

CAMEO



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Front Cover TOGO

German 10pf + 10pf reply card overprinted for the Allied Occupation.
Reply part used as registered postcard to Holland, 28 Oct 1915.
Robert Gibbs had doubted any stock of this PS card had been captured
and overprinted by the Allies.
Sent for illustration in *Cameo* by John Mayne.

Editorial

The Committee of WASC is now committed to deliver *Cameo* electronically to those overseas members who choose to subscribe at the reduced rate approved by the last AGM. I refer you to page 5 of this *Cameo* to understand the way Ray Harris, our webmaster, is now setting this up in a password-protected form. When we can be sure this is operating well, I expect there will be a number of UK members who will be interested to access *Cameo* in that way. I hope it will also provide a launch pad for the complete *Cameo* archive to be made accessible in searchable pdf format. In the meantime two air mail projects are also in process of delivery via the WASC website—see page 6 of this issue of *Cameo*.

So, 2013 should be an interesting year for the Study Circle's publishing activity. But we should not forget that WASC is active socially and that this is one of our weekend conference years. I would encourage all our members, particularly new members and those who have not been to a meeting before, to make this the year when you come along to be welcomed, entertained and informed.



The next issue will be edited by Rob May, datelined June 2013, and the copy deadline is 27 May 2013

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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.

Rob May / Barry Burns

Scope

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

Annual Subscription

A subscription of £20 per annum provides UK members with a printed copy of *Cameo* three times a year, but this assumes electronic distribution to all overseas members, either as a website download or on CD-R. Those overseas members who prefer to receive *Cameo* in print format may do so at an additional 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.



Sabena 1944

Dear Rob,

Re your article on the Sabena 1944/45 service to Europe, (Cameo No. 87, Oct 2012, p156) I came across this cover image on the fantastic Belgian Congo website www.congoposte.be/ which is a goldmine of information about the Belgian Congo.

Funnily enough a couple of weeks ago I found on ebay a card flown by Sabena to Belgium on 23 March 1945 at 7fr postage; the same as your card.

Rob adds—the design of this first flight cover is slightly misleading. Although Belgium was liberated in September 1944 such mail addressed to Belgium was kept back in the UK until early 1945.



First flight 13 Sept 1944 Leopoldville to the UK only, not to Brussels at this date. Opened by censor in the UK (*ed—with apologies for the low resolution of this image*)

Peter Wingent
Winchester



Postcard date-stamped Leopoldville, 29 March 1945, with Brussels arrival date-stamp of 11 April. Flown by the once-monthly Sabena service from Leopoldville to Hurn, using a Lockheed Lodestar, then sent to Brussels by air or surface. The 7Fr postage comprises 1Fr ordinary postage for cards to Europe (rate applied from 7 September 1944) plus 6Fr postcard airmail fee to Europe (rate applied from 27 November 1944)



Gold Coast—1945 airgraph from Elmina

Dear Rob

I remember that we discussed some Gold Coast airstrips used during WWII. One was at Elmina from which I had seen no postal items previously. At a Dutch stamp fair I attended recently I found with a Belgian dealer an airgraph from Capt. L.A. Woodroffe, 3 (WA) TTS, Elmina, Gold Coast, West Africa Force (illustrated here). It is postmarked FPO 45 (Takoradi) and got the A600 censorship mark 7115. It was explained to me that this represents the last acceptance of the airgraph service from Gold Coast as noted by Keeton. "3 (WA) TTS" should mean 3rd West Africa Trades Training School. If that is correct it would rather imply a more civilian school or was it still military in nature?

Elmina is a rather small, sleepy historical town with mainly old Dutch buildings as it was the Dutch capital for centuries. I think there are no military buildings whatsoever, maybe apart from the military airstrip recorded during the Second World War. It could have been built in the coastal flat plains but I do not know the exact location.

What was Capt. Woodroffe doing in such an minor outpost during WWII? I look forward to hearing from members who might be able to provide more details about the person and the place.

Marc Parren
Heerlen, Netherlands.

Ed— I think the ancient Elmina Castle itself was a military, then police, training base at this time



Sierra Leone auction results

Dear Rob,

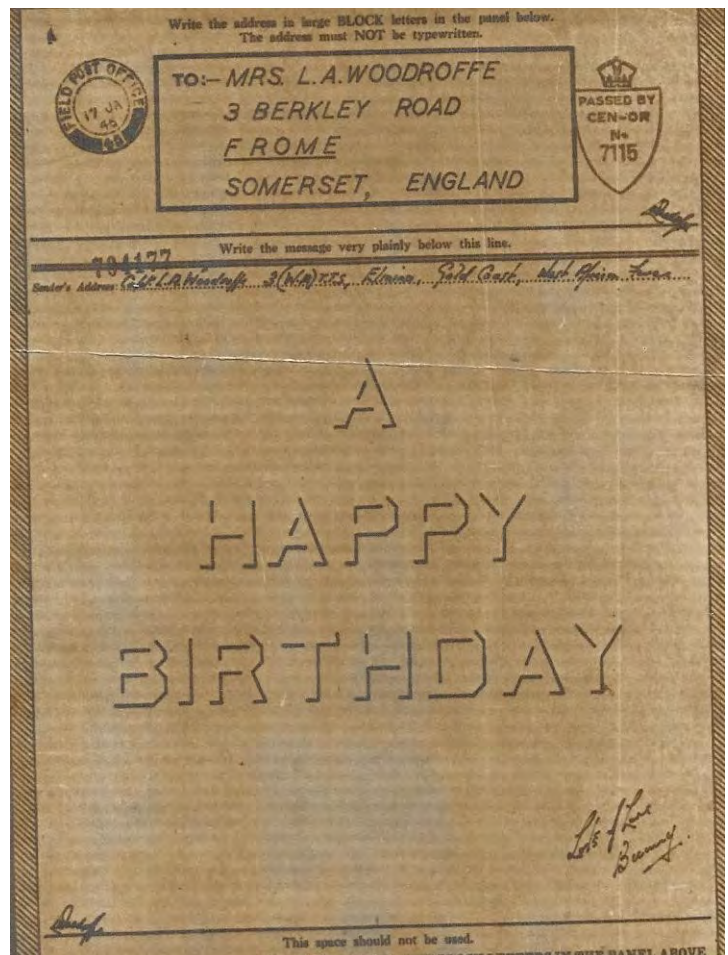
A very recent auction on the Continent came up with the following results for some Sierra Leone items which may be of interest. The figures quoted are, I think, hammer prices, so there is quite an amount of addition to make.

1878 first issue 6d + second issue 1/- x 2 cancelled B31 on cover to Paris with Paid Liverpool Br. Packet in red also Paid At Sierra Leone in red with other cancels. Estimate €1500 but sold for €3360.

Cover to Halifax, Canada 1894 with 1d, 1½d and 2d. Canceled Freetown with boxed Registered + Registered Devonport. Estimate €500, sold €735.

1896 1d x 2 + 2½d canceled Benguema on 2d Registered Envelope to London. Est. €920, sold for €1108.

1898 1½d + 3d + Revenue 1d + 6d + fiscal o/p 1d, Freetown on Registered Letter to Manchester. €660, sold for €945.



Prices paid seemed to be high but obviously somebody was willing to pay. I liked the Benguema item but was bid out!

Keith Hanman
Whitton, Middx



Gold Coast Achiankrom postmark

Dear Rob,

I attach a scan of Type 19 ACHIANKROM postmark which I have just acquired. It is not listed in Mackin or Anderson's books but it is illustrated on page 131 of Proud under ACHINAKROM.



Peter Duggan FRPSL
Reading

Digital Cameo

Ray Harris

Following the membership vote about subscription rates for 2013 a note has been circulated to overseas members asking if they prefer to continue to receive Cameo by post or by electronic means.

My intention at present is that members opting for the electronic version will be sent the address of a webpage within the WASC site, but with no external pointers to it. They will also be given a password, so that they will be able to download the latest issue as a pdf file, which will require the password for them to open it. It will be readable with Adobe reader from version 6 onwards (currently version 11 is available as a free download).

The pdf will be the same as is sent to our printer. That means there is one file for the content and another for the cover, with all illustrations in colour (unless the author of any article provided only black and white to the editor). The overall image quality should be comparable to the printed version. In this format the pdf will involve no programming elements, only text and simple images, so no risk from JavaScript.

Members can contact me if they have any queries.

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

- Airmails – Barbara Priddy
- Ascension – Bernard Hughes
- Biafra – Dudley Prestedge
- Cameroons – Marty Bratzel
- Gambia – Oliver Andrew
- Ghana – Ian Anderson
- Gold Coast – Peter Duggan
- Lagos – John Sacher
- Maritime – John Knight
- Nigerias to 1914 – John Sacher
- Nigeria post 1914 – Tony Plumbe
- St. Helena – Bernard Mabbett
- Sierra Leone to 1961 – Frank Walton
- Sierra Leone post 1961 – Peter Rolfe
- Togo – Jeremy Martin

**The Publications Committee Chairman
is Rob May**

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.

Air Mail News, Volume 55, no. 219, November 2012

pp30-34 Peter Wingent, *To and fro between Southampton and Poole Imperial Airways Flying Boat Base Sept 1939 to 1940*. [ed—see also www.pooleflyingboats.com]

Civil Censorship Study Group Bulletin, Vol. 39, No. 4, October 2012

pp141-147, Tony Brooks & Graham Mark, *WWI: the French Censorship Commission in London*. WASC members may recognise the marks this Censorship Commission used; a double oval - OUVERT/ Par l'AUTORITÉ MILITAIRE with numbers 900-920 in the centre and an octagonal "SAISI PAR/ l'AUTORITÉ MILITAIRE"

pp167-169, John Wakelin, *WWII USA—instructions for Official Couriers 1943*

Journal of the France & Colonies PS, Volume 62, no. 3, September 2012

pp80-84 Peter Kelly, *Motorised Transport of Mails across the Sahara, Part 1*

Journal of the France & Colonies PS, Volume 62, no. 4, December 2012

pp117-123 Peter Kelly, *Motorised Transport of Mails across the Sahara, Part 2*

pp141-142 Bob Maddocks, *Ivory Coast, Journée Nationale des Cheminots 20-21 Mai 1945*

p146 John Mayne, *Togo: 'Après le Départ' strike on German Mail* [ed— mail sent in 1896]

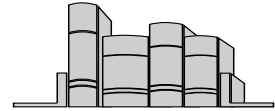
Philatelic Collections Newsletter, issue 20, Autumn 2012

p3, *Philatelic image analysis with retroReveal* (<http://retroreveal.org>)



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.

The Wartime Atlantic routes of Pan American Airways by John Wilson

A collaborative project to establish air mail routes to and from West Africa has been in progress since 2006. The UK's weekly Civil Aviation Authority reports were the first primary source of reasonably accurate information on wartime air services and these were transcribed and placed on the web site of the West Africa Study Circle for free access by any interested researchers. All of this activity, whilst answering many of the questions and correcting many of the misunderstandings of the last 70 years pales into insignificance beside the discovery in the Pan American Archive (held in the Richter Library at the University of Miami) of the airline's Atlantic Division "Trip Summaries".

For the collector or researcher wanting specific details of the wartime services of Pan American Airways, it would be necessary to have access to the original documents described in this text. Since this would normally involve a visit to the University of Miami, this option is unavailable to most people. However, having located the trip summaries and had copies made of them, it seemed an obvious step to try and make the information available in digital format. Accordingly, and with the most generous permission from the Richter Library, a summary article by myself, together with images of all the actual trip summary documents for 1939-1945 (All Atlantic flights, not just for the West African air links), are proposed to be placed on the web site of the West Africa Study Circle, alongside my work on the British CAA Report, and available as a free-to-download resource. The specific sub-address for these documents has not yet been created and will be provided as part of an article to appear in the June 2013 issue of *Cameo*.

The Pan American Archive documents are held as Special Collection ASM 0341 in the Richter Library and constitute some 25,000 folders. To aid searching, the Library has produced an index to the collection and this will also be available on the West Africa Study Circle web site.

Please note that the Trip Summaries remain in the possession and copyright of the Richter Library, and permission to reproduce was granted on the basis that the images are to be used for research and not for any commercial purposes. Information about the Special Collection is available on the following link:

<http://scholar.library.miami.edu/panam/>

It is hard to comprehend the importance to the airmail collector of the discoveries made in the Pan American Archive held in the Richter Library at the University of Miami. On a personal note I cannot adequately express my gratitude to the staff of the Library for their enormous assistance and dedication in supporting my research over the last few years.

In particular I would thank Cristina Favretto, Steven Hersh and Laura Capell who must have been stressed at times by my incessant questions, but nevertheless were swift to respond with the utmost courtesy.



RAF Flights Lagos to Rabat 1943-44 by Barbara Priddy and Peter Wingent.

The authors have prepared a 25 page article on this subject and have placed their draft on the website www.wasc.org.uk for comments and input by members before publication in print form in 2013.

Please return any contributions to either author by e-mail as soon as possible.

Major J.G.C. Allen

Simon Heap

I read with great interest Bob Maddocks' 'Who was who in Nigeria/Cameroons in WWII' (*Cameo*, 13(3), October 2012, pp. 175-177).

Though Bob briefly outlined the life of Major J. G. C. Allen, he was unable to find a biography of "this interesting man".

In fact, fortunately, Major James Godfrey Colquhoun Allen (1904-1982) left copious records in the Rhodes House Library's manuscript collection as part of the Oxford Development Records Project. He even wrote two autobiographies, the first titled, "*Whence Few Came Out*": *An Autobiographical Account of Service as a District Officer in Eastern Nigeria, 1926-32* (MSS.Afr. s.1687), which was extended in the second, *Nigerian Panorama – 1926-66 (A District Officer from Eastern Nigeria Looks Back)* (MSS.Afr.s.1551). In the latter, on page 104, is Allen's very interesting observation from the 1920s:

The carrier of a 'book' (letter) from a European was always treated by the primitive illiterates of those days with the greatest possible caution. It was widely believed that a letter written by a European embodied the 'spirit' of the writer and that it would report fully to the addressee or the writer, on receipt, all that had occurred during the period of transmission. Therefore, its possession served as a sort of talisman to the bearer while at the same time putting him on his best behaviour and causing him, for fear of repercussions, to deliver it with the least possible delay. If at any time the bearer decided to yield to temptation and commit any act which he knew would not be approved by the whiteman he took care to hide the note in some secure place before yielding to his desires in the belief that, thus hidden, the vigilant letter could not see what was happening and report the culprit to the authorities. This convenient theory, which was never officially admitted, resulted in a reasonably efficient and rapid mail service. The bearers of such letters were always euphemistically known as 'runners' but although they seldom, if ever, exceeded a leisurely walking pace they were usually reliable and trustworthy, chiefly perhaps for the reasons described above.

Rhodes House Library also has a transcript of an interview carried out by Professor Tony Kirk-Greene of Oxford University at Allen's home in Bath in 1972 about his service in Nigeria, 1925-53 (MSS.Afr.s.2105). There is also a microfilmed *Report on the Political Situation in the Cameroons under the French Mandate*, July-August 1940 (MSS.Afr.s.424.ff.240-254).

In 1943, Allen wrote *Native Policy in Nigeria*, a 16-page pamphlet published by Twentieth Century Press, as well as *A Handbook of Basic Administration and Civil Service Procedure in the Federal Republic of Nigeria*. During parts of 1946-48, Allen was Acting Commissioner of the Colony in Lagos.

Other aspects of Allen are worth mentioning. Allen had been educated in France, Germany and Switzerland and destined for the diplomatic service, before he joined the colonial service. Allen was the second piano teacher of the noted Nigerian composer Akin Euba in 1948. Euba won first prize at the First Nigerian Festival of the Arts in 1950, which Allen had helped to create (<http://africlassical.blogspot.co.uk/2008/04/akin-euba-nigerian-composer-born-april.html>). It is also reported that Ladi Merriman Johnson, Director of Music at the Finham Choral Society in Coventry, had started his piano lessons with Allen in Bath (<http://www.finhamchoralsociety.org.uk/pages/director.html>)

Allen also has a significant place in the founding of *The Nigerian Field Society*, of which I am a member, being part of a small meeting assembled in Obudu on 3 October 1930 at which the society was formed.

WWI Army Correspondence Cards

John Mayne

I previously raised a query for members in *Cameo* (Vol. 13, June 2012, pp114-115) about a pro-forma army correspondence card used from Gold Coast during World War I. Jeremy Martin's response was published in the next issue of *Cameo* (Vol. 13, October 2012, p124) and answered my query about why this card had not been sent post free: - free postage applied only after 28 August 1914.



Figures 1 & 2
Front and reverse of another type of Army correspondence card printed in Accra

An enquiry of Alastair Kennedy produced a constructive reply. He has identified the writer of my card to be George Shechan who was made up to Temporary Lieutenant with the W.A.F.F. from 25 August 1915.

The format for such cards was agreed in 1913 and the two cards recorded by Jeremy and myself, printed and used in Gold Coast, are very early usages. Similar cards were issue for use by the British Expeditionary Force in France on 15 August 1914 and are first recorded used there on the next day.

Peter Burrows of the Forces Postal History Society is an expert in these cards. He has sent a copy of an unused Gold Coast card for publication in this *Cameo*, printed in a different format. He can give no date of issue for it.

NOTHING is to be written on this side except the date and signature of the sender. Sentences not required may be erased. If anything else is added the post card will be destroyed.

[Postage must be prepaid on any letter or post card addressed to the sender of this card.]

I am quite well.

I have been admitted into hospital

{ sick } and am going on well.

{ wounded } and hope to be discharged soon.

I am being sent down to the base.

I have received your { letter dated.....

{ telegram

{ parcel

Letter follows at first opportunity.

I have received no letter from you

{ lately.

{ for a long time.

Signature only }

Date.....

Govt. Printer, Accra. Army Form A 2042

Gambia: Banjul Machine Cancellers

Oliver Andrew

As noted by Duncan & Andrew (Ref 1), there are two date-stamps used in the franking machine, with seven wavy lines. The first (103.01) has 9mm spacer lines and the year is much shorter than the date line; the second (103.03) has 7mm spacer lines and the year is nearly the same length as the date line. It is now possible to give many more details of the use of these two and the numbering in the book has consequently been altered. We have changed that numbering as little as possible.

