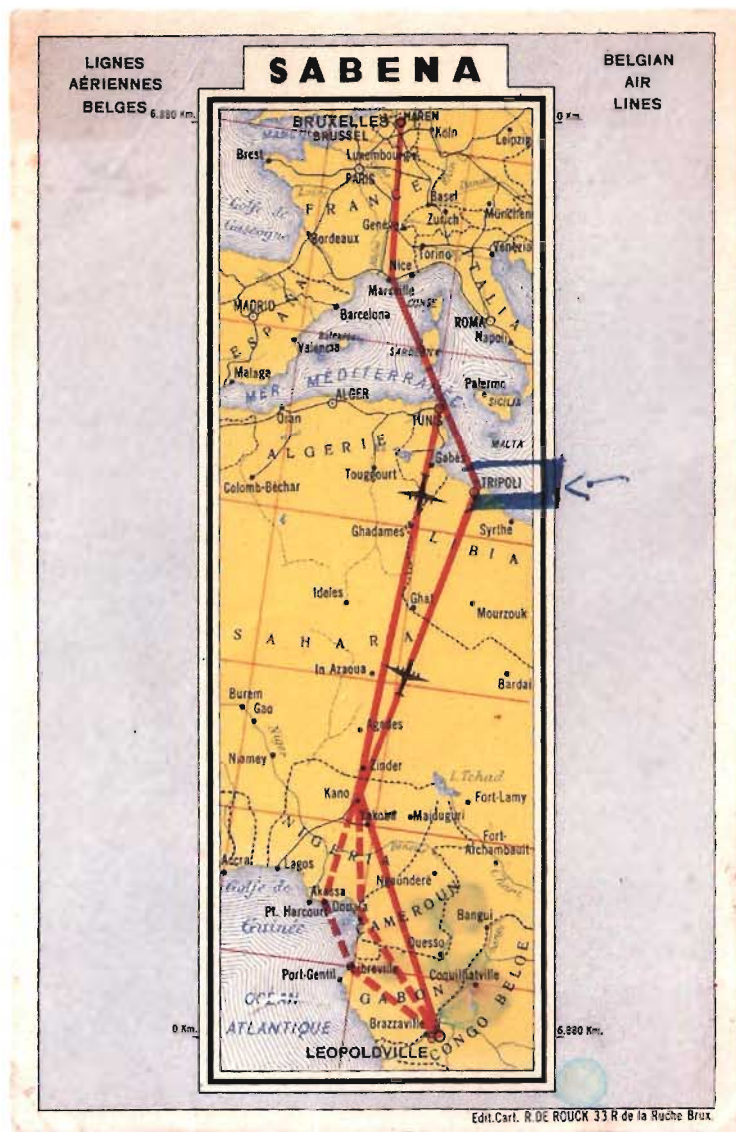


CAMEO



The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle



VOLUME 11 NUMBER 5
WHOLE NUMBER 80

JUNE 2010

Destination - West Africa



Our September Auction features these fine Sierra Leone items - and don't forget to check our Cross-Reference Index for other West African gems.

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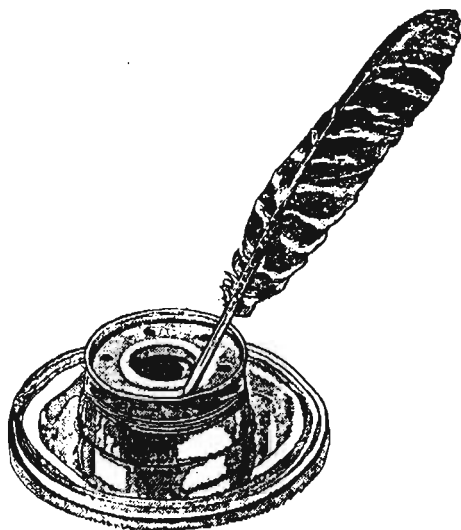
Web Site: <http://www.wasc.org.uk>

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Front Cover

Picture side of a Sabena complimentary postcard.
Used from Tripoli to Belgium, postmark date unclear,
circa 1948-1950 using stamps of BMA Tripolitania.
Shown by Mike Sanders via Frank Walton.



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

Philatelic addresses

David Beech joined us at the March meeting of WASC at "the Royal" and said a few words about facilities at the British Library for philatelic research. Following discussion about philatelic addresses he has e-mailed

Dear Barry,

It was a great day and most enjoyable with old and new friends.

I am delighted that members are interested in the *How to look after your Collection* article and attach a copy and one about research too. (*these will appear in future issues of Cameo with David Beech's permission*).

The web *Biographies of Philatelists and Dealers* by Brian J. Birch is at <http://hps.gr/fipliterature/>

David Beech, London

Postal Stationery of the the Nigerias

Dear Rob,

As you know I am in the process of compiling a list of all known examples of the scarcer items of Nigeria postal stationery and I wrote a letter in the January 2010 *Cameo* asking for more records for some of these. Unfortunately I must say that I have received only one reaction to that letter; from the US member Stanley Field. By direct enquiry of Jeremy Martin and Ray Harris I have been able to get some scans or photocopies from them.

Maybe people have only one or two items falling within the scope of the queries in my last letter but feel that this is too small a holding to be of interest. On the contrary; I am as interested to know what long term collectors of this area have not yet been able to find!

After this reminder about my earlier queries, may I now ask for members to look in their collections for some further Postal Stationery material that seems to me to be rather scarce and for which I would appreciate scans/photocopies of items in mint condition -

the Niger Coast 1897 registered envelopes,
the Southern Nigeria KGV registered envelopes
and the Nigeria KGV 2d and KGV I registered envelopes (except the first size G)

I hope to publish a list of all known examples in due course, not showing information about current owners, with all contributors to receive a copy

Peter Horlyck
Denmark

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

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

Publications committee chairman —
Frank Walton

 **Togo—the P-C / 12 cachet**

Dear Rob,

Cameo no.79, January 2010, included at pages 232-233 notes by John Mayne and myself about a P-C / 12 cachet on a German postal stationery card used at Atakpame in September 1914.

The owner, Erich Schlieper, submitted the card to the Expert Committee of the “Royal” whose opinion was that the card was genuine. As regards the hand-stamp they say “We do not think it is a postal marking”

John Mayne has also checked and there is no photographic record of the item when it first appeared in auction on October 1984.

It does appear, therefore, that this is not a censor cachet

Jeremy Martin
Salisbury

 **Togo—Registration Labels**

Dear Rob,

Jeremy Martin records three British labels with the frame, R and number in shades of blue on white paper and name of the office printed, identified as RB2a, RB2b and RB2c; issued for Lome and Ho (*Togo Postal History 1914-1922*, by J.J. Martin & F Walton, WASC 1995, p79).

Jeremy notes the *Gold Coast Gazette* showed a postal agency re-opened at Kpandu on 27 May 1921 and records a British cancel for the town incorporating the words “Gold Coast” once only on 4 November 1921 (*ibid*, p55).

The Dr. Burghard Wollenhaupt collection was offered by Corinphilia of Zurich on 3 March 2010 (see p293) and included a mixed lot of covers and postal stationery cards of which I obtained copies; sadly of not a good enough quality to reproduce in *Cameo*. Several items were from Ho and one cover sent registered post has a clear strike of 11 April 1921 with an Accra registered backstamp the following day. This cover has a registered label in the same format as the above, printed for Kpandu and numbered 572.

If the Kpandu agency re-opened on 27 May 1921, why were registered labels for that office in use nearly seven weeks earlier at Ho? Kpandu is to the north of Ho and there was no need for mail from Kpandu to Accra to transit Ho. Comments would be appreciated.

