

# CAMEO



The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle



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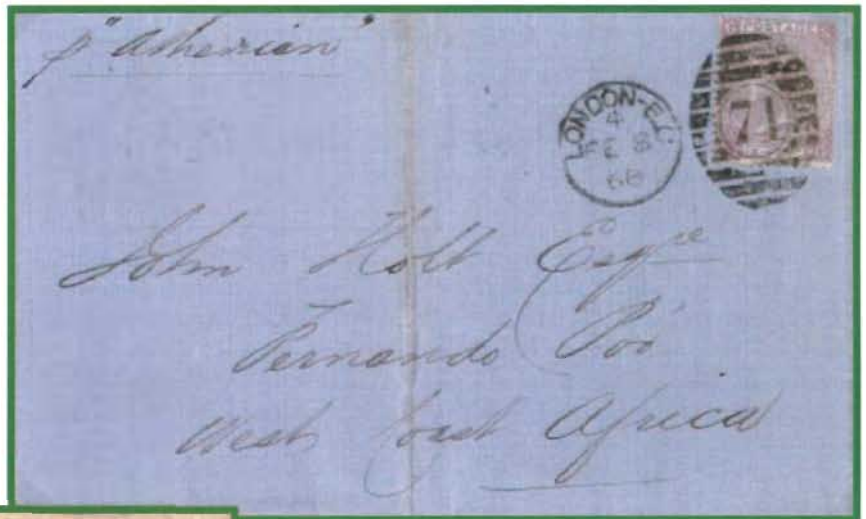
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West Africa Study Circle  
President : Barry Burns

**Joint CAMEO Editors**

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

Robert May  
Longdown Farm Cottage, Cadsden  
PRINCES RISBOROUGH  
HP27 0NB, UK  
☎ 01844 344336  
robmay@freenet.co.uk

**Hon. Secretary**

John Powell, "Middle Path"  
23 Brook Street, Edlesborough  
DUNSTABLE LU6 2JG  
☎ 01525 220196

**Hon. Treasurer**

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

**Hon. Membership Secretary**

Peter Duggan, 75 Alexandra Rd,  
READING RG1 5PS  
☎ 0118 966 3220

**Hon. Auctioneer**

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

**Hon. Advertising Manager**

Peter Rolfe, "Merok",  
28 Ashford Road, BEARSTED  
Kent, ME14 4LP  
☎ 01622 737476

**Hon. Librarian**

Oliver Andrew, 52 Valley Drive  
BRIGHTON, W. Sussex  
BN1 5FA  
☎ 01273 564908

**North American Representative**

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

**Webmaster**

Ray Harris  
harris6@which.net

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

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## Front Cover

Gold Coast: Christiansborg Castle hand-painted essay for  
a 5/- stamp in large format,  
recently discovered by Spink. Shown here at 250%  
See article on page 107 of this *Cameo*

## Editorial

Welcome to another 72 page issue, but despite the extra 12 pages I am continuing to have to hold back a large number of articles from a wide range of contributors. Again I can only apologise and pray for patience from all those members. Our printers made a mistake with the numbers printed in January and so I am holding plenty of copies which we could use to promote WASC to new members and advertisers. If you have anyone in mind, let me know by e-mail.

Richard Beith has reported that his article published in the January 2009 *Cameo* has won gold in the literature class at the Scottish Philatelic Congress. Congratulations! The 2008 year of three issues of *Cameo* has been entered in the class for philatelic journals at the APS Stampshow and also at Autumn Stampex, but Richard's will be a hard act to follow

My editorial colleague, Barry Burns, has organised this year's biennial weekend conference details of which will be enclosed with this issue of the Journal. If you have not booked I recommend it. WASC is the friendliest and most accessible philatelic conference I know, and the Saturday evening meal is always a highlight. Day visitors are welcome too, if your interests are a bit narrower, but wider collaboration at past conferences has led to some notable research advances. I recall in particular both the venture to assemble WW2 air mail letter cards printed in West Africa, and the Cameroun members' collation of their material relating to the 1961 sterling surcharges. I hope to see some new faces this year, along with the usual suspects!

Rob May

**The next issue will be edited by Barry, datelined Oct 2009,  
and the copy deadline is 1 September 2009**



## Editorial Policy

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

Rob May / Barry Burns

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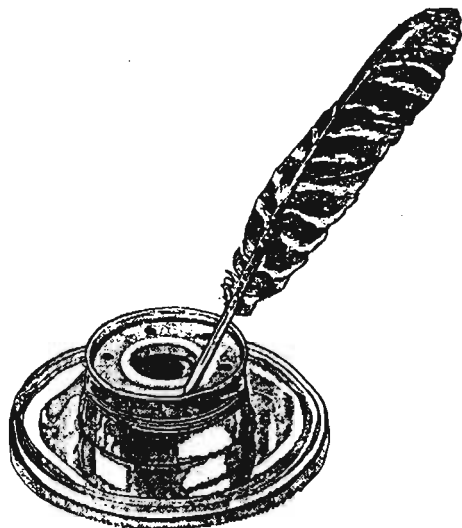
Printed in England on archival quality paper to ISO 9706 by J.S. Dutton, Stockport

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

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	Full page £90	Half page £50

## Letters to the Editor



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

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

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

*Rob May & Barry Burns*

### "Paid at Tenerife"

*The following E-mail has been forwarded to the editors by John Sacher following a request made to him in Spanish in January. Any replies from members should be sent to the e-mail address at the end of this note, copy to John Sacher, please*

Dear Mr Sacher,

I am looking for letters with the PAID AT TENERIFE hand-stamp, posted from or in transit through the Canary Islands, as we would like to include them in the Second Volume of the "Canarian Mail History" book. We would need images to be in JPEG format (front and reverse), scanned at 300 dpi, of all the copies of this mark that you have available.

We would really appreciate your collaboration.

Agustin Alberto de Leon  
Presidente del Grupo Filatelico y Numismatico de  
Tenerife  
agustin@alberto-conde.com

### William Thomas of Coity & St Helena

Dear Rob

In the article under this title in Cameo no 76 January 2009 we lost part of the captions to the illustrations, where the rates were analysed. The complete captions should have been:

Figure 6

8d ship letter rate plus  
8d mileage to Bridgend

Figure 7

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus  
1/10d double mileage to Bridgend

Figure 8

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus  
2/- double mileage to Bristol

Figure 9

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus  
1/6d double mileage to Bristol

Figure 10

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus  
1/6d double mileage to Bristol

Barry Burns

Stokesley, Middlesbrough

*My apologies to Barry and Neil Walklate. Barry spotted the problem; my software had converted the 10 point font copy into 11 point.*

### Distinctive Freetown Postmark

Dear Rob,

In my January 2008 "Cameo" article (Vol.10, No.4, p.219), I described a distinctive Freetown postmark with tall lettering, used in the 1930s. I can now report some date extensions. Back in 1996, Frank Walton ("Cameo", Vol.5, No.3, p.121) illustrated a Registered Letter receipt bearing a strike of this postmark dated March 1937, while I have acquired further examples on stamps bearing dates up to March 1938. Perhaps more significantly, a stamp purchased in the recent WASC auction carries the same postmark, without code C, dated April 1958. This allows me to confirm that the postmark is actually Proud's D63.

To summarise the current situation, this postmark was used between June 1933 and March 1938 with code C, then again between April 1958 and February 1961 without code C. Oddly enough, the only date cited by Proud is the non-existent 29 Feb 1961!

Philip Quirk  
Harborne, Birmingham



## Why no flying boats to Freetown?

Dear Mr Beith,

I have just finished your fascinating article in *Cameo*. It brought back memories of my first flight, in 1947, aboard a BOAC flying boat from Baltimore to Bermuda. I have no idea whether it was a Boeing A314, but I suspect it was. In any event, when I did some internet sleuthing I stumbled across an article published in 1947 by Captain David Brice, who flew the A314, explaining why expansion of commercial use of flying boats would be problematic due to ocean swells. In that context, he wrote the following which may be of some interest: ". . . the 87,000 lb Boeing A314 had a swell limitation of about 3½ to 4 ft, and Freetown (which was adequate for Catalinas and Sunderlands) was banned to Boeings because the alighting area was in a river, which was open to the sea and consequently had frequent swells."

I had been struck, reading your article, by the absence of any mention of Freetown. Now I know why. Having once traversed the Sierra Leone River mouth in a hovercraft, I can attest to the swells that concerned Captain Brice and other flying boat pilots.

Kevin Lowther  
Springfield, Virginia



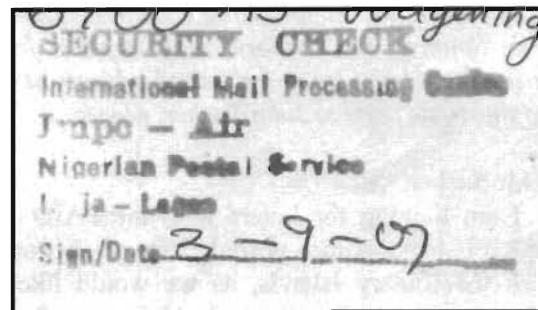
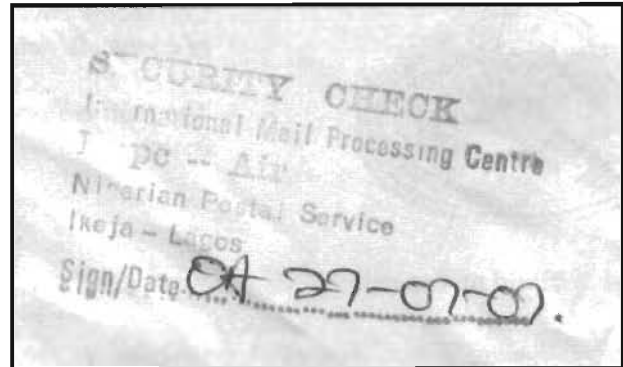
## Nigeria Stamp Duty and Security Checks

Dear Rob

I have a follow up on the article *Stamp Duty Act, Nigeria* in Volume 10(3), Number 72, page 152. The statement that the instructional mark as described in the article was applied as an indication of postage due on underpaid letters no longer holds true. I possess a correctly N150 franked cover to the Netherlands from mid-2007 still bearing this hand-stamp. Most likely it is an official publicity postmark used to inform the public of the application of stamp duty adhesives on all legal documents. But why would you apply this to mail to a foreign country? Maybe Moses Zacchaeus can confirm application on domestic covers at the time as well.

Around the same time foreign mail was for some reason or another opened for inspection at the International Mail Processing Centre at Ikeja-Lagos. I possess five such covers addressed to the Netherlands with a security check instructional mark used between 27 July 2007 and 03 September 2007 and resealed at the side of the cover by either transparent (2) or brown (3)

cellotape. I have not seen this procedure and instructional mark applied at other times. Maybe others can confirm this and the reason for inspection. What comes to my mind is that West Africa started to be flooded by cocaine originating from Latin America at the time and that this could be a check on whether covers were used to ship such substance to Europe in small quantities per cover. However, sniffer dogs would do a better job!



Marc Parren  
Cameroun & Ghana



## 1925 Egypt-Kano Flight Labels

Dear Rob,

With reference to Jeremy Martin's article in *Cameo* no 76 January 2009, page 45, I too acquired strips of the 1925 RAF Flight labels and, having the advantage of housing the British Air Mail Society's library, looked them up in Gunter Mair's *Catalogue of Air Mail labels*, published in 1991 by The Postal Label Study Group of Los Angeles. He gives the Nigeria-Egypt label, but not the Egypt-Nigeria.

Barbara Priddy  
Wimbledon

Access to the internet? Then please try visiting the  
West Africa Study Circle Web Site at : <http://www.wasc.org.uk>  
Webmaster is Ray Harris; contact [harris6@which.net](mailto:harris6@which.net)

CURRENT CONTENT; our website is now host to a web publishing experiment—  
to make a CAA report available on line in pdf format to members and non-members of WASC.

 **Possible WW2 Sierra Leone surface mail connection to Fishermans Lake, Liberia**

Dear Rob

John Wilson's excellent research has made it a very exciting time to be collecting war time airmail. It's such a bore having to work for a living

John's latest work has highlighted the importance of Fisherman's Lake in the development of the Trans Atlantic service but I would like to approach the issue of how air mail got there from a slightly different angle. Fisherman's Lake is in Liberia - just! It is no more than 20 miles over the border from Sierra Leone. The town on the lake is Robertsport and I have several covers from Robertsport in the 1930's and 1940's. All of them have postmarks showing transit via Sierra Leone including a couple of wartime surface covers that have Sierra Leone censors on them. My suggestion therefore is that air mail to be sent via Fisherman's Lake could be sent to Freetown and then sent on the relatively short, established surface route to the Lake. Of course the great problem with this is that there is no official confirmation. Records for Sierra Leone for this period are frustratingly elusive (We still have no official confirmation of the 5/- 1d transatlantic rate. We only know of it from recorded covers) and the operation of Fisherman's Lake seems fairly hush-hush. Indeed I think that one of the most fascinating aspects of John's recent research is the degree of disinformation that surrounded the Trans-Atlantic service.

Peter Richards  
Askerswell, Dorset

*Ed—see also page 105 of this Cameo*

 **Mails between Canada and West Africa before 1898**

*This e-mail was sent to Frank Walton as a result of the writer's search of the Cameo index on the WASC website*

Dear Frank,

I collect mail from, to and via Canada during 1873—1898. I would be interested to learn of any covers pre 1899 (pre-Imperial Penny Post) between Canada (or any of British North Africa) and West Africa.

I have a ten year old list of nine covers 1869-70, 1890s from BWA to Canada, and since then have seen probably as many more and have taken notes on several. These include covers from Niger Coast, Gabon and St Helena to Canada, and also one from Japan to Sierra Leone via Canada in 1890. If that is of interest to you or any of your members I can send details, although Canada might not be a rare enough destination to excite people.

Kind regards.

Brian Murphy  
murphybrian@rogers.com

 **Handstamp on Oil Rivers Consular Stamp**

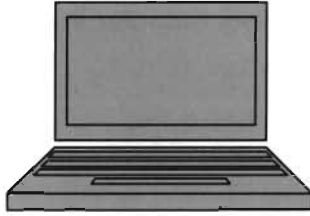
Dear Rob,

I am having difficulty deciphering the hand-stamp on the illustrated Consular Service stamps submitted by a GB Overprint Society member for our journal, *The Overprinter*. The hand-stamp says BRITISH VICE-CONSULATE at the top and at the bottom it starts OIL RIVERS but then the following word is obscure. There were six vice-consulates in Oil Rivers : Benin, Bonny, Brass, Forcados and Opobo, and the main consulate at Old Calabar. Later Benin moved to Sapele and Forcados moved to Warri, but the obscure word does not look like any of these names. Any clues? Who would know?

John Gledhill  
Warwick

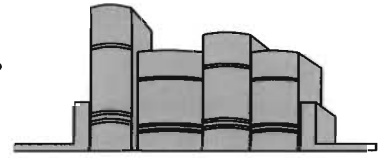


*Ed—my own first response is that the word around the bottom frame looks like DISTRICT to me, followed by a code letter. Is there anyone who has a clearer mark or a reference source who can clarify this? I have checked Ince & Sacher and found no reference to these Consular hand-stamps.*




## Sources

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



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

 *The Oil Rivers and Niger Coast Surcharged Provisionals and Bisected Stamps*, by John Sacher CBE FRPSL, published by RPSL, March 2009 as a supplement to the *London Philatelist*, ISSN 0024-6131, 80pp, A4 size, card covered, full colour. Distributed free to all RPSL members by courtesy of the author. Price £19.95 plus P&P for non-members.  
Reviewed by Rob May.

John Sacher has published the first substantial study of these controversial provisional stamp issues since the analyses carried out by Dick Agabeg in 1956 and Herbert G. Porter in 1958. The subsequent 50 years has seen technological developments that have assisted greatly, enabling the author to communicate with collectors around the world, receive high quality scans of stamps from various collections, then analyse scanned images to identify each individual stamp. The collation of records from collectors, the auction catalogue library at the Royal, from records of the expertising committees of the RPSL and BPA, by access to the Royal Collection and by access to a major collection that has not been seen in public for many years allowed him to compile a record of 4700 stamps in all, excluding those certified as forgeries.

For some values and colours of overprint, there are more copies now recorded by the author than were said to have been printed at the time. The author cautiously criticizes some “good” certificates, but also concludes that some contemporary letters which previous analysts relied upon were not entirely accurate.

It is clear from contemporary letters that those involved in the production of these provisionals were aware of their philatelic potential. The dates on used stamps show that canceling to order or canceling by favour did take place, whilst research into the known covers franked with these provisionals show that many of them are addressed to philatelists, dealers or sent using excess postage and stamp combinations to create collectable material. On the other hand, John Sacher has published good contemporary evidence of the stamp shortages that created the postal need for these provisional issues at Old Calabar and Opobo, for what he terms the “bulk” issues—the ones that can be found in significant numbers in used condition.

The status of the rare colours, inverted or misplaced surcharges, and other rarities is more doubtful in that they appear to come from so-called trial sheets which were broken up to be sold mint to philatelists, and which were not necessarily produced prior to the counter sheets.

The postal requirement for the high value surcharges is very doubtful. It has been suggested that the postmasters needed to create these to balance their books when 2d and 2½d stamps were devalued to halfpenny by the surcharges, but the total face value of the known high values exceeds the total demonetization of the low value surcharges.

This is a fascinating analysis. It certainly is not the last word but it is a giant step forward. It also vividly shows the philatelic potential of collecting scans and information instead of collecting the stamps themselves.

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

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



*Report on the Progress of Civil Aviation, 1939-1945*, transcribed by John Wilson, no ISBN. Published in pdf format on the WASC website, [www.wasc.org.uk](http://www.wasc.org.uk). Accessible free of charge to read and download by members and non-members  
Reviewed by Rob May

In 1980 John Wilson found this file in the CAA Library and over the years since he has transcribed the BOAC section from it. Recently, because of the need for more information on the operations of Pan American Airways, John has completed the transcription (with permission of the CAA) of the entire report with worldwide coverage, not just West Africa. It is transcribed exactly and completely, without any commentary or analysis. The co-operation between the efforts of John Wilson and the Study Circle has made this 75000 word primary source document readily available to students of WW2 airmails and aviation anywhere in the world.



## Sierra Leone 1829 and 1830 Missionary Letters

**Jeremy Martin FRPSL**

Two letters from J. Murrell, an Anglican missionary in Sierra Leone, recently came into my possession. The first was dated 9 December 1829 and was sent to "*My dear Harriett*", his sister living in Alton, Hampshire. The letter mentions that he was met on board at Sierra Leone and that he is residing at Fourah Bay which is considered the most healthy part of the Colony. He continues

*"...my present impression is that if the land was thoroughly cleared, and cultivated, it would prove as healthy as any other part of the world"*

The entire received a red PORTSMOUTH / SHIP LETTER hand-stamp and was rated 1/3d. This was made up with 8d Ship Letter rate for a single sheet, plus 7d for 30-50 miles to Alton; Act of 1812.

The second letter was written on 19 January 1830 and addressed to his mother, also at Alton. He mentions that he had sent previous letters to her and also to Harriett, Ann and Thomas by a vessel named the *Saffo* which left the Colony on 28 December. The above letter to Harriett was almost certainly carried by the *Saffo*. Mr Murrell acknowledges "*receipt of letters from you and Harriett and Ann. They came by the St. Andrew which arrived here on the 2nd January. Three friends, Messrs Raban, Metsgar and Morgan, a colonial chaplain, came by the same vessel. As soon as possible after their arrival a meeting was held to appoint the stations of those who came by the Julius and the St. Andrew, when my station was appointed to Kissy which is one of the largest and most civilized (sic) of the African villages. There is a very good church in this village. It will contain, I suppose, about 800 persons and on Sundays it is nearly full. The population of Kissy is about 2000.*"

He mentions that he has been in Sierra Leone for six weeks, had suffered from diarrhoea and believed it was a kind of fever. Some "*quenin (sic) proved effective*"

This entire received a black SHIP LETTER / PORTSMOUTH and rated 1/7d. Again this would be 8d for a Ship Letter, single sheet, plus 11d for 170-230 miles between Plymouth and Alton; Act of 1812.



## Sierra Leone Wax Postal Seals

**Jeremy Martin FRPSL**

The Circle has not previously attempted listing these red wax seals which are found on the back of registered O.H.M.S. mail. I have two examples, but it is not possible to illustrate them

1. 16 Apr 1920 CORRESPONDENCE BRANCH / crown / G.P.O. / SIERRA LEONE
2. 20 May 1924 POSTAL DEPARTMENT / ACCOUNTANT / SIERRA LEONE

Additional information will be welcome

# The Boeing A314 aircraft of BOAC

John Wilson

Although many airmail collectors are aware that BOAC operated three Boeing A314 flying boats during WW2, little or no research seems to have been published in the aerophilatelic press as to how the aircraft were acquired, what routes were flown, and what cargo was carried. Various stories have been put about regarding a Pan American Airways prohibition on the BOAC aircraft carrying commercial mail and these stories have become accepted as fact. Locating and studying an official file held in the National Archive (Ref.1) has allowed an analysis to be made of the circumstances under which the aircraft were obtained, how the routes were determined and an accurate record constructed of the major events relating to these aircraft.

Note: There has been a continuing debate about whether or not the later Boeing aircraft were designated 314A or A314. Throughout the British file being analysed the term 314A was used, although there is incontrovertible evidence in the form of a Boeing name plate from NC 18612 that the designation was A314. Please read the two designations as being the same.

## The purchase contract.

The first mention of the contract is in the opening document of the file dated 26 August 1940, and refers to the purchase of two (not three) Boeing 314A aircraft as the result of an agreement between the Under Secretary of State for Air and the President of Pan American Airways. Mention is made of the possibility of a third aircraft after discussion between the two named parties. This did not take long, because the contract document, a transcript of which is given as Appendix 1, is dated 30 August 1940 and is drawn up between Pan American Airways and the British Government. The Boeing Aircraft Company was not party to this contract so it seems a reasonable assumption that if Pan American Airways had wished to impose restrictions on carriage of any type of cargo, including mail, then such restrictions would be incorporated in the contract. Careful reading of the document reveals no such restrictions, and there are no references to restrictions in any of the other 300+ documents in the file under analysis. Indeed, in a minute dated 10 January 1941 from D.G.C.A.

(Director General Civil Aviation) to P.U.S. (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Air) we find the following:

*"1. I have examined the contract relating to the sale of these boats by Pan American Airways to H.M. Government. There is no clause which in any way restricts the use to which they may be put by the purchasers."*

To be completely accurate, the original query to which this minute was a reply related to a mad proposal to arm the Boeing aircraft and use them on anti-submarine duties, but the paragraph relating to "*no clause which in any way restricts...*" is also confirmation that Pan American had not made any restrictions in the contract.

## Other contract matters.

Clause 9 of the contract related to the supply of spare parts for the three aircraft but delays in delivery of these, in the end amounting to a substantial \$700,000, caused enormous problems and changed the in-service operation and routing of the Boeings.

Clause 8 defines a "claw-back" arrangement whereby Pan American could take back any or all of the BOAC aircraft in the event of loss of Pan American Boeings, even those earlier aircraft which were already in service with Pan American Airways. In the event, this clause was never required to be invoked, no doubt much to the relief of the British Government.

## Routes and reasons.

The American and British governments clearly had different ideas about what exactly the three Boeings were to be used for. In a message from D.G.C.A. to P.U.S. (see above for full titles) dated 18 November 1940, relating to the spare parts, we find:

*"Pannair (sic) have assumed that there will be two terminals and one intermediate station. This probably indicates that the Boeings will be used for transatlantic service with intermediate stations in Bermuda or Newfoundland. As the intention is to use the Boeings for West African service, allocation of spares to stations will be on different*

*lines and a saving might be possible."*

In a secret memorandum from P.U.S. to D.G.C.A. dated 4 December 1940 is the following, which shows the British intentions:

*".... We propose to base these boats on Bathurst ....."*

However, the matter still dragged on and even in January 1941 although the question of arming the Boeings had been dropped, the War Cabinet had not decided whether the aircraft would be used for transatlantic or West African service, even though a detailed provisional plan had been drawn up for the delivery acceptance of the aircraft on 15 February, 15 March, and 15 May, 1941 and a date of 1 June for commencement of a regular Foynes – Bathurst service carried out using all three aircraft.

