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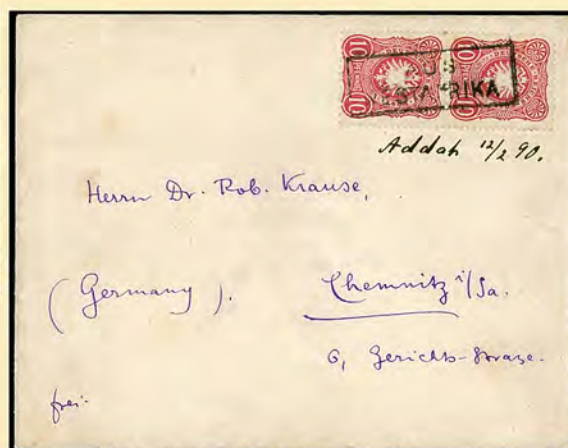
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Front Cover

Biafra; Second Anniversary of Independence

Inter-panneau block of 10, with sheet margin at right,
also shows 4d. and 2s.6d. se-tenant

See the article by Massimo Galvani starting page 245

Editor's Notes

I am writing this short introduction after returning from another excellent WASC Conference Weekend held at Cheltenham at the end of September. Peter Richards, with some important assistance from Ray Harris and others, had produced a varied and very interesting programme of displays which I'm certain we all thoroughly enjoyed. Add in the live auction, comfortable hotel and enthusiastic attendees and the three days passed all too quickly. I'm aware that a lot of our members are unable to attend these functions for various reasons, but if you ever get the opportunity then you won't be disappointed. This time we had overseas members from Denmark and Canada who are both regular visitors to this biennial event in our programme.

I believe this issue again gives a widespread coverage of our collecting interests, although inevitably there are some omissions - this time notably for Ascension, the Gambia and Tristan da Cunha. I was pleased to receive a lengthy submission from our Italian based member Massimo Galvani on the Second Anniversary issue of Biafra, which I have edited down to eleven pages starting at page 245. However, I hope to be able to publish the full text, with many more illustrations of proofs and errors, on the Circle's website sometime during the next two months. If modern material interests you (and if not, why not?!) then please keep checking www.wasc.org.uk



The next issue will be edited by Rob May, datelined January 2018, and the copy deadline is 31 December

Barry Burns

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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.

Annual Subscription

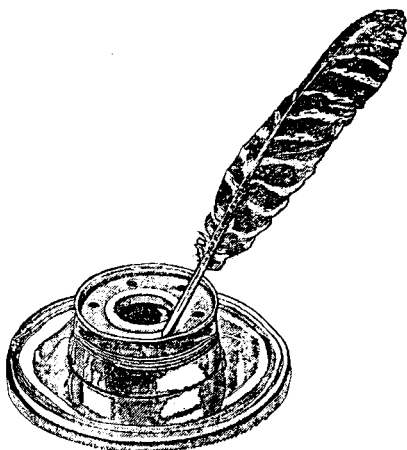
From 2016, until further notice, a subscription of £10 per annum will provide all members with an electronic copy of *Cameo* via the WASC website three times a year. Alternatively members can choose to receive a printed copy of *Cameo* by post for £20 per annum. The cost of postage to overseas members 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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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

Auction Report, John Sacher WA Sale

Dear Barry,

Re. the report on John Sacher's posthumous sale in *Cameo* 101 p133 I have no wish to cross swords with the authors of this article but....

The philatelic press advised the highlight of this sale was not an item from British West Africa but an early cover from French West Africa which realised £20,000 plus charges.

This is an early cover with French Colonial Eagles from the island of Gorée near Senegal, the diamond cancel added to the stamps the most difficult of the colonial cancels to find on piece yet alone on cover. A magnificent item which obviously outshone any of those from BWA.

I appreciate the French area in not normally covered by *Cameo* apart from issues of Cameroun perhaps, but surely worthy of mention in this case. Best wishes,

John Mayne
Bridgnorth

Mystery Dahomey Postmark

Dear Barry and Rob,

I specialise in West African colonies postmarks to 1907 and have just acquired this stamp via Delcampe. I shall be most grateful if you could please publish the attached scan in the next *Cameo* in an attempt to find out from any member whether they know where this cds comes from or indeed anything about this post office.

I have never heard of or seen any reference to CABOLE/DAHOMÉY ET DEPENDANCES in my extensive library of reference books, neither does a Google search return any information whatsoever! A mystery.... Best regards,

Simon Binsted
Andorra



PS Maurice Tyler of FCPS has put me on the right track, as it is now called Kamboli (or Kambolé, in the back of beyond in Togo – after being ceded to Germany in 1912), but I certainly have never seen it before. Chances are that it must be an exceedingly rare postmark, especially from 1904, and I would dearly like any more information that anyone can provide, so publishing the scan would be great.

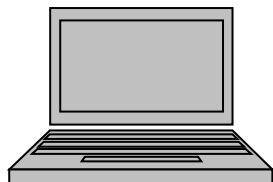
WWII Air Services

Dear Barry,

Re. Frank Walton's note in *Cameo* 101 p132, I would like to add that this is a very bald summary. What I did was extract, to clear my own mind, from John Wilson's great transcription of the sourcebook *Report on the Progress of Civil Aviation 1939 - 1945*, which is of course available from WASC, purely the routes that included a call in West Africa, and then summarise this when Frank asked about wartime routes.

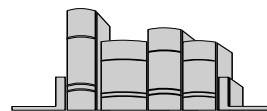
Anybody (and I feel sure there will be many) wanting proper details is invited to ask me for a digital copy of my extracts, or, better still, buy the original book.

Barbara Priddy
Wimbledon



Sources

Views expressed by reviewers are their own
and are not necessarily endorsed by WASC
or the editors of *Cameo*



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

Sierra Leone 2½d on 2s, Third Edition, by Frank L. Walton RDP FRPSL, ISBN 978-1-905647-22-4

Only four sheets of the 1897 2½d on 2s Sierra Leone surcharge were produced, making a total of 240 stamps. In his continuing study of this issue Frank, aided by Majed Halawi, has now tracked down 160 of the stamps. Of the 64 scarcer overprint types (WASC Types B-F), all but four have now been recorded. The format of the first and second editions has been retained; each stamp is illustrated and its provenance traced, and the formidable task of positioning each stamp in its original sheet has been achieved.

Besides the 13 previously unrecorded stamps in the third edition, many of the existing images have been improved and provenances extended. A new chapter on forgeries includes three items that have recently come to light; fortunately for collectors, the underlying 2s Stamp Duty adhesive required to produce such items is not common, particularly in mint condition.

The third edition is only published in digital format, with the file available for download without charge through the website of the West Africa Study Circle via a link from the home page: www.wasc.org.uk. A paper copy has been donated to the RPSL Library.

Interest in this book should not be confined to those readers with an interest in Sierra Leone, or who are fortunate enough to possess one or more of these stamps! The methods used by the author are most instructive, and illustrate exactly how such a study should be undertaken.

Review by Philip Quirk

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.

ARGE Bericht 136, March 2013

Ein Brief aus der Heimat - Kamerun im ersten Weltkrieg, by Carsten Brekenfeld

Gibbons Stamp Monthly, volume 47 number 10, April 2017

pp106-107, *Ascension Island: The 1975 Red Overprint* by Stefan Heijtz FRPSL

volume 47 number 11, May 2017

p117, *Stamp Hunting, Sierra Leone* by Nimrod

volume 48 number 3, August 2017

p75, *Stamp Hunting, St Helena* by Nimrod

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

New Features include:

A document giving postage rates of Nigeria during the George VI period which was gathered from Nigeria Gazettes by the late Nigel Lutwyche.

A 2017 presentation on Ghana postmarks can be found on the Gold Coast/Ghana page.
Early issues of *Cameo* (1975-1984) are now available for download or reading on screen.

**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

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Destination Victoria; GB Postal Stationery Wrappers

by John Courtis; Feedback (I)

John Mayne

My thanks to John for this interesting article (Ref. 1) and to the Editors for publishing it.

John states that of 10,000 items recorded, the one illustrated is the sole example to Kamerun. This is no surprise; British merchants and shipping fell a long way short in marketing goods and services by comparison with their German counterparts. Pre 1900 there were more German than British merchants in Lagos, and Woermann Line were aggressive to the extent they forced the Conference to admit the company into their arrangements.

As John states outward Woermann ships called at Dover. I have not seen any German mail with Dover connection other than a postcard from a Woermann purser to Dover Trinity Pilot, perhaps confirming the two knew each other from their duties. Czimmek lists returning Woermann ships called Dover April 1899 to November 1904. With ships calling monthly Plymouth April 1899 to March 1900, it was quicker for mail to pass from here than be handled at Dover, the latter cancel in this period then unlikely. Interestingly John states ships called Dover 11th monthly, but Czimmek makes no mention. Togo mail, not common, via Liverpool is held, mostly pre 1900.

Czimmek lists returning Woermann ships called monthly at Plymouth from 25 April 1899 to 28 March 1900. Mail endorsed via Plymouth and / or cancelled on arrival held. Southampton is listed on return voyages, logically replacing Dover, monthly from 26 March 1902 to 1914, French mail for dropped and taken across the channel. Examples of the Southampton endorsement and arrival cancel on Togo and Kamerun mail held.

In the absence of transits on John's wrapper one cannot identify if this routed via Liverpool or Dover; few British ships if any, called at Kamerun. Czimmek's closest dates *Hans Woermann* departing 27 May arriving Victoria 22 June, and *Eleonore Woermann* departing 9 May arriving 29 May, maybe just possible.

The one wrapper I have (Figure 1) unfortunately has an indistinct cancel, perhaps caused by unevenness of the contents, strictly perhaps not Togo mail being addressed to Quittah arriving 8 July 1896 and re-directed to Lome arriving three days later, without additional postage added.

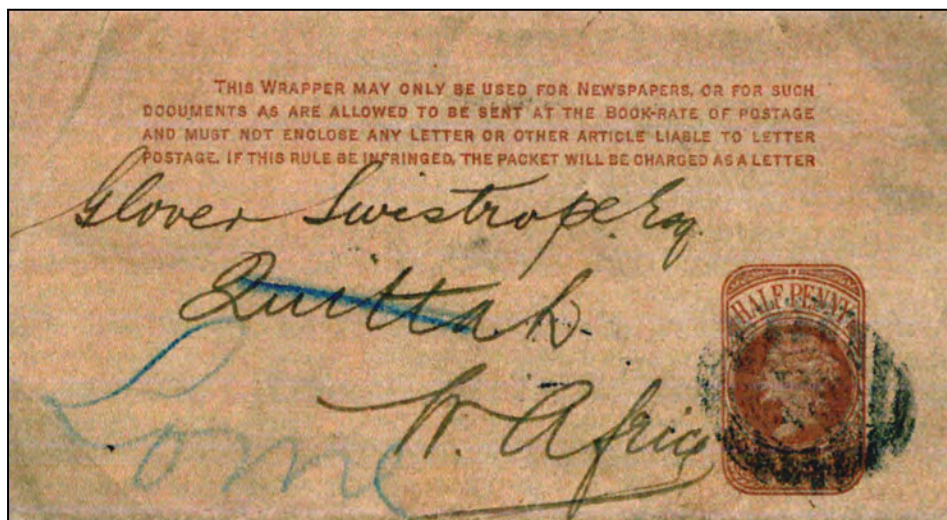


Figure 1
Halfpenny newspaper wrapper with indistinct cancel addressed to Glover Swistrop at Quittah.
Quittah arrival of 08.07.1896 on reverse; redirected to Lome

With the RAF having destroyed Woermann's Hamburg office Czimmek's schedules of 140 pages are reconstructed from mail seen; a mammoth task as in 1913 153 Woermann ships left for West Africa. In August 1914 the company was the world's largest privately owned shipping business.

Reference

- 1 Courtis John K., "Destination Victoria, Cameroon, German West Africa: Tale of a GB Post Office, Postal Stationery Wrapper", *Cameo*, Volume 18 pp185-189, WASC June 2017

Destination Victoria; GB Postal Stationery Wrappers by John Courtis; Feedback (II)

John Mayne

I again refer to the article by Dr John Courtis (Ref. 1) but hesitate in pointing out some inaccuracies therein.

There are few UK collectors of German Colonies; indeed I may be alone collecting (for over 40 years in depth) Togo, the first and smallest colony, and have exhibited this together with the Allied occupation to 20 July 1922 both here and Germany.

John Courtis writes 'as a show of German interest the small gunboat SMS *Möwe* (*Seagull*) arrived in West Africa' - this was not the case. Hamburg merchants made several approaches for official support of their African interests and maybe by way of appeasement the Chancellor appointed Woermann to be official mail carriers on 10 August 1882, conditional on Woermann separating shipping and trading interests. I believe they received a substantial subsidy for their West and East Africa routes; the first voyage to Australia being too far and un-remunerative.

John notes that in 1884 Woermann, as spokesman for the traders, petitioned Bismarck for protection of their interests. In fact the request was stronger than this and had been ongoing for several years. In a volte face Bismarck changed direction, agreeing a programme of colonisation commencing with Africa in what were to become Togo, Kamerun and Deutsch Sudwest-Afrika (DSWA). In his defence he had been occupied unifying Germany.

T. Pakenham in *The Scramble for Africa* - Chapter 12 - Germany, Africa, and London, notes that Germany, being the last European power to obtain a foothold on the continent, was therefore left with the crumbs! Covering the period 19 May to November 1884 he explains the reasons for the change of mind and notes that Count Herman von Bismarck, the Chancellor's son, met Lord Granville at the Foreign Office on the first date. Denying interest in Togo, the British also denied interest in the latter, being fully occupied in the Gold Coast.

The meeting was intended to overcome disagreement with the way Germany was behaving regarding DSWA. Bismarck left that meeting to immediately cable, under code, Doctor Nachtigal (Nightingale) already in Lisbon where the *Möwe* had arrived. The doctor travelled overland by train by way of deception and to avoid recognition. He was instructed to sail as soon as possible.

The ship reached West Africa and the German flag raised 5 July 1884 for the first time at Togo, a small village, and also that day at Bagida, a small fishing village. 6 July saw Lome under German influence. Simple agreements were made whereby in return for goods Germany, three to four weeks away, would provide a gunboat and military support if needed. There was never a need for the latter; this leading to the eventual downfall of the country in 1914.

Nachtigal sent coded messages to Germany, using the words 'orange', 'ginger' and 'cocoa' etc to confirm he had met his obligations at Togo. He next departed for Kamerun and followed the same procedure there on 11 July. Woermann had had a presence here from 1868.

Next to DSWA, where a German merchant Adolf Luderitz had acquired the Bay of Angra Pequena in 1883, and already made agreements with locals. On 24 April 1884 the area was declared German by Bismarck much to the chagrin of England and the Cape of Good Hope - there had been friction for some time. Nachtigal confirmed this arrangement, raising the flag on 7 August 1884 when Angra Pequena was promptly renamed Luderitzbucht.

As an aside Little-Popo, Togo, was until November 1885 under the control of a chief named Lawson, a family of sound reputation across West Africa and leanings towards the UK.

Local unrest led by the French resulted in an uprising and a plea by Lawson to Sierra Leone for assistance, which was declined. This led to France taking control only for the city to pass to Germany on 26 December 1885, Klein-Popo being the first capital of Togo.

Nachtigal was not yet finished and he continued to Samoa!

By coincidence or quirk of fate a second ship, also named *Möwe* was, in World War One, a German surface raider in Atlantic and West African waters. It captured the Elder Dempster *Appam* returning to England with various notables and £50,000 in gold in February 1916. The ship was taken by a prize crew to the States, but the German crew were interned, the British returned to Falmouth and the bullion followed. It was my discovery of a cover from Togo which included a newspaper article of the incident that brought this episode to the interest of collectors. Gartner recently offered a captured cover for £1500.

I hope John and *Cameo* readers may find this of interest. Some dates can be verified by Albert Friedemann's *The Stamps and Cancells of the German Colonies and German Post Offices Abroad*.

Reference

- 1 Courtis John K., "Destination Victoria, Cameroon, German West Africa: Tale of a GB Post Office, Postal Stationery Wrapper", *Cameo*, Volume 18 pp185-189, WASC June 2017

Editor's Note: I showed these two responses from John Mayne to Dr John Courtis who replied as follows:

Letter 1 from John Mayne adds a bit to the story but he has not mentioned the recent Colin Tabcart tome on shipping to/from West Africa which I would have thought is the most up-to-date reference.

Letter 2 adds nothing to the story per se but is interesting peripheral information that contradicts what appears in Wikipedia, my go to reference for background information. Perhaps John could be encouraged to revise that section of the Wikipedia entry as a feature of Wikipedia is to invite experts to add their knowledge to refine and correct misinformation.

With thanks and very best wishes,

John

Another 1906 Cover from Northern Nigeria

Ray Harris

Patrick Frost & Rob May illustrated a cover in *Cameo* 101 (p182) sent to Colintraiwe, which has an OFFICIAL PAID / LOKOJA postmark. The Frost cover was sent to Miss M.B. Campbell. I have an almost identical, though scruffier, cover sent on the same day to Mrs Campbell (Figure 1). It took the same route, with identical Greenock and Colintraiwe markings. The initials under "No stamps available" are DC, those of Captain Duncan Campbell of the 2nd Black Watch.



Figure 1
Front and reverse of the cover from Lokoja to Colintraiwe

This cover has a blue crayon T/1 applied at Lokoja; I believe that was also on the Frost cover, rather obscured by the reseal label. It seems uncertain whether single or double rate of postage should have been collected from the addressee.

There is some information about similar letters sent from the Boer War in a *Notebook* of the London Postal History Society (Ref. 1); this includes notes from *The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist* and also from research in the Post Office Archives by Alistair Kennedy. It seems from that research, that the single rate should be charged, though to the soldier it was effectively free as the Army were to pick up the bill.

I have three other covers from Northern Nigeria endorsed "No stamps available": one arrived Liverpool May 1900 has 1d to pay; one arrived Plymouth February 1902 has 2d to pay; one arrived Plymouth January 1903 has 1d to pay. Further examples of both single and double rate being charged on covers from other administrations can be found on the internet.

I think that use of the Official Paid canceller would not have been justified. The only correct use of the mark that I have from Lokoja is in 1915 applied on the front. A Lokoja postmark would normally have been applied on the back in transit and I suggest the clerk simply used the wrong one. On my cover, not only did the T.P.O. clerk charge the double rate, but someone added an extra T in red ink.

Reference

- 1 Download from: <http://www.gbpa.org.uk/information/downloads/files/LPHG/notebook/160%20-%20Dec%202004.pdf> (one string, no spaces - Ed.)