John Mayne
Bridgnorth

 **Togo—the P-C / 12 cachet**

Dear Rob,

I have now heard from Erich Schlieper. He tells me he met Hans Bothe occasionally in Berlin where he worked in a grocery shop near Tempelhof Airport! He was married with no family and died on 16 November 1973, aged 74. He was undisputed as an expertiser, with Karl Mansfield as the next leading authority on the German Colonies at that time. However Erich says it is not normal practice for expertisers to keep a copy of any of the items they consider.

There are several reasons to be confident about the assessment of this card as genuine

- 1 It comes from a known correspondence. Other items to this address from the same writer have recently been offered through Corinphilia
- 2 British troops are known to have been at Atakpame at the time this was posted
- 3 Erich has clear evidence the spurious censor mark was not on the card when it was sold in the 1980s

Erich and I both hold the view that the item is genuine – apart from this cachet.

John Mayne, Bridgnorth

Ed—I apologise for misattributing display of this card at the WASC conference. Jeremy Martin had the photocopy

 **Nigeria SG58bw**

Dear Barry,

Did anyone else notice Muscott’s advertisement on page 15 of the January 2010 issue of *American Philatelist*? They were offering a sheet number block of 4 UMM of this inverted watermark variety which is only listed used in SG (as SG58bw) and in CW. There must only have been a single sheet (CW lists this error at £3000+ for a single stamp used) but somehow this unique block was saved. No offer price was given.

Ed Sherman, via Barry Burns

 **Gold Coast Definitive Plate Numbers**

Dear Rob,

Further to Peter Duggan’s article on plate numbers for Gold Coast definitives (*Cameo* 79 p264) I have two blocks of the 1938 2d value, comb perf. 12 x 11¼ (SG 123a), each showing Plate No. 2a below stamp 59. Best wishes,

Barry Burns
Stokesley

Auction Report

Corinthia, Zurich 3 March 2010

The Dr. Burghard Wollenhaupt collection of Anglo– French Occupation of Togo 1914-1915

The collection was offered in 243 lots. Collections of this quality are not often offered and, whilst the selection of stamps available was of high quality, the strength of the postal history section reflected how difficult such material is to find, as the majority of the items offered were of a philatelic nature.

Three items particularly caught my eye

Firstly a black and white picture postcard (not illustrated here) printed by the Basel Mission Book Depot at Accra of a palm road in the Gold Coast was part of the 'Pyle' correspondence. The message was written at Atakpame when the town was under British control for just three weeks and was posted at Lome 07.09.1914, a day later. It was endorsed "no stamps available" and has a red London arrival mark of 29.09.1914. This is one of the earliest items of the occupation and few items of un-stamped mail are known. Against a start price of SwFr 1000 (£670) it made SwFr 1500.

Secondly a philatelic cover was illustrated on the front of the hardback catalogue for the sale (Fig. 1). It was addressed to Mr Cowie, a manager of Lome bank. Endorsed 'Presented to me by Lt. Col. Bryant commanding British forces in Togoland and with an unknown signature, on 07.01.1915 it has pairs of the British issues SG 29,30,31 and 32 paying excess postage, all cancelled by the German 'bridge'-type Lome cancel. This is the first day of issue for the these stamps from the small supply found at Sansane Mangu and are considerably elusive on cover. Only 50 of SG29 and 200 of SG32 are possible. Priced at SwFr 7500 (£5000) it remained unsold.

One of just a few French items offered was an example of the German 5pf reply card over-printed for the French, correctly used (Figs. 2 & 3). These cards were released in early August 1915 and Robert Gibbs (Ref. 1) in his section on postal stationery states "these cards are all very scarce to rare unused or with favour cancels and they are very rare used [correctly]". Offered at SwFr. 500 (£335) it realised SwFr 800.

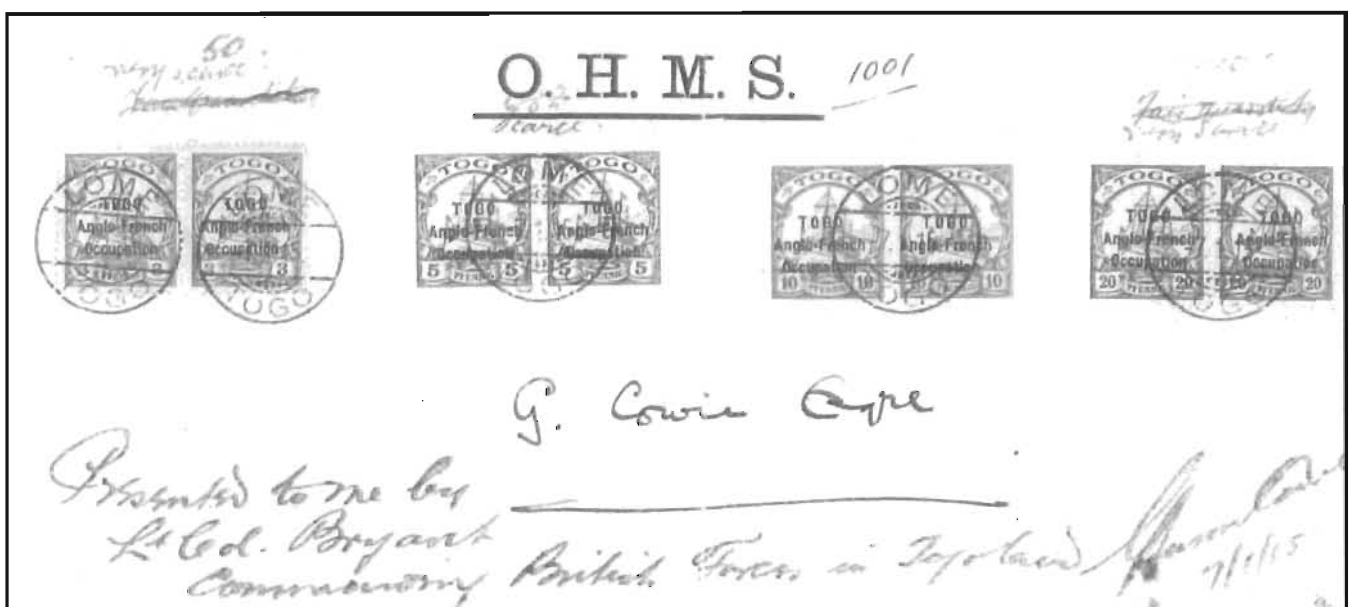


Figure 1

This card has several unusual features. The reply half was used for the outward message and is addressed to the interpreter at Petit-Popo (Anecho). It is struck with the German cancel for Nuatja of 05.08.1914, which is, of course, impossible. In January 1915 several of the former German post offices did not have a '15' year slug available. Then we can also note that the German cancel for Nuatja is not recorded by Jeremy Martin (Ref 2) until after 1922. The outward half, which in this case was used for the reply, has the German Anecho cancel with the '14' slug crudely amended to 11.08.1915 and is addressed to Atakpame, about 40 miles north of Nuatja. Whilst the message is genuine, it also states the card is appreciated and will form part of the collection of the recipient's father.