Another dispute now appeared with Lord Beaverbrook of the M.A.P. (Ministry of Aircraft Production) who sent a telegram on 26 February 1941 to the British Air Commission in Washington saying that the M.A.P. would retain ownership of the Boeings and not hand them over to BOAC. From subsequent messages between Beaverbrook and Sir Archibald Sinclair, the Secretary of State for Air, it is clear that Sinclair was determined to get the aircraft to BOAC and in service on what now became known as the "Takoradi route". Sinclair to Beaverbrook 1 March 1941 states:

*"..... You and I do not agree about the Clippers and the Prime Minister asked for my comments on your minute to him ..... I will not ask you to withdraw your telegram since we both hope very shortly to receive the Prime Minister's decision. But we need these Clippers very badly for the Takoradi route. You opposed their purchase originally and I beg you now not to interfere with the important use for which they are destined."*

On the same day, Sinclair wrote to Churchill emphasising the need for the Boeings to be used on the Takoradi route.

*"5. These flying boats are urgently needed by BOAC for the England – Lisbon – Takoradi link which, for neutrality reasons, must be civil as far as Lisbon though it serves a vital military purpose. It is the only swift line of communication with the Middle East, and owing to the wreck of "Clyde", we can count only on "Clare" to keep it open ...."*

Churchill responded with a question

*" .... let me know first what actually are the 3 Boeing Clippers to do on the Takoradi route. Are they to carry pilots needed to fight in the Middle*

*East, or high personnel on special missions?"*

Sinclair's response includes the first description of the intended use of the Boeings on the West Africa service and the carriage of mail, albeit non commercial:

*"... at present, there are only two flying boats "Clare" and "Guba" which can do UK – West Africa. They carry a moderate load (say 5 passengers and 4cwt of freight each), and they take about 10 days to do the round trip of 10,000 miles .....* A rough analysis of passengers and freight carried in recent months is as follows:-

*Service passengers include General Hutton, Air Vice Marshal Tedder, General Auchinleck, General Liddell and General Holden.*

*Allied representatives include M. Vleeschauer (Belgian Government), General de Gaulle, General Catroux, General Gentilhomme and General Spears.*

*British civilians include the Prime Minister of Australia and party, and Sir Archibald Carter.*

*Service stores include wing tips, piston rings, bolts, Tomahawk and general spares, also operational maps, yellow fever serum and drugs.*

*Mails include urgent official correspondence and special troop mails, e.g. airgraph service and Christmas mail."*

At a meeting of the War Cabinet on 17 March 1941, Churchill confirmed that the three Boeing aircraft would be allocated to the Takoradi route, and the Postmaster General who was at the meeting "Said that the point in which he was mainly interested was the Takoradi service. It was impossible to provide an adequate mail service to our troops in the Middle East unless he was given a regular allotment of 340 kilos per flight."

It would seem therefore that matters had been settled, but the establishment of the regular UK – West Africa run depended on suitable maintenance facilities being available at both Bathurst and in the UK. At a meeting with the Under Secretary of State for Air on the same day as the War Cabinet, proposals were made to construct a slipway at Bathurst so that work could be carried out with the flying boats out of the water. It was estimated that the Bathurst slipway would take 9 to 12 months to complete and the U.S. of S. said that in order to avoid having to send the aircraft back to Baltimore for servicing, a suitable slipway should be found in the UK. The Coastal Command base at Pembroke Dock was suggested, but subsequently found to be unsuitable both for constructional reasons and the possibility of aircraft damage due to enemy air

action. This is the first mention of the need to service at Baltimore, and was clearly not a desirable state of affairs as far as the British were concerned.

### **The bombshell.**

In a flurry of top secret messages between Washington and England it becomes apparent that Beaverbrook was still stirring up trouble.

19 April 1941, Sinclair to Under Secretary:

*"...I am a little concerned to hear that Mr. Harriman (Averell Harriman) told you that the President was thinking of suggesting that the Clippers should be used on the trans-Atlantic route. I do not, for a moment, suppose that it would ever have occurred to the President to make such a suggestion on his own account. I am afraid that it seems to me more than probable that he has expressed at least tentative approval of a suggestion which has been conveyed to him by Mr. Harriman and which may have originated from somebody here who wants to upset the arrangement which the War Cabinet has approved for the employment of the Clippers on the Takoradi route."*

That this "somebody" was Beaverbrook is confirmed in a secret cipher message from Air Attache, Washington, copied to P.U.S. on 24 April *"... I am assuming as result of recent phone conversation between Beaverbrook and Hopkins that the 3 Boeing 314A's (original apostrophe) are now to be employed on the North Atlantic air route. Can you confirm this?"*

On the same day, 24 April, Sinclair wrote to the American Ambassador in London to re-state the case for the Takoradi route, and to Beaverbrook, addressing him as "Dear Max" but asking in no uncertain terms for an assurance that Beaverbrook as Minister for Aircraft Production would hand over the Boeings to BOAC for the West Africa service. A second note to "Dear Max" later on the same day thanked Beaverbrook for his telephoned agreement that the Boeings would be used only for West Africa. Once again the matter was apparently closed but a further cipher message from Air Attache, Washington dated 5 May 1941 makes the point that:

*"... Position here is one of some delicacy. The three Boeing Clippers were released to us by White House solely on understanding that they would be used for a Transatlantic service. It therefore seems to Wilson, Self (Sir Henry Self,*

*Permanent Secretary, M.A.P.) and me that Beaverbrook should agree the change to the West African route with Hopkins (Harry Hopkins, White House). Wilson understands that the former intends to telephone Hopkins about this. Until this is done we all think it would be most inexpedient to raise this subject with Admin."*

The same cipher message brings up for the first time the idea of a compromise route which would, in the end, turn out to be not a compromise but the basis for the operational route. Despite the original delivery schedule, Boeing production had slipped quite badly and the failure to provide maintenance facilities in England or Bathurst also affected the route decisions. The message reads:

*"You probably appreciate that owing to lack of beaching trolleys, spares and maintenance equipment, Boeing Clippers will in any event have to be based on New York at least until September when maintenance situation will be eased. On this basis could Atlantic and West African requirements not be met by a New York – Montreal – Botwood – Foynes – Lisbon – Bathurst and return service."*

This suggestion was fleshed out by Walter Runciman of BOAC in a document sent to Sir Arthur Street and shown as Appendix 2. The suggestions in this document will be recognised by collectors of trans-Atlantic airmails as being very close to the eventual routes used. It is interesting to note that Runciman was aware of the need to consider a winter and summer route for the Boeings, probably because of the knowledge of Pan American route changes according to season, and although he seemed in favour of restricting the route to a Foynes-Bathurst shuttle in order to maximise the miles flown between trips to Baltimore, the eventual service did make the runs to Lagos, albeit on a very erratic schedule.

Analysing the flights of just one aircraft "Berwick" in 1941/42, using the BOAC movement records held at the British Airways Museum at Heathrow reveals the infrequency of flights from Lagos to Foynes.

Leaving Foynes on 23 July 1941, "Berwick" flew Foynes-Lagos-Foynes-Baltimore-Foynes-Lagos-Foynes-Baltimore-Bermuda-Lisbon-Foynes-Lisbon-Bathurst-Lagos-Bathurst-Trinidad-Baltimore-Norfolk, Virginia- Bermuda-MB(?)-Foynes-Lisbon-Bathurst-Lagos-Bathurst-Belem-Trinidad-Bermuda-Baltimore-Bermuda-Lisbon-

Foynes-Lisbon-Bathurst-Lagos-Bathurst-Belem-Trinidad-Bermuda-Baltimore, arriving there on 11 March 1942. In eight months there were only two trips from Lagos to Foynes, leaving Lagos on 29 July 1941 and 28 September 1941. Not exactly a stunning service, but amply illustrating the effects of having to use the South Atlantic route in winter, when the northern route from the UK to Baltimore via Canada was impossible to fly because of weather conditions.

An extract from the minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> Civil Aviation Progress Meeting held on 25 September 1941 is included in the file and is shown as Appendix 3. This relates to the change from summer to winter routes and raises a question about whether or not Natal was "suitable for the Boeings" further suggesting that the winter route should be Baltimore-Bermuda-Trinidad-Belem-Bathurst-Lisbon-Foynes; in other words a counter-clockwise route against the prevailing winds for the entire trip.

One final comment on the "Clippers" was contained in an extract from a meeting of the Civil Aviation Progress Meeting held on 12 June 1941: "*The meeting took note that (i) the US authorities had expressed a wish that we should not use the designation 'Clipper' for the aircraft of this type in British ownership; they would accordingly be styled 'Boeing 314A's' in future as a class; the first one had been named 'Bristol', the second would be 'Berwick' and the third 'Bangor'.*"

I cannot help feeling that the hand of Juan Trippe is visible in this request, but have no proof of it.

### **Delays at Baltimore.**

Having been compelled by circumstances to carry out routine aircraft servicing at Baltimore and hence accept the major route change which this entailed, the BOAC schedules were seriously affected by delays at Baltimore. Because of design issues with the engines, all of which are detailed in the file, it became necessary to restrict flying times between major service to 120 hours, which meant that the aircraft could make only one round trip before returning to Baltimore for servicing. This in itself would have resulted in a less than expected schedule of flights between UK and West Africa, but a major problem caused by delays at Baltimore effectively took two of the three BOAC aircraft out of service for most of the time. From the BOAC movement records (Ref.2) we find that "*Bristol*" arrived at Baltimore on 20

July 1941 but did not leave until 26 August; "*Berwick*" arrived Baltimore on 25 August and did not leave until 14 September; "*Bangor*" arrived Baltimore on 5 September and did not leave until 3 October. In the meantime "*Bristol*" arrived again on the 20 September and did not leave until 20 October. This overlapping programme of delays destroyed any attempts to run the UK – West Africa service as it had been designed, and generated huge concern in Whitehall.

The situation is best summed up in a letter to Dr. Edward Warner of the C.A.B. in Washington:

*"... our West African link is not being reinforced in the way we had hoped ..... cause of the delay in the turn-round is two-fold, firstly labour and secondly ( more important still) spares.....P.A.A. swing a large labour force on their aircraft. I believe they put something like two hundred and fifty to three hundred men on the job and turn round in two or three days. B.O.A.C. have a nucleus of labour and are recruiting locally as much as they are able to ..... Pan American are rendering much help (sic) as they can but it seems that they cannot spare much labour ..... although \$700,000 worth of spares were ordered, Boeings have not delivered any ..."*

BOAC movement records (Ref 2) show that by mid 1942 the turn round time had been reduced to some two weeks but this was still nowhere near the two to three days achieved by Pan American, and by mid 1943 the situation had not improved. It took until mid 1944 for the Baltimore turn round times to equal the Pan American performance.

### **Air mail.**

References already given apparently confirm that there were no specific restrictions placed on BOAC by Pan American, and that the carriage of official despatches and troops' mail was allowed, this latter in accordance with UK Government policy on all the air routes of BOAC. On the 2 June 1941 a cable was sent to the Canadian Government informing them as follows:

*"It is proposed to make periodic flights between Foynes and Baltimore via Botwood or Gandar (sic) Lake.....these flying boats are to be used primarily on the UK – West Africa service but at present they have to return periodically to U.S.A. for maintenance. The maintenance trips will therefore provide a trans-Atlantic service the frequency of which will depend on a number of factors at present under consideration."*

A reply cable from the Government of Newfoundland reads:

*"Please advise whether mails will be carried on periodic flights referred to. If so, are there to be, as was the case last year, any weight limitations for Newfoundland."*

Following several messages between UK departments, the following telegram was sent from the Dominions Office to the Government of Canada on the 15 July 1941:

*".....will not be available for commercial traffic. Official passengers, official mail and a limited amount of ordinary mail will be carried whenever possible."*

Although this is not a definitive statement, it does indicate that the British Government was aware of the difference between official mail and ordinary mail, and was not against carrying ordinary mail on the flights from Baltimore to the UK via Canada. It also makes an important distinction between "commercial traffic" and "mail".

### Summary.

It is clear that the original intention of the Secretary of State for Air, supported by Churchill, was to employ the Boeing aircraft on a back and forth shuttle between the UK and West Africa, with servicing carried out at Bathurst and a location in the UK. A combination of political infighting, failure to complete the servicing slipways and the differences in objective between the British and American Governments led to a decision to service the aircraft at Baltimore and, almost by accident, create a flying route that allowed for each of the three aircraft to make only one clockwise trip between servicing stops. Undue delays at Baltimore in 1941, 1942 and 1943 curtailed the planned schedules with the result that the BOAC Boeings did not perform their original role, although without them the UK – West Africa service would have been very much worse; possibly to the point of collapse.

Whether or not the Boeings carried "ordinary mail" is still an open topic. The file analysed here is the only one found in the National Archive that contains documents relating to the purchase and initial operation of these aircraft, with great detail for the year 1941 and closed finally in 1943. References to carriage of mail suggest that, at least in the view of the British Government, the only restrictions were those applied to all BOAC flights during the early years of the war, and it was only

the lack of carrying capacity which caused the ban on "ordinary mail". As we see in the correspondence with the Canadian Government, there seemed to be the possibility that such mail could be carried in limited quantities.

And yet, in the annual report of the Civil Aviation Authority (Ref. 3) for 1941, under the heading "Trans-Atlantic" we find a two line paragraph saying:

*"The carriage of commercial traffic on these flights (the Boeings) was precluded by the terms of the permit issued by the United States Authorities for the use of the facilities at Baltimore."*

Interpretation of this statement hinges on the definition of "commercial traffic" and if one takes the clear distinction in the Canadian correspondence, then "commercial traffic" does not include mail and suggests that the term refers to cargo or passengers carried as revenue earners. If this were the case then the matter would have become a commercial dispute between BOAC and Pan American, and there is no doubt where Juan Trippe would stand on this; he was not renowned for lack of commercial competence. On the other hand, the original contract between Pan American and the British Government contains no restrictions, caveats or mention of "commercial traffic". Other required definitions would be "United States Authorities" and "facilities at Baltimore". Just who were the "Authorities"? A letter from Walter Runciman of BOAC dated 5<sup>th</sup> August 1941 says that:

*"The slipway (at Baltimore) is the responsibility of the Baltimore municipality, and both they and P.A.A. assured us that it was serviceable."*

Could this mean that the "Authorities" were in fact the City of Baltimore, or the United States Government? It could not refer to Pan American Airways because the C.A.A. would surely have used "P.A.A." or "Pan American Airways" as they did throughout all their reports, rather than "Authorities".

In purely pragmatic terms we are looking at a situation where the BOAC Boeing aircraft flew a clockwise route around the South Atlantic in winter, and a Lagos-UK-Canada-Baltimore and return in summer. They would not have carried "ordinary mail" from UK to West Africa since that was forbidden by British standing orders, but it is possible that they could have carried "ordinary mail" from West Africa to UK when the seasonal routing allowed. They could conceivably have

carried mail from West Africa to the United States by dropping it at Bermuda en route to Baltimore (the winter route) and there is tentative evidence that this happened (Ref. 4). Despite standing orders and permits, one has to remember that this was all happening against a background of war and limited resources, and it would be unlikely that an aircraft loadmaster who had spare capacity for a few bags of mail would refuse to carry it onwards.

A more detailed analysis of the flights from Lagos to Foynes, suggested by Peter Wingent, has shown that at least in the summer months, the Boeing aircraft flew from Lagos northwards to either Foynes or Lisbon (where mail could have been transferred to the regular BOAC/KLM service to the UK), on a quasi-regular basis. This increases the likelihood that "ordinary" mail may well have been carried by the BOAC Boeings from West Africa. Even allowing for the rumoured "ban" imposed by Pan American, it is hard to see how that carrier could possibly have influenced the running of an entirely British operation on the West African route. Peter and I are investigating the possibility of publishing a comprehensive list of flights on the West African service of BOAC, but this will take considerable time and effort to produce.

No doubt further research will provide a definitive answer to the question of the mysterious "permit", but the National Archive file has provided at least some explanation of the turbulent introduction to service of the three Boeing 314A flying boats that flew with BOAC from 1941 to 1946.

### References.

1. File AVIA 2/2385. National Archive, Kew, London.
2. BOAC movement records held at British Airways Museum, Hendon.
3. File DS.43225/1. "Report on the progress of Civil Aviation 1939-45". C.A.A. Library.
4. Wilson J. "Did the BOAC Boeings carry commercial mail?". "Cameo", Journal of the West Africa Study Circle, October 2008.
5. File AIR 20/6123. National Archive, Kew, London

### Acknowledgements

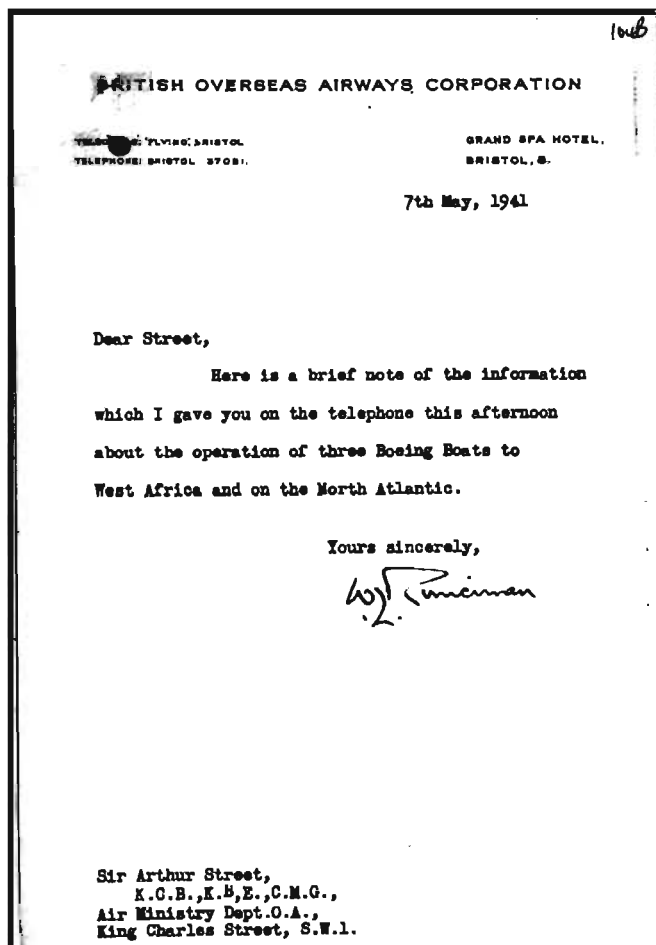
My thanks are extended to Richard Beith for his patience and advice on content and presentation, and to members of "The Group", a loose confederation of knowledgeable collectors and personalities including, but not exclusively Bob Wilcsek, John L. Johnson Jr, Barbara Priddy, Peter Wingent, Robert Picirilli and Robert May.

Extracts and transcripts from files held at the UK National Archive are by permission of the Archive, where the staff were ever helpful and swift with my enquiries.

### Appendices

1. Sale and purchase contract, Pan American Airways to HM Government. Available on request as a pdf file from [johnwilson@freezone.co.uk](mailto:johnwilson@freezone.co.uk)
2. Letter from Hon. Walter L. Runciman, BOAC.
3. Extract from minutes of 13th Civil Aviation Progress Meeting 25 September 1941
4. Extract from CAA Intelligence Summary 2 December 1942
5. Delivery flights of "Bristol", "Berwick" and "Bangor"

### Appendix 2 (1)



Appendix 2 (2)

1074C

Three Boeing Boats:

West Africa and North Atlantic.

1. Foynes-Bathurst return and Foynes-New York (via Newfoundland) return are equivalent operations

three boats provide a twice weekly frequency on either route

maintenance requires that not less than one trip out of six shall be to America

thus among possible combinations are

once weekly Foynes-Bathurst return and  
once weekly Foynes-New York return

or

thrice fortnightly Foynes-Bathurst return and  
once fortnightly Foynes-New York return

or

five Foynes-Bathurst return trips and )  
one Foynes-New York return trip        ) every three weeks

2. The extension of the West African route to Lagos throws the operations out of balance and means that not more than three return trips to Lagos can be made between flights to America, the frequency working out at 10 return trips to Lagos and 3 return trips to New York every 8 weeks:

to provide more trans-Atlantic trips other combinations are possible but would need to be individually worked out.

3. The above calls for three boats and frequencies will be less until all three are in operation.
4. The programme only holds until ice in Newfoundland prevents boat operations by this route when alternatives such as Foynes-Bathurst-Trinidad-Bermuda-New York and return will have to be considered.

### Appendix 3

Deletions and corrections are on the original document

194A

(f) Winter Route for Boeings.

The meeting took note:-

(i) of a statement by D.G.C.A. that permission had not yet been received from the Brazilian Government for landings at Belem and Natal. He would try and get an early decision.

(ii) of the following information given by Mr. Pearson.

(1) it was proposed to switch over to the winter route within the next few weeks, - probably about November 1st. Pending a decision as to whether Natal was suitable for the Boeings the route would be:-

Baltimore - Bermuda - Trinidad - Belem - Bathurst - Lisbon - Foynes;

(2) the round flight would be just possible within the present limit of 120 hours between engine overhauls. As the above route omitted Lagos, B.O.A.C. proposed to operate a shuttle service with an S.30 Empire boat between there and Bathurst as an extension of the run from the U.K. to West Africa;

(3) the round flight Baltimore - Foynes - Baltimore would take about 22 days. This, with three aircraft, would theoretically give a once-weekly service but, in practice, a lower frequency was to be expected;

(4) preliminary calculations showed that the payload on the Baltimore - Foynes route would be 2,600 kilos, plus 1,200 kilos for West Africa off-loaded or on-loaded at Bathurst. If Natal could be used, the payload would be increased by 700 kilos on the eastbound run (from 2,600 to 3,300 kilos) and on the westbound run by 1,200 kilos (from 2,600 to 3,800 kilos).

(5) ~~it~~ it would be necessary to lay down stocks of fuel at Belem and also at Natal if it were found possible to land there; 100 tons, in addition to small stocks now at Belem would be necessary;

(6) ~~it~~ it might be possible to dispense with the Bathurst - Lagos S.30 shuttle service if, as seemed likely, the engine hours between overhauls of the Boeings could be increased later on to, say, 180 hours, which would permit of flights to Lagos.

(7) ~~Major~~ Major McOrindle feared that the Corporation might not be able to run from Bathurst to Lagos; P.A.A. wanted the Corporation's service to terminate at Bathurst;

(iii) of a statement by D.D.O.II. that at the request of the A.O.C.-in-C., three Hudson III's were being stripped of their military equipment and would be used as transport aircraft in the Bathurst - Lagos area. They should be able to ease the load on the shuttle service. It was expected that the first Hudson III would arrive in West Africa about the middle of October.



G-AGCA "Berwick" delivery flight

Location	Arrive	Depart	Remarks/delays
New York		21 June 10.45	
Bermuda	21 June 16.07	22 June 19.38	
Horta	23 June 09.16	23 June 10.53	
Lisbon	23 June 17.56	24 June 18.30	
Bathurst	25 June 08.02	26 June 05.29	
Lagos	26 June 17.17	12 July 05.28	17 days
Bathurst	12 July 17.49	13 July 17.05	
Lisbon	14 July 07.27	14 July 21.30	
Foynes	15 July 06.12	23 July 03.35	8 days
Lisbon	23 July 10.40	23 July 19.06	
Bathurst	24 July 09.35	25 July 05.15	
Lagos	25 July 16.30	29 July 04.14	4 days
Bathurst	29 July 16.58	30 July 19.00	
Lisbon	31 July 10.00	20 August 22.15	20 days
Foynes	21 August 10.32	24 July 17.43	3 days
Botwood	25 August 08.34	25 August 11.27	
Baltimore	25 August 21.50	14 September	20 days

G-AGCB "Bangor" delivery flight

Location	Arrive	Depart	Remarks/delays
New York		23 July 10.50	
Botwood	23 July 19.00	23 July 22.04	
Foynes	24 July 10.44	27 July 22.47	
Lisbon	28 July 05.32	28 July 18.31	
Bathurst	29 July 09.28	31 July 03.40	
Lagos	31 July 15.32	04 August 05.26	4 days
Bathurst	04 August 16.29	05 August 18.34	
Lisbon	06 August 09.20	06 August 21.23	
Foynes	07 August 05.39	Return to Foynes	Weather delay
Foynes		04 Sept. 19.37	28 days
Sydney, Nova Scotia	05 Sept. 10.28	05 Sept. 14.16	
Baltimore	05 Sept. 21.18	03 October	28 days

# FAM-22; Blockage at Brazzaville?

John Wilson

Early in 2008 I was in correspondence with Bob Wilcsek and mentioned an airmail cover which had been despatched from Beirut in January 1942, traveled via Brazzaville and eventually carried on FAM-22 to America. This innocent “mention” started a chain of investigation that raised more questions about the issue of whether FAM-22 flew a regular service into Leopoldville or actually terminated at Lagos during 1942. (Ref 1)

The cover in question is shown at Fig.1 and the most obvious feature is the large “First Flight” cachet (Fig.2) applied at Beirut and reading “Courrier Aerien-Damas-Lignes Aeriennes de la France Libre-Pan American Airways-New York” with the dates 20-I-42 and 1-II-42 corresponding (presumably) to the departure from Beirut and projected arrival in New York. Closer inspection of the cachet reveals a route map, of which more later. Frank Muller did record “a first flight from Beirut on 20 January 1942 via “Damascus-Dakar-New York”, the mail carrying a “Cachet Speciale””. Bob Picirilli has pointed out that there must be an error here—the flight could not have routed via Vichy Dakar at this date.



