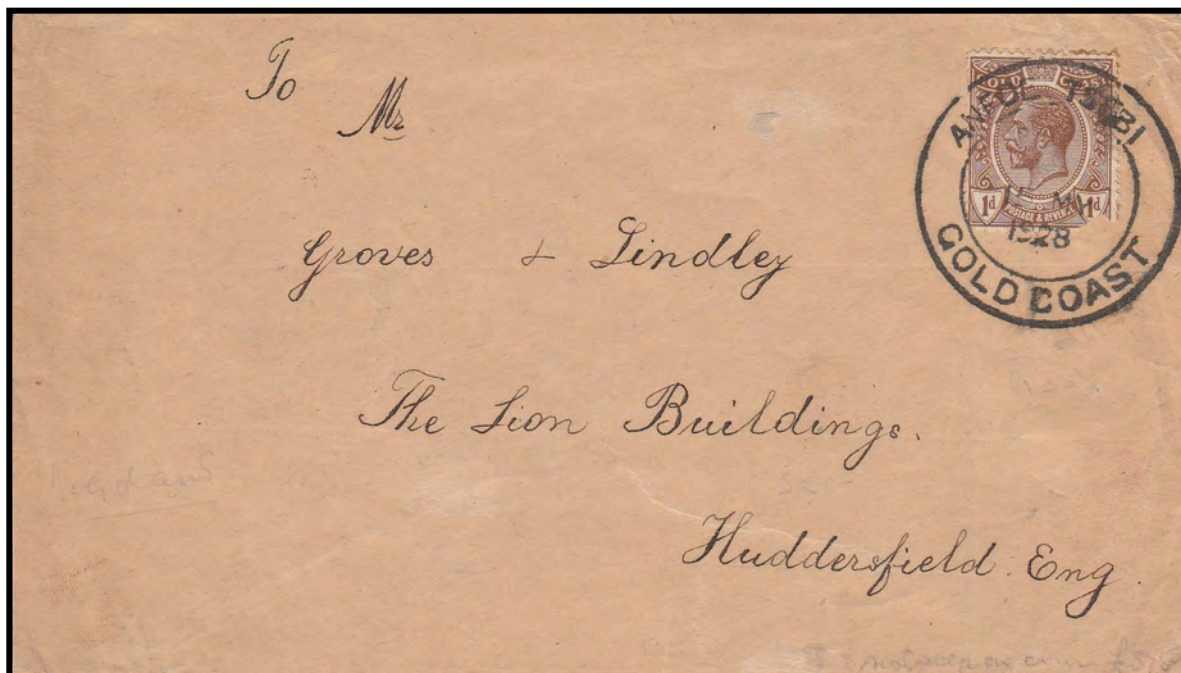


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Destination Victoria, Cameroon, German West Africa: Tale of a GB Post Office, Postal Stationery Wrapper

Dr John K. Courtis FRPSL

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An analysis of more than 10,000 post office postal stationery wrappers from Great Britain has revealed only one example of a wrapper addressed to the destination Victoria, Cameroon, German West Africa. The wrapper is a late usage of the 1904 post office wrapper issue bearing the yellow-green indicium of King Edward VII. It is addressed to Messrs. Woermann & Co., Victoria (Cameroon), German West Africa. The circular date postmark is BIRMINGHAM 9.15PM MY 4 11 and identifier 12.

This exotic Victoria, Cameroon destination was an early seaport on the west coast of Africa across from the island of Fernando Po. It was initially administered by the Baptist missionaries under the British but in 1886 it was annexed to Germany. The purpose of the paper is to bring to light the story about this wrapper: destination, addressee, shipping line and route, and the likely sender and contents. The wrapper is shown as Figure 1.



Figure 1: GB Wrapper to Victoria, Cameroon, German West Africa

The Destination

Victoria (now known as Limbe) is located on the coast of Cameroon and was an early trading port. It was founded in June 1858 on the southern slopes of Mount Cameroon by the British missionary Alfred Saker of the Baptist Missionary Society of London. He and his Baptist converts had been pressured into leaving the nearby Fernando Po after the arrival of Spanish Jesuits and the proclamation of Catholicism as the only form of public worship. Saker crossed over to Cameroon and bought land on behalf of the Baptists on the coast of Amba Bay at the mouth of the Victoria River from King William of Bimbia.



