

G A M E O



Journal of the
West Africa Study Circle
VOLUME 5 NUMBER 3 JANUARY 1996

STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY OF WEST AFRICA

Sold By Christie's



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Viewing: Colour photos of major items will be on display at Stampex (Stand 19), from January 24th to 28th 1996. In addition, London Viewing (for requested lots only), will take place at the Royal National Hotel, near Russell Square Tube station on Wednesday April 17th (9.30am - 5.00 pm). For Derby viewing details & photocopy service, see the catalogue.



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FROM COMMON STAMPS TO HAND ESSAYS

They all appear on my monthly list. Two of the hand drawn essays of Oil Rivers Protectorate were on my lists in 1994. If you are not already on my mailing list, please request a free copy.

I am interested in buying all British Africa material. Valuations undertaken for insurance and probate.

ROBERT SEAMAN

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This is the last editorial to be written by your present editor. I have resigned as from this issue feeling that someone more versed in Desk Top Publishing should take over. Frank Walton has been co-opted by your Committee as the next editor. All future articles to him please at his address at 8 Grasmere Road, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield S18 5PS. I hope you will give him the splendid support you have given me.

Despite my plea in the last issue I have only received two photographs of Madame Joseph Forgeries for the Royal Philatelic Library.

The next edition of Cameo will contain amongst others the delayed review of Ted Proud's monumental work on the Postal History of the Nigerias and Cameroons. It will also contain a report of the sale of Bob Seaman's Biafra and the results of Robert May's and Michael Wright's research on the Southern Cameroons 2d. S.G. 4- 4c inclusive.

On a high note the Cameo was awarded a Large Silver at the National Philatelic Exhibition of New Zealand in June 1995.

PUBLICATIONS.

Our members Bob Maddock's and Marty Bratzel's book on the Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration was awarded a Vermeil with felicitations at last year's Chicagopex. The Society's own publication Jeremy Martin's and Frank Walton's book on Togo won a small Vermeil at the October 1995 Stampex.

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The circle covers The Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ascension, Cameroon's, St Helena, Togo and nearby British Postal Agencies. Annual Subscription: U.K. members £12 per annum, Overseas members £14 per annum. Entry Fee for new members £5. Subscription term now spans 1 calendar year. Advertising Rates: Full Page £35; Half Page £20; Members small advertisements 50p per square inch, plus in the event of a sale, a fee of 1% of price (minimum fee £1).

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FIGHTING IN THE GAMBIA IN 1894

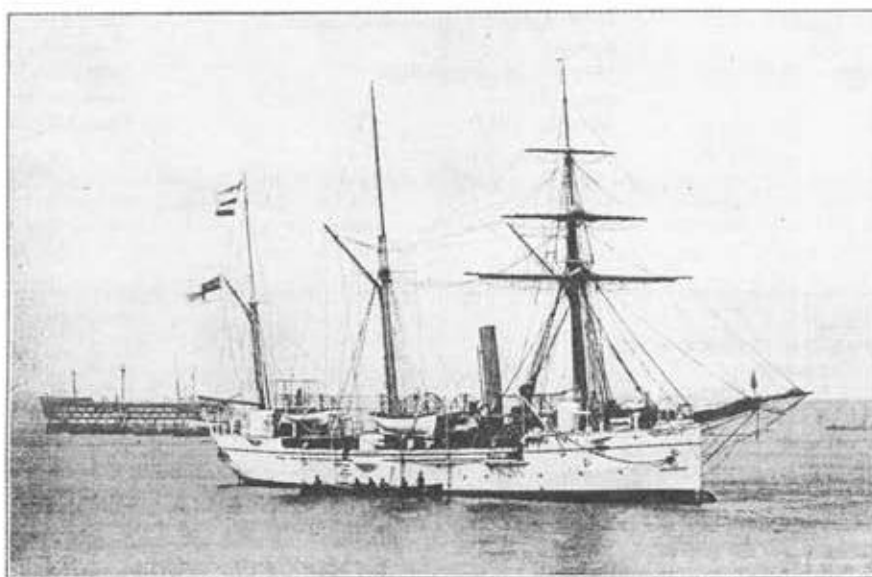
Jeremy Martin

On page 104 of "The Stamps and Postal History of The Gambia", edited by Oliver Andrew and published in 1985 by Christie's Robson Lowe, brief details are given of a campaign in 1894.

"The Illustrated London News" of 3rd March 1894 provides a few more details plus pictures of three British ships involved. The report states that the force under Colonel Corbet on Monday February 26 (1894) was attacked at Sabadjee by two thousand of the enemy, who were Mandingos, and, after two hours' fighting, drove them back with heavy loss.

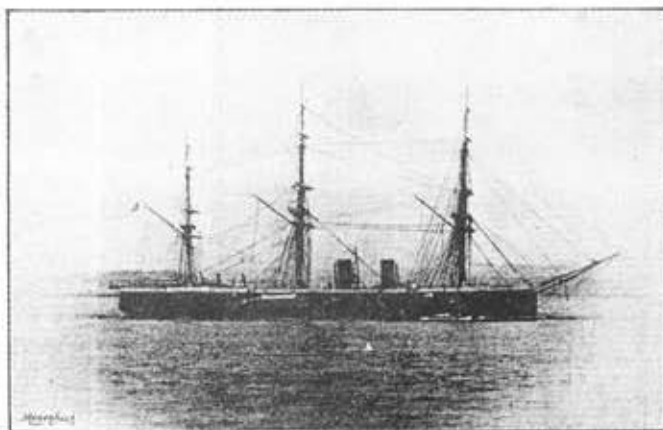
On the British side none were killed but one man of the West India Regiment and two marines were slightly wounded.

Bathurst was considered safe from attack. The European inhabitants numbered fifty or sixty in all.



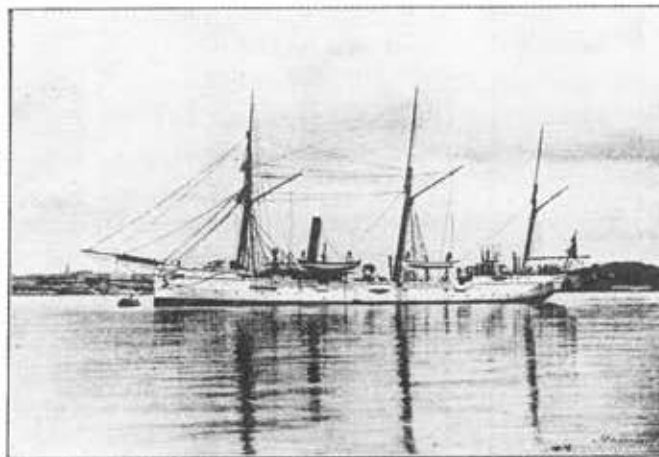
H.M.S. WIDGEON, ON THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

Photo by C. Long, Plymouth.



H.M.S. RALEIGH, FLAG-SHIP ON THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

Photo by C. Long, Plymouth.



H.M.S. MAGPIE, ON THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

Photo by C. Long, Plymouth.

GAMBIA UPDATE

Oliver Andrew

- 1 Recently, The Gambia has been using new datestamps. They are single-circle, POST OFFICE/one-line date/place. Those I have seen are:

- BANJUL 06.06.95
- BAKAU 14.06.95 (04.09.95 Cape St. Mary)
- SEREKUNDA 15.06.95

I have examples on ordinary, prepaid, and registered mail. The latest dates I have of the previous cancellers are:

BANJUL	Type 28	13 MY 94
	Reg 12	28 JL 92
CAPE ST. MARY	Type 1	14 NO 91
SERERKUNDA	Type 1	9 DE 94
	Type 2 (Reg)	??? 91

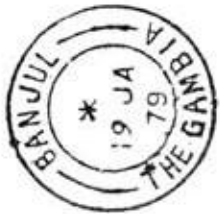
Probably readers can improve on these dates.

- 2 "The Gambia Experience", a holiday company specialising in The Gambia, have sent prospective customers "GAMBI-GRAM"s: postal stationery with perforated edges for opening and for separating returnable slips. Mine has a prepaid mark, a rather blurry rectangle 36 x 24 mm. GPO /BANJUL/POSTAGE PAID. They were also obliging enough to send on request an unused example and a used example of the returnable slip, since I naturally wanted to keep my original entire. Does anyone know of any similar mail-shots?
- 3 I have recently bought a sheet of what appear to be sample strikes of cancellers and instructional marks held by the Gambia P.O. in January 1979. There are no accompanying notes. A comparison with earlier attempts to get strikes of the complete range may be useful. The main comparison must be with the set collected by W. Kinloch in 1964-66 for the W.A.S.C. But E.B. Proud in his 1995 book on Gambian postal history also refers to and illustrates many instructional marks in use up to 17 February 1965. Despite the thoroughness and persuasiveness of Messrs. Kinloch and Proud, their two sets are not identical, and this new set offers further differences.

Of the remainder:

Nos. 1, 2, and perhaps 3, are post-independence
Nos. 6, 7, 8 are not in Kinloch
Nos. 8, 10, 20, 23 are not in Proud
Nos. 1 and 2 are known in use
Nos. 3 and 8 are new discoveries

No. 8 is not described in M. Samuel's book on Specimens, and may be a post-independence local mark. Or it may be planted here in an attempt to authenticate it ...



1



2



3



4

Insufficient address

5

Posted out of course

6

Liability for Rate
Gambia

7

SPECIMEN

8

T ~~WENT AWAY~~
PART

10

Return to sender

11

LATE

12

A.R.

13

2^D
TO PAY

14

4^D
TO PAY

15

9^D
TO PAY

16

10^D
TO PAY

17

6^D
TO PAY

18

7^D
TO PAY

19

R

20

MISSSENT TO GAMBIA

21

Found without contents

23

LEFT WITHOUT ADDRESS

24

5^D
TO PAY

26

1^D
TO PAY

25

11^D
TO PAY

27

27

MADAM JOSEPH AT MACARTHY ISLAND

Len Weldhen

Madam Joseph handstamp No.170 is a forgery of Andrew type 'Macarthy Island 3' - MACARTHY ISLAND / * / 2 line date / GAMBIA.

The forgery is very dangerous indeed as not only is it very well executed but the forger has furthered the deception by using part strikes and also by wiping clean one or more of the figures and letters making up the date lines.

The main distinctions between genuine and forged marks are:-

Genuine

The distance between the foot of leg of the letter 'Y' to foot of the letter 'I' - 2.4mm.
Letter 'C' very narrow, approx. 0.8mm in width.
Lettering is heavier.
Type face holds the ink.
Date - any date during genuine usage of the stamp.

Madam Joseph

The distance between the foot of leg of the letter 'Y' to foot of the letter 'I' - 2.9mm.
Letter 'C' more rounded, approx. 1.0mm in width.
Lettering is very fine.
Very lightly inked.
Date - FE 17 / 10 and any combination of these figures and letters that can be made by wiping one or more clean prior to striking.

In my collection I unfortunately find:-

1902-05 issue	2s. 6d.	Part strike 'CARTHY ISLA'
1909 issue	7½d	Part strike 'Y ISLAND'
1909 issue	3s. 0d.	Part strike 'THY ISL'
1912 issue	7½d	Part strike 'MACARTHY IS / FE 7/GAM'
1912 issue	1s. 6d	Almost complete strike but date is 'F 7' no year and 'GAMBIA' very faint (almost wiped clean?)
1912 issue	2s. 6d	Part strike 'MACARTHY ISLA / F 17'
1912 issue	5s. 0d.	Part strike 'MA SLAND / F 7' / GAMBIA' but BIA is very faint as though the rag had brushed it when wiping the date line clean.
1921 issue	4s. 0d.	Part strike 'MACARTHY ISLAND / FE 17 / 10 The date line is very faint but none the less I should have spotted this one!

Among a small number of genuine marks I do have one copy of 1912 issue 1s. 6d. on small registered piece dated 10 MY/23 thus proving the need for high values at Macarthy Island at that time.

Mint copies of Edward and George high value key types were plentiful in the inter-war years, used copies were not so and accordingly carried a premium. Lightly struck part strikes would be classified as 'fine used' and would command an extra premium. Postmark collecting had not commenced and so nearly full strikes were not called for.

"THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE GAMBIA" E.B. PROUD

660 pp Hardback £42

Available from E.B. Proud, P.O.Box 74, HEATHFIELD, E.Sussex TN21 8PY

ISBN 1 872465 15 3

OLIVER ANDREW

Another in Mr Proud's lengthening series of Postal Histories, this one is an extraordinary mixture. There is a wealth of information hitherto only accessible in archives; for example, the P.O. monthly returns which record the amounts of each class of mail received and dispatched, and published in the Government Gazette, are here handily printed together (those from Jan 1892 - Dec 1917, at least). If you have a registered letter from Bathurst to Marseille, posted in August 1903, this book will tell you that your cover is unique. Similarly with an August 1902 postcard to Lagos, and many others. But it is a pity that the returns from October 1884 to December 1891, also published in the Gazette, are not given; nor is there an explanation of their omission.

You will find here all the sailing schedules for the P.O. vessels from 1920-1945; the early ones (1920-19.2.1922) under "Marine Timetables" (p.286-287) and those for the T.P.O. (28.2.1922 - 1945) under "Travelling Post Office" (p.247-273). And here too is the list of shipping between Liverpool and Bathurst 14.1.1892 - 24.8.1939, but nothing before or after those dates. Like other collectors, I shall derive much pleasure from tracking down the exact ships that carried particular covers. But, mixed in with this fascinating detail, is information of doubtful interest to postal historians: a 13-page listing of the administrative districts in 1894, the complete list (30 pages) of village headmen (no year given; it was 1924), 9 pages describing the boundaries of each administrative area in each Division (a map would have been more informative and much more concise). This pattern of original and interesting material only partly digested, if at all, is visible throughout: the 1903 P.O. Regulations, the 1907 changes the P.O. Ordinance of 1912, and the P.O. Regulations of 1926 are given in full, and very useful they are too, but the P.O. Ordinances of 1897 and 1908, and the Regulations of 1915 are not given; and there is no explanation of the relative significance of the material given and the material omitted. I regret to say that there is source material, e.g. the Blue Books, the Correspondence books, the Annual Reports, etc., that Mr Proud does not seem to have been aware of, although they are available for consultation at the P.R.O.