Figure 1



103.01		12 Apr 1977	13 Feb 1995
.011	Line date year	12 Apr 1977	18 Nov 1985
.0111	wavy lines inverted	19 Aug 1997 and	16 Feb 1978
.0112	cds inverted	1 Jul 1978	7 Jul 1978
		17 Nov 1978	
		31 May 1985	18 Jul 1985
.0113	year inverted	30 Mar 1979	
.012	Date line year	13 Sep 1979	
		26 Sep 1980	1 Oct 1980
		21 Feb 1985	
		27 Jan 1986	
.013	Line year date	16 Jun 1984	19 Jun 1984
		3 Apr 1986	24 Feb 1987
.0131	wavy lines inverted	16 Feb 1985 and	18 Jul 1985
.014	Line year (no date)	1985, 1986	1987
.015	Date year line	1 Apr 1987	27 Jul 1988



Figure 2

Some time between 29 Dec 1992 and 20 Jan 1993, the second cds (103.03, see below) was replaced. The first cds was put back into use, with the year figure '8' altered to resemble a '9'. The left hand part of the lower loop of the '8' was removed. The alteration was not particularly skilful and can be mistaken for the original '8'. Figure 1 shows a stamp issued on 13 Sep 1993 cancelled with the altered mark: the 2D airmail rate to Europe was only introduced in 1992.

103.02	(the wavy lines are inverted)	20 Jan 1993	13 Feb 1995
.021	(gap) date year	20 Jan 1993	25 Nov 1993
.022	Date (gap) year	6 Jan 1994	13 Feb 1995
.0221	cds inverted	24 Nov 1994 and	6 Jan 1995
103.03		29 Dec 1987	29 Dec 1992
.031	Date year line	29 Dec 1987	1 Aug 1988
.0311	cds inverted	28 Feb 1988	3 Mar 1988
.032	Year line date	16 Aug 1988	17 Jan 1989
.0321	cds inverted	4 Feb 1989	
		10 Nov 1990	16 Nov 1990
.033	Year date line	23 Feb 1988	
.034	Line date year	20 Jan 1989	14 Nov 1990
.0341	cds inverted (figure 3)	4 Feb 1989	
		16 Nov 1990	27 Dec 1990
.035	Line year (no date)	4 Jan 1991	31 Jan 1991
	cds inverted (1990 date 1991) (figure 4)	4 Jan 1991	31 Jan 1991
	(the date is twice inverted, or not at all)		
.036	(gap) date year	10 Feb 1991	29 Dec 1992
.0361	wavy lines inverted	16 Oct 1991	16 Mar 1992
.037	Year date (gap) (wavy lines inverted)	8 Nov 1991	11 Nov 1991
.038	cds missing	??????????	??????????



Figure 3



Figure 4

Reference

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

Some philatelic comments on the Independence and Re-unification of Cameroun

Marc Parren

With much interest I read Rob May's article on the use of aerogrammes in Cameroun which discussed the period around independence and the relations between West and East Cameroun, illustrated by some examples of aerogrammes from West Cameroun (Ref. 1). That brought to my mind a meeting I had last year with George Muna, son of Salomon Muna. The latter was President of the National Assembly of Cameroun between 1973 and 1988, and a keen philatelist himself, most likely inspired by the fact that he was previously a Minister of Posts and Telecommunications. While George led me around the small museum of artefacts which had belonged to his father at the Salomon Muna Foundation in Yaoundé, I also noticed a small philatelic exhibition. That, of course, raised a special interest for me and we discussed my interest in the postal history of the country. More astonishingly, he later showed me a bi-lingual booklet produced by his father on the history of Cameroun in the light of stamps issued (Ref. 2).

It has a political connotation and accordingly it was printed but not distributed widely. I will discuss in this article some of its highlights starting with the national emblems such as its flag. In 1957, French Cameroun became self-governing and in 1958, a 20f stamp was issued to commemorate the first anniversary. This stamp already had the 'green-red-yellow' flag and 'peace-work-fatherland' national emblems that are still in use today. However, the flag has since been modified twice, first with the addition of two stars at the time of re-unification in 1961, and then later by the removal of one of them.

On 1 January 1960 former French Cameroun became La République du Cameroun and starting issuing stamps with that name. On 1 October 1961, Southern Cameroons, which was now known as West Cameroun, and La République du Cameroun, now known as East Cameroun, became the Federal Republic of Cameroun. East Cameroun continued to use stamps of La République du Cameroun. In West Cameroun old stamps of French Cameroun overprinted 'République Federale' came into use. In addition to the overprinted French Cameroun stamps the 25f stamp with the portrait of the second Prime Minister of French Cameroun, Mr Ahidjo, which had been issued on the date of Independence, was overprinted as well. The question raised: "is it particularly because this stamp depicted Prime Minister Ahidjo that it was the only stamp of the newly-independent République du Cameroun on which the Sterling overprint appeared?"

On 1 January 1962 the République Federale du Cameroun issued its first new stamp design in common, both issued in francs (for use in former East Cameroun) and overprinted in Sterling (for use in former West Cameroun). The stamps show the leaders of both East and West Cameroun, respectively Mr. Ahidjo and Mr. Foncha. Mr. Ahidjo is described as President Ahidjo and Mr. Foncha '1^{er} Ministre Foncha'. This was a stamp of the République Federale du Cameroun, and if Ahidjo is identified as President, Foncha should be described as Vice-President, which is the post he held in the République Federale du Cameroun. Foncha was also Prime Minister of West Cameroun at the time. Describing him as '1^{er} Ministre', and not even Premiere Minister, creates confusion as to whether Mr. Foncha was just a 1st Minister or Prime Minister of the République Federale du Cameroun. At any rate, it appears that an effort was made to dilute the impression of equal status given by the appearance of both men on the same stamp. This design was the only one that came close to portraying re-unification as a union of equals, the stamps were quickly withdrawn from circulation under the pretext of the existence of artistic deficiencies in the images of the two leaders.

In 1967 a 20f stamp was issued by the République Federale du Cameroun to commemorate the 7th Anniversary of Independence of La République du Cameroun (figure 1). The stamp features the speech made by Mr. Ahidjo on 1 January 1960 proclaiming such. However, the two flags depicted were flags of the République Federale du Cameroun with two stars, whereas the design should, for obvious reasons, have used the flag



Figure 1

without stars in use at the time of Independence. This stamp did not celebrate the date of Independence for West Cameroun as well. A further 25f stamp depicting Mr Ahidjo was expected to be issued but this stamp was withdrawn from use and only mint copies and one first day cover are known.

As a next step on 20 May 1972 the Republic converted to become the République Unie du Cameroun after a referendum. The flag was modified and lost one star as from 20 May 1975 to commemorate the Union of West and East Cameroun. At this time West Cameroun also lost its regional government.

When a stamp was issued in 1979 for the visit of French president Giscard d'Estaing a design error was made showing one star in the wrong place on the Cameroun flag. This was noticed and corrected on the issued stamp but some mint copies and FDCs of the error can be found (figures 2 and 3).

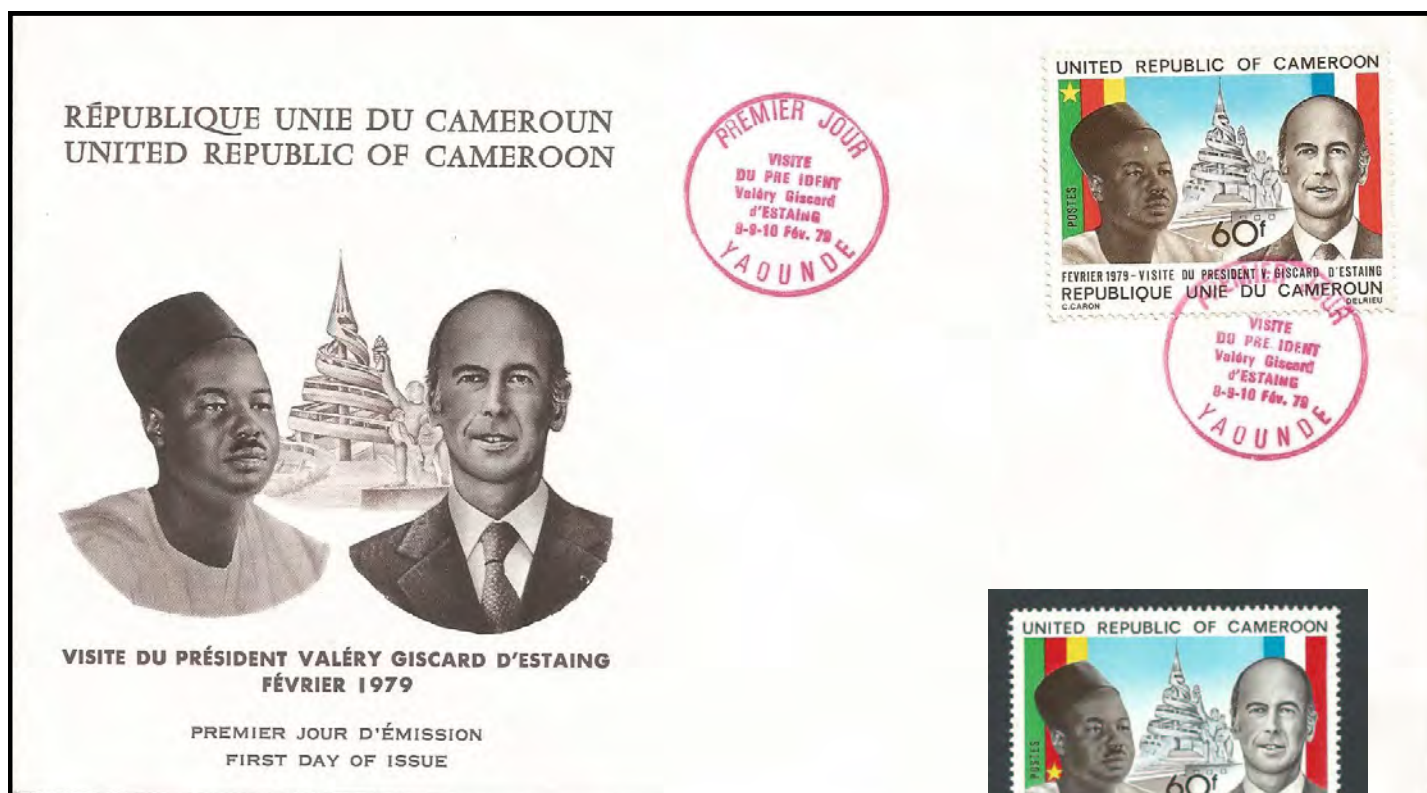


Figure 2; FDC for the 1979 presidential visit stamp showing the error of design with the single star in the green band of the flag

Figure 3; the corrected design

In 1984 the name was changed to read République du Cameroun. President Biya for the 30th Anniversary of Independence issued two stamps (figure 4) and a souvenir sheet on 1 January 1991, although one year late, to commemorate once more just the East Cameroun independence.



Figure 4

In 2010, the government seemed to have been more sensitive to these issues since they issued on 20 May 2010, national day of the Union, four stamps a souvenir sheet and a stamp booklet commemorating both the 1960 and 1961 independence and re-unification (Ref 3).

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1. May R., Use of Aerogrammes in Cameroun, *Cameo* Vol. 13, pp144-151. WASC, October 2012.
2. Muna, Salomon Tandeng. *Stamps and the history of Cameroon. A philatelist's view*. Tama Books, Yaoundé, Cameroun, 1995.
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Postmaster George Cole and the Reorganisation of the Lagos Post Office, 1901

Dr Simon Heap

At various points in its early history during the nineteenth century, the Lagos Post Office had received criticism about its work, which one historian of Lagos said resulted from “planlessness”. (Ref. 1) Such negative views continued into the next century. So, in early 1901, a two man team headed by Captain H. V. Neal, an Inspector in the local Hausa Force, and District Commissioner James M. M. Dunlop, investigated the poor state of the Lagos Post Office which had been under the management of long-time Postmaster George Josephus Cole for over sixteen years.

Their findings were stark: “There are hundreds of letters lying at the Post Office. Even if the person cannot be found, no notice is put up at the Post Office to this effect... Stamps – foreign – had been removed from envelopes.” The main thing that struck Neale and Dunlop was “the entire absence of any method of working in the department. Everything is done in a slipshod manner and no one knows who does it. The Postmaster has to call in every one before he can find out”. (Ref. 2)

At the same time as the formal enquiry, Cole underwent a medical examination to see if he was fit enough to discharge the duties of his office. Conducted by the Medical Officer of Health Dr Francis G. Hopkins and Assistant Colonial Surgeon in the Medical Department Dr William H. G. M. Best on 20 March 1901, they declared, “Cole is physically fit”. (Ref. 3)

So the colonial authorities listed four issues to be weighed in judgement in the case: the “gross carelessness” in the handling of letters; Cole’s “most unsatisfactory replies” to questions put to him by the Committee; his “slipshod” management; and that Postmaster Cole appeared to have “no control over his staff”. (Ref. 4)

The Lagos Governor, Sir William MacGregor, was by no means satisfied with Cole’s explanation of the sorry state of affairs and considered that he has been guilty of gross neglect by not properly directing the work of the Department under his management. (Ref. 5)

Yet, after a careful review, the Government proved unwilling to terminate Cole’s employment in view of his long service. Indeed, George Cole’s first appointment to colonial service stretched back almost 27 years to 7 July 1874, just after the inaugural set of adhesive stamps were issued, when he was employed as a Messenger. Cole then rose through the ranks, to be Acting Clerk in 1876, Clerk in 1877, then transferred to the Secretariat as Second Clerk in 1882 and then appointed Lagos Postmaster after a decade of colonial service on 14th January 1885. His initial Postmaster’s annual salary of £150 had increased over the years to reach £290 by 1901. (Ref. 6) However, Governor MacGregor was convinced that Cole was “unfitted to remain in sole charge of the Department” and so arranged that in the future the Post Office be supervised by the Treasurer of the Colony. (Ref. 7)

Sadly, George Cole died only a few months later on 29th August 1901. (Ref. 8)

Lagos did not get a new postmaster until the following year with the appointment of the Chief Clerk Arthur Laborde from the Colonial Secretary’s Office. Every time Laborde was away on annual leave, his deputy, Chief Clerk Alphonso Coker, was indeed supervised by the Colony’s Treasurer. (Ref. 9)

More importantly, out of the tragedy of Cole's death, the Lagos colonial government seized the opportunity to do something positive with the staffing levels to try to solve the problems of the mail service. There was a reorganisation of the Lagos Post Office Department: eight new staff employed, doubling the total number of staff. (Ref. 10)

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2. National Archives, Ibadan (NAI), Chief Secretary's Office (CSO) 16/3/N.16/1901, *Report* by Captain H. V. Neale, President, and J. M. M. Dunlop, Member, 30 March 1901.
3. NAI, CSO 16/3/N.16/1901, *Report* by Neale and Dunlop, 30 March 1901.
4. NAI, CSO 16/3/N.16/1901, *Report* by Neale and Dunlop, 30 March 1901.
5. NAI, CSO 16/3/N.24/1901, Adolphus W. Allen, Acting Colonial Secretary, Lagos, to George. J. Cole, Postmaster, Lagos, 24 April 1901.
6. Ince and Sacher, *The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region*, p. 526; *Lagos Blue Book of Statistics*, 1901, p. 50.
7. NAI, CSO 16/3/N.24/1901, Allen to Cole, 24 April 1901.
8. *Lagos Blue Book*, 1901, p. 50.
9. *Lagos Blue Book*, 1900, pp. 42-43; *Lagos Blue Book*, 1902, p. 52.
10. *Lagos Blue Book*, 1901, p. 50.



Another Nigerian Mobile PO cancel

Ray Harris

The cancel shown is the only marking on an envelope addressed to Ellisdon in London. It appears to record MOBILE PO (the latter inverted) / NIGERIA, dated 12 J? / 195(?)7. The sender was at a Sudan United Mission School, giving his address as Rim (Makafo) via P.O.Jos. It is thus reasonable to assume that this cancel emanates from the Jos area. The stamps are 2d grey type B (SG72cc), therefore the year is more likely to be 1959.



Postmark enlarged 50%

Letter from St Helena 1815 - Rate Explained, Update

Colin Tabeart

May I be so bold as to comment on the article of the above subject by Bernard Mabbett in *Cameo* Whole Number 87, October 2012? Firstly, congratulations to the author for a valiant attempt to reconcile the 4/6d that appears to be the rate actually charged to the recipient. 1812-1819 is a particularly difficult period to interpret incoming ship letter rates, but there are some significant misconceptions within the article.

Firstly the progression of rates at the time this letter arrived is wrong. It was not per half ounce, but prior to 1840 was as follows:

A single sheet of paper under 1 ounce = 1 rate
2 sheets of paper under 1 ounce = 2 rates
3 sheets of paper under 1 ounce = 3 rates
A letter weighing one to one and a quarter ounces, regardless of number of sheets = 4 rates
For every quarter ounce above one and a quarter ounces add an extra rate

Secondly, much of Robertson was written nearly 60 years ago. At that time very little research had been done into postage rates, and Robertson is more often wrong than right on his interpretation of postage rates, and particularly so with respect to ship letter rates. Far better research is now available – see References.

Thirdly, I do not think the rate crossed out is 7 shillings – it looks much more like 5 shillings to me, which was the maximum rate allowed to be charged on ship letters from the East Indies for a period of one year under 55 Geo III c 153, effective from 11 July 1815. That Act set an inward ship letter rate to the UK of 8d single from anywhere in the world (modified with respect to India Letters from 1819 to 1839 – but that is another story and not applicable to this letter).

Inland rates, enacted by 52 Geo III c 88, effective from 9 July 1812 until the uniform 4d post in December 1839 were as follows:

Date	Limits	Single	Double	Treble	Ounce	Remarks
9 Jul 1812	Up to 15 miles	4d	8d	1/-	1/4d	52 George III c 88
	15 to 20 miles	5d	10d	1/3d	1/8d	
	20 to 30 miles	6d	1/-	1/6d	2/-	Within Great Britain
	30 to 50 miles	7d	1/2d	1/9d	2/4d	
	50 to 80 miles	8d	1/4d	2/-	2/8d	
	80 to 120 miles	9d	1/6d	2/3d	3/-	
	120 to 170 miles	10d	1/8d	2/6d	3/4d	
	170 to 230 miles	11d	1/10d	2/9d	3/8d	
	230 to 300 miles	1/-	2/-	3/-	4/-	
	every extra 100 miles add	1d	2d	3d	4d	

As to the letter, once landed at Portsmouth it probably went via London, as Bernard Mabbett says. The mileage from Portsmouth to London was 72, and from London to Cheltenham 95 – total 167 miles = a 10d single rate charge. 10d + 8d ship letter charge = a single charge of 1/6d, so this letter is clearly a treble rate letter for a total collect sum of 4/6d, as marked.

There are now three very good studies of UK Letter rates as given in the References below. David Robinson's work is by far the best available for the period covered, sadly only up to 1840, and is long out of print. Much missed, David is no longer with us.

The Moubrays' book is excellent, but covers a very short time span, and will set you back of the order of £200 if you can get a copy. My book covers 1635 to 1900, and can be had occasionally as a second edition at auction, but a third edition is now available from me on CD only for a modest £15, including postage. It also includes US, French, and Australian inland rates and postcard rates, not available elsewhere. E-mail me at colintabeart@btinternet.com if interested.