Figure 2: Antique map showing the location of Victoria, Cameroon

A town already existed on the site called Bimbia made up of freed slaves and natives from nearby areas. Saker changed the name to Victoria in honour of Queen Victoria of England. The initial church influence was soon overshadowed by English and German commerce. Victoria remained the responsibility of the missionaries rather than Britain. Presbyterian Basel missionaries from Switzerland bought the land from the Baptists in 1887 by which time Cameroon was a German colony, Kamerun. Victoria was central to this colony both economically and politically.



Figure 3: Basel Missionary Base, circa 1904

Initially Victoria was under the British administration and not part of the German colony Kamerun. On 7 May 1886, Great Britain and Germany agreed to exchange Victoria and its vicinity for German rights at the Forcados River in Nigeria and St. Lucia in South Africa. On 28 March 1887, Victoria and its vicinity were handed over to the German administration.

The Germans envisaged the creation of a commercial economy realising that the fertile volcanic soil would lead to the cultivation of plantations of palm oil, rubber, bananas, pepper, coffee and cocoa. In order to transport the crops to European markets the need for regular shipping resulted in the development of the seaport. The harbour was well-sheltered and capable of receiving the largest vessels.



Figure 4: Early Scene of Victoria and its Warehouses, circa 1910

By the time the wrapper arrived at Victoria in 1911 the settlement, originally based on a church-cum-missionary influence had grown economically, with well over a dozen German companies based in Hamburg and Bremen which conducted their trading and plantation activities; a pier had been built and a class social stratification had developed. It was a cosmopolitan ‘second-class town’ with Caucasian settlers from England, Germany and France together with natives from other colonies who had been attracted to the area because of employment opportunities especially in services and in work on plantations. Women from the “aristocracy” wore silk dresses, Europeans did no menial work. Victoria had its own administrative and legal system and a post office. It was a commercial hub and was referred to as the “shopping centre” of Anglophone Cameroon. By 1911 Victoria was a thriving commercial centre that attracted those people intent on adding further to the economic progress of the place. Imports from Europe were strong and comprised all manner of merchandise that contributed to civilized life.

The Addressee

The German connection began when the Woermann Company of Hamburg built a warehouse in 1868 on the estuary of the Wouri River. Other German traders followed in sufficient numbers that they were able to request the appointment of a Consul.



Figure 5: Woermann Factory (Trading Post), Victoria, Cameroon

These companies and others purchased extensive acreage from local chiefs and began systematic plantation operations, including bananas. Initially the traders were mainly interested in selling goods including guns and liquor in return for palm products. Initially they were not interested in permanent colonization for cost reasons but a fall in African produce prices changed attitudes and ways of conducting business. A more permanent colonial arrangement became necessary once direct routes were established to the interior to widen the network of agricultural land and produce from plantations. Moreover, once firms such as Jantzen & Thormählen (both agents of Woermann & Co.) had established bases and plantations they required military protection.

By 1898, Jantzen & Thormählen had their headquarters in Bimbia, in the Victoria District, and lands in other areas. The process for acquiring land in the early years was informal. In some cases, the company simply occupied the land and their title was later recognized by the government. Sometimes they paid the local chiefs for the land. In other cases, the government declared an area to be crown land, and sold it to the company. Eventually, through various mergers, Jantzen & Thormählen created the largest plantation area in West Africa around Mount Cameroon, with 220,000 acres of cocoa, coffee, and later rubber, oil palm and bananas.

By 1884, Adolph Woermann, representing all West African companies as their spokesman, petitioned the imperial foreign office for "protection" by the German Empire. This request was subsequently withdrawn, but as a show of German interest, the small gunboat SMS *Möwe* arrived in West Africa.