Fig. 1

A monthly route from Beirut/Damascus to Brazzaville had been opened by the Free French airline LAM from October 1941, with a flight from Damascus (in French Levant which had been liberated from Vichy control) via Cairo, Khartoum, Fort Lamy and Bangui to Brazzaville. All of AEF and Cameroun remained loyal to de Gaulle while all the rest of French Africa stayed with the Vichy Government. This was apparently an effort on the part of the Free French to begin to unify, and build communication among, the areas under their influence.



Fig 2

Further correspondence with Bob Wilcsek revealed that between us we had more than one example of such covers, all of them having a common feature; evidence of a serious delay at Brazzaville/Leopoldville which resulted in eventual arrival in the United States not on the first of February as planned but in mid-April 1942. My original cover showed only a transit cancel of Brazzaville dated 27 January 1942 but no other





Fig. 5

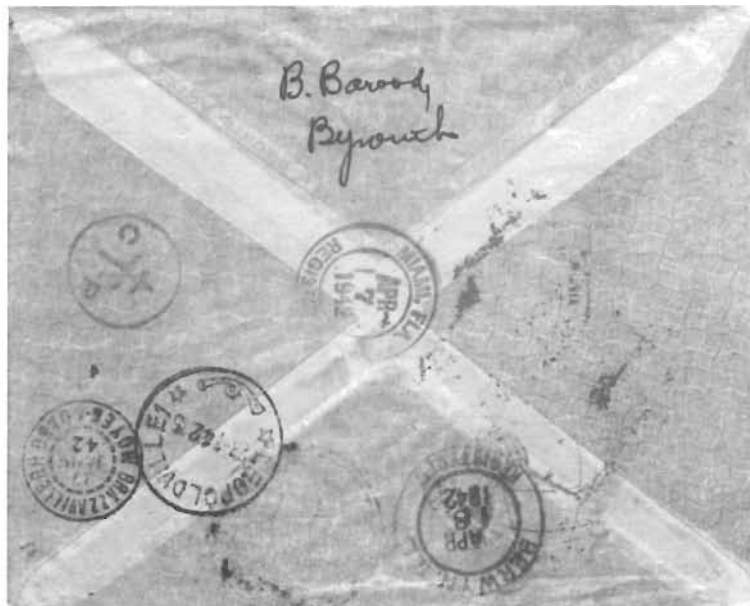


Fig. 6

Leopoldville on 7 February 1942, arriving Miami on 13 February. Flight 06 was one of the (many) FAM-22 flights to terminate at Lagos and not proceed to Leopoldville, so the mail once again missed the flight.

Extrapolating (speculatively) using a 14 day cycle from the Aitink & Hovenkamp information leads us to flight 07 (Capetown Clipper) which should have left Leopoldville on 7 March 1942. It certainly did leave, but not on a return trip to America, because whilst at Leopoldville it was re-designated as Charter Flight (later "Special Mission") No. 16 and flew onwards to the Cocos Islands via Port Bell, Khartoum, Mombasa, Mahe and Diego Garcia to carry out an aerial survey of Cocos before returning. This means that there was certainly no FAM-22 mail pickup at Leopoldville on 7 March.

The next FAM-22 departure from Leopoldville would have been flight 08, leaving on 21 March and arriving in Miami on 27 March. It would appear from the covers shown that there is a distinct gap between 27 March and application of the Miami transit strike of 7 April but acquisition of another cover from the Lebanon despatch (Fig. 7 and Fig. 8) revealed that it was opened and re-sealed in Trinidad which means that the mail was removed from the aircraft for censorship and I cannot estimate how long this process took

to complete. It is a distinct possibility that the FAM-22 flight continued on to Miami and the censored mail was then placed on board one of the other regular Pan American flights from South and Central America passing through Trinidad en route for Miami. (Ref. 5)

Aitink & Hovenkamp do not give actual times of arrival and despatch of the Clipper aircraft at Trinidad but BOAC records of the Boeing 314A flights via Trinidad en route to Baltimore in the same period show a stay at Trinidad for about six hours and I cannot see how censorship can have taken place within this time frame. Note that the BOAC Boeings were flying exactly the same route as the PanAm Boeings from West Africa via Bathurst and Belem.



Fig. 7

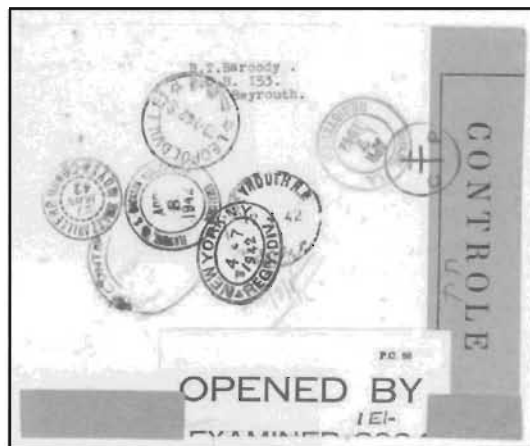


Fig. 8

Did this mail travel on FAM-22? As a rule of thumb it is reasonable to assume that if mail carries a transit mark of Miami, or a censor label of Trinidad, it will have traveled from West Africa on FAM-22, and this, together with the date evidence would suggest FAM-22 carriage.

A second question is “In the absence of FAM-22 at Leopoldville, could not the mail have been re-directed to Lagos for onward transmission”?

I was fortunate to locate another cover shown as Fig. 9 and Fig. 10 that must have traveled by the same route as the first flight covers, being cancelled at Bikfaya, Lebanon on 13 January, transit Beirut on 16 January and Brazzaville on 27 January, the same day as the first flight covers. This cover was, however, addressed to French Guinea so was not liable to delays caused by FAM-22 considerations. The rather surprising thing about it is that it did not arrive in Lagos, where it was opened and re-sealed by Nigerian censor, until 28 February 1942, a one month delay between Brazzaville and Lagos. The third question is, therefore, “How did this cover travel from Brazzaville/Leopoldville to Lagos”?

The only air carrier at the time and on this route was BOAC, using their regular Cairo-Lagos flying boat service that called at Leopoldville. Sabena flights called no further south than Stanleyville. Actual records (not speculation) show that BOAC flight CL31 was at Leopoldville on 30 January – Lagos 31 January; flight CL32 Leopoldville 6 February, arriving Lagos on the same day; flight CL33 Leopoldville 14 February – Lagos on 15th; flight CL34 Leopoldville 20 February – Lagos on 21st and flight CL35 Leopoldville 26 February – Lagos 27th.

So – the most likely flight for the Lebanon to French Guinea via Lagos cover would have been CL35, even though it could have been carried on CL31, CL32, CL33 or CL34. Similarly, it might have been possible for the first flight covers to have been transported to Lagos in the same way. The final question for the reader is, therefore, “What reason could there have been for a one to two month delay in Brazzaville/Leopoldville in early 1942”?

It is possible that the first flight covers were allocated a separate mail bag at Beirut and that could account for their off-hand treatment at Leopoldville. After all, comments made by the captain of the first FAM-22 flight out of Leopoldville make it clear that Pan American crews were not altogether impressed by having



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

to undertake hazardous trans-Atlantic flights just to carry philatelic mail, but this would not explain the delay to normal commercial mail within Africa. I should also mention that the delay to this commercial cover extended still further because it did not arrive in Conakry until 21 April, and its final destination at Kouroussa until 25 April. The cover may well have been held in Lagos as a consequence of French Guinea being a Vichy state at the time.

One thing is certain: the idea that FAM-22 was a regular service is rather like the current political fluff that says "It was not a policy, rather an aspiration". Recent work by Peter Berry (Ref 3) and David Crotty (Ref 4) on the "Special Missions" has revealed the extent to which Pan American Airways flew literally thousands of vital trans-Atlantic missions from America during the war. Berry records that in the period to December 1942, a total of 1,219 Atlantic crossings were made by the Boeing Clippers. This puts the FAM-22 mail flights into some kind of context, and I do have the feeling that carrying the ordinary air mail was a low priority exercise, bearing in mind the absolute necessity of moving men and materials from America to Accra and Lagos for onward shipment to the Middle and Far East.

This all started with a conversation but has gathered momentum over the last year within a loose grouping of collectors worldwide, including John L. Johnson, Richard Beith and the three Roberts; May, Picirilli and Wilcsek, all of whom have been party to some intense discussion about what exactly happened with FAM-22. We are surely a lot further forward than the days when collectors fondly imagined that there existed a “regular” two-weekly mail service from Miami to Leopoldville.

Finally, back to the First Flight cachet. This shows the route from Lebanon to America via Leopoldville and Lagos, but curiously, under very close inspection, the thick line showing the route is drawn as a very thin line between Leopoldville and Lagos. It’s probably an accident, but it is nevertheless clear, and perhaps shows that the engraver had more than a little knowledge about the route situation in West Africa?

I do hope for comments and/or criticisms which might help to answer the various questions raised.

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## Private Mail Bag and Postman Walk Markings of Sierra Leone

Philip Quirk

Peter Rolfe's display at the November 2008 Study Circle Meeting included a partial strike on an off-cover stamp of an oval postmark inscribed "Private Mail....." Since then I have been fortunate enough to acquire two covers bearing specimens of the complete marking. Both are local items, sent registered to S.C.O.A. (Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain), Freetown. Judging from other incoming items with more complete addresses, the company maintained P.O. Box 102 in the early 1980s, and was apparently involved in the motor trade (ref. 1)



Figure 1: Private Mail Bag oval postmark.



Figure 2: Postman Walk circular postmark.

The Private Mail Bag / Sierra Leone oval (Fig. 1) measures 35 x 28 mm. It appears on both covers as a back-stamp, applied across the flaps at both ends of the envelope. This positioning suggests the desire to prove that the item was intact when received at the G.P.O. The dates are 2 August 1983 and 17 February 1984. Both covers also carry Registration Delivery Counter back-stamps.

Figure 2 shows a circular 27 mm diameter marking inscribed Postman Walk / G.P.O. Sierra Leone, and dated 21 August 1981. It is also used as a back-stamp across the envelope flaps. The cover is a local Freetown item and bears 42c worth of stamps, cancelled with the Registration Delivery Counter oval. Although there is no registration etiquette, the amount of postage paid suggests that the cover was intended to be registered and was probably treated as such.

Reference 1: <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3601690> (accessed 7 February, 2009)

# Charlatanic Correspondence in Nigeria

Dr. Simon Heap

Most readers will be aware of the advanced fee fraud, or “419”, letters and e-mails from Nigeria stating how you could take a cut from a large amount of money being transferred out of the country and through your bank account. The aim of the scam is to get your bank details and clear out your account.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Nigerians themselves were the subject of such scams, which the British colonial government called ‘Charlatanic Correspondence’. Often the letter offered medical or spiritual assistance, at a price. In 1930, it was reported: “*People ordering such articles as ‘Brain Pills’, ‘Charms’ to enable examinations to be passed*”. (Ref 1) Two years later, “*a pathetic feature this year has been letters containing remittances for ‘power’ to obtain work*”. In 1933, “*In spite of the depressed times, this class of correspondence has increased*.” (Ref 2) “*One writer stated he had been out of work for over two years, and was destitute; nevertheless he was able to enclose £2 for a ‘lucky ring’ which would bring him work and wealth*.” (Ref 3) As reported in 1934, “*It shows how difficult it is to break down the African’s belief in charms, talismans, brain pills and other concoctions*.” (Ref 4)

Locals stuffed money in envelopes and posted them. The Posts and Telegraphs staff took it upon themselves to intercept such mails, either incoming from dubious addresses or outgoing full of payments. Their interceptions were backed by the law: Section 24 of the Post Office Ordinance of 1928 (Ref 5). “*Packets containing literature and advertisements were destroyed*”. (Ref 6) 89% of these letters were intercepted at offices in the Southern Provinces in 1932. (Ref 7)

The Surveyor-in-Charge based at Kaduna, reported as regards the Northern Provinces of Nigeria that: “*Charlatanic correspondence still continues, and the number and class of their dupes are surprising. Over thirty such letters were intercepted and £26 19s 6d returned to the senders. One letter alone contained £16 seeking advice of the usual nature from a quack in India*”. (Ref 8)

Sometimes the senders used third parties to try and get their letters through the postal system. In 1929, the Divisional Surveyor at Lagos wrote in that year’s Annual Report:

“*The persistency with which the senders to Charlatanic addresses endeavour to get their letters through after such have been returned to them is remarkable. To quote one instance, a letter to a Charlatanic address in India was forwarded under cover to another advertiser in England with the request to forward same to its designation [destination], the sender criticising severely the Nigerian Post Office for its censorship; unfortunately for the sender the letter was intercepted in its turn by the English Postal Authorities*”. (Ref 9)

Wartime censorship meant charlatanic correspondence faded away: in 1943-44: 35 intercepted packets contained £10 12s; the following year it was even less at 34 packets, with £7 10s inside. (Ref 10)

After the war, “*there appears to be some local attempt to revive this traffic which is not confined to overseas correspondence*.” (Ref 11) In 1946-47, “charlatanic firms” established themselves in Nigeria and there was a very big increase in the number of postal packages intercepted, far higher than any recorded in pre-war years. (Ref 12)

In the late 1940s, the burden on the un-remunerative work made it necessary to consider whether the unaided efforts of this department can continue. (Ref 13) The question of maintaining inspection of mails for the interception of Charlatanic Correspondence was referred to Government, as “*this non-productive work is wasteful of staff and is increasing in volume*”. (Ref 14) On 2 June 1949, the examination of mails and the interception of items judged to be of a fraudulent character were discontinued. (Ref 15) Immediately, there was “an influx” of such mail. (Ref 16)

**Table 1: Charlatanic correspondence, Nigeria, 1928-38, 1943-49**

Year	Number of packets intercepted	Money recovered (in £s)		Year	Number of packets intercepted	Money recovered (in £s)
1928	580	202		1937	3,492	135
1929	553	137		1938	2,124	81
1930	1,355	464		1943-44	35	11
1931	1,183	180		1944-45	34	8
1932	983	311		1945-46	355	160
1933	2,244	234		1946-47	5,630	845
1934	2,250	324		1947-48	9,570	1,205
1935	2,652	199		1948-49	12,808	1,619
1936	3,154	99		1949*	1,587	200

\*1 April-2 June 1949 only

Sources: *Nigeria Annual Report on the Posts and Telegraphs Department, 1929-38, 1943-50.*

So the fraudsters had defeated the colonial authorities, and 60 years later we are still seeing the results of such activity, by post and e-mail today. I would be very interested to know if WASC members have examples of such charlatanic correspondence.

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## Mail transport in the Gold Coast between the Wars

**Dr. Simon Heap**

Having recently read Jeremy Martin’s extracts from a 1937 Gold Coast publication (Ref 1), and also written myself on the general subject of motor transport there from the colony’s first car (1902) to 1939 (Ref 2), this short article adds some primary evidence on postal transport during the two decades between the wars.

The Gold Coast Legislative Council of 1919-20 stated some of the problems of using mechanical transport vis-à-vis head-loading mail in the south of the colony:

*“The Postmaster General reports that on occasions when he has used motors to get urgent mails through he has had to pay prices which would be prohibitive for a regular mail service.”*

*“Arrangements have however been made for a motor service between Sekondi and Chama with a carrier service from there to Abrobenam, a stretch in which Government is informed no-one will risk their cars or lorries, thence a motor to Elmina and Cape Coast and onward to Saltpond.” (Ref 3)*

The railway network added another option to the spreading road network:

*“The Postmaster General has also been under consideration a service from Accra to Nsawam by rail, thence to Winneba via Swedru, with a connection to Saltpond by Swedru.” (Ref 4)*



**Mail lorry on The Great North Road during heavy rains, July 1921. (Ref 5)**

The 400 miles Great North Road ran from the Kumasi rail head via Atebubu, Prang and Tamale to the Gold Coast’s northern border with French West Africa. 1921 saw the first vehicle link from the northern border to the south, symbolised by the Governor of the Gold Coast travelling by car to Navrongo and meeting the Lieutenant-Governor of Haute Volta, who had travelled by car from Ouagadougou.

Transport by carriers faded from the scene as increasing number of vehicles (especially Ford lorries) entered the Gold Coast and the local population, inspired by the cocoa boom, built more and more roads. In 1921 there were an estimated 2,241 miles of road maintained by other than the Government Public Works Department, a figure which rose to 3,977 miles in 1924 and 5,527 miles by 1927. (Ref 2, p27) The colony’s Annual Report of 1927-28 reported the a postal transport watershed: *“Owing to the extension of motorable roads the abolition of mail service by head loads is now practically complete and mails are distributed to all principal towns and villages by motor transport.”* (Ref 6)

Ten years later, the Government could announce that, *“Accra and Sekondi, including the Head Post Offices en route, also Takoradi and Winneba, [are] linked by a daily postal service – for the first time in the history of the Post Office. Introduced in October 1937, and carried by Royal Mail Vans.”* (Ref 7)

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7. *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1937-38*, p71. See Martin p152 for a photograph of such a vehicle

# Gambia Imperial Censorship -

A follow-up.

John Wilson



Figure 1 (reduced)

Figure 2



There are two rules in postal history research: (1) If you want to know something, publish an article and wait for the feedback, and (2) Absence of proof is not proof of absence. These two rules clearly applied when *Cameo* published my short article on the Imperial Censor Station at Bathurst (Ref.1).

At the time of writing that article I did not have any illustrations of covers that had been censored at Bathurst whilst being carried on the Pan American "LATI substitute" route, and had to rely on examples drawn from other members of WASC by our editor, Rob May. I did not see these before the article was published, but when I did see *Cameo* I was stopped dead in my tracks at the implications of the covers that had turned up. Let me briefly summarise the background:

When the Italian LATI uncensored airmail service ended in December 1941, Pan American Airways agreed to replace it by a trans-Atlantic route using their Boeing A-314 flying boats between New York and Lisbon via Brazil and West Africa. Mail between South America and Axis controlled Europe would be censored en-route but in the period from March 1942 to late July 1942 the only censorship station available was at Bathurst in Gambia, and it is recorded that mail from ten flights was examined at Bathurst between 8 March and August 1942 (Ref.2). Since the mail was deemed to be in transit, this required Imperial Censorship and a team of censors was sent out from UK to carry out this task. They were issued with censor hand-stamps carrying the letters “INN” as distinct from the existing terminal censorship stamps lettered “NN”, and my assumption was that transit mail intercepted at Bathurst would carry the “INN” mark, whilst mail originating in, or addressed to Gambia (terminal mail) would show the “NN” mark. WRONG...!

Figures 2, 3 and 4 (not shown here) attached to my earlier article clearly show the Imperial “INN” mark applied not to transit but to terminal mail originating in Gambia, on covers where one would have expected the normal “NN” tombstone mark. This was surprise enough but then Charles Leonard asked me to comment on some covers that he had in his collection and the scene changed again. Thanks to some excellent work by Bob Maddocks in extracting information from the National Archive in Banjul (Bathurst) (Ref.3) we know that the D.A.C. in charge of the examiners sent out from England was E.O. Jacobs, and Charles has a letter written by Jacobs to his wife, who incidentally seems to have been serving in the Censorship Office in Liverpool (Fig. 1). The letter carries the boxed censor mark of P.202, and this mark has been positively confirmed, not only by this letter, as being in use in Bathurst during 1942. Its use on the letter from Jacobs, since he was the censor, would indicate that the particular stamp was in his possession, although one cannot be certain of this. This, then, is P.202 on terminal mail from Gambia to England. A similar use is shown on a cover from Bathurst to Tavistock (Fig.2)

Figure 3



A third cover, from Barbados to Sierra Leone, also carries the P.202 mark, so this demonstrates that it was also used on transit mail (Fig. 3), as does a fourth cover (Fig.4), sent from Uruguay and addressed to Zurich. We now have cover evidence that both the “INN” and “P.202” marks were used seemingly without any adherence to their correct application, and that is useful information in itself, but what makes the Charles Leonard covers of special significance is their connection with, and confirmation of, the unscheduled stops of the Pan American “LATI substitute” service at Bathurst.

I always try to carry out a detailed assessment of covers presented to me, and the following paragraphs are intended to illustrate my reasoning. I am always open to comment and correction because experience tells me that no sooner one has made a statement, evidence will appear to modify the conclusions.

**The Cover illustrated as Figure 3, opposite**

Barbados 27 Feb. 1942, Bathurst 18 March 1942, Freetown 30 March 1942.  
Barbados to Trinidad as per Appendix C below: (Ref. 4)

***“British West Indian Airways Ltd.***

***Port of Spain (Trinidad) – Tobago – Barbados:*** Until 28/2, once daily on weekdays with Lockheed 14 and Lockheed “Lodestar” landplanes; on 28/2 the service ceased.

***Port of Spain (Trinidad) – Barbados:*** From 1/3, ten times weekly, with Lockheed 14 and Lockheed “Lodestar” landplanes.”

Possible routes from Trinidad:

FAM-22. From 7th February, no calls at Bathurst but at Fisherman’s Lake. ( Ref. 4)

If off loaded at Fisherman’s Lake then transit would be direct to Freetown, because of proximity to Fisherman’s Lake. **Not sensible.**

FAM-18 winter route. Clockwise only as per service (13) below: (Ref 4)

***“(13) New York – Bermuda – Horta\* (Azores) – Lisbon (Portugal) – Bolama (Portuguese Guinea) – Natal (Brazil) – Belem – Port of Spain (Trinidad) – Bermuda – New York (one direction only):*** Until 18/5, twice weekly; 19/5 – 18/10, service re-routed and no stops were made at Bermuda (see route (3) under “Canada”). After 18/10, the former route was resumed and included stops at Shannon (Eire), Fisherman’s Lake (Liberia) and San Juan (Puerto Rico). Operated with Boeing 314 flying boats.

***\* Optional stop.”***

No calls in West Africa except Bolama. **Not sensible.**

LATI substitute. After 19 May 1942 as per service (14) below, alternating clockwise/counter clockwise. (Ref 4)

***“(14) New York – Bermuda – Horta (Azores) – Lisbon (Portugal) – Bolama (Portuguese Guinea) – Fisherman’s Lake (Liberia) – Natal (Brazil) – Belem – Port of Spain (Trinidad) – San Juan (Puerto Rico) – Bermuda – New York:*** 8/5 – 14/11, once weekly (reverse direction, alternate weeks), with Boeing 314 flying boats. Frequent unscheduled stops were made at Bathurst (Gambia).”

However, in the period from December 1941 to the start of service (14) Pan American did not operate to a fixed schedule but had to provide a service to replace the former Italian LATI route to carry mail between South America and Lisbon. It is recorded that this ad hoc route called at Bathurst for censorship and this is, I believe, how this cover traveled. Using Flynn’s (Augustinovic) tables of aircraft in transit through Bermuda, (Ref.5) I suggest that the cover traveled on the “*Yankee Clipper*”, in Bermuda on 12th March, returning via Trinidad on 19th March. I have allowed for a slight delay between the cover arriving in Bathurst and the P.202 mark being applied. The next potential flight would be “*Dixie Clipper*” through Bermuda on 20th March, but this is unlikely because the time between leaving Bermuda and returning is only 5 days, which equates to the FAM-18 clockwise route time, whereas the “*Yankee*” route time was 7 days which equates to a journey counter-clockwise and return clockwise, which is how I believe the “LATI substitute” operated at this particular time.

**This is the only route that makes sense**, and ties in also with the delay between Bathurst and Freetown which was probably by sea.

Considering that the “History of Postal Censorship” (Ref 2) records the first mail arriving at Bathurst for censorship was 8 March 1942, this is a very interesting and desirable cover, and I covet it greatly....!



Figure 4

**The cover illustrated at Figure 4, above**

Montevideo 18th February 1942. No arrival information.

Possible routes.