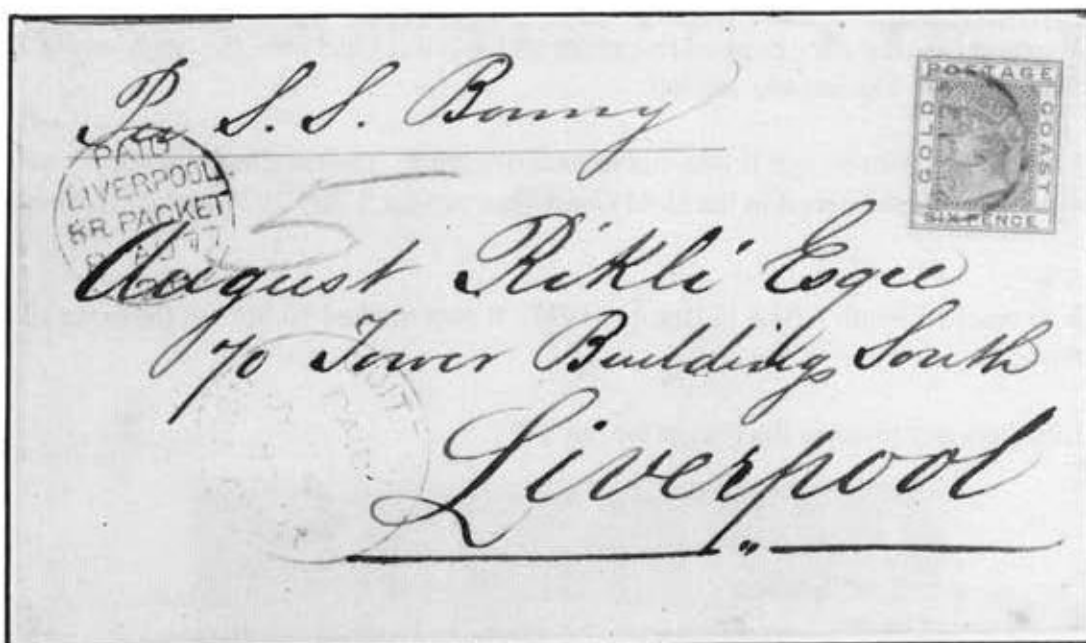
The postmark listing, though, is carefully annotated and raises numerous questions, which I would like to recommend to collectors' attention as worthy of further research. Mr. Proud does not list some of the marks given in the W.A.S.C. Handbook, e.g. 6B, 8B, PP2, MOO2; but he does list some hitherto unrecorded marks: an eight-line "bars" cancellation, two variants of Type 3 (no differences described), two variants of REG 7. E.r.d.s. and l.r.d.s. differ considerably from those known to the Circle. Reconciling these discrepancies, and similar ones among the instructional marks, should give someone some fun!

The book is excellently produced (I daren't scribble notes on my copy, just stick bits on paper in!), with plentiful illustrations many of them contemporary postcards; though I can find no reference in the text to the "Forerunner" pictured sinking on page 287. In keeping with the light editorial hand, which many will find too light, there is no index. And from the W.A.S.C.'s point of view, there is an extraordinary omission: nowhere is the Circle mentioned! "Cameo", and the Handbook are given in the bibliography without acknowledgment of the Circle's work of many years that has lead up to them.

The narrative and explanation linking the archival material is perfunctory, so that it is essential to come to the book with some previous knowledge of the subject, if one is to understand the significance of the material, and if one is to make the best use of it. For this reason I cannot recommend it to new collectors of The Gambia. Experienced collectors will find material here to stimulate and challenge their collections, but may prefer for this price to rely on already published sources (e.g. "Cameo", or the Handbook), or the P.R.O.

NEW DISCOVERIES GOLD COAST

QUITTAH PAID IN BLUE
THE EDITOR



This cover was shown to me by Gary Dubro the only recorded cover previously with Quittah paid showed the postmark in black

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GOLD COAST AIRMAIL 'D'

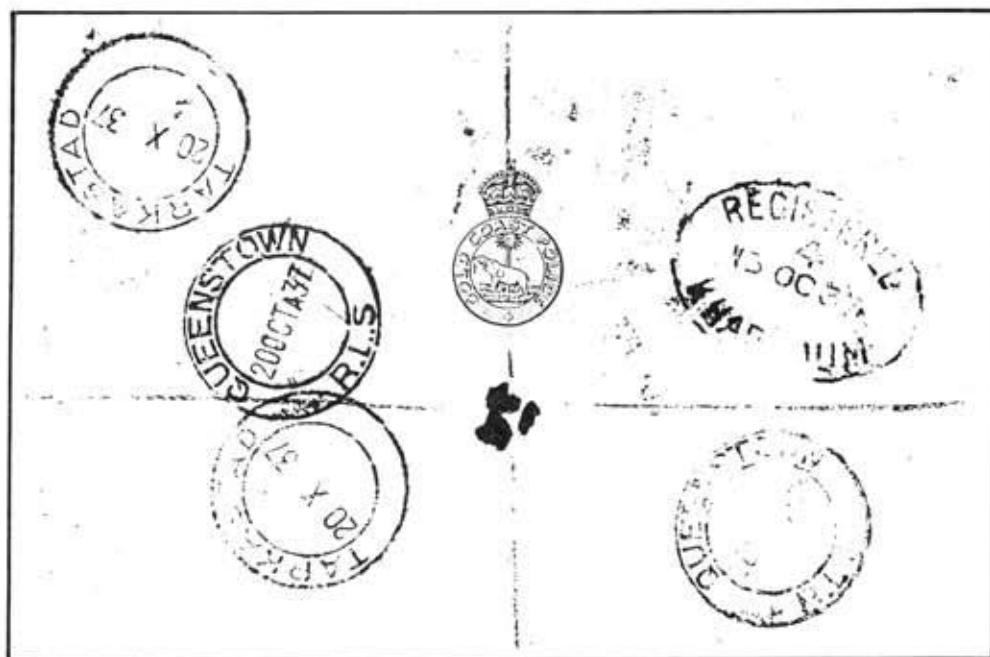
Jeremy Martin

Peter Wingent has sent me a copy of this cover and asked if I had seen the large purple 'D' handstamp before. The answer was 'no'.

Peter's initial thought was that it was due to underfranking. The rate via Imperial Airways was 9d per ½ oz as published in the Gold Coast Gazettes for 1 July 1937 and 20 November 1937.

The cover reached South Africa in October 1937. It was franked 9d but not the extra 3d for registration.

Have members any ideas as the reason for the 'D'?



GOLD COAST CENSOR 10

Jeremy Martin

Following my note in the July 1995 Cameo, I have received details of more covers to foreign destinations censored by number 10.

(viii)	December 1939	Gold Coast to Switzerland	IA
(ix)	March 1940	Gold Coast To Switzerland	ME
(x)	May 1942	Gold Coast (letter in French) to Canada	ME
(xi)	April 1940	Gold Coast to Switzerland	FK
(xii)	May 1940	Gold Coast to Switzerland	FK
(xiii)	May 1940	Gold Coast to Switzerland	FK
(xiv)	January 1941	Gold Coast to Switzerland	FK

My thanks to Ian Anderson, Michael Ensor and Fritz Kemme

Michael Wright has advised that the similar 'PASSED BY CENSOR NIGERIA' number 11 was especially, though not exclusively, on sensitive mail to countries such as Switzerland.



SIERRA LEONE 1956

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BOOK REVIEW

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE GOLD COAST

by Edward B Proud ISBN 0 1872465 16 1

Available from the Author PO Box 74, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8PY

528 pages Hardback

Price £45.00 + pp

R. C. J. Nelson

This book deals apart from the Postal History of the Gold Coast with the Postal History of the British - Administration of Togoland 1914-20. The Postal History of the Gold Coast is covered up to Independence. The book attempts the monumental task of illustrating every single postmark and instructional mark of the Gold Coast. Apart from very few omissions inevitable in a subject so vast, it succeeds. The quality of the drawings and illustrations is high. I particularly enjoyed the 16 pages of unusual covers in colour and the 90 pages (about) of monochrome illustrations of the old forts and views and scenes of the Gold Coast.

The General History of the Gold Coast is on the whole well written though marred as elsewhere in the book by typographical errors and some historical slips; for example there were 9 Ashanti Wars not 7 and Kumasi was destroyed in February 1874 not 1873.

As respects the chapter on the Postal History, there are many items not previously seen which are essential for specialists; in particular the overland mail routes from 1875, the development of the post offices and some interesting finds dealing with the bisects. There is however only sketchy treatment concerning the postal stationery. Airmails are dealt with in reasonable depth.

Postal Rates comprise many tables of rates; the book however is not complete in this respect for example the inter British West African Colonial rates from 1/1/1856 are not set out in whole.

The discussion on T.P.O.s does contain some notable omissions namely the complete posted on train rates and railway tables; the map does not show the extension of the Central line to join the Eastern line and the fact that Weshiang (originally Weija) was the other terminus of the Accra light railway. The postmarks for the original Gold Coast Government Railway (Sekondi to Kumasi) are given under the general postmark section rather than under the T.P.O section. There is no mention of the fact that Up and Down meant different things on the Western and Eastern lines. It is implied that the Western Line was extended to Takoradi from Sekondi when in fact the Sekondi-Takoradi was always a branch line.

I turn now to the most serious drawbacks of the book. Firstly, the general index for a book of this size with 100 pages of text is inadequate although the indices dealing with the postmarks (both right and left justified) are excellent; secondly, the attempt at pricing is alarmingly erratic and out of date; multiplying the prices given by 5 to 10 times would give a better idea.

As respects the section on Togo there is a very interesting account of the War and of the postal arrangements drawn from sources not so far published. The map however does not come out well. There is little or no discussion of the postal stationery and very little discussion as to the early postal rates which do present difficulty. Once again, the drawing of the postmarks is excellent but the pricing is erratic.

In conclusion, despite the book's drawbacks, some of which are enumerated above, it is a massive work containing much information not previously published; on the whole and partly because of the price, it is a book for specialists but nonetheless fascinating for those at any stage of their collecting.

TOGO POSTAL STATIONERY CARDS

John Mayne

The discovery of the Togo Yacht issues and details of numbers found and their overprinting is well documented. This is not so with postal stationery where there appears little information as to when or where these items were found, the numbers overprinted, or where overprinted. Most catalogues agree overprinted stationery was released 26.08.1915. No mention is made of unoverprinted cards being used during the occupation yet alone whether such use was valid.

The most common stationery found overprinted is the last German 5pfg card printed on watermarked paper Michel P17 released in 1912. Correctly used cards are not easily found but the writer notes in his collection the following:- (postmarks per Martin and Walton)

Unoverprinted Cards

1. Sent within envelope to Bude between Christmas 1914 and New Year 1915. Not cancelled.
2. Anecho 003.02.(1915) 30.01.1915 with Gold Coast SG72 to Oxford.
3. Lome 008.02 27.02.1915 with Gold Coast SG77a to Berlin.
4. Lome 008.01 16.06.1915 with Togo SG28 to Lome. Philatelic.
5. Assahun 004.01 15.10.1915 not used.

Items 2 and 3 have no other cancels and as such no evidence of arrival and it must be doubtful if card 3 reached Berlin! The second item has recently been acquired and is addressed to Noble Burrows, a known philatelic address.

This suggests German cards were discovered pre-1915 but when used attracted additional postage. Excess postage has been paid in most cases. An examination of catalogues from the major German auction houses over several years does not reveal an unoverprinted card postally used without additional postage being paid.

Overprinted cards too are difficult to find genuinely used.

British Overpainted German 5pfg Cards

Philatelic unless indicated.

1. Lome 008.01 27.08.1915 to Lome. Actual first day of issue?
2. Lome 008.03 27.08.1915 to Lome. Actual first day of issue?
3. Tsewie 015.03 29.08.1915 not used. First day this cancel used.
4. Lome 008.01 02.09.1915 to Lome.
5. Tsewie 015.03 07.09.1915 to Palime. Proper use.
6. Lome 008.01 08.09.1915 to Perthshire. Proper use.

7. Lome 008.01 11.10.1915 to Noepe.
8. Noepe 009.01 15.10.1915 to Leipzig.
9. Assahun 004.01 21.12.1915 not used.
10. Assahun 004.01 21.12.1915 to Brighton.
11. Lome 008.02 23.05.1916 to Brighton.
12. Palime 011.01 11.10.1916 to Switzerland. Togo SG50 added.

French Overprinted German 5 pfg Cards Held

The ratio of mail between the British and French sectors has been stated at 7:1. Certainly French mail is more difficult.

1. Atakpame 005.01 27.08.1914 not used. Earliest date recorded.
2. Atakpame 005.01 09.10.1914 not used.
3. Anecho 003.02 (1915) 11.08.1915 not used.
4. Anecho 003.02 (1915) 11.08.1915 to Lome. Censored. Proper use.
5. Anecho 003.02 (1915) 30.08.1915 to Switzerland.
6. Atakpame 005.01 11.12.1916 to Switzerland.

Cards 5 and 6 both have Dahomey unoverprinted values added.

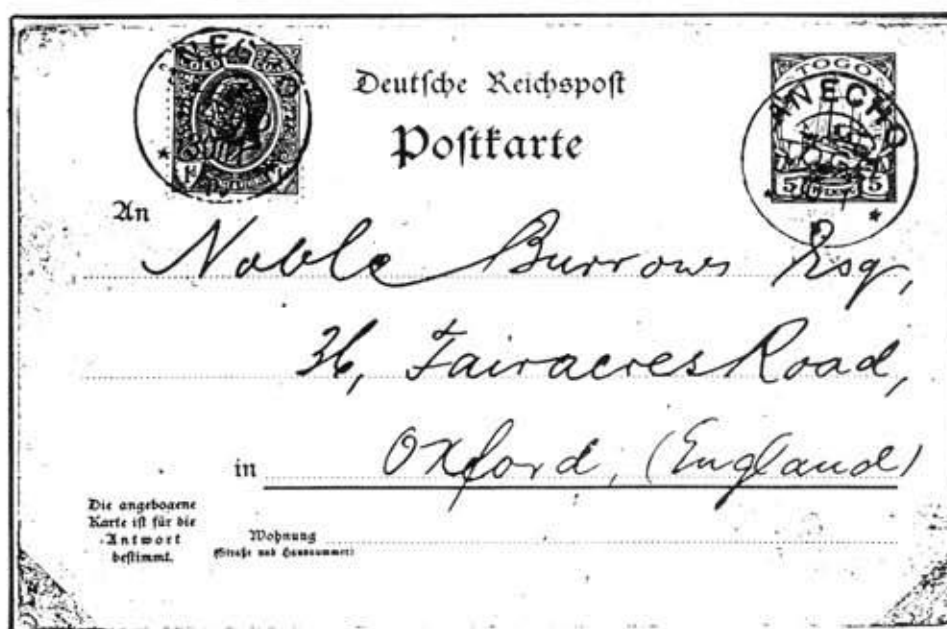
Overprinted yacht stamps were not available until September 1914 and cards 1 and 2 must surely be questionable and may have been backdated. Cards 3 and 4 both cancelled Anecho are dated prior to when British issues are recorded as released and it may be the French issues were the first available. As additional evidence a reply card is held used at Anecho 02.08.1915 addressed to Atakpame.