References

- 1 Robinson David, *For the Port and Carriage of Letters – a Practical Guide to the Inland and Foreign Postage Rates of the British Isles 1550-1840*; the Author, Scotland. ISBN 0-9516794-0-6
- 2 Moubray Jane and Michael, FRPSL, *British Letter Mail to Overseas Destinations 1840-1875*; Royal Philatelic Society London 1992. ISBN 0-900631-28-7
- 3 Tabeart Colin, APR, *United Kingdom Letter Rates Inland and Overseas 1635-1900*, 2nd edition HH Sales 2003. ISBN 0-905222-80-6



St Helena & Ascension Forged SPECIMEN Overprints

Bill Thorpe

I recently bought some Specimen stamps on EBay that didn't quite look 'right'. They were merely described as 'Specimens', and my doubts were confirmed when they arrived. Although the lettering looked genuine, on some it was wrong for the particular stamp. However, on all stamps, the imprint of the SPECIMEN overprint on the reverse caused by the machine stamping of the overprint was not present. An example of the reverse of the genuine overprint is illustrated as Figure 1.

The suspect stamps are dealt with in catalogue and date of issue order, and illustrate the possible pitfalls in purchasing items like this. All references are taken from Samuel's book. (Ref.1)

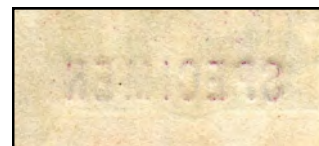


Figure 1
Genuine overprint
from back of stamp

St Helena

1903 Halfpenny SG 55

The genuine overprint is Type D12a, and measures 13.5 x 2.5 mm. Although the forged overprint is in the right place, it measures 14.5 x 2.7mm, and is thicker and not as sharp as the genuine one (Fig. 2).

1912 Halfpenny SG 72

This also should have a Type D12a overprint, but measures 14.5 x 2.5mm. Again the overprint is in the right place, but the real giveaway is that it should be in red and not black (Fig. 3).

1923 Halfpenny SG 97

The overprint should be Type D16, 15.5 x 1.75 mm, and red in colour. This one measures 14.75 x 2.25, and although red, is entirely in the wrong place. This should be just above the top vignette frame line.

However, there are two other factors which show that this is a forgery. Firstly there is a break in the left vignette frame line which only started in the 1923 printing of the one penny. Secondly, the gum on the stamp is a dark brown, which indicates that it is from one of the last two printings. As genuine Specimens were only taken from the December 1922 printing (issued February 1923) this therefore cannot be genuine (Fig. 4, with the break in frame line shown alongside).



Figures 2, 3 & 4, left to right, with the 'break in the left vignette frame line' flaw at far right

1922 One Penny SG 98

This should be Type D12a, but is not for reasons already stated for SG 55 and SG 72. However, the stamp itself is not from the 1922 printing. The vignette, Figure 5, is from a genuine Specimen which shows the ship to be much darker and in less detail than the forgery (Fig. 6). The green of the stamp is also of a much different shade than a genuine copy.

1923 Two Pence SG 100

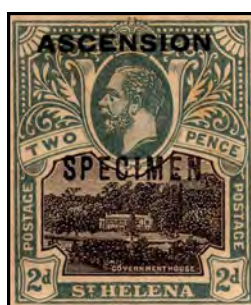
This should be Type D16, but from the size of the overprint is obviously not. It is also probable that the stamp is not from the 1922 printing (Fig. 7).



Figures 5,6 & 7, l to r

Ascension

1922 Halfpenny SG 1 and Two Pence SG 4



Figures 8 & 9. Here the main clue is as with St Helena; on the genuine the imprint shows on the reverse (Fig. 10). In this set, all the genuine overprints are in red apart from the 1½d, so these are obvious forgeries. The overprint should be Type D16, which this is not as it resembles Type D12a.



Figures 8, 9 & 10, l to r

1924 One Penny SG 11

This should be Type D16, but again resembles D12a, and is an obvious forgery (Fig. 11).

Items such as those described here do not appear on the market very often, and on the Internet it is sometimes hard to be really sure if the item is genuine or not. Samuel does not mention the colour of the overprints, but in many cases this makes identification easier, as does the position of the overprint itself.



Figure 11

Reference

- 1 Samuel Marcus, *Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857-1948*, RPSL London 1976

Postal Day to Day Life in Sierra Leone 2012

Martin Bohnstedt

This report from Sierra Leone in 2012 was first published in German in Michel Rundschau 4/2012. It has been translated into English by WASC member Hans Peter Hauschild for publication in Cameo with permission of the author.

Sierra Leone is no longer in the news, and that is a good thing. Almost a decade after the end of a long, brutal and confusing civil war, the country is once again peaceful and secure although it is also one of the poorest and least developed nations on earth. Few people still remember that Sierra Leone has been a well known holiday destination for package tourists 30 to 40 years ago, with some of the most beautiful beaches in West Africa. There are few tourists in the country today, just some aid workers, mining experts and emigrants with family roots in Sierra Leone.

There are 24 post offices in present day Sierra Leone, eight of which are located in different neighbourhoods of the sprawling capital city of Freetown. Their interior often features old fashioned, charming Wild-West architecture with desks and barriers of dark, roughly cut wood and iron grilles with small openings to serve customers. While some post offices in the interior of the country are traditionally placed in prominent town centre buildings, others are rather successfully hidden from customer attention. In a country where even the smallest roadside shop draws the attention of customers through colourful notice boards and becomes guilty of visual overstimulation, the small, pale, worn out Post Office signs on the walls of dirty, plain, weather beaten Post Offices easily disappear behind all the other publicity boards (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Waterloo Post Office



Figure 2: Lungi Post Office



Figure 3: Lunsar Post Office (inactive)



Figure 4: GPO Freetown

Some post offices can only be reached on a footpath (New England), others consist of a single small room inside a government office building (Youyi), or are situated in the middle of a sprawling settlement of social housing (Kissy) or are not publicly accessible (Freetown Quay in the freight port). Compared to its tiny size the postal kiosk just across from Freetown's airport terminal in Lungi must rate as the most well-marked post office in town ! (Figure 2)

Most people in Sierra Leone do not write or receive letters. Many associate the word "Post Office" not with mail, but with an "office" at a "post" and promptly send you to the only "post" they are familiar with: the police post...! At least there is usually one among the police officers who knows what a "Post Office" really is and can tell you the way to the nearest one.

The postal administration of Sierra Leone explains that besides the proper Post Offices there are also 17 Post Agencies, mostly in and around Freetown. Theoretically they should offer most basic services and deliver letters in their neighbourhood. However, many Postal Agencies are placed in unmarked private buildings and unknown even to the next-door neighbours. The agents can rarely be found at their desks and they do not generally show great eagerness or initiative. The agent of Murray Town (Freetown) told me his agency had been destroyed by fire, which is why he put all remaining material in stock in the GPO. People living in the area shrugged that there was not even mail delivery by their agency any more, instead every few weeks a postman would come from the GPO with some deliveries.

The Postal Agency Fourah Bay College (University of Freetown) had reduced its functions to that of the university's internal mail room. The agent told me that he would take official mail to the GPO instead of handling it in his agency. Asked to produce his postmark, he got nervous but found it after some minutes of intensive search. The date had been changed in 1997 for the last time and had got seized up by rust since then.

An employee in the GPO is keeping a fine list of monthly payments to all the Agents, but after visiting some of them I would not regard these payments as salaries for actual work done, but just as some form of charitable donation for unemployed citizens who would not have any income without it. ...

In Wellington, one of Freetown's outer suburbs, I discovered a postal installation even below the level of a postal agency. (Indeed, Wellington does not feature in the list of postal agencies.) It was just a local postman's delivery stand and he did not possess a date-stamp. He was much easier reachable by his clients in his well signed little stall than at home.

Outside Freetown finding a fully functional post office is a hit-and-miss affair. In Makeni and Kenema my registered letters were handled and stamped professionally. In Port Loko the postmaster was definitely overtaxed. He did not put registration numbers on the letters and did not want to give me the registration receipts. He only remembered one element of the procedure, namely to complete the registration receipt duplicate in his big log book. Nonetheless, the letters from Port Loko eventually arrived at their destinations, albeit a month later than usual.

The Lunsar Post office was empty and locked (Figure 3). The postmaster had taken his postmaster bag, a few forms and some stamps to his home. The postmark had gone missing, but he assured me he would travel to Freetown "the next day" to report the loss and get it replaced. Possibly he did not want to admit that Lunsar would likely go on without postmark for months or even years to come. Even in Waterloo, less than 30 km from Freetown, a missing item led to a long crisis: in August 2011 registration stickers for overseas letters ran out of stock. Till December no replacements had arrived.

As early as 1990 the Sierra Leone Post had got a new name: SALPOST (Sierra Leone Postal Services Ltd.). The name can be found not only on the façade of the GPO in Freetown (Figure 4) but also in the date-stamps used all over the country, except in a few cases where much older "Sierra Leone" postmarks continue to be used (for example, in Kenema and Youyi).

A quirky little fact is that the transit date-stamps used in Freetown's GPO for registered letters does not feature any location name at all. Besides, all over the country not much attention is paid to fix the correct date. Often the year is missing in the postmark, or numbers are upside down. Postmarks of smaller Freetown branch post offices just bear the name of the neighbourhood, not mentioning that it is actually in Freetown. Old fashioned geographic names in and around Freetown like Aberdeen, Hill Station, New England and Waterloo remind one of Sierra Leone's colonial past as part of the British Empire. It's a real pity that the country's most original village name does not appear in any postmark because there is no post office in "Devil Hole" (figures 5 & 6)

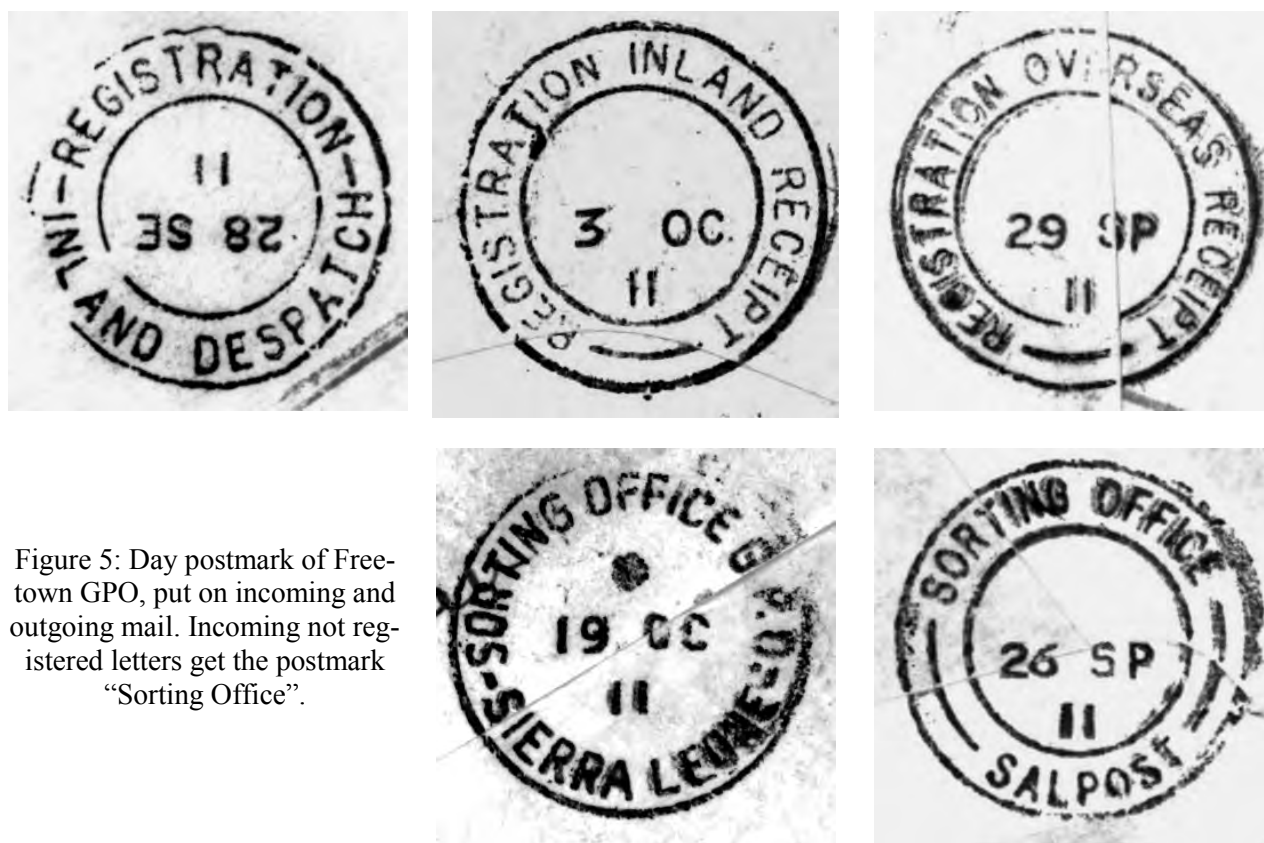


Figure 5: Day postmark of Freetown GPO, put on incoming and outgoing mail. Incoming not registered letters get the postmark "Sorting Office".

Traditionalists - and philatelists! - in Europe might regret the decline of the postal system. In Africa, however, technical progress has undoubtedly made communication cheaper, faster, easier and more democratic. Even wage-less people in Sierra Leone generally own a cheap prepaid mobile phone, and top-up credit costs just a few hundred Leones, while inland letter postage is 2000 Leones (about 0.30 euros). As a result you will find very few customers in Sierra Leone's post offices, especially in Freetown's small branch post offices or in countryside towns and villages. UPU statistics prove that the country's inhabitants despatch very few letters, but nevertheless like to receive them. The average citizen only sends 0.04 letters per year. Incoming postal items are a much higher number than outgoing ones. In many post offices I saw stacks of letters from foreign missionary societies, educational institutions and more or less dubious churches – all ready for delivery.

Sierra Leone's mobile phone culture is very useful even for visiting philatelists: most postmasters in Sierra Leone do not take their opening hours very seriously and give delivering letters as an excuse for their temporary absence. Many though write their mobile phone numbers on the post office's doors, so I got used to the habit of phoning them in advance of a visit to fix an appointment, as with my dentist at home! Conversely, I also benefitted from their relaxed attitude towards working hours. During a prolonged postal strike in September 2011 over unpaid wages, the post office workers did not deliver or transport mail, but I could hand in my letters in the post offices to be processed further and dispatched after the strike had finished.

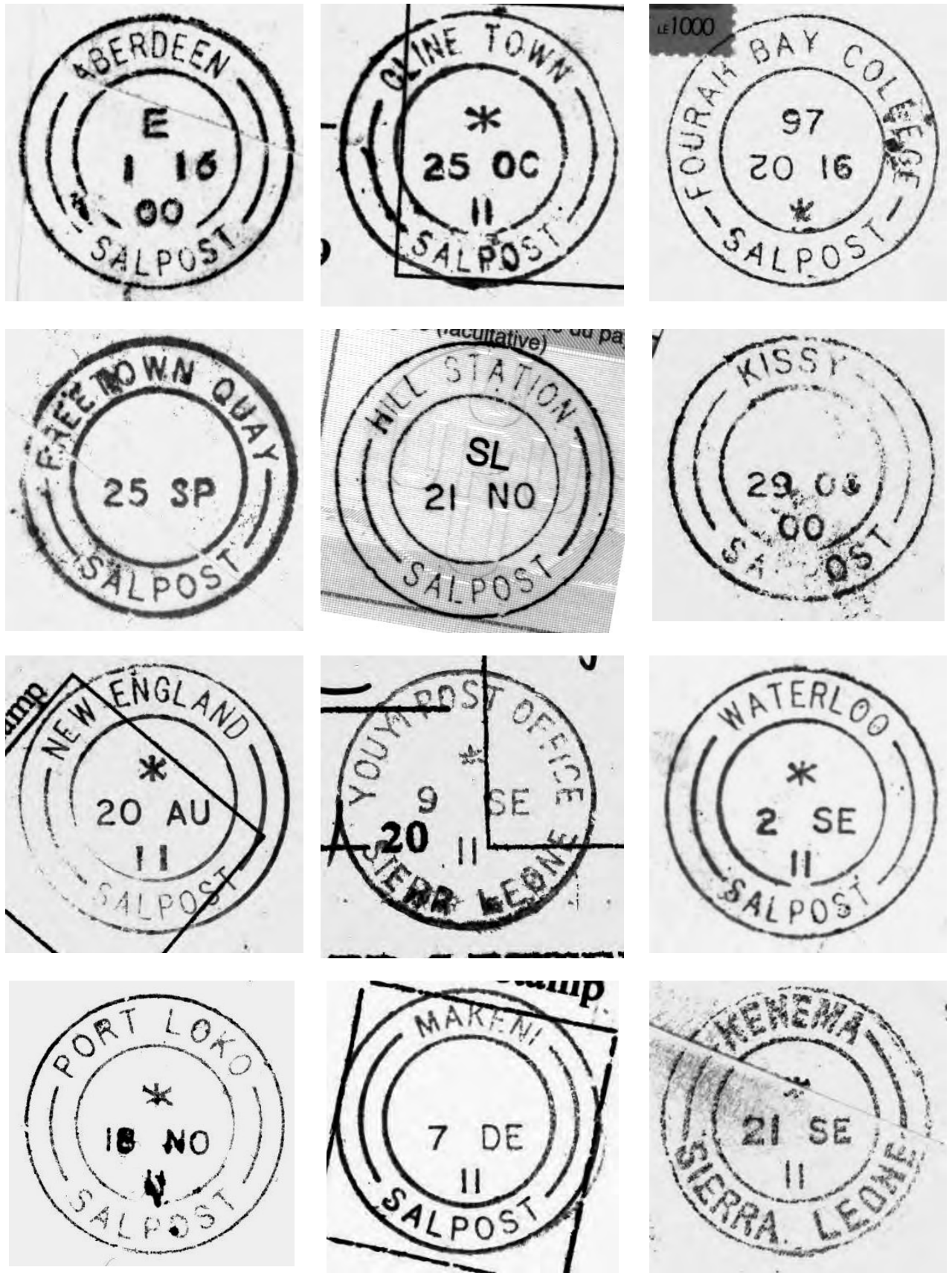


Figure 6; Counter day postmarks of different Post Offices and the Fourah Bay College Postal Agency. Missing years (Freetown Quay, Hill Station), setting mistakes (Aberdeen, Kissy) and inverted numbers (Fourah Bay College) are frequent. In the Youyi postmark the “a” of Sierra is missing.