References

1. Gibbs R.M., *G.R.I The Postage Stamps of the German Colonies occupied by the British 1914-1918*. Christie's Robson Lowe, London 1987
2. Martin J.J. & Walton F.L., *Togo: The Postal History of the Anglo-French Occupation 1914-1922*, p47, WASC, Sheffield 1995

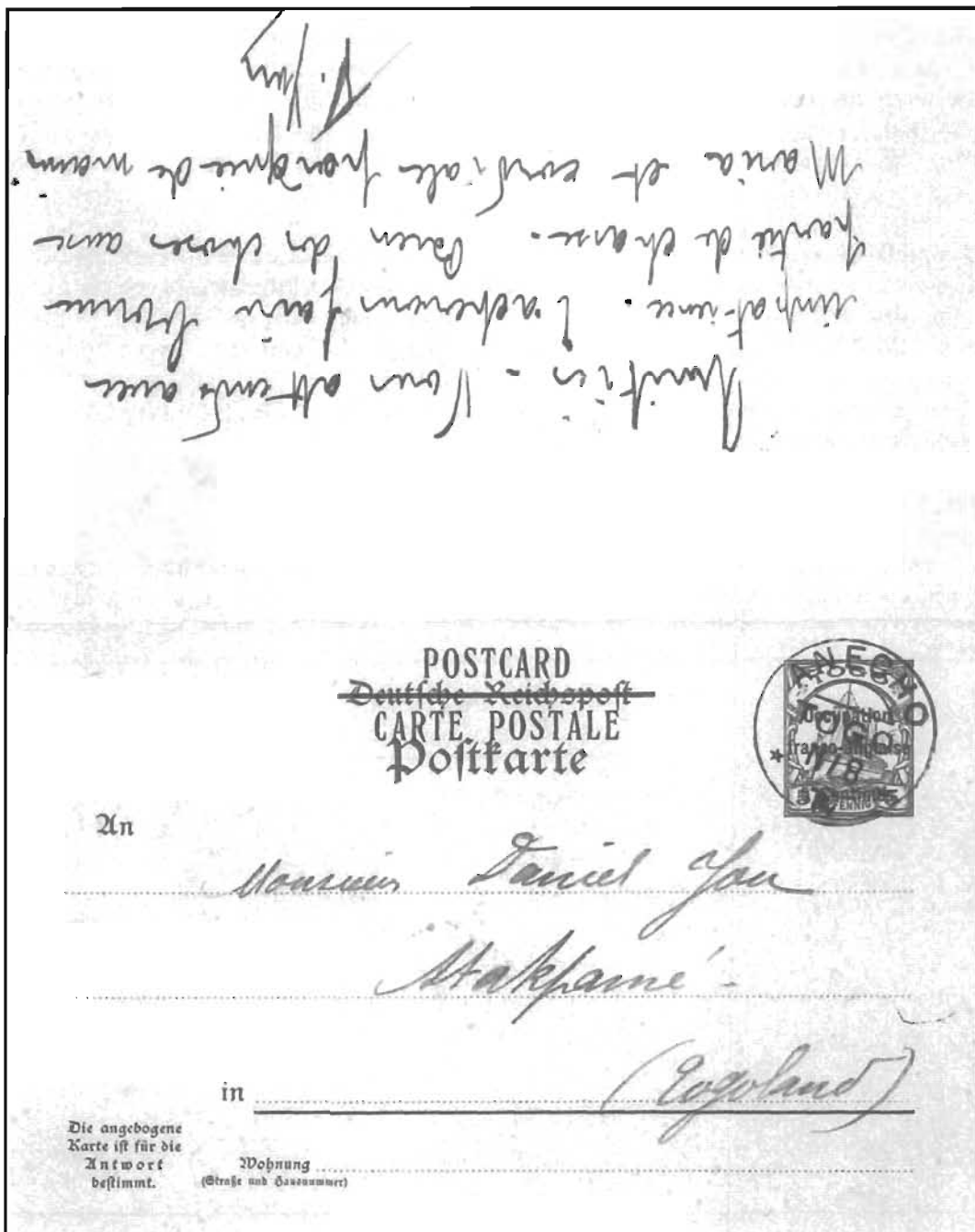
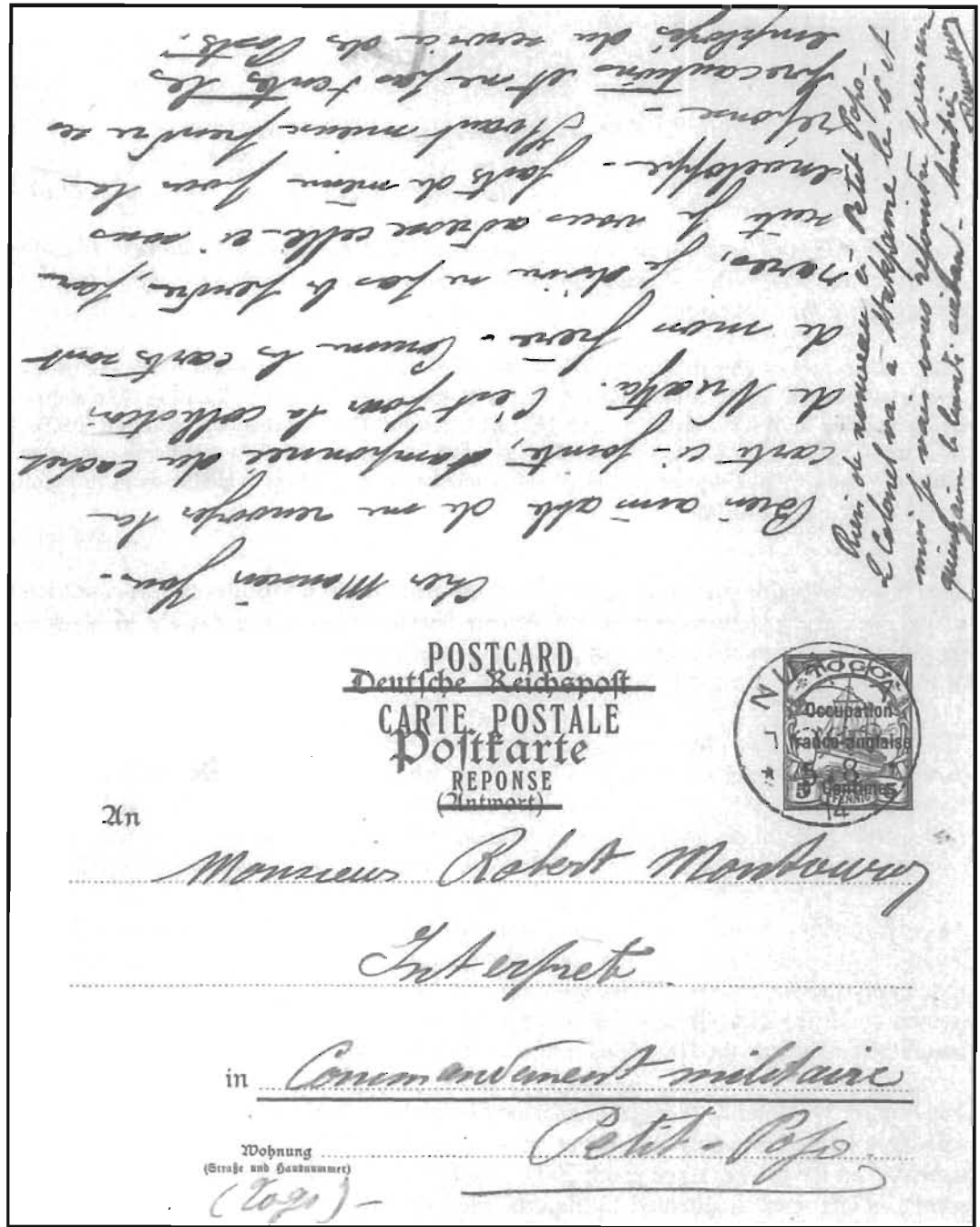


Figure 2; outward side

Figure 3
The same card;
reply side



Nigeria—proof of an un-issued QE2 5/- definitive

Rob May

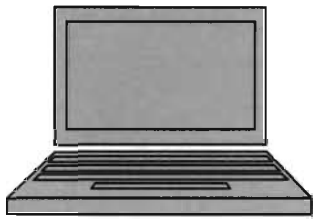
Michael Wright has brought to my attention the proof illustrated here, depicting “Lime Kilns at Awgu”, which was offered by Philangles in their sale of 8th March 2010. It was described as a De la Rue photographic essay of 1955, with a De la Rue archive hand-stamp on the reverse.