The Route

Without the named ship written or handstamped on the wrapper and with no supporting transit markings it is impossible to corroborate the actual route followed. Verifying the route is made all the more awkward because the use of post office postal stationery wrappers is a concessionary class of mail of usually bulky newspapers and printed matter and would have been sent by the cheapest route at the convenience of the post office. The Post Office Guide for 1911 identifies two embarkation ports for mail to Victoria, Cameroons.

West Coast African Mails were sent either via Liverpool on an Elder Dempster mail packet or via Dover by a German packet. The Liverpool route would have originated from Birmingham on the Midland Railway with departure from Liverpool on Wednesday, 10 May 1911.

The alternative routing would have been by German packet. Cameroon at that time was a German colony and the Woermann Line of shipping from Hamburg is a good fit with well-developed shipping routes and schedules to ports along the west coast of Africa. Mail left Dover on a German packet the morning of the 11th of each month. The wrapper left Birmingham on 4 May on the Great Western Railway night train to Dover via London arriving one day later and with sufficient time for the German Packet departure on 11 May. The mail route from Dover was Tenerife, Sierra Leone, Accra, Quittah, Pram Pram, Addah, Lagos, Porto Novo, Fernando Porto del Roy and Victoria, Cameroons.

The Sender

There is no merchant mark on the wrapper and hence no direct identification of the sender. However, Birmingham is identified from the postmark as the source. Birmingham was known as the “City of a thousand trades” because of the wide variety of goods manufactured: buttons, cutlery, nails and screws, guns, tools, jewelry, toys, locks, and ornaments were amongst the many products manufactured. Large factories became increasingly common towards the end of the century when engineering industries became increasingly important. While Manchester was known for textiles, Birmingham was known for its metals which enables it to trade in scissors, knives and weapons amongst other things.

The Enclosure

Some speculation is required in order to focus on the nature of the enclosure. The wrapper contained an enclosure which might have been a Birmingham newspaper intended for the managers of the Woermann & Co. warehouse, the newspaper advertising merchandise of use to a growing colonial commercial hub. There were several newspapers published in Birmingham at the time: *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, *Birmingham Daily Post* and the *Birmingham Mail* for example. However, the enclosure could have been a current price list from a particular factory in Birmingham.

While the probability of the contents being a newspaper versus a price list or catalogue can be debated, there is no direct evidence to establish the nature of the enclosure and the identity of the sender. The wrapper was not uprated, the ½d paying the weight to 2 oz. Whatever the nature of the enclosure it was not likely to have been heavier than 2 oz.

This is the only known wrapper with this Victoria, Cameroon address. It is an unusual even exotic address for a wrapper from Great Britain. In other words, it was almost certainly purpose-driven by the sender rather than as some random mailing to attract business. What would Woermann & Co.’s warehouse in Victoria want from Birmingham that it could not obtain elsewhere, particularly Germany? Who initiated the contact, was it a sender in Birmingham initiating contact or was it a response to a request from Woermann & Co. for information? Moreover, why would this wrapper have been retained in the business archives of Woermann & Co.

The provenance of the wrapper might shed some insights. It was part of a very large cache of wrappers purchased by Jan Kosniowski some years ago, from a dealer in Germany. Now that Jan’s catalogue of Wrappers from the Whole World is nearing completion he is selling off much of his surplus stock and hence this wrapper made its way onto the eBay market where it was purchased by the author. Perhaps therefore the wrapper ended up in Germany as part of the Woermann & Co. business archives from Cameroon.

It has been established in other studies that extant wrappers have been discovered in business archives that have undergone a culling process and rescued from destruction (ref. 2). The reason these wrappers were included in business archives in the first place is likely due to their direct association with advertising in newspapers. The newspaper bearing a client’s advertisement was mailed to the client or agent on behalf of the client as proof that the advertisement appeared as instructed. Along these lines the enclosure would have been a Birmingham newspaper containing the advertisement. But this then raises the question what would have been the nature of the advertisement? The produce shipped by Woermann & Co. was bananas, coffee, palm oil and other commodities. What would have been the market for these items in Birmingham?