The writer would welcome information on these cards with details of others known to exist, in particular to ascertain if they were available overprinted at other post offices and outside the dates given.

Outward half of an unoverprinted German postal stationery reply card posted at Anecho 30.01.1915 addressed to Oxford and cancelled by the Anecho cancel with the 1914 year slug amended by the French and Gold Coast 1d value alongside similarly cancelled.

The use of unoverprinted postal stationery was not recognised hence the addition of the correct Gold Coast value to meet current postage rates to the United Kingdom.

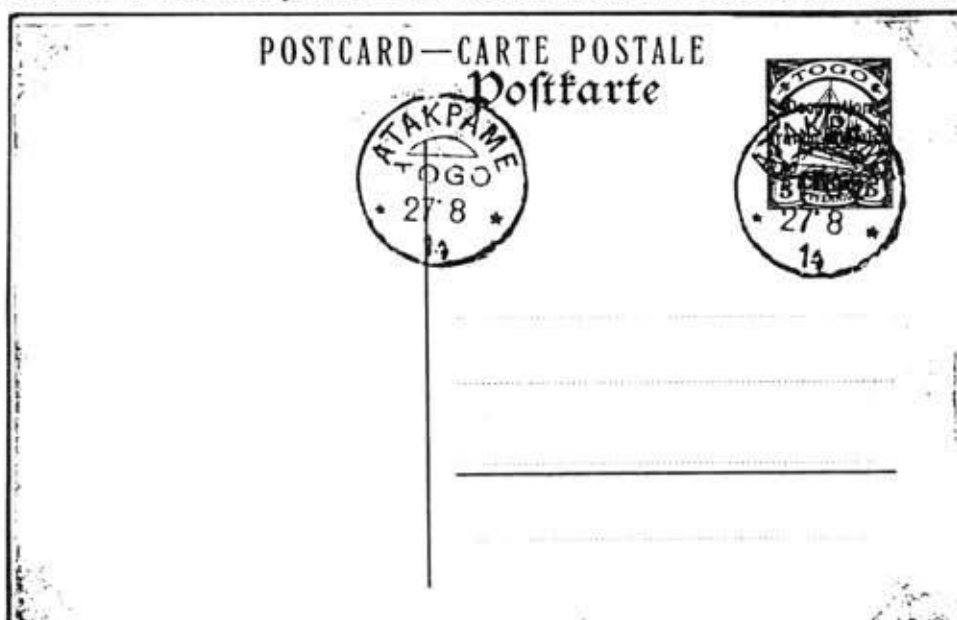
Genuine message albeit of some philatelic content with writer requesting papers of the war as well as the war map and The Times Great War Book. Writer states he has written for the Kamerun Stamp and hopes to obtain it.



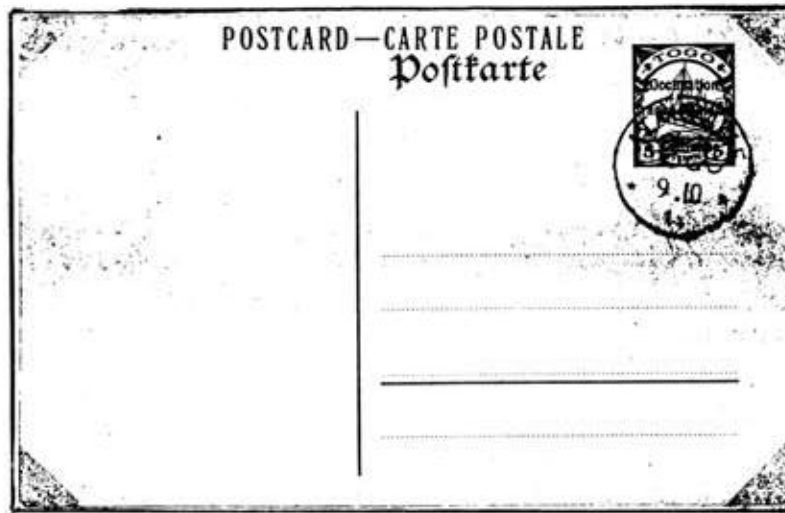
5 pfg German postal stationery card on lozenge watermarked paper overprinted for use by the French and cancelled *par complaisance* at Atakpame 27.08.1914 with an additional cancel alongside.

No information is available as to when and how many German cards were discovered yet alone where they were overprinted but the indications are that the British cards became available on 26.08.1915.

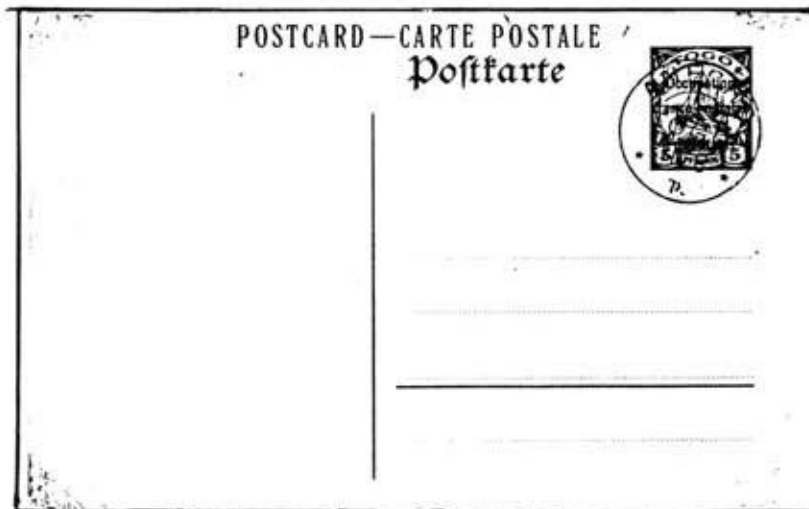
The postmark on this card may have been backdated or the cancel carried an incorrect year slug.



A German postcard of 5pfg value overprinted for use by the French with new value expressed in full (5 centimes) in contrast to the Yacht stamps. Early example with card stamped ATAKPAME 09.10.1914.



A German 5pfg postcard on lozenge watermarked paper overprinted for use by the French with the new value expressed in full as '5 Centimes' unlike the stamps. Stamped ready for use at Anecho 11.08.1915 by the German canceller as amended in 1915 by the French who tried to alter the 1914 year slug to read 1915 albeit unsuccessfully.



GOLD COAST SMALL CIRCLE OBLITERATOR

Jeremy Martin

This cover was received in Manchester on No 8 01. It is franked by 2 x ½d Key-Plates which have been cancelled by eight 7mm circles enclosing a small 2mm circle.

Has any member seen anything similar. The writer wondered whether it might have had something to do with the aftermath of the Ashanti campaign, a device used before a proper c.d.s. was available.



SUSPICIOUS DATES OF USE ON TOGO POSTAL STATIONERY CARDS

Jeremy Martin

Michael Ensor has drawn my attention to this 5pfg. German postcard overprinted for use in Togo. It has a Lome Ref 008.02 (Type C) cancel dated 23.5.15

A note in 'Stamp Collecting' of 30 October 1915 reported that the German overprinted Togo Postcards "..... were issued in Togoland on 26 August, and that so few were available that they were all sold out very quickly."

Michael reports that in Vorläuter ⁽²⁾ on page 898:7 there is shown a virtually identical card with the date believed to be 23.5.16. However, Michael suggests that the date is actually also 23.5.15.

The address was probably that of a stamp dealer in Brighton. But who applied the date-stamp for him? This is likely to remain a mystery. Could a second Madame Joseph have been at work?

Ref. 1 Togo. The Postal History of the Anglo-French Occupation 1914-1922 by Jeremy Martin and Frank Walton published 1995 by the West Africa study Circle.

Ref. 2 Vorläuter. Journal of the German Colonies Collectors group.



JEREMY MARTIN

This date-stamp, previously Type D, was prepared by the British and handed over to the French for their use from 1st October 1920.

This postcard shows that the French were still using it in 1931. It is interesting to note that the AM/PM part appears to have been blanked out. An attempt appears to have been made to alter 'FEB' to 'FEV'.

Ref. 'Togo. The Postal History of the Anglo-French Occupation 1914-1922' by Jeremy Martin and Frank Walton published by the W.A.S.C. 1995.



DESIGNER OF SIERRA LEONE KG VI DEFINITIVES - A POSTSCRIPT

NIGEL LUTWYCHE

As a result of the article in July, 1994 *Cameo*, the Waterlow Study Circle expressed an interest and reprinted it in their *Journal*. The editor, the Rev. David Hubbard, expressed the thought that it was possible that Father Welch only designed (or suggest the design) for the monochrome values (rice harvesting) and not the bi-coloured stamps. The reasoning for this is that the manuscript annotation and signature are underneath the 1½d scarlet, whereas they could have been written easily beneath both stamps.

Dickon Pollard, of Murray Payne Ltd., wrote that while trading as Sellars years ago, they had for sale a red coloured low value stamp of the 1938 definitive set which bore the signature "F. Welch", in red. Dickon recalls that the signature on the stamp was the same as that on the cover. At the time they had the stamp they speculated that the signature was that of the designer but did no research into it.

The only question I'll ask - who has that stamp now?

BOOK REVIEW

TOGO POSTAL HISTORY 1914-1922

by J Martin & R Walton

ISBN 0-9525687 - 1-3

Published by West Africa Study Circle,

8 Grasmere Road, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield S18 5PS

103 pages Hardback

Price £22.00 + pp

£17.00 + pp to members of the WASC

Fritz Kemme

Good books add so much to our hobby. In my opinion it is not only indispensable for the specialist-collector but anyone interested in West-Africa should own and read this book as it reflects the historical situation in this part of the world during and after WW I.

Fortunately the authors have resisted the temptation to quote any prices. There is only one thing I miss. On page 33 the authors write about the ACCRA overprints on GOLD COAST stamps. They mention the many varieties but fail to go into details. This in my opinion is a pity as just these varieties add a lot to the fun.

Otherwise I think this book to be a flawless and magnificent literary achievement and living (postal) history.

TOGO being the smallest of the former German Colonies is still of great interest to many Germans. As there is no comparable literature about the postal history of this period in Germany the Circle is well advised to offer this excellent publication also to German collectors. This should be done via the "ARGE Deutsche Kolonien", Messrs. H.Koehler, Wiesbaden, and/or Messrs. P. W. Meinhardt, Den Haag, Netherlands.

Again - congratulations to the authors - and a big "Thank You" also to our "West Africa Study Circle".

Do you collect West Africa Postal History?

IF SO WE MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU

Our stocks consist of British and German Colonies Postal History. If you would care to inform us of your collecting interests, we would be delighted to send you photocopies of any relative items we obtain.

Besides being members of the W.A.S.C. we are members of P.T.S. (London)

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THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICES OF GHANA

J J Martin

Prior to Independence on March 6th 1957, there were six T.P.O.s operating daily except Sundays. The following list is from "T.P.O.", Vol. II, No. 2 (March/April 1957).

<u>Designation</u>	<u>Route</u>
T.P.O. Western Up	Starts from SEKONDI & terminates at KUMASI
T.P.O. Western Down	Starts from KUMASI & terminates at SEKONDI
T.P.O. Eastern Up	Starts from ACCRA & terminates at KUMASI
T.P.O. Eastern Down	Starts from KUMASI & terminates at ACCRA
T.P.O. Central Up	Starts from HUNI VALLEY & terminates at KADE
T.P.O. Central Down	Starts from KADE & terminates at HUNI VALLEY

Each T.P.O. is staffed by one Postal and Telegraph Officer and one Mail Guard Messenger. These officers accept ordinary and registered correspondence from the general public at all stations, and a large amount of sorting work is done by them on the train.

A late fee of twopence, additional to the ordinary postage, is payable on correspondence posted on the T.P.O. for delivery in the Gold Coast; threepence on articles for delivery abroad; and sixpence on all registered articles.

(Lists supplied by courtesy of the Director, P.T.T., Accra, and K. Chapman and R.L. Christian.)

Prior to the issue of cancellers with GHANA instead of GOLD COAST, Type W6 of Gold Coast dated 27 March 1957 has been seen with the black handstamp GHANA 22 x 5mm struck over the GOLD COAST of the canceller. (philatelic)

The Post Office Impression Books include cancellers issued to Ghana and the dates the cancellers were sent out are shown.

Philatelic covers abound but their dates have been incorporated. All cancellers black unless otherwise noted.

The Western Line



GH. W1



GH. W2



GH. W2a



GH. W3

Type	Form	Size in mm	Wording	E.r.d.	L.r.d.
GH. W1	Single circle	24	T.P.O WEST R.5/ GHANA enclosing * and 2-line date	30 JUN 1958	
GH. W2	Single circle	24	T.P.O. WESTERN DOWN/GHANA enclosing * and 2-line date	21 MAR 1958	23 MAR 1962
GH. W2a	Single circle	24	As GH.W2 but no *	30 JUN 1958	
GH. W3	Single circle	24	As GH.W2 but UP instead of down	04 OCT 1958	28 JUL 1978
GH. W4	Double circles	32 & 21	T.P.O. WESTERN DOWN/GHANA enclosing * and 2-line date	21 MAR 1958	

GH. W2 and W3 were sent out to Ghana by the G.P.O. in December 1959. Earlier dates have been recorded which suggested the December 1959 date-stamps may have been duplicates.

An illustration of GH. W4 is needed.