Post Offices		Postal Agencies	
Freetown GPO		Murray Town	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>
Freetown Quay	<i>Port Area</i>	Wilberforce	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>
Kissy	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>	Circular Road	<i>Freetown Center</i>
Youyi	<i>Government Building</i>	Congo Town	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>
Aberdeen	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>	Lumley	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>
Hill Station	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>	Hennessy Street	<i>Freetown Center</i>
New England	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>	Fourah Bay College	<i>University of Freetown</i>
Cline Town	<i>Quarter of Freetown</i>	Allen Town	<i>Suburb of Freetown</i>
Lungi	<i>Airport</i>	Calaba Town	<i>Suburb of Freetown</i>
Waterloo		Portee	<i>Suburb of Freetown</i>
Bo		Goderich	<i>Suburb of Freetown</i>
Kenema		Milton Margai College of Education	<i>Goderich</i>
Kailahun		Regent	<i>Outer part of Freetown</i>
Lunsar		Hamilton	
Magburaka		Newton	
Makeni		Pepel	
Kabala		Mile 91	
Port Loko			
Kambia			
Moyamba			
Pujehun			
Bonthe			
Koidu			
Blama			

List of post offices and postal agencies 2012

UPU imperialism has by now imposed standardized forms on more than 80 countries – including Sierra Leone. The most prominent example are blue, self-adhesive, barcode stickers for registered mail in UPU standardized design without any names of towns or villages included. The sticker form consists of three identical parts (one for the letter, one for the customer's receipt, and one for the post office receipt duplicate). Generally, the large upper part with a wide margin and the UPU emblem is put on the mail item. A few postmasters mercifully put this monster sticker onto their receipt copy and use one of the smaller and more modest parts for the letter. Others boldly take their scissors and cut off parts of the margin around the barcode. (Figure 7)



Figure 7: Registered letter from Makeni with a strange combination of inland registered postmark and self-cut UPU-Registered sticker. The un-cancelled 1000 SLL stamp was added after the letter was posted – either because the letter was not adequately franked (but only 100 SLL less than required) or because someone thought the letter to be addressed to Australia, for which a higher tariff had to be applied

Yet others are unwavering in their belief that the UPU symbol on the margin is most important and may under no circumstances be removed “because the UPU rules about mail transport would not apply to this letter otherwise.” They brutally put the large margin barcode sticker on the letter, covering even stamps if necessary.

Inland post in Sierra Leone is still without postcodes. Registered letters receive a rectangular “R” rubber or metal stamp, usually with the name of the town or village and a handwritten registration number. (Figure 8)

Figure 8: Inland registered letter with mini-sheet Mi No 512 as proper postage. Four postmarks on the margin, but none on the stamp Mi No. 3994



Sometimes only a number in manuscript is used, and nothing else. At least the Post Offices in Waterloo and Cline Town still use the old, small, gummed blue stickers of British production which were used some 20 years ago in the whole Commonwealth for both domestic and international mail.



Figure 9: Inland registered letter from Waterloo near Freetown with MiNo. 4223-25 and 4228 (eco-tourism) as postage – a rare example for a modern stamp issue from Sierra Leone with connection to the country itself.

Registration stickers from Cline Town PO bear the name “Freetown East” – I am not sure whether this is the old name of Cline Town PO or if they are using gummed stickers of a former Post Office called Freetown East, which no longer exists.

Stamp production responsibility for Sierra Leonean stamps lies with the Inter Governmental Philatelic Corporation (IGPC). This agency has been flooding the stamp market for many years with lots of cheaply produced thematic stamps without relevance to the stamp-issuing country. Within Sierra Leone commemorative stamps are only available in the General Post Office in Freetown and, even there, not at any of the normal counters. Instead, the postmaster guards a big strong room adjacent to his office. It is large - several square metres - and contains stacks of boxes full of commemorative stamps. All stamps are carefully kept in the original printer's wrapping inside the cartons. Complete sheets are kept in plastic covers, souvenir sheets are veritable “bricks” pressed between cardboard and kept together by rubber bands. As a philatelist willing to inspect all issues in that stockroom you have to be willing to take a lot of time, because opening all those boxes, taking out the stamps and repacking everything is not a quick process.

The postmaster does not know which issues (or quantities) are delivered to Sierra Leone by the Agency, but he told me he thought the Salpost managers would probably receive this information from the IGPC. I saw stamps issued between 1993 and 2011 and would be willing to make a wild guess that of about 10% of all commemorative stamps issued on behalf of Sierra Leone a small percentage (between a few hundred and a maximum 1000 to 2000 stamps or sets) was in stock in the safe room. I cannot say whether all other issues had been sold out or had in fact never even reached Sierra Leone. The most recent deliveries (2011) of IGPC packets had control stickers showing technical data and the designation “Territory Supply”. Clearly the decision of how many stamps will be sent to Sierra Leone is already taken when packing the stamps after printing.

By coincidence, Youyi Post Office had some 2006 commemorative stamps in miniature sheets in stock, but the Freetown postmaster told me that commemorative stamps are generally not delivered to post offices because there are no staff with philatelic knowledge available. This is a pity because boxes full of special stamps are now yellowing in Freetown. They could be used for postage instead and generate considerable income for Salpost. Instead of commemorative stamps all post offices sell stamps of the definitive set started in 1992. I saw the denominations of 200, 300, 500, 750, 1000, 2000, 3000, and 5000 leones, and all of them were second and later printings. Most definitives featured the year “2006” at the bottom, Michel Number 1917 II (3000 SLL) was only available with the year “2002”, Michel number 1916 II (2000 SLL) with “2002” and “2006”. Surprisingly, all post offices accepted without comment all my colourful stamps as postage on letters although they surely had never seen any of them before. Generally they did not even ask where I had bought them.

Sub-Saharan Africa is a promising region for any explorer-philatelist who hopes to stumble across previously unknown stamps. In Sierra Leone I was lucky, too: the first find was a set of three stamps to commemorate SOS Kinderdorf International with values of 200, 600 and 700 leones (figure 10)



Figure 10: A newly discovered - not yet in the catalogues – but presumably many years old set “SOS-Kinderdorf”, on an adequately franked inland cover from 2011.

The state of yellowing and the denominations led me to the conclusion that this set must have been produced about 15 years ago. It has never appeared in any stamp catalogue. Subsequent research confirmed a release date of 1999. The stamps were known to a handful of subscribers receiving SOS Kinderdorf topical issues. They had been supplied with FDCs after the release of the stamps, but nobody possessed mint sets.

The second discovery was a tiny overprint of the Hong Kong 94 philatelic exhibition emblem on stamps of the cat set issued on 17 May 1993 (Michel numbers 2024 – 2047). These stamps had only been known without overprint up to now. They were issued in two miniature sheets with 12 stamps each. The overprint was only found on the first mini sheet (Michel no. 2024 - 2035). It had been printed twice on the lower sheet margin (in both corners) and only once on a single stamp (Michel no. 2025), namely the second stamp in the upper row of stamps (figure 11)



Figure 11: Another late discovery, nearly 20 years after being issued: Mi No. 2025 (white cat on rose-coloured background) with a hitherto unknown overprint with logo of the Hong Kong 94 philatelic exhibition

The Freetown GPO had sold these stamps for years without noticing the difference between original and overprinted sheets. It is quite possible that the second mini sheet – possibly sold out completely - also exists with the same overprint. If its overprint was positioned identically the overprinted stamp should be Michel number 2037. The two souvenir sheets belonging to the same set of cat stamps were still available in Freetown, with and without overprint. The overprint on the souvenir sheets is situated on the margin – on souvenir sheet 225 in the upper right corner, on souvenir sheet 226 in the upper left corner. No overprint is found on the stamps themselves (Michel numbers 2048 and 2049).

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Sierra Leone Use of AR Cards in 1983

Philip Quirk

A job lot of covers franked with bird definitives yielded two examples of Avis de Reception (AR) cards, both used in 1983. The AR service confirmed to a sender that an item had been delivered to the addressee. AR cards, introduced from 1921 onwards, passed through the post free on their return journeys, but some originating authorities affixed the stamps paying the AR fee to them (Ref. 1).

The first example (Figures 1, 2) is a loose card, relating to a registered letter posted from Freetown to Aberdeen (Sierra Leone, not Scotland!). It was despatched from the Freetown GPO on 20 December 1983 (Freetown Counter No.1 cds), where its seven 5c bird stamps were also cancelled with the same device.



Figure 1: Front of AR card used in connection with a registered letter sent 20 December 1983 from Freetown to Aberdeen.

The Aberdeen postmaster acknowledged delivery of the letter on 23 December, and also wrote in the registration number (Ft-2 (denoting Freetown 2), No.1076). He then applied his datestamp the following day before returning the card to the sender, c/o SCOA, Freetown.

The AR card has no pinholes but is heavily creased half-way down, suggesting that it was folded around the letter it accompanied. Designated "P. & T. Form No. 6", it is printed on fairly thick, salmon-coloured card, whose printing code indicates that it was produced in September 1972. It is interesting that the card was designed for use with three classes of correspondence: insured letters, registered articles, or parcels with declared value (valeur déclarée).

My second example of the AR card has been glued to the back of an airmail, registered, express cover, posted from Freetown to the USA in July 1983 (Figures 3, 4). Sent by Prince Issa Koroma from the General Post Office Registration Branch, the cover may well have contained philatelic items; the recipient is an established seller on the eBay website. The registration label has been altered in manuscript to Freetown 57, a code associated with the Philatelic Bureau from 1983 onwards (previously code 89 was used - Ref. 2). Mr Koroma also wrote "A.R. Card Attached" in the lower right corner of the front of the envelope. The card itself bears the handwritten "Reg. No. 1160 FT57" and has been tied to the envelope by two strikes of the Registered Mails Received oval, dated 07 July 1983. In contrast, the eight stamps on the

ADMINISTRATION DES POSTES DE LA SIERRA LEONE
Post Office of Sierra Leone

AVIS DE RECEPTION
ADVICE OF DELIVERY

Timbre du Bureau
Stamp of Office of origin

20 DE 83
S.P.O. SIERRA LEONE

d'une lettre avec valeur déclarée de One
of a letter insured for
d'un objet recommandé Registered (1)
of a Registered Article
d'un colis postal avec valeur déclarée de Letter
de Free Town (le 20/12/83 sous le No. (2) 11-2
of [on the under No.] 1076
expédié par M. B. B. Labai
sent by
et adressé à
and addressed to
(full address) MR. Musafieu Smith
..... 12 Cape Road - Aberdeen

TIMBRE DU BUREAU
DISTRIBUTEUR

Le soussigné { qu'une lettre avec valeur déclarée
déclare { qu'un objet recommandé
qu'un colis postal avec valeur déclarée } a l'adresse
susmentionnée
The undersigned acknowledges that { an insured letter
a registered article } addressed as above
an insured parcel }
et provenant de
and posted at
livré le
delivered on the 23 = 12 = 1983
Signature (3)
de l'agent du bureau distributeur:
of the Postmaster of the Delivering Office:

STAMP OF DELIVERING
OFFICE

Nature de l'objet (lettre, échantillon, imprimé
etc.)
Nature of article (letter, sample, printed paper, 2.
etc.)

Bureau d'origine: date de dépôt à ce Bureau
no. d'enregistrement au même bureau.
Office of origin: date of posting at this office
No. of registration at the same office

Nota.—Cet avis doit être signé par le destinataire ou, si les règlements du pays de destination le
comportent par l'agent du Bureau distributeur, et renvoyé ensuite par le premier
courrier directement à l'adresse indiquée au recto.

Note.—This advice must be signed by the addressee or (if the postal regulation of Country
of destination so provide by the Postmaster of the Delivering Office, then sent by the
first Mail to the address shown on the other side.

Figure 2: the reverse side of figure 1

front of the envelope have been cancelled by the Registration Overseas Despatch oval for the same date. A circular, clock-type mark confirms receipt by the Austin, TX, Special Delivery section on 15 July 1983, while the front of the envelope bears an explanatory handstamp documenting a failed attempt to deliver the item.

This cover has two bizarre features. Firstly the use of glue to attach the AR card to the envelope would have made it difficult to remove without causing damage, perhaps the reason the US Postal Service did not attempt to do so. Secondly the total franking of only 9c (including the single 1c stamp on the AR form) is surely a gross underpayment. Perhaps the balance was paid in cash or the sender trusted to his official Post Office position to get away with adding the item to the mails. There is no evidence that the recipient was charged any postage due.

As from 01 July 1975, the Sierra Leone AR fee was 16c for inland or overseas surface items and 24c for overseas air (Ref. 3). I have been unable to verify any later costs for this service from the Gazettes, although authority for the Director-General to impose a 15% surcharge on postal fees was promulgated by Public Notice No.19, dated 07 May 1981 (Ref. 4). At this time the registration fee was increased to 35c, so the 35c franking on the Aberdeen card represents a plausible fee for the AR service.



Figure 3: Front of 07 July 1983 cover, Freetown to USA, with AR card attached to the back of the envelope.

References:

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2. Walton, F.L. & Quirk, P.G. (2010) "Sierra Leone Registration", 2nd. edition, p.41.
3. Sierra Leone Government Gazette, 03 July 1975, p.811.
4. Public Notice No.19, 1981, published with the Sierra Leone Government Gazette of 14 May 1981.

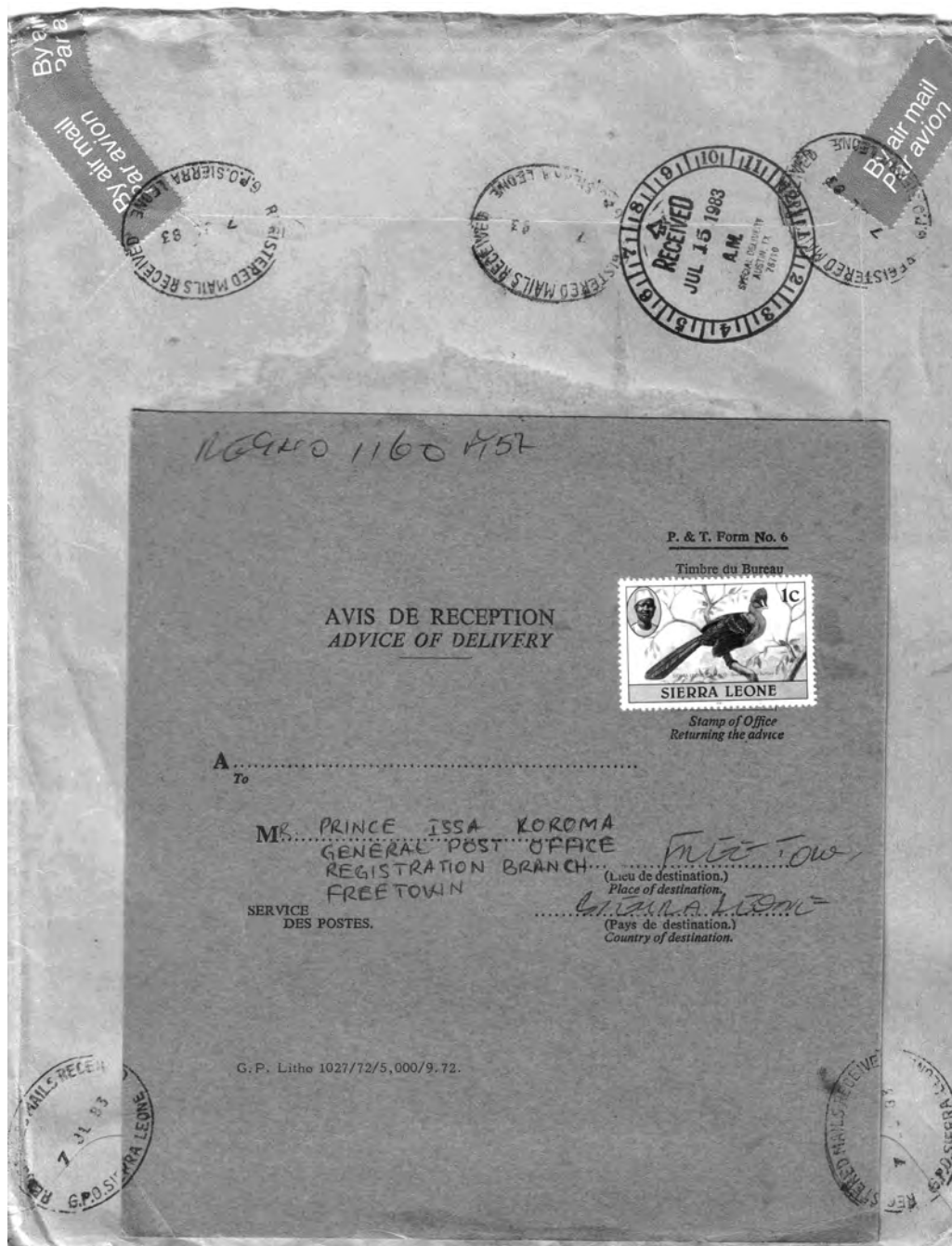


Figure 4: reverse of figure 3



Nigeria new version of N500 “National theatre”

Ray Harris

I attach a scan of a used copy of a new version of this N500 stamp.

This looks superficially like the original from the 1990s (imprint N.S.P.&M. Co. Ltd.) but it is perf. 13 and has no watermark, so it will warrant a place in the catalogue.

The date on this copy, the only one I have seen, is 11 Oct 2012.



Gambia Cancellations 1990 and 1991

Oliver Andrew

Strange dates in Gambian cancellations have long fascinated collectors. Most are simply mistakes, but some are genuine and ingenious ways round a problem. This is best seen in the use of '19' in 1900 before the arrival of the '00' year slug—a straightforward solution in the days when there was only one Post Office and few cancellers.

However, particularly confusing are what are clearly 1990 and 1991 obliterations. Some show no year, others show '90' or '91', still others have a single '9'. It is clear that the year slugs for 1990 didn't arrive until the fourth week in July. It is also clear that, incredibly, the year slugs for 1991 were not properly ordered either. My acquisition of a large series of covers of these dates addressed to Finland has enabled me to suggest a solution; or more accurately a series of solutions, since Gambian Post Offices differed in their practices. It is possible to check the real date of covers against:

- Date of issue of the stamps

- Correspondent's dating

- Clerk's manuscript dating (see figure 1)

- On Express letters, the Finnish Post Office attached a date label (see figure 2)

- Letters passing through other countries often have a dated cds

WASC member Bob Maddocks, who was in the Gambia 1991-1992, has confirmed that covers sent to himself were indeed received in 1991 (Ref. 2)

Figure 1:
Manuscript date
inserted into the
cds on the left
cover.