Registered Letter sent within Abeokuta, S. Nigeria

Stanley Field

Figure 1 shows a cover from Southern Nigeria, dated 6 July 1910. The registered letter was sent from Igbein Hill Abeokuta to Ibara, Abeokuta. This would be within the confines of the same municipality. The rate for internal mail in Southern Nigeria was ½d per 1 oz. The rate for the greatest registration was 8d per 120 pounds. Yet the sum of the postage is well over these amounts. Why would anyone place so much value on such a small envelope? The stamps used come from two different sets, so it probably was not a philatelic letter.

Note the cancellation mark on the cover. The number in the box of the registration cancellation is one unit below that (74863) which is illustrated in the Ince and Sacher book (Ref. 1).



Figure 1
The cover described by Stanley. Note the Registration Number, 74862

Reference

- 1 Ince J.F. & Sacher J., *The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region Prior to 1914*, p471, RPSL, London 1992

Despite Stanley's comment, I believe this may actually be a 'philatelic' cover because of the carefully arranged stamps and clear postmarks. Can any reader add anything further? - Barry

Nigeria: Coastal Post Offices of Old Calabar

Eddy Akpan

I was on a trip to Akpap Okoyong for three weeks and decided to use my spare days to explore the region and find out what is left of the Post Offices and other Colonial historical sites in the region.

It is a 30 minutes bike ride from Akpap Okoyong to Creek Town. I was very excited, as I have been longing to see what Creek Town looks like. When I got there on Monday 5 June 2017 at exactly 8:11am, I had missed the Postman who was already on board a boat from Creek Town to Calabar (about a 15-20mins shorter journey compared to taking the road from Akpap Okoyong via Okurikang to Calabar). We spoke on the phone and he promised to visit me at Akpap Okoyong the following day on his return from Calabar. I explained to him I had some mails to post from Creek Town to different parts of the world. He would need to have stamps and his canceller when he came to Okoyong so that we could do the franking of the mail, ready for him to take it to Calabar. When he arrived, he only had 5 copies of some N30 stamps, far too few for my 15 pieces of mail (5 destined for international places, and 10 internal). So he had to travel back to Calabar to make requisition for more stamps.

He returned the next day with a full sheet of the newly released Anti-corruption N50 stamps. When it was time to cancel the envelopes we discovered that his canceller had no date in it. According to him, he finds it difficult to change the date, hence he would do the franking, but write the date in the space by hand. I objected to this since such methods will cause biro writing on the stamps! Also, there was no Creek Town shown on the canceller when we did the demo on plain paper. I insisted that I actually wanted it to be shown that I am posting the mail from Creek Town.

Much to my surprise, he brought out another bigger canceller which did have Creek Town boldly on it but as he struck the cancellation I realized that there was a problem with the date. The date was shown as December 2012! This will confuse any collector of postal history, with what will seem to be a very early usage of the Anti-corruption stamp. He told me he still planned to do a plain cancelling and write the date by hand, but we agreed that if he did so, the date should be written on the envelope and not on the stamps. If he actually does this, it will make some interesting postal history. So now we are expecting a mail posted in 2012 from Creek Town, reaching Calabar in one day and beginning its trip to Aba, and to Lagos for onward delivery to the UK, apparently 5 years later! An example of the resulting batch of covers is shown opposite as Figure 1, and Figure 2 depicts the author outside the closed Creek Town PO.

The next location was Ikoneto, which is a 10 minutes bike ride from Akpap Okoyong. I met the former security man turned postman (due to lack of a postman from Calabar to the coastal community) clearing the surrounding vegetation (Figures 3 and 4). It is a far bigger Post Office than Creek Town. There is also a Postal Agency at Ikoneto but covered with shrubs. Here the Postman has had no stamps at all for many days. Luckily, I went with four extra stamps of N50 each. But as we were looking at his stamp folder I discovered for him one N50 2009 Monkey Colony Definitive. I posted two mails to myself and the Calabar Stamp Club from Ikoneto. The security man turned postman was excellent at changing the date of his canceller. He did it with extreme dexterity. We had to use water to wet the stamp pad for cancellation to be possible.

While I was at Akpap Okoyong, I contacted Dr. Simon Heap, and discussed my planned visit to Creek Town, as I knew he had made a similar visit many years ago during one of his visits to Calabar. He sent me a publication he made sometime ago on the History of Creek Town PO which mentioned a PO at Akpap Okoyong in September 1947. That sent me searching for the site of the Okoyong PO even though I had been told by the locals since I arrived that there is no PO in Akpap Okoyong.

I eventually met with one Apostle Joseph Akaba, a retired Staff of P&T at Ogoja in Cross River State in the 1980s. He told me a long story of how he was compulsorily retired from his job when P&T became NITEL. But he was a good guide to the location of the last Postal Agency of Akpap Okoyong (Figures 5 and 6) located at the Okoyong Zonal Office – Odukpani Local Government Area.

He told me of another retired P&T staff person, Mr. Offiong Ukpang Okon who was from Akpap Okoyong who, on seeing how their people suffered in not receiving and sending mails, decided to build and run the Postal Agency at the location until his death on 26 September 1999. The Odukpani Local Government Area Council reneged from the payment of an agreed amount of money to Nipost, which caused Nipost to stop passing through the village. So Akaba himself started going to Calabar on a weekly basis to send and receive mails for the village, which he distributed from house to house on his return.

Mr. Akaba took over the mail connection to Calabar, without needing to use the abandoned building. In fact Akaba said he never entered the Postal Agency building after the death of Mr. Offiong. He continued travelling straight to Calabar to convey mails from and to the community until 2003 when he had a cardiac arrest. Then the process ended totally. There is no postal service for this community but the Postal Agency building at Akpap Okoyong is still standing today awaiting a volunteer.

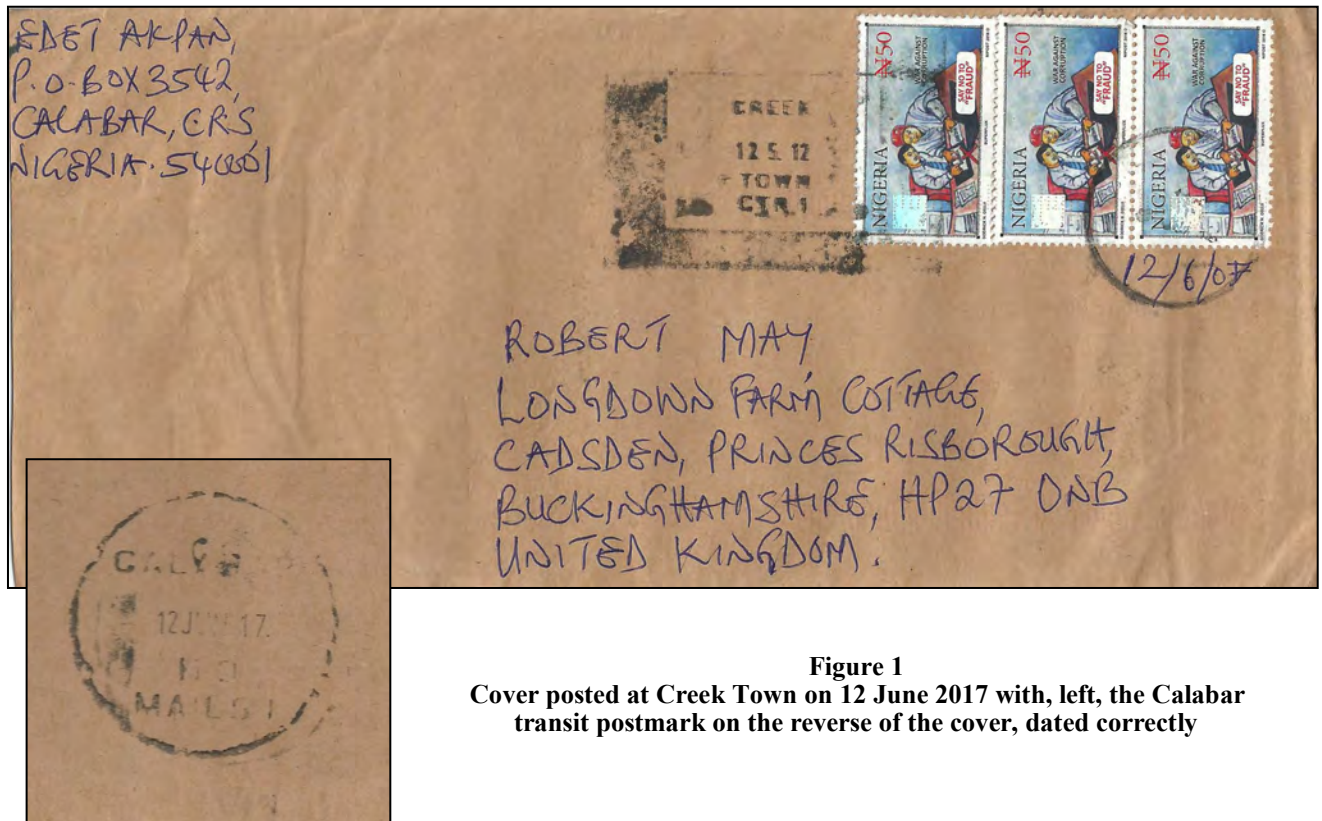


Figure 1
Cover posted at Creek Town on 12 June 2017 with, left, the Calabar transit postmark on the reverse of the cover, dated correctly



Figure 2
Eddy Akpan standing outside the closed Creek Town post office



Figure 3
Ikoneto Post office back view with security guard turned postman



Figure 4
Ikoneto Post Office, front view



Figure 5 (right, top)
Okoyong Postal Agency building
and

Figure 6 (right, below)
The posting box at Okoyong PA,
still apparently available for use





Figure 7
Presbyterian Church at Okoyong.
Note the statue of Mary Slessor, holding twins, to the left of this picture



Figure 8
Mary Slessor's house at Okoyong

Okoyong is famous in Nigeria as the home of the missionary Mary Slessor, where she became nicknamed Obongawan Okoyong (the Queen of Okoyong). Her church in Okoyong and her home still stand and are shown as Figures 7 and 8.

She was a Scottish Presbyterian who first arrived in Nigeria in 1876, aged 28, and was assigned to Calabar. At that time she confronted customs that included human sacrifice when village elders died, and the belief that twins embodied evil which meant the parents would abandon them in the bush as soon as they were born. She went into the bush to find them and then brought them up in her mission house. She learnt to speak the Efik language and that greatly helped her to gain the great respect and confidence of the local people.

She travelled to Okoyong in August 1888 after previous male missionaries had been killed, then lived alone with the Okoyong and Efik people for the rest of her life. She not only preached the word of God but also settled disputes, established schools and developed trading. In 1892 she became vice-consul in Okoyong, presiding over the native court. She lived with repeated bouts of malaria and died of it on 13 January 1915. She was buried in Duke Town with full honours.



Mail for Passenger aboard *Professor Woermann* November 1914

John Mayne

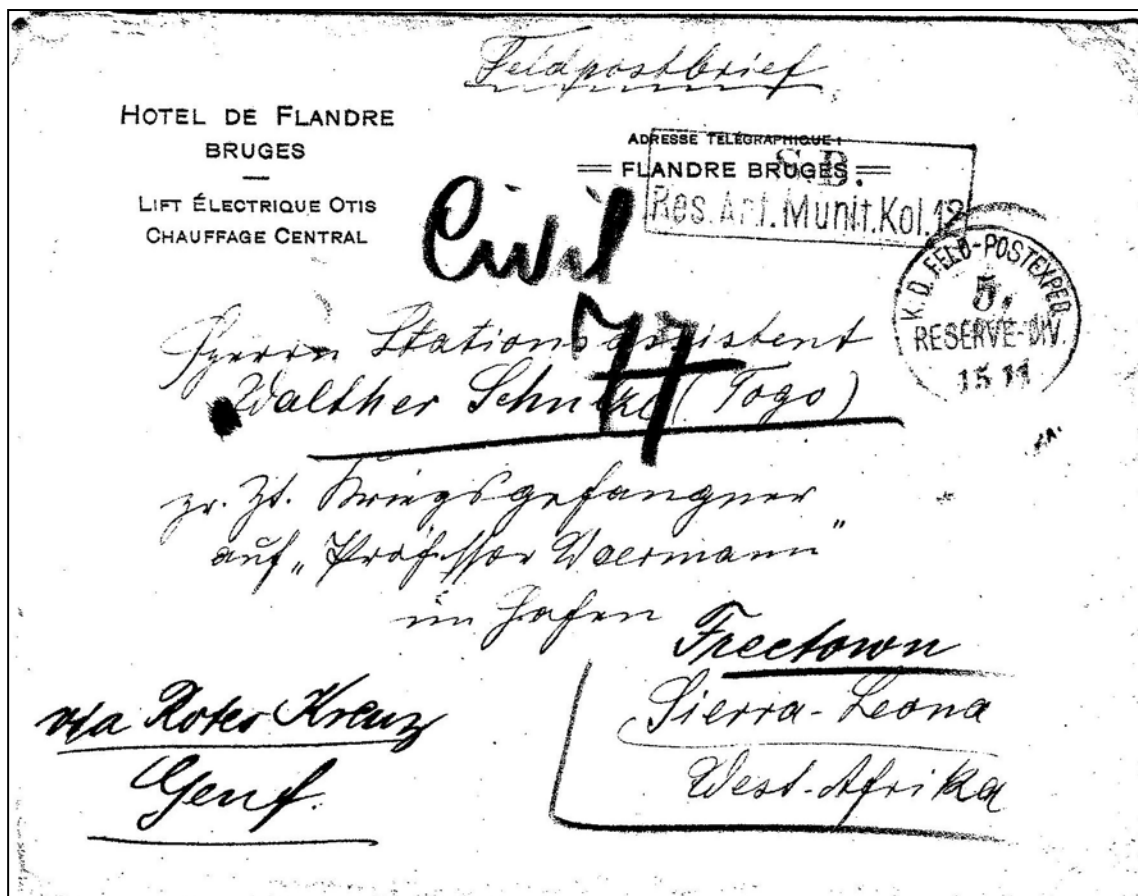


Figure 1
Peter Vogenbeck's cover

The cover illustrated as Figure 1 has puzzled Peter Vogenbeck, who owns it, myself, Frank Walton, Jeremy Martin and Graham Mark. Graham Mark has provided the best potential explanation but I am now sending it to *Cameo* in hopes that any other member has a firmer view.

It is an advertising envelope for the Hotel de Flandre Bruges with the sender's address written on the reverse in German 'Abs. Max Schultze II, Res. Sers. Munit. Kolonne 12, III Res. Armee Korps. 5 Res Division'. It was sent free 'Feldpostbrief' addressed to his brother, Walther Schultze, aboard ship returning to Togo. It is postmarked by the Feldpost sending office on 15 November 1914.

Walther Schultze was aboard SS *Professor Woermann* when it was captured and impounded at Freetown. It seems that his brother was aware that German nationals were being held aboard that ship because he has addressed his letter to Sierra Leone. Somewhere in Europe the words *Freetown* and *via Roter Kreuz Genf* (via Red Cross Geneva) were added in the same hand, then the cover was backstamped at Geneva on 28 Nov 1914. The puzzle is the large handwritten *Civil 77* added to the front of this cover.

Frank Walton was unable to assist and passed the query to Jeremy Martin. He doubts that the cover got any further than Geneva; there is no Freetown arrival marking so it may never have reached there.

Graham Mark has further emphasized that. He is aware from a personal correspondent that 243 Germans captured in West Africa were transferred to the UK before the end of 1914. So, whilst the *Civil 77* could have referred to the cabin number aboard the *Professor Woermann*, it is more likely to be the mark of a handling office at the Red Cross tasked with the job of tracking down the addressee. There is no indication that the cover was either delivered to the addressee or returned to the sender.

Gold Coast QV New Varieties

Gwyn Hughes



Figure 1
2d green SG 6 with
watermark inverted and reversed



Figure 2
4d magenta with
damaged last E of PENCE



Figure 3
6d orange with
damaged letters of the value

I have found three values of the 1876-1884 watermark CC set with previously unlisted varieties (unless any other member knows otherwise).

The variety shown as Figure 1 is difficult to see on this scanned image but I have shown this 2d green (SG 6) used stamp to Ian Anderson and Rob May who confirm that it has the Crown CC watermark both inverted and reversed, so that the two Cs are the right way round as seen from the back of the stamp. Figure 1 shows the watermark inverted so that the two Cs are inverted at the top of the image.

Figures 2 and 3 are both examples of damage to the duty plate. In Figure 2 (4d SG 7) the final E of FOUR PENCE has its middle bar bent downward. In Figure 3 (6d SG 8) the letters S, C and both Es of SIX PENCE have damage at the bottom of each letter.

The only reference I have seen to any damage to the duty plate on these stamps is in Sacher (Ref. 1) where he says that the 6d is recorded with a damaged second E in PENCE at row 3 stamp 1 and with a flattened S in SIX on row 10, stamps 1 and 2.

Reference

- 1 Sacher J.(Ed), Beale P., Ensor M., Martin J., and Newroth P., *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast to 1901*, RPSL, London 2003

Introducing Stamp Vending Machines to 1950s Nigeria

Dr Simon Heap

The Lagos General Post Office installed stamp vending machines sometime during 1955-56. This measure was designed to automate some of the single transaction postal business of the Post Office and efficiently cut waiting times in queues. However, the Post Office reported that it had “not proved entirely satisfactory due to high humidity among other troubles”. (Ref. 1) One wonders if one of the other ‘troubles’ was the use of handmade stamp coils made from strips taken from full sheets and stuck together into a roll. Nonetheless, the postal authorities hoped that “when the machines have been proved satisfactory additional ones will be installed at the larger Post Offices throughout the country. (Ref. 2)

The following year’s Annual Report hailed that a solution had been found to the jamming equipment:

Stamp selling machines which were installed the previous year at the Lagos GPO as an experimental measure continued to give trouble, largely because of the effect of the humid climate on the stamps and the mechanism. An electric heater was fitted inside the machine and seems to have solved the difficulties being experienced. (Ref. 3)

The plan to roll out such machines could now go ahead. In the run up to Nigeria’s independence in 1960, it was reported that, “stamp selling machines were introduced in a number of the larger towns and have proved popular with the public.” (Ref. 4)

References

- 1 Nigeria Posts and Telegraphs Department Annual Report, 1955-56, p7
- 2 Ibid, 1955-56, p7
- 3 Ibid, 1956-57, p9
- 4 Ibid, 1959-60, p9



Nigeria Sudan Interior Mission Aerogramme

Jeremy Martin FRPSL



Figure 1

The aerogramme illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 is type WANG.A. 06.01 (Ref. 1). It has an additional logo printed in red on the front for use by the journal *African Challenge* Nigeria, West Africa / Private Mail Bag, Lagos. As seen from the imprint on the inside of this aerogramme this journal was published in Africa by the Sudan Interior Mission.