The Eastern Line



GH. E1



GH. E2



GH. E3



GH. E3

Type	Form	Size in mm	Wording	E.r.d.	L.r.d.
GH. E1	Double circles	24 & 17	SOUTH EASTERN T.P.O. DOWN/1		
GH. E 2	Double circles	24 & 17	As GH. E1 but UP/2		
GH. E3	Single circle	25	T.P.O. 'E' ACCRA enclosing * and 2-line date	13 JUL 1958	03 SEP 1959
GH. E3	Double circles	32 & 21	T.P.O. EASTERN UP/GHANA enclosing 2-line date	21 MAR 1958	
GH. E5	Double circles	33½ & 23½	T.P.O. EASTERN DN/	06 APR 1963	
GH. E6	Double circles	27 & 16	T.P.O.E. DN/GHANA enclosing 2-line date	20 JAN 1977	
GH. E7	Single circle	c 25mm	T.P.O. EASTERN UP/GHANA enclosing * and 2-line date	20 JUN 1958	

The Impression Books show that, in January 1958, two cancellers were issued for the South Eastern T.P.O. (GH. E1 AND E2) which was presumably the Eastern Line.

The Impression Books also show that, in February 1958, two cancellers (GH. E3) were issued. Note that the position of the 'E' varies slightly.

Clear photostats are required for GH. E4 and E5 to check the wording and measurements.

For GH. E6 the details are accurate but a clear example is needed for an illustration.

A copy of GH. E7 is needed for measurement and illustration.

The Central Line



GH. C1



GH. C2

<u>Type</u>	<u>Form</u>	<u>Size in mm</u>	<u>Wording</u>	<u>E.r.d.</u>	<u>L.r.d.</u>
GH. C1	Single circle	24 mm	T.P.O. CENTRAL R/GHANA enclosing * and 2-line date	04 SEP 1958	14 OCT 1959
GH. C2	Single circle	24mm	T.P.O. CENTRAL/GHANA enclosing * and 2-line date		

The Impression books show that GH.C2 was sent to Ghana in December 1959.

T.P.O. Registration

The only item recorded is a blank registration label with manuscript T.P.O.C.' of the Central Line dated 14 Oct 1959.

Posted on Train



This philatelic cover shows usage of the Extra Fee cachet.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Size in mm</u>	<u>Wording</u>	<u>E.r.d.</u>	<u>L.r.d.</u>
GH. EF1	59 x 21	POSTED ON TRAIN/ WITHOUT EXTRA FEE/ ____D TO PAY	04 SEP 1958	

Clearly, there is much more to be discovered. I would welcome additional information and clear photostats.

GHANA POSTAL RATES 1966-67

JEREMY MARTIN

Although, at the moment, not a popular collecting area, we should perhaps note postal information when it becomes available.

The following has been taken from the 3rd edition of "Ghana at a Glance" published by the Ghana Information Services c. end 1966 early 1967.

POSTAL INFORMATION

Country	Letter per ½ oz.	Postcard per card	Second class mail per ½ oz.
Commonwealth Countries	¢	¢	¢
Australia	0.36	0.18	0.12
Canada	0.24	0.12	0.09
Ceylon	0.24	0.12	0.09
Cyprus	0.24	0.12	0.09
Gibraltar	0.15	0.08	0.06
Guyana	0.36	0.18	0.12
Hong Kong	0.36	0.18	0.12
India	0.36	0.18	0.12
Jamaica	0.24	0.12	0.09
Mauritius	0.24	0.12	0.09
Malaysia	0.36	0.18	0.12
New Guinea Territory	0.36	0.18	0.12
New Zealand	0.36	0.18	0.12
Pakistan	0.24	0.12	0.09
Rhodesia	0.15	0.08	0.06
Singapore	0.36	0.18	0.12
Tobago	0.24	0.12	0.09
United Kingdom	0.15	0.08	0.06

The Commonwealth countries here exclude African Countries, since these are placed in the list of independent African States.

AIRMAIL RATE OF POSTAGE

Country	Letter per ½ oz. ¢	Postcard per card ¢	Second class mail per ½ oz. ¢
2. All the Independent African States except South Africa	0.06	0.03	0.02
3. All other Independent States	0.36	0.18	0.12
(a) Afghanistan, Antigua, Argentina, Bermuda, Bhutan, Belivia, Brazil, Brunci, Burma, Cambodia, Cape Verde Islands, Chile, Christmas Islands, Cocos (Kneeling Islands) Caroline Islands, Columbia, Cook Islands, New Zealand (Territories), Cuba, Equador, Falkland Islands, Fiji Islands, Formosa (Taiwan) French Polynesia, French West Indies, Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Gwadur (Pakistan), Indonesia, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Laos Macao, Maldive Islands, Marian Islands, Marshall Islands, Museat, Mauru Island, New Caledonia, New Guinea territory, New Hebrides, Newfolk Island, Papua, Puraguay, Peru, Philippines, Pitearn Island, Portuguese Reunion, St. Kitts-Nevis, Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Pierre and Maquellon, Vincent, Samoa West, Samoa (U.S.A.), Solomon Islands, Surinam (Dutch Guiana) Thailand (Siam), Tibet, Tonga, Tortola (British Virgin Islands), Turks and Caicos Islands, Uruguay, Venezuela, Vietnam, Virgin Islands (U.S.A.), Wake Islands.			
(b) All the remaining Countries including South Africa	0.24	0.12	0.09
(c) All dependent territories in Africa including Islands	0.15	0.08	0.06

Air letter forms.—The special letter form embossed with ¢0.10 stamp may be sent to all countries but enclosures are not permitted. The forms may be bought from all post offices—privately manufactured ones may be used if only they have the approval of the Director of Posts and Telecommunication Department. Forms which do not bear an indication that they have been approved by the director will be treated as ordinary air mail letters.

Second Class Mail.—Printed papers, samples, small packets to commonwealth and those countries which admit them may be sent by air at the rates shown in the above list.

There is a minimum charge of ¢0.15 for small packets. Second class mail items should be clearly superscribed in the upper left-hand corner of the cover, below the air mail label, for the particular service intended. Such items should not contain anything; a current letter should not be sealed against inspection.

Air parcel Service.—Air parcels may be sent to United Kingdom at the rate of ¢0.20 per $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., to Nigeria; Sierra Leone, and Gambia at the rate of ¢0.51 per the same weight.

Letters.—Inland ¢0.05 for the first oz.; ¢0.08 for 2oz. and ¢0.03 for every additional oz. or part thereof. Overseas—Commonwealth countries, and all independent African countries except South Africa, letters not over 1oz. ¢0.06, for every additional oz. ¢0.03; other places abroad: not over 1oz. ¢0.09 and for every additional oz. ¢0.06.

Postcards.—Inland ¢0.03 per card; Commonwealth countries and Independent African Countries except South Africa; ¢0.05 per card. Other places abroad, ¢0.06 per card.

Inland Telegrams.—The minimum charge is ¢0.30 for the first 12 words and ¢0.02 for every additional word. Urgent or press is ¢0.18 for the first 48 words and ¢0.01 for each additional word. Porterage charge for inland telegrams to be delivered outside the free delivery area is ¢0.03 per mile. A supplementary fee of ¢0.12 is charged on each inland telegram tendered for transmission on sundays and Public Holidays.

Ghana's decimal currency came into use in July 1965. Its basis is the "Cedi" (¢) which is divided into 100 pesewas (P) and was equivalent to 8s 4d of the old currency e.g. 8 shillings - 96 pence = ¢0.96

BIAFRAN CENSORSHIP

Jeremy Martin

The writer purchased the censored covers in the recent Harmers' sale of the Robert Seaman 'Biafra' (1). I thought it would be worthwhile to set down what is known of censorship of mail using the format set out in 'West African Censorship World War I and II' (2).

If anyone is able to add additional information or dates, I would be pleased to hear from them.

The Biafran conflict lasted from 1967 - 1970. Some inward mail was subject to Government censorship with censor cachets being applied (3). It seems likely that the censoring was carried out at Ihiala Airport.

PASSED BY CENSOR



Type 1
58 - 59 x 8mm

Type 2
outer diameter 36mm

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Type 1 | Straight-line 'PASSED BY CENSOR' struck in violet. Length varies according to pressure applied. |
| Type 2 | Circular cachet of two outer circles and an inner circle. Wording 'PASSED BY CENSOR' AIRPORT IHIALA' with 'DATE' in centre. Struck in violet. Date added in manuscript. |

<u>Type</u>	<u>Earliest</u>	<u>Latest</u>
1	09 JUL 1969	= NOV 1969 (4)
2	01 SEP 1969	01 SEP 1969

PASSED BY CENSOR AIRPORT IHIALA



Cover from Peru to Biafra, via Gabon. With circular censor mark used at IHIALA AIRPORT and dated '1/9/69' with initials.

Censored mail was re-sealed by strips of brown paper. size varies.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Paper</u>	<u>Earliest</u>	<u>Latest</u>
1	Brown	09 JUL 1969	17 SEP 1969

References:

1. Harmers of London. Sale 4632, 27-28 June 1995
2. "West African Censorship World War I and II" by J.J. Martin and F.L. Walton published 1993 by the West Africa Study Circle
3. "A First Philatelic Study of Biafra" by D.H. Prestedge published 1970 for the West Africa Study Circle. Page 5
4. Idem. Page 17

MISSENT TO LAGOS

A.J.Plumbe

A hitherto unrecorded instructional cachet "MISSENT TO LAGOS" in violet was recently acquired on a 20 August 1960 Ghana cover endorsed 'Forces Mail' and addressed to the Isle of Wight. Sent by SCPO J Ross of the Ghana Naval Base in Takoradi, it is backstamped by a machine Chippenham 26 August 1960, so was hardly delayed by its out-of-course routing. The cachet is 3mm X 42mm and shown in the accompanying Figure. [I would be interested, to learn of anybody else's sightings of this 1960 cachet.]

(Reduced 50%)



THE POSTMARKS OF KUNTA-UR Len Weldhen

In a postal auction, closing date December 1st 1995, Messrs Empire Stamp Auctions offered for auction:-

- | | | |
|---------|---|-----|
| Lot 452 | 1923 (AP28) philatelic usage of blue and white picture postcard (no message) to Senegal and depicting 'The six gun battery at Bathurst' and bearing 'Elephant and Palm' 2½d, 3d, and 4d adhesives tied by 3 KUNTA-UR cds's.
Scarce | £75 |
| Lot 453 | 1923 (AP28) philatelic usage of blue and white picture postcard (no message) to Senegal and depicting 'The Roman Catholic Church at Bathurst' and bearing 'Elephant and Palm' 3d and 6d adhesives tied by 2 KUNTA-UR cds's.
Scarce | £75 |

Both postcards are dated 28 April 1923.

The Post Office did not open until 7 January 1924.

No comment.

FREE FRENCH MISSION, LAGOS

Jeremy Martin

In June 1995, I attended the French National at Orléans. In the Postal History class Bertrand Sinais, the Paris auctioneer, had an entry 'Les entiers postaux au type Pétain'. This exhibit included a cover from 'J. Elgier (?). Free French Mission Lagos' which I had not seen before.

The 3d Nigerian stamp was postmarked at Lagos 5 AP 41, addressed to Kribi, French Cameroons and re-directed to Fort Lamy in Tchad.

The cover received Nigerian and French Equatorial Africa censor marks. However, of greater interest, is the violet double circle cachet enclosing 'FRANCE-LIBRE' and, in the centre, the Cross of Lorraine and 'LAGOS'.



LAGOS PAQUEBOT

Jeremy Martin

Franked by 2 x ½d South African stamps and addressed to Lagos, this cover received a Lagos PAQUEBOT mark upon arrival as well as a violet Nigerian triangular censor cachet.

The black PAQUEBOT measures 67mm and is very similar to Drechsel's (1) Lagos Type 3 although the 'Q' is more like Type 2.

The cover received a Lagos back-stamp of 4 MR 43.

1. The Paquebot Marks of Africa etc by Edwin Drechsel published 1980 by the Pall Mall Stamp Company Ltd on behalf of Robson Lowe Ltd.



AN R.L.O. SEALING TAPE FROM NIGERIA

Michael Wright

I recently came across this cover with a re-sealing tape of the Returned Letter Office, Lagos. Not surprisingly, given that it was used in 1946, its appearance is very similar to the wartime censor tapes, particularly Types 1 and 2.

The cover had been posted to the U.K. from Nigeria, but could not be delivered; it seems to have been returned to Nigeria but not opened to obtain the name of the sender until it arrived there. The tape was then applied and tied with the second recorded postmark of the R.L.O. Lagos (Proud No. D.2) but dated 19th September 1942 it is a few months earlier than he records, and it also shows a time (11AM).



"P.O.C." - ANOTHER MANUSCRIPT POSTAL MARKING ON NIGERIAN MAIL

R J Maddocks

Further to it's initials "S.A.B.S." as discussed in my article in the January '95 issue of "Cameo", there is another set of initial letters "P.O.C." seen on Nigerian covers which has perplexed me as to its meaning and application. Also with the kind assistance of Neville Jones, our Nigeria Study Editor, numerous and various avenues have been explored without success other than deducing that there is an apparent association with underfranked registered mail. Most dealers and collectors approached said they hadn't seen the marking before, Nigerian contacts did not respond and the National Postal Museum in London advised that "it knew of no immediate British equivalent". This is quite strange as I found some sixteen covers bearing these initials in a very mixed batch of 1950's Nigerian mail and have also seen a Gold Coast cover similarly marked plus, quite intriguingly, one from the Federal Republic of Cameroon. The latter was posted at Bamenda in March 1962 very shortly before the former Southern Cameroons ceased to use Cameroon stamps overprinted with Nigerian currency values.

Thus it is probable that the initials "P.O.C." were a standard abbreviation used not only by the Nigerian Post Office but also by the Postal Administrations in all the British West African colonies. My hunch was that whereas "S.A.B.S" (Stamps Affixed By Sender) related to **overfranked** registered mail, "P.O.C." was to the contrary, relating to **underfranked** registered mail.

Illustrated here are six selected Nigerian covers (reduced in size) which bear the initials "P.O.C." The markings, all in manuscript, have been made in red ink (1,3 & 4) and red (2 & 5) and blue (6) crayon. On others not illustrated, they are also in pencil though infrequent. They would have been applied either in the office of posting or of subsequent sorting. Sometimes "P.O.C." has had the letter "T" added to read "P.O.C.T." or it is accompanied by a separately applied 'T' mark, either by handstamp or by hand. This letter is, of course, the universally recognised postage due symbol. Sometimes again a value has also been shown and this would indicate normally the amount of tax/surcharge deemed to be collectable; though it does not always seem to work out at double the deficiency in postage and/or registration fee.