Figure 2: showing Finnish post office
date label below the right hand
postage stamp



All this gives :

Postmark type (Ref 1)	1990		1991
003.01 Banjul	Day month only	>17 Jy	
	90	25 Jy >	91
009.03 Basse	Day month only	>12 Ju	
	90	Au>	
011.01 Brikama	Day month only	>25 Jy	
	9	Au>	No year
013.01 Cape St. Mary	Day month only	>21 Jy	
	90	? >	No year
016.02 Georgetown	Day month only	> ?	
	90	14 Au >	91
024.04 Kaur	Day month only	> 24 Jy	
		? >	No year
027.02 Kuntaur	Day month only	> 24 Jy	
		? >	(SP 11 ?1)
029.01 Mansa Konko	Day month only	> 28 Ju	
	90	13 Au >	
031.02 Serekunda	Day month only	> 25 Jy	
	90	27 Jy >	
035.01 Yundum Airport	Day month only	> 8 Jy	
	90	25 Jy>	
103.03 Banjul MC	All show 90		Day month inverted
			>Ja 31 1991
			Fe 10> 1991
503.02 Banjul Reg oval	Day month only	> ? Jy	91

Further precision may be possible, especially in the case of the village post offices. The postal clerks still, though, made their traditional mistakes of missing and inverting, and partly missing and partly inverting, day, month and year slugs.

For further illustrations of some of these postmarks see my previous article in *Cameo* (Ref. 3).

References

1. Duncan S.P. & Andrew O., *The Postal markings of the Gambia 1858-2000*, WASC, Dronfield, 2006
2. Bob Maddocks, personal communication
3. Andrew O., "Gambia Cancellations 1990-1991", *Cameo*, Volume 12 p38, WASC, January 2012

First use of Gold Coast stamps in Togo, 1914

John Mayne



Figure 1

Dalwick (Ref. 1) and Martin & Walton (Ref. 2) record that on 8 August 1914 Gold Coast stamps (un-overprinted) were already in use. I had never seen a Gold Coast stamp with a Togo cancel of this early a date until I was asked to assess a batch of 80 covers, mostly French but some British, and came across the one addressed to L.C.C. Miles Accra shown here (Figure 1). This is a souvenir or philatelic cover bearing seven different values. Were these stamps taken into Togo by the sender and, if so, who was he?

Moberly (Ref. 3) states that H.S. Newlands, District Commissioner, Keta and Political Officer, Ada Column, spoke fluent German. Captain Barker, CO Ada, met Newlands between Keta and Ada, and travelling together by bicycle and Ford truck, reached Lome about 6pm on 6 August under a white flag. They agreed to return on 7 August at the same time for a decision, to be met by Mr. Clausnitzer, delegated by Major von Doering to surrender the city. The telegraphic cable and instruments had been cut or destroyed and von Doering departed. The post office would by now have been closed.

The Englishmen slept that night in Lome and early the following day (8 August) an un-named Gold Coast telegraph officer arrived from Keta by bicycle. He restored the telegraphic link to Gold Coast. Later 14 soldiers and police from Aflao frontier post (again all un-named but thought to be native troops) who had been requisitioned to assist in the occupation, arrived. The Union flag was raised. Barker and Newlands took British control of the post office, joined later by the engineer. Presumably in the course of that duty one of them found the German Lome canceller.

The report to Parliament in April 1915 notes that on 8 August Major O'Shaughnessy, telegraph engineer, and Corporals Bernasconi, Bullmore and Pope, along with three native operators went by *SS Obuassi* to Lome taking materials for 40 miles of telegraph and sufficient instruments for eight stations. It adds that they reached Lome the same day, when Major O'Shaughnessy succeeded in picking up, cutting and sealing the cable between Monrovia and Duala. There is no mention in this report of the restoration of the link with the Gold Coast.

By midnight on 8 August there were six known officials in Lome: Newlands, Barker, O'Shaughnessy, Pope, Bernasconi and Bullmore. Other native troops, also present, were unlikely to have posted letters.

I have covers to Newlands as Political Officer, Lome, which could have been self-addressed. Both appear philatelic. The handwriting on those differs from that on this cover.

Pope, later postmaster in the Gold Coast, was a philatelic producer, addressing much of it to his family address at Rhyl in North Wales. The handwriting on this cover is not his. Likewise, I have mail from Bernasconi and this cover does not appear to be from him.

That leaves Barker, O'Shaughnessy and the un-named engineer who arrived by bicycle. Do other members have mail from these two named individuals? I conclude that the cover is not likely to be from O'Shaughnessy as he would not have known he was being sent to Lome until the 8 August and he would have spent most of that day working to find and sever the long-distance cable. Barker, on the other hand, knew he was returning to Lome on 7 August, he had time to acquire a selection of Gold Coast stamps from his local post office and he was one of the officers who is known to have taken control of the Lome Post Office. Is his handwriting known?

There is the possibility that this cover was fabricated and backdated but I prefer to think that this is the earliest possible mail, souvenir or otherwise, after the invasion. Unfortunately, the item reported by Dalwick many years ago was not illustrated by him; but perhaps it is the same item?

Comments would be appreciated.

References

1. Dalwick R.E.R., "*Togo and its Occupation Stamps (handbook No. 3)*", Stamp Collecting, London, 1915
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3. Moberly, Brig. Gen. F.J., *Military Operations Togoland and the Cameroons, 1914-16*, Imperial War Museum, London, 1995



Benin -Food for Thought in Modern Issues

Nicholas Pertwee

Grand Prix de l'Amitié

One's curiosity is always aroused when a catalogue note after its listing suggests that a stamp was not valid for postage, despite clear evidence that it has been used for genuine postal reasons. A case in point is the set of 6 values and a miniature sheet, all to the same design, marking the 5th Grand Prix de l'Amitié France -Afrique, a race meeting held annually at the Paris-Vincennes racecourse as part of a broader cultural festival which on this occasion involved Benin. By 'feel' and format the stamps are quite different from the many thematic issues made at around the same time and were intended to mark a real event. They also identify the printer unlike the contracted-out thematics where the sheets' selvedge has no marking apart from a sequential number. Here the name Cartor appears in the bottom right-hand corner below the printed area, opposite the designer's name.

Two international catalogues, Michel and Scott, list this set. They both give the date of issue as 1999 but do not narrow that down even though the event's dates are shown on the stamps as 7-8 May 1999. Yet the high valuation both give to it mint - there is no used quotation - suggests that information was available as to the numbers issued and one such piece of information without the other seems strange. One assumes that the date of issue was on or near the date of the festival, though examples on cover seen up to now give an earliest date of 17 June 1999, from Porto-Novo.

Michel is the one to note that there is some doubt as to the postal validity of these stamps, though cover evidence shows otherwise. All values have been seen used even if some appear more than others (see **Table**

1 for details). A splendid mint full set with the accompanying miniature sheet has been seen once on an internet auction site, but at a price! The most that can be said for what was being asked for it was that it was lower than the Michel quotation which is €400 for the set and €200 for the miniature sheet. Scott lists the same six values (135F, 150F, 200F, 300F, 500F, 1000F) as Michel, but not the miniature sheet which repeats the 500F value in a different colour, and notes that it has reserved numbers for two additional stamps in the set. No such additional values have appeared so far.

As far as the geographical spread of use is concerned, Cotonou and neighbouring towns account for most of the places of origin but others are further removed (Ouesse, Banikoara, Aplahoue and Sakete for instance) which points to the stamps having been distributed more widely into the postal network than just the capital and environs. The period over which they were used, spread over a core 18 months, does not hint at any moves made to recall them. If they were issued, or used, in only small numbers the reason is probably that they coincided with the complicated 3-stamp set commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Conseil de l'Entente (Mi 1229-1231) whose 135F, 150F and 200F values between them adequately covered the internal postage rate and the basic airmail rate to Britain and Europe, and saw extensive use. (I have written about Benin's Conseil stamps in detail in a separate article—ref 1).

But having delved further into this and seen the way in which this event was headlined in a French-African arts magazine of the time, confirming that it was held at the time stated on the stamps, another theory might be advanced. Even if there was a related horse race, which the magazine does not mention, the festival's focus was on cultural events, with the National Ballet of Benin one of the featured attractions. The stamps on the other hand show the racing theme very prominently, with no hint of any cultural activities. It may have been thought that they misrepresented the event they were designed to commemorate and were partial to just one aspect. No values have ever been seen rehabilitated later with revaluation overprints and so, while it is plausible that the set did not find favour with the authorities, it certainly was not suppressed and stocks seem not have been left over for re-use – though there have been many instances where stamps have had to wait considerably longer than 12 years to be called back into service by La Poste du Bénin.

Table 1 shows the places and date ranges of use.

TABLE 1	GRAND PRIX DE L'AMITIE 1999	Mi 1223-1228
Value/Cat. #	Places used	Date Span
135F Mi 1223	Cotonou Centre-de-Tri, Parakou, Porto-Novo	13 10 1999 - 25 10 2000
150F Mi 1224	Abomey Calavi Universite, Allada, Aplahoue, Azove, Cotonou (Cadjeoun, Centre-de-Tri, Gbgamey, Philatelie), Porto-Novo	05 07 1999 - 21 12 2000
200F Mi 1225	Abomey-Calavi, Come, Cotonou (Centre-de-Tri, Philatelie, Sainte Rita), Natitingou, Ouesse, Porto-Novo, Porto-Novo Gbokou	17 06 1999 - 17 04 2000
300F Mi 1226	Banikoara, Cotonou (Centre-de-Tri, Jericho), Porto-Novo, Sakete	29 07 1999 - 11 07 2002
500F Mi 1227	Cotonou-Gbgamey, Natitingou	22 09 1999 - 09 02 2000
1000F Mi 1228	Cotonou Jericho, Parakou	03 01 2000 - 05 10 2000
Printer: Cartor. Format: Vertical. Paper: No phosphor markings. Perforation: 13¼x13. Image area: 26x36mm. The image area measurement is the same as for the stamps for the 40th Anniversary in 1999 of the Conseil de l'Entente, also printed by Cartor. The perforation is the same, in reverse due to their horizontal format, as the Conseil stamps dated 1999 and 2000 (part). The earlier Conseil stamps saw extensive use overlapping the period of availability of the Grand Prix stamps and can be found used alongside them on the same cover. Their presence effectively shut the Grand Prix issue out, accounting for its scarcity.		

All this set's values used on cover are shown in **Figs. 1-7**. There are two 500Fs, one from sheets and the other from the miniature sheet. These can be distinguished by the colour of the bar at the top of the stamp bearing the country name and the value tablet - these two features match in colour on all the values - the sheet stamps being in dark green and the miniature sheet version in black. It is unlikely that the latter would ever appear on letters as people would be understandably reluctant to remove the stamp for use on its own, destroying the sheet, which itself is too large at 70x100mm to go comfortably on an ordinary letter in its original form.

Figures 1-7

The Grand Prix de l'Amitié set of 1999 (earliest date seen used on cover 17/6/1999) is said not to have been valid for postage. However, examples of all values have been seen genuinely used from a variety of towns.



Figure 1 135F (Mi 1223)
from Porto-Novo on 25/10/2000 with
135F/200F APPA African Petroleum
Producers Association (Mi 1115)
to Holland.

Figure 2 150F (Mi 1224)
used with 200F SOS Kinderdorf
Children's Villages 50th Anniversary
(Mi 1207, 15/10/99) from Abomey
Calavi Universite dated 20/9/2000,
to England.



Figure 3 200F (Mi 1225)
used from Ouesse on 7/2/2000
to England at printed paper rate.

Figure 4 300F (Mi 1226)
on cover from Banikoara to England
dated 8/12/99. Used with
50F Philexafrique II Stamp Exhibition,
Libreville, overprinted République du
Bénin with value unchanged (Mi 1111).



Figure 5 500F (Mi 1227)
used on registered cover from
Natitingou to Finland on 4/10/1999
with 3 x 150F 1998 Veteran Motor Cars
thematic (SG 1759, 12/10/98).
The pattern of use of the latter will be
discussed in an article on the Agency
issues which I have submitted to
Gibbons Stamp Monthly.



Figure 6 1000F (Mi 1228)
used on registered cover to Finland
from Parakou on 3/1/2000 with
2 x 200F SOS Kinderdorf Children's
Villages 50th Anniversary
of October 1999 (Mi 1207).

Figure 7 1000F (Mi 1228),
pair used on registered cover to
Finland from Cotonou Jericho
dated 5/10/00 with 150F Conseil
de l'Entente dated 2000, p.
13½x13¼, non-phosphor
(Mi 1230x). Despite the 2150F
postage and registration this cover
does not seem to have merited
preferential treatment for it only
reached the Ivory Coast for
onward transmission on 14/10/00
– Abidjan backstamp of that date.



Figures. 8a-8c (The Slave Route UNESCO Conference) show examples of these stamps used on cover.



Figure 8a The Slave Route UNESCO Conference, 135F (Mi 618).
Used at Dassa-Zoume on 23/11/94 on cover to England.

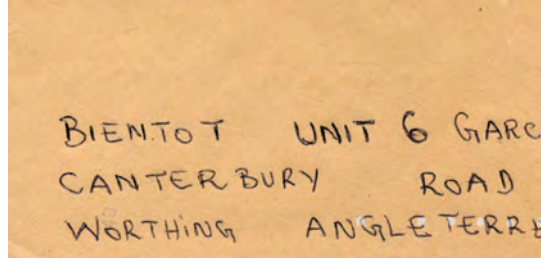


Figure 8b The Slave Route UNESCO Conference 200F (Mi 619).
Used on cover from Aplahoue to France dated 1/3/95.



Figure 8c
The Slave Route UNESCO Conference 300F (Mi 620).
Used on cover to Belgium from Kloukanme dated 10/11/95 with 150F/500F Yuri Gagarin 20th Anniversary of First Manned Space Flight (Mi 656, 1995).

An example of a cover using both République du Bénin and République Populaire du Bénin stamps alongside each other.



None of these 4 issues have been seen perforated mint, though imperforate stamps and proofs on card do sometimes appear (**see Fig. 8d**).

Figure 8d Slave Route 135F and 300F imperforate corner pairs.



Puzzling 1994 issues

There are four sets issued in 1994 that are out of kilter in terms of price with their neighbours in the two major international catalogues that list them. One other catalogue has an incomplete listing. Mint quotations are high but used stamps are hardly rated at all though their scarcity belies that view. The high mint prices set them apart from the other commemorative issues of the period and immediately cause one to wonder what is so special about them. All bear the date 1994 and the Slave Route stamps give the date of the UNESCO conference they were issued for, 1-8 September 1994 at Ouidah. **Table 2** below gives dates of use taken from covers and elsewhere. With the exception of the slavery stamps, all seem to have been put into use some months later than the purported date of release.

TABLE 2	PUZZLING 1994 ISSUES		
<i>Subject / Features</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Where used</i>	<i>Date of Use</i>
The Slave Route UNESCO Conference Ouidah 1-8 Sept 1994 Inscribed: Postes 94 UNESCO – BENIN Cartor imprint P. 13x13½	<u>F135</u> Mi 618 Sc 728	Dassa-Zoume Natitingou	23 11 1994 20 07 1995
	<u>F200</u> Mi 619 Sc 729	Cotonou Sainte Rita Cotonou Akpakpa Aplahoue	24 10 1994 07 12 1994 01 03 1995
	<u>F300</u> SG1275 Mi 620 Sc 730	Cotonou RP Parakou Parakou Avrankou Kloukanme	22 11 1994 04 03 1995 17 05 1995 31 05 1995 10 11 1995
1st International Scout Camp at Natitingou Inscribed: Postes 1994 No imprint P. 12¾x12½	<u>F135</u> Mi 621 Sc 731	Parakou Parakou Parakou Dassa Zoume	30 03 1995 12 04 1995 04 08 1995 13 06 1997
International Year of the Family Inscribed: Postes 1994 No imprint P. 12½	<u>F200</u> SG1276 Mi 622 Sc 732	Cotonou Aeroport Cotonou R.P. Cotonou Aeroport Cotonou R.P. Cotonou Port Phil.	27 11 1994 14 12 1994 13 01 1995 03 04 1995 01 06 1995* *(Scott illustration)
Football World Cup USA Inscribed: USA 94 Postes Cartor imprint P. 13x13½	<u>F300</u> Mi 623 Sc 733	Cotonou PK3 Cotonou RP Parakou Kandi Bembereke Abomey Klouekanme Klouekanme	27 06 1995 25 08 1995 30 08 1995 30 08 1995 19 12 1995 29 12 1995 26 01 1996 13 03 1996

Cotonou features prominently as the source town but there are sufficient other regional centres to attest to wider distribution. None of the catalogues are able to be more precise than 1994 for the dates of issue but it is not unreasonable to assume that the high catalogue values mint are based on information about the numbers printed. If that is so, the dates of issue might also have been available. Another question one might ask is, if the stamps are so scarce, should the prices for mint and used not be more in balance? This may be no more than sour grapes, as I do not have any mint examples, and admittedly one often sees a similar lack of price balance particularly where some of the scarcer provisionals are concerned, but I think it could be argued that a scarce stamp is of equal, if not more, significance if it has served the postal purpose for which it was intended, especially if it is still on cover.

Figures 9 (International Scout Camp, Natitingou), **10** (International Year of the Family) and **11** (Football World Cup USA) show examples of these stamps used on cover.



Figure 9

135F Scout Jamboree at Natitingou (Mi 621) on cover to Switzerland from Parakou dated 4/8/95 used with 250F Theodor Heuss Laying of Foundation Stone of National Workers Education Institute issue of Dahomey (29/3/72) overprinted République Populaire du Bénin and 70F (Mi M473, 1988). Another example of République du Bénin and République Populaire du Bénin stamps used together.



Figure 10

200F International Year of the Family (Mi 622) on cover to France with Cotonou R.P. (Recette Principale) roller cancellation dated 3/4/95.



Figure 11

300F USA World Football Cup (Mi 623) on cover to Austria from Parakou dated 30/8/95 with 30F/380F 400th Anniversary of Birth of Rubens (Mi 659) and DU BENIN 20F/200F Dahomey 1971 Christmas Birth of Christ by Albrecht Dürer (SG 1223).

Where provisionals are concerned, I do not think I am completely alone in this view for, to quote Richard Maisel from his article *‘Cover and the Controversies’* in the Collectors Club Philatelist for September-October 2009 (Vol. 88 No. 5, pp. 283-285), “Many of these provisionals in mint condition are now centerpieces (sic) in Cayman Islands and rarities collections, while used copies are far more difficult to obtain”. Substitute Benin for Cayman Islands and is it not the same difference? According to Mr. Maisel’s article, four sheets of the Cayman Islands 2½d on 4d provisional (SG 35) were made, so only 480 stamps exist.

In the case of Benin and the 2008/9 overprints, official figures give 250 copies – 10 sheets of 25 stamps – for the F1000 on F150 Munich Olympics gold medal winners shot-put stamp (originally SG 483), though Coudreau lowers this to 75 (see *Timbres Magazine* No. 102, June 2009, p. 37 *‘De nouvelles valeurs surcharges au Benin’*). The F1000 overprints on the Dahomey F35 World Savings Day (Mi 1587) and F35 Munich 1974 World Football Cup (Mi 1623) stamps are both officially reported at 375 copies (15 sheets of 25 stamps), amended by Coudreau to 225 and 250 respectively (see **Figs. 12 and 13**). There are many other examples in this series of stamps with numbers printed of less than 480.