FAM-22. From 7th February, no call at Bathurst but at Fisherman's Lake. **Not sensible.**

FAM-18 winter route. Same observations as in cover (3) above. (Ref 4). No calls in West Africa except Bolama. **Not sensible.**

LATI substitute. After 19 May 1942 as per service (14) shown in cover 3. (Ref 4) **Not in the time frame.**

The route would have been Montevideo to Natal, transferred there to Pan Am LATI substitute (this was before the San Juan Agreement imposed diversion at Natal to San Juan) and then counter-clockwise to Bathurst for censorship. There is confirmation in file DEFE 1/197 (Ref.6) that mail was removed at Bathurst and replaced on the same aircraft for onward transmission, so the cover would have carried on to Lisbon and eventually to Zurich.

I have been unable to find source documentation relating to the airmail rates from Uruguay, but Richard Beith kindly checked his records from his LATI research (Ref.7) and told me that cover evidence suggested that the single air rate via LATI was 75c, which nicely ties up another cover that is equally obviously in the wrong collection, i.e. it should be in mine.

From the despatch date it would seem that this cover also ties in with the first recorded call at Bathurst for censorship on 8 March. For an unassuming looking cover, this is a real find.

Thinking about other possible routes, I considered the possibility of a sea passage but at this time in the war, all ships from the Americas to Africa were sailing in convoy to Freetown, not Bathurst, and in any case sea mail would have gone to Lisbon and not called at Bathurst. I cannot see any other explanation than that this cover went by air from Natal to Bathurst on the first LATI substitute flight to be censored.

As a result of the appearance of this group of unexpected finds, I began looking in greater detail at my own collections of West African airmail which I started more than 30 years ago. Much to my surprise and

delight, I found trapped within the pages of an album a cover that I must have had for years and forgotten about. This is shown as Fig. 5. It can be seen to be a cover from Buenos Aires despatched on 28 February 1942 and addressed to Barcelona. Endorsed "Via Natal – Lisboa" the cover traveled on the anti-clockwise "LATI substitute" route after transfer at Natal, Brazil before the San Juan Agreement came into force, but it was intercepted in Gambia and there received a strike of the P.203 censor mark. The cover was then forwarded by the Pan American "LATI substitute" flight to Lisbon and eventually to Barcelona by Lufthansa service #96, arriving on 13 March 1942, where it was opened and re-sealed by the Barcelona censor. The rate paid is the original "LATI" rate made up of 20c registration, 20c surface fee and double 1P25c air fee (2P50c). From the dates of despatch and arrival it would seem reasonable to assume that this cover was carried on the first intercepted flight through Bathurst.



Figure 5

The significance of this particular cover is that it confirms the Bathurst interception of "LATI substitute" mail but perhaps more importantly the use of the P.203 censor mark on the route. In Martin & Walton (Ref.8), this mark is listed as ERD. 9 December 1941 and LRD. 20 February 1942. I am curious about the December 1941 date because records show that the Imperial Censors did not arrive in Bathurst until early February 1942, (Ref 2) so if the owners of the covers on which this P.203 mark appears are reading this article, I would be extremely grateful if they could contact me to clarify the details, particularly the countries of origin and destination. In fact, I would be grateful for any reader's information on covers carrying Gambia censor marks in the period from February 1942 to August 1942.

### Summary.

From covers now seen, it appears that the censor hand stamps at Bathurst were used indiscriminately on both terminal and transit mail.

Use of the P.203 censor mark is confirmed on mail passing through Bathurst on the "LATI substitute" flights of Pan American Airways in the period from February to August 1942.

More information is needed about airmail covers carrying a Gambia censor mark or label in the February to August 1942 period so that our collective understanding can be increased. Assistance will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

My thanks and appreciation for encouragement and help go to Charles Leonard for allowing me access to his covers, and to Richard Beith, Bob Maddocks, Rob May and other members of "The Group" worldwide.

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## Sierra Leone Internal Censored Mail

Frank Walton FRPSL



Figure 1. Letter posted within Freetown. Adhesive cancelled 29 Dec 1942, backstamps of both 1 Jan and 2 Jan 1943.

On first glance, the cover illustrated in Figure 1 appears to be an ordinary envelope used internally within Freetown during the Second World War. What is most unusual in my experience is that it has been censored and received an octagonal QQ/1 handstamp (Martin & Walton Type 4, Ref. 1). I have shown it to several other collectors of West African censored mail, but no-one could recall seeing an internal cover from any country that has been censored before. It is quite possible that this letter was just mis-sorted into a pile to be censored - or was there perhaps a wider policy of sampling local letters? It would be most interesting to hear of any other examples from Sierra Leone or other countries.

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# 1942: Fisherman's Lake US Airfield

John Wilson

I made contact last year with the son (my age) of one of the civil engineers from Pan Am who was sent over to Liberia to build the facilities at Fisherman's Lake. Although he has all his father's correspondence, and has been kind enough to send me scans of letters written during the Clipper flight on which his father travelled out to West Africa (wonderfully detailed), the son is obviously reluctant to dispose of the actual material. However, he did put a couple of items on eBay (Lord knows why) and I acquired them.

The attached images figures 1 & 2 are of a cover and letter sent to the civil engineer from a friend in Sierra Leone; unremarkable except that it shows a regular contact with Sierra Leone. The cover is endorsed "AIRCO" and seems to have been carried by air, free of charge, from Freetown up to Harbel (note that this should correctly be spelt with one "L"). This was the Firestone rubber plantation where the construction crew lived whilst building the facilities at Fisherman's Lake.

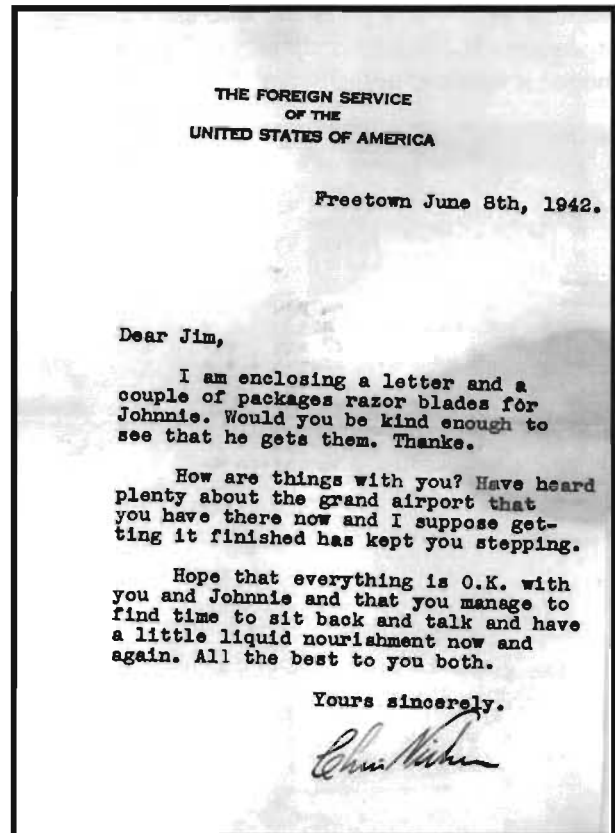
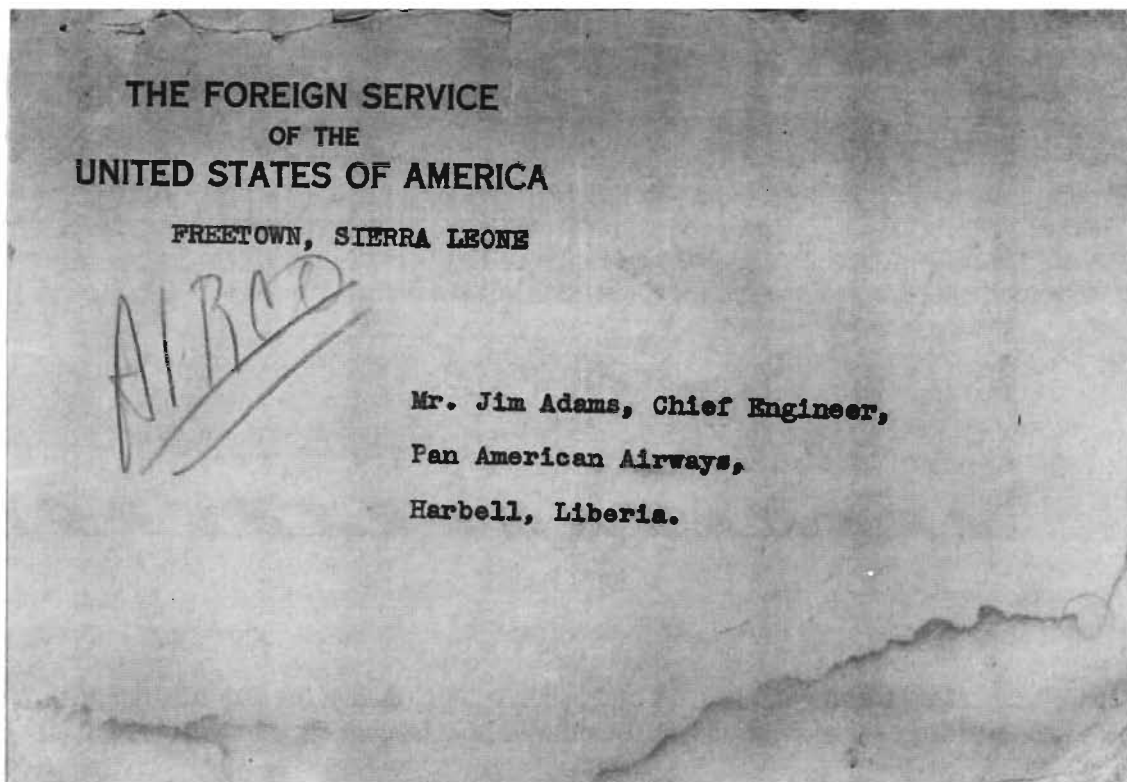


Figure 2 above; the enclosed letter (reduced)

Figure 1 below  
Private carriage cover endorsed AIRCO in pencil



# A Well-travelled Gambia Cover

Oliver Andrew

Pursuing an obscure philatelic interest, I persuaded my sister to send me a letter (Figures 1 and 2) from Ascension via a fictitious character, Poste Restante, Banjul. The verso bore a genuine UK address, to which I hoped it would eventually return. It did, but only after some unforeseeable adventures.



Figures 1 and 2

It was cancelled at Georgetown with the c.d.s of 9 January 2001 (though the year was omitted). It has an Ascension registered label on the front, and the usual Royal Mail barcode sticker on the back. It arrived in

Banjul, via the UK, where it received two strikes of a large square handstamp 'GPO BANJUL / RECEIVED / OPENED / DAMAGED / OFFICIALLY SECURED'. This is handstamp 603.11 in *The Postal Markings of The Gambia* (Ref. 1), and not otherwise recorded. The envelope was resealed with heavy, but transparent, brown tape. It was then returned to the UK where, by error, it was sent to Ascension, arriving on 15 July 2002, as shown by the Georgetown c.d.s. Either here, or perhaps in Banjul, it was marked with an unframed 'RETURN TO SENDER' (40 x 3 mm). This is not a known Gambian mark, and I would welcome further information. (*This is an Ascension handstamp, and was illustrated in the St Helena and Ascension Supplement Number 35 [Ref. 2] - Barry Burns*). Finally, the letter was put in a fresh envelope (Figure 3), franked 'ON POSTAL SERVICE', marked 'MISSENT TO / ASCENSION ISLAND' and given the Georgetown c.d.s. dated 15 July 2002. It did in the end arrive at its intended destination.

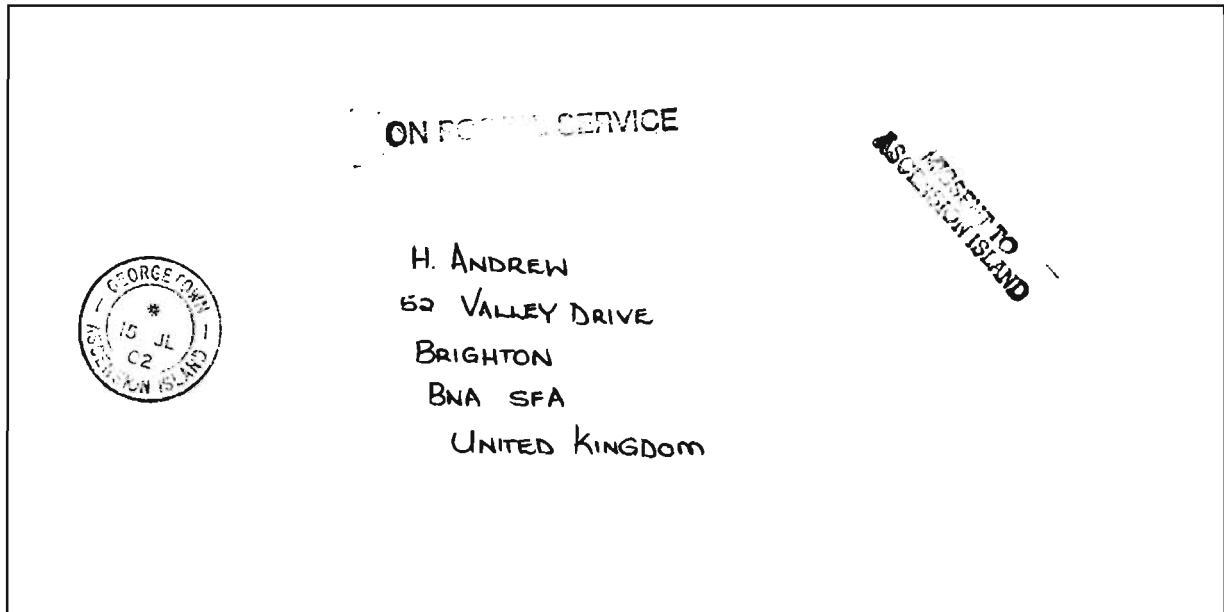


Figure 3 (shown at 70%)

#### References

- 1 Duncan S.P. & Andrew O., *The Postal Markings of The Gambia 1858 to 2000*, p88, WASC, Dronfield 2005
- 2 Podger J., "New Ascension Cachets", *St Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 35*, p5, WASC,



## Gold Coast: a new 1938-44 Essay?

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

The 5/- essay illustrated on the front cover of this issue shows Christiansborg Castle and is hand-painted in violet and green on a card 46mm x 43mm. The country name and value tablets are picked out in Chinese white. The portrait oval is blank.

This was found by Spink in an archive of banknotes and is likely to have been produced by a De La Rue house artist, possibly for a new King George VI set.

My thanks to David Parson of Spink for his help with this article. The essay was lot 251 in the Spink sale of 29/30 April 2009. It made £1400 before buyer's premium, against an estimate of £800-£1000.

# Inbound mail to Gambia, 1847

Marc Parren



In October 2008 Marc Parren reported to this editor that the cover illustrated above had just been sold on ebay for “just over \$1000”. The cover has no markings on the reverse, which is not illustrated here. The scan was shown to Oliver Andrew and others at the November WASC meeting and Oliver has kindly commented for publication.

He writes “This Gambia cover...is the earliest incoming cover known to me. Henry Vere Huntley was Governor of the Gambia from 1839 to 1842. He was an energetic and effective Governor at a difficult time in the Colony’s history. He was knighted in 1841.”

He goes on to comment that for this price someone made a good bargain.



## Sierra Leone: Forgeries of Queen Victoria £1

Frank Walton FRPSL

Although there are forgeries recorded by Philip Beale of the 2s and 5s values of the Postage & Revenue keyplate of Sierra Leone (Figs 1 & 2, Ref. 1), I have seen no mention of forgery of the £1 value in any literature.



Figures 1 and 2. Forgeries of the 2s and 5s values.

In recent months, I have seen three copies of a forgery of the £1 value from the keyplate series. One of these is my own which I purchased from a dealer at Spring Stampex (Fig. 3), another is from Philip Quirk’s collection (Fig. 4), and a third was recently offered on eBay as a genuine stamp (Fig. 5).



**Figures 3, 4 and 5.** Forgeries of the £1 value.

There are several things about these three stamps which should immediately raise the suspicions of a serious collector:

postmarks: the three stamps have apparently genuine postmarks from KOWLOON & HONG KONG; SANDWICH and BIRKDALE / SOUTHPORT. There are no offices in Sierra Leone that share these names.

shades of paper: the ones with UK postmarks are rose-red rather than red; genuine Sierra Leone £1 stamps are on red paper.

shape of £1 characters. See genuine items illustrated in Figures 6 and 7.

In Figure 4, remnants of the name STRAITS SETTLEMENTS can be seen in the country tablet and there are remains of bars in the value tablet.

What is completely right about these stamps is the perforation and watermark.

SIERRA LEONE



**Figures 6 and 7**

A die proof of the duty plate, and a plate block showing the shape of the genuine £1 value.

A noticeable difference is the shape of the top of the figure '1'.



The way in which the forgers created these stamps was to find a cheap 'host' stamp on the correct paper, and then bleach out the design. The postmarks are obviously of more resilient ink and prevail through the washing process. The 1903 Hong Kong 4c purple on red (SG 64) fits this model, with a catalogue value of less than £1, and is most likely the origin of the stamp illustrated as Figure 3. For the stamps with UK postmarks, a likely candidate for the 'host' stamp is the 6d on rose-red paper from the 1887 Jubilee series (SG 208).

Unfortunately I cannot offer a complete explanation that fits the presence of the residual words 'STRAITS SETTLEMENTS' in Figure 4. A candidate for the host stamp here is the 1904 Straits 4c (SG 112). This is the Edwardian version of the Postage & Revenue keyplate, and thus has the country name and a lined value tablet in the correct place. Whilst this theory could be a solution for the faint remains, it doesn't offer a sensible reason for the SANDWICH postmark. Has anyone got any ideas?

#### Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Philip Quirk for sharing with me his example of this stamp, and also for his insight into the way in which this forgery was perpetrated.

#### Reference

1. Beale P.O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone...*, pp137 and 208, RPSL, London 1988.

# Kano Field Force & the Siege of Agadèz

Peter R.A.Kelly.

I was most interested to read Michael St J. Wright's article on the Kano Field Force in 1917 as this brings to the surface a military event in Niger that gave rise to considerable concern by both France and Great Britain.

The action involved has been well documented but I have, for many years, sought information as to whether any mail from French troops was posted in Nigeria. Until Michael's article everyone I spoke to seemed to be ignorant of the whole issue.

The story behind the origins of the siege and the manner in which it was lifted is worth repeating because it constituted a smart and very necessary piece of co-operation between France and Great Britain which may be unknown to many postal historians.

The background to this was the revolt that had taken place in neighbouring Tripolitania which resulted in the Italians abandoning Ghadames, Ghat and Murzouk in 1914. In so doing, they left behind a considerable arsenal of modern weapons. The Senoussi tribe and various hangers-on were well placed to take control in the Sahara and Tibesti because of the reduction in the French troops present following the draft to Europe in WWI. The Senoussi were further encouraged by news of French defeats at home.

The initial sorties by the Senoussi were to the west when they crossed over into Algeria and took Fort Charlet at Djanet and were also responsible for the death of the iconic warrior-priest Charles de Foucauld at Tamanrasset, Algeria on 1 December 1916.

At this point the Senoussi were becoming masters of the Sahara and Kaossen teamed up with Sultan Tegama and turned to the south, crossing the border into Niger. On 25 December 1916 an officer who had escaped from Agadèz arrived at Zinder bringing news of the siege and pillage of the surrounding area. This was followed shortly afterwards by the receipt of further bad news announcing the attack on the annual caravan from Tibesti and Bilma in which the military troop protecting it had been wiped out.

Action had to be taken, and quickly columns were dispatched from Algeria, Timbouctou and Zinder. These alone were not considered sufficient and the decision was taken to send additional troops from Dakar (Sénégal). This was easier said than done because there was no way that they could be moved quickly to Niger. The railway linking Dakar and the Niger river at Koulikoro was not yet completed and even if it had been, it would have been impossible to move a large body of men down the Niger to Niamey and equally to difficult to have moved them by lorry and on foot across country to the other side of the Niger bend at Niamey or Gaya. In other words, it would have taken some months to achieve this.

This is where the co-operation with Nigeria came in. It was agreed that the Dakar column be transferred to Lagos by ship and then to Kano by rail and then by lorry and camel into Niger.

On 8 February 1917 the **Colonne de l'Air**, a flying column led by Lt Col Mourin, set out from Zinder as a relief force. It consisted of nearly 900 men including artillery and heavy machine gun detachments. At the same time all available British forces in Nigeria were moved north to support the French should additional help be required.

After a number of decisive confrontations with the enemy, Agadèz was relieved in March 1917 but it took a year or so for the Senoussi to be driven back across the border. Kaossen fled north to Fezzan where he died later but it took until May 1919 to capture Tegama.

It is therefore quite logical for the Kano Field Force to have continued to monitor the Nigerian frontier with Niger closely and, in view of the level of the common objective it seems quite likely that there was a degree of liaison. Tessaoua is only 60 km from the frontier. Michael's letter is therefore a very useful document.



I can add a copy of a letter written by the Commandant du Cercle at Zinder to Lt Colonel Mourin in reply to his telegram sent from there on 13 March, congratulating him on this fine performance in the face of stiff opposition. He also confirms that he has sent on the good news to the Gouvernement General in Dakar. However, further help from the British is needed because he has run out of tobacco and needs to obtain some from Kano!! This letter has no postal markings and was carried privately by the military.

#### References

1. Naval Intelligence Division *Geographical Handbook Series. French West Africa Vol II The Colonies.* 1944.
2. Fergus Fleming *The Sword and the Cross,* Granta, London 2003.



## Togo - an underpaid postcard, 1924

**John Mayne, with response by Rob May**

*The following short article by John Mayne first appeared in the Journal of the France & Colonies PS in June 2008, and is reproduced with permission of the author and the editor of that Journal*

The 1921 issue [of Togo overprints on stamps of Dahomey] remains elusive on cover before 20 July 1922 with some values as single used stamps still unrecorded before this date. The issue was short lived, and whilst more readily found after 1922 is still difficult to find even then.

The item shown overleaf was a delight to acquire, as it brings together German, British, and French connections. The German cancel of Lome was applied on 13 February 1924 on the French 20c value of the 1921 issue used alone, with ½d and 1d postage dues affixed at Ipswich on 5 March. Lome was in the British sector until 1 October 1920. The rate for a card with a message of over five words was 30c. In 1915 1d equated to 10c approximately, and it would seem that 2d postage due should have been raised?

This is only the third example of mail between 1914 and 1924 to England which I have recorded where underpaid postage has been levied.



Figure 1: Postcard sent from Lome 13 February 1924 to Ipswich, postmarked with the ex-German date-stamp, franked 20c when the correct rate should be 30c. Hand-stamped 1½d at the International Section of the GPO London and with GB 1d and ½d postage due stamps applied at Ipswich

Rob May responded

John, the 1½d postage due is correct, and what you have is a nice example of a short-lived rate. As a young collector I was puzzled by the existence of a British 1½d postage due label first issued in 1922 and again with new watermark in 1924. The explanation was provided to me by an article in *Stamp Collecting* in January 1978 by E. Keith Parker (Ref 1) which I kept and which provides the following explanation.

The economic turmoil after the First World War made a reappraisal of the basic rate of postage due a key topic for the Madrid Congress of 1920. Previously the letter rate had been set at the equivalent of 25 French centimes in any member's currency but the French franc had devalued to the extent that on 6 January 1920 the exchange rate was 40.75 Francs to £1 making the French 25c rate totally unrealistic for other currencies.

The agreements reached at that Congress established the concept of the "Gold Franc" as the common unit of conversion of all other currencies at their present exchange rate. In addition Article VI, paragraph 3 of the Madrid Congress specified a minimum surcharge of 30 Gold centimes on any item sent underpaid between member countries. However the British Post Office continued to interpret the Madrid regulations in terms of the French currency, so that the Foreign letter rate became 3d (= 50 French centimes) and the nearest Sterling equivalent of the minimum surcharge of 30 centimes was 1½d. The British minimum 1½d postage due surcharge was introduced on 13 June 1921.

At the 1924 Stockholm Congress the minimum surcharge was reduced to 10 Gold centimes, which converted at that time to 1d Sterling, and brought the period of 1½d postage due to an end.

In John Mayne's example the deficiency is 10 French centimes. This is doubled by regulations to become 20c payable by the recipient, but this is still less than the Madrid Congress minimum of 30 Gold centimes. Using the French centime instead of the Gold centime the British interpretation of the minimum charge of 30 centimes was payable at the rate of 1½d postage due.