Furthermore, none of the covers evidence that any surcharges were in fact ever claimed and collected from the addressee on delivery.

In normal circumstances all mail items intended for transmission by registered post must be handed over the post office counter to a postal officer in person. The latter is responsible for ensuring that the correct postage and registration fee have been prepaid and stamps affixed accordingly before acceptance and a receipt is issued. It is very unlikely that any underfranked registered item would have thus entered the postal system over the counter.

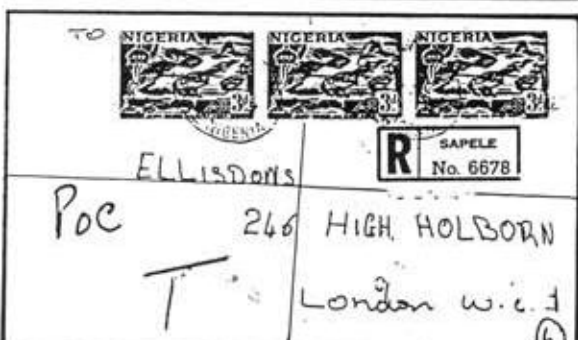
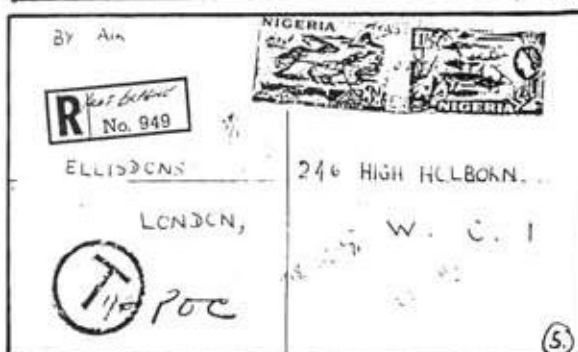
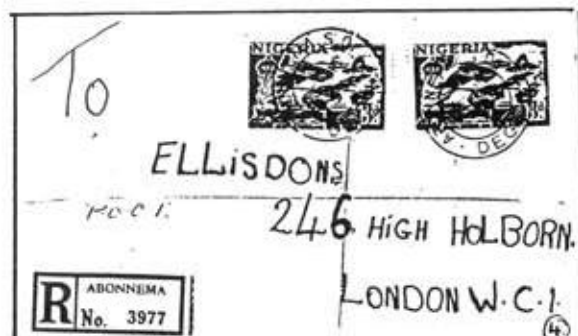
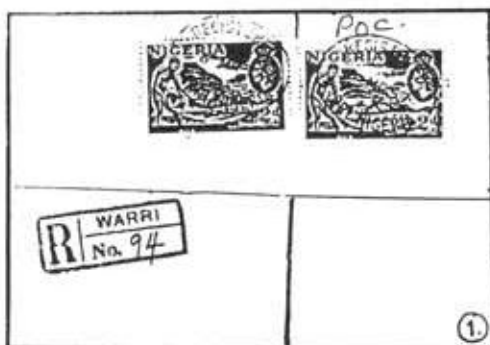
But then there were items intended or marked for registration by the sender but which for various reasons were dropped into a pillarbox or mailbag instead of being passed over the counter. There has to be a laid down procedure on how they were handled thereafter. According to Post Office regulations the Post Office has the power to compulsory register and surcharge accordingly any item found amongst the unregistered correspondence at any stage of its transmission bearing the word "Registered" (or any other word, phrase or mark (such as a blue crossing) to like effect). In such cases the surcharge, being double the deficiency in registration fee and postage, is collectable from the addressee on delivery.

Items intended by the sender for airmail transmission were usually onforwarded by compulsory registered surface mail instead.

Thus it is surmised that these compulsory registered covers had been marked "P.O.C." to indicate "Posted Out of Course" ie they had entered the postal system by means other than over the Post Office counter. In fact, I have ascertained that this is the procedure still followed within the Royal Mail notwithstanding the statement by the National Postal Museum that it knew of no immediate British equivalent of these initials.

One wouldn't have thought that "P.O.C." covers from West Africa are so scarce as not to have been highlighted previously - perhaps it is a question of power of observation! Should any member now find such an item in his collection and has alternative suggestions and comments these would be welcome for further discussion through the Editor, Neville Jones or myself.

P.S. Bob Maddocks writes "Received in reply after nine months from Nigeria P&T confirmed POC. The cleft stick had been used for firewood en route".



CAMEROONS 1919 'ON ACTIVE SERVICE'

Jeremy Martin

This is a stampless 'On Active Service' postcard, possibly from the Cameroons. The coloured picture side shows 'Kamerun-Tanzkostüm'. The message reads 'Just an idea of a native dance, you ought to see them as they get warmed up to it'.

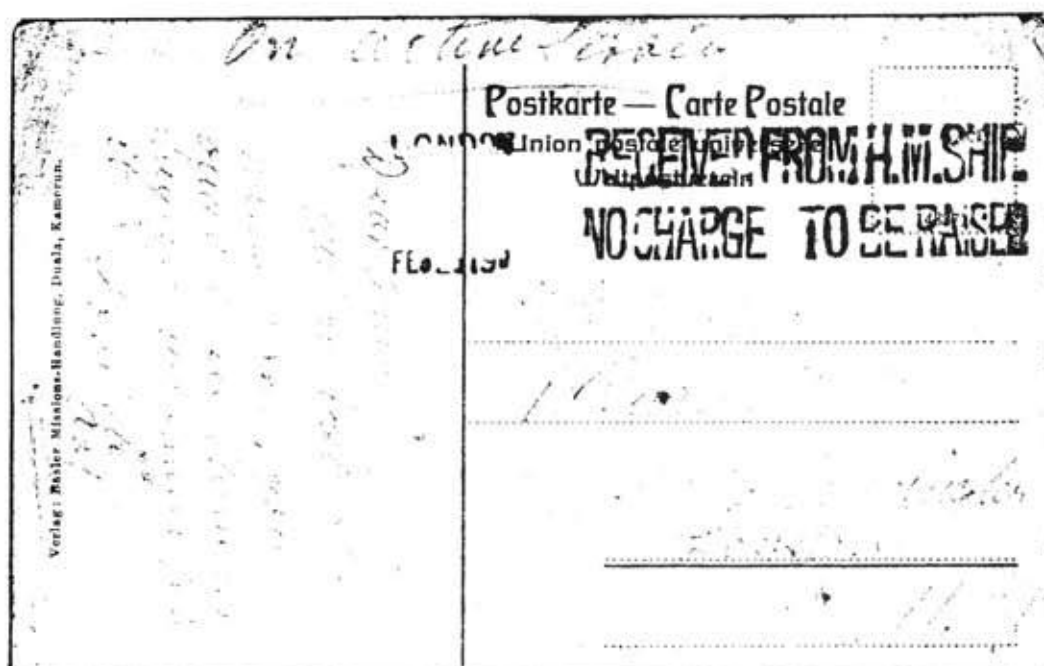
Addressed to London, the card received at London 'RECEIVED FROM H.M. SHIP/NO CHARGE TO BE RAISED' mark of February 1919.

I showed it to Marty Bratzel who referred it to Bob Maddocks. Bob commented that he doubted whether in February 1919 one could say there were any British military still 'on active service' in French or British Cameroons. It could well, however, have been written by a sailor on board a visiting warship for he seems to have been familiar with the 'native dance' in Kamerun as per the picture.

The Royal Navy may well have remained on active service duties longer than the military after the war had ended in November 1918.

Bob has two covers bearing the 'RECEIVED FROM H.M. SHIP' cachet. One clearly show the Kamerun origin for it has a Duala date-stamp of 8.9.15. The other is a postcard written ex. H.M.S. Challenger c/o G.P.O., London and dated in December 1914. It is inscribed 'Stamps not Available. On Active Service' but, like mine, has no postal date-stamp.

My thanks to Bob and Marty for their help.



SIERRA LEONE - Q.S.L. CARDS

B M McCloy

These Q.S.L. cards are used to confirm the reception of a transmission between radio enthusiasts around the world.

I illustrate two such cards from Sierra Leone.

1. 1948 - Capt. S.B. Duke, Sierra Leone Signal Sqn.
2. 1957 - A.W. Torrie, Prince of Wales School, Freetown.

The first card has a short message on the reverse and was sent in an envelope. The second card is addressed to London and was stamped and sent through the post from Freetown.

I would be most interested to hear if any other members have examples of these Q.S.L. cards from Sierra Leone.

SIERRA	LEONE
Z D 1 B D	
To RADIO. <i>BRS 2768</i>	
CONFIRMING <i>or reception</i> ON. <i>1.4</i> M/CS	
ON. <i>2.4. Dec</i> 194 <i>8</i> ..	
AT. <i>18.35</i> HRS. G.M.T.	
UR SIGS. <i>1</i> W/PONE.	CAPT. S B. DUKE,
QRM/QRN. <i>1</i>	SIERRA LEONE SIGNAL SQDN.
PSK/TNX. QSL.	FREETOWN,
	BRITISH WEST AFRICA.

SIERRA LEONE	
Z D I F G	
A.W. TORRIE PRINCE OF WALES SCHOOL, FREETOWN.	
To. <i>G3BTD</i>	Confirming our QSO on. <i>21 June</i>
DATE. <i>14.5.57</i>	TIME. <i>1700 GT</i>
Transmitter. <i>KFC 827</i>	SIGNALS. <i>5. 14/7</i>
Receiver. <i>H20</i>	Antenna. <i>7mc 500</i>
Thanks for QSL.	KIA ORA and 73.
	Ex ZL 2 FG. <i>21</i>

Forces Airmail Concessionary Rate

Frank Walton



The September 1995 WASC auction contained two Sierra Leone covers, each addressed to the UK, paid at 2½d and endorsed *Forces Air Mail*. The one illustrated above has a clear Garrison Mail datestamp of 6 August 1955, but the other was an example of the frequent practice at the Garrison Mail post office of omitting the year dies. Both covers bore George VI 2d and ½d definitives.

It has proved difficult to track down any reference to this 2½d rate for Sierra Leone. Philip Beale's *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone* makes no mention, nor does Ted Proud's *The Postal History of Sierra Leone*.

Drawing a blank for Sierra Leone, the net was cast further afield to the other West Africa colonies. Ted Proud's books *The Postal History of Nigeria* and *The Postal History of Gold Coast* do not include such a rate, nor does Oliver Andrew's *The Stamps and Postal History of The Gambia*. The next place to look was in back copies of *Cameo*. Thanks to Jeremy Martin's memory and the Cumulative index three reference were found, although unfortunately none relating directly to Sierra Leone.

In Volume 3 page 204, there is an article by Roy Lambert covering the R.A.F. Aerial Survey of British West Africa. This suggests that 2½d was a concessionary rate for H.M. Forces in the Gold Coast which was obtained by writing 'Forces Airmail' on the front of the envelope and the sender's name, rank and address on the back. The examples referred to cover the period January to May 1951, when the normal airmail rate was 6d.

An article entitled *Forces Concession Rates* can be found in Volume 3 page 35 which explains the 1½d forces concessionary rate in the Gold Coast when the normal rate was 2½d. This discusses the forces rates between 1945 and 1950 when covers are known free, 1½d or 2½d.

A Gambia postal notice is illustrated in Volume 3 page 117, which mentions a 2½d being in place in February 1941, but this is of course many years earlier than the Sierra Leone covers.

Further information or examples of this rate would be welcomed.

(Ed: I have a Forces cover with such a rate from the Gold Coast)

SIERRA LEONE - SALPOST

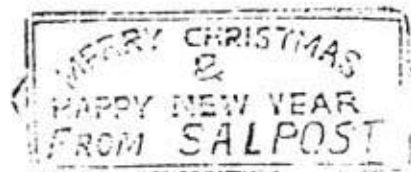
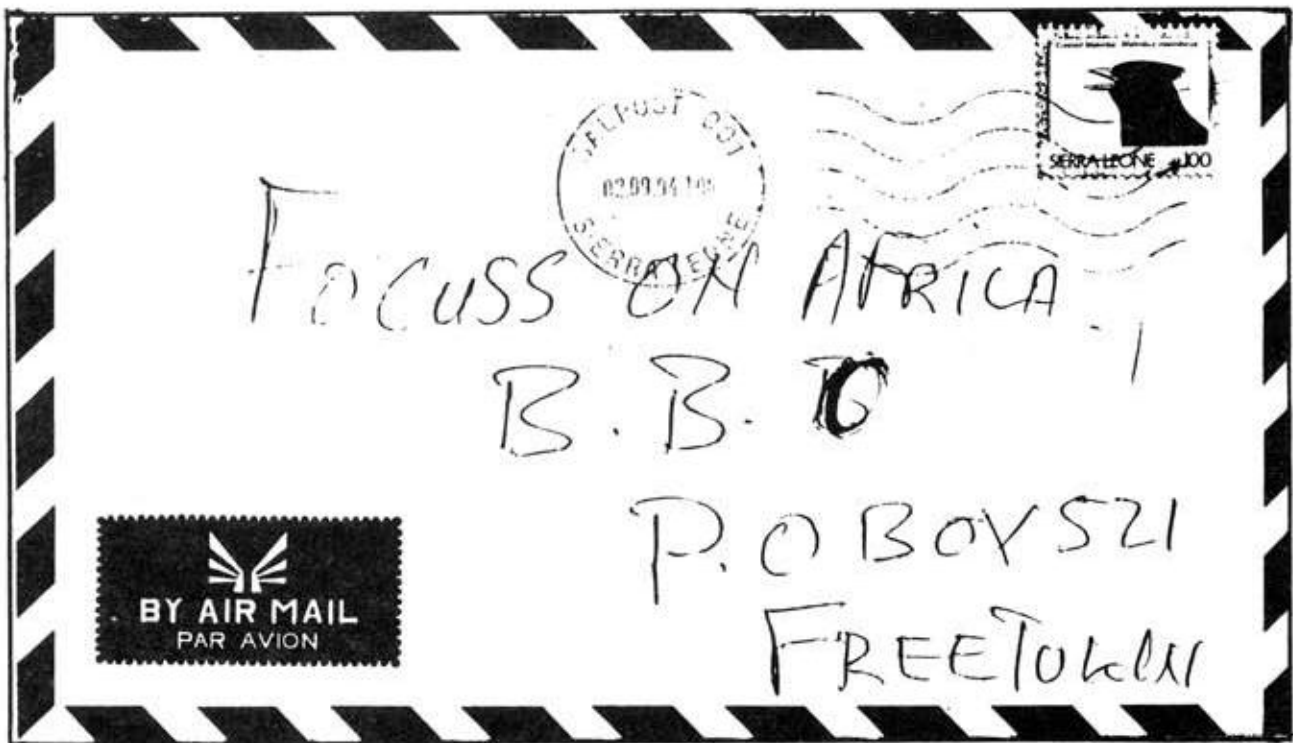
Peter Rolfe

About 1990 the Sierra Leone Post Office underwent a reorganisation and, as is the current fashion, acquired a new corporate identity. Henceforth they were to be known as SALPOST and a picture of their headquarters appears on the illustrated aerogramme that was first issued in 1991.