An alternative line of enquiry is that Woermann & Co. requested a current catalogue of merchandise from a firm in Birmingham. What would Woermann & Co. have needed? A refrigeration unit, replacement parts for machinery, knives for cutting hands of bananas, tools, nails and screws, etc. The list of metal-based merchandise necessary in the running of plantations and a warehouse under the management of Woermann & Co. would seem to be quite extensive. An awareness of what could be obtained from a firm in Birmingham might seem the likely enclosure.

Summary of Analysis

That a wrapper bearing the uncommon address Victoria, Cameroon dated 4 May 1911 has survived for more than a century is remarkable. The wrapper, from Birmingham, England to a German Company in the seaport of the German colony Kamerun is tantalizing with regard to why it was sent and what was its enclosure. The addressee Woermann & Co. was a pioneer German company that exploited the Victoria area of Cameroon as part of the “Scramble for Africa”. Buying up large tracts of land and developing plantations of bananas, palm oil and coffee for shipment of produce to Hamburg, Germany for European consumption was the firm’s *raison d’être*. Especially intriguing too is the German Woermann Shipping Line set up by Adolph Woermann – this Line may have carried the wrapper from Dover to Woermann, Victoria, a coincidence perhaps.

The investigation is a journey of discovery and is an example of how a humble item of postal stationery can be examined for its postal history and social philately attributes.

References

1. Cockrill Philip (1980), *The History, ships and Postal Cancellations of the Woermann Line 1890-1965*, Cockrill, England, Series Booklet No. 11, p. 33
2. Courtis John K. (2016), Bates, Hendy & Co. and Clarke, Son & Platt, Advertising Agents: Colonial Tentacles as Evidenced by Extant Post Office Wrappers, *The Postal Stationery Collector*, Issue No. 86, Vol. 22 No. 2, May, pp. 54-59
3. Nkwi Walter Gam (c2009), *Victoria, Cameroon: The Rise, Decline and Fall of a Port-City in the context of Globalization and Modernity, c.1880s-c.1960*, Department of History, University of Buea, Cameroon, p. 36
4. Akali Thomas Ngomba (2005), *The Fluctuating Fortunes of Anglophone Cameroon Towns: The Case of Victoria, 1858-1982, African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspectives*, University of Rochester Press, Chapter 13, pp.318-339

Acknowledgement

An earlier draft of the paper was read and commented upon by Allan Gory and I thank him most sincerely for his insights in strengthening the paper.



Gambia Machine Cancellers

Oliver Andrew

As noted by Duncan & Andrew (Ref 1) there are two Banjul machine cancellers with seven wavy lines to the right of the c.d.s. The first, 103.01, has 9mm spacer lines in the c.d.s., and the year is much shorter than the date line. The second, 103.03, has 7mm spacer lines and the year is the same length as the date line. It is now possible to give many more details of the use of these, and an odd variety of 103.01 which I have called 103.02.



Figure 1
New type 103.02 machine cancellation

Reference

1. Duncan S.P. & Andrew O., *The Postal markings of the Gambia 1858-2000*, p45, WASC, Dronfield, 2006

Type	Notes	Dates
103. 011	___ date year	12 AP 77 - 18 NO 85
0111	Wavy lines inverted	19 AU 77 & 16 FE 78
0112	Year inverted	30 MR 79
0113	c.d.s inverted	1 JY 78 - 7 JY 78 16 NO 78 31 MY 85 - 18 JY 85 (but c.d.s normal 13 JY 85)
0114	c.d.s. and wavy lines inverted	2 DE 84 - 6 JA 85
012	date ___ year	13 SP 79 24 SP 80 - 1 OC 80 19 FE 85 - 17 FE 86
013	___ year date	16 JU 84 - 19 JU 84 3 AP 86 - 24 FE 87
0131	Wavy lines inverted	16 FE 85 and 18 JY 85
0132	c.d.s inverted	16 NO 78
014	___ year (space)	1985-1987
015	date year ___	1 AP 87 - 27 JY 87

Early in 1993 the second machine canceller (103.03) broke down. It was replaced by the 'old' one (103.01) but with the lower left segment of the 8 in the year slug removed to read as '9'.