#### Reference

1. E. Keith Parker, "International Postage Due and the UPU", *Stamp Collecting*, pp1787-1797, 19 January 1978

# Cameroun – Plating the Sterling issue of 1961: the 2/6 on 30-Franc Type 1 and the 6d on 20-Franc Stamps

Marty Bratzel, Brian Lythgoe, Nick Carter, Michael Wright, Rob May, and Peter Hørlyck

## Introduction

On 1 October 1961, Cameroun introduced 12 then-current postage stamps revalued with sterling currency, for use in West Cameroon. These overprinted stamps remained in use until May 1962, when the currency conversion was completed and stamps in CFA francs were introduced. This article, the fourth in a series, examines in detail the overprint characteristics on the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 and the 6d on 20-franc stamps. Previous articles have examined:

The 1½d on 5-franc and the 3 d on 15-franc F.I.D.E.S. stamps (Ref. 1).

The 1/- on 25-franc Ahidjo stamp (Ref. 2).

The ½d on 1-franc (Type 1), the 1d on 2-franc, and the 2d on 10-franc stamps from the 1946 definitive series (Ref. 3).

## The stamps

The un-overprinted 20-franc definitive stamp, depicting the loading of bananas onto a steamship, was issued in 1959; the stamp is engraved and printed in dark green, orange, and brown. The un-overprinted 30-franc commemorative stamp, publicizing World Refugee Year, was issued in 1960; the stamp is also engraved and printed in red brown, ultramarine, and yellow green. A full sheet of each consists of 25 stamps, arranged in 5 rows of 5 stamps. Both stamps are perf. 13 and are identical in size. The two stamps (Figure 1) were overprinted in September 1961 (Ref. 4) and officially placed on sale in West Cameroon on 1 October 1961. A double overprint has been recorded for the 6d on 20-franc stamp (Ref. 5).

The 2/6 on 30-franc stamp is found with two different overprints. Additional 30-franc stamps were overprinted in late September or very early October 1961 (Ref. 4) using a plate with larger numerals of value. The first printing is classified as Type 1 and the subsequent printing Type 2. The key differences between the two types are more fully described and illustrated anon. This article focusses on the small-numeral 2/6 Type 1 and the 6d stamps released on 1 October.



Type 1

Figure 1  
The 6 d and the 2/6 Type 1 Overprints  
on the Issued Stamps.

## Proof Impression

At least one proof impression was prepared for the 2/6 Type 1 overprint. The proof was cut into at least four pieces, three of which are to hand:

Positions 1-2 and 6-7 (PH).

Positions 3-5, 8-10, and 13-15 (BL).

Positions 11-12 (MW).

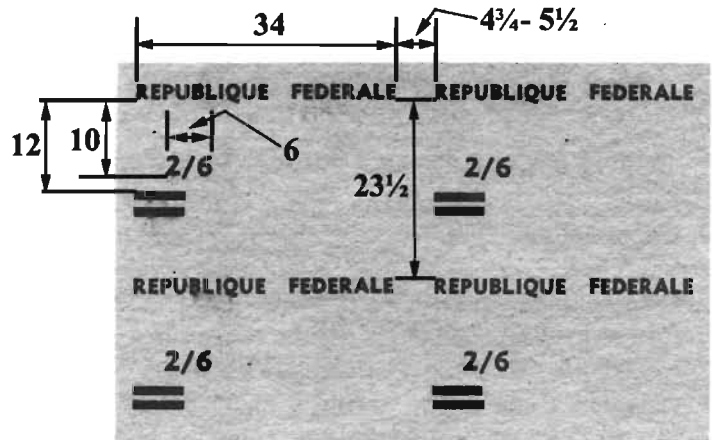
These three pieces, which mesh perfectly together, cover the first three rows in a full sheet of 25 stamps, that is, positions 1-15. The overprint proof, in carmine red on tan paper, is well executed, although a bit over-inked and slightly smeared. The characteristics of the bars are particularly clear. On the reverse is the manuscript notation:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 40 = 1000 \\
 5 \\
 \hline
 200 \\
 40
 \end{array}$$

There may be additional manuscript notation on the back of the missing piece or pieces.

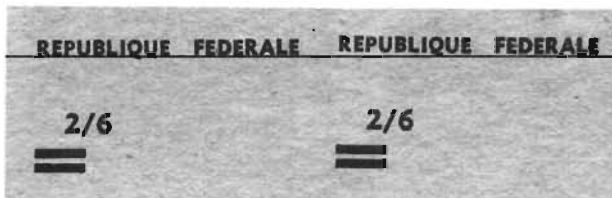
The overprint plate is reasonably well composed. The three rows of the proof overprint have no defective letters or numbers which would facilitate plating. Positions 3-4 and 8-9 are depicted in Figure 2, along with key measurements. There are, however, several factors that assist with plating:

- The pair of bars at each position exhibit specific characteristics; three which are reasonably easily seen with a magnifying glass are illustrated later.
- At some positions the bars are not quite aligned, that is, one bar extends slightly to the left or right relative to the other.
- The text, REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE, is not fully aligned across a row (Figure 3) or down a column (more easily illustrated with a pair of the issued stamps, Figure 4, page 117 for which no proof impression is available).
- The distance between the end of FEDERALE on one stamp in a row and REPUBLIQUE on the adjacent stamp varies between  $4\frac{3}{4}$  and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  mm.
- The position of the 2/6 relative to REPUBLIQUE can differ slightly from one position to another (Figure 5). Generally, however, the placement differences are too subtle to be of much practical use for plating.



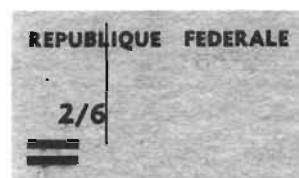
**Positions 3-4 & 8-9**

**Figure 2**  
2/6 Type 1 Proof, Positions 3-4 and 8-9.

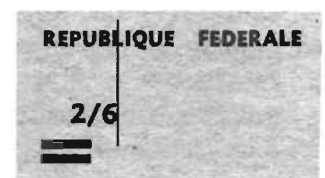


**Positions 14-15**

**Figure 3: 2/6 Type 1 Proof, Misaligned Row, positions 14-15. Compare with issued 6d on 20-franc stamps in Figure 7.**



**Position 3**



**Position 14**

**Figure 5: 2/6 Type 1 Proof, placement of 2/6 relative to REPUBLIQUE, Positions 3 and 14.**

Proofs are not known for the 6d overprint. Since the format of both stamps under consideration here is the same, May (Ref. 6) grouped the two stamps together. We hypothesize that, after the overprint plate was used to prepare the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamps, the plate was adjusted to prepare the 6d on 20-franc stamps. Based on our examination and the discussion below, this is correct.

### Examination of the 2/6 ON 30-Franc Type 1 Stamp

The Carter accumulation (Ref. 7) contains numerous used singles and a few used pairs of the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamp. In addition, a number of mint multiples, some with marginal selvedge, are available, also an irregularly shaped used block of eight. The overprint on all copies seen is well positioned. The ink is carmine red. However, because the stamp is engraved, the ink did not adhere well. As a result, the bars on the issued stamps are not evenly inked, and many of their distinctive characteristics that would assist

with plating are lost. Nonetheless, the slight misalignment of rows and columns of text, the subtle differences in the placement of the 2/6 relative to REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE, and the relative alignment of the bars seen on the proof impression are present on the issued stamps. Indeed, the 2/6 proof and the 2/6 issued stamps fully match for all 15 available positions of the proof. Based on multiples with selvedge plus multiples that straddle the boundary between the portion of the sheet for which proofs are and are not available, it is possible to plate stamps for the final two rows of the sheet, that is, positions 16-25.

Overall, it is reasonably straightforward to plate larger multiples, difficult to plate pairs, and essentially impossible to plate single stamps. However, there are no 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamps with an overprint inconsistent with those observed in a full sheet of 25 stamps, supporting the contention that only one setting was used to overprint the stamps.

### **Examination of the 6d on 20-Franc Stamp**

The Carter accumulation contains numerous used singles and a number of used multiples, up to seven stamps, of the 6d on 20-franc stamp. In addition, a number of mint multiples, some with marginal selvedge, are available. The overprint on most copies seen is well positioned although, on a few copies, the overprint is shifted slightly laterally so that either the text or the bars intersect the perforations. The ink is vermilion. Although the stamp is engraved, the overprint ink, in most cases, adhered reasonably well and the distinctive characteristics of the bars are visible. Four positions are illustrated on page 117. On some stamps, the overprint is under-inked, leading to poor impressions and the consequent inability to see the specific characteristics of the bars, but these remain useful for measurement and alignment between stamps.

A useful observation to help plate the 6d on 20-franc stamp is the placement of the 6d relative to REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE. Figure 6 depicts two relative placements. The intersection at each of the 25 positions in a sheet falls somewhere between these two “extremes.” The differences between any two positions can be subtle. Nonetheless, knowing the relative intersection at each position can help confirm a stamp’s position in a sheet, especially when working with multiples.

Using the distinctive characteristics and the relative alignment of the bars, plus marginal copies with selvedge, as well as consideration of the 6d relative to REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE, the 6d on 20-franc stamps were provisionally plated for all 25 positions in a reconstructed sheet. Multiple copies were available for most positions. There are no stamps among the several hundred examined with an overprint inconsistent with those observed in a full sheet of 25 stamps, supporting the contention that only one setting was used to overprint the stamps. Deliberately, during the plating of the 6d stamps, no reference was made to the 2/6 proof impression or the plated 2/6 stamps.

After the provisional plating was complete, the 6d stamps for positions 1-15 were compared with the 2/6 proof impression and with the issued 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamps. Indeed, distinctive characteristics of the bars are present for corresponding positions, including the misalignment of text on adjacent stamps in a row (see, for example, Figure 7). The 6d stamps for positions 16-25 were compared with the corresponding 2/6 stamps (for which no proof impression is available); distinctive bar characteristics are present, notably at two key positions.

### **Further Plating Considerations**

There is, however, a significant anomaly that led us to question the provisional plating of the 6d stamps and to conduct a careful re-examination. When we compared the relative alignment of the two bars each of the 25 positions, we found that, for fifteen of the positions, the bar alignments on the 6d stamps match (or are not inconsistent with) the corresponding 2/6 proof impression and the 2/6 stamps. However, for ten of the positions, the relative bar alignments are different.

The perfect match between the 2/6 proof impression and the overprint on the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamps lead us to conclude that the overprint plate was used as prepared. However, after the 2/6 print run was complete, to prepare the plate to apply the 6d overprint to the 20-franc stamps, the plate had to be partially disassembled. The observation that the bars with key distinguishing characteristics remained at the same positions for both the 2/6 overprint plate and the adjusted 6d overprint plate indicate that the plate was not

completely disassembled. The additional observation – that the horizontal misalignment of REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE present along a row of both the 2/6 proof and the issued 2/6 on 30-franc stamps was also present for the 6d on 20-franc stamps – further supports this conjecture and gives an indication of the extent of plate disassembly. However, significant changes were made, notably:

- The 2/6 was replaced with 6d and repositioned from the left to the right (as viewed on the overprinted stamps).
- The pair of bars was also repositioned from left to right.
- The distance between REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE on horizontally adjacent 6d on 20-franc stamps is different from the distance on adjacent 2/6 on 30-franc stamps from the same corresponding positions. In some cases, the change in distance between horizontal pairs is minimal (i.e. a ¼ mm or less) but, in other cases, the distance was increased by as much as 1½ mm or decreased by as much as 1 mm. See, for example, Figures 8 and 9.
- The distance between REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE on vertically adjacent 6d on 20-franc stamps is the same or only minimally (i.e. less than a ½ mm) different from the distance on adjacent 2/6 on 30-franc stamps from the corresponding positions.
- The vertical alignment of REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE in a column of 6d on 20-franc stamps is altered from that observed for the corresponding stamps from the 2/6 proof impression and the issued 2/6 on 30-franc stamps.

We carefully re-examined the provisional plating of the 6d stamp, taking into account positions known to be correct because of selvedge and because of distinctive characteristics of the bars at incontrovertibly established positions. We found that, even though the relative alignment of the bars was different for ten positions, the distinctive characteristics of the bars (such as those illustrated in Figures 10 - 12 plus other positions which do not lend themselves to reproduction here) are present for the 2/6 proof, the issued 2/6 stamp, and the corresponding position of the provisionally plated 6d stamp. With these anchors, we therefore conclude that the overall assignments for the 6d stamps are indeed correct.

The presence of bars with distinctive characteristics at the same corresponding positions for the 6d on 20-franc and the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamps and the 2/6 proof lead us to conclude that the same plate, suitably adjusted, was used for both denominations. The numerous differences noted above indicate the extent to which the overprint plate was disassembled, but also that the bars and many of the spacers were left in position while the adjustments were made to the overprint plate. That the bars at ten positions shifted slightly relative to each other is not unexpected, but did contribute to some consternation during the plating exercise.

For the record, we note that, at two positions, the bars *may* be different, but the poor quality of the overprint on the issued stamps, coupled with the limited number of copies available for study at those two positions, preclude a definitive conclusion one way or the other.

### **Characteristics of Specific Positions**

Illustrated in Figures 10 - 12 are distinctive characteristics present on the 2/6 proof impression, the issued 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamp, and / or the 6d on 20-franc stamp:

Position 14 – indentation at top of lower bar (Figure 10).

Position 20 – indentation at bottom right of lower bar (Figure 11).

Position 24 – break at top left corner of upper bar. (Figure 12).

Examination of stamps with a 30X magnifier was *de rigueur*. Indeed, the challenges of plating even the three illustrated examples are demonstrated by the poor ink adherence of the 2/6 overprint and the orange ink of the 20-franc stamp. The availability of multiple copies of stamps from each position in a sheet confirm that these characteristics are real and not artefacts resulting from under-inking or poor ink adherence.

The distinctive micro-characteristics present at other positions do not easily lend themselves to reproduction here, even in colour, because the characteristics generally fall atop the printed design of the stamps. A number will, nonetheless, be illustrated in a future article, in conjunction with a discussion of

the overprinting plate used for different denominations in this series.

### The 2/6 on 30-Franc Type 2 Stamp

The key differences between the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 and Type 2 overprints are depicted in Figure 13. May (Ref. 8) showed a full sheet of 25. The identification of distinctive characteristics at specific positions in the Type 2 sheet is the subject of a future article in this series.



Positions 20 & 25

Figure 4: 2/6 on 30-franc Stamps, Vertically Misaligned Text, Positions 20 and 25.



Position 5

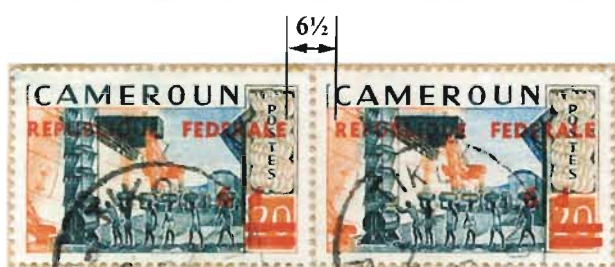
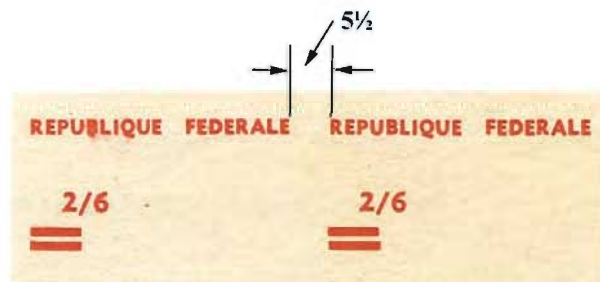
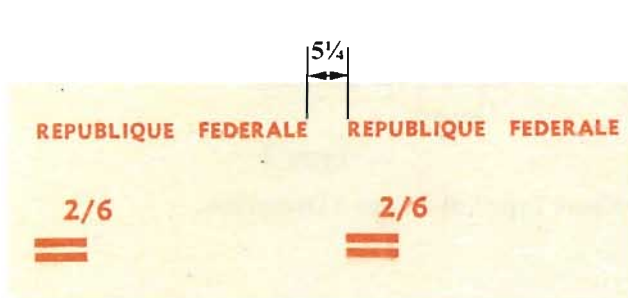
Position 6

Figure 6: 6d Placement Relative to FEDERALE, Positions 5 and 6.



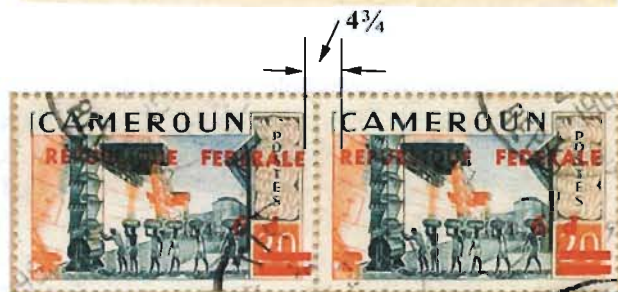
Positions 14-15

Figure 7: 6d Misaligned Row, Positions 14-15. Compare with 2/6 proof in Figure 3.



Positions 1-2

Figure 8: E - R Distances between Positions 1 and 2. 2/6 proof impression and 6d on 20-franc stamp.



Positions 8-9

Figure 9: E - R Distances between Positions 8 and 9. 2/6 proof impression and 6d on 20-franc stamp.



Figure 10  
Position 14

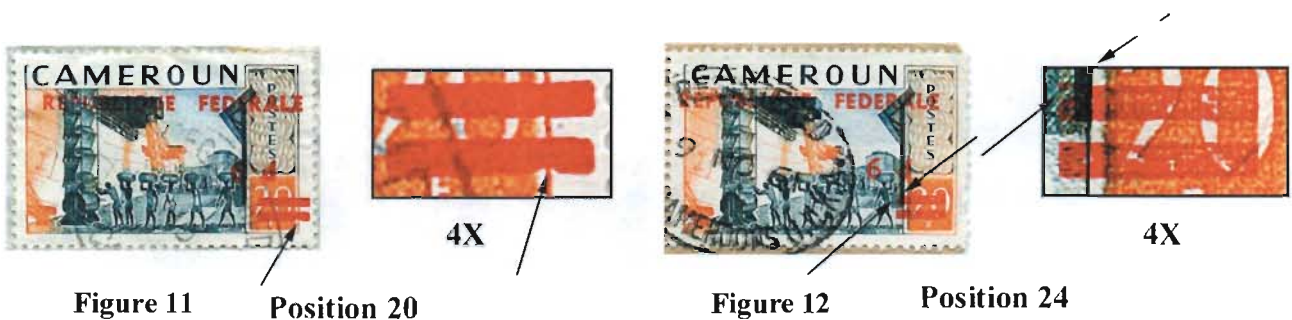


Figure 11 Position 20

Figure 12 Position 24

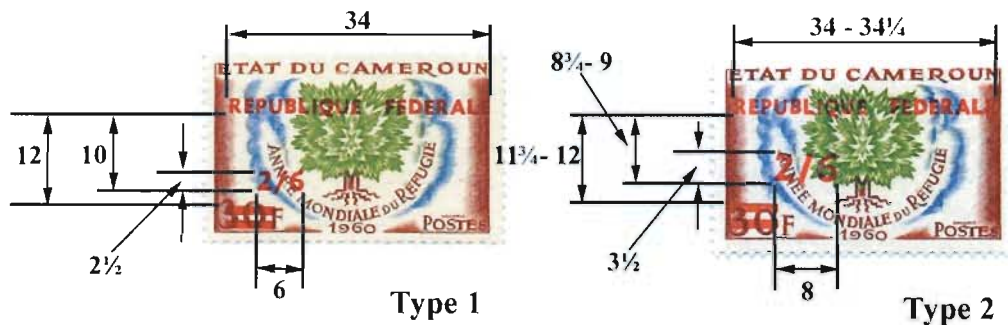


Figure 13: Characteristics of the 2/6 on 30-Franc Type 1 and Type 2 Overprints.

## Conclusions

Proof impressions are available for 15 of the 25 positions of the 2/6 Type 1 overprint. Poor adherence of the overprint ink on the issued 2/6 on 30-franc stamp significantly obscures or wipes out the distinctive characteristics of the overprint at each position, thus, the plating of the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamp is challenging. However, for both the 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 and the 6d on 20-franc stamps, through careful comparison of the bars on multiples or marginal stamps with selvedge, as well as consideration of horizontal and vertical alignment of rows and columns, plus the position of the denomination relative to REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE, we have plated the stamps of both denominations for all 25 positions in the sheet. Distinctive macro- and / or micro-characteristics on the 2/6 proof impression, the issued 2/6 on 30-franc Type 1 stamp, and the corresponding positions of the 6d on 20-franc stamp can, with care, be discerned from the artefacts arising from poor ink adherence and / or under-inking. There are no stamps, among the several hundred examined, that could not be associated with one of the 25 positions. These considerations, taken together, lead us to conclude that there was only one overprint setting for each stamp and that the plate used to apply the 2/6 overprint was, after adjustment, also used to apply the 6d overprint. The 2/6 Type 2 stamp, discussed in Ref. 8, constitutes a separate, later printing.

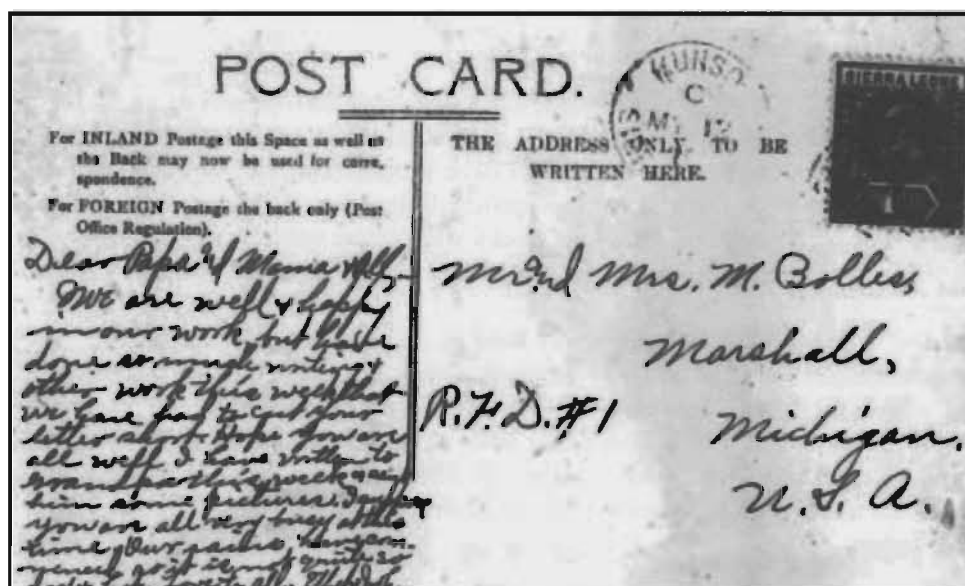
## References

1. Bratzel, Marty, Brian Lythgoe, Rob May, and Nick Carter. Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 1½d on 5 Franc and the 3d on 15 Franc Stamps. *Cameo*, Vol. 8, No. 3, June 2004, pages 144-150.
2. Bratzel, Marty, Brian Lythgoe, Nick Carter, and Bob Maddocks. Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 1/- on 25 Franc Stamp. *Cameo*, Vol. 9, No. 3, January 2006, pages 129-133.
3. Bratzel, Marty, Brian Lythgoe, Nick Carter, Michael Wright, and Peter Hørlyck. Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the ½d on 1 Franc, 1d on 2 Franc, and 2d on 10 Franc Stamps. *Cameo*, Vol. 10, No. 7, January 2009.
4. Bratzel, Marty. Cameroun – the Sterling Issue of 1961: Printings, Dates of Issue and Availability. *Cameo*, Vol. 9, No. 4, June 2006, pages 190-197.
5. Lythgoe, Brian. Cameroun 1961 6d surcharge double. *Cameo*, Vol. 10, No. 2, June 2007, page 87.
6. May, Rob. Cameroun 1961 Sterling Surcharges Reprinted. *Cameo*, Vol. 6, No. 7, July 2000, pages 330-331.
7. The Carter accumulation is a large quantity of used Cameroon stamps that Nick Carter acquired “on the streets” in Lagos in 1961-62. Nick passed away on September 11, 2008. His stamps have been, and will continue to be available for study. Additional articles based on his accumulation will be published periodically in the philatelic literature.
8. May, Rob. Cameroun 1961 2/6 Large Format Surcharge. *Cameo*, Vol. 8, No. 5, January 2005, pages 297-298.



## Kunso, Sierra Leone again

John Hossack



I have another example of the Kunso postmark to add to the list previously shown in *Cameo* (Ref. 1). This was applied to a postcard on 12 May 1910, the stamp being cancelled at Freetown on 18 May. The card was sent by the Rev. John Ovenshire and his wife Ethel to, presumably, Ethel's parents in Marshall, Michigan, USA. Michigan had a strong connection with the Wesleyan Mission in Sierra Leone. Marshall is in the Battle Creek area of the state, which was the destination of another postcard illustrated in *Cameo* (Ref. 2). John and Ethel went to Kunso in November 1909. John died there in January 1912 and Ethel returned to the USA in March of the same year.