More recently, a new form of machine cancellation has appeared incorporating this title and seems to have replaced the FREETOWN COUNTER No.--- in use on international mail from Freetown. The postmark comprises a crisp 26mm circle with the legend SALPOST 001 / SIERRA LEONE and the date, together with 5 rows of wavy lines (see picture of cover). The earliest usage seen so far is 02.09.94.

Additionally, in 1994, there was a handstamp in celebration of the Christmas season as illustrated.

So far, this new cancellation has only been seen on mail from Freetown but the use of the 001 numeral suggests a provision for extended use. No official pronouncement or advice has been seen.



Sierra Leone Registration Labels

Frank Walton

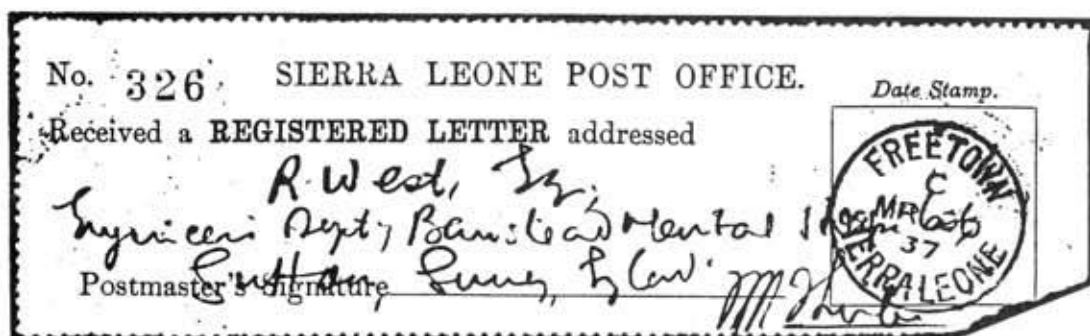


A non-member has sent me details of Sierra Leone registration labels held in his collection of around 200,000 loose labels from all over the world. This includes reports of many new types over and above those listed in *Sierra Leone Registration*, the monograph published by WASC last year.

Of particular interest was an example of **HILL STATION, / W.C.A.** of the type used in the first period between 1907 and 1913, and several examples from the TPOs. It is infuriating that these loose labels cannot of course be dated.

SIERRA LEONE REGISTERED LETTER RECEIPT

Frank Walton



It is unusual to come across the sender's receipt for a Registered Letter such as the one illustrated above, particularly for commercially used items. I wonder if the associated envelope has survived as well...

SIERRA LEONE - EMBOSSED POSTAL STATIONERY

Peter Rolfe

The embossed postal stationery of Sierra Leone is always uncommon and does appear to have been widely used. Nevertheless, the authorities persisted and a QEII version was issued in 1959. The validity of this item extended into the post independent period and a nice example of this is illustrated in Philip Beale's book on Sierra Leone.

Recently another fine example came to light. Addressed to USA, the item (see illustration) is registered and postmarked KOIDU TOWN 21 AU 61 in a double ring cancellation type 140.03 * . The reverse has a Chicago receiving mark dated AUG 28 1961. The added postage of 2/6 is a little over the top as the correct rate would have been a total of 2/6 (Air Mail to USA 2/- plus registration fee 6d) whereas this item totals 2/9. However there was no 2/3 value so the alternative would have been two lower values.

The item is obviously philatelic but has clearly passed through the postal system and as these covers used after independence are very rare we must be grateful to see such an example at all.



THE POSTAL HISTORY OF SIERRA LEONE

E.B. PROUD

Published by Proud Bailey
Co P.O. Box 74 Heathfield, East Sussex
Hardback. Pages 471, eight in colour
Price £45 plus p&p

Philip Beale

This book contains a great deal of information together with fine illustrations. It includes a considerable number of photocopies taken from the colonial Gazettes, an account of the country's historical background, a Chapter on postal rates, a detailed listing of the postmarks and instructional markings (which uses the author's own distinctive numbering system) with information on Post Offices, together with extensive tables showing sailing times of ships and flight departures of aircraft. There is no indication of the sources from which the postmarks and the shipping tables are taken. There is a valuation shown for postmarks on stamps and on cover or postcard.

Despite all this useful material I was disappointed with some aspects of the book. In a publication of such length, exclusively devoted to the postal history, I would have like to have seen some photostats taken from the annual Blue Books and, more important, photocopies and an analysis of all the statistical information shown in the annual Reports of the Post Office, which constitute the main source for the later postal history. A more detailed Index would have helped the reader.

The postmark collector will find little to add the Circle's publication by Frank Walton. At the end of the volume the author lists Cameo and a few other relevant publications but he does not give their publishers. I would have expected to see at least a reference to the existence of the West Africa Study Circle. I particularly like the photographs of ships and aircraft, the interesting letters quoted concerning airmail services, the use of postcards, and the reproductions from the London Illustrated News, which are all printed on good quality paper.

SIERRA LEONE STAMP DESPATCHES IN 1912

Philip Beale

I am grateful to Peter Fernbank for pointing out an omission in my book *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone*. He has found a further despatch of the low value KGV stamps in 1912 which he describes on page 61 of Cameo July 1995. The circumstances are so unusual as to be worth a comment.

Sierra Leone put in a Requisition 105/10 which was printed and despatched in 1911 using the KE VII head. This is shown in the *Private Day Books*. In the parallel series *Colonial Stamps* a further despatch, also numbered 105/10, is shown. The details of the Order have lines drawn through them, though these are not drawn through the listing of numbers to be despatched. Peter has located this despatch in the *Private Day Books*. By then the KG V head was available to the printer. Peter confirms to me that, curiously, there is an error in the Index of despatches for the *Private Day Books* because this despatch is not listed. I congratulate him on his persistence particularly because it establishes the correct date of issue of the Specimens, including the 2d. Peter has kindly checked all the other despatches which I quote and assures me that they are all correct.

THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE AT KEW
Philip Beale

It has been suggested to me that members would be interested to read an account of the West African colonial records available for inspection at Kew. The difficulty in finding out what exists is that the standard two volume *Guide to the Contents of the Public Record Office* H.M.S.O. was issued in 1963 and has long been out of print. The same applies to *The Records of the Colonial and Dominions Offices* H.M.S.O. published in 1964. Other H.M.S.O. publications include *The Records of the Foreign Office 1782-1939* and *List of Colonial Office Confidential Print*. The Historical Manuscripts Commission has composed in its Guides to Sources for British History No.5 *Private Papers of British Colonial Governors 1782-1900*. That is also published by H.M.S.O., though most of those Papers are not at Kew. It should be possible to consult any of these books at a large library. I have copies of all of them and could always provide photocopies of odd pages.

Obviously it saves much time if, on arrival at Kew, the visitor knows what documents are required and I provide below a list of the main sources for West African history to be found there. So that intending researchers should know the scope of the work likely to be involved, I have given the number of volumes involved in any group of documents. To consult the records it is necessary to have a reader's ticket so it is sensible to obtain that in advance by writing to P R O at Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU requesting a form. Send a stamped addressed envelope. However, one can obtain a temporary pass on arrival. For that you will need personal identification, preferably a passport. As pens are not allowed, take one or two pencils and a pencil sharpener. Have a pound coin available which will enable you to hire a locker for you cannot take coats, bags etc. beyond the counter. You can take in small notebooks and a small handbag. Laptops can be taken by in by arrangement. Refreshments are available.

You then proceed upstairs and ask to be allocated a desk. Then you are lent a bleeper to inform you when documents are available. To order a document you will need to know its number and to type this into one of the computer terminals in the Search Room together with your ticket and desk number. Follow the instructions given on the display. Document numbers are obtained from the main catalogues, two sets of which are available in the Search Room. Of course, it saves much time if you can arrive with some document numbers so that you can immediately order these and then proceed to consult the catalogues. You can order three bound volumes and it will take between half an hour to two hours for them to arrive. When they have arrived, you can order another three. Last orders are placed at 3.15 so you can see that if, for example, you wanted to consult all the Blue Books for Gold Coast you would have to make many visits to Kew. However, Circle members possess many of the Gazettes so consult our Editors before going to Kew for them.

Be very careful to type in correct numbers for it is exasperating to find you typed in a wrong digit and have been provided with a document that you did not want! If you are arriving early in the day it is possible to order three documents in advance. Of course, it is always possible that someone else will be using a document that you want or that is being held by the photocopying department which is copying from it for an order. If you want to study the Governors' Correspondence from Gold Coast you must be prepared to spend some weeks at Kew as it comprises 776 volumes. Each one is very large and heavy! I spent many weeks there when consulting records for my Sierra Leone book. However, if you want to look at records for a particular year or two, that could be managed in a few visits.

The staff are most helpful but cannot be expected to look up references for you. I find the computer terminals are user friendly. When looking for Governors' correspondence it is best to start with the Registers which give brief summaries of the contents of each letter. You will soon discover that the process known as 'weeding' began in the 1880s when much correspondence and many documents were destroyed. The Registers make this clear for they show many letters and despatches marked 'destroyed'. Much postal information has been lost as a consequence. You must be prepared to find nothing on a subject you wish to know about, but negative information is an important part of research. Typed documents only begin in 1893.

The Gazettes are listed as Gazettes. Acts, Proclamations and Ordinances as Acts. Most documents from the Colonial Councils are under Sessional Papers and any Post Office and other Reports will be under Sessional Papers or Miscellanea. The annual Blue Books, which are the annual returns made by colonies, are under Miscellanea. They contain lists of postal officials and often postal rates. When a Governor issued an Order under his own authority it was known as a Proclamation, when after approval by his Council it was an Ordinance. Some documents will be available after the final dates I give, which are those in publications made some years ago, and this should be apparent by consulting the catalogues.

I quote the references you will need for ordering documents from each of the previous West African colonies. There is a parallel series for every other Colony and for the Dominions. The first volume under any heading will start at 1 and should continue in sequence. Original Correspondence I abbreviate as O.C.; Registers of Correspondence as R.C.; Registers of Out letters as O.L.; Entry Books as E.B.; Acts as A.; Sessional Papers as S.P.; Government Gazettes as G.G.; Miscellanea as M. If you are unsure just what may be within a particular group like the Entry Books for the colony you are studying, order one book for a year that should be of interest so that you can find out if that series would be helpful.

ASCENSION

O.C. ref. is C.O. 749 1921 – 1923.

R.C. ref. is C.O. 823 1922 – 1923.

after that see St Helena

CAMEROONS

O.C. ref. is C.O. 649. 1915 – 1926. 31 volumes.

R.C. ref. is C.O. 750. 1915 – 1926. 5 volumes.

O.L. ref. is C.O. 751. 1915 – 1926. 4 volumes.

Other information can be found under Nigeria.

CONFIDENTIAL PRINT

Africa ref. is C.O. 806. 1858 – 1897. 365 volumes.

FERNANDO PO

All documents are ref. C.O. 82. 1828 – 1843. 12 volumes.

Otherwise under Sierra Leone.

GAMBIA.

O.C. reference is C.O.87. 1828 to 1943. 255 volumes.

R.C. ref. is C.O. 341. 1849 to 1930. 15 volumes.

O.L. ref. is C.O. 481. 1872 to 1926. 8 volumes.

E.B. ref. is C.O. 401. 1827 to 1939. 16 volumes.

A. ref. is C.O. 88. 1843 to 1940. 9 volumes.

S.P. ref. is C.O. 89. 1843 to 1940. 24 volumes.

G.G. ref. is C.O. 460. 1883 to 1940. 21 volumes.

M. ref. is C.O. 90. 114 volumes.

GOLD COAST

O.C. ref. is C.O.96 from 1753 – 1753. 1843 – 1943. 776 volumes.

R.C. ref is C.O. 343. 1849 – 1931. 36 volumes.

O.L. ref is C.O. 482. 1872 – 1926. 22 volumes.

E.B. ref. is C.O. 402. 1843 – 1872. 13 volumes.

A. ref. is C.O. 97. 1843 – to 1872. 13 volumes.

S.P. ref. is C.O. 98. 1829 – 1844 and 1854 – 1940. 77 volumes.

G.G. ref. is C.O. 99. 1872 – 1940. 68 volumes.

M. ref. is C.O. 100. 1845 – 1940. 90 volumes.

LAGOS

O.C. ref. is C.O. 147. 1861 – 1906. 179 volumes.

R.C. ref is C.O. 421. 1861 – 1906. 10 volumes.

O.L. ref. is C.O. 483. 1872 – 1906. 8 volumes.

E.B. ref. is C.O.420. 1861 – 1872. 5 volumes.

A. ref. is C.O. 148. & 1886 – 1905. 3 volumes.

S.P. ref. is C.O. 149. 1872 – 1906. 7 volumes.

G.G. ref. is C.O. 150. 1881 – 1906. 12 volumes.

M. ref. is C.O. 151. 1862 – 1905. 43 volumes.

NIGER COAST PROTECTORATE

O.C. ref. is C.O. 444. 1899. 4 volumes.

M. ref. is C.O. 464. 1896 – 1900. 4 volumes.

Then see Southern Nigeria.