This design is clearly not one of Maurice Fiévet’s bold compositions for the set printed by Waterlow and issued via the Crown Agents in 1953 (Ref 1)



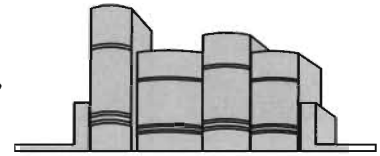
Reference

1. May R. & Martin J.J., “Maurice Fiévet and the 1953 Nigeria definitives”, *Cameo*, Volume 10 p256, WASC, June 2008




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 stock is arranged via the Treasurer.

 *Directory of Overprinted British Postal Orders*, by John M. Gledhill PhD, published by the Great Britain Overprints Society 2009. Jointly funded by the Postal Order Society and GBOS. 136 pages, 8 full colour plates. Reduced price to WASC members £15 UK, £19 Europe, £24 overseas, all including P&P. Available from Tony Stanford at PO Box 2675, Maidenhead SL6 9ZN, UK, mentioning WASC membership in order to secure this special price. Payment by bank giro or paypal (at supplementary cost of £1) is available by prior arrangement with Tony via e-mail at gbos@talk21.com

Reviewed by Michael Wright.


This is a remarkable publication, the first of its kind to bring together for all countries the beginnings of a listing and analysis of overprints on British Postal Orders made mainly to show the generally higher poundage [commission] charged overseas on top of the face value of the Order. The first recorded occasion of this practice was in 1905 for the Transvaal.

The range of countries involved covers almost the whole British Empire at some time or another [with the exception of Australia and territories within its orbit] and even beyond, for example People's Republic of Southern Yemen. All of the British West African territories were involved except Northern Nigeria; Ascension used Orders overprinted St Helena, and Tristan da Cunha even had its own overprint. WASC countries account for about 70 of the items; the author personally having not seen about 25 of these.

As with reply coupons, some small territories, before their independence from other Commonwealth countries, used the Orders of the controlling country's post office even if they issued their own stamps. Eventually the British Post Office gave up printing a poundage on its Orders and, although the number of issuing countries was falling, for a while a few countries continued to have poundage added. Overprinting before dispatch from the UK ended in or shortly after 1985.

The author, Dr. John M. Gledhill, disclaims being an expert on Postal Orders and insists that this is not a catalogue [which probably will never be achieved] but "merely a categorization of 830 items which have appeared on the market since about 2005". He has used auction and sales lists and ebay offerings as a main source of his data, augmented by reports from members of the Postal Order Society. That society also helped finance the publication alongside the Great Britain Overprints Society. Even if the illustration of an Order is complete and clear, it does not completely make an identification certain because, again as with reply coupons, there may be a variation on the back. Items are recorded in italics where the author has not seen them personally.

There are also eleven pages of historical introduction by the Postal Order expert, Richard Solly. This book is recommended to members at a very modest price for a book of 136 pages plus colour plates.

 *British Censorship of Civil Mails during World War 1, 1914-1919*, by Graham Mark, originally published by the author 2000, now reprinted. ISBN 0953000419. 252 + xxxviii pages, A4 with over 250 b/w illustrations. Card cover in colour. A modest reprint of this book has been produced and is available at the same retail price as the original, £25. Included with the reprint will be the cumulative supplement which was prepared in March 2009. Available from the author by writing to Oast House West, Golden Hill, Wiveliscombe, Somerset TA4 2NT, UK.

Postage & packing will be extra: to UK addresses £5, airmail to Europe £7, airmail to the rest of the world £13, overseas surface mail £7. Payment by Sterling cheque, Euro30 or US\$50 cash (at senders risk) is acceptable. Or by paypal (adding 4% for the Paypal charge) to Robert@johnson83.wanadoo.co.uk giving your name and address and the message 'for Mark censor book'.

This book begins with a background to censorship of the mail and then describes the pre-war preparations, the legal and operational aspects of the work through the war. Mails to and from various geographic areas are examined in turn;

enemy countries, allies, then neutral countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Undercover mail, transit mails, inland mails and special categories of mail are also covered. The analysis of the censors' labels, slips, notices and forms are given in some detail; 80 pages being devoted to this section.



King George VI proofs of Nigeria in the Royal Philatelic Collection

Tony Plumbe

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the King George VI Collectors' Society, 50 frames of exquisite material from the Royal Philatelic Collection were exhibited at the Royal Philatelic Society, London on Saturday 27 February 2010. The material comprised artwork, essays, approved and not approved proofs, colour trials and a few stamps from 56 stamp issuing colonies and relating to the contemporary omnibus issues. Material was notable for the vibrancy of its colours. Amongst the items on display was material from Ascension, the Gambia, Nigeria, St. Helena and Sierra Leone.

Below is a record of the Nigerian proofs

½d green:

imperforate proof, stamp size, annotated on reverse "Approved design ½d to 1/- Definitives Inclusive 6.10.37".

1d bright purple, 2d rose-red, 3d black and 4d blue:

all imperforate proofs, stamp size, affixed to a Bradbury Wilkinson & Co. Ltd sheet, annotated in black manuscript "Approved RWC 18/2/44". RWC is Mr R W Cook of the Crown Agents

2½d orange:

imperforate proof, stamp size, annotated in red manuscript "Approved RC 22/7". The 22/7 is below the RC. RC is the initials of Mr R Chappell of the Crown Agents.

2/6d black & blue;

imperforate proof, stamp size, affixed to quadrille ledger sheet with typing at the top reading "NIGERIA / Requisition No. 3780/2 / 25th October 1937" ('/' denotes a new line), annotated sloping upwards in black manuscript "Appd for die & colours subject to finished stamps being perfectly clear of smudge effect HS 28/10". The 28/10 is below the HS. Initialled 'GLS' in left hand margin of the sheet. HS is Mr Henry Stanfield and GLS is Mr George Smith, both of the Crown Agents.

5/-:

imperforate proof, stamp size, affixed to quadrille ledger sheet with typing at the top reading "NIGERIA / Requisition No. 3780/2 / 25th October 1937" ('/' denotes a new line), annotated sloping upwards in black manuscript "Appd for die & colours". Below this annotation is GS 29/10". The 29/10 is below the GS. Initialled 'HS' in left hand margin of the sheet. HS is Mr Henry Stanfield and GS is Mr George Smith, both of the Crown Agents.

The Royal Philatelic Collection

Notes of the 50th Anniversary Display given to the KGVI Collectors' Society

Jeremy Martin FRPSL and Barry Burns

2010 was the 50th Anniversary of the King George VI Collectors' Society. This was celebrated by a display of King George VI material from the Royal Philatelic Collection at The Royal Philatelic Society London on 27 February 2010. The display was compiled by Rod Vousden MSc, FRGS, FRPSL, and by Dickon Pollard of Murray Payne Ltd. Rod is the Assistant to the Keeper, Royal Philatelic Collection, and is also Chairman and Archivist of the KGVI Collectors' Society. We list the West African items on display, but on page 297 of this *Cameo* Tony Plumbe has described the Nigeria section of the display in more detail on page 297, so the Nigeria material has been omitted from this report.