103. 02	wavy lines inverted	20 JA 93 - 13 FE 95
021	(space) date year	20 JA 93 - 25 NO 93
022	date (space) year	25 NO 93 - 13 FE 95
0221	c.d.s inverted	20 NO 94 - 6 JA 95
103. 03	year wider, spacer lines = 7mm	29 DE 87 - 29 DE 92
031	date year ___	29 DE 87 - 1 AU 88
0311	year inverted	? FE 88 - 3 MR 88
032	year date ___	23 FE 88
033	year ___ date	16 AU 88 - 17 JA 89
034	___ date year	20 JA 89 - 27 DE 90
0341	c.d.s inverted	4 FE 89 - 27 DE 90
0342	wavy lines inverted	28 JY 90 10 NO 90 - 16 NO 90
0343	extended line	3 JY 89
035	1991 date 1990 (year & c.d.s inverted, wavy as normal) lines	4 JA 91 - 31 JA 91
036	(space) date year	10 FE 91 - 29 DE 92
0361	wavy lines inverted	? MY 92
037	year date (space) (wavy lines as normal)	8 NO 91 - 11 NO 91

Type	Notes	Dates
103.	04	7 SE 95 1 DE 98
	041	Dot instead of dash 7 OC 90
103.	05	2 MY 95 29 JA 08
	06	18 MR 01 -
131	01	Serekunda The Gambia (17 FE 82 was the date of opening of the new PO in Serekunda)
	011	___ date year 17 FE 82 4 MR 83
	012	date year 5 FE 82
	013	date ___ time 4.45pm 25 MR ?? 25 AP 85
	014	date ___ year 10 FE 84 28 MR 84
	015	___ time (15-PM) year 1 MR (1985?)
	016	time (15-PM) ___ date 5 MR
	017	___ time (4.45 PM) 1985?
	018	___ time (15-PM) date 1 MR 85?
	Bakau	
132	01	MC3 as 103.05 and 131.03 5 JY 01



Gambia PS Registered Envelope RP10; Does it Exist?

Oliver Andrew



The Gambia handbook (Ref 1) lists a registered envelope RP10, with neither the head of QEII (RP7 and 8) nor the Gambian coat of arms (RP11). I recently acquired two envelopes apparently of this type.

But detailed, if slightly destructive, examination showed that the medallion with the Queen's head was merely hidden under a carefully-positioned stamp. Dates provide a possible explanation. My examples are postmarked in September 1970 and Republic Day was soon to follow on 2 November that year.

So, does type RP10 really exist?

Reference

- 1 Andrew J.O. (Ed), *The Stamps and Postal History of The Gambia*, Christie's Robson Lowe with the West Africa Study Circle, 1985