NIGERIA

O.C. ref. is C.O. 583. 1912 – 1943. 263 volumes.
R.C. ref. is C.O. 763. 19 volumes.
O.L. re. is C.O. 764. 8 volumes.
A. ref. is C.O. 656. 9 volumes.
S.P. ref. is C.O. 657. 51 volumes.
G.G. ref. is C.O. 658. 44 volumes.
Railway ref. is C.O. 741. 2 volumes.
M. ref. is C.O. 660. 31 volumes.
Customs & Trade C.O. 659. 1911 – 13. 3 volumes.

NORTHERN NIGERIA

O.C. ref. is C.O. 446. 1898 – 1913. 114 volumes.
R.C. ref. is C.O. 584. 7 volumes.
O.L. ref. is C.O. 585. 6 volumes.
A. ref. is C.O. 587. 3 volumes.
G.G. ref. is C.O. 586. 4 volumes.
M. ref. is C.O. 465. 14 volumes.

SOUTHERN NIGERIA

O.C. ref. is C.O. 520. 1900 – 1913. 131 volumes.
R.C. ref. is C.O. 589. 8 volumes.
O.L. ref. is C.O. 590. 6 volumes.
A. ref. is C.O. 588. 4 volumes.
S.P. ref. is C.O. 592. 16 volumes.
G.G. ref. is C.O. 591. 12 volumes.
M. ref. is C.O. 473. 16 volumes.

ST.HELENA

O.C. is C.O. 247. 1805 – 1943. 241 volumes
R.C. ref. is C.O.366 1849 – 1930. 13 volumes.
O.L. ref. is C.O. 491. 1872 – 1926. 5 volumes.
E.B. ref. is C.O. 248. 1815 – 1872. 18 volumes.
A. ref. is C.O. 249. 5 volumes.
S.P. ref. is C.O. 250. 10 volumes.
G.G. ref. is C.O. 251.10 volumes.
M. ref. is C.O. 252. 104 volumes.

SIERRA LEONE

O.C. ref. is C.O. 267. 1664 – 1943. 683 volumes.
R.C. ref. is C.O. 363. 26 volumes.
O.L. ref. is C.O. 484. 13 volumes.
E.B. ref. is ref. is C.O. 268. 1672 – 1872. 57 volumes.
A. ref. is C.O. 269. 12 volumes.
S.P. ref. is C.O. 270. 76 volumes.
G.G. ref. is C.O. 271. 1817 – 1940. 48 volumes.
M. ref. is C.O. 272. 1819 – 1940. 117 volumes.

TOGOLAND

O.C. ref. is C.O. 724 1920 – 1926. 4 volumes.
R.C. ref. is C.O. 803. 1920 – 1926. 1 volume.
O.L. ref. is C.O. 804. 1920 – 1926. 1 volume.

Otherwise see Gold Coast.

If anyone plans some major research, I would be pleased to correspond.

SIERRA LEONE - A CENSOR LABEL PRINTING ERROR

NIGEL LUTWYCHE

I have read that errors on censor labels are not uncommon. This is the first occasion that I have seen this particular error, the incorrect spelling of "censor". If a whole batch of locally printed labels bore this error, then some of them must have survived.



1946 VICTORY ISSUE - CURRENT NUMBERS

Nigel Lutwyche

During Frank Walton's display of Sierra Leone on the Sunday morning of the weekend meeting at Leamington Spa in October, the question arose of the additional numbering used by De La Rue in the bottom margin of the 1946 Victory issues. With the permission of Richard Lockyer, general secretary of the King George VI Collectors' Society, the following information has been taken from a series of articles on the Victory issue written by him and published in Gibbons Stamp Monthly during 1989.

De La Rue **were** awarded the contract to produce the Victory commemorative issues for the colonies, each of which would have two low value stamps showing the Houses of Parliament and the River Thames. (For a variety of reasons, this design was not used for the Aden States, Hong Kong, the Malayan Union and Zanzibar.) The sheets comprised ten horizontal rows of six stamps with the plate number occurring in the margin under R10/5. This plate number can be accompanied by the Letter A or B indicating that a large single working plate comprising two panels of 60 impressions marked either A1/B1 or 1A/1B were used. The printer's sheet of 120 was guillotined into post office sheets of 60. It appears from the Plate Issue Register that, with few exceptions, orders in excess of 15,000 sheets of 60 were printed in this manner, i.e. '120 set'. For smaller orders it would have been uneconomic to have used the '120' set, apart from which high grade steel needed to make the plates was in short supply after the war. However, seven values for five colonies do have an A1 plate number although produced in '60 set'.

For the Victory issue, De La Rue used another number, inverted, under R10/1. These numbers start at ten and then run irregularly from thirty to eighty-six. These numbers have been referred to as 'current numbers' to avoid confusion with the plate numbers. Only 28 of the 41 colonies using the Parliament design have these current numbers. The reason why some colonies did not have current numbers and why this numbering sequence was used has yet to be established. (At Leamington Spa, Len Weldhen told the meeting that he had purchased sheets of the Victory issue for all the colonies when they were issued and was able to confirm that some of the sheets did not have current numbers.) Sheet numbers, when found, occur above R1/6 and indicate that those sheets were sent to the colony.

So far as the Study Circle is concerned, here are some details of the Victory issue:-

Colony	Duty	Current Number	Plate Number	Sheets Despatched
Ascension	2d.		1	11,395
	4d.		1	11,810
Gambia	1½d.	31	1	11,495
	3d		1	11,232
Gold Coast	2d	85A	1A}	32,248
	2d.	85B	1B}	
	4d.	86	1	12,448
Nigeria	1½d.	83A	1A}	34,260
	1½d.	83B	1B}	
	4d.	84	1	12,877

St. Helena	2d.	61	1	11,200
	4d.	62	1	11,950
Sierra Leone	1½d.	81A	1A}	20,440
	1½d.	81B	1B}	
	3d.	82	1	9,800

Details of the number of sheets dispatched were taken from the relevant requisition books. The current numbers were not officially listed and those quoted have either been reported or seen.

Incidentally, Gambia was the first colony to see its Victory issue in use on 6 August, 1946, (while Gilbert & Ellice Islands were the last, on 16 December).

BERTRAM POOLE

Jeremy Martin

Recently brief notes have been published in *Cameo* about prominent past members of the Circle. I do not think that Bertram Poole was ever a member but he wrote many booklets on many countries, mostly on parts of the Empire.

Going through his *Gold Coast* book, the previous owner had left inside Poole's obituary. It was dated 1957 and probably came from "Stamp Collecting".

It related that he died on 8th September 1957, aged 77, at his home in Los Angeles. Bertram W. H. Poole was born in Hereford and for many years was well known in British philatelic circles as a journalist of some repute. He edited a number of magazines including the "West End Philatelist". In 1921, the inaugural year, he was elected to the roll of Distinguished Philatelists.

He was a member of the the jury of the 1913 New York Exhibition and, shortly afterwards, took up permanent residence in the U.S.A. He conducted a stamp business from California until 1955 when he went into semi-retirement.

Among other books he wrote "Gold Coast" (1910) and "Sierra Leone" (1911) in the "W.E.P." series of Philatelic Handbooks.

HISTORY OF CENSORSHIP IN WW2

Michael St. J. Wright

In 1952 the Home Office printed 250 copies of a Secret book of some 898 pages (including a second volume of 35 Appendices) entitled "History of the Postal and Telegraph Censorship Department 1938-1946". Unlike most government papers, which are released to the Public Record Office after 30 years, this was regarded as of such sensitivity that it was not made available to the public until late in 1994. Its identification is DEFE 1/333 (Vol 2 is DEFE 1/334).

Chapter XXVII(b) deals in summary form with censorships in Colonies, Protectorates, Mandated Territories etc., and I have extracted below the paragraphs relating to our WASC countries. Exceptionally Gambia is not dealt with there, but earlier in the book (pages 143-7 in Chapter VII on Censorship Overseas), mainly because of a largely abortive proposal to establish a very large imperial censorship station at Bathurst, to deal with expected transit mail. This was due to a proposed U.S. air service from Brazil to Lisbon which it was suggested could be set up to substitute for the Italian L.A.T.I. service from Brazil to Europe via Spain, which the Brazilians would then be prepared to close. I have cut out a very long section of Paragraph 237 about the insuperable difficulties of establishing a staff of 150 at Bathurst!

247. Proposed Imperial Censorship Station at Bathurst

The local staff at Bathurst consisted of six part-time Censors. The Chief Censor was also Director of Education and the other members of the staff were likewise all doing a double job. In addition to terminal mail a certain amount of transit mail was also examined, namely that from ships plying between Portugal and Portuguese Guinea and the Atlantic Islands. In the case of any transit mail with which this staff could not cope, bags were made up to contain the correspondence which was considered of greatest interest, and these bags were sent to London for examination.

248. Suspension of L.A.T.I. service

Final agreement with Brazil was not reached until just before Pearl Harbour (7th December) and when the L.A.T.I. service was suspended on 16th December this was in fact not a fulfilment of the special agreement but a routine consequence of Brazil's adherence to the United Nations.

249. Plan for substitute U.S. Air Service

The possibility of a large unit at Bathurst had receded with the entry of the U.S. into the War.

The U.S. Government, however, decided to proceed with the plan for a substitute service. The enemy, after some weeks of incredulity, realised that the United States were voluntarily supplying him with a powerful weapon of war. He began to make full use of the new and improved channel, and interception became an urgent necessity.

Full co-operation of Brazil with the United States was of first-class importance and the U.S. officials absorbed in promoting that co-operation were impatient of any proposal which might in any degree check its progress. Moreover, the political and commercial value of a U.S. air service linking South America with Europe was very real to them. The dangers inherent in such a service, without proper control, were unreal, because unfamiliar. Such suggestions as that examination should be completed during a three hour's stop at Bathurst, or left entirely in Brazilian hands, had to be seriously argued.

250. Transit Mail Examination at Bathurst

Finally an advance party consisting of a staff of six was sent out from this country and arrived at Bathurst on the 12th February, 1942, for the specific purpose of dealing with transit mail carried on the Pan American Airways Clipper Service between Brazil and Lisbon. They were instructed to forward enemy mails to London and to examine others selectively as best they could. On arrival, the leader reported that transit mail was negligible as the Clippers had not begun to call at Bathurst; he was therefore authorised to assist with terminal mail, provided transit mail was not available and provided that the local Chief Censor retained responsibility for terminal mail. As a matter of fact the Imperial Unit undertook terminal censorship during the whole period of their stay. They also undertook the decoding of cables to and from the Governor. This little party had to be extraordinarily completely equipped owing to the impossibility of obtaining furniture or supplies of any kind in Gambia. Thus in addition to all office and household furniture and kitchen equipment, such items as soap, candles, rat-traps, gramophone needles and corn-plaster among countless other miscellanea had to be sent from the U.K.

The first Clipper mail was dated 8th March, 1942, and in all ten mails were examined before the Clipper ceased to call after 21st August, 1942. It may be pointed out that owing to changes in the schedule of the air services between Brazil and Lisbon and also in some measure owing to the dislike of Pan American Airways for the arrangement and their seizure of any pretext to omit the Bathurst call the unit was by no means so regularly or fully employed as had been hoped. Its work therefore amounted rather to a periodical check rather than to a regular examination of the mail, but it served its purpose.

There were also other difficulties. In a telegram of 2nd March from H.M. Embassy at Washington, it was stated that east bound planes would on the present trip call at Bathurst, nominally for fuel. There would be no scheduled stay, and the U.S. State Department were most anxious that it should be extremely short. They also attached the utmost importance to Censorship not interfering with any official Brazilian mail which might be carried and they desired that all mail other than that condemned should go forward by the same plane. The State Department accordingly desired that Bathurst would concentrate their attention on non-official mail emanating from Latin America. In a subsequent telegram of 20th March, from H.M. Ambassador at Washington, it was reported that Pan American instructions were that till further notice, all aircraft on the West Africa service whether inward or outward bound should normally call at Bathurst and make a stop of several hours. If a plane was delayed the Bathurst call might be omitted but this would be quite exceptional. The State Department were also quite agreeable to a small proportion of neutral mail being held over for the following plane if Censorship operations could not be completed in time. They stressed, however, that this must in fact be only a small proportion, otherwise there would be trouble with the Brazilians.

The staff at Bathurst remained at the token strength of six for some months. Even this small body, however, did work valuable in itself and still more valuable in the material it provided for continued pressure for more complete control. At the 68th Meeting, dated 13th May, 1942, of the Security Executive the Chairman made a report which led to subsequent actions as described in paragraph 206 above and resulted in the San Juan Agreement.

251. Effect of San Juan Agreement

Under the terms of this Agreement (1) Pan-American were not permitted to carry mail directly between South America and Europe or Africa or vice versa, and (2) the airmail in both directions carried between Brazil and Lisbon was diverted for examination in San Juan where the American staff was strengthened by the assistance of British staff. The Agreement resulted in the discontinuance of the calls of the L.A.T.I.-substitute service at Bathurst and the relegation of this post to its former minor status. From the last two mails dealt with, apart from many thousands of enemy letters sent to London, no less than 612 submissions were prepared on the 5,800 letters examined by the Bathurst Station itself. Although unable to spare time for heavy cypher work, the officer in charge was able to keep in touch with New York and Trinidad as with London and his work fitted smoothly into the growing Western Area network.

252. Bathurst Imperial Unit Disbanded

The position from the point of view of the Imperial Unit at Bathurst became increasingly unsatisfactory until it was decided in December, 1942, to disband the Unit and transfer the majority of the staff to Lagos, where additional Censorship staff was urgently required to deal with important transit mails. Four officers went to Lagos on the 19th and 20th December, on the closure of the Imperial Unit at Bathurst and the two other members of the staff returned to the United Kingdom.

The responsibility for the examination of terminal communications reverted to the Colonial Censorship and they were authorised in January 1943 to send any transit mail with which they could not cope to London, Lagos, Cape Town or elsewhere for examination. Fortunately this transit mail was almost non-existent.

p508 Para 1222 (2) Ascension Island

Postal and Telegraph censorship was introduced on 1st September, 1939. Cable and Wireless Limited had an important cable station on the Island and at the beginning of the war the Island was inhabited solely by their employees, numbering about 130, and a British military Unit consisting of two officers and about 26 other ranks. It was decided in March 1940 that the outgoing mail from Ascension was so small and unimportant that postal censorship could be discontinued. In the Spring of 1942, the question of re-imposing censorship arose, as the United States had decided to establish an air base on the Island, and sent a party of about 12,300 military engineers. Arrangements were made whereby the British and American Unit Censorships examined their respective Army mail, but postal censorship of civil mail was again undertaken by the Medical Officer of Cable and Wireless. There was no external telephone circuit in use.

p508 Para 1223 (3) BATHURST (GAMBIA) (See paragraphs 247-252)

p535 Paras 1357-9 (14) GOLD COAST

1357. Establishment and Organisation

From 3rd September, 1939 all incoming and outgoing overseas and overland mails were concentrated at Accra and Sekondi and these two stations continued until the end of the War. There was a modified form of censorship on internal mails to ascertain information about African morale.