The display started with proofs of the head of the King, followed by proofs of the Coronation, Peace, Silver Wedding and UPU issues. All the following items are imperforate unless noted.

Ascension

Nine sheets were displayed, all relating to the 1938-53 definitive issue SG 38-47.

- 1 & 2 Artist's sketches in five designs for the new De La Rue set
- 3 ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d, 3d, 1/-, 2/6 values, approved for colours 27/10 (except border of 2/6, 29/10/37)
- 4 6d, 2/6, 5/-, 10/- values, approved (except 10/-) for colours 10/11 (2/6 now a deeper carmine)
- 5 1d black and yellow-orange, approved 1/2/40
- 6 3d black and grey, approved 16/2/40
- 7 4d black and ultramarine, approved 29/2
- 8 1½d black and rose-carmine; 2d black and scarlet, approved 20/9/48
- 9 1d black and green (Three Sisters), approved 19/1/49

The Gambia

Six pages were displayed, all relating to the 1938-46 definitive issue SG 150-161.

- 1 3d value in a pale sage-green and pale purple-brown, not approved. Another 3d value in darker colours which was 'Approved for colours of 5d 20/11/40'
- 2 5d as issued, approved 2/12/40
- 3 2d lake and scarlet, approved 25/1/43
- 4 1½d blue and black, 'Approved subject to grey being strengthened to that of the 2d value in the first printing of King George VI series 30/6/44'
- 5 Three 1½d values in similar shades, two not approved; the third in blue and black approved 27/6/46 (sic), almost certainly this was 1944
- 6 Artist's artwork by Bradbury Wilkinson of a 2/- value, vignette blue, frame purple. Blocks of four of the issued ½d and 1d values perforated plus singles ½d and 1d, both perforated SPECIMEN

Gold Coast

There were five album pages. The first two were the 1938-44 definitive issue SG 120-132; the final three the 1948 definitive issue SG 135-146.

- 1 Two examples of the 1940 10/- value, one not approved 28/3; the other approved for colour 28/3
- 2 Artist's artwork by Bradbury Wilkinson of a 4d value, vignette purple-black, frame orange. Then perforated ½d and 1d values in blocks of four plus single ½d and 1d, both perforated SPECIMEN
- 3 Set ½d to 10/- colour proofs of the 1948 set dated 14/3/47. The 6d value required modifications
- 4 & 5 Two grey cards with colour proofs of the complete set on black paper

St Helena

The six pages cover the 1938-44 definitives SG 131-140, the 1949 UPU SG 145-148, the 1949 bi-coloured issue SG 149-151, and the 1953-59 pictorial issue with head of George VI.

- 1 1d, 1½d, 2d bi-coloured, the 1d and 1½d not approved, the 2d approved 13/5/49
- 2 1d black and green, 1½d black and carmine, approved 26/5/49
- 3 1938 1/- in sepia, Artist's artwork in issued design but head of Edward VIII; plus a ½d violet perforated block of four and a ½d single perforated SPECIMEN
- 4 Universal Postal Union set
- 5 & 6 Colours of a pictorial set with head of George VI. The designs were subsequently used for the Elizabeth II set SG 153-165

Sierra Leone

Just four pages, for the 1938-44 definitives SG 188-200.

- 1 3d and 5d mounted on one card, approved 17/9/37
- 2 1½d mauve, 2d scarlet, approved 28/7/40
- 3 1/3d proof in black and white, approved 1/2/44
- 4 1/3d red, not approved, and 1/3d yellow-orange, approved, dated 19/1/44



The Skeleton Handstamps of West Cameroon

Michael Wright and Marty Bratzel

Work continues on our collaborative project to compile information about post offices, postal agencies and postmarks of independent Cameroun. More than 50 years have passed since Cameroun achieved independence on January 1, 1960. Our goal is to publish our collective findings for this time span in 2011.

In the course of assembling information, we identified a variety of skeleton postmarks, all used in West Cameroon in the decade or so following reunification of this territory – the former Southern Cameroons, which had been under British administration – with the Republic of Cameroun on October 1, 1961 to form the Federal Republic of Cameroun. A brief overview is in order to provide context for the use of skeleton handstamps in West Cameroon.

Since the early years of the 20th century, the British had used skeleton handstamps throughout the Empire, including Nigeria and the Cameroons. For one widely used style, slugs could be inserted into 26 slots around the periphery to compose the desired wording, then clamped tight; slugs could also be inserted into three or four slots in the centre to provide the date. Skeletons provided for the rapid availability of a temporary date-stamp upon the opening of a postal facility, until a permanent dater could be fabricated and delivered. They also provided cost savings, serving as the “permanent” date-stamp for postal agencies that handled only small volumes of mail.

Skeleton handstamps made their first appearance in the Cameroons in 1916, during the initial organization of postal operations under British civil administration (Refs. 1, 2) – actually earlier, in December 1914, if one includes the canceller briefly used by the Cameroons Expeditionary Force. Their use continued to a greater or lesser extent up to reunification in 1961. In particular, skeletons were utilized in 1930, when objections were raised in the League of Nations about the use of cancellers inscribed Nigeria in a mandated territory that, although administered as such, was not part of Nigeria. The skeletons were withdrawn when new date-stamps correctly reflecting the territory's status were introduced. (Objections had also been raised about the

use of Nigerian postage stamps, but the British did not accede on that point.) Skeletons again saw temporary use in 1950, when the mandate date-stamps were withdrawn, pending the arrival of permanent date-stamps reflecting the territory's status as a United Nations trusteeship.

Starting in 1942, skeletons were routinely introduced at newly opened postal agencies, serving as the permanent canceller at many. The Cameroons were detached upon the independence of Nigeria on October 1, 1960. Wording changes were easily made to the skeleton handstamps, primarily the removal of the word Nigeria – the presence of which had crept back into many devices – done in conjunction with the fashion to now place the postal agency name at the top and the controlling post office name at the bottom. Gremlins are also found as letters had a tendency to fall out and were occasionally re-inserted upside down or in the wrong slot.

Details about other dates and other styles of skeleton handstamps used during the period of British administration are provided in Refs. 1 and 2.

Upon reunification in 1961, five or six skeletons briefly remained in use until the arrival of permanent date-stamps, or underwent significant rewording. Some of those withdrawn were held in storage and subsequently utilized at postal agencies newly opened in West Cameroon later in the 1960s and early 1970s. The locales and observed wording are summarized in the accompanying table, and representative examples are illustrated in Figures 1-9. Details such as the recorded dates of use will be included in our above noted forthcoming publication.

To conclude, are the skeleton handstamps still in storage somewhere, and might they reappear in yet another guise at some future new postal agency? Other Cameroun cancellers from the 1960s have surprisingly resurfaced during the past decade, after years of dormancy. With West Africa, anything is possible!

Thanks are extended to Dann Mayo, Peter Hørlyck, and Bob Maddocks for providing selected illustrations. Additional information and details are always welcome and will be duly acknowledged.