Thanks are due to Philip Quirk who kindly sent me information about John and Ethel Ovenshire.

## References

1. Quirk, P. & Carter, D., “The Wesleyan Methodist Mission at Kunso”, *Cameo*, Volume 10 pp200-204, WASC, January 2008
2. Quirk, P., Walton F. & Carter, D., “A 1912 Postcard from Kunso, Sierra Leone”, *Cameo*, Volume 7 pp265-267, WASC, January 2003

# Gambia; the Currency Changes of 1971

Oliver Andrew

On 1 July 1971 The Gambia changed its currency from sterling to 100 bututs = 1dalasi. The dalasi (the word originates from 'dollar') was the local name for the French five gold franc coin, legal tender in The Gambia for many years and worth 3 shillings 10½d, ie roughly 4 shillings. Four shillings is 96 half-pennies which was near enough to a decimal system for most price changes to be easily made. However fixed rates, like postage, hit problems. Because of the 4% discrepancy some values had to be fudged. You could either multiply from 1 butut = ½d or divide down from 100 bututs = 4/-. But in the middle was muddle.

Face values of stamps were

old	new	old	new
½d	(-)	1/-	25b
1d	2b	1/6d	38b
1½d	(-)	(-)	50b
2d	4b	2/6d	63b
3d	6b	5/-	1D25
4d	8b	10/-	2D50
(-)	10b	£1	5D
6d	13b		

Of the new values, 50b was for registered airmail to the UK, and the 10b served no special purpose. Rates of postage appear not to have been considered fully. Registration changed from 6d to 13b, but unregistered airmail to the UK, which had been 1/6d, and might have become 36b, or 39b (3x13b) became 37b, a rate which needed a combination of three stamps. Registered airmail was 50b, ie 13b + 37b. Aerogrammes remained at 10d face value (=20b cost) until all stocks with a face value in sterling, including 7½d + 2½d stamps, and 8d + 2d stamps, were exhausted. Registered envelopes followed a similar pattern.

The 38b stamp had a short life because nobody used it. Subsequent commemorative sets contained the values 4b (the new inland rate), 25b and 37b (seamail and airmail abroad). The discrepancy between rates and face values was to recur with depressing frequency. The 1977 flowers set, for example, had the same face values as the fishes set of 1971. There had been some rate increases in the meantime (inland 8b, registration 25b, first class unregistered mail to the UK 50b), but the unused 38b stamp value had not been changed, even though it still corresponded to no postage rate.



## Gold Coast Government Railway Postmarks

Peter Duggan

During the Edwardian period date-stamps were issued to a small number of offices at towns on the railway network with G.C.G.R at the top of the ring and the name of the station at the foot. Mackin lists those enclosed within a 25mm single ring as Type 10 adding that they have only been recorded at ABOSSO (1903-07), HUNI VALLEY (1911) and IMBRAIM (1905-11)



The postmark illustrated, although poor and incomplete, is clearly of the same type, and is dated on two lines AP 1/11: at the foot of the ring 'UASO' appears in such a way that there are likely to be two or three more letters before the 'U'. From the railway map illustrated in *Cameo* (Vol. 6 No. 6 page 277) the only stop that fits is ESUASO, spelt in later postmarks ESSUASO.

# 2009 South Atlantic Visit

## Part 1 - Ascension Island

### Barry Burns

Bernard Mabbett and I returned to the South Atlantic earlier this year for our second visit to Ascension Island and third visit to St Helena. Our previous trips were reported in some depth (Refs. 1,2,3) so this time I am concentrating on the philatelic and archival aspects.

Summarising our itinerary, we departed the UK on Wednesday 14 January on the overnight RAF flight from Brize Norton to Ascension and, after two nights at Georgetown, departed on Saturday 17 January on the RMS *St Helena* for Jamestown where we arrived on Monday the 19th. On this occasion we spent nearly four weeks on St Helena, and did not embark the RMS until Saturday 14 February. The journey to Cape Town took nearly eight days including a stop at Walvis Bay, Namibia, where we were able to take a Land Rover trip to the 'Living Desert'. It was an excellent holiday, thoroughly enjoyed by Bernard and myself.

However, I must begin by relating a very sad event. Having previously viewed the collection of postage stamps at Jamestown (Ref. 4), I was curious to know if a similar collection had been retained at Ascension. Consequently I sent the following email to Iva Henry, the Georgetown Postmistress, on 20 October 2008:

*Dear Iva,*

*Just a quick question, if you don't mind. No urgency, so reply when (and if!) you have the time to spare.*

*When we visited St Helena the first time, in 1998, we were fortunate to visit the Archives at the Castle in Jamestown. Whilst there we were shown their collection of stamps, which included the very first set for Ascension, issued in 1922 by overprinting the St Helena stamps with 'ASCENSION'. Although there were many sets of St Helena since that date, there were no more Ascension stamps as far as I know.*

*Do you know of any collection of Ascension stamps (either officially kept or otherwise) on Ascension, or if there are any Post Office Records? Bernard Mabbett and I are both returning to the South Atlantic in a few months time. We arrive at Ascension via Brize Norton on 15 January 2009 and leave for St Helena on the RMS on 17 January. During those two days or so we would like to view any stamps or postal archives that you know of, either at Georgetown Post Office or elsewhere.*

*With kind regards and very best wishes, Barry*

Verena Benjamin, a philatelic clerk at the Philatelic Bureau replied on 21 October:

*Thank you for your email.*

*Iva is away on leave and is currently travelling on the RMS St Helena. When she arrives on St Helena I will forward her this message. Alternatively, Iva will return to Ascension in early December, would it be too late to respond then?*

*Best regards, Verena*

I replied to Verena the same day:

*Thank You Verena. Wait until Iva returns to Ascension, we don't arrive there until mid January.*

Iva did eventually reply on 18 December:

*Dear Barry,*

*Thank you for your enquiry with regard to the Post Office Records/Archives.*

*I am sorry it has taken me a while to reply to you but your email arrived just after I had left for my holiday in St Helena. Also on my return I fell ill and have not been at my desk to catch up on past correspondence.*

*There are records on past issues at the Post Office and at the Heritage Society and I am sure you will be welcomed to have a look at them when you arrive. With all best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.*

*Sincerely, Iva, Iva Henry, Postmistress, Ascension Island Government.*

Ewas naturally pleased with this response, and replied the same day:

*Dear Iva,*

*Many thanks for your reply. Sorry to hear of your illness; I hope you are OK now. Will certainly follow up your suggestions when we arrive on 15 January. Looking forward to our return very much.*

*Best wishes for Christmas and 2009, Barry*

I thought that was that and prepared to relax over Christmas. Imagine my shock and horror then, when the following email arrived on 22 December:

*Dear Mr. Burns,*

*Trust all remains well with you and wondering as to why I'm making contact.*

*I'm the Inspector of Police and in charge of the Police Department on Ascension. A recently (sic) Incident has occurred whereby Mrs. Iva Henry the Post Mistress has disappeared from here (sic) home. I'm obliged to carry out an investigation into this incident. As the investigation unfolds I would be grateful if you would enlighten me on your visit to Ascension in January of next year. Pl could you be specific on your visit to the Ascension Post Office and what would your visit entails (sic). I've access to your e-mail sent to Mrs. Henry regarding the issue with the stamps and archiving of these records. To complete our lines of enquiry I would need to know the exact working of the Archives, to establish as to what could have gone wrong in the first place.*

*What is your position with the Post Office of Ascension Island?*

*I'm sorry to trouble at this time in these circumstances.*

*Pl could you write a statement to this effect on the attached form.*

*Many thanks and look forward to your cooperation.*

*Best Regards, Reg Williams, Inspector of Police*

Attached was a St Helena Police Statement of Witness form, which I duly printed off and entered the above information. This was scanned before returning the image to Reg Williams on 23 December:

*Dear Mr Williams,*

*I am sorry to hear this news; it was only four days ago that Iva Henry sent an email to me.*

*I attach the completed statement form. I have tried to give any pertinent information, but please contact me again if there are any particular questions - although I can add very little to the current situation.*

*Kind regards, Barry*

Apart from a couple of emails concerning our forthcoming January visit, and a request to itemise the most valuable stamps that may have been present in Post Office hands, that was the end of the correspondence.

When Bernard and I arrived at Georgetown we visited the small Police Station and met David Sismey, the Sergeant on duty. He explained that Iva had still not been found, and very little progress had been made. I should point out that it is almost impossible for anybody to leave the Island without assistance as the nearest land of ANY form is St Helena, over 700 miles away. With the tight security on the Island, all arrivals and departures are more than thoroughly monitored, and it is inconceivable that any person could leave unnoticed.

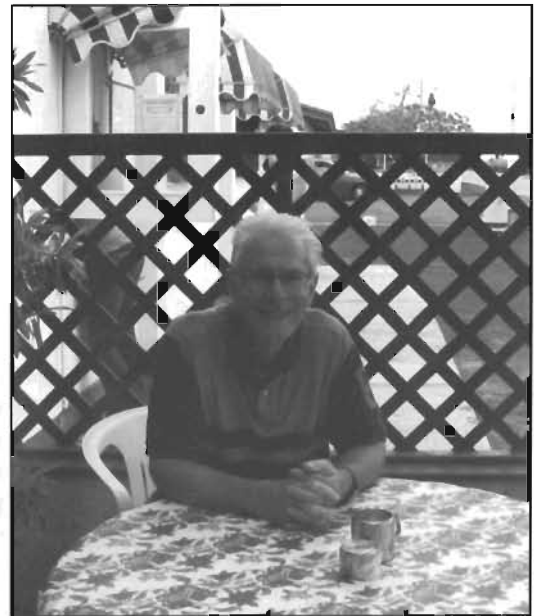
The conclusion, therefore, must be that Iva had met with a tragic accident, or took her own life. Whatever, a very sad episode indeed, and I am sure that all members of the Circle who had dealings with Iva will join me in expressing our sympathies to Iva's family and friends.



Figure 1 Happier Times

Iva Henry, when Postmistress at Jamestown, with WASC members (l to r) Brian Foord, Alan Scrine, Bernard Mabbett and Barry Burns, taken during our June 1998 visit to St Helena

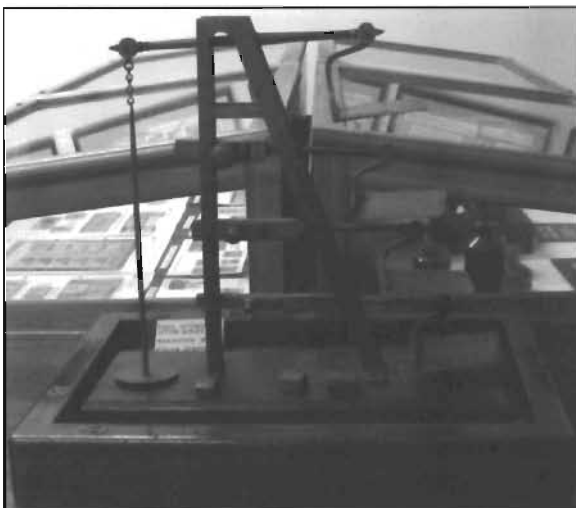
Because of this development, our planned search at the Post Office was naturally cancelled. However, contact was made with the Heritage Museum, and Neil MacFall kindly opened it up for us on the Friday (usually the museum is open only on Saturdays - the day of our departure!). This is well worth a visit, and Neil, Bernard and I spent a very interesting and useful couple of hours there.



Figures 2 & 3

The Museum, and Neil MacFall relaxing At the 'Tasty Tucker', Georgetown

Inside the deceptively large building the Heritage Society has assembled a varied selection of artefacts dating back to the times when the Island was first occupied in 1815 by the British Navy to deter the French at the time of Napoleon's exile on St Helena. There are a number of displays of interest to the philatelist, which Neil (an enthusiastic collector himself) has collated and described.



Figures 4 & 5

The 'Weighing Machine' with description

**VICTORIAN POST OFFICE LETTER WEIGHING MACHINE.**

This set of scales was originally housed in the Post Office run by the Marines as part of the Paymaster's Office. It dates from 1857 and we can state this confidently because in the Ascension Island Letter Books, kept in the local Archives, we find the following order for them made to the Admiralty by the Captain-in-Charge at the time.

**10. From Captain-in-Charge to The Secretary of The Admiralty, London, Requesting a Seal & Letter Weight.**

*Per "Scourge" 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 1857  
Ascension 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 1857*

*Sir,*

*I have to request you will be pleased to cause a Seal with a suitable device & a Letter Weighing Machine to be sent out for the use of my office, much inconvenience having arisen from the want of these articles, there being no means of procuring them on the Island,*

*The Secretary of The Admiralty*

*I have the honour.....etc  
Signed Geo A Seymour, Captain.*

They are of a very rare type known as a "Ladder Scale" (for obvious reasons) and were manufactured by Degraeve, Short, Fanner & Co in London. Made from brass and mounted on a wooden base, they still have three original weights of 1oz, 2oz and 4oz - all that were needed to weigh Victorian letters.

A very early postal item is the letter weighing machine shown in Figure 4, the description of which (Fig. 5) dates it from 1857. Although my photograph of the machine is not very clear, it is just possible to make out the four 'steps' making the 'ladder' on the right. Amazing that the three original weights are still present.

The idea of letterboxes at Ascension dates from the seventeenth century, when outward bound ships would leave messages on the Island for the next calling ship to take home. This concept must have appealed to later walkers on Ascension, because by 1913 a green tin box appeared at Letterbox near the easternmost point on the Island, and letters were left there for the next person to come along and put in the General Post.

A modern series of letterboxes dates from 12 September 1979 when Scan Newery and some friends discussed the possibility of having handstamps placed at the letterboxes. The idea became popular, as there are now twenty-four such letterboxes on Ascension, each with its own distinctive handstamp. The following locations now have a letterbox and handstamp, from the dates of introduction shown:

Sister's Peak	12 September 1979	Crystal Bay	19 April 1987
Letterbox	15 September 1979	White Horse	8 September 1987
Broken Tooth	1 December 1979	Devil's Cauldron	1989
Mountain Red Hill	8 December 1979	Pillar Bay	19 September 1990
Dew Pond	12 January 1980	Northwest Point	30 April 1991
Cocconut Bay	27 January 1980	Bullocks Ponds	13 November 1992
Weatherpost	9 July 1980	Louie's Ledge	1995
Spire Beach	13 April 1981	Boatswain Bird View	January 1996
South Red Crater	16 April 1981	Oatey's Oasis	Not Known
Ladyhill	19 October 1982	Wolves' Bluff	January 2007
Crater Cliff	25 April 1985	Echo Canyon	2007
Devil's Riding School	February 1986	Duckpond	2008

In addition, a further three letterboxes are due to be installed during 2009. The locations of these will be at Shelly Beach, Goat Hole and Dampier's Drip. So the enthusiastic walker will be kept busy (and fit - some of these walks are quite demanding) if he/she decides to visit them all. I was surprised to hear from Neil that few walkers actually handstamp covers (apart from himself!), but are quite content to simply stamp the spaces in their guidebooks to prove they have completed the walk. Figure 6 illustrates a map, showing the letterbox locations and handstamp designs of the first 18 walks, which is displayed at the museum.

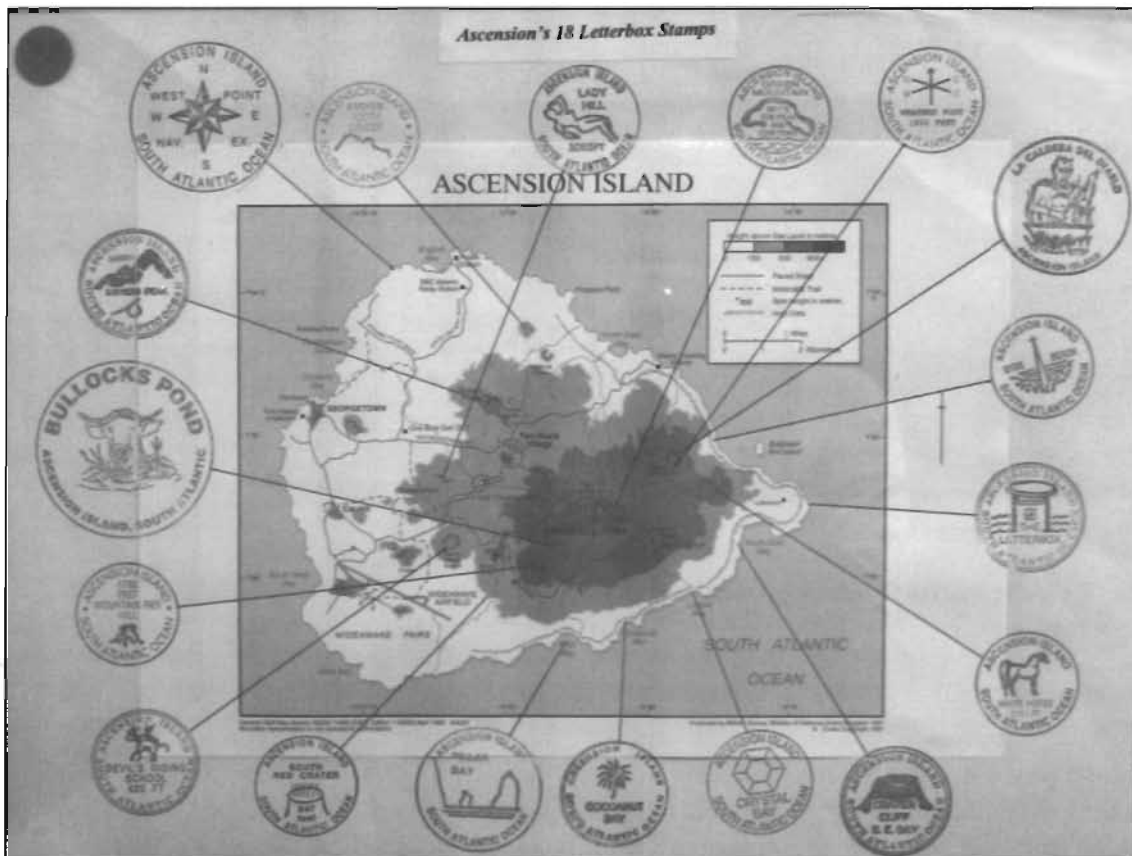


Figure 6 Map showing the location of the first 18 of the letterboxes, and handstamps used

This information is adapted (with thanks) from Neil MacFall's booklet *Ascension Island Letterbox Walks*, published in 1998, and from information later supplied by Neil. An updated edition is available from the Heritage Museum, and a supplement will be issued later this year with details of the latest additions.

Neil has managed to gather a wide range of stamps and covers, from the first issue of 1922 up to fairly recent ones. One of the wall frames houses the first overprinted set, together with the notice announcing that the postage rates of Ascension would be the same as those for St Helena. There is also a registered cover to the USA of 1931 franked with the 1d. and 5d. values of the 'Badge' set paying the correct rate of sixpence (3d Foreign postage plus 3d registration). A display cabinet also shows issues up to the 1937 Coronation set, including the 1922 overprints on St Helena with the SH2 Specimen handstamp (Figure 7). This set is scarce in this form. Unfortunately, lack of time and magnifying glass meant that a close scrutiny of the 1924 badge set for varieties will have to wait! A number of first day covers are also on show.



Naturally, a visit to Ascension must include at least one visit to the Post Office. The two ladies working there were most helpful, and asking for corner and imprint blocks etc. was no trouble. I resisted the temptation to purchase all the items stocked, many of which were displayed on the walls (but without any 'Specimen' or other handstamp!). It was possible to obtain not only Ascension Island stamps etc., but also those of St Helena and Tristan da Cunha. So the avid collector would require a deep pocket.

Bernard and I bought stamps for our immediate needs, and I also fell for the latest very attractive definitive issue in a presentation pack (Figure 8). Four different aerogrammes were available, each with varying illustrations of Island scenes and wildlife, but no booklets. I also obtained a postal order (normal British type) for one of our honorary life members, but was surprised that the clerk did not apply the issuing office c.d.s.



Figure 8 2008 'Animals and Eggs' Presentation Pack

However, a receipt was issued which was stamped with the c.d.s. and also had the postal order number. I was told this is normal practice on the Island, unlike at St Helena, where we later discovered that the usual UK system of stamping the order with the c.d.s. of the issuing office was adopted.

For the record, I list the postal rates of Ascension which were in operation at the time of our visit in January 2009.

#### SURFACE MAIL

<b>LETTERS</b>	<b>St Helena</b>	<b>International</b>
First 20g or part of	0.15	0.25
Above 20g up to 100g	0.35	0.50
Above 100g up to 250g	0.65	1.00
Above 250g up to 500g	1.25	1.75
Above 500g up to 1000g	2.00	2.75
Above 1000g up to 2000g (Maximum weight 2kg)	4.00	4.75

<b>POSTCARDS</b>	0.15	0.20
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#### **PRINTED MATTER**

First 20g or part of	0.10	0.20
Above 20g up to 100g	0.25	0.45
Above 100g up to 250g	0.35	0.75
Above 250g up to 500g	0.60	1.00
Above 500g up to 1000g	0.85	1.25
Above 1000g up to 2000g	1.25	2.50
Each additional 1000g - add	0.60	1.00
(Maximum weight: paper 2kg, books and pamphlets 5kg max.)		

#### **SMALL PACKETS**

First 100g or part of	0.25	0.45
Above 100g up to 250g	0.35	0.75
Above 250g up to 500g	0.60	1.00
Above 500g up to 1000g	0.85	1.25
Above 1000g up to 2000g (Maximum weight 2kg)	1.25	2.50

#### **SPECIAL CHARGES**

Registration Fee	0.50	0.50
Insured Premium 25p per £35, for insured value or part thereof plus the registration fee.		
Maximum insured value £1000.		

<b>PARCELS</b>	<b>St Helena</b>	<b>South Africa</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>
Items exceeding 2kg:			
Above 2kg up to 3kg	4.00	8.00	9.00
Above 3kg up to 5kg	5.00	10.00	11.00
Above 5kg up to 10kg	7.00	13.00	16.00
Above 10kg up to 15kg	9.00	16.00	26.00
Above 15kg up to 20kg	11.00	19.00	36.00
Above 20kg for each add. 1kg add (Maximum weight 30kg)	1.20	1.50	2.00

To other countries the rate of postage to Great Britain or South Africa (as the case may be) plus the onward postage therefrom to the country of destination.

Insurance (via Great Britain only) 25p per £35 for the insured value or part thereof. (Maximum insured value £583.11 SDR) (IBC 29/04)

### AIRMAIL TO ALL DESTINATIONS

#### LETTERS

For the first 10g or part thereof	0.40
Above 10g up to 20g	0.50
For each additional 20g or part thereof	0.30

**POSTCARDS** 0.35

#### PRINTED MATTER

For the first 20g or part thereof	0.30
For each additional 20g or part thereof	0.20

#### SMALL PACKETS

For the first 100g or part thereof	1.00
For each additional 20g or part thereof	0.20

Bernard and I both sent quite a number of letters and cards whilst on Ascension, but I am illustrating just the following two aerogrammes.

Figure 9 illustrates (at 80%) one of the aerogrammes (air letter sheets) which was posted at the Georgetown Post Office. The GEORGETOWN/ \* / 16 JA / 09 / ASCENSION ISLAND c.d.s. is correctly applied over the printed 'Postage Paid' impression. This particular aerogramme has 9 illustrations, showing Ascension from the South-East on the front.