Figure 12 1000F/35F World savings Day (originally Dahomey) – Mi 1587



Figure 13 1000F/35F Munich 1974 World Football Cup (originally Dahomey) – Mi 1623.

I am happy to say that in the period in which I have been researching this and other Benin articles, Michel has in fact revised the used prices in its listing of the 2000 provisionals (Mi 1232-1309), from a paltry across-the-board €3 - against €100, €200 and in one case €500 for the mint stamps – to half the values they give them mint which is somewhat more reasonable. They now give mint and used prices for the 2008 and 2009 provisionals too, this time putting the used at about two-thirds of the mint prices, which is a step in the right direction. But I think they will come to see that even these comparative valuations are too grudging.

Stamps printed on phosphor-lined paper

Although Benin does not have an automated sorting system that would need phosphor-tagged stamps, a number of issues have appeared thus. In a separate article on the Conseil de l'Entente stamps (Ref 1) I described how the Conseil's 40th Anniversary stamps of Benin dated 'Poste 2001' and with perforation 13x13¼ were on paper with phosphor lines. In passing I also touched on the Edward Bouchet Memorial Physics Conference issue which is printed on similar paper, for both its dates of 2001 and 2002.

It was Michel's comment to the effect that phosphor-lined paper was used, in error they said, for part of the 2001 printing of the Conseil stamps that encouraged further investigation, which showed that it was in fact the bulk of the 2001-dated stamps p.13x13¼ that was on this paper. This in turn led one to ask whether any other post-2001 stamps were on phosphor paper and it turned out that most modern issues were.

With phosphor lines or other markings

All phosphor features glow yellow under UV light at 380nm.

- 5th Anniversary of the da Silva Museum for Afro-Brazilian Culture (10/11/2003, Mi 1350-1355)
- 'Zin Kaka' Red-Bellied Monkey (19/12/2003, Mi 1356-1362)
- The Rotary International Centenary set (1/2/2005, Mi 1367-1372) does not have phosphor lines but has a small fluorescent Rotary wheel logo in the bottom right-hand corner of each value
- Centenary of the Birth of Leopold Senghor (2006, Mi 1399-1400). In addition to phosphor lines these stamps have a fluorescent La Poste du Bénin logo in the middle of the stamp
- National Arms series (Jan 2008, Mi 1454-1461). These occur in both small- (25F, 50F, 75F, 100F) and large-format (200F, 250F, 500F, 5000F) versions The original printing of the 2008 National Arms stamps has in addition to phosphor lines an irregular pattern of bright phosphor 'fibres' throughout the sheet, though this latter feature is missing from later printings. The small-format 25F with printing date of 21/1/2008 is an example of the former and has both lines and 'speckles' The large-format 200F has the printing date 19/5/2009 and has just lines, which appear much duller under UV light than on the original printing, but no 'speckles' But the date on the stamps themselves, 'Postes 2008', remains the same all through.
- 50th Anniversary of Independence (1/8/2010, Mi 1645-1647)

Without phosphor markings

Only two recent issues lack phosphor lines and do not react at all under UV light.

- Gate of No Return (23/6/2003, Mi 1345-1349) and
- Campaign against Child Trafficking (31/8/2004, Mi 1363-1366)

It is surely no coincidence that all the examples on phosphor paper were printed by Cartor, who appear now to be using this paper as a matter of course for Benin stamps. Of the stamps without phosphor features The Gate of No Return set was printed by The Fine Arts Company s.a.r.l./Sahara Printing Company according to data given by Benin to the UPU. Sahara Printing Company is in Cairo. The Campaign against Child Trafficking stamps have 'ITVF', denoting the French Government Printing Works, in the centre of the margin below the printed area.

Afterword

There are other issues that come in the why-so-expensive-mint category, like the single stamp described in catalogues as having been issued for the 40th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War (SG 973, May 1985) though it is in fact slanted towards the Soviet victory as is shown by the design and its inscription (**Fig. 14**). But the gem of the piece is the commemorative for World Red Cross Day on 8 May 1989 (**Fig. 15**) if Michel (the only major catalogue to list this stamp, as its #481) is right about its valuation. Here the overprint '8 Mai Journée Mondiale de la Croix Rouge' has been applied in 3 lines to the 150F

value of the set of two commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Birth of Joseph Lister (original SG 666, 20/9/77).



Figure 14 (B34) Cover to Germany with 100F stamp commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War (SG 973, May 1985) from Cotonou dated 11/11/85. Heavily slanted, however, in favour of the Soviet victory as shown by the inscription '40 ans de la victoire du peuple sovietique dans la grande guerre nationale de 1941-1945' reflecting Benin's socialist leanings at the time this stamp was issued.



Figure 15 (B35) Red Cross overprint on 150F 150th Anniversary of Birth of Joseph Lister (Mi 481, 1989). Only listed by Michel.

Overprinted in mixed case **8 Mai / Journée Mondiale / de la Croix Rouge** in 3 lines, in serif letters, the **8 Mai** in the top line larger than the rest below.

It is also interesting to speculate whether there will be another issue for cooperation between Benin and Nigeria given the rise of piracy in the Bight of Benin that has attracted the attention of the press, and the navies of the two countries, in recent months. Benin, then still Dahomey, stressed the ties that bind it to its huge neighbour with two stamps marking close cooperation with Nigeria issued on 11/8/75 (SG 577/578). The inscription in French is more vivid - Cooperation Intense Dahomey-Nigeria (**Fig. 16**).

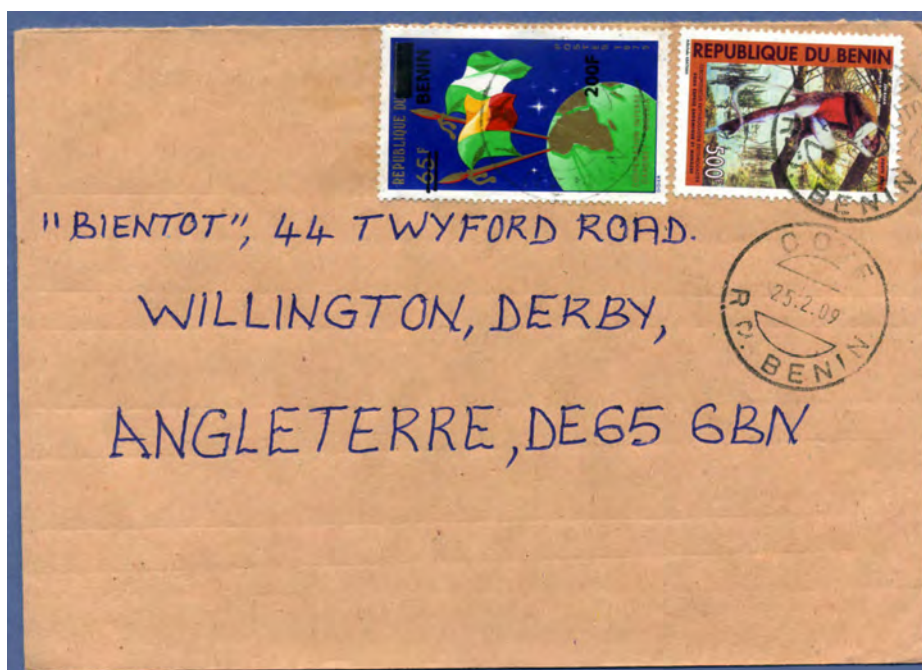


Figure 16 (B36) Cooperation between Benin and Nigeria. The 65F value overprinted BENIN and 200F (Mi 1497) on cover to England from Come dated 25/2/09. The overprints are very difficult to see as they are mainly on the stamp's dark background.

In the opinion of this writer all the stamps mentioned in this article are worth looking out for whether mint or used or, out of preference, on cover. Mint copies are never easy to find but are expensive. Covers are rather more accessible but such examples as do appear for sale are beginning to attract a dedicated following and prices are tending upwards as a result. Collectors who are already lucky enough to have examples of the Grand Prix and 'puzzling' 1994 issues on cover are encouraged to look at them and publicise the dates and places of use so that we can broaden our knowledge of the background to these scarce stamps.

References

1. Pertwee N., Modern Benin Revalued: some notes on its Provisional Definitives", *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, August 2012



Benin 135f Shield Definitive

Michael Round



Readers may have already noticed fellow member Nicholas Pertwee's recent (and copiously illustrated) contributions to *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*: a notable three-part serial on Ghana's C50 surcharges of 1988 (March, April and May 2012) and an introductory survey of Benin surcharges in general (August 2012). (ed- and a further installment of Nicholas' research into modern Benin appears supra)

Surcharges are always fruitful material for research, but there is philatelic interest among the un-surcharged issues, too. Illustrated above is part of a commercial cover from Benin. Remarkably, and quite by

accident, I imagine, (since it doesn't look neat enough to be deliberately contrived), it shows use of all three versions of the 1995-7 135f Arms definitive side by side. This issue is little known in the UK, but is catalogued by Yvert as Nos 708AL, 780ALa and 729, and by Michel as Nos 662 I, 662 II and 926.

The 1997 version (the pale yellow one at right on the cover, Yv 729, Mi 926) is completely redrawn, and the differences may be spotted at arm's length - most obviously in the country-name, which runs along the bottom of the stamp in one line rather than up its side in two.

The 1995 versions are harder to tell apart. The later 1995 version (the centre stamp on the cover) has thinner and more spaced-out lettering. This is only really observable in side-by-side comparison with the earlier type (the left-hand stamp on the cover): single stamps may be more confidently identified - as either '1995 Type I' (Yv 708AL, Mi 662 I) or '1995 Type II' (Yv 780ALa, Mi 662 II) - by the face-value '135f'. In the later version this measures 4mm, as opposed to the earlier 3.4mm. As a result the figure '5' falls entirely below a line projected from the base of the words 'DU BENIN' rather than being bisected by it.

The contemporary 200f Arms (same design) also exists in the same three versions, the totally redrawn one moreover in two shades. What else is out there, we wonder?



Togo mail from a German Missionary, post 1914

John Mayne



German nationals serving as missionaries were not considered a threat to Togo's security and were allowed to remain in the country, presumably under supervision.

The above picture postcard written in Togo on 22 November 1915 is of interest. It was sent by Father Koch, possibly with the Steyl Mission, to his sister-in-law in Germany. The full message covers family matters and refers to nephews called up for service in the forces. The card is endorsed "via Holland" and censored at Lome, but shows no postage paid in Togo. The headquarters of the Steyl Mission in Holland was close to the German border: so were there arrangements for mail to be taken across the border to Emmerich where a Germania 5pf value was added and cancelled 30.12.1915 to meet the German inland rate?

The card has a two line cachet applied in violet by a postal censor office at Emmerich to handle mail from neutral Holland to Germany. Any suggestion how the item came also to be censored in Togo without postage paid from there will be welcome.

Gambia: a much travelled cover

Oliver Andrew



This registered cover was sent from Mansa Konko, Gambia to Sydney, Australia on 16 Nov 1957. Despite the apparently “philatelic” use of a range of stamps randomly placed, this cover is franked at the correct airmail rate for Australia at 2/10d, but the postage paid does not include the additional 6d registration fee. In Sydney it was sent around various suburbs, as the addressee had moved. The it was marked as a dead letter and returned to the sender. There are no fewer than 23 date-stamps or instructional marks, plus two more in manuscript. Curiously, there is no date-stamp for its return to Mansa Konko.



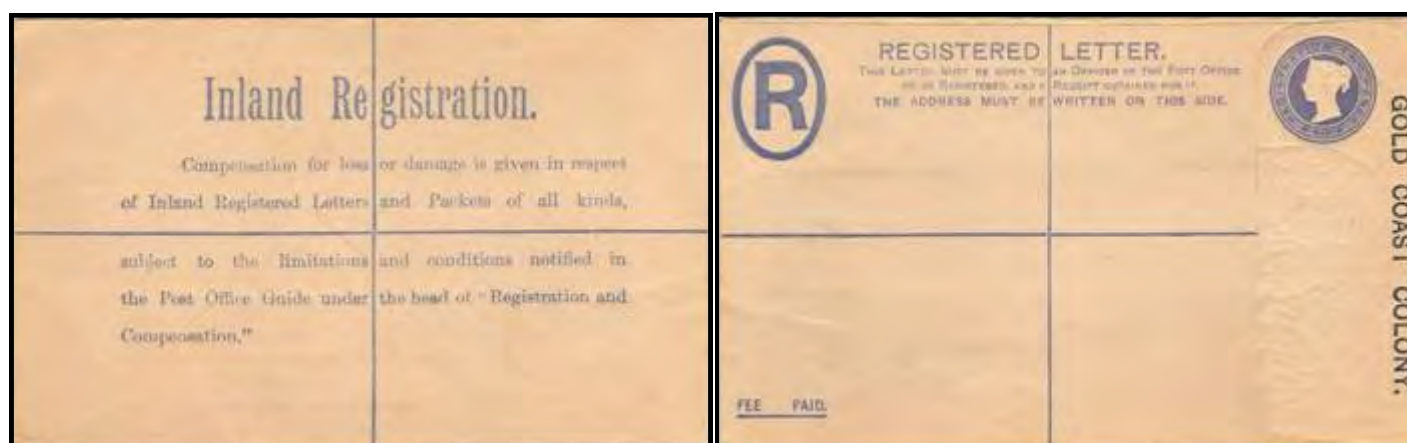
Gold Coast QV Registered Envelopes again

John Gledhill

John Gledhill wrote:

I have so far understood that the British QV registered envelopes over-printed Gold Coast ALWAYS had the insurance information on the back deleted (i.e. just string lines instead).

However, I have just received a Gold Coast QV item that does have the insurance information on the reverse. It is H&G type C6, the final Queen Victoria issue, with straight overprint and straight flap (size G).



I raised this in Cameo last year (Ref. 1) where Rob May quoted from Ensor (Ref. 2) that Gold Coast did not sign up to the “Insured Letter Agreement” until 1903. But the illustrated envelope is from the 1901 Gold Coast set. Could it be a later printing in the same front design made after they had signed up in 1903? They could therefore deliberately have retained the UK’s insurance printed reverse. If so, that would make two types of an already rare issue. But that too would be odd, as the H&G recorded date for the first King Edward VII issue was in 1902, so why would there be a revised reprint of the QV type after that?

Supplementary question; if the Gold Coast did not sign up until 1903, and the KEVII issue was released in 1902, could there be a first printing of those envelopes without the insurance information on the back?

At the moment I have no other scans of the reverse for these types so, for all I know, all envelopes in this QV design and size could have the insurance information printed on the reverse.

Tony Sandford replied:

Attached are scans of front and back of my used copy of QV H&G GB type RP23 which has Inland Registration text on the back (see figure 2 overleaf). Maybe this was from an urgent dispatch of envelopes produced from old QV stock.

John Gledhill wrote further:

I have since (in response to my first message) received a couple more scans of this item (two sizes F&G) and they too have the insurance information on the back. So, actually, I have yet to see an example of this layout **without** the insurance reverse.

In the absence of contemporary documentary evidence the only theories I can think of are:

- 1 They forgot to change the back
- 2 They were in a rush and they did not have time to re-print the envelope with blank back; just to overprint GOLD COAST COLONY. onto some of the UK stock.
- 3 They knew that Gold Coast was in the process of thinking about signing up to the international agreement, so deliberately left the back printed the same as in the UK



Figure 2; front and reverse of used QV registered envelope Jan 1903 Kwitta to Liverpool

References

1. May R., "Gold Coast GB overprinted QV registered PS Envelopes", *Cameo*, Volume 12 p76, WASC, June 2011
2. Ensor M. (Ed), *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast 1901-1957*, p84, WASC, Dronfield 1998

Cessation of the Union Castle Mail Contract 1978

Effect on Mail from St Helena

Bernard Mabbett

Following the cessation of the mail contract with the Union Castle Line, mail from St Helena was carried by private yachts until the introduction of the RMS *St Helena* (ex MV *Northland Prince*) in the autumn of 1978.

The following yachts are known to have carried mail to Ascension, from where it was forwarded on by air, except for one yacht (*Marander*) which went to Cape Town instead of Ascension.

Yacht Name	Date of Sailing from St Helena	Destination
<i>Perky</i>	10 February 1978	Ascension
<i>Foxtrot</i>	19 February 1978	Ascension
<i>Coorida</i>	18 March 1978	Ascension
<i>Labuse</i>	28 March 1978	Ascension
<i>Marango</i>	3 April 1978	Ascension
<i>Rendezvous</i>	28 April 1978	Ascension
<i>Rolling Stone</i>	20 May 1978	Ascension
<i>Sarrita</i>	27 May 1978	Ascension
<i>Marander</i>	30 May 1978	Cape Town
<i>Solitaire</i>	30 May 1978	Ascension

Unfortunately I have no information on yachts carrying mail for June, July and August. I would therefore be interested if any reader can supply this information, or indicate where the details may be found. I have gone through my collection of covers for this period, and can illustrate the examples which follow.

Figure 1 shows an OHMS cover posted at St Helena 17 February 1978, and addressed to the UK. It will have been carried by the *Foxtrot*, which left on 19 February for Ascension where it received the Ascension c.d.s. of 28 February.

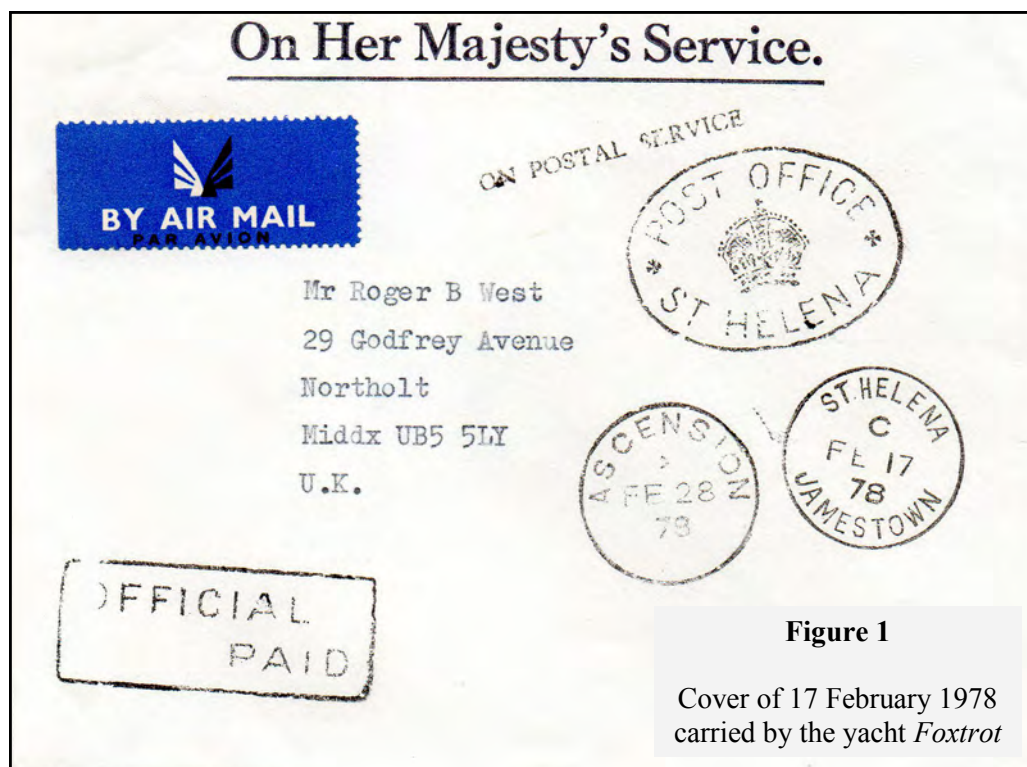


Figure 2 shows another OHMS cover, this time dated 10 March, which will have left the Island on the yacht *Coorida*. There is no Ascension c.d.s.