Figure 2 shows the typewritten message sent on 23 February 1956 to a Presbyterian Mission at Angoon, Alaska thanking them for sponsorship for a special issue of *African Challenge* to commemorate the 1956 Royal Visit of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to Nigeria.

I have spoken to Ray Harris who has a similar example dated 4 August 1955. Since this adaptation of a Nigerian aerogramme is a private production it has not been included in his book *Aerogrammes of Nigeria*.

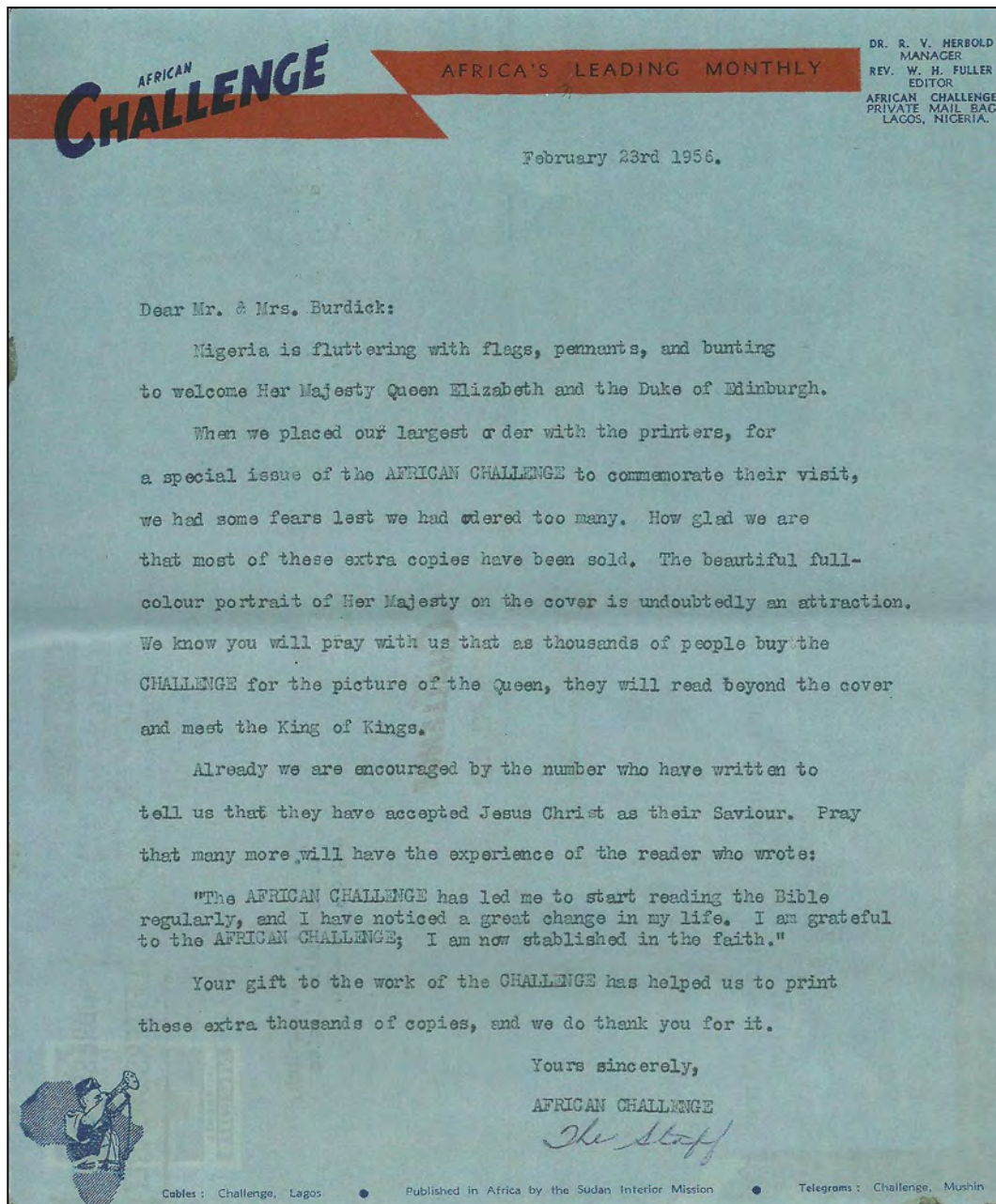


Figure 2
The letter side at 70% actual size

Reference

- 1 Harris R., *Aerogrammes of Nigeria 1948 to 2000*, p17, WASC, 2016



Two St Helena Packet Letters

Barry Burns FRPSL & Peter Cottis

The Stefan Heijtz collection of St Helena included several examples of the earliest postal marking of St Helena, the Packet Letter handstamp which was in use from 1816 to 1819. Two of these are illustrated and described below, together with transcripts of the letters.

The Packet Letter Act of 11 July 1815 called for postage of 3/6d per sheet, plus inland postage. As this was significantly higher than the Ship Letter rate of 6d per sheet (plus 2d gratuity for the Captain plus inland postage), it was necessary for Packet mail to be identified, and so the Packet Letter handstamp was introduced for all mail from India and intermediate ports. Similar handstamps therefore exist for Bombay, Calcutta, Cape of Good Hope, Colombo, Madras and Mauritius as well as St Helena, for which only 14 examples are recorded.

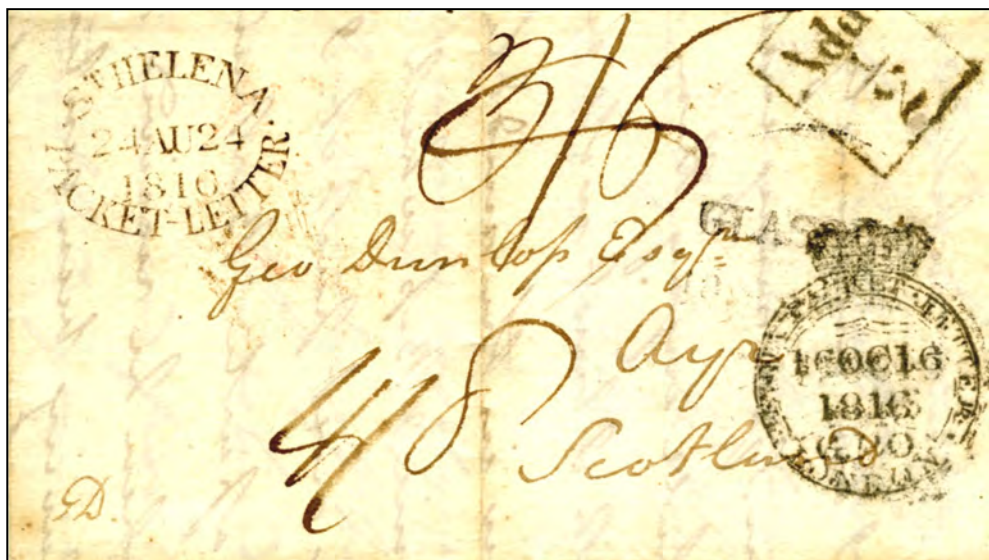


Figure 1
Earliest dated Packet Letter from George Dunlop to his father at Ayr, Scotland

Figure 1 illustrates an entire from George Dunlop, a surgeon with the Second Battalion, 66th Foot Regiment guarding Napoleon during his exile on St Helena. It is addressed to his father, also George, at Ayr in Scotland. It bears the Packet Letter handstamp HS1 dated 24 August 1816. It is thus one of three examples of this mark on the earliest known date of use. On arrival in the UK it also received the INDIA PACKET LETTER/LONDON/16OC16/1816 handstamp, a London double circle OC16.1816 mark (on the flap), a Glasgow 19 OC datestamp plus the 'Add ½' handstamp.

The packet letter rate of 3/6(d) has been deleted and uprated to 4/8(d) to include the 1/2d mileage rate from London to Ayr, plus the halfpenny Scottish Toll charge.

George writes:

Tag late Camp
1st August 1816.

My Dear Father,

I have this moment heard of one of our Transports going to England and could not miss the opportunity of writing you a few lines merely to tell you all goes on well with me. I am still in Camp, but expect to get into better quarters in about a week, at a house about half a mile from this. We have last week received notice, the authenticity of which we can have no doubt, that our first Battalion is ordered from India to St Helena to supply our place, as we undoubtedly go on half pay. I have, at present, no reason to think I shall be reduced, as I will be in the first before the reduction can take place, which cannot (be) before May next. I am in hopes, however, I shall be next home with the Battalion here, when I will be allowed six weeks leave. A medical Officer must go with them, and he goes free of expense, so that I shall lose nothing by it.

You may easily suppose I have little opportunity of knowing what is going on in the Island as our camp is so far removed from James' Town. I believe I told you in a former letter that I had had an introduction to

the Inspector Mr Baxter, whom I met a few days ago, and who told me the Governor had had a letter from Sir J. Brunton at the Cape recommending me particularly to his notice. I intend calling on the Governor, as Mr B. told me he had expressed a wish to that effect, and said he wished to pay me some attention. I am indebted to Dr Robertson for this.

I am anxiously expecting letters from you, you may easily suppose how much I shall enjoy them when they come, which I trust will soon to be. I am now in the middle of --- a letter to Annie & Bess which will be forthcoming next packet. I have seen nothing of Bonaparte. Bertrand was much hurt when he received the information of his having been sentenced (to) death in France. I see him frequently and think him by far the best of our charges.

Remember me to James when you write him & to Annie and Bess, and believe me my Dear Father,

Yours affectionately

Geo. Dunlop.

Notes

Taglate is near Silver Hill/Levelwood, about 4 miles by 'road' from Longwood

James, Annie and Bess were George's siblings

The Governor of St Helena during the exile was Sir Hudson Lowe

Mr Baxter refers to Alexander Baxter, the Deputy-Inspector of Hospitals at St Helena from 1816 to 1819

Bertrand was General Henri-Gatien Bertrand, given the title 'Count' in 1808 by Napoleon. The Count and Countess accompanied Napoleon into exile and remained with him on St. Helena until after his death in May 1821

The 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 66th Foot Regiment were amalgamated on 24 July 1817

George Dunlop left St Helena on 12 September 1819 in HMS *Hyaena*, and died in 1827

The second letter, illustrated as Figure 2, has the HS1 handstamp dated 29 March 1817. It is from William Burnaby Greene to his mother Mrs Pitt Greene at Wickham, Fareham, in Hampshire.



Figure 2

Packet Letter from William Burnaby Greene to his mother Mrs Pitt Greene in Hampshire (Hants), UK

Figure 2 illustrates the entire from William Greene, bearing the Packet Letter handstamp HS1 dated 29 March 1817. On arrival in the UK it received a C/26MY26/1817 c.d.s. in red on the reverse. It is rated 4/2 (d) being the 3/6d packet rate plus 8d inland rate.

William writes:

*Briars, St. Helena
March 26th 17*

My dearest Mother,

In the greatest hurry I write to you just to inform you of the 'Phaeton's' arrival since the day before yesterday, and that she is now under sailing orders for the Isle of France (Mauritius). We had a very quiet passage from the Capes although to me it appeared very long, so anxiously was I looking forward to letters which I expected must at least have reached here, as a store ship left Portsmouth for this place at the latter end of December. You may however judge of my surprise at not receiving one single letter from anybody but Johnson. I was however greatly relieved from my anxiety by hearing in that letter that everybody was

well. Captain Festing whom I have seen, is likewise very anxious as he as well as myself has heard nothing for many months. As it is reported the 'Falmouth' is going home, Captain F. has I believe abandoned the idea of living here. He looks much better than he did.

Our sudden tho' not unexpected trip to the Isle of France will now keep me some months longer without any letters which is one of the many reasons I have for not wishing to go there. We hourly expect the 'Conqueror' here and should she arrive before our departure, I apprehend it will entirely alter the present arrangements which I shall be very glad of. Captain Wainwright mentioned in his letter the ---- had reached home, and although I confess I have not the most distant idea of promotion, nevertheless I should like to learn whether I am to form any expectations for some six years hence. I hope you will not attempt to raise my hopes, but candidly tell me if anything can be done for me. All the midshipmen are endeavouring to get home from this station to leave the service, so thoroughly are they convinced that it will be useless to remain any longer. I certainly agree with them, but I cannot conceive how many of them intend to get on elsewhere. Those of the 'Falmouth' are gone home. I need hardly say that I shall be guided entirely by the wishes of my father and yourself in all that relates to my promotion or success in the Service.

I am now at the Balcombe's and they really are very kind, whenever I am here he has begged me to consider myself quite at home. Mr. Balcombe has just told me that he intends to write to my father in a few days. I am at present drawing my allowance as it is against me at the Isle of France, not that I am in want of money except sufficient to pay for my mess, but because Mr. Balcombe has advised me to do it here in preference, and one twenty pound bill has a greater value than two ten.

I like the 'Phaeton' pretty well. Captain Stanfell is a very good man, but I am afraid that Captain Festing has spoiled me for another chief. I am on the point of going to spend the night at the Balcombe's. There is an amateur theatre here which is the only amusement (sic) St. Helena produces. I mentioned in the beginning of my letter having heard from Johnson: he appears to like Guernsey very much.

Pray remember me etc., etc.

Yours most dutiful and affectionate son,
(signed) William Burnaby Greene

Notes

William Burnaby Greene was born 20 February 1797 at All Saints, Southampton, the son of Captain Pitt Burnaby Greene and Joanna Tinling. He entered the Royal Naval College 27 January 1810 and gained the rank of Captain on 6 June 1834. He died in 1851 at Fareham, Hampshire

Captain Stanfell fought bravely both in the French and American wars. Following the peace with America, he commanded the *Phaeton* and *Conqueror*. In the former ship he conveyed Sir Hudson Lowe from England to St Helena to be Governor during Napoleon's exile and in the latter served as Flag-Captain to Rear-Admiral Plamplin during the last two years of his command at St Helena. It is recorded that the *Conqueror* was paid off in October 1820; on which occasion her officers gave Captain Stanfell an elegant entertainment in Chatham, as a mark of their esteem and an acknowledgement of his constant attention to their comforts. Such praise was not usually accorded to Naval Captains at that time.

Robert Festing entered the Navy in 1799, and served much of his time in the Dutch East Indies. He became Captain in 1811, and from 26 September 1815 to 3 August 1817, was engaged on the Cape of Good Hope and St Helena Stations. During this time he had two interviews with Napoleon - on 1 August 1816 and on 25 March 1817. In 1838 he was given a C.B., and was advanced to the rank of Rear-Admiral in 1846. He retired as Admiral in 1860 and died in 1862

The Balcombe family lived for many years on St Helena and one of the daughters, Betsy, was a companion of Napoleon. He lived in a small house in the Balcombes garden while his own quarters at Longwood (Figure 3) were being prepared.

Recommended Reading

Mabbett B., "The Packet Letter Handstamp" Part 1, *St Helena & Ascension Supplement* Number 23 pp6-10, WASC January 1995

Mabbett B., "The Packet Letter Handstamp" Part 2, *St Helena & Ascension Supplement* Number 24 pp3-7, WASC July 1995



Figure 3
Longwood House

New Nigeria N50 Definitive Discovery

Edet Akpan and Chris Bond

The 2010 definitive set from Nigeria is already a complicated release. There are stamps from 3 different printers, the main releases from Kalamazoo Security Print (circular holograms) and Superflux International (square holograms), and then a solitary release from Nigerian Security Printing and Minting (NSPM).

The NSPM was an early release featuring the Landers Brothers Anchorage on the N50 value. This was redesigned by both Kalamazoo and Superflux, meaning there were 3 variants of this design. Now, a fourth design of the Anchorage stamp has been discovered!

The new design is pictured in the middle of the 3 stamps in Figure 1. It appears to be another version by Kalamazoo, as it has a circular hologram, is printed on their slightly thicker paper, and has 12 x 12.5 perforation.



Figure 1

The new discovery (centre) flanked by printings from NSPM (left) and Kalamazoo (right)

However the ink for the yellow in 'NIGERIA' is not fluorescent and the value is black, unlike the other Kalamazoo issues. The font for the value does however match the Kalamazoo issues.

From a design viewpoint it appears to be a progression from the NSPM design, to the final Kalamazoo philatelic release. The colouring and picture is very close to the original NSPM, but the description has been shrunk. In the final version, the image is reduced, the background colour changed, and the description dropped to below the image.

From this, one theory is that it was meant to be a proof by Kalamazoo, which was then abandoned.



Figure 2

The Post Office at Ovim (Edet Akpan)

The stamp was discovered in south east Nigeria, in a remote Post Office in Ovim (pictured in Figure 2). Further investigation has traced the supply of the stamps to have come from Umuahia, Abia State.

The Lagos Philatelic Bureau had no knowledge of this stamp.

Editor's note: Hugh Jefferies notes this reported new discovery in his 'Catalogue Column' in the July 2017 edition of Gibbons Stamp Monthly.

USS *Lancaster*'s Visit to St Helena

Dennis Engblom



We do not see too many connections between the United States and the Crown Colony of St Helena. Most often early covers, whether sent from St Helena or directed to the island, relate to the business of whaling. There are also correspondences from the United States Consul on the island and mail forwarded by him. This article relates to four covers sent from St Helena in 1885 by two sailors of the United States Navy.