Figure 1

Skeleton Handstamps used at Postal Agencies in West Cameroon

Bai	Bai Postal Agency / Cameroon	Ref. 3
Bambui	Bambui / Rep. Fed. Cameroun	Figure 1
Kembong	Kembong / Postal Agency	Figure 2
	Kembong PA / Cameroon	Figure 3
	Kembong PA / West Cameroon	Figure 4
Mbakwa Supe	Mbakwa Supe P A / U	Ref. 2
	Mbakwa Supe P A / UUKT	Ref. 1-3
	Mbakwa Supe P A	Ref. 2
Mueba	Mueba / P A	—
Ndian	PA Dian / West Cameroon	—
	PA Ndian / West Cameroon	—
Nguti	Nguti P Agency / W Cameroon	Ref. 3
	Nguti P Agency / W Cameroo	Figure 5
	Nguti Postes / Cameroun	Figure 6
Nwa	Nwa / Cameroon	Figure 7
Tombel	Tombel P A / West Cameroon	Figure 8
Widikum	Widikum P A / West Cameroun	Figure 9



Figure 3

Figure 2

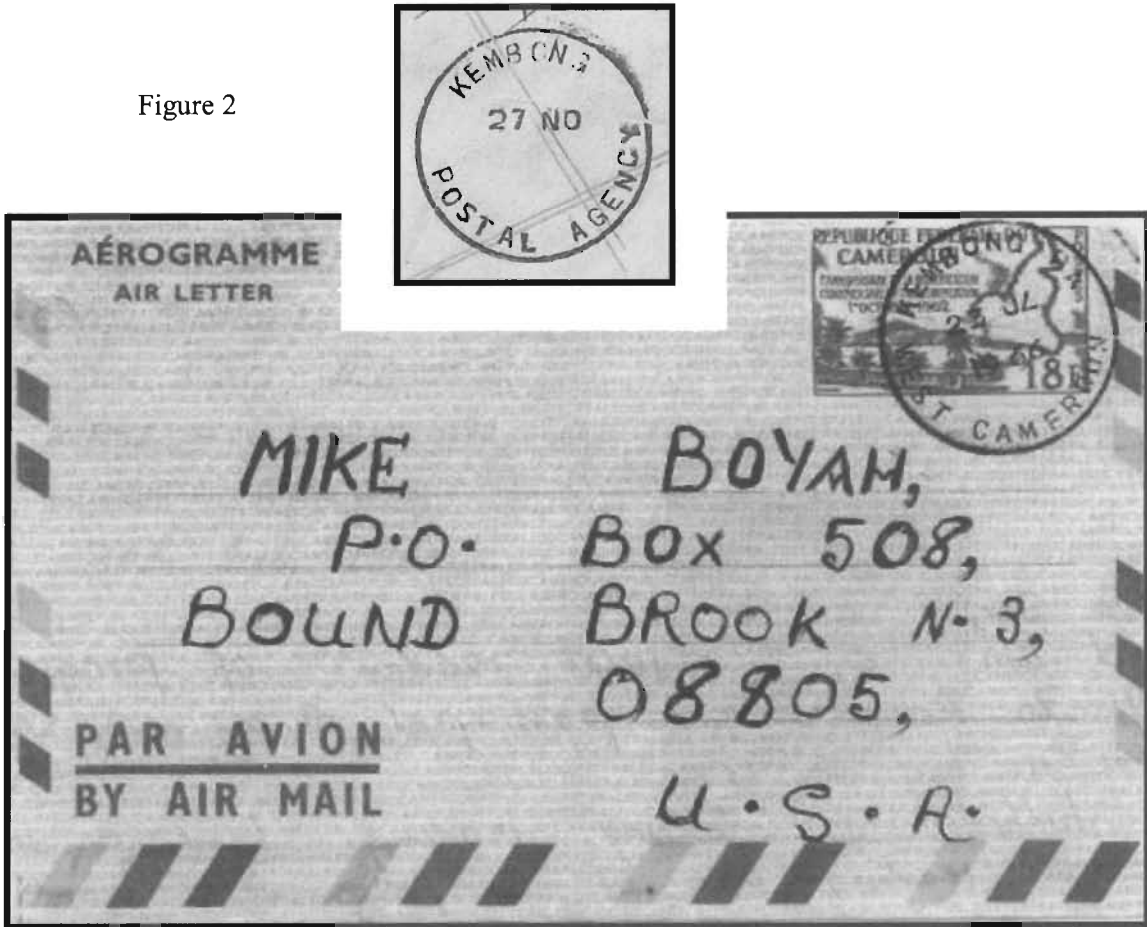


Figure 4

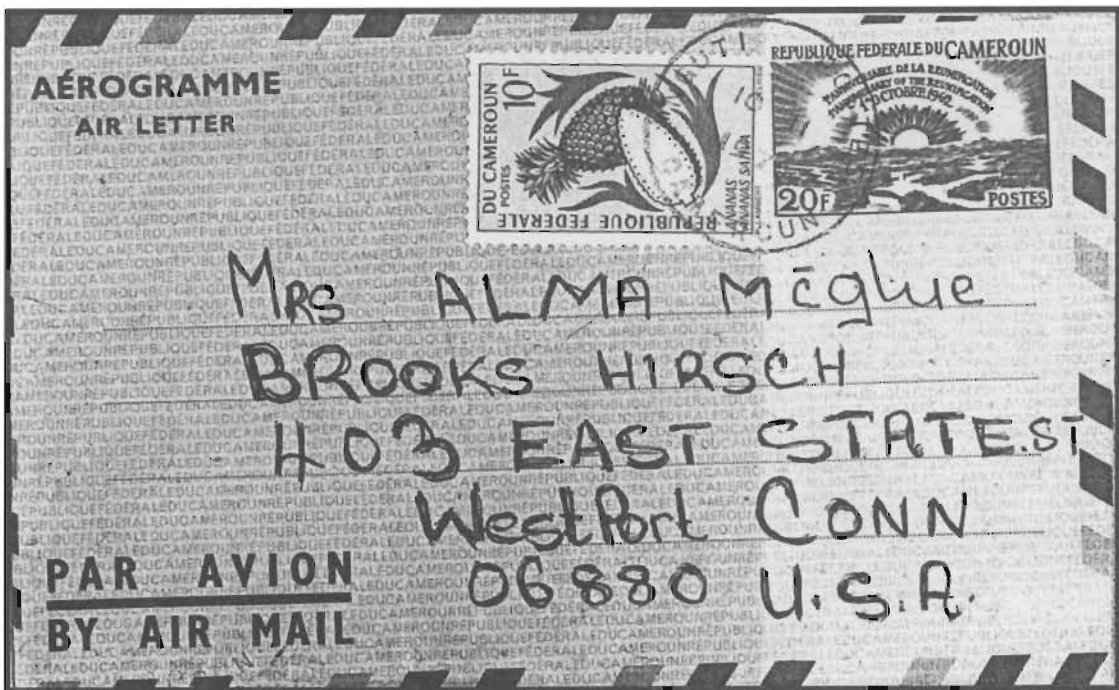


Figure 6

Figure 5

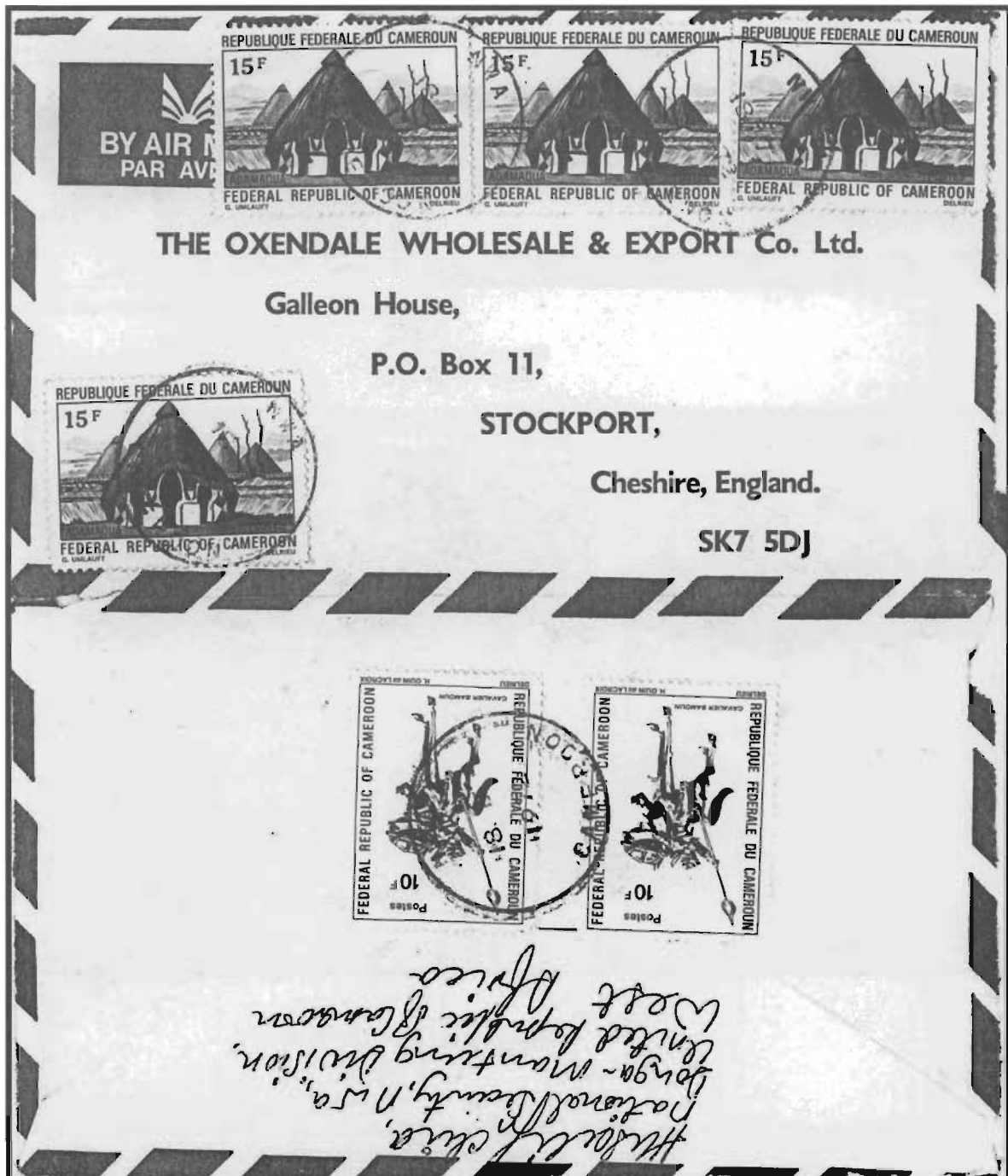


Figure 7

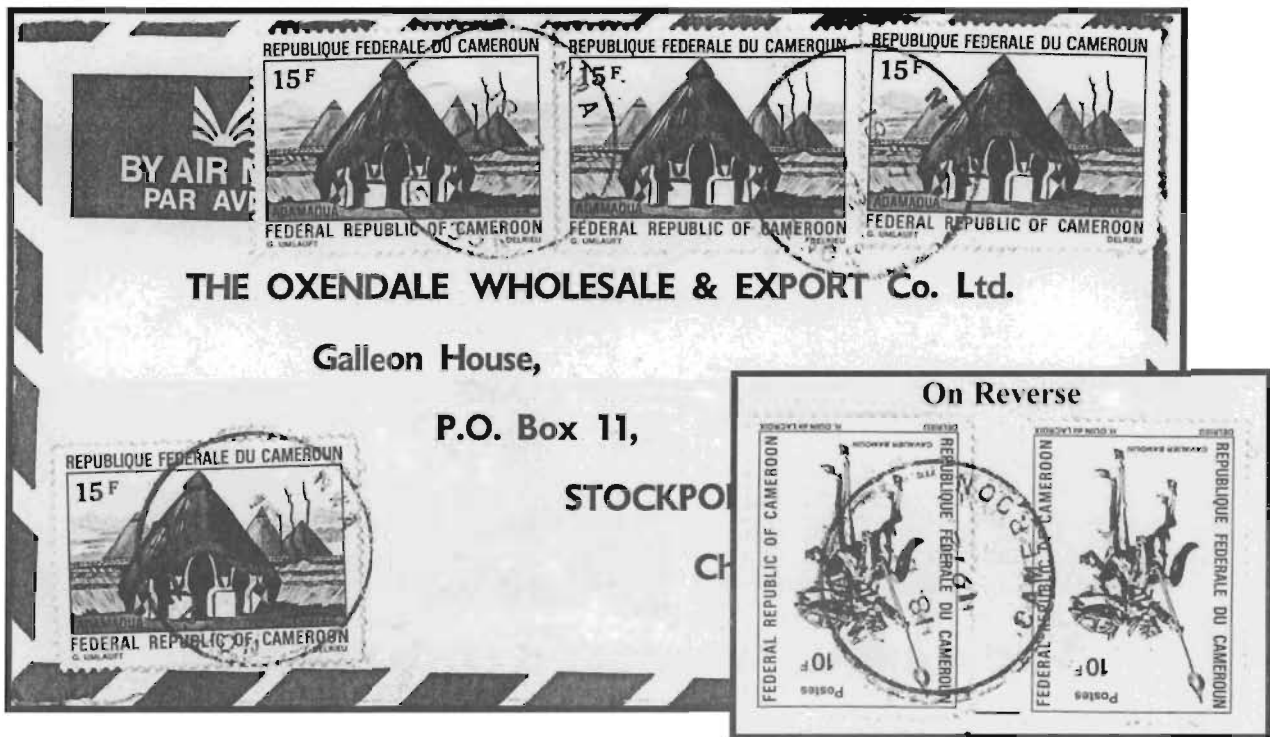


Figure 7

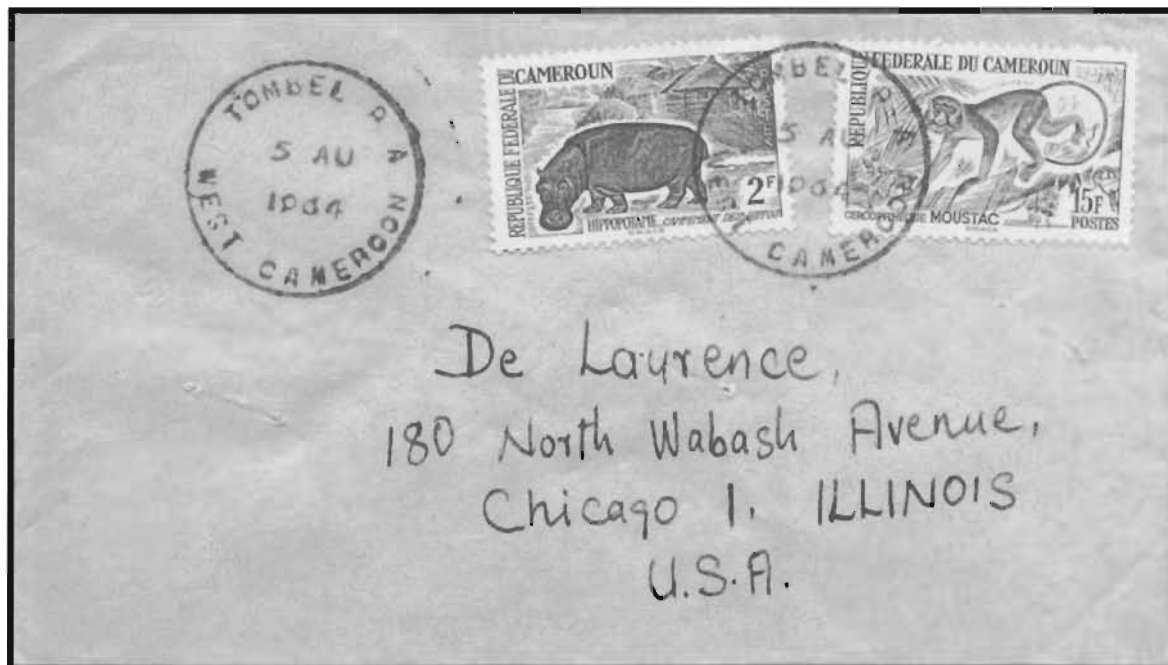


Figure 8

References

1. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961*. MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 1994. 136 pages. ISBN 0-9694026-1-9.
2. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961 – Supplement*. MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 2007. 115 pages. ISBN 978-0-9694026-5-7.
3. Kidd, C. Southern Cameroons 1950-1970. *Modern Postal History in the Making. Stamp Collecting*, October 1970, pages 39ff.