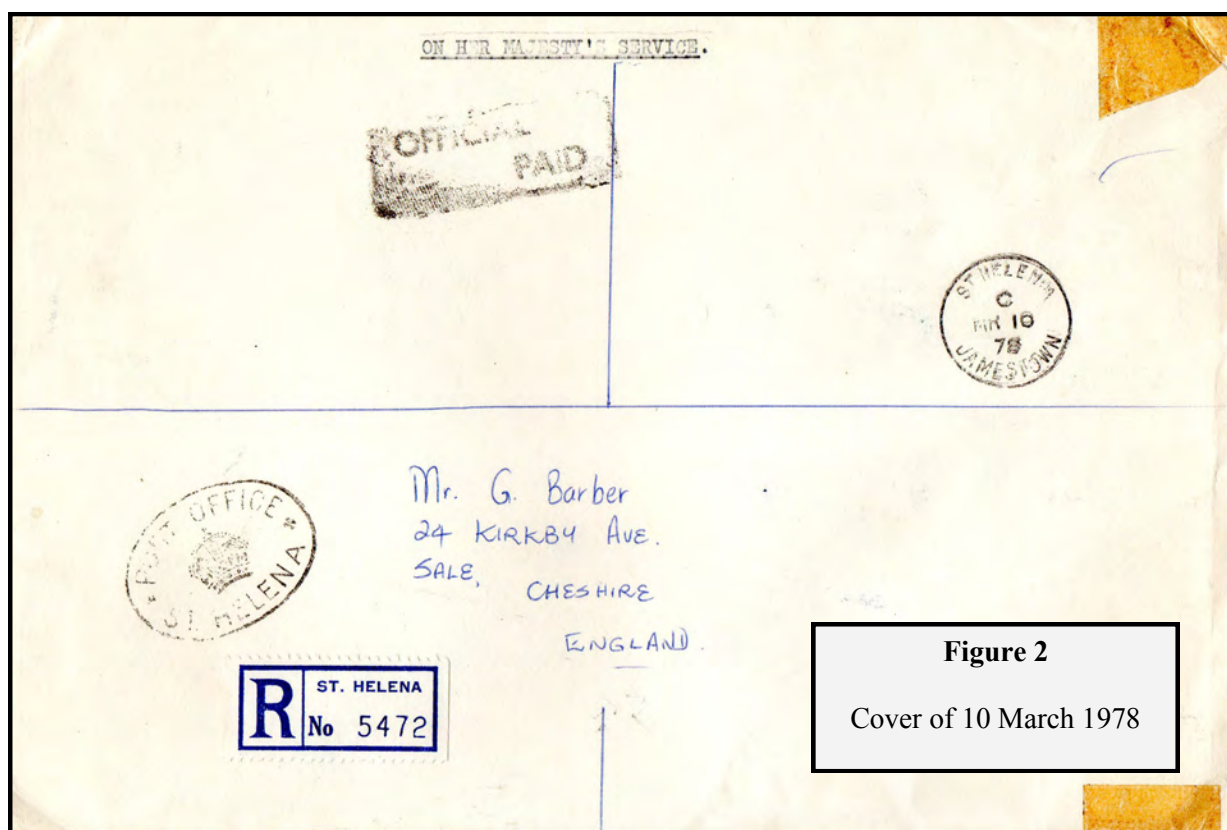


Figure 2

Cover of 10 March 1978

The next two items will have been carried on the yacht *Rendezvous*. The first (Fig. 3) is dated 4 April and the second (Fig. 4) is actually a newspaper wrapper dated 17 April. Both of these will have travelled to Ascension but, again, there are no Ascension marks.

It is likely that the first three covers will have contained philatelic items purchased from the Post Office at Jamestown. The oval POST OFFICE/CROWN/ST HELENA handstamp (Mabbett Type PO 5) was introduced in 1924 and may still be in use, although a rectangular one (Type PO 6) was introduced during the 1980s.

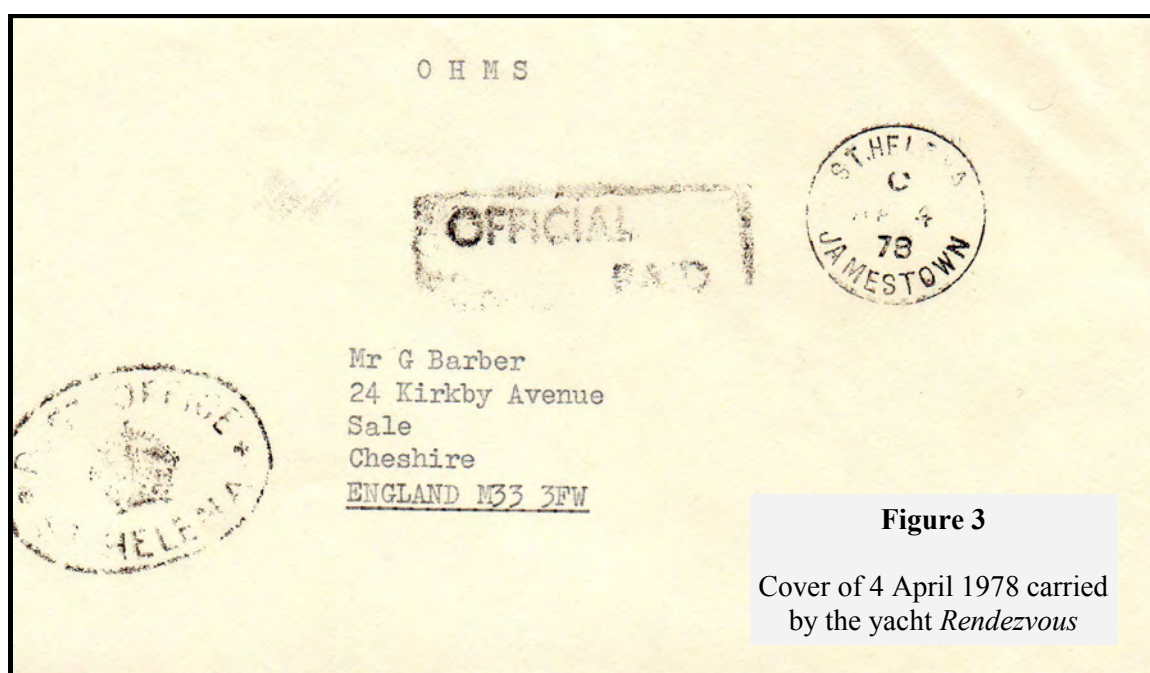


Figure 3

Cover of 4 April 1978 carried by the yacht *Rendezvous*

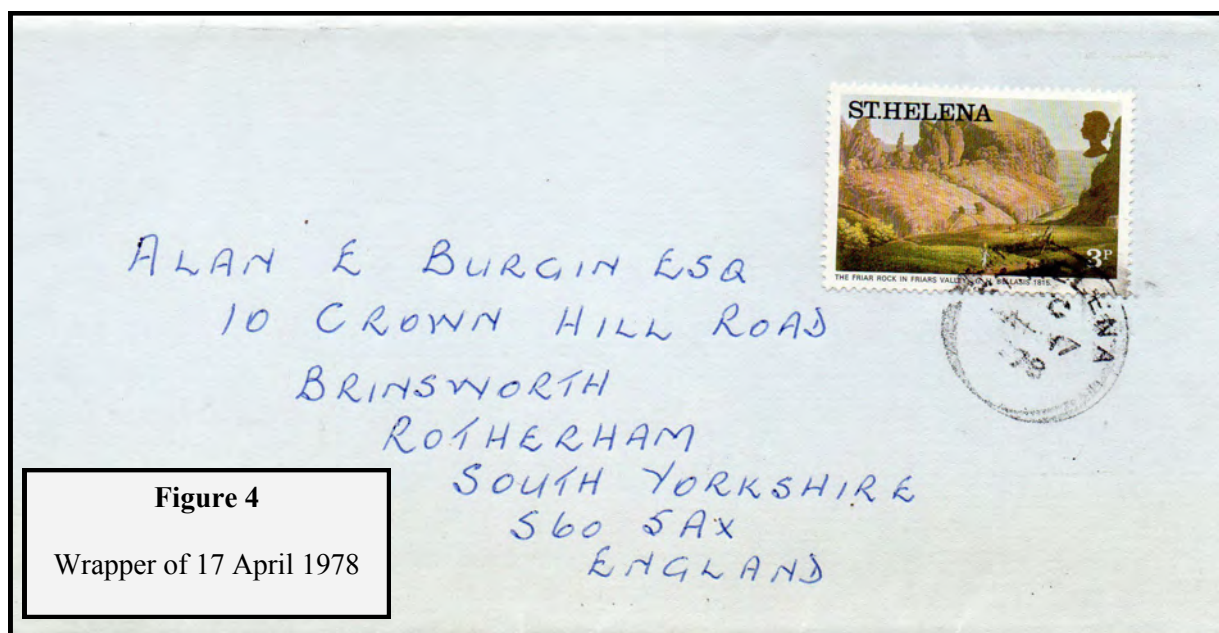


Figure 4
Wrapper of 17 April 1978

Note - The illustrations in this article are not necessarily full size - Editor



Three Old St Helena Postcards

Bill Thorpe

Most of the older St Helena postcards can be identified by the printer; Innes, Jackson and Thorpe in particular. I now have three that have no printer's marks at all, but appear to have all been produced by the same person.

From the pictures it is possible that they may predate some of the older cards. They appear to be photographs, with large captions all in the same style of lettering. Figure 1 (all illustrations at c. 80%) illustrates the clearest example of the caption style, 'Government House, Plantation, showing St. Paul's Cathedral. St. Helena.'



Figure 1

Government House,
with reverse shown below

POST CARD	
CORRESPONDENCE	ADDRESS ONLY

In the other two cards, 'Main Street Jamestown. St. Helena.' and 'Jamestown from the sea. St. Helena' the caption is only clearly visible in a scan (Figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2

Main Street, Jamestown,
with reverse shown below

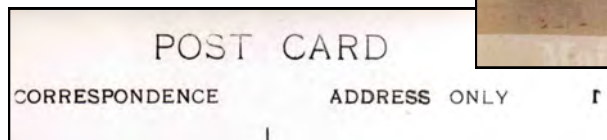
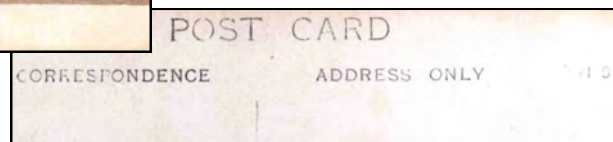


Figure 3

Jamestown from the sea,
with reverse shown below



The backs are all similar with what is possibly a number after 'ADDRESS ONLY', which is only clear on one of the cards.

Can any reader supply further information as to the publisher or a possible publication date for the cards?

The Zinder ~ Kano motor service

Peter Wingent

In December 1933, the Algerian Government created a motor service company named Société Algérienne des Transports Tropicaux (referred to as SATT hereafter) (Ref. 1). It operated a mail and passenger service from Algiers to Kano, a distance of 3,760 km., which was once-weekly between Algiers and Tamanrasset and once-fortnightly between Tamanrasset and Kano. It was named “Ligne du Hoggar,” reflecting the fact that the route passed through the Hoggar Mountains (also known as the Ahaggar) which is a highland region in southern Algeria, in central Sahara along the Tropic of Cancer. It is the final leg between Zinder and Kano of just 160 km. which is the subject of this article. The front cover of a SATT October 1934 booklet, shown in figure 1, illustrates the route and even includes the rail connections from Kano to Lagos and Port Harcourt.

The motor service did not operate from May to October each year due to extreme temperatures in the Sahara Desert during these months (Ref. 2).

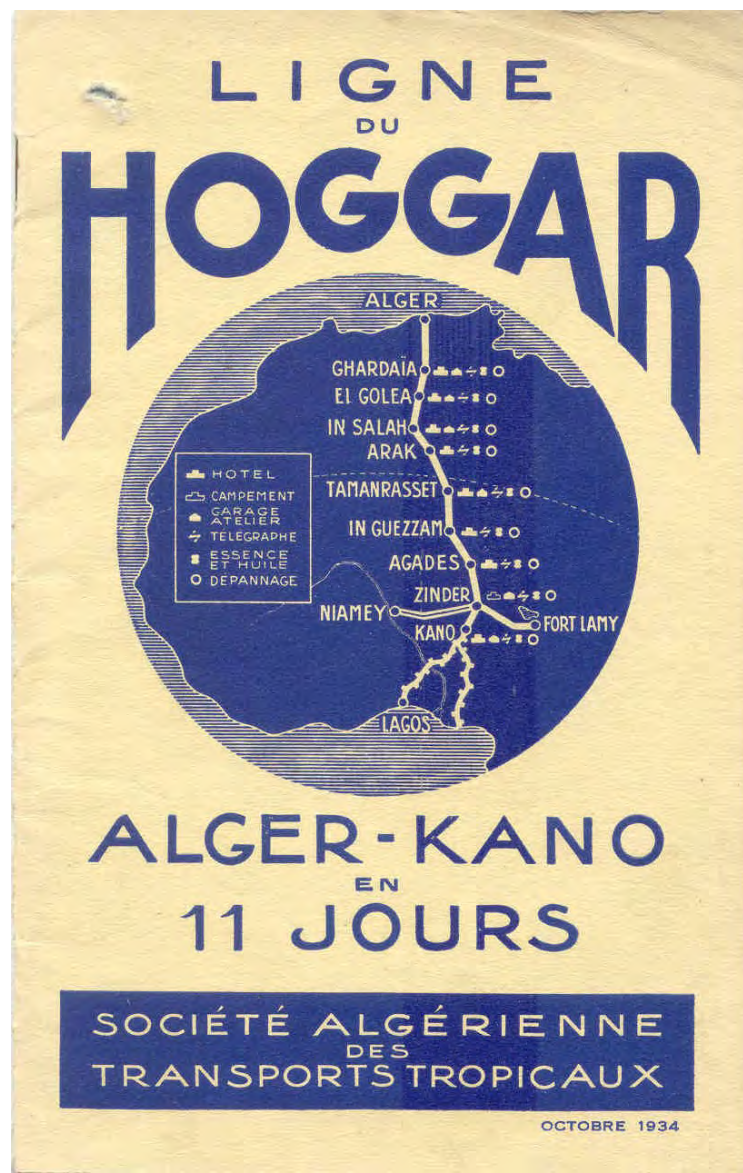


Figure 1

In February 1935, Sabena commenced an air service between Brussels and Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo, and Air France/Regie Air Afrique commenced a service between Paris and Brazzaville in French Equatorial Africa. The airlines operated these services in conjunction with each other on alternate weeks and the routes of both of them passed through Zinder. Thus it became possible for mail destined for Nigeria to be flown from Europe to Zinder, then to be sent by motor vehicle to Kano and then onward by train to places in the south of the country.

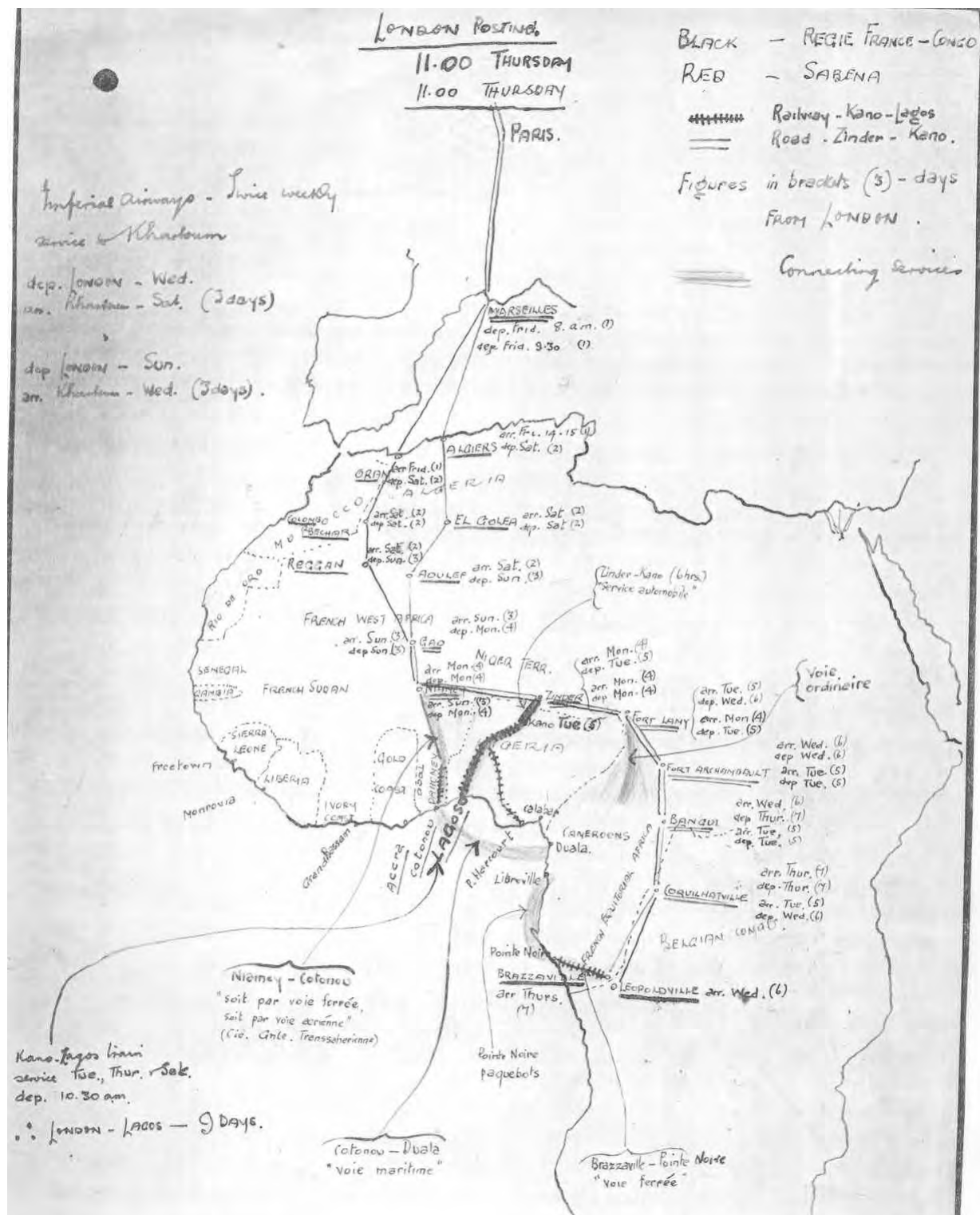


Figure 2 (original was colour coded but black and white copy only was available)

In a series of letters held at the British Postal Museum & Archive (Ref. 3) a tale unfolds of the attempts by both the French and Belgian air companies to persuade the British post office to utilise their services to send air mail destined for Nigeria to Zinder and then by the motor service to Kano. Their attempts were met with resistance.