1358. Postal censorship

On 13th September 1939 the Gold Coast War Committee directed that (a) no incoming mail was to be examined unless addressed to suspects. (b) All outgoing mail to neutral countries was to be subject to 100 per cent examination. (c) Outgoing mail to the British Empire was to be examined at the discretion of the Chief Censor. From 1st August 1944 pre-censorship was enforced for all travellers leaving the Colony. The Pre-censorship Offices were at Accra and Sekondi. No other control of travellers was undertaken at any time.

1359. Telecommunications Censorship

From 3rd September, 1939, all incoming and outgoing telegrams were examined, District Commissioners at various posts were instructed to examine incoming and outgoing overland telegrams. Telephone communication with neighbouring French territories was suspended in June 1940. On various subsequent occasions telegraph and telephone communications were progressively dismantled.

p547-8 Paras 1411-16 NIGERIA

1411. Establishment and Organisation

Postal and Telegraph Censorship was introduced in Nigeria and the Cameroons on 1st September, 1939. The Postmaster-General was appointed as Chief Censor. This appointment lasted too long as experience showed that the interests and objects of censorship were handicapped by the overriding interests and control of the Postal and Telegraph Department. For instance, no terminal and very little transit mail to or from neutral countries was examined until July, 1940. Furthermore, mail to enemy-occupied territories was returned to the sender marked "No service", but was not examined. In September, 1940, the Military took control of censorship, although the P.M.G. remained nominally as Chief Censor. In June, 1941, however, the Local Government decided to create an independent Censorship Department under the control of an Officer unconnected with Postal and Telegraph Department. (This Officer later became Superintending Censor for the West African area and Censorship Adviser to the Resident Minister in West Africa: see paragraph 1416 below). It is interesting to observe that the Military Intelligence Section ceased to function overnight and left the new Chief Censor with no Headquarters Staff whatever. A Censorship Advisory Committee had been appointed, but only met once in 1941. Special local difficulties arose from the absence of any European residential community: the unreliability of the African staff; and finally the enormous length of the land frontier coupled with the proximity of the neutral islands of Fernando Po and San Tome and Principe. Finally the evasion of censorship by high officials and their friends by the improper use of official bags was on a considerable scale until the end of 1941, when the matter was reported to the Colonial Office and the evasion consequently stopped.

1412. Transit Mails at Lagos

It was reported in October, 1942, that after the cutting of communications in the Pacific and with the great increase in Military activity in Egypt, the Middle East and U.S.S.R. new varieties of transit communications had passed through Lagos. A number of additional air routes had been opened and those previously operating had enlarged their services considerably. The result was a very large increase in the transit mails which had to be dealt with. The situation created by the exclusion of Africa from the San Juan Agreement (see paragraphs 206 and 251) imposed a very heavy burden on the Lagos unit, because the station found itself compelled to examine 100 per cent of mail from South America to French Africa, Belgian Congo, Angola and Fernando Po. Mail in the reverse direction was over-labelled to Trinidad because it was beyond the scope of Lagos to handle it. Neither Lagos nor Trinidad was in a position to intercept mails between South America and Liberia and Portuguese Guinea. The closest co-operation was established by Lagos Censorship with the American Army Headquarters at Accra to prevent the evasion of San Juan by Pan American services to and from Lisbon. Moreover the U.S. army and security personnel in Liberia seized suspect mails and forwarded them either to Lagos or direct to San Juan through Military channels. On the closure of the Bathurst Imperial Censorship station (see paragraph 252) four members of the staff were transferred to strengthen the staff at Lagos. On their arrival in December, 1942, immediate steps were taken to examine fully at Lagos various categories of transit mails which previously it had been impossible to deal with locally. These included communications to and from the Belgian Congo and Free French territories received from and addressed to South America, Vichy Africa and Liberia. These reinforcements also enable Lagos to examine the whole of the Belgian and Fighting French mails which had previously been consigned by Leopoldville, Stanleyville, Brazzaville and Duala to Cotonu via Accra, and which the Gold Coast Censorship had had to forward unexamined owing to lack of qualified staff.

1413. Travellers Censorship

In September, 1944, a Travellers Censorship Section was established in Nigeria.

1414. Telecommunications Censorship

Owing to serious indiscretion, particularly in telegrams, it was found necessary to subject to Censorship all official plain language and Government telegraph code telegrams, except those transmitted on internal land lines. In 1941, telephone monitoring of conversations through the Lagos Exchange was established secretly by the Military in co-operation with Civil Censorship. Indiscretion was widespread and there were several prosecutions. Early in 1942 an Order was issued by the Government to discontinue censorship on all official telephone lines and the monitoring service was therefore abandoned.

1415. Staff

It was not possible, with very few exceptions, to entrust any confidential information to local Africans. Consequently the whole of Censorship sorting and scrutiny, as well as examination, had to be undertaken by the European staff. The recognised establishment of the Department was about 40, but no fewer than 195 Europeans were employed on Censorship duties at different times during the war. Fourteen men were recruited from England through the Crown Agents, but most of these did not give very satisfactory service.

1416. General Note on West Africa

From June, 1941, onwards there was constant and useful co-operation and exchange of Censorship information between the four West African British Colonies, viz. Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia (Bathurst). In August, 1942, the Chief Censor of Nigeria was appointed as Imperial Censorship Representative for West Africa. This appointment was due to the great importance of West Africa as a transit area for war supplies and communications to the Middle East and Far East in 1942, partly caused by the cutting of Pacific communications. The appointment of the Imperial Censorship Representative was confirmed on the 20th August, 1942. His duties consisted of the coordination and supervision of British Censorship control in West Africa. He also inspected the Censorship stations in the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Bathurst (Gambia). Lastly he acted as censorship Adviser to the Resident Minister in West Africa.

p551 Para 1429 (26) ST. HELENA

Censorship was imposed from the beginning of the war. The organisation consisted of two officers, namely the Government Secretary, who acted as Postal and Press Censor, and the Manager of Cable and Wireless Ltd., who acted as telegraph Censor. There was no external telephone circuit in use. Instructions for Censorship in Ascension Island were routed via St. Helena for convenience.

P551-2 Paras 1431-5 (28) SIERRA LEONE

1431. It was unnecessary to set up any Station outside Freetown as all outward ocean mail was despatched from that port, and there were no facilities for the transmission of cable or wireless messages elsewhere. During the earlier years of the war, until the Mediterranean was re-opened Freetown was very important as a Convoy assembly port. By the end of 1942 however its importance had declined.

1432. Postal Censorship

The mails handled at Freetown were mainly terminal to and from Sierra Leone. The following transit mails were also dealt with:-

- (a) United States to Liberia or vice versa. These mails were carried in U.S. ships which called voluntarily at Freetown. There were no calls after June, 1942.
- (b) Air mails to and from Liberia carried by the French Aeromaritime Service, on the route between Dakar and Lagos.
- (c) Mails carried on Portuguese ships. These ships sailing between Portugal and her African Colonies began to call voluntarily at Freetown towards the end of 1940 and the scrutiny of the mails carried by them added considerably to the volume of censorship work. A separate Portuguese Section was established to deal with these mails. In 1942 the traffic was restricted to northbound ships and examination was confined to:-
 - (i) postal mails from San Tome and Principe
 - (ii) clandestine mail resulting from search on board carried out by Port Security authorities. This consisted of correspondence which had escaped detection at Capetown, and that originating from the West African coast i.e. Angola, San Tome and Principe. Northbound Portuguese ships ceased calling regularly at Freetown after May, 1943.
- (d) Finally Freetown examined occasional transit mails to and from the Belgian Congo and French Equatorial Africa.

1433. Travellers Censorship

All pre-censorship was carried out at the Chief Censor's office. The majority of travellers submitting their documents for pre-censorship were, however, Government Officials, well known British members of the local commercial community, or missionaries. Hence examination was not difficult.

1434. Telecommunications

All telegrams outward, inward and transit, were scrutinised by the cable censors. The telephone system in Sierra Leone was restricted to Freetown and no censorship was imposed.

1435. Staff

The staff at its peak consisted of 12 persons (three part time) - exclusive of five clerks and messengers. There were separate postal censorship and telegraph personnel. The staff was originally recruited from local officials and local European ladies. To relieve the overburdened officials and cope with the increase of work five men were sent out from the United Kingdom in 1941 and 1942.



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ITALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN WEST AFRICA IN WWII AND POSTAL CENSORSHIP

R.G. Maddocks

Following my articles in Cameo (July 1994 and January 1995) on the presence of Italian Prisoners of War and the South African Air Force in British West Africa during WWII I have since received from South Africa further and more substantial information which flashes out the meagre details gleaned from other sources.

This information as given hereunder is provided by the kind courtesy of the Chief of the National Defence Force, Pretoria to whom I am indebted for taking considerable time and effort in responding to my enquiry in such detail.

Thus is explained the presence of Italian POWs in West Africa. It might seem however, to override previously quoted information which I took from the book "Eagles Victorious" by Martin and Orphen and the State Archives, Pretoria. The former mentions the POWs being shipped from Cape Town (vessel unnamed - Queen Mary?) and the latter also from Cape Town in the SS "Britannia", but both also in April 1943. Probably there was more than one sailing for the prisoners we now known to have been employed in the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone as well as Nigeria to which colony, however, the largest number were sent. So far there have been no indications of the presence of any Italian POWs in the Gambia.

Apart from Lagos, Nigeria and Murray Town, Sierra Leone, the locations of other POW camps have yet to be identified (there were seemingly at least 6 camps in all - Mr A. G. Brown in Cameo July 1992 illustrated covers from Camps No 1 and 6)

1. The South African High Commissioner, London requested in a secret telegram PM.9/55/8A dated 5 Jan 1943 that the UK Government required 500 prisoners for labour in West Africa. These men had to be medically fit and the following categories had to be reserved for this purpose :-

- a. 1 x Medical Officer
- b. 5 x medical orderlies
- c. 25 x non-commissioned officers (preferably skilled tradesman as shown below)
- d. Other ranks had to be proportioned in the following classifications
 - i. 18 x Blacksmiths
 - ii. 36 x carpenters
 - iii. 18 x electricians
 - iv. 94 x fitters N.T.
 - v. 67 x fitters general
 - vi. 29 x instrument mechanics
 - vii. 36 x tinsmiths
 - viii. 20 x welders
 - ix. 5 x watchmakers
 - x. 5 x typewriter mechanics
 - xi. 10 x painters
 - xii. 37 x textile refitters
 - xiii. 37 x tailors
 - xiv. 57 x boot repairers
- e. Total : 500

2. If the Union Government was unable to fill the above trades, unskilled but literate personnel up to but not exceeding a 100 would be acceptable for employment at base ordnance depots to complete the above total.

3. The telegram was also referred to the Adjutant General (AG) who replied saying that much was dependant on the POW's supplying the necessary information, since the Union was unable to carry out trade tests to determine specialisation and that the prisoners own statements were sometimes unreliable.

4. The Chief of the General Staff (CGS) replied that he fully realised the AG's difficulties but emphasised that Italians were to replace skilled or literate British personnel and any not falling in the above categories would be useless mouths to feed.

The AG responded with the following figures, viz:-

- a. 1 x Medical Officer
- b. 5 x medical orderlies
- c. 25 x NCO's
- d. 18 x Blacksmiths
- e. 36 x carpenters
- f. 10 x electricians (instead of 18 asked for)
- g. 94 x mechanics
- h. 50 x Turners (instead of 67 asked for)
- i. 20 x Tinsmiths (instead of 36 asked for)
- j. 37 x Tailors
- k. 10 x welders (instead of 20 asked for)
- l. 5 x Watchmakers
- m. 10 x Painters
- n. 57 x Bootmakers

5. No Instrument makers, Typewriter mechanics or Textile Refitters could be found and only a total of 378 out of the 500 requested were available. The difference was made up of 122 literate labourers which included 20 cooks.

6. In a signal to the CGS dated 26 March 1943, West Africa (MILWESTAF) intimated that apparently elements of the Blackshirts had given trouble in East Africa and requested that no Blackshirts be included in the party. To which the Deputy AG(POW) replied, that if MILWESTAF wanted the above categories, he must accept certain Blackshirts and that these men had not given any trouble in South Africa. (Author's note: Info not quite correct). MILWESTAF did not press for their exclusion.

4. MILWESTAF in a letter dated 8 April 43 to CGS raised certain points relating to the censorship of POW mail. viz:

* On arrival, P/W will be given a letter card to notify their relatives of the change of address. As it may well take some months before mail will arrive addressed correctly, it would be much appreciated if incoming mail which arrives at your headquarters for these P/Ws is censored, owing to a shortage of staff here at present, and then forwarded addressed to Chief Censor, GHQ WEST AFRICA FORCE.

Censorship of parcels for these P/W can be undertaken here and, unless you wish to censor the parcels, it is suggested that they are forwarded uncensored to this Headquarters.

Necessary arrangements are being made with GHQ MIDDLE EAST for routing and censoring mail which arrives in the MIDDLE EAST addressed correctly to P/W in this Command.

It would be appreciated if any information of interest from a security point of view regarding these P/W would be forwarded to this Headquarters.

It is also requested that O.C. Escort for these P/Ws may be given sufficient letter cards for use by P/Ws during their journey. O.C. Escort should be made responsible to see that these are collected, bagged and forwarded to the Chief Censor, GHQ WEST AFRICA FORCE on arrival at LAGOS.*

8. The ship "Elizabethville" completed repairs in Port Elizabeth on 12 April 1943 (11 April 1943 ?) and proceeded to Durban where she embarked with 500 Italian POWs including escort and set sail for Lagos on 27 April 1943, disembarking her POW passengers on 13 May 1943 where she was to be employed as a ferry service between Lagos and Matadi.

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