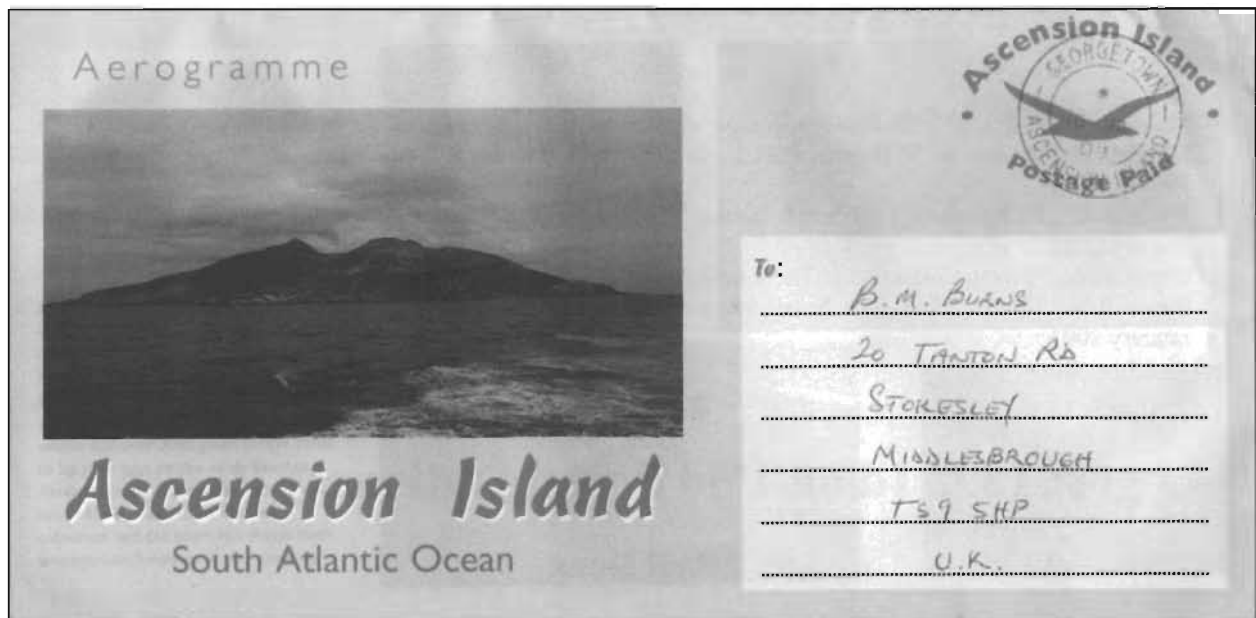


Figure 9

Aerogramme posted at Georgetown

The second aerogramme depicts the RMS *St Helena* anchored off Clarence Bay, and this example (Figure 10, also at 80%) was posted on board the RMS as we sailed towards St Helena. It has the double oval R.M.S. \* ST. HELENA \*/ \* POSTED AT SEA \* cachet, similar to Mabbett RMS Type 2 but larger, measuring 40 x 24 mm. On arrival at Jamestown it received the normal Jamestown oval cancel of 19 January, but note that this was, correctly, not applied over the Postage Paid impression. It did not, however, receive either a Paquebot mark or the RMS ST HELENA c.d.s. as was the case in 2002.

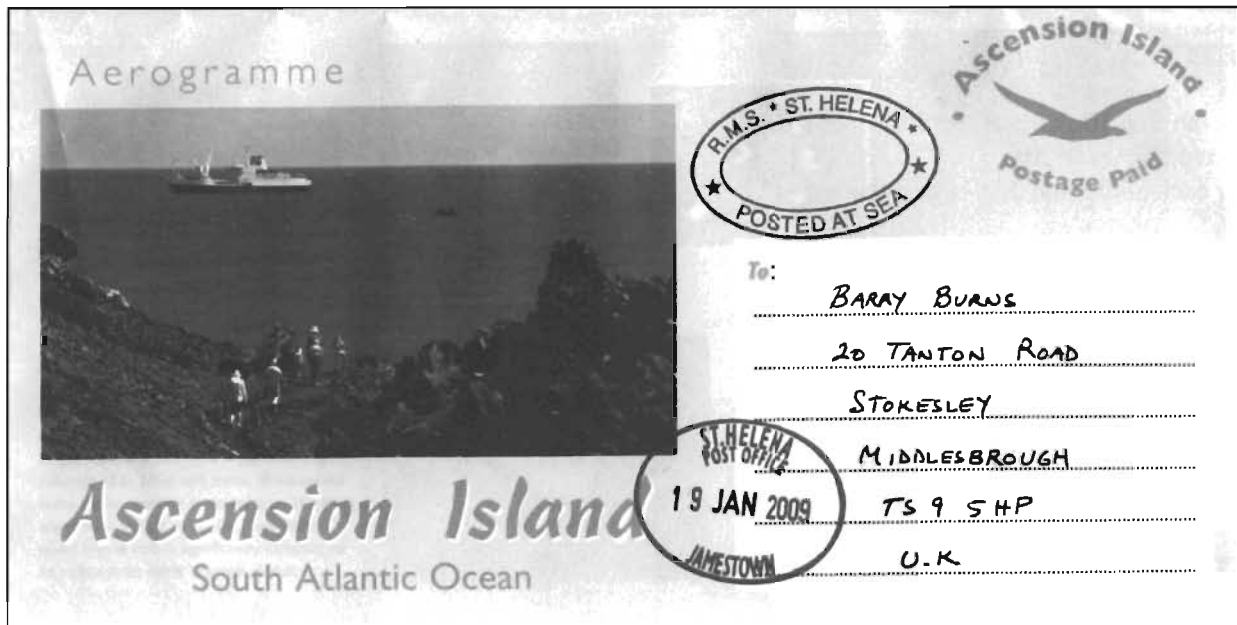


Figure 10

Aerogramme posted on board the RMS en route for Jamestown

The two aerogrammes not illustrated here show a Green Turtle Swimming, and English Bay, respectively, on the front. All four were published by Southern Cross Ventures.

As the datestamp in Figure 10 shows, we arrived at Jamestown on Monday 19 January 2009, from where this article will resume in the October edition of *Cameo*.

#### References

- 1 Mabbett B., "A Trip to St Helena", *St Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 31*, pp3-8, WASC, January 1999
- 2 Mabbett B., "A Trip to St Helena, Part 2", *St Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 32*, pp3-7, WASC, July 1999
- 3 Burns B.M., "Notes from Two Small Islands", *St Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 39*, pp4-18, WASC, January 2003
- 4 Burns B.M., "Stamp Collection at The Castle Archives", *Cameo Volume 8* pp230-240, WASC, October 2004
- 5 Burns B.M., "Notes from Two Small Islands", *St Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 39*, p17, WASC, January 2003



## Lagos: 1892 1d on 1½d Postal Stationery Postcard

Paul Dunn

I illustrate at figures 1 and 2 both sides of a used example of this postal stationery postcard. The Lagos Colony Postmaster (?), Mr Cole, had written this card on 16 May 1893 to Edward Denny Bacon at 41 Seething Lane, London. David Beech has kindly told me that Bacon had his business, Bacon & Hastings, as flour factors at this address. The card is stamped in transit at Liverpool 18 JU 93. Part of the message reads:

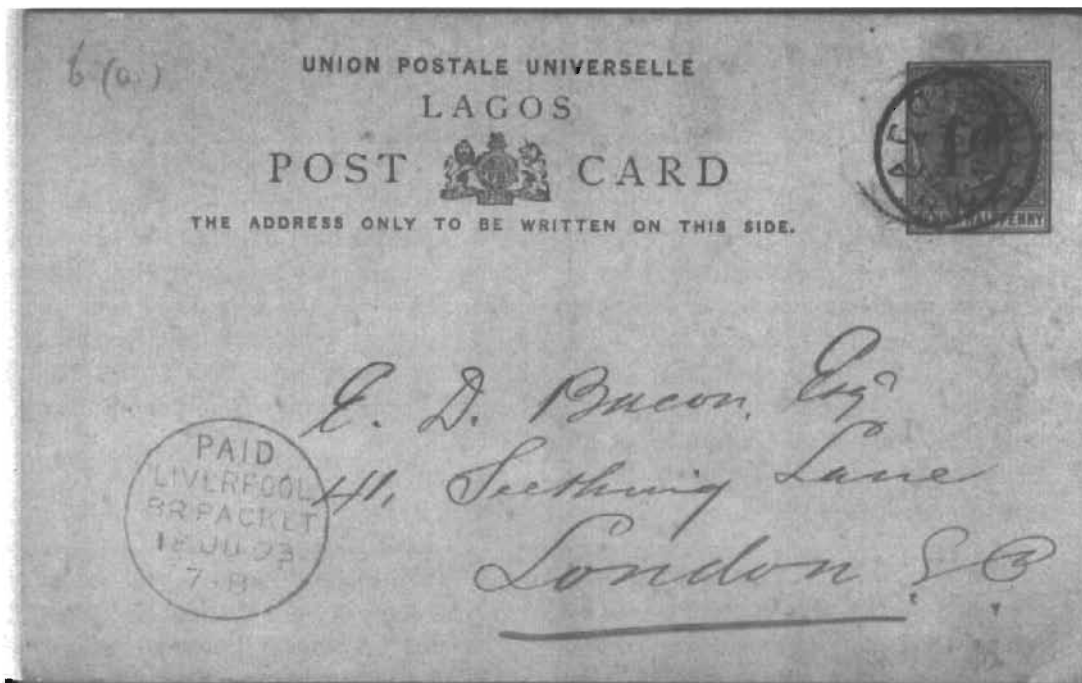


Figure 1 front

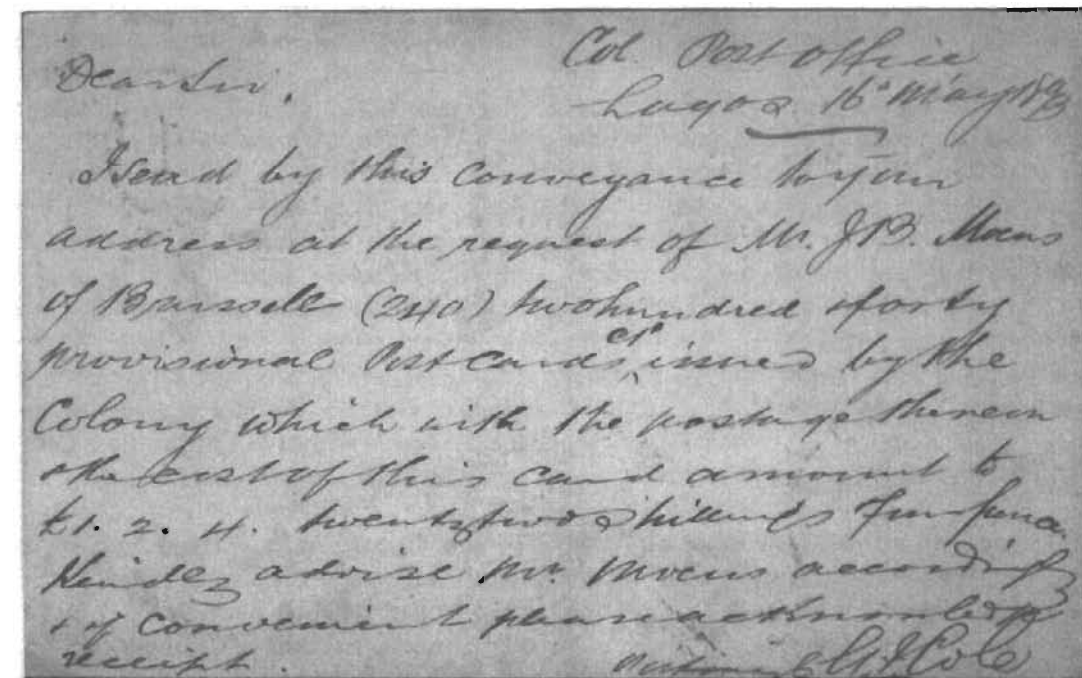


Figure 2 message side

*"I send by this conveyance to your address at the request of Mr JB Moens of Brussels (240) two hundred and forty provisional postcards 1d issued by the Colony..."*

I believe the card in question to be that on which the message is written, ie Queen Victoria Type CP2 surcharged by local printing in 1892 with "1d" in black. (Ref 1).

It is estimated that 1000 cards were surcharged, so Bacon would have received about a quarter of the total. Here my research runs out. Were other postmasters asked to make similar despatches? What was the arrangement between Moens and Bacon? To whom did the 240 mint postcards eventually find their way? Any light that members can shed on this would be very welcome.

#### Reference

1. Ince J.F. & Sacher J., *The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region Prior to 1914*, pp99 & 102, RPSL, London 1992

# Nigeria: C.R. Walker's Scrapbooks

Michael St J. Wright

C.R. Walker was a serious collector of Nigerian stamps and postal history while he was in Nigeria as a colonial civil servant between the wars (I believe he first went out there to be an officer in the WAFF during the First World War). He corresponded with H.G. Porter, and other active Nigeria philatelists, and contributed articles and notes to *Stamp Collecting* et al. Quite a lot of his material has appeared onto the market in recent years, through various dealers.

His interests were very wide; he took note of postal history matters, and other things that might still be called Cinderella, to an unusual extent for that era. He compiled two large scrapbooks in which he collected cuttings of philatelic articles or information, or meticulously transcribed details from Gazettes, Post Office Circulars etc.

These books were once in the possession of our one-time president the late Harold Macmillan, who passed them to John Wilson, who (longer ago than I would like to say) in turn entrusted them to me while I extracted information that I thought should be brought together and published more widely. Barbara Priddy has also seen them for their wealth of contemporary writing on airmails. Now we have finished with them, John Wilson kindly proposes to place them in the WASC Library.

Artefacts in the (untitled) green book include:

1\* Between pp9-10: a small form labelled Taxed Correspondence with "P&T Form No" (but not numbered!) postmarked KEFFI on 4 Dec 21, and covers of a 4s 0d booklet of stamps.

2\* Page 32: the front page of The Nigerian Daily Times for 23 Oct 36 about the arrival of airmail.

3\* Page 38: a small Post Office notice about obtaining stamps (P&T Acct.97 G.P., Lagos 49/36)

4 Page 39: an Imperial Reply Coupon (type 1, 2½d) postmarked at Jemaa on 16 Dec 27.

5 On page 44 (A)\*: a blank telegram form A on which stamps would be affixed and cut through with the top half of the stamps becoming part of the receipt.

(B): such a receipt, with stamps for 2s2d postmarked Jos 17 Oct 27

(C): a blank form A with heading PRIVATE TELEGRAM. on which the whole stamps would be retained by the Telegraph Office

6\* Page 46: Post Office Circulars giving Postal Office Charges for 1 Mar 1921 and 1 May 1923.

7\* Between pp 67-68: lists of Post Offices for Jan 1921, Jan 1922 and July 1924 (one for October 1922 is in the yellow book titled Scrapbook.)

8\* Page 80: a large Post Office Notice about Letter Posting on Nigerian Railway No.28 24/12/28

Note

- I have taken the liberty of photocopying the items marked \* above, and would be happy to send any to members for 5p per A4 page, plus postage. Because of overlapping items—sometimes four or five between pages—photocopying is difficult, and potentially risky for artefacts and books as a whole. The books themselves weigh around 2kg each, which may inhibit many movements in and out of the library. They are robust, but show signs of their age!

I have also photocopies available of a typed two-page collation by Herbert G. Porter of "*Sales of Stamps for Postal Purposes from 1914-1934*" (with "*of which sales to collectors*") and the numbers of the various types of Offices and Agencies from 1921-1934, and a two-page typed copy from the Nigerian Gazette of 1928 relating to the Heavy Parcel Service with a list of the Post Offices to or from which such parcels could be sent.

The four lists of the Post and Telegraph Offices in Nigeria which appeared in the Post Office Circulars dated January 1921, January 1922, October 1922 (in another book) and July 1924 cover too many pages to be part of this exercise, and have various changes of presentation. Nevertheless they contain some useful details, particularly for the Cameroons, which (apart from agencies under Obubra) are listed after the Southern Provinces.

The information given is the name of a relatively big office, followed by related offices (in the broad sense of the word). The "Class" as shown in 1921 was split from 1922 into "Type" and "Business done"; the Province was in the third (later fourth) column. The following abbreviations were used:

P for Post Office

T for Telegraph Office

P.A. for Postal Agency (Government)

P.P.A. for Postal Agency (Private)  
 R.P.A. for Railway Postal Agency  
 S.B. for Savings Bank  
 M.O. for Money Orders  
 Pcl. For Parcel Exchange  
 Pcl (R ). For Parcel Receipts only  
 Asterisk indicated "No Local Treasury"  
 Sword indicated that the office "pays cash to Railways"

\* October 1922 showed the same data for the Cameroons except that Rio del Rey did not appear

JULY 1924

	Type	Business done
OBUBRA	P&T,	SB, MO
Bamenda	P&T	
Ossidinge	P&T	
*Tinto	P&T	

As an example, I show below all the offices which were located in the quasi-Province called Cameroons: some were listed under Obubra, which was inside Nigeria, on the telegraph line joining Cameroons to Nigeria.

VICTORIA	P&T	(Pcl)
*Buea	P&T	
Kumba	P&T	

There are some strange things going on. For instance, why did Buea apparently lose status, and its Treasury (as apparently Tinto also did)? But the major question that just jumps out is: did Rio del Rey quietly have some postal business, at least for a time in 1921/22, which for eighty-five years philatelists have failed to discover? Perhaps it was so lowly that it never had a postmark, as its mail went out to Victoria by river and coast—or into a Nigerian office? There is almost a later parallel in the same Western area of the Cameroons; after the Southern Cameroons joined with the former French Cameroun, the officials who had got REP FED CAMEROUN postmarks ready for use by day one, had not been told about the strange little private postal agency at Ndian, which had cleared its mail direct through Calabar (and alone among Cameroons post offices and agencies was recorded in the Nigerian Gazette as closing when it was no longer in Nigeria). It may have closed briefly, but it soon started to use a provisional postmark, always struck in violet, which looked more like a grocer's receipt stamp.

JANUARY 1921

	Class
OBUBRA	P&T, SB, MO
Bamenda	P&T
Ossidinge	P&T
Tinto	P&T

BUEA	P&T, MO
Kumba	P&T

VICTORIA (Pcl)	P&T, MO
Rio del Rey	PPA

JANUARY 1922\*

	Type	Business done
OBUBRA	P&T,	SB, MO
Bamenda	P&T	
Ossidinge	P&T	
Tinto	P&T	

VICTORIA	P&T	(Pcl)
Buea	P&T	
Kumba	P&T	
Rio del Rey	PPA	

### Extracts from the Post Office Circulars

(in C.R. Walker's manuscript; the rows of xxxx mean he had omitted part of the text)

Page 54 (of scrapbook)      Post Office Circular Vol III No. 5 issued at Lagos May 1918 page 29

#### *C556/18—Spoiled and Obsolete Postage Stamps*

*Spoiled and obsolete postage stamps must be sent to the Accountant.*

*Only the issues super-scribed "Nigeria" are current. All Northern Nigeria, Southern Nigeria etc. issues are obsolete.*

*Sub-postmasters will forward their spoiled and obsolete stamps to their Head Office in their next requisition....*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

*For the present, Southern Nigeria postcards will be treated as current; but any cards super-scribed "Lagos", "Oil Rivers" etc. will be sent in as obsolete*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

*Spoiled and Obsolete Postage Stamps*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

*For the time being, booklets containing Southern Nigeria stamps will be treated as current.*

*Niger River Travelling Post Office—Cessation of Service*

*On and after the 1st August 1919, the Travelling Post Office on the Niger River Steamers will be discontinued and mails for the river stations where there is no Post Office nor Postal Agency will be retained at Lokoja, Idah, Onitsha or Forcados until called for.*

*The firms concerned have been communicated with and will doubtless advise the Postmaster of the nearest office as to the disposal of their correspondence.*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

*Travelling Post Office—official designation*

*The official designation of the Travelling Post Office (Railway) is as follows:*

*Iddo-Ibadan — TPO Up*

*Ibadan-Iddo — TPO Down*

*Ibadan-Jebba — TPO Up*

*Jebba-Ibadan — TPO Down*

*C 825/21 - Registration Fee**Regulation No. 27 of 1921 of 13/12/1921 Post Office Ordinance 1916*

*The fee for registration of correspondence is increased from two pence to three pence as from January 1st 1922. All offices will exercise care to see that the amended fee is enforced on all letters posted after December 31st 1921.*

*The fee for compulsory registration of articles posted out of course is increased from four pence to six pence.*

*The price of the official registered envelopes remains the same as before. The additional fee will be prepaid by postage stamps.*

*Paquebot Letters - Stamping of*

*“Paquebot” stamps are being supplied to the following offices:- Bonny, Calabar, Degema, Forcados, Lagos, Opobo, Port Harcourt, Sapele, Warri, Victoria.*

*These stamps must be used only for obliterating the postage stamps on correspondence received loose from incoming vessels. Great care must be taken to avoid obliterating postage stamps on correspondence posted in Nigeria with the “Paquebot” stamp.*

MW's comment: Proud recorded Paquebot marks only for Lagos and Port Harcourt (both initially a skeleton with no date; a long line was later used at Lagos). Calabar has been seen on a Cameroun stamp by Marty Bratzel.

*A.S. 302.23 - datestamps; changing type of.*

*Several irregularities have recently been observed with regard to datestamp impressions, particularly to the daily setting up of type.*

*The current method of inserting type is - day-month-year, eg*

<i>LAGOS</i>	<i>NOT</i>	<i>LAGOS</i>
<i>29 MY.</i>		<i>MY. 29</i>
<i>23.</i>		<i>23</i>

*Particular attention must be paid to the changing of date-stamp type and in every case an impression should be taken in the Date Stamp Impression book before any article is stamped; so that correctness may be ensured.*

*A.B. 363/23 - New Registration Envelopes*

*With reference to Post Office Circular Notice No. 19 on page 12, January 1922, advising the increase in the Registration Fee from 2d. To 3d., local Treasuries and Postmasters are notified that new registration Envelopes have now been received bearing 3d. Registration blue Stamps (the old issues bore only 2d. Registration Stamps). Size H will no longer be stocked; only G and H2 sizes will be supplied.*

*The selling price of the NEW envelopes will be as follows:-*

*G 4d. (3d stamp plus 1d cost of envelope)*

*H 4½d (3d stamp, plus 1½d cost of envelope)*

*Such envelopes will be taken on charge, issued and sold by all concerned at those prices*

*Old stock with 2d stamps*

*There is no longer any old stock at headquarters*

*Local Treasurers and Treasury Assistants who have any of the old stock on hand should issue them at once to the Postmaster*

*It will be inconvenient for Head-postmasters and Sub-postmasters to have envelopes in circulation at two prices and the following steps should, therefore, be taken to convert old stock into new stock. The old stock bore a 2d. Registration stamp and was sold at the following prices*

*G 3d. H 3½d H2 3½d*

*A 1d postage stamp from his stamp stock will be affixed by the Head-postmaster or Sub-postmaster or Counter Clerk to all old G, H and H2 envelopes on hand and the stock will then be taken on charge at 4d and 4½d.*

*No entry in any account is necessary as the total value of the stamp stock will remain unchanged - the decrease in the number and value of 1d stamps on hand being exactly balanced by the increase in the value of the registered envelopes on hand.*

*Any spoilt envelopes can be dealt with as laid down in the Accounting Rules.*

*A.B. 778/23 - Perforating Presses—issue of*

*1 Postage stamp perforating presses have been issued for use in the following offices: -*

<i>Abeokuta</i>	<i>Burutu</i>	<i>Calabar</i>
<i>Degema</i>	<i>Ebute Metta</i>	<i>Enugu</i>
<i>Ibadan</i>	<i>Ijebu Ode</i>	<i>Lagos</i>
<i>Onitsha</i>	<i>Port Harcourt</i>	<i>Sapele</i>
<i>Warri</i>	<i>Zaria</i>	<i>Victoria</i>
<i>Jos</i>	<i>Kaduna</i>	<i>Kano</i>
<i>Lokoja</i>	<i>Opobo</i>	

- 2 *The presses are intended to be used for perforating postage stamps on Parcel Post Delivery Notices, Trade Letter Bill slips and Postage Stamps affixed to official papers as fines. The stamps must, however, be cancelled first by date-stamping as at present, and the second cancellation should take place as early as possible after affixing and cancellation. Stamped Delivery Notices etc. should not be accumulated before cancellation takes place.*
- 3 *In no circumstances will stamps affixed to Postal Orders in extension of value be either date-stamped or cancelled.*
- 4 *The Perforating Press should be kept clean, oiled and carefully used.*

Page 55 Extract from the Post Office Circular Vol X No. 3 p10 issued at Lagos March 1925

*P.S. 9/25 - Stamp Booklets—Obsolete Issues*

*It is reported that Old Stamp Booklets are still on sale in some offices. As those issued prior to July 1924 do not contain up-to-date postal information each booklet should be returned to the Chief Accountant, General Post Office, Lagos and accounted for by Head Postmaster's Accounting Rule No.66 and Sub-postmaster's Rule No. 18(d).*

Page 138 Extract from Post Office Circular Vol X No. 12 p68 issued at Lagos, December 1925

*S. 1161/2 - Letters from Stamp Collectors*

*Letters are occasionally addressed to Postmasters by Stamp Collectors abroad inviting exchange of stamps, or sometimes requesting Postmasters to hand an accompanying letter to some stamp collector in his district. Such requests should not be complied with; and all letters from Stamp Collectors or Dealers should be forwarded to the Surveyor in charge of the district*