Sabena wrote to the G.P.O., London, on 8 March 1935 and Air Afrique wrote on 20 March. Both companies emphasised the acceleration that the combination of their services and the Zinder – Kano motor route afforded for mail from Britain to Nigeria. Air Afrique asserted that mail from Britain could reach Kano in five days and Lagos in seven days. This prompted the G.P.O. to evaluate the possibilities, part of which was the extremely informative map shown in figure 2. One of the conclusions drawn was that the transmission time from London to Lagos and Port Harcourt would be nine days, giving a gain of six to ten days over existing routings. It is worth noting this figure of nine days is two days longer than that given by Air Afrique.

On 1 June 1935, Paul-Louis Richard, a director of Air Afrique, visited Mr. D.O. Lumley of the British post office in an attempt to persuade him to agree to the use of the French and Belgian services for British mail to Nigeria. Mr. Lumley explained to Richard that a British service, *“would before long be available and it was intended to serve the West African colonies in that way.”*

The final response of the British post office to the offers of Sabena and Air Afrique was a long time coming. It was not until 1 August 1935 that W. Burkett of the Air Ministry wrote to D.O. Lumley of the G.P.O. saying that the establishment of a British service to West Africa had been delayed and it was now hoped that a preliminary service would commence in October. He hoped that in the meantime, Lumley would be successful in resisting requests made to him for the use of the French and Belgian services.

In a letter dated 8 August 1935 from Sir F.H. Wilkinson of the G.P.O. to Lt. Col. F.C. Shelmerdine of the Air Ministry, Wilkinson wrote, *“As you know we are in a very awkward position in not offering the use of the French/Belgian service to the public and we have only been able to maintain it by giving applicants to understand that a British service would probably be available in the near future. Our position becomes more and more difficult as the opening of the service is postponed and I sincerely hope that something can still be done to expedite the establishment of the British service.”*



Figure 3

(By courtesy of Barbara Priddy)

In the end the British service did not commence until February 1936 but mail from Britain via the French and Belgian services was never officially sanctioned. However, a small number of covers are known to exist and an example is shown in fig. 3. It was posted in London on 4 February 1936 and the back-stamps of Paris, 7 Feb. and Kano 14 Feb. prove it was not flown by Imperial Airways. Instead, it was carried by the Sabena service which was scheduled to depart on 8 Feb. and to arrive at Zinder on 11 Feb. Interestingly, the first Imperial Airways service was timetabled to arrive at Kano on 14 Feb. but arrived two days late on 16 Feb. It is franked 1/3d.: a rate which was never advertised by the British P.O. The rate to Nigeria via Imperial Airways was 6d. per ½ oz.

The only reference source I have been able to locate giving the attitude of the Nigeria post office to the use of the Kano – Zinder route is that described by Herbert Porter (Ref. 4). In a note on page 80, he states, “Prior to the inauguration of the British service in February 1936, it was usual for writers to send their mail privately to ZINDER for posting, although this contravened the Nigerian Post Office regulations.” The cover in figure 4 may well be an example of such mail since the envelope bears the printed name and address of a merchant in Lagos. It is date-stamped Zinder, 3 December 1935 and has a Paris arrival date of 8 Dec., proving it was flown by the Air Afrique service which left Zinder on the 3 Dec. and was due to arrive in Paris on 7 Dec. Another example is a cover described by Porter on page 81, addressed to Liverpool, which was posted in Zinder on 20 May 1936, was written in Nguru on 3 May and was sent privately via Kano to Zinder. It has a Paris back-stamp of 29 May.



Figure 4

(Courtesy of Barbara Priddy)

Porter stated that, “It is an offence under Nigerian Postal Rules for anyone to carry mail to Zinder from Nigeria. If Nigerian stamps were put on for postage, the French would surcharge the letter as being unstamped. I tried several times to get letters sent by this route but the G.P.O. always answered ‘no service.’”

This statement gives added interest to the cover shown in figure 5 which was clearly sent from Kano to Zinder but was not surcharged by the French postal authorities. It was posted in Kano on 6 March 1935

and was back-stamped at Zinder on 12 March. Apart from 3d. registration fee, an air mail fee of 1 shilling (presumably per ½ oz.) was charged, although such a rate was never advertised by the Nigerian P.O.



Figure 5
(Courtesy of Barbara Priddy)

Porter quoted a friend who had written to him on the subject as follows: “When I was staying with the Resident Kano in January [1936] he told me that a European official of the P. & T. Dept. was in Kano investigating the amount of mail which left via Zinder. According to the P. & T. Ordinance, only the P.M.G., Nigeria is allowed to convey mail and therefore anyone taking mail to Zinder to post would be severely dealt with under the P. & T. Ordinance.” Surprisingly, he then goes on to say that, “if you care to send letters to me for your friend I will see if I cannot get them sent “privately” to Zinder and posted there.” Clearly he was not concerned by the P. & T. Ordinance.

Of course, the French and Belgian postal authorities utilised their own air services and the Zinder – Kano service for their own mail. Two examples are shown in figures 6 and 7:



Figure 6 (author's collection). Backstamps on right.

The cover in figure 6 was sent by train from Pointe Noire to Brazzaville, then flown by Air Afrique to Zinder, from where it was sent by the motor service to Kano and on by train to Jos. The 7.50fr. postage = 1.50fr. first 20 grm. ordinary postage, plus 2 x 3.00fr. per 5 grm. air mail fee.

The cover shown in figure 7 was flown from Brussels to Zinder by the first Sabena service to the Belgian Congo, which departed on 23 February 1935 and arrived at Zinder on 26 Feb. The Kano back-stamp of 5 March shows it took exactly one week to reach there after arrival at Zinder. 5 March was a Tuesday and the SATT timetable, shown in figure 8, shows arrival should have been on Saturday, 2 March. However, it is quite likely that the motor service was three days late, given that it was operating an eleven days service over extremely difficult conditions. The timetable shows the journey from Zinder to Kano was scheduled to take only 6 hours, which seems extraordinarily fast for a distance of 160 km. in desert conditions.

I have discovered some conflicting information regarding the frequency of the motor service and I am unable to reconcile the differences. A letter of 26 Feb. 1935 from the Postmaster General's Office, Nigeria, stated that the SATT operated the Zinder – Kano motor service. All references I hold relating to the frequency of the SATT service say that it was once-fortnightly between Tamanrasset and Kano, and this is shown in the timetable illustrated in figure 8, but the Sabena letter of 6 March states that, "... *there exists a connection by road between Zinder and Kano in Nigeria. This connecting service is operated by car three times weekly each way...*" Thus the possibility must exist that there was another company operating a service between Zinder and Kano. If any reader can offer an explanation, please write to the editor.



Figure 7

(Courtesy of Barbara Priddy)

My thanks to Barbara Priddy for providing scans of her covers shown here as figures 3,4,5 & 7, without which this article would have been sparsely illustrated

LIGNE DU HOGGAR											
Dates des Départs et Arrivées d'Octobre 1934 à Mai 1935											
Services ALGER-TAMANRASSET et TAMANRASSET-KANO et FORT-LAMY											
ALGER	EL GOLEA		IN-SALAH		TAMANRASSET		AGADES		ZINDER	KANO	FORT-LAMY (Kousséri)
Départ	Arrivée	Départ	Arrivée	Départ	Arrivée	Départ	Arrivée	Départ	Arrivée	Arrivée	Arrivée
De Ghardaia seulement	Lun. 8 Oct.	Merc. 10 Oct.	Merc. 10 Oct.	Ven. 12 Oct.	Sam. 13 Oct.	Lun. 22 Oct.	Mar. 23 Oct.	Jeu. 25 Oct.	Jeu. 25 Oct.	Ven. 26 Oct.	—
Mar. 30 Oct.	Merc. 31 Oct.	Ven. 2 Nov.	Ven. 2 Nov.	Sam. 3 Nov.	Dim. 4 Nov.	Mar. 6 Nov.	Merc. 7 Nov.	Ven. 9 Nov.	Ven. 9 Nov.	Sam. 10 Nov.	—
» 6 Nov.	» 7 Nov.	» 9 »	» 9 »	» 10 »	» 11 »	» 20 »	» 21 »	» 23 »	» 23 »	» 24 »	—
» 13 »	» 14 »	» 16 »	» 16 »	» 17 »	» 18 »	» 28 »	» 29 »	» 31 »	» 31 »	» 3 »	—
» 20 »	» 21 »	» 23 »	» 23 »	» 24 »	» 25 »	» 4 Déc.	» 5 Déc.	» 7 Déc.	» 7 Déc.	» 8 Déc.	Dim. 9 Déc.
» 27 »	» 28 »	» 30 »	» 30 »	» 31 »	» 1 ^{er} Jan.	» 18 »	» 19 »	» 21 »	» 21 »	» 22 »	» 23 »
» 4 Déc.	» 5 Déc.	» 7 Déc.	» 7 Déc.	» 8 »	» 9 »	» 1 ^{er} Jan.	» 2 Jan.	» 4 Jan.	» 4 Jan.	» 5 Jan.	» 6 Jan.
» 11 »	» 12 »	» 14 »	» 14 »	» 15 »	» 16 »	» 15 »	» 16 »	» 18 »	» 18 »	» 19 »	» 20 »
» 18 »	» 19 »	» 21 »	» 21 »	» 22 »	» 23 »	» 22 »	» 23 »	» 25 »	» 25 »	» 26 »	» 27 »
» 25 »	» 26 »	» 28 »	» 28 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »	» 31 »	» 3 »	» 4 »
» 1 ^{er} Jan.	» 2 Jan.	» 4 Jan.	» 4 Jan.	» 5 Jan.	» 6 Jan.	» 31 »	» 30 »	» 1 ^{er} Fév.	» 1 ^{er} Fév.	» 2 Fév.	» 3 Fév.
» 8 »	» 9 »	» 11 »	» 11 »	» 12 »	» 13 »	» 12 Fév.	» 13 Fév.	» 15 »	» 15 »	» 16 »	» 17 »
» 15 »	» 16 »	» 18 »	» 18 »	» 19 »	» 20 »	» 20 »	» 21 »	» 23 »	» 23 »	» 24 »	» 25 »
» 22 »	» 23 »	» 25 »	» 25 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 27 »	» 28 »	» 30 »	» 30 »	» 31 »	» 1 ^{er} Mars
» 29 »	» 30 »	» 1 ^{er} Fév.	» 1 ^{er} Fév.	» 2 Fév.	» 3 Fév.	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 5 Fév.	» 6 »	» 8 »	» 8 »	» 9 »	» 10 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 12 »	» 13 »	» 15 »	» 15 »	» 16 »	» 17 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 19 »	» 20 »	» 22 »	» 22 »	» 23 »	» 24 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 5 Mars	» 6 Mars	» 8 Mars	» 8 Mars	» 9 Mars	» 10 Mars	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 12 »	» 13 »	» 15 »	» 15 »	» 16 »	» 17 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 19 »	» 20 »	» 22 »	» 22 »	» 23 »	» 24 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 29 »	» 29 »	» 30 »	» 31 »
» 2 Avr.	» 3 Avr.	» 5 Avr.	» 5 Avr.	» 6 Avr.	» 7 Avr.	» 9 Avr.	» 10 Avr.	» 12 Avr.	» 12 Avr.	» 13 Avr.	» 14 Avr.
» 9 »	» 10 »	» 12 »	» 12 »	» 13 »	» 14 »	» 9 Avr.	» 10 Avr.	» 12 Avr.	» 12 Avr.	» 13 Avr.	» 14 Avr.
» 16 »	» 17 »	» 19 »	» 19 »	» 20 »	» 21 »	» 9 Avr.	» 10 Avr.	» 12 Avr.	» 12 Avr.	» 13 Avr.	» 14 Avr.
» 23 »	» 24 »	» 26 »	» 26 »	» 27 »	» 28 »	» 30 »	» 1 ^{er} Mai	» 3 Mai	» 3 Mai	» 4 Mai	» 5 Mai
De Ghardaia seulement	Lun. 29 Avr.	Merc. 1 ^{er} Mai	Merc. 1 ^{er} Mai	Ven. 3 Mai	Sam. 4 Mai	» 30 »	» 1 ^{er} Mai	» 3 Mai	» 3 Mai	» 4 Mai	» 5 Mai
» 6 Mai	» 7 Mai	» 9 Mai	» 9 Mai	» 10 »	» 11 »	» 30 »	» 1 ^{er} Mai	» 3 Mai	» 3 Mai	» 4 Mai	» 5 Mai
» 13 »	» 14 »	» 16 »	» 16 »	» 17 »	» 18 »	» 30 »	» 1 ^{er} Mai	» 3 Mai	» 3 Mai	» 4 Mai	» 5 Mai

Les dates en caractères italiques correspondent à des Services Facultatifs.

PRIX DES BILLETS : Alger-Kano, ou vice-versa..... Frs 3.900 »
logement et nourriture compris / Alger-Fort Lamy, ou vice-versa..... Frs 4.800 »

1^{er} OCTOBRE 1934
Sous réserve de modifications.

Figure 8: the SATT southbound timetable for the winter of 1934 – 35.

FORT-LAMY (Kousséri)	KANO	ZINDER
Départ	Départ	Départ
	Merc. 31 Oct.	Jeu. 1 ^{er} Nov.
	» 14 Nov.	» 15 »
	» 28 »	» 29 »
Mar. 11 Déc.	» 12 Déc.	» 13 Déc.
» 25 »	» 26 »	» 27 »
» 8 Jan.	» 9 Jan.	» 10 Jan.
» 22 »	» 23 »	» 24 »
» 5 Fév.	» 6 Fév.	» 7 Fév.
» 19 »	» 20 »	» 21 »
» 5 Mars	» 6 Mars	» 7 Mars
» 19 »	» 20 »	» 21 »
» 2 Avr.	» 3 Avr.	» 4 Avr.
» 16 »	» 17 »	» 18 »
» 7 Mai	» 8 Mai	» 9 Mai

Figure 9:

HORAIRE :						
Distance kilomét.	ALLER		RETOUR		Distance kilomét.	
	Jours	Heures	Heures	Jours		
0		Dép. 7 h. 30				
	Mardi	Arrêt pour déjeuner à Boghari	Arrêt pour déjeuner à Bou-Saada			
430		Arr. 19 h.		Dimanche	3.985	
		Laghouat (Hôtel)				
		Dép. 6 h.		Arr. 18 h.		
955	Mercredi	Arr. 19 h. 30		Samedi	3.525	
		El Golea (Hôtel)				
		Dép. 7 h.		Arr. 18 h.		
1.375	Vendredi	Arr. 17 h.		Vendredi	3.135	
		In Salah (Hôtel)				
		Dép. 11 h.		Arr. 17 h.		
1.665	Samedi	Arr. 19 h.		Jeudi	2.805	
		Arak (Bordj-Hôtel)				
		Dép. 6 h.		Arr. 13 h.		
2.065	Dimanche	Arr. 19 h.		Mercredi	2.385	
		(Hôtel) TAMANRASSET				
		Dép. 5 h.		Arr. 18 h.		
2.505	Mardi	Arr. 17 h.		Mardi	2.095	
		In Guezam (Bordj-Hôtel)				
		Dép. 4 h.		Arr. 19 h.		
3.040	Mercredi	Arr. 20 h.		Dimanche	1.695	
		Agades (Hôtel)				
		Dép. 4 h.		Arr. 20 h.		
3.600	Vendredi	Arr. 20 h.		Samedi	1.255	
		Zinder (Campement)				
		Dép. 12 h.		Arr. 4 h.		
3.760	Samedi	Arr. 18 h.		Jeudi	720	
		KANO				
				Arr. 13 h.		
				Dép. 7 h.		

NOTA. — Le parcours Alger-Ghardaia ou vice-versa peut être effectué à petites étapes par le chemin de ter P.L.M. entre Alger et Djéla et la correspondance automobile de la ligne du Hoggar SERVICE ROUKAMEL entre Djéla et Ghardaia. Départs quotidiens dans chaque sens.

Left: the Kano - Zinder section of the SATT northbound timetable and
Right: the daily schedule. Both are for the winter of 1934 – 35.



Arrivée du service transsaharien à Kano



Gare de Kano
Départ du service du Hoggar à l'arrivée du train direct venant de Lagos

Figure 10: two views of a SATT motor vehicle at Kano.

This article has focussed upon air mail connecting with the Zinder – Kano motor route, but European surface mail was carried by SATT from Algiers right across the desert. It would be interesting to see examples of such mail and for the story to be extended to cover this aspect in a future issue, if any reader could do so. (*ed– interested readers are referred to the “Articles of interest” section on page 5 for two papers by Peter Kelly published in the Journal of the France & Colonies PS*)

References:

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GAMBIA. 1897 DLR Die Proof for QV 1d Duty Tablets in black on glazed card dated '24 SEP.97. Ex Weldhen. £400	ST HELENA. 1876 2d yellow (Perf 14 x 12½) block of four. Very fine mint. Rare multiple. SG 22. £600
GAMBIA. 1909 (MCA) 7½d with 'dented frame'. Very fine used and scarce thus. SG 79a. £225	ST HELENA. 1922 15/- Badge with vignette frame breaks (Pos# 24). Very fine mint. SG 113. £700
GHANA. 1967 1½p Kingfisher with blue (value etc) omitted. Unmounted mint. SG 461a. £200	TOGO. 1914 80pf with notch in right side of 'T' (Pos# 48). Very fine used. Holcombe Cert. SG H9var. £300

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