Figure 1
The first cover sent 18 (28?)
May 1885 to Miss Pribou
at 7½d rate, backstamped
New York 14 June

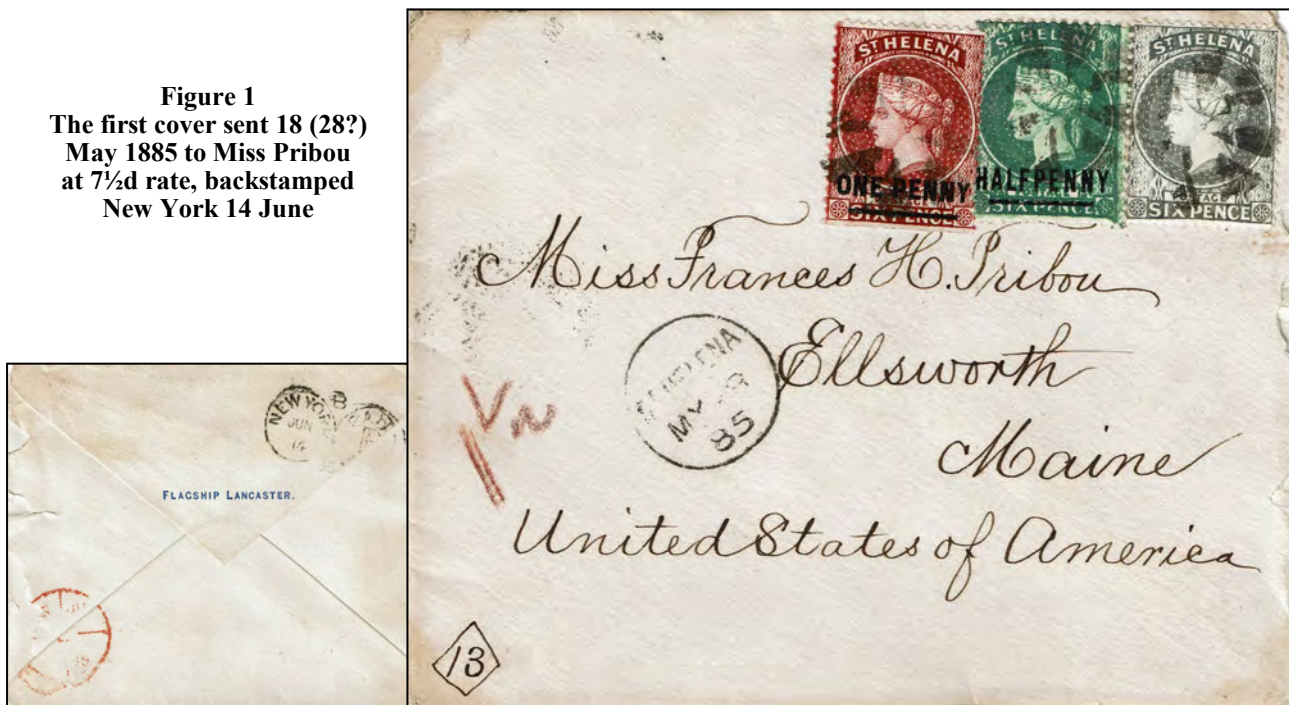


Figure 2
The second cover sent
June 1885 to Miss Pribou,
backstamped New York
4 July

Note different font of the '5'
in the St Helena datestamp - Ed.

USS *Lancaster* was a screw sloop-of-war in the United States Navy from just before the Civil War through the Spanish-American War. After serving in various theatres and capacities USS *Lancaster* was decommissioned in July 1875. Recommissioned in August 1881 she cruised extensively in the Mediterranean, northern European waters, and on the coast of Africa.

Early in 1885 *Lancaster* cruised down the west coast of Africa and arrived at the Congo River in April, on route to Rio de Janeiro. On the Atlantic transit she put in at St Helena, staying in port from 16 May to 9 June, 1885. The four covers described here were posted while the *Lancaster* was at St Helena, anchored in James Bay.



Figure 3
The first cover from Wirt McCreary to his mother at Erie, Pennsylvania, sent 18 May and received 15 June 1885

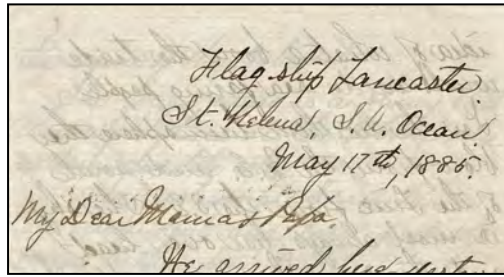
The writing on the first two covers (Figures 1 and 2) is in a very neat hand and the covers are addressed to the same recipient. Unfortunately no contents come with the covers. The two covers were posted in St Helena on the same dates, 18 May and 8 June, as the following two covers. Each envelope of the first pair is imprinted FLAGSHIP LANCASTER on the reverse, and has been numbered by the writer.

The second pair of covers (Figures 3 and 4) are special as they come with original contents. They are addressed to Mrs. D.B. McCreary at Erie, Pennsylvania, and were sent by her son Wirt. What a son to write two letters to his mother within three weeks. Partial transcripts of each letter, which are interesting from several standpoints, follow (*overleaf*).

Wirt McCreary graduated from the United States Naval Academy in June 1884. He was immediately assigned as a naval cadet to the USS *Lancaster* and joined the ship in Lisbon, Portugal on 18 July 1884. McCreary left the ship at Zanzibar on 7 April 1886. His subsequent military career involved service in the United States Marines in China (the Boxer Rebellion), Cuba and Panama. McCreary's last assignment was recruiting for the Marines in Buffalo, NY. He died at Buffalo in 1913.

All four covers carry the same franking of seven and a half pence, this rate took effect from 1 January 1884. Each cover was also marked 1½ in red, showing the amount due to Britain. Various transit and receiving marks are on the reverse sides, as illustrated at 50%.

As an aside, USS *Lancaster* stopped at St Helena again on 11 July 1886 and stayed until 26 July 1886. There must be more covers out there!



Flagship Lancaster
St. Helena, S.A. Ocean
May 17th, 1885.

My Dear Mama & Papa,

We arrived here yesterday from St. Paul de Loanda (Angola - Ed.), having made the 1200 miles in seven days and mostly under sail, only using steam long enough to carry us clear of the African coast.

It was very warm in St. Paul but we picked up the S.E. trades about 150 miles of (sic) the coast and they blew very fresh in fact a modest gale, which speedily brought the thermometer down from 90 to 70 a long wished for and much needed change. You can have no idea of what a boon the trade winds are to seafaring people.

In the northern hemisphere they blow from the N.E. and south of the line from the S.E. The sky is most always clear overhead and the sun shining and a ship just jumps thorough the water.

We made 192 miles in one day under sail above and only about half of the sails on her as she steers badly with any after sail. That was pretty good work considering that we have to drag a heavy propeller along behind us.

Provisions of all kinds were very dear at St. Paul so we lived on sea stores most of the time. Potatoes are \$11 (eleven) a bushel, being brought from Lisbon, and wood (some that we bought for starting fires) cost us \$20 (twenty) a cord delivered on board. The darkies charge \$6 a cord for cutting it and they are about the only people who can stand the exertion.

We got a two months mail on our arrival here and I got 20 letters your last one mailed from Erie on the 20th of April, containing my birthday present, got here on the 15th pretty quick work. Many thanks for the money as I was ever so pleased at getting it. Our paymaster will cash all London drafts so it is just the same thing as money. The mail steamers that touch here are the Cape steamers between Southampton and Good Hope and are very fast, making the run from here to England in two weeks so as this letter leaves in two days it ought to get to you on or about the 12th of June (actually 15th, Figure 3 - Ed.) before my letter from St. Paul reaches you.

At the Congo the Dutch traders had over 5000 cases of gin for trade with the natives so you can see what is really the worst feature of the "climate" down here.

We are first filling up on fresh provisions here. Spanish mackerel, spring chicken, Southdown mutton, fine potatoes, lettuce, bannanas (sic), fresh figs, etc. This island is a veritable oasis. It is nothing but a bundle of mountains, ten miles long and 6 miles wide, covered with a rich black loam in which every edible plant of fruit grows.

This is the last of autumn with us and the weather is delightful. The population is about 5,000 all English and some negroes besides. I have not been ashore yet but I am writing now so as to have this letter catch the mail steamer.

On Tuesday I am going to Longwood, Napoleons former abode and see his place of exile. It is four miles back of the town.

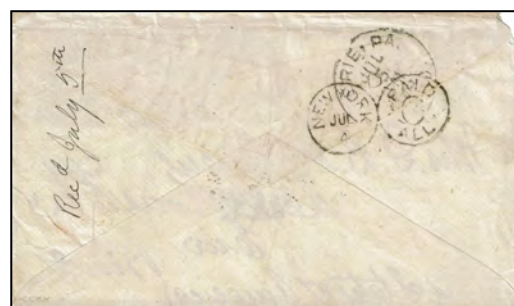
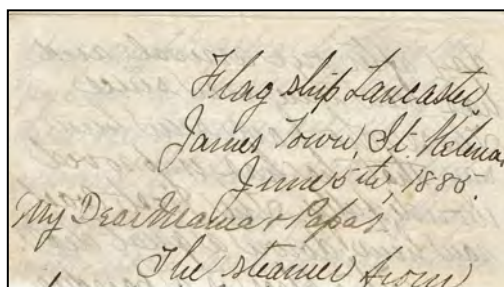
We are going to stay here two weeks, long enough to give the crew general liberty; then we will "up anchor" for Rio Janeiro (sic). The S.E. trades will carry us all the way so we will sail the intervening 2000 miles in 12 or 14 days, arriving in Rio in about a month, the middle of the Brazilian winter.

We are ordered as flagship of the S.A. station and I am just as well satisfied as I couldn't go there on a better ship than this.

Your loving son,
Wirt McC



Figure 4
The second cover from Wirt McCreary to his mother
sent 8 June and received 4 July 1885



Flagship Lancaster
James Town, St Helena,
June 5th, 1885.

My Dear Mama & Papa

The steamer from the Cape to England will touch here next Monday so I will begin this letter two days before hand in order to be sure and have it ready.

We have been here three weeks tomorrow and everybody has braced up wonderfully on the pure cool air and the fresh provisions.

«
The Admiral went to board up in the hills the 3rd day after our arrival and has been there ever since. Those who have seen him say that he has improved wonderfully. The West Coast ran him down a great deal.

This place is a paradise for fishermen, no less than seventy varieties being caught. The other evening I borrowed a man's line who was fishing on the forecastle and I caught over a dozen mackerel in less than 10 minutes.

McNulta and I went out to Napoleon's place the other day in a carriage and a long hard pull it was. Over hills, down hills and up hills for four miles. The house is an unpretentious frame one and stands on top of a bleak hill that has no redeeming features whatever.

The records of St Helena are very silent on everything concerning his life here so it is hard to find out much. Perhaps you may have an opportunity to read up something about it before long.

One day last week a splendid English clipper ship the "Lorrens" came in here from Australia bound to England with 70 first-class passengers aboard.

A day later the English flagship "Boadicea" came in, and the next evening a hop was given on shore for which our band played. All of the people in town went and all of the young lady passengers from the clipper ship so everybody had a good time.

One great pleasure in lying in an English port is the regularity which which (sic) the mail steamers come and the quick time they make. From here to England is over four thousand miles and the steamer which is due here today from England has just been sighted.

The letter that I sent you from the Gaboon (sic) by a Portuguese steamer on the 25th of April will probably get to you about the same time this letter does about the 2nd of July (actually 4th, Figure 4 - Ed.).

We will sail from here next Tuesday or Wednesday for Rio and will make the run in from fifteen to twenty one days. There is only line (sic) of steamers from Rio to the US but they only run monthly I believe so our mail will probably go via England as usual. If you want a letter to reach us soon look in the NY Herald and find when the steamer sails, then address the letter to me "per the ——" (name of steamer) and care of the US Consul.

There is also a cable to Rio. I tell you all these because you might like to know them. We are just in the dead of winter here and will be when we arrive at Rio but it is not noticeable as the weather is very pleasant.

Postage from here is 15 cents a half ounce so I will quit. Unless my letter from Rio catches the American steamer it will take at least three week to reach you after our arrival.

Your loving son,
Wirt McC

USS *Lancaster* was decommissioned at the Philadelphia navy yard 1 May 1902 and her name was stricken from the navy list on 31 December 1915. Her golden eagle figurehead (right) is now on display at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia.



References

McCarthy Wm J. (ship's printer) and Hoag Lorenzo, USMC, *Cruise of the United States Flagship Lancaster & Cruise of 1884-87...*, Printed on the ship's cruise by the crew
Hamersly Lewis R., editor, *Who's Who in Pennsylvania*, L.R. Hamersly Company, 1904, New York
Clark George B., *Treading Softly: US Marines in China, 1819-1949*, Praeger Publishers, 2001, Westport, CT
Mabbett B., compiler and editor, *St Helena - The Postal, Instructional and Censor Markings, 1815-2000*, WASC, Dronfield 2002



Unidentified St Helena Boer Camp Censor - Update

Dennis Engblom

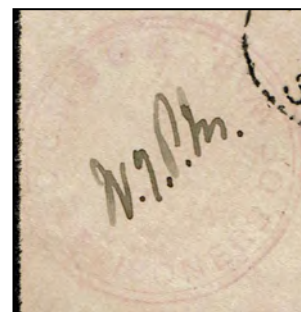


Figure 1

Registered mourning
cover to Germany with
Type 1 censor circle
initialed 'NIPM'(?),
enlarged above

A previous article (Ref. 1) suggested the existence of a censor in the Boer camps who had not been identified in St Helena references. This was based on six examples of censor initials, shown in the article. Since that issue of *Cameo* was published I have received no comments on the article's contents. No one has raised objections, so let me blunder on.

Another cover has been acquired (Figure 1) which seems to substantiate the existence of the new censor. The initials on this cover are a bit different than the previous examples in that the individual letters stand out more clearly. The letters appear to be NIPM, or possibly WIPM. This cover was sent to Germany, as were the others. The date of the St Helena canceller is 16 February 1901 which is within the date range shown on the other covers.

Reference

- 1 Engblom Dennis, "Unidentified St Helena Boer Camp Censor", *Cameo*, Volume 10, p289, WASC June 2008



British Togo at Grosvenor 2017

Chris Jackson

(Note: all realisations include the buyer's premium of 22.8% inclusive of VAT rounded down to the nearest pound. Estimates are in brackets.)

Spurred into action by Barry Burns' and Jeremy Martin/John Hossack's auction reports in the June 2017 *Cameo*, I here report on the British Togo section of the Grosvenor auction of British Empire and Foreign Countries Postage Stamps and Postal History which I attended on Thursday 2 February 2017.

A significant number of British Togo overprints, both Accra and London, are uncommon in a single auction and it was pleasing to see forty five lots in this auction covering mainly mint stamps but also with six postal stationery lots, a Togo Literature lot and ten cover lots. Besides the bidders in the room, there was the opportunity to bid via the book, agents, telephone and live internet. My impression was that the book and bidders in the room dominated the successful bids.

Accra sets: Two lots of the H34-H46 set (one mint and one used) were sold at £172 (£100). A small 'F' set (H34a - H46a) made £307 (£250-£300). A set of the ½d to 5/- 'thin G' (H34b - H44b) reached £246 (£100-£120).

There were eleven lots of the **mint 'CCUPATION' error**. They mainly sold above estimate. The ½d and 1d together (H34f and H35f) fetched £282 (£100-£120). The 2d (H36f) achieved £196 (£100-£120). The 2½d (H37f) went for £184 (£70-£80). The 6d (H40f) made £270 (£100-£120) and the 2/6d (H43f) sold for £491 (£200-£250). Two lots of the 1/- (H41f) achieved £110 (£70-£80) and £67 (£60-£70). The 2/- (H42f) fetched £282 (£150-£180) and the 10/- (H45f) made £589 (£200-£250). **Missing hyphen high values** (Two lots); The 2/- (H42c) made £307 (£120-£150) and the 2/6d (H43c) reached £282 (£100-£120).

The London overprints: (Five lots) sold at around estimate although a used set (H47 to H58) realised £184 (£100-£120). **Postal Stationery:** Bids were disappointing with the specimen postcards (½d and 1d) selling together at £104 (£120-£150), the ½d and 1d postcards (used) selling together at £74 (£80-£100) and the size F registered specimen envelope selling at £92 (£100-£120).

All the **Covers/Cancellations lots** (10) sold below estimate. Undoubtedly the star attraction of the British Togo section of the auction was a certificated **mint ½d double overprint** (H34g; unpriced in SG) which, after lively bidding, soared to £982 against an estimate of £250-£300.

This was a well run auction with excellent viewing on the previous day. At the half way point in the auction, Grosvenor were over two hours behind where they expected to be because the live internet bidding slows the auction process significantly. With T for Togo being towards the end of the auction, I was close to needing to book a room in London but rapid progress was made in the last two hours.



Bark *Wanderer* at St Helena

Bernard Mabbett



Figure 1
1878 cover from Azores to Capt. Heyer of Bark *Wanderer* at St Helena

In *Cameo* 86, page 84 (Ref. 1) Barry Burns illustrated and described a cover dated 31 October 1878 from the Azores addressed to Capt. Andrew Heyer, Bark *Wanderer*, St Helena, South Atlantic Ocean (Figure 1).

In the Stefan Heijtz sale of 27 April 2017 Lot 2719 there was another cover dated 1880 addressed to Capt. A.R. Heyer, Bark *Wanderer*, St Helena this time from Boston, USA (Figure 2). The cover is franked 28 cents, one cent overpaid. The cover has '110' in red equating to the 11d due for the British share. (This item now resides in my collection).



Figure 2
1880 cover from Boston to the same Captain, again at St Helena

The Whaling Bark *Wanderer* (Figure 3) was the last whaling vessel to be built at the Mattapoisett ship yard in 1878. She was launched 16 April 1878 at the Shipyard of J.H. Holmes & Sons.

She was 116 feet from stem to stern, with a beam of 27½ feet, and an overall draft of 15 feet 8 inches. Her bowsprit added an additional 50 feet to her length. The vessels owners were Gifford & Cummings, New Bedford.



Figure 3
Bark Wanderer with sperm whale
(*San Francisco Maritime NHP*)

She sailed on her four year maiden voyage on 4 June 1878, and it would appear that she used the island of St Helena as her base as Jamestown had a resident US Consul.

Captain Heyer's wife Myra accompanied him to the South Atlantic, but in February 1881 she died in childbirth at St Helena. Capt. Hayer left the ship to care for his daughter, named after her mother, and returned to Massachusetts from St Helena when young Myra was eight months old.

Between 1878 and 1924 the *Wanderer* carried out over twenty whaling expeditions, and went on to appear in the film "Down to the Sea in Ships" (1922). She was wrecked in a storm on 25 August 1924 on the rocks of Cuttyhunk, one of the Elizabeth Islands off the Massachusetts coast.

Reference

- 1 Burns B., Mabbett B., & Johnson R., "1/4d at St Helena - Accountancy or Charge Mark?", *Cameo* volume 9 pp82-85, WASC October 2005



Another St Helena 1863 Surcharge Essay

Bernard Mabbett

In *Cameo* 78 (Ref. 1) Jeremy Martin listed the 14 known types of the 1d and 4d De la Rue Essays for the 1863 imperforate, surcharged issue of St Helena. This had been first published in *The London Philatelist*, with a follow up of additional information by Barry Burns (Refs. 2 and 3).

The 1d and 4d imperforate issue of July 1863 was a stop gap issue due to the increase of postage rates (*UK from 6d to 1/-*), and the introduction of compulsory pre-payment of postage. This issue was superseded by the 1d, 4d, and 1/- perforated stamps which were invoiced by De La Rue in January 1864.

A total of 33 Essays have been recorded in either the British Library, the Royal Philatelic Collection or in private collections by the date of Jeremy's and Barry's excellent articles. There were 21 in archive collections, and 12 in private collections.

I can now record another example purchased in 2011 on a very popular auction web site (Figure 1). It was being sold by a well known dealership who obviously had no idea of its significance, and as a result I purchased it for very little money.