Gambia 1941: a Forces Mail Query

Oliver Andrew

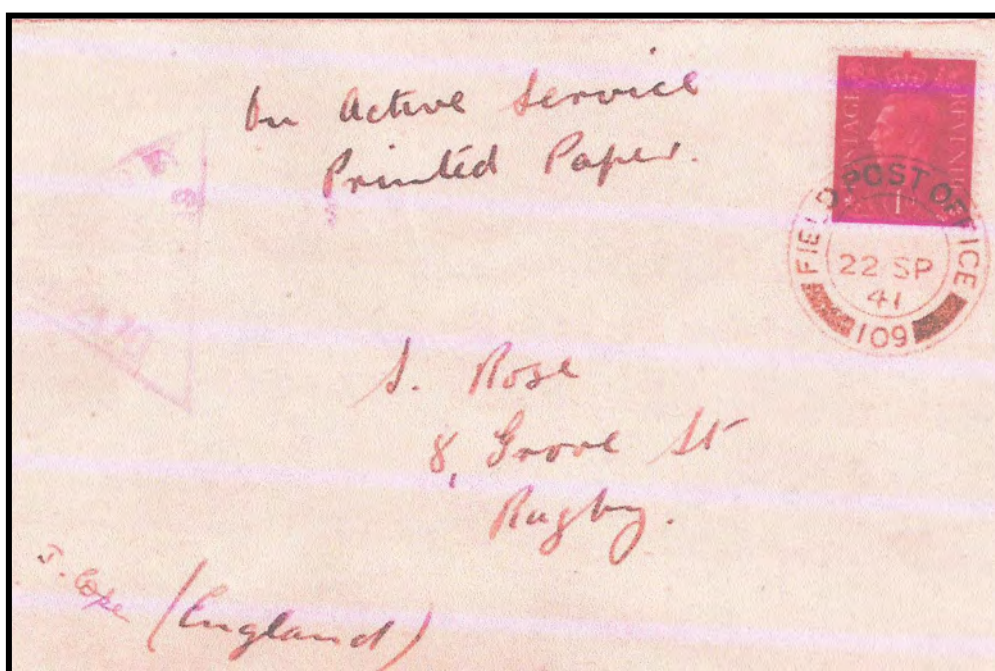


Figure 1

This simple-looking cover raises questions. Why did it need a GB stamp? Or, indeed, any stamp at all? The extract from an order HQ Military Forces, given in the Gambia handbook (Ref 1), says:

"With effect from 22 September 1941 letters, postcards and printed papers not exceeding 2oz. in weight are exempt from postage". (i.e. private mails from serving personnel).

The cover at figure 1 is dated 22 September 1941, the same day as the start date given in the above notice. Charles Leonard had a similar cover (same date, same inscriptions and same stamp) but with a different addressee and sender. Charles has drawn my attention to Philip Beale's book on Sierra Leone (Ref 2) where a third such cover is illustrated.

If they had all been posted the day before, the printed paper rate of "*½d for 2oz. or part thereof*" would have applied. So this cover would need to have weighed over 2 ounces to have been charged 1d. But surely so many coincidences require a further explanation?

References

- 1 Andrew J.O. (Ed), *The Stamps and Postal History of The Gambia*, p88, Christie's Robson Lowe with the West Africa Study Circle, 1985
- 2 Beale P.O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone...*, p36, RPSL, London 1988

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ASCENSION. 1933 1d grey-black and bright blue-green.
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Very fine unused. Extremely scarce. SG 12A.

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GAMBIA. 1881 2d rose lower-left corner block of four with
guide dot in margin. Very fine mint. SG 13B.

£200

GAMBIA. 1898 6d Keyplate block of four including the
malformed 'S'. Very fine mint. Exceptionally fresh. SG 43a.

£400

GOLD COAST. 1879 2d single and bisect tied to piece by
'556' cancels with CAPE COAST CASTLE c.d.s. SG 6a.

£375

GOLD COAST. 1889 3d top marginal pair (Pos# 3-4) with
smaller letters of value. Unmounted mint. SG 15a var.

£65

NIGER COAST. 1893 ½d on 2½d (Type 9 in violet).
Very fine mint. Extremely rare. RPS Cert. SG 34.

£5500

NIGER COAST. 1894 '½' on half 1d dull blue. Very fine used
on piece with OCR c.d.s. Rare on this shade. SG 57.

£400

NIGERIA. 1940 1d imprint block of 12 including 'A' of 'CA'
missing from watermark. Unmounted mint. SG 50ab.

£1250

ST HELENA. 1927 2/6 Badge with broken mainmast.
Very fine used with 'JY 26 27' c.d.s. Rare. SG 109a.

£1100

SIERRA LEONE. 1905 £1 purple/red. Very fine used with
central FREETOWN c.d.s. 'OC 17 12'. Superb. SG 98.

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TOGO. 1915 5pf block of four (Setting 3 : Pos# 6-7, 11-12)
Very fine mint. Rare multiple. BPA Cert. SG H30.

£550

TOGO. 1915 5/- with no hyphen after 'ANGLO' (Pos# 5).
Very fine mint. Rare. SG H44c.

£275

TOGO. 1915 20/- left marginal with small 'F' (Pos# 25)
Unmounted mint. SG H46a.

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