Page 42 Post Office Circular Vol. XI No. 11 issued at Lagos November 1926 Notice No. 5 on page 70

*C.68/26 - Express Delivery of Letters etc.*

*It is notified for general information that the Express Delivery service for postal correspondence, excluding parcels, has been arranged between Great Britain (and Northern Ireland ) and Nigeria and will come into force as from the 1st December 1926.*

*Arrangements may be made at a later date for the extension of this service to other Countries and also for an Inland Service should such a course be deemed necessary.*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

*The fee on letters etc. will be 6d. Per package, excluding postage, and a receipt will be given for each package. Registered articles intended for delivery by the Express Service will require the registration fee in addition to the postage and express fee.*

*Letters etc. for the Express Service should be tendered at the public counters of the Post Office and should be marked "Express Delivery" on the left hand side of the front of the envelope which must also be marked with a broad perpendicular line in ink from top to bottom; both on front and back.*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

*A receipt for an Express letter packet, whether registered or unregistered, will be given, for the present by means of the Registered Packet Counter Receipt Book, (Postmasters No 8); the entry being plainly marked "Express", and if the packet is an unregistered one the wording of the receipt should be amended accordingly.*

*Every Express packet must bear the word "Express" in the top left hand corner of the address side of the cover and be marked with a thick blue line drawn vertically down the middle of the address side of the packet.*

*The accepting (Counter) officer will affix an Express label to the letter packet.*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

*508/25 Imperial Reply Coupons*

*With reference to the Post Office Circular notice No. 8 paragraph 5 page 73 of November 1926, the date of placing the Imperial Reply Coupons on sale in Nigeria is changed from 1st January to 1st May 1927.*

*Postmasters must exercise particular care to distinguish between the Imperial Reply Coupons and International Reply Coupons (which are not negotiable in Nigeria\*) the colour being similar although the design is different. Supplies of the Imperial Post Office Coupons have now been sent to all Post offices. The issue price is 2½d and they are exchangeable for a 2d stamp.*

*Attention of Postmasters is specially drawn to the importance of date stamping the coupons, in the space provided on the left hand side, when issuing. If the date stamp of the issuing office should be omitted the coupon would be invalid when presented in exchange for the equivalent value of stamps.*

*The coupon will be cancelled by a second date stamp on the right hand side when they have been exchanged for stamps.*

\*MW's comment: this was because Nigeria was still outside the UPU, which organised I.R.C.s

Page 60 Post Office Circular Vol XII No. 9 issued at Lagos September 1927. Notice No. 4 on page 73

*No. P.798/C. 62/26 - Embossed Envelopes*

*Envelopes embossed with 1d. And 2d. Stamps will shortly be available for issue and Postmasters will in due course receive a supply, after which they will requisition in ordinary course.*

*The selling price of the 1d. variety will be 1¼d and that of the 2d. variety 2¼d but the price of a single envelope will of necessity be 1½d or 2½d as the case may be. Such envelopes as may arrive from single purchases will be brought to account as Misc. revenue, a suitable note being made on the Misc. receipt.*

*The envelopes will be interleaved with wax paper and every care must be taken to ensure that they be kept clean and in good condition and that when sold the flap be not stuck down nor the interleaving wax paper removed. Any complaints from members of the Public will be regarded seriously.*

*Postmasters should endeavour to bring to the notice of all members of the public that such envelopes are on sale.*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Page 60

Post Office Notice in the Nigeria Gazette Vol XIV No.68 of 22 Dec 1927

*Envelopes embossed with 1d and 2d stamps*

*Envelopes embossed with 1d. And 2d. Stamps are on sale at all Post Offices in Nigeria. The prices are 1¼d and 2¼d. If a single envelope only is purchased the prices charged will be 1½d and 2½d. The envelopes are of good quality and the gummed flaps are interleaved with waxed paper.*

*Sgd. J.I. Righton. Postmaster-General*

Page 44

Post Office Circular Vol. XII No. 9 issued at Lagos September 1927 Notice No. 5 on page 74

*P/775/A.B.23/24 - Revised "A" Telegraph Forms*

*On and after 1st October 1927, Telegraph Rules 40 and 41 will be cancelled, and the practice of cutting off the top of every telegraph form as a receipt to the sender will cease. A new form will be brought into use, having a perforated receipt slip in the lower right hand corner, which will be removed and handed to the sender. Stamps will be affixed at the bottom of this form.*

*Cancellation of the stamps will be effected by means of perforating presses, as is now done in the case of Parcel Delivery Notices*

MW. Appended to this is an extract from the Nigeria Posts and Telegraphs Telegraph Rules 1921 (in C.R. Walker's manuscript) describing the previous procedure. (*ed- see also p130 to locate examples in the scrapbook at page 44*)

POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS, NIGERIA

**POST OFFICE CHARGES.**

LETTERS.=INLAND. 1d. per oz. or part thereof.

UNITED KINGDOM, BRITISH COLONIES AND POSSESSIONS

2d. for the first oz. and 1d. per additional oz. or part thereof.

FOREIGN. 3d. for the first oz. and 1 1/2d. per additional oz. or part thereof.

BOOK PACKETS, NEWSPAPERS, CIRCULARS.=1/2d. per 2 oz. or part thereof.

COMMERICAL PAPERS.=2 1/2d. for the first 10oz. and 1/2d. per 2 oz. or part thereof.

PARCELS.=INLAND-(except addressed to Bornu and Sokoto Provinces) 9d., 1s. 6d., 2s. 3d.,  
under 3lb, 7lb and 11lb respectively.

INLAND for BORNUN and SOKOTO Provinces 6d. per lb. or part thereof.

UNITED KINGDOM, BRITISH WEST AFRICAN COLONIES, MONROVIA,  
DAHOMY AND FRENCH CAMEROONS 2s., 3s., 4s. under 3lb., 7lb. and 11lb  
respectively.

ALL OTHER COLONIES AND COUNTRIES-RATES AS SHEWN IN BRITISH  
POST OFFICE GUIDE plus Nigerian proportionate charges of 1s. 8d., 2s. 4d, and 3s.

TELEGRAMS.=INLAND. "URGENT" 3d. per word, minimum charge 3s.

ORDINARY 1d. per word, minimum charge 1s.

REPLY PAID. ADDITIONAL *PRO RATA* AS ABOVE.

CABLEGRAMS. RATES ON APPLICATION TO POSTMASTER.

POSTAL ORDERS. ISSUES AT 6d., 1s., 1s. 6d., 2s., 2s. 6d. = 1d. commission

5s., 7s. 6d. = 2d. commission.

10s., 12s. 6d., 15s. = 3d. commission.

17s. 6d., 20s. = 4d. commission.

Postal Orders are only payable in the United Kingdom, and British Colonies and Possessions.

MONEY ORDERS. Not exceeding £10 = 6d. for each £1 or part thereof.

Exceeding £10, but not exceeding £20 = 5s., plus 4d. for each £1 or part thereof in excess of £10.

Exceeding £20, but not exceeding £30 = 8s.4d. plus 3d for each £1 or part thereof in excess of £20.

Exceeding £30, but not exceeding £40 = 10s.10d. plus 2d. for each £1 or part thereof in excess of £30.

Limit of issue of a single Money Order, £40.

SAVINGS BANK. Deposits - Amounts from 1s. upwards, excluding odd pence.

Interest on deposits - £2 10s. per cent per annum.

Withdrawals - On demand - Not exceeding 20s.  
By Warrant - Sums exceeding 20s.

TELEPHONES. YEARLY RENTALS payable in advance.

Applications for installations, extensions and alterations should be made to the Engineer-in-Chief, G.P.O., Lagos, Agreements - Five years.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES.-REGISTRATION ON LETTERS, BOOKS AND commercial papers  
3d.

REGISTERED LETTER ENVELOPES, 3d., 3 1/2d. each, including Registration Fees.

INSURANCE. 6d. for £12; 9d. for £24; 1s. for £36; 1s.3d. for £48; 1s.6d. for £60 on letters and parcels only.

Limit of Insurance £60.

ABBREVIATED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES. £1 per annum for approved addresses-  
Application to be made to the Chief Accountant, General Post Office, Lagos.

PRIVATE BOX RENTALS. £2 per annum for large boxes or boxes rented by firms. 10s. per annum for small boxes. Also 5s. deposit for key. Application to be made to the local Postmaster.

MAIL NOTICES. 6s. per annum or any part thereof.  
Application to be made to the local Postmaster.

PRIVATE MAIL BAGS. Rental £2 per annum-Bags to be provided by the Subscriber. Application to be made to the local Postmaster.

Printed by the Government Printer Lagos. 81.5.21 5,000 (149)

Page 46 Actual copy, printed in red "Issued with the Post Office Circular No.3 of 1st March 1923"

This differed from the 1st May 1921 issue as follows:

- 1) The rate for "LETTERS to the UK [etc]" was raised to "2d. for the first oz. and 1 1/2d per additional oz. or part thereof".
- 2) Addition: "BOOKLETS containing 18-2d. and 12-1d. stamps are now on sale: price 4s. each."
- 3) The word "PARCELS" was added between "INLAND" and "Addressed to Bornu..."
- 4) "PARCELS = UNITED KINGDOM" were separated from BRITISH WEST AFRICAN COLONIES [etc] and were raised to 2s., 3s.6d., 5s. for the three weight steps.
- 5) The "Nigerian proportionate charges" added for "PARCELS = ALL OTHER [etc]" were renamed "land and sea charges", and reduced to 1s.2d., 2s. 2d., and 3s.3d.
- 6) Under POSTAL ORDERS the qualification "some" was added before "British Colonies".
- 7) Under "TELEPHONES" Agreements could also be made for "Three years and one year".
- 8) "REGISTERED LETTER ENVELOPES" were described as "OLD TYPE" and "still on sale at 3d., 3 1/2d."
- 9) The charge for PRIVATE BOX RENTALS was raised to £2 per annum for large boxes or boxes rented by firms and 10s. per annum for small boxes.
- 11) "or any part thereof" was added to the charge of 6s. per annum for "MAIL NOTICES".
- 12) The new printing details were 31-1-23 5,000 (21)

POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS, NIGERIA

**POST OFFICE CHARGES.**

LETTERS.=INLAND. 1d. per oz. or part thereof.

UNITED KINGDOM, BRITISH COLONIES AND POSSESSIONS  
2d. for the first oz. and 1 1/2d. per additional oz. or part thereof.

FOREIGN. 3d. for the first oz. and 1 1/2d. per additional oz. or part thereof.

BOOKLETS containing 18-2d. stamps and 12-1d. stamps are now on sale: price 4s. each.

BOOK PACKETS, NEWSPAPERS, CIRCULARS.=1/2d. per 2 oz. or part thereof.

COMMERICAL PAPERS.=2 1/2d. for the first 10oz. and 1/2d. per 2 oz. or part thereof.

PARCELS.=INLAND-(except addressed to Bornu and Sokoto Provinces) 9d., 1s. 6d., 2s. 3d.,  
under 3lb, 7lb and 11lb respectively.

INLAND PARCELS addressed to BORNUN and SOKOTO Provinces 6d. per lb. or  
part thereof.

UNITED KINGDOM, 2s., 3s. 6d., 5s. under 3lb., 7lb. and 11lb. respectively.\*

BRITISH WEST AFRICAN COLONIES, MONROVIA, DAHOMEY AND  
FRENCH CAMEROONS 2s., 3s., 4s. under 3lb., 7lb. and 11lb respectively.

ALL OTHER COLONIES AND COUNTRIES-RATES AS SHEWN IN BRITISH  
POST OFFICE GUIDE plus Nigeria land and sea charges of 1s. 2d., 2s. 2d, 3s.3d.\*\*

\*Was 2s., 3s., 4s. on 1/5/21

\*\* Was "Nigeria proportionate charges" of 1s. 8d., 2s. 4d.and 3s on 1/5/21

TELEGRAMS.=INLAND. "URGENT" 3d. per word, minimum charge 3s.

ORDINARY 1d. per word, minimum charge 1s.

REPLY PAID. ADDITIONAL *PRO RATA* AS ABOVE.

CABLEGRAMS. RATES ON APPLICATION TO POSTMASTER.

POSTAL ORDERS. ISSUES AT 6d., 1s., 1s. 6d., 2s., 2s. 6d. = 1d. commission

5s., 7s. 6d. = 2d. commission.

10s., 12s. 6d., 15s. = 3d. commission.

17s. 6d., 20s. = 4d. commission.

Postal Orders are only payable in the United Kingdom, and some British Colonies and  
Possessions.



**MONEY ORDERS.** Not exceeding £10 = 6d. for each £1 or part thereof.

Exceeding £10, but not exceeding £20 = 5s., plus 4d. for each £1 or part thereof in excess of £10.

Exceeding £20, but not exceeding £30 = 8s.4d. plus 3d for each £1 or part thereof in excess of £20.

Exceeding £30, but not exceeding £40 = 10s.10d. plus 2d. for each £1 or part thereof in excess of £30.

Limit of issue of a single Money Order, £40.

**SAVINGS BANK.** Deposits-Amounts from 1s. upwards, excluding odd pence.

Interest on deposits = £2 10s. per cent per annum.

Withdrawals-On demand-Not exceeding 20s.

By Warrant-Sums exceeding 20s.

**TELEPHONES.** YEARLY RENTALS payable in advance.

Applications for installations, extensions and alterations should be made to the Engineer-in-Chief, G.P.O., Lagos, Agreements Five years, Three years, and one year.

**ADDITIONAL SERVICES.-REGISTRATION ON LETTERS, BOOKS AND commercial papers**  
3d.

**OLD TYPE REGISTERED LETTER ENVELOPES** still on sale at 3d., 3 1/2d. each.

**INSURANCE.** 6d. for £12; 9d. for £24; 1s. for £36; 1s.3d. for £48; 1s.6d. for £60 on letters and parcels only.

Limit of Insurance £60.

**ABBREVIATED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES.** £1 per annum for approved addresses-Application to be made to the Chief Accountant, General Post Office, Lagos.

**PRIVATE BOX RENTALS.** £2 per annum for large boxes or boxes rented by firms. 10s. per annum for small boxes. Also 5s. deposit for key. Application to be made to the local Postmaster.

**MAIL NOTICES.** 6s. per annum or any part thereof.

Application to be made to the local Postmaster.

**PRIVATE MAIL BAGS.** Rental £2 per annum-Bags to be provided by the Subscriber. Application to be made to the local Postmaster.

Printed by the Government Printer Lagos. 31-1-23 5,000 (21)

FINALLY

Page 38

Post Office Circular Vol XIV No. 3 issued at Lagos March 1928

*N.M.9/28 Sale of Used Postage Stamps*

*It is notified for general information that letters are being forwarded from America and other countries addressed to officers of the Posts & Telegraphs Department offering to buy used postage stamps.*

*Such letters should be ignored for the possession of used stamps in any quantity by officers of the Department is not permitted and any officer found in possession of such stamps or trading with Stamp Dealers will be subject to serious disciplinary measures if not prosecuted.*

## Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals

**The London Philatelist**, Volume 118, April 2009, number 1364, pp86-93

*The 1897-98 Malformed 'S' and Repaired 'S' flaws on plate 2 of the Universal Postage Keyplate*, by Robin Davis and Charles Freeland FRPSL. This is apposite to collectors of Gambia; the only West African colony to use this keyplate.

### **Journal of the France & Colonies PS**

Volume 58, no. 4, December 2008, pp145-151, *Airmail Routes and Rates from Cameroun to the UK during World War II* by Martin Bratzel and Bob Picirilli

Volume 59, No.1, March 2009, pp16-17, *Early usage of French Postage Due Stamps in the French Sphere of Occupied Cameroun*, by Bob Maddocks

Volume 59, No.1, March 2009, pp21-26 *Modern Post Offices in Cameroun*, by Marc Parren

### **Air Mail News**

Volume 51, No 204, February 2009, pp270-272, *A few Notes on the Pan American Lisbon / Natal / Lisbon Service ("the Substitute LATI Service")*, by Edward T Proud. This item generated a critical response by John Wilson in the May 2009 issue of Air Mail News pp15-18, and a rather defensive answer from Mr Proud.

Volume 52, No. 205, May 2009, pp40-41, *A very early use of FAM22 by Swiss Mail* by Michael Crux. This discusses a cover from Switzerland to Baghdad via the double Atlantic southbound via Lagos. The Swiss are the only European postal administration so far known to have publicised this southbound service.

Volume 52, No. 205, May 2009, pp53-58, *Over the Hump*, by Brian Asquith. The WW2 air link from India to China. This article originally appeared in *Stamp & Coin Mart*

### **Airpost Journal**

Volume 79, No 1, January 2009, *Miami and the FAM 6 extension to Africa*, by Bob Wilcsek. This article continues the *FAM22 RIP* research from *Cameo* October 2008, and will be reproduced in *Cameo* when space allows

### **Overprinter "Africa & Islands Issue", Edition 2/2009 Summer**

pp55-59, *Oil Rivers / Niger Coast postal stationery cards from Post Office Personnel*, by Andy Wilde

p59, *Gold Coast Telegrams*, by John Gledhill

p60, *Niger Coast 1894 size F registration envelope variations*, by John Gledhill

p66, *Tristan da Cunha overprints 1929*, by John Gledhill

p69, *Oil Rivers registration envelope, with modified insurance*, by Tony Stanford

John Gledhill has also launched a project to create a consolidated listing of overprinted GB postal stationery, as many items are known that are not included in the rather simplified Higgins & Gage listing.



## Monorail at Ekona Plantation, Kamerun

**Martin Bratzel**

Two earlier articles in *Cameo* (Refs. 1 & 2) illustrated railways at Old Calabar. In one, a viewcard datelined December 13, 1904 depicted a monorail. Maddocks speculated that it may have been used by government officials or, more likely, on a commercial plantation.

Depicted here is a monorail that served the Ekona plantation in Kamerun. The photo is dated to 1912. Ekona plantation is northeast of Victoria and Buea, in that portion of Kamerun which later came under British administration. The plantation was connected to the 0.60-metre light rail network that served many of the plantations in the area. Construction of that network began in 1901. Much of the network was abandoned by the 1960s but, as late as 2001, trains occasionally ran on the very limited amount of track remaining between Tiko and the Sonne and Pongo plantations.

References

1. Warrell, A. A Railway at Old Calabar. *Cameo*, Vol. 10, No. 2, June 2007, page 112.
2. Maddocks, R.J., The Railway(s) at Old Calabar. *Cameo*, Vol. 10, No. 3, October 2007, pages 130-131.
3. Schroeter, Helmut and Roel Ramaer. *Die Eisenbahnen in den einst deutschen Schutzgebieten Ostafrika, Südwestafrika, Kamerun, Togo und die Schantung-Eisenbahn Damals und Heute / German Colonial Railways East Africa, Southwest Africa, Cameroon, Togo and the Shantung Railway Then and Now*. Röhr-Verlag, Krefeld, 1993. 150 pages. ISBN 3-88490-184-2.
4. Martin Bratzel has now self-published a book on the railways of Cameroun *The Railroads of Cameroun and associated Postal History*, with funding from The Collectors Club of Michigan and The Stuart Rossiter Trust. Details are enclosed with this issue and a review will appear in *Cameo* as soon as possible



Monorail at Ekona plantation, 1912.  
From Ref. 3. Reproduced with permission granted by Gustav F. Röhr.



# Elder Dempster Lines Sailing List

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

Recently I acquired two Sailing Lists for Elder Dempster steamers. The first covered the period October 1938 to March 1939, the second from April 1939 until September 1939, although the tables run up to October.

They are of interest in that they detail the sailing dates to the various West African ports and also give the names of the steamers. Figure 1, 70% of actual size, is from the latter timetable.

Another table shows the itinerary of the M.V. "Calabar" which sailed from Lagos back to Lagos, calling at smaller ports before connecting with the mail steamers back to England.

ELDER DEMPSTER LINES							
THE WEST AFRICAN							
OUTWARDS.	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA	M.S. ABOSSO	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA
LIVERPOOL (Dep.)	12 Apl.	19 Apl.	3 May	17 May	31 May	14 June	28 June
HADEIRA (arr.)	16 "	24 "	7 "	21 "	4 June	19 "	2 July
*LAS PALMAS "	17 "	"	8 "	22 "	5 "	"	3 "
*BATHURST "	20 "	"	11 "	"	8 "	"	6 "
FREETOWN "	22 "	29 Apl.	13 "	27 May	10 "	24 June	8 "
*MONROVIA "	"	30 "	"	28 "	"	25 "	"
ITAKORADI "	25 Apl.	2 May	16 May	30 "	13 June	27 "	11 July
ACCRA "	26 "	3 "	17 "	31 "	14 "	30 "	13 "
LAGOS "	27 "	4 "	18 "	1 June	15 "	29 "	13 "
PL. HARCOURT "	30 Apl.	"	21 May	"	18 June	"	16 July
SUELLABA (for Duala) (arr.)	"	7/18	"	4/7	"	2/5	"
VICTORIA (arr.)	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
CALABAR	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
HOMEWARDS.	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA	M.S. ABOSSO	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA
CALABAR (Dep.)	"	9/10	"	6/7	"	4/5	"
PL. HARCOURT "	3 May	"	24 May	"	21 June	"	19 July
LAGOS "	6 "	13 May	27 "	10 June	24 "	8 July	22 "
ACCRA "	7 "	14 "	28 "	11 "	25 "	9 "	23 "
TAKORADI "	7 "	14 "	28 "	11 "	25 "	9 "	23 "
MONROVIA "	9 "	"	20 "	"	27 "	"	25 "
FREETOWN "	10 "	17 May	31 "	14 June	20 "	12 July	26 "
BATHURST "	11 "	"	1 June	"	29 "	"	27 "
LAS PALMAS "	14 "	22 May	4 "	19 June	2 July	17 July	30 "
HADEIRA "	15 "	23 "	5 "	19 "	3 "	18 "	31 "
PLYMOUTH (arr.)	19 "	27 "	9 "	23 "	7 "	22 "	4 Aug.
LIVERPOOL (arr.)	20 May	30 May	10 June	24 June	8 July	23 July	5 Aug.

ELDER DEMPSTER LINES							
MAIL SERVICE.							
M.S. ABOSSO	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA	M.S. ABOSSO	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA
12 July	26 July	2 Aug.	16 Aug.	30 Aug.	13 Sep.	28 Sep.	27 Sep.
16 "	30 "	7 "	20 "	3 Sep.	17 "	23 "	2 Oct.
17 "	31 "	"	21 "	4 "	18 "	"	"
"	2 Aug.	"	24 "	"	21 "	"	"
22 July	5 "	12 Aug.	26 "	9 Sep.	23 "	30 Sep.	7 Oct.
22 "	"	13 "	"	10 "	"	1 Oct.	"
25 "	8 Aug.	15 "	29 Aug.	12 "	26 Sep.	3 "	10 Oct.
26 "	9 "	16 "	30 "	12 "	27 "	4 "	11 "
27 "	10 "	17 "	31 "	14 "	28 "	5 "	12 "
"	13 Aug.	"	3 Sep.	"	1 Oct.	"	"
30 July	1 Aug.	30/31	Aug.	17/20	Sep.	8/11	Oct.
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
M.S. ABOSSO	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA	M.S. ABOSSO	M.S. ACCRA	M.S. ADDA	M.S. APAPA
1/2 Aug.	"	22/23	Aug.	19/20	Sep.	10/11	Oct.
"	16 Aug.	"	6 Sep.	"	4 Oct.	"	"
8 Aug.	19 "	26 Aug.	9 "	23 Sep.	7 "	14 Oct.	19 Oct.
6 "	20 "	27 "	10 "	24 "	8 "	15 "	20 "
6 "	20 "	27 "	10 "	24 "	9 "	16 "	20 "
"	22 "	"	12 "	"	11 "	"	"
9 Aug.	23 "	30 Aug.	13 "	27 Sep.	12 "	18 Oct.	24 Oct.
"	24 "	"	14 "	"	13 "	"	"
13 Aug.	27 "	4 Sep.	17 "	1 Oct.	16 "	24 "	30 Oct.
14 "	28 "	5 "	18 "	1 "	17 "	25 "	"
18 "	1 Sep.	9 "	22 "	6 "	21 "	29 "	"
19 Aug.	3 Sep.	10 Sep.	23 Sep.	7 Oct.	22 Oct.	30 Oct.	2 Nov.

\* Passengers and Mails only.  
 † Taking cargo for Abosso and Oboke  
 ‡ Refer to next page for details of inter-coastal service  
 § Cargo accepted by arrangement only, with transhipment at Pt. Harcourt, connection at Lagos by the M.S. "CALABAR."

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