This brings together the total of known copies in private collections to 13. It is another example of the Figure 6 style.

My example has a Royal Certificate dated 17 August 2011 stating that it is genuine. It is an excellent four margined copy with just a small scissor cut in the bottom margin.



Figure 1
Another 'Figure 6' Essay

References

- 1 Martin J.J. / Burns B.M., "St Helena 1863 Overprint Essays", *Cameo* volume 11 pp168-170, WASC October 2009
- 2 Martin J.J., "St Helena 1863 Overprint Essays", *The London Philatelist*, volume 118 pp42-43, RPSL March 2009
- 3 Burns B.M., "St Helena 1863 Overprint Essays", *The London Philatelist*, volume 118 pp147-148, RPSL May 2009

Captain B.G.V. de Witt Hamer

Camp Postmaster at St Helena

Bernard Mabbett

Captain B.G. Versejewel de Witt Hamer was captured at the battle of Elandslaagte on 21 October 1899. He was a Captain in the Hollanderkorps, and was sent to Simonstown and placed on board the old Royal Navy Ironclad HMS *Penelope* which was being used as a prison hulk in Simons Bay.

This vessel proved to be unsuitable for the housing of the Boer POWs, and he along with his fellow prisoners was transferred to the SS *Catalonia*, and finally to the SS *Milwaukee* for transportation to the island of St Helena where he became a very prominent prisoner and became Camp Postmaster.

A large amount of inward mail is known addressed to him at Walbro Cottage on the island, where as an officer he was allowed to live outside the camp confines. Mail addressed to him while he was a prisoner of war on board the *Penelope* or the *Catalonia* is not so common.

In Figure 1 I illustrated an undated stampless cover, probably sent by his wife from the Boer Republic and addressed to him on board the *Penelope* (Figure 2). The cover has the Boer Republic pink censor seal applied, and also the V.R. Opened Under Martial Law British censor seal. There is a manuscript date in pencil on the British censor seal for 30 January 1900. (This is probably the date he received it). The cover probably travelled from the Boer Republic to Lourenco Marques in neutral Portuguese Mozambique, then by Union Castle steamer to South Africa. There are no postal markings at all.



Figure 1
Censored cover to de Witt Hamer on board HMS *Penelope*



Figure 2 (left)
HMS *Penelope*, launched June 1867
and scrapped 1912
(Wikipedia, public domain)

In Figure 3 I illustrate a second undated stampless cover addressed to him on the *Catalonia*, and once again was probably from his wife. This item of mail shows no Boer or British censoring in South Africa, but it does have a strike of the 24mm St Helena dumb censor mark applied, indicating that the mail was forwarded from the *Catalonia* to him on St Helena.

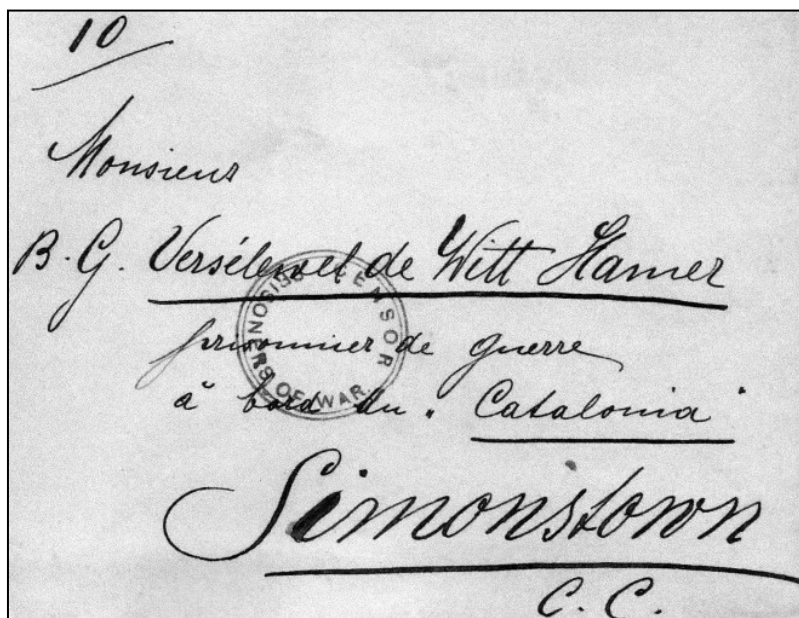


Figure 3
Cover to de Witt Hamer on board HMS *Catalonia* with St Helena BW1 censor circle



Double Flaw on Sierra Leone First Sixpence

Ian Sibsey

In the early part of last year I came across a copy of SG 36 (9th printing, 1890) exhibiting a couple of flaws.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Figure 1 shows a dot in the top quadrant of the 'X' in SIX and Figure 2 a broken line behind Queen Victoria's head. I have since acquired a second copy of this variety (also SG 36) and an earlier revenue copy (Figure 3) just exhibiting the 'dot' (Barefoot 3, 1884).

Working on the assumption that this variety only occurs once per sheet, then the maximum number of copies per printing would be the same as Frank Walton calculated in his 'Dot after Pence' article (Ref. 2). To date I have not seen this variety in any of the other printings however; considering the Revenue copy lacks the 'Broken Line' flaw this might suggest that the 9th printing was the start with the possibility of continuation into the 10th printing (SG37, 1896)?

With regards to the plate position of this variety, this still needs to be determined though I have eliminated panes 2, 3, 5, 11 & 12. Should anyone have examples of this variety and/or further information I would be pleased to hear from them.

References

- 1 Beale P.O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone*....., p 156, RPSL, London 1988
- 2 Walton F., "Sierra Leone First Sixpence 'Dot after Pence' variety", *Cameo*, Volume 13 pp134-135, WASC, October 2012
- 3 Walton F., "Sierra Leone Type D7 Cancelled Overprint on Queen Victoria 6d", *Cameo*, Volume 17 pp113-114, WASC, June 2016

Ghana Post Office Meter Marks and a Postage Paid Cachet on Airletters of the 1980s and 1990s

Philip Quirk

At the June 2017 Salisbury Meeting, Jeremy Martin showed some formular airletters from Ghana, on which the postage had been paid by impressions from meter franking machines. We discussed whether these impressions had been applied at the office of posting or centrally, prior to distribution of the airletters. Jeremy asked if anyone had further information on this topic, and this article is an attempt to answer his request.



Figure 1 Unused Ghana Posts and Telecommunications Corporation postcard (reduced)

Figure 1 shows an official Christmas and New Year greetings postcard, bearing images of stamps from the 1976 and 1979 Christmas sets. It is franked twice; firstly C5.00 from machine P&T 1 with Accra Central 14.12.88 datestamp, then an additional C35.00 from machine PB0006 without datestamp in the opposite corner. I do not know what postal rate this was intended to satisfy, but the card conveniently illustrates the two types of meter mark, with and without datestamp, that will be discussed further.



Figure 2
Berekum to Finland, 14 Jan 1986, mixed franking
with dated P&T 88 meter mark (reduced)



Figure 3
Sunyani to Finland, 29 Aug 1985, mixed franking
with dated P&T 87 meter mark (reduced)

Figure 2 shows a privately produced airmail envelope on which the total postage of C3.00 has been paid through 2 x C1.00 stamps plus a C1.00 dated meter mark. The latter has the same date as the postmark cancelling the stamps, so presumably was applied at the Berekum post office at the time the item was posted.

The C2.00 meter franking in Figure 3 was struck onto Pitney Bowes adhesive paper, which was then attached to the envelope. This item was uprated to a strange C3.06, but the six 1Np stamps, essentially worthless by 1985, were added simply to cover up the original address so the envelope could be reused!

The sender was an employee of the Posts and Telecommunications Corporation at Sunyani. Again, the stamps are postmarked with the same date as the meter frank.

Relevant postal rates are summarised in Table 1.

Date	Rates (Cedi)
June 1983	2 (aerogram) / 3 (letter)
17 Mar 1986	20 (aerogram) / 25 (letter)
1 May 1988	70 (aerogram) / 80 (letter)
April 1993	200 (aerogram) / 300 (letter)
1 Jan 1997	550 (aerogram) / 800 (letter)

Table 1 First Class Basic Airmail Rates to Europe (Ref.1)



Figure 4
Undated P&T 2 meter mark uprating an unused airletter, ca.1986-87 (reduced)

By courtesy of Nicholas Pertwee, Figure 4 shows an undated C18.00 meter mark uprating a C2.00 airletter to the new C20.00 rate and applied prior to its sale. The red marks to the left of the frank suggest that the meter had previously been used with a datestamp. Nicholas' other examples of this airletter show variations in the frank's position and orientation, and he suggests they may have been produced one at a time.



Figure 5
Sunyani to Finland, 27 March 1995, mixed franking with undated P&T 87 meter mark (reduced)

Figure 5 shows a Ghana P&T formular airletter to Finland bearing a C70.00 meter frank and C130-worth of stamps. The airmail rate to Europe had increased from C70 to C200 in April 1993. Again, the meter mark has no datestamp, and must have been applied to the airletter before the stamps were added (one of them covers the meter number). Similar red marks to those of Figure 4 are present. Fortunately, the meter's identification number can just be read from the back; it is P&T 87, the same machine as used with Sunyani datestamp on the Figure 3 cover. This is strong evidence that the frank was applied at Sunyani, presumably at some point before the rate increase.



Figure 6 Tarkwa to Finland, 7 Nov 1995,
mixed franking with undated meter mark PB0006 (reduced)

Ghana P & T also produced a formular envelope intended for inland mail. Figure 6 shows such an envelope franked an undated C30.00 by machine PB0006, the same as used on the Accra postcard (Fig. 1). The envelope was uprated and used for international airmail from Tarkwa, but the PB0006 meter mark was more likely applied in Accra. Neither strike from this meter shows red marks to the left, so it may never have been fitted with a datestamp.

Figure 7 shows another formular envelope, this time franked the full C200 and used from Berekum; again the undated meter mark was probably applied in advance. Part of the right hand frame of the frank has been removed to incorporate the small 00 digits showing the Pesewas. The P&T 425 meter cannot be definitively assigned to Berekum, which was previously using P&T 88 (Fig. 2), but the office may have had more than one franking machine, or simply received a replacement capable of producing values higher than C99.99. A similar example, used 27 August 1996 from Nsawam, was shown on the now defunct site www.aerogramme.com; an archived version is available (Ref. 2)

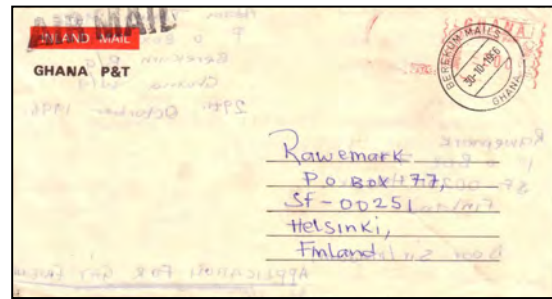


Figure 7 (above)
Berekum to Finland, 30 Oct 1996,
full franking with undated meter mark
P&T425 (reduced)

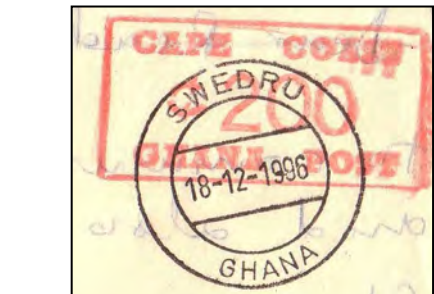
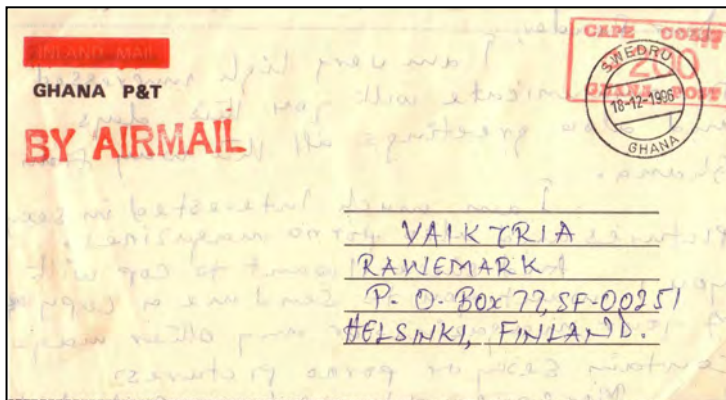


Figure 8 (left)
Swedru to Finland, 18 Dec 1996, with
rectangular Cape Coast/c200/Ghana Post
cachet (42 x 21mm) shown full size above.

As an alternative to the undated meter franks, Cape Coast employed a rectangular cachet inscribed CAPE COAST/c200/GHANA POST, struck in red. I have an example used from Swedru (Fig. 8) and an uprated piece from Cape Coast itself (Fig. 9). A second cover from Swedru (24 May 1996) has been shown on the Stampboards website by user "pbr" (Ref. 3). The basic aerogram rate was C200 until 1 January 1997.

Figure 9
Piece from formular envelope with the
same cachet as Fig. 8, uprated and used
from Cape Coast,
12 Dec 1996 (reduced)



In conclusion, the Ghana postal authorities used meter marks in two ways: a dated frank applied at the post office counter when an item was posted, and an undated frank applied to formular envelopes before they were sold. In the Sunyani example the undated franking almost certainly occurred at the post office where the envelope was sold, but other stationery items may have been franked centrally (e.g. using the PB0006 meter in Accra) before dispatch to other offices. A more extensive study of the dated meter marks and their numbers might clarify this situation. The Cape Coast cachet represents an interesting alternative solution, somewhat reminiscent of the Biafra Postage Paid markings of 1967, and perhaps equally scarce?

Acknowledgment

I thank Nicholas Pertwee for additional information and many helpful suggestions

References

- 1 Pertwee, N., "Recent Philatelic Happenings in Ghana - Part 1", *GSM*, Feb. 2011, pp79-84
- 2 <<https://web.archive.org/web/20170209095243/http://www.aerogramme.com:80/countries/Ghana/Ghana.html>> accessed 5 August 2017
- 3 <<http://www.stampboards.com/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=50287&sid=ab18208452a86e56e0350697a5ba8053&start=300>> (continuous address, no spaces - Ed.) accessed 5 August 2017

Modern Postal Censorship in Cameroun

Marc Parren

Cameroun has 10 semi-autonomous administrative regions - eight are Francophone while just two are Anglophone. English-speakers have long complained that they face discrimination. They often complain that they are excluded from top civil service jobs and that government documents are often only published in French, even though English is also an official language. A less known aspect of this is the fact that the Francophone authorities installed postal censorship for incoming covers directed to at least the Anglophone parts of Cameroun.

I have lived three times in Cameroun and to be more exact from 1994-1997 in Kribi, 2008-2011 in Yaoundé and the entire year 2015 in Buea. I started to become suspicious when in early 2015 I moved to Buea for a new job and started my lively mostly philatelic correspondence as usual. Soon after I noticed that the covers had been tampered with, as many letters inside were almost impossible to remove as they were glued to the inside cover, and I started to note that either the flap of the cover or the folding line at one of the sides of the cover were no longer smooth and showed signs of gluing. So I was wondering what was going on.

Since I was a frequent visitor to the GPO at Buea I knew the lady at the counter well. At first she pretended to know nothing but after many complaints from my side the staff there revealed to me that there are police officers based in the Douala GPO who check letters. So this looks like we are dealing with postal censorship breaching the secrecy of postal letters not to be opened as a paradigm to be respected by postal authorities.

Figure 1 (right)
Incoming cover to Buea
posted 3 May 2015
in Dubai, UAE with
censorship number
10030615



Dr. Marc Parren
PSMNR-SWR
P.O. Box 417
Buea
CAMEROON

Figure 2 (left)
Incoming cover to Yaoundé
posted 15 May 2015 in
Craig Cove, Ambrym,
Vanuatu without any signs
of censorship

All covers shown at ca. 70% - Ed

Apart from the tampering of the covers, another piece of evidence the censors leave behind is a hand written number placed mostly below one of the affixed postage stamps, consisting of 8 digits; the first two digits form what are most likely the sequence number of the covers checked (censored) by the respective police officer, and the next six digits are the actual date of checking. If we look at a cover posted in the United Arab Emirates, it shows the censorship number 10030615 written under the right hand postage stamp (Fig. 1). So it was the 10th cover censored 3 June 2015 in Douala by the respective censor officer.

After returning to the Netherlands, when my second contract related to Cameroun came to an end in December 2011, I kept my post office box at the Yaoundé Bastos post office operational. During 2015 sporadically external covers arrived at this address.

I illustrate a cover posted in May 2015 in Vanuatu, South Pacific (Fig. 2) which arrived in Yaoundé without showing any signs of censorship. I can confirm that during the period from June 2009, when the Bastos post office opened its doors, until this very day no covers which arrived in my mail box over there have been seen tampered with. So there seems to be no postal censorship applied for letters addressed to the political capital Yaoundé, and most likely this applied to all Francophone regions.



Figure 3 (above)
Incoming registered cover to Buea posted 30 June 2015 in Paamiut, Greenland without any signs of censorship



Figure 4 (left)
Incoming registered cover with Advice of Receipt (AR) to Buea posted 8 September 2015 in Libreville, Gabon without any signs of censorship

What I also noticed is that none of the incoming registered (Fig. 3), and registered with advice of receipt (Fig. 4) covers addressed to me in Buea show any sign of censorship. These covers only have a hand-written remark stating the first advice of arrival of the postal item at the GPO in Buea.

Neither domestic ordinary (Fig. 5), registered (Fig. 6) and Express Mail Service (EMS) covers (Figs 7 & 8) sent between the Francophone and Anglophone parts show any sign of censorship.



Figure 5 (left)
Incoming domestic cover to Buea posted 25 March 2015 in Campo, South Region without any signs of censorship

Figure 6 (right)
Incoming domestic registered cover to Buea posted 18 February 2015 in the postal agency Nsam in Yaoundé handled 24 February by the Yaoundé Recette Principal without any signs of censorship

Note the domestic simple barcoded registration label starting with the letters DA and the first advice of arrival of the postal item at the GPO in Buea on 26 February



Figure 7
Outgoing domestic EMS cover posted 13 February 2015 at the Molyko-Buea post office to Yaoundé, where it arrived on 17 February without any signs of censorship
Note the domestic UPU barcoded registration label starting with the letters BA

EMS COURSE CAMEROUN Boulevard du 20 mai B.P. : 14411 Yaoundé Tél: (237) 222 507 000 Site web: www.campost.cm		No de l'envoi Tracking N° N° 0012950 CM	
N° DE COMPTE ACCOUNT N°	Poids en kg Weight 548	Prix T.T.C. Price 3000	Heure de dépôt Time of client deposit 10H55mn
			Date de dépôt Time of client deposit 11/12/15
			Bureau de dépôt Office area BASTOS-YDE
EXPEDITEUR SENDER Mme MONGO DJOMBE CAROLINE AGENCE POSTALE BASTOS YAOUNDE TELEPHONE : 699 4199 27		DESTINATAIRE RECEIVER Dr. MARC PARREN P.O BOX 417 BUEA	
Description de la marchandise Merchandise description Documents	L'expéditeur accepte les conditions au verso Sender accepts all conditions Signature :	Code postal : Postal Code	Telephone : Phone number 691395012
		Pays : Country CAMEROUN	

EMS - Course Cameroun est un service de la CAMPOST

Cameroon Postal Services
 15 DEC 2015
 BUEA

Cameroon Postal Services
 3
 YAOUNDE

Figure 8

Incoming domestic EMS cover posted 11 December 2015 at the Bastos-Yaoundé post office and handled the same day by the EMS Yaoundé 3 and on 15 December by the EMS Buea 1 without any signs of censorship. Note the domestic UPU barcoded registration label starting with the letters BA

It also clearly shows that they do not have any watch list, since otherwise all my incoming mail whether destined to Buea or Yaoundé should have been opened for censorship. So whose correspondence is targeted for censorship? What is clear is that it at least targets people living in the Anglophone administrative regions and only foreign incoming ordinary covers.

What I also heard is that this might be related to the fact that during a visit of President Paul Biya to London, public demonstrations against his non-democratic ruling by Anglophones living in the UK took place, which the President did not appreciate at all. Ever since young Anglophones living in or visiting the diaspora and returning to Cameroun started to be arrested at Douala Airport. The Anglophones tried to avoid this by no longer boarding flights directly between Europe and Cameroun but by taking flights to other places in Africa and next boarding another airline with destination Douala to avoid being apprehended.

To what extent this is true is hard to say. In November 2016, Anglophone Camerounians went to the street to demonstrate against the discrimination they face. Bamenda was the site of major protests in the northwest region, and the cities of Buea and Kumba in the southwest region also saw demonstrations by lawyers, teachers, students and activists. They took to the streets to protest the appointment by the mostly Francophone government of French-speaking judges and teachers in English-speaking areas - a practice they say has continued for years.

Next I present a table showing the foreign incoming covers I received at Buea during 2015 and whether they showed signs of censorship or not. I also list all registered foreign covers I received without any sign of censorship as well.

	Censorship		Registered
	Yes	No	No
Europe			
Aland	1	1	
Austria	1		
Belarus	1		
Belgium	1		
Croatia			1
Cyprus		2	
Czech Republic	1	1	
France			3
Germany	2		
Greece	1		
Hungary			1
Latvia		1	
Liechtenstein		1	
Malta	1		
Moldova			1
Netherlands	1		
Poland	1		
Serbia	1		
UK		1	
America			
Canada	1		
Cuba		1	
Greenland	3	1	
Suriname		2	
USA	3		
Africa			
Djibouti	1		
Gabon			1
Republic South Africa	1		1
Asia-Pacific			
Australia	1		
Brunei	1		
India		1	
Indonesia		1	
Israel	1		1
Japan		1	
Korea		1	
Pakistan			2
United Arab Emirates	1		
Vanuatu			1
Total	25	15	12

Table 1
Incoming foreign mails to the author at Buea during 2015



Figure 9
Incoming cover to Buea posted 4 August 2015 in Djibouti with censorship number 03170815

Looking at the ordinary incoming letters the majority (62.5%) were censored. This reflects the situation in all continents. However, what is striking is that even among the few African covers received there are two which have been censored. The censorship of covers originating from the Republic of South Africa is not surprising as it holds a large Anglophone community, but this cannot be said of Djibouti (Fig. 9). Another aspect that strikes one is Asia, where covers originating from the Far East seem to be untargeted for censorship, in contrast to the Middle East (i.e. Israel and UAE).

Countries holding a typically large population of Camerounian Anglophones show contrasting evidence, with all three covers originating from the USA being censored (Fig. 10) while the one from the UK was not. The twelve registered covers received, of which only the American continent is lacking, all remained uncensored.

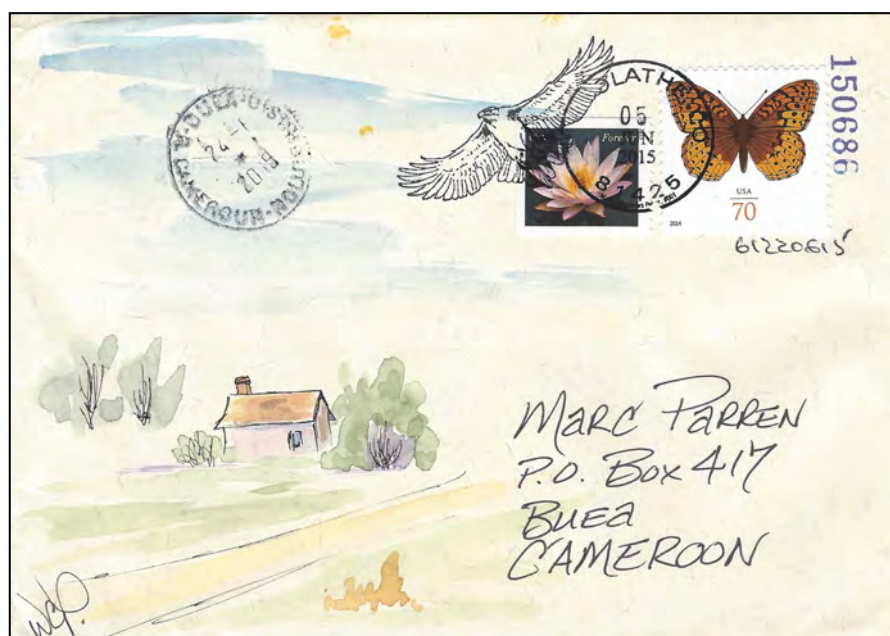


Figure 10
Incoming cover to Buea posted 5 June 2015 in Olathe, USA
with censorship number 61220615 and Buea Distribution arrival postmark dated 24 June 2015

Discussion

I think I have provided sufficient evidence for censorship being applied to the majority of incoming ordinary foreign letters addressed to Buea during 2015. Censorship takes place by police officers inside the Douala GPO and resembles what the political control offices did in the USSR by secretly watching the correspondence of Soviet citizens and foreigners alike (Skipton & Volis 2015, Ref. 1) and in East-Germany by the Stasi who had made available over 2,000 officers for this job (Hellström 2011, Ref. 2).

It would be of interest to find evidence of similar censored covers addressed to places like Limbe and Bamenda to show that this process covered the entire Anglophone zone. I even suspect that censorship could have been applied to incoming foreign covers addressed to Anglophones living in Douala as this economic capital of Cameroun is known as an opposition-dominated town as well. No such censorship has been reported on covers destined to go abroad when originating from the two Anglophone regions. I posted many such letters myself without any such signs noted so far.

What is also striking is that no such censorship seems to be applied on any foreign registered incoming covers. Any additional evidence will be hard to find since incoming covers to Cameroun are uncommon nowadays as the art of hand-written letters is fast disappearing. This also leaves you wondering how much valuable information is generated in this way by the security forces, as most information is no longer provided by snail mail but rather by all kinds of digital ways. At the moment we do not know when this postal censorship started and for how long it will last, but only time can tell.

References

- 1 Skipton, David M. & Volis, Steve (2015), *Soviet clandestine mail surveillance, 1917-1991*, Collectors Club of Chicago, Chicago USA
- 2 Hellström, Peter (2011), *Die Postkontrolle der Staatssicherheit: aus der Sicht eines Zeitzeugen*, Morgana Edition, Berlin, Germany



Variant Design of 1990 Ghana Orchid Stamp

Philip Quirk

On 17 December 1990, Ghana issued a set of eight stamps and two miniature sheets depicting orchids (SG 1480 - MS 1488). The stamps were printed in lithography by the Irish company B.D.T. and were comb perforated 14. Figure 1 shows a copy of SG 1486, the c400 *Ancistrochilus rothschildianus* from this set.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 2, scanned under identical conditions, shows a markedly different stamp, albeit with the same basic design and face value. There are many changes, an obvious one being that the framed orchid design itself is significantly smaller (24 x 31mm, compared to 25 x 36mm in SG 1486). Perforations also differ as the variant stamp is comb perf. 13.25 x 13.25 (both to the nearest 0.25), rather than 14. The variant is used from Kumasi, unfortunately without the year showing. As a somewhat cruder product, it is likely that the variant stamp was produced later than the SG 1486 set, but the printing and perforating seem too good for it to be a postal forgery.

Ghana 'recycled' a number of previously issued designs for its 1995-2007 definitives. For example, the c20 *Bebearia arcadius* butterfly design from February 1990 (SG 1408) reappeared as a small-format c1500 in January 2007 (SG 2159a). The variant orchid stamp may be an earlier example of such a procedure, although in this instance with no change in face value. In view of the many differences from the original design, it was possibly produced by a different printing firm.

The variant stamp raises a number of questions. Assuming it is genuine, when was it issued? Who printed it? Did other designs from the orchid set undergo similar treatment? And last but not least - are there any more copies out there?

As no such variant stamp appears in the current SG West Africa catalogue, I have sent copies of the scans to Hugh Jefferies. He has not encountered the variant design before and would also welcome any further information that WASC members might be able to provide, with a view to listing it in a future edition.

Nigeria - Postal Planning post-WWII

Bob Maddocks

For the general interest of those postal historians concerned with Nigeria's postal services after the end of WWII, I quote verbatim an article which I found in *Corone*, the Journal of HM Overseas Service (Volume 9, Number 12) published in 1957.

Unfortunately, whilst the article carries a brief introductory acknowledgement in parentheses to the *Nigeria Trade Journal* as its source, no reference is made to the actual issue in which it originally appeared; the author, moreover, is not named.

Postal Planning in Nigeria

(With acknowledgments to Nigeria Trade Journal)

No country with any pretensions to commercial development can afford a postal service incapable of meeting the demands which commerce and industry make upon it. It is the job of the Postal Services Branch of the Department of Posts and Telegraphs not merely to meet the public's demand but also to anticipate development and be ready with new services before the public has realised the need for them. In the organisation of postal services, distance is measured by time and this distance-time factor must be related to economy in operation since, in the ultimate analysis, the public has to pay for the service it gets and extravagance cannot be tolerated. The corner-stones of a good postal system are therefore speed, reliability, regularity and economy in operation.

To the individual, his letter, if he ever thinks about it, may seem a trifling thing to handle, but when many thousands of letters are involved the problem of moving the sheer bulk of mail becomes a task of considerable magnitude in itself, quite apart from the need to move it quickly and to get each individual item to the right place. This is true of any postal organisation and the question may well be asked - why is Nigeria particularly affected, and in what degree does its postal service need to be reorganised? To answer that, one must study the history of the past 20 years.

In the early 1930s, Nigeria, in common with most Commonwealth countries, was afflicted with a slump. Retrenchment was the order of the day and the postal service gave its quota; administrative establishments were slashed, and development and research were halted. At that time, the Nigerian postal service was rated highly in British West Africa and for some years, up to the outbreak of World War II, it was able to absorb the effects of retrenchment without any perceptible lowering of its standards. The war period was one of holding on and improvisation; the service emerged at the end of it, with its organising capacity weakened by ten years of 'making do' and its conduct of business impaired by the oversimplification of processes dictated by the need for economy. Then, before it could take stock, it was assailed by the rush of post-war development which was reflected in an immediate increase in postal traffic - an increase which has grown steadily since, and shows no sign of diminishing. (Letters posted in Nigeria have trebled since 1945/46.) Caught unprepared as it was by an unprecedented volume of work, with an attenuated staff and an obsolescent organisation, the postal branch was fully occupied in trying to maintain a reasonable standard and had little time for constructive planning.

A more progressive outlook among the people has not made matters easier. The air-conscious Nigerian who knows he can get from Lagos to Kano in four hours is no longer content for his letters to take four days to do the same journey. The average man is not concerned whether a particular place is on an air route or not; he knows that communication is swift between some places and assumes that it can be equally swift between all.

Circumstances have therefore combined to cause the standard of the Nigerian postal service to deteriorate. Hence the need for reorganisation.

In a country like Nigeria, where surface transport is relatively underdeveloped, it is necessary to rely on air communications for the speediest transmission of mail, and here the West African Airways Corporation plays an important part.

The Department and the Corporation have been in consultation for a year, and as a result the air time-tables now provide for a much better distribution of mail by air than previously. Consultations are continuing, as the ultimate aim of both the Department and the Corporation is that letters posted at any of the main centres should reach their destinations over a large area of the country on the following day.

While air transport necessarily takes pride of place in the pattern of mail conveyance, the older methods of rail and road are still important. The former is particularly useful in moving categories of mail, especially parcels. Use of the railway is comparatively simple to plan since railway time-tables are not subject to any great variation in timing and the railway service is well established.

Road transport presents a very different problem. Its organisation is fluid and unco-ordinated, yet since it provides the only means of communications with many parts of the country, it must be used to supplement the air and railway services which are effective only to main centres. There is little purpose in getting mail quickly to a point on an air route if its onward transmission is going to take several days; full use must be made of all suitable road services working out of the main centres for the local distribution of mail. Unfortunately, not all operate at times best suited to the postal service and not all are reliable enough to be entrusted with carrying mails; care is needed in selection.

The examination of road facilities began some months ago and already the transit time of correspondence between Lagos and many places up-country has been reduced from about four days to between 24 and 30 hours. The process of examination is being continued.

While the large road transport concerns co-operate well with the Post Office, their network does not extend over the whole country, and often local services are in the hands of a few small contractors. These seek business where they can, and find it difficult to maintain the strict time schedules demanded by the postal authorities, to whom reliability and regularity are as important as speed. In many districts, therefore, the Post Office is faced with the alternatives of accepting an inferior standard or of operating its own road services.

The development of departmental motor services is conditioned by the general principle that a Government department should not undertake ancillary work which could be performed as efficiently and economically by an outside contractor. The superior efficiency of departmental road services is unquestioned, but maintenance costs are necessarily high in poor road conditions, and it is difficult to operate economically, especially as the Post Office cannot gather extra revenue by carrying passengers or freight as outside contractors do. Therefore each proposal has to be carefully studied; not infrequently, an improvement which the use of a departmental vehicle would bring about has regretfully to be set aside, because its cost would be disproportionate to the advantage gained.

In some of the creek areas, there are practically no roads at all, let alone reliable road transport, and this still further complicates the problem of mail distribution. A preliminary survey is therefore being made into the possibility of making greater use of water-borne transport.

In the north, the postal service is confronted with the problem of vast distances and all too often poor road conditions. Even if the roads were uniformly good, the distances involved preclude the rapid transportation of mail. However, as the air and rail services are limited in scope and frequency, it is necessary to rely to a large extent on road transport. Accordingly, an experiment is shortly to be undertaken of distributing mail from the large sorting centre at Kano by Auster aircraft owned by the Department. There will be many difficulties to overcome and departmental air services will not at present replace road transport to any great extent in the north, though eventually it is hoped to make considerable use of them for the distribution of first-class mail.

The Southern Cameroons presents a special problem. Surface communication between Nigeria and the Cameroons is tortuous and slow, and aircraft capacity is not nearly enough to take all the categories of mail. Even when the mail arrives, the problem of distribution is immense, since the only means of communication is by road and for several months of the year some of the roads are almost impassable. The cost to the postal service of living up to the motto, 'Whatever else fails the mail must get through', is extremely high.

It is intended to make greater use of the air to get first-class mails to the Southern Cameroons, lines of communication by surface route are being examined, and a special study of the territory's internal communications system is being made. But the problem bristles with difficulties and no spectacular improvement can be expected.

Studies and experiments of the kind described are but one aspect of the postal services reorganisation plan. Work procedures and methods in sorting offices must be revised and the staff organisation geared to take the fullest advantage of any improvements which the planning staff may devise. This entails a time-and-motion study of every medium and large post office throughout the country. Normally, this is a continuous process, but in Nigeria, because of the exceptional conditions which have operated since just before the War, this type of work has been largely at a standstill, and it has now to be done virtually from scratch.

One of the first essentials has been to devise standards which will enable every post office to determine, on a uniform basis in the light of the traffic passing through it, what mails it should make up direct on other post offices, and to which mail centres it should send correspondence which it receives in insufficient quantity to justify forwarding in direct mails.

This has entailed studying the flow of correspondence passing through every post office, determining which mails should be made up for what destinations and through what channels of communication they should be conveyed, and keeping every post office in the country informed so that they can keep these matters under constant review. All of this has now been done. Its importance is obvious since, unless there is a plan for the circulation of letters uniform for the country and based upon the network of public and departmental communications services, and unless this plan is known to all and kept up to date, mail can easily be sent on by devious and unsatisfactory routes and thereby be considerably delayed.

Having organised the sorting arrangements, the next step is to examine the staffing at all offices to ensure that adequate staff is available at the right times and that it is not being used wastefully. This is under way, but it cannot be a quick process and is unlikely to be completed under three years.

Another not so obvious need is to have each post office equipped with a full range of up-to-date rule books. This is most important since, while the staff are expected to exercise initiative in the daily performance of their work, it is essential that they should everywhere work on uniform lines, especially as many of the procedures are prescribed by international agreement. Unfortunately, the keeping of rule books up to date, and the publishing of new ones, were matters which early fell under the retrenchment axe, and the supply of rule books is now not only totally inadequate but in many cases such books as exist are in extremely bad condition. Since early in 1956, therefore, a specially selected team has been working on the preparation of a completely new and up-to-date range of rule books and has completed the drafts. With the co-operation of the Federal Government Printer, it is hoped soon to provide post offices with the new basic rule books.

A factor limiting the expansion of the postal service is lack of proper accommodation. The majority of the public offices are cramped, inadequately equipped and unattractive both to the public and to the staff. Conditions behind the scenes in sorting offices and other working rooms are no better. Drastic measures are called for and drastic measures are being planned.

A construction programme has been drawn up which provides for no less than 121 different projects ranging from small post offices in developing rural areas to a new General Post Office in Lagos.

The programme is ambitious and will make heavy demands on the resources of both the Posts and Telegraphs and the Public Works Department. It provides for a significant degree of community self-help in approved cases and it is hoped, with the enthusiastic co-operation of all concerned, to complete it, or at least to see it well on the way towards completion, by 1960.

The fittings used in post offices are being examined to establish whether they are adapted to the most expeditious handling of the traffic. A modern design for post office counters, which can be manufactured in the Department's workshops, has been approved and will shortly go into production. It will be a feature of all new post offices and will begin to appear in the course of the next few months.

The possibilities of mechanical handling of mail in sorting offices are not being overlooked. There is limited scope for mechanisation as yet, but it is being installed at a new parcel office under construction at Apapa, and it is to be used extensively in the new Lagos General Post Office.

The claims of the rural areas find a place in the postal services reconstruction plan since it provides for the replacement of some of the larger postal agencies by post offices giving a full range of facilities. In the more remote and underdeveloped areas, however, the mainstay of the postal service is, and will continue to be, the postal agent, and considerable thought has been devoted to ways and means of improving his conditions of service and remuneration.

Last but not least, there is the all-important question of staff. It would be of little avail to prepare elaborate plans without training the staff to meet the new conditions and letting them know the reason for the changes. A programme of postal training, unprecedented in the annals of the Nigerian postal service, has been launched. Courses, each lasting up to three weeks, have been started in Lagos for training supervising officers in the technique of man management, job relations and the finer requirements of supervision. They are framed on the most up-to-date lines evolved in the United Kingdom and the United States, and are probably the most progressive of their kind in Nigeria.

Courses have also been instituted for postal controlling staff, on whom falls the brunt of the work of implementing the postal service reconstruction programme. Head Postmasters, too, are shortly to be given a special administrative course. The rank and file are not being overlooked. A new form of basic training has been evolved for new recruits, and no one will be employed in a post office until he has passed through it successfully.

This, then, is what the Postal Service has achieved in the last year and is planning for the future. The concept is wide and its fulfilment will be a formidable task, but it presents a stimulating challenge to the organisation which is being built up, and to the staff who are being trained to operate it.



Opening Big Qua Town Postal Agency in Calabar, 1938-48

Dr Simon Heap

Postal agencies excite the interest of many philatelists, particularly when they opened, added functions like handling money orders and telegrams, and even closed. This article covers the history of how a Postal Agency came to be opened in the Big Qua Town suburb of Calabar (Figure 1) on 3 August 1948. It shows how the demand and supply of postal services changed to meet the needs of Calabar's citizens, and how getting a postal agency open demanded the meeting of many preconditions. (Ref. 1)

In July 1938, Calabar's Acting District Officer R.W. Edgar observed that a post box was not much good to the local people unless they could buy stamps there; in other words, at a Postal Agency. Most people did not keep a supply of stamps at home or on their person, "so a Big Qua Ma wishing to post a letter goes to the PO, and thus would not use the post box in their own town. I think a case could be made out for an agency at Big Qua. It would serve Big Qua, Akin Qua, Ediba and Otok Otok, a total population of 966." (Ref. 2)



Figure 1
Big Qua Town north-east of Government Hill, Calabar
extracted from Survey Department, Map of Calabar, Government of Nigeria, 1937

A year later, His Highness Ntoe Iki Ita Oqua II of the Qua clan of the Ejagham tribe wrote to District Officer William Bridges that “Chief Ayon Etim is a suitable person to take up the Agency. He is Headmaster of Big Qua Town School, Deputy Ntoe of Big Qua Town, and a member of the Calabar Native Administration Council.” (Ref. 3)

Without the need for the pillar box to remain in Big Qua Town, it was proposed to transfer it to a site on the Marina near the African Traders Company factory [Marina Beach]. (Ref. 4)

However, the Second World War intervened to postpone these plans. It was only in 1947 that momentum was regained and a new postal agent suggested.

Before a Postal Agency could be approved at Big Qua Town the Posts and Telegraph Department required four conditions to be met: a suitable premises in which to house the agency; appointment of a suitable agent preferably engaged in other employment; two persons of substance who were prepared to bond the agent in the sum of £100; and the provision of a safe for the secure custody of cash, stamps and postal orders.

The Post Office would pay an initial allowance of ten shillings per month to the postal agent and if business rose the allowance would be increased. The Post Office would supply all the necessary equipment, including a Posting Box and registered letter machine. (Ref. 5)

Two men of substance came forward to bond Mr E.E. Esua, the prospective postal agent: the aforementioned Ntoe Ika Ika Oqua II of Big Qua Town, and Chief Ayon Etim of the Supreme Court, Calabar. After Esua had completed a two weeks’ course in postal duties, Big Qua Town Postal Agency opened to serve the local population. (Ref. 6)



Figure 2 (right)
Big Qua Town postmark on Royal Silver Wedding 1d stamp, 16 January 1949
Reproduced with the kind permission of Paul Redhead

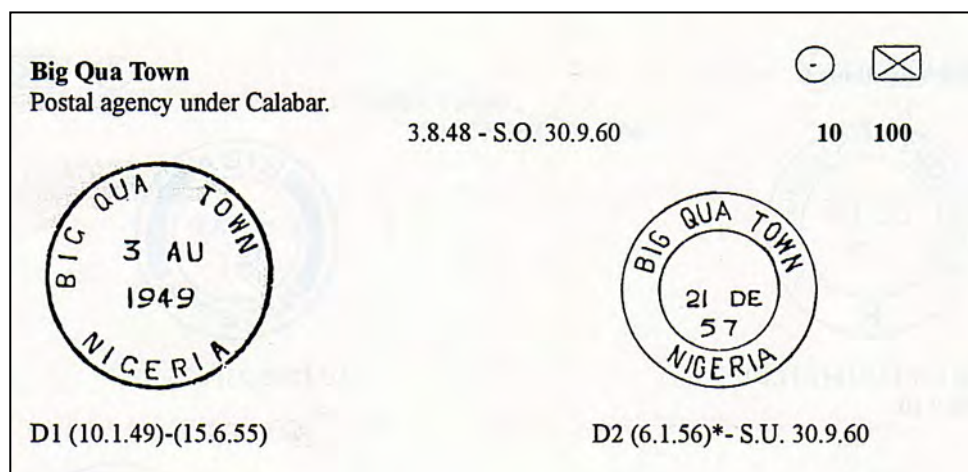


Figure 3
Big Qua Town cancels, in *Proud Postal History of Nigeria* (Ref. 1)

References

- 1 Proud Edward, *Postal History of Nigeria*, p298, Proud Bailey, Heathfield 1995: also Paul Redhead’s listings on website: <http://www.nigerian-post-offices.org.uk/lists.html>
- 2 National Archives, Calabar [NAC], Calabar District Papers [CADIST] 3/3/77, R.W. Edgar, Acting District Officer, Calabar, to E.C. Ross, Surveyor, Posts and Telegraphs Department, Aba, 9 July 1938
- 3 NAC, CADIST 3/3/77, Ntoe Iki Ita Oqua II to William Bridges, District Officer, Calabar, 26 July 1938
- 4 NAC, CADIST 3/3/77, Ross to Colin de Neufville Hill, District Officer, Calabar, 11 July 1940. Hill later became Secretary for Finance in Tanganyika and then Permanent Secretary, decorated with an OBE in 1959 and CMG in 1962
- 5 NAC, CADIST 3/3/77, Acting Senior Surveyor, Aba District, to District Officer, Calabar, 10 February 1947
- 6 NAC, CADIST 3/3/77, Secretary, Calabar Council, to District Officer, Calabar, 3 April 1947



Cameroun Sterling and Reunification Issues with Specimen Handstamp

Marty Bratzel

Depicted here (Figure 1) are twelve stamps of the Cameroun sterling issue of 1961 and the six stamps of the Reunification issue of 1 January 1962. The stamps are all mint, never hinged. Each has been handstamped SPECIMEN; the sterling issue in blue and the Reunification issue in red-violet. In some cases, the handstamp is barely visible - the poor quality inferring a non-professional, low-volume undertaking. Several questions immediately arise: Who added the handstamp and why?; When and where were the stamps acquired? and Is the handstamp legitimate or spurious?



Figure 1 Cameroun postage stamps with SPECIMEN handstamp



Figure 2
1/2d on 1 Franc stamp,
Type 1 overprint with
SPECIMEN handstamp
in blue

Of the twelve sterling-revalued issue of 1961, three of the stamps were never placed on sale in West Cameroun: the 2/6 on 30 franc, 5/- on 100 franc, and 10/- on 200 franc stamps are all Type 2, probably prepared in late September or early October 1961 and only available from the philatelic bureau in Paris (Ref. 1).

One could conclude that the stamps were acquired there, or perhaps a small supply was retained by the postal authorities in Yaoundé.

The six reunification stamps were available in both Cameroun and in Paris and could have been acquired at either location.

In addition to different colours, different devices were used to apply the handstamp, from which we can perhaps infer that the stamps were acquired and handstamped at different times. For the 1961 issue, SPECIMEN is about 17½ mm long in blue and, for the Reunification issue, about 13 mm in red-violet.

Perhaps the handstamped stamps were intended as a gift for a dignitary or perhaps the overprint was applied by someone just playing around or looking to create rarities.

The stamps were offered as Lot 30609 in the David Feldman series of auctions held in Onex, Switzerland on 27-30 June 2017. Against an estimate of €400, the stamps were unsold.

Additional information, opinions, and insight would be most welcome.

Reference

- 1 Bratzel, Marty. "Cameroun – the Sterling Issue of 1961 – Printings, Dates of Issue and Availability", *Cameo*, Vol. 9 No. 4, June 2006, pp 190-197



Figure 3
5/- on 100 Franc stamp,
Type 2 overprint with
SPECIMEN handstamp
in blue



CEF Overprints on Kamerun Yacht Stamps Update Number 7

Marty Bratzel

This article is the seventh in an occasional series about the C.E.F. overprints on Kamerun yacht stamps, first placed on sale at Duala on 12 July 1915. The purpose is to supplement and expand Robert Gibbs' definitive work on the subject (Ref. 1). We illustrate here another variety of the 4d. on 40 pf. stamp and a forgery of the 1d. on 10 pf. stamp with blue overprint, and also comment on a non-existent variety of the ½ d on 5 pf. stamp.

4d. on 40 pf. Stamp

On the basic stamp, a constant flaw occurs at Position 55: a black dot on the side of the ship, below the mast holding the flag (Figure 1). Since only 100 sheets were overprinted, only 100 examples of this variety can exist. However, because of the position of the 4d., the dot can be obscured on the overprinted stamp and easily missed. Depicted in Figure 2 is an example of this variety, recently found on eBay.

For the record, a single example of this variety was prepared with triple overprint, two albino, since it was the left half of the sheet so overprinted.



Figure 1
Unoverprinted 40 pf. stamp
with dot on side of ship,
Position 55



Figure 2
4d. on 40 pf. stamp with dot,
which is partially obscured
by the overprint

1d. on 10 pf. Stamp with Blue Overprint

Depicted in Figure 3 is a 1d. on 10 pf. stamp with blue overprint, with the 1d. double. From its position on the stamp, the 1d. was impossible to add without the C.E.F. The second 1d. must be forged. This particular stamp was offered by a German auction house but withdrawn prior to sale.



Figure 3
1d. on 10 pf. stamp with
blue overprint
The second 1d. is forged

½d. on 5 pf. Stamp with Black Overprint

Occasionally offered for sale are ½ d. on 5 pf. stamps with black overprint but, notwithstanding its having been reported by H.G. Porter (see Ref. 1, page 207), Gibbs doubted its existence. Indeed, the stamp does not exist! Yet, the black overprinted stamp is still listed in one major catalogue. Stamps with a purported black overprint are actually overprinted in very dark blue, easily confirmed by comparison with a stamp of another denomination overprinted in black. Caveat emptor!

Acknowledgement

Thanks are extended to Peter Hørlyck for the scan of the stamp in Figure 1

Reference

- 1 Gibbs, Robert M. *G.R.I. The Postage Stamps of the German Colonies occupied by the British 1914-1918*. Christie's Robson Lowe, London 1987, xv + 275 pages ISBN 0-85397-428-4



Storm in St Helena

Hugh Jefferies MBE, FRPSL

This short article appeared in 'Catalogue Column' in the September edition of Gibbons Stamp Monthly, and is reproduced with the kind permission of the Author and Dean Shepherd, the Editor - Barry

Three well-known varieties on the vignette of the 'Badge' stamps of St Helena (SG 92-113) and Ascension (10-20) have been listed in the catalogue for many years now. These are the 'Broken Mainmast' (R2/1), the 'Torn Flag' (R4/6) and the 'Cleft Rock' (R5/1). Not all of them are present on all values in the two sets, but they are all popular with collectors and fetch good prices when offered.

This is in fact a very interesting series of stamps, so interesting, indeed, that in 2012 the West Africa Study Circle published a comprehensive 148-page book on the subject, entitled *The George V Badge issues of St Helena and Ascension* by Ralph Stanton and Bill Thorpe. This book illustrates and lists dozens of other flaws on the vignette or frame plates, one of which the authors describe as 'larger than any of the major listed flaws'. This is described as the 'Storm over Rock', which occurs on R3/5 and was only present during printings made in December 1922. This means that it is only found on the ½d., 1½d., 2d., 3d., 4d. and 8d. values of St Helena and on none of the Ascension stamps, which did not appear until 1924.

Stanton and Thorpe, comment that, 'it is felt that the flaw should have separate listing' - which it will have in the 2018 edition of Part 1.



Postmaster General's Office Datestamp, Freetown, SL

John Ray FRPSL, Philip Quirk & Barry Burns FRPSL

On 12 January 2017 David Alford and John Ray gave a joint display of Fiji to the Royal Philatelic Society London at 41 Devonshire Place. Amongst some superb material I spotted this item from Bradbury Wilkinson bearing a copy of the 2½d value of the 1954-1959 definitive set.

What caught my eye however was the receiving datestamp at Sierra Leone. Although not strictly a postal marking I believe it is of interest to our readers, so John kindly provided the illustration shown as Figure 1 with the note:

The stamp on the card was part of a series which was issued on 1 October 1956. I see from the catalogue that the next stamps to be issued by Sierra Leone after 1956 were the Independence set of 1961, printed by Bradbury Wilkinson, so perhaps the sample helped them to win the contract.

Philip Quirk added:

It looks like a rubber handstamp of the Climax type (three character month followed by a full stop), see e.g. Collect British Postmarks 9/68. I think 035.94 and 335.45 are the only Climax cancels recorded in SL Postmarks.



Figure 1
Publicity card from Bradbury Wilkinson with Sierra Leone receiving datestamp
Card shown at 70% with full size datestamp alongside



Bo, Sierra Leone - A Possible cds Variety

Gary Wayne Loew

One of the most studied and published topics in philately is marcophily, the study of cancellations and postmarks. Literally hundreds of books have been printed, with new titles and revisions being published each year. Those of us who are marcophilists are always on the hunt for a new Earliest Recorded Date (ERD) or Latest Recorded Date (LRD). But such date-related discoveries are ephemeral, with new sightings emerging with some regularity. The ultimate find, however, is the discovery of a new cancellation type or variety thereof.

A good example of the ongoing development of marcophily is found in the cancellations of Sierra Leone. In 1990, Frank Walton authored the book *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone, 1854 to 1961*, published by WASC. Twenty-five years later, Walton collaborated with Philip Quirk, David Horry and Michael Hamilton to produce a substantially revised and expanded second edition of that seminal work. I have referred to this second edition frequently as I add examples to my Sierra Leone collection.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Recently, I acquired the 1935 Silver Jubilee stamp seen in Figure 1 with a somewhat blurred cds from an obviously well-worn handstamp. It appears that the canceller might have slid or compressed during the cancelling, especially the lower portion. Turning to the Walton second edition, I sought to identify the mark. This proved to be a problematic undertaking. The post office was easily identified as Bo, with a date of DE 27/35. There are eleven possible types and varieties illustrated on pages 8-9 in Walton.

A quick visual inspection of these types suggests that the cancellation might be 016.02, reproduced from the book as Figure 2. However, closer inspection left me uncertain because the Time Code of 016.02 is a 'C' whereas my cancel doesn't conform to the shape of a 'C'. I recognise the vagaries resulting from worn handstamps as well as sliding or compression during cancellation. Figure 3 is a close-up of the Time Code from my stamp. To my eyes, it looks like a partial asterisk, including three of the six points, all apparently at the proper angles for an asterisk. But no such variety is shown in Walton. At this point I was perplexed, so I reached out to the four authors plus noted Silver Jubilee specialist John Cooper. Most stated that my cds was 016.02.

At the recommendation of David Horry, I printed the scan of Figure 2 onto clear acetate and the overlay is a near perfect fit of my stamp.... except that the Time Code does not line up with the 'C'. In an email to me, Philip Quirk concluded that the Time Code was a 'C', but noted: "The code letters / stars were certainly removable (a star was added to 016.03 ca.1954 when the period after B was removed, creating 016.05)."



Figure 4
BO postmark of NO 19/35
(Philip Quirk)

This offered me a ray of hope and provided a path in my quest. It is highly unlikely that a substitution of an asterisk for a C would be made and then reversed using a clearly worn canceller. Therefore, one of two conditions will resolve my Bo mystery. If any reader can provide a scan of 016.02 with a clear asterisk, then we can confirm a new variety. However, if a clear 'C' can be found on this cds with a date after my stamp's 27 December 1935, then the matter is resolved and I merely have an odd example for my collection. I would note that I perused the nearly 1,000 Sierra Leone cds's on co-author Michael Hamilton's website and could not locate a Bo cds that satisfies either of my criteria. Can any *Cameo* reader resolve this Bo mystery?

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Messrs. Cooper, Hamilton, Horry and Quirk for their helpful contributions to my inquiry

Gold Coast Mansu Find

Simon Binsted

In 2013 I spotted this fine copy (Figure 1) in a job lot of old stamps advertised by someone in Belgium for €5.00 on Delcampe and, luckily, was the only bidder. Containing my excitement, I determined one day to do some more research into it and finally got round to it last month!



Figure 1
Simon's stamp with m/s
Mansu / 16/12/95

Proud records, alongside a wonderful photograph, that a Post Office opened at Mansu on 26 December 1895, and Ian Anderson's handbook has it as opening on the same date but as a Telegraph Office, yet this was cancelled in manuscript 10 days before. As far as I am aware no other such cancellation has ever been recorded, although if anyone knows otherwise, do please let me know.

In 'early December' 1895, Sir Francis Scott set out for Kumasi, the seat of Ashanti King Prempeh, from Cape Coast Castle with an expedition force of British and West Indian troops. King Prempeh had defied the British in many ways since the Third Ashanti War in 1873, and this expedition to bring him to heel was to become known as the Fourth Ashanti War.

The best record of this campaign is to be found in the book called *The Downfall of the Prempeh: A Diary of Life with the Native Levy in Ashanti, 1895 - 96* (web reference <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015058538854;view=1up;seq=86>) by none other than Robert S. Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout movement, then a Brevet Colonel. His diary mentions that the force had to make its way, no more than two abreast, up the track through 'dense, primeval forest' via what is today Dunkwa and on to Prahsu, where they arrived on 22 December, laying a field telegraph cable on poles as they went along at 'the amazing rate of two and half miles per day'.

Mansu is roughly halfway between Cape Coast and Prahsu and this stamp was cancelled on 16 December. B-P does not give a specific date for their arrival in Mansu, but it is quite likely to have been within 24 hours or so either way. Since this is a One Shilling stamp it is almost certain to have been used for sending a private telegraph message, probably the first and perhaps the only one sent, presumably by an officer, as soon as the telegraph apparatus was connected up.

Access to the internet?

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Biafra; Second Anniversary of Independence

Massimo Galvani

On 30 May 1969 Biafra issued a set of four stamps, lithographed in Italy and printed on white reflective paper (under UV) without watermark, plate or sheet numbers. They were in vertical format in sheets of four panes of 50 stamps each (5 row by 10 stamps). The perforation used was 13 x 13½: the sheets do not have full perforation in the top, left or bottom margins although the perforation extends into the margin by one or two holes; perforation is only through the right margin. The slash and dash (/-) normally associated to the stamps of 1s., 2s.6d. and 10s.(miniature sheet) was substituted by a comma (') giving 1', 2'6 and 10', most likely due to some difficulties for the printer. The stamps depicted a Biafran child in chains and globe. The quantity issued is unknown. The four values are:

- 2d. Multicoloured with yellow-orange frame
- 4d. Multicoloured with red-orange frame
- 1s. Multicoloured with new blue frame
- 2s. 6d. Multicoloured with emerald frame



Figure 1 (above)
The four values as issued

The stamps exist also with wide margins and guide marks; these definitely come from the sheets before cutting.

Figure 2 (below)
Wide margin with guide mark

Figure 3 (right)
This inter-panneau block of 4,
with guide marks and sheet
margin at left, shows 4d. and
2s.6d. values se-tenant



An inter-panneau block of ten stamps, with sheet margin at right, also showing the 4d. and 2s.6d. values set-tenant, is illustrated on the cover of this issue of *Cameo*. This similar block of twelve (Figure 4, reduced) has the perforation shifted upwards.

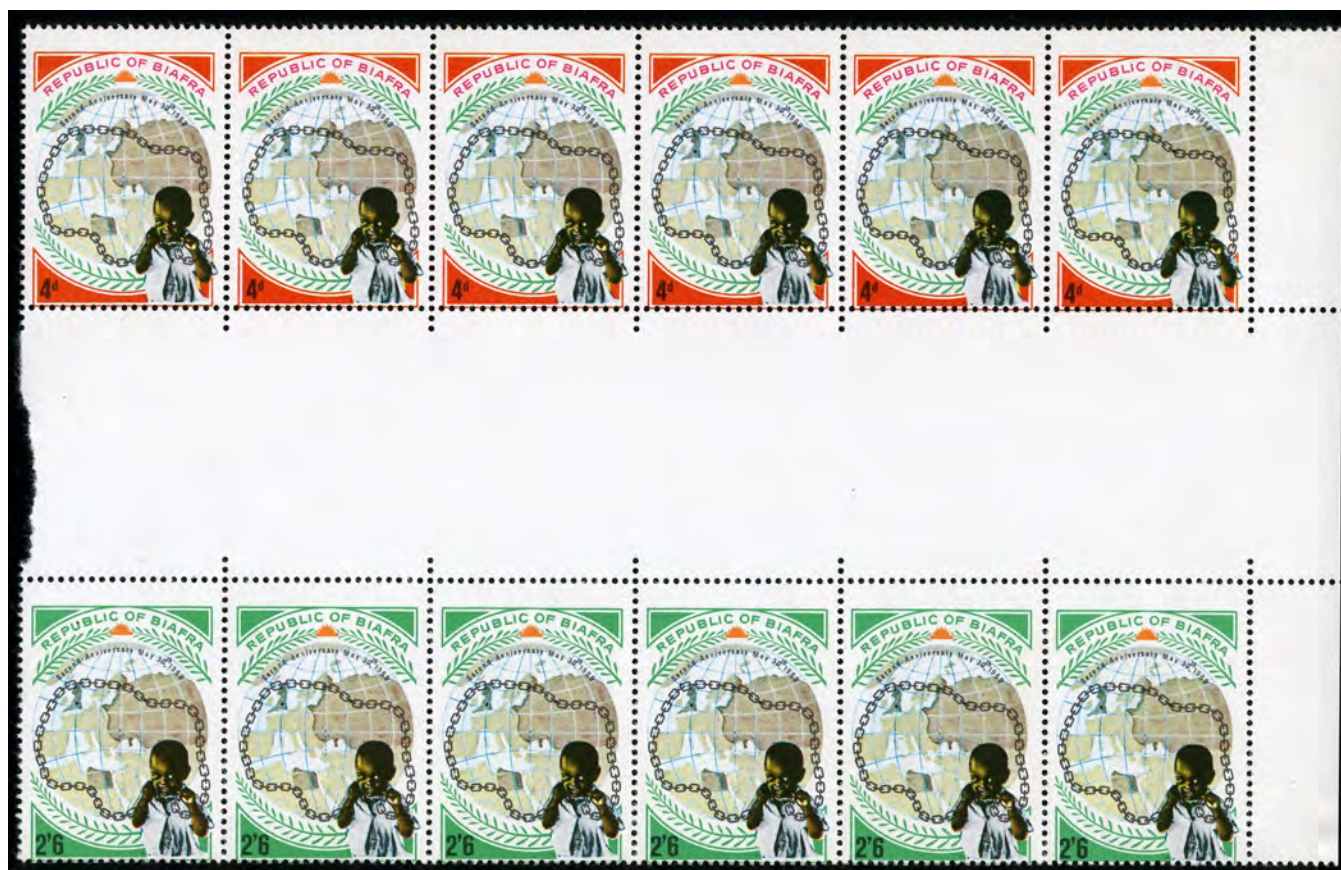


Figure 4
Inter-panneau block with upward shift of perforation

Three inter-panneau blocks of 20 existed (10 stamps of 4d. and 10 stamps of 2s. 6d.) and were separated in the following way:

- Three blocks of 4 showing margin at left (one with perforation shifted upwards)
- One block of 6 with margin at right (perforation shifted upwards – Fig.4)
- One block of 5 margin at right (Front Cover)
- Five blocks of 4 from the centre (one with perforation shifted upwards)
- A single block from the centre most likely damaged

Printing Error

The 4d. exists with green (Wreath) and orange (Sun) omitted. This is due to the missing of the third step of the printing. Only 50 stamps are believed to exist (Figure 5).



Figure 5
Missing the green and orange colours

Progressive Colour Proofs

They exist for all the four values, imperforate and with gum. Only the 4d. was printed in four steps.



First Printing

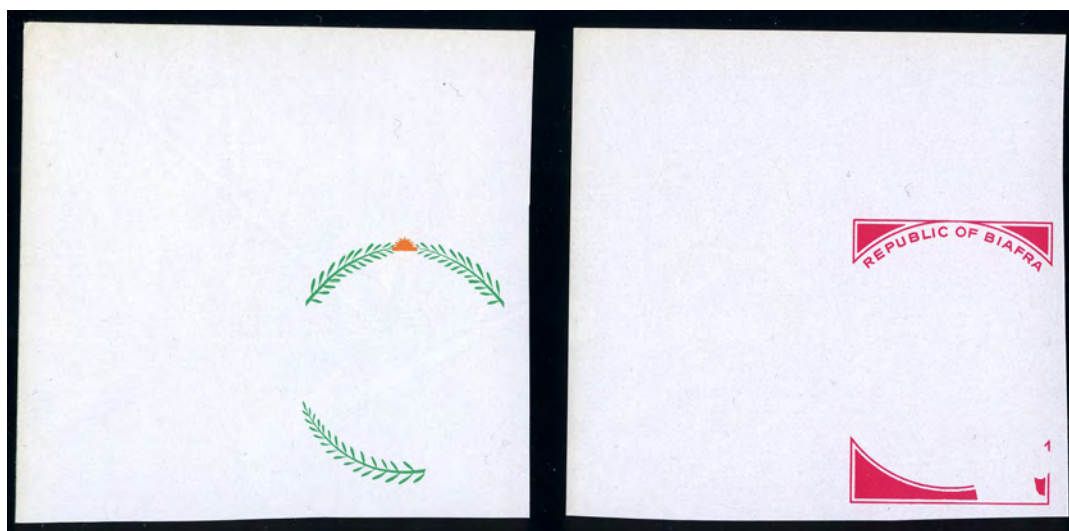
Second Printing

Third Printing



First Printing

Second Printing



Third Printing

Fourth Printing

Figure 6 Progressive Colour Proofs

Horizontal Inter-panneau Progressive Imperforate Colour Proofs

These are from the top margin of the sheet, showing at left the 4d. and on the right the 2d. inverted.



First Printing



Second Printing



Third Printing

Figure 7
Horizontal Inter-panneau Progressive Imperforate Colour Proofs



Figure 8
Inter-panneau Progressive Colour Proof
Fourth Printing

Note that on the fourth printing the right side is white because the 2d. has only three steps while the 4d. has four steps.

Figure 9 below illustrates an imperforate inter-panneau block of 4, Colour Proof with sheet margin at right, showing 4d. in yellow colour (**the last printing in red is missing**) and 2s.6d. in se-tenant pairs.



Figure 9
Inter-panneau block of 4, Colour Proof showing 4d. in yellow colour
(the last printing in red is missing) and 2s.6d. in se-tenant pairs

One inter-panneau block of 20 existed (10 stamps of 4d. and 10 stamps of 2s. 6d.) and was separated in the following way:

- One block of 4 showing margin at left
- one block of 4 showing margin at right (Fig.9)
- three blocks of 4 from the centre

Imperforate Colour Proof Error

These exist only for the 4d. and 2s.6d. On the 4d. the colour of the sun is light yellow and not orange, and is shifted to the right covering part of the green wreath (Figure 10). I have seen another block of four (top left corner of a sheet) and one single stamp from position R3/1.



Figure 10
4d Colour Proof with yellow sun shifted to right

First Day Cover

These exist with postmark Owerri 30 MY 19 (Figure 11). Some envelopes appear to have been signed in red by General C.O. Ojukwo.



Figure 11 First Day Cover postmarked OWERRI / 30 MY / 19

Specimens

I have so far recorded no SPECIMEN stamps.

Miniature Sheets

Two types of Miniature Sheets (Figure 12) were also issued with a value of 10s., printed on white reflective paper (under UV), without watermark; all sheets are numbered on the back, (right bottom corner, Figure 13) with sequential number of 5 digits. They depict starving Biafran children:

10s. Multicoloured Miniature Sheet - with perforation 13 x 13½ (**Type A**)

10s. Multicoloured Miniature Sheet - with simulated perforation (**Type B**)

It is not clear why two different miniature sheets were printed, but I believe they have been issued for philatelic interest and propaganda since I have never seen any officially used. Dudley Prestedge reports in his book they were 'Issued in ratio of **one imperforate** to **ten perforated**' but I believe it is not correct because the progressive numbering on the back of the miniature sheets does not match that ratio.

The quantity issued of **Type A** I estimate to be 15,000; we must not forget that many sheets were unofficially overprinted "SAVE BIAFRA 9th JAN. 1970" especially those with higher numbering on the back (lowest number in my possession 09594, highest 14737), for **Type B** I estimate the quantity is 5,000; also in this case some sheets were overprinted "SAVE BIAFRA 9th JAN. 1970" but without following a progressive numbering and mixed (lowest number in my possession 02273, highest 04473).

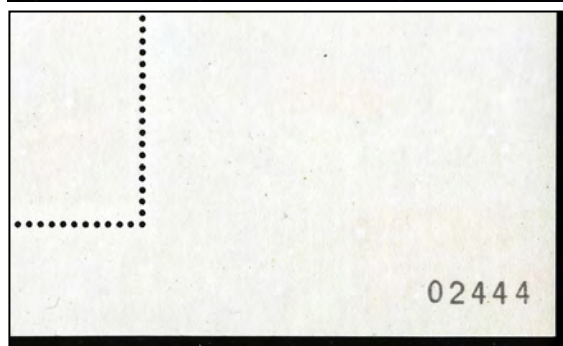


Figure 12 (above)
Type A Miniature Sheet, perf. 13 x 13½

Figure 13 (left)
Sheet number 02444 printed on back

Miniature Sheet Imperforate Progressive Colour Proofs

These are all on gummed paper, and illustrated at 60% size.

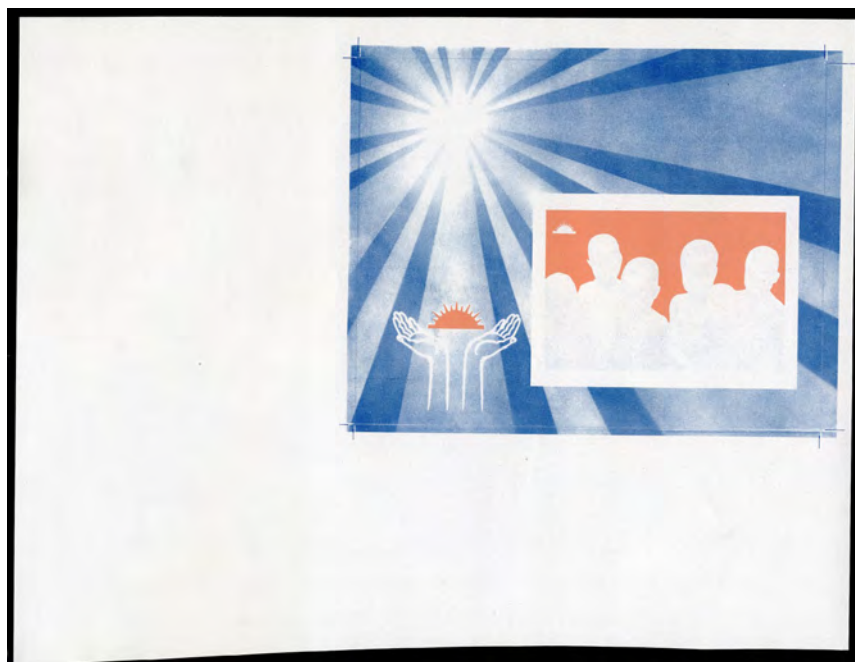


Figure 14
First Printing



Figure 15
Second Printing

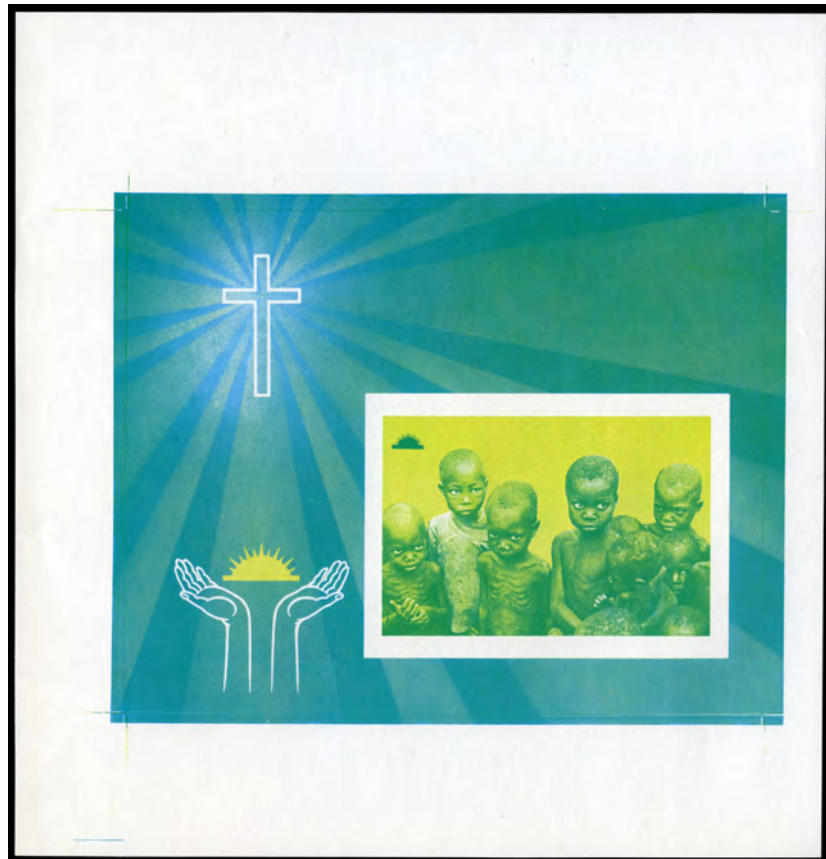


Figure 16
Third Printing



Figure 17
Final Printing

I have seen four other sets, three with wide margins and one with smaller margins and, from the final printing 4 additional sheets with larger margins.

Miniature Sheet Perforation Error Proof

Quadruple perforations on gummed paper showing part of a miniature sheet on the right and also perforations on the left margin. I have seen only one like this but without margins. I think it maybe the 'missing' miniature sheet to the right of this one.



Figure 18
Miss-perforated Proof Miniature Sheet
shown at 60%

Miniature Sheet overprint SPECIMEN

Whilst issued sheets are serially numbered, this specimen *Figure 19) bears no control number on back.



Figure 19 SPECIMEN overprint in red

Miniature Sheet (Type B) with Simulated Perforations



Figure 20
Type B Miniature Sheet; lowest number in my possession 00829, highest 02703

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TOGO. 1915 10/- marginal copy with thin 'G' (R.4/6). Very fine mint. SG H45b. **£140**

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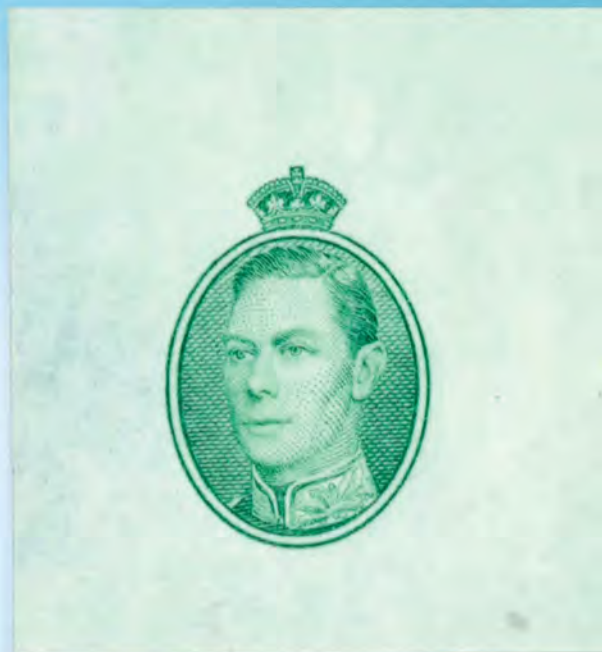
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