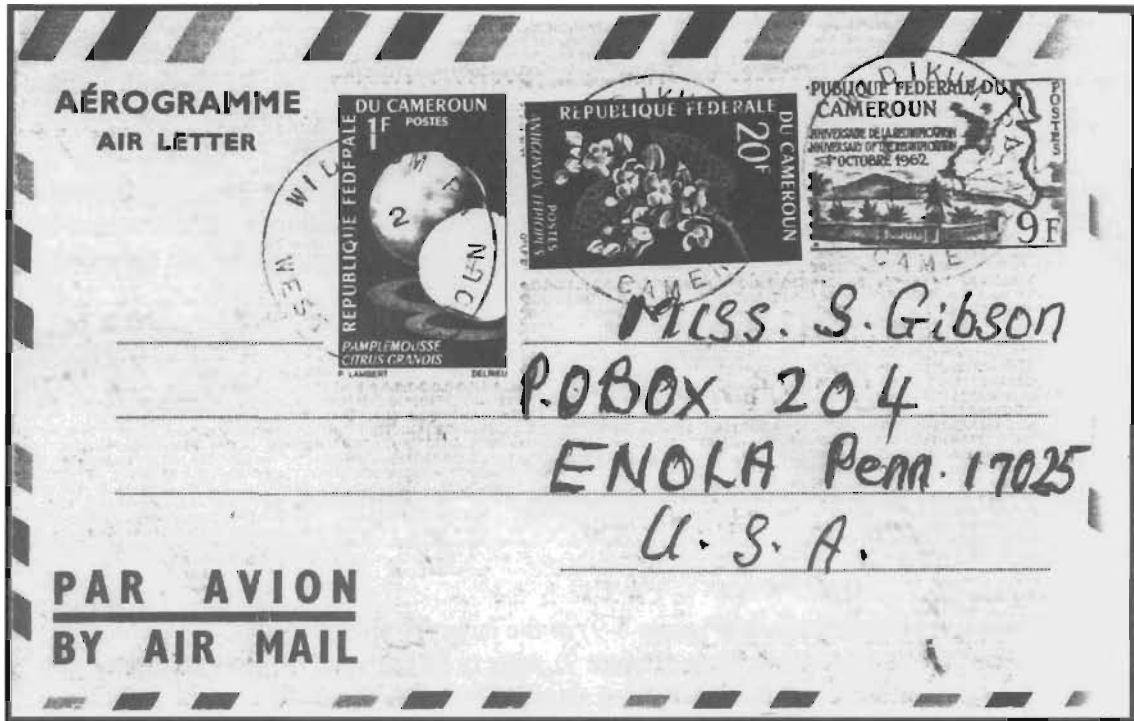


Figure 9



Post-Reunification use of Permanent British Cameroons Date-stamps

Marty Bratzel

Work continues on our collaborative project to compile information about post offices, postal agencies, and postmarks of independent Cameroun. Our findings will be published in 2011. In the course of assembling information, we turned our attention to the datestamps of the former Southern Cameroons that saw continued use upon reunification of that territory with the Republic of Cameroun on October 1, 1961.

Approximately 200 different cancellers were used in the Cameroons during the period of British administration, from 1916 to 1961. Add in the various settings for the skeleton handstamps, more than 230 different postmarks have been recorded, along with their period of use (Ref. 1, 2), and new examples continue to be found. Upon reunification, the cancellers previously in use were to have been withdrawn and replaced by new handstamps supplied by the postal authorities at Yaoundé. However, many remained in use.

Continued use of the old permanent date-stamps was particularly inappropriate, as most were inscribed UUKT or UUKA – under United Kingdom trusteeship or administration – reflecting the former “colonial” status of the territory, albeit under United Nations auspices.

Prior to reunification, several handstamps were in use simultaneously at six post offices – Bamenda, Buea, Kumba, Mamfe, Tiko, and Victoria. In addition to general-purpose devices, other cancellers were available specifically for registration, parcel post, postal savings, and telegraph. Upon reunification, only one replacement postal handstamp was initially supplied to each post office. Based on postmark evidence, a second or third handstamp was not provided until 1963 at the earliest. Evidently considered insufficient and, coupled with past reliance on the availability of multiple devices, local postal officials continued to use

many of the old permanent handstamps, notably those intended for registered mail. In fact, a surprising 24 have been confirmed used after October 1, 1961, some for only a few days, but 16 saw use into 1962 and 8 into 1963, up to two full years after reunification. Post-reunification use has been fully documented (Ref. 1, 2).

Since no provision had been made for new year slugs for the old cancellers, the question arose – how to display the correct year in the postmark on and after January 1, 1962. Summarized below and illustrated in Figures 1-13 are the measures taken – or not taken. For 1962, the following have been recorded:

- The year was left blank (Figures 1-3).
- The 61 was left in place (Figure 4).
- The 61 was inverted to read 19 (Figures 5-6).
- A large 6, presumably a day slug, was inserted (Figure 6).
- The year was cobbled together from two slugs, 6 + 2 (Figure 3).
- The year was cobbled together from three slugs, 19 + 6 + 2 (Figure 7).

and for 1963:

- The year was again left blank (Figures 8-9) or the large 6 left in place.
- The composite 62 was left in place (Figure 9), later to be replaced by just a 6 (Figure 10).
- The year was cobbled together from three slugs, 19 + 6 + 3 (Figure 11).

Only the occasional manuscript notation 62 or 63 has been recorded (Figures 4, 12-13).



Fig. 1. Bamenda 10 FE, without 62 year slug.



Fig. 2. Kumba 1 FE, without 62 year slug.

Of particular interest is that the single numerals cobbled together to make the 62 or 63 depicted in Figures 3, 7, 9, and 11 each have a stop. The stops are most easily seen in Figures 3 and 11. Other examples to hand of these postmarks confirm their presence. The only slugs with a stop after the numeral were those used to denote the time of day in the postmark. In the case of the 4-digit years in Figures 7 and 11, a 9 was inverted to create a 6 – the stop is at the top left of the numeral, and the accompanying 19's are most likely inverted 61 year slugs.

Thanks are extended to Michael Wright, Bob Maddocks, Peter Hørlyck, and Wolfgang Strobel for kindly providing selected illustrations, and thanks also to Michael for suggesting this article. Additional information and observations are, of course, always welcome.

References

1. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961*. MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 1994. 136 pages. ISBN 0-9694026-1-9.
2. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961 – Supplement*. MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 2007. 115 pages. ISBN 978-0-9694026-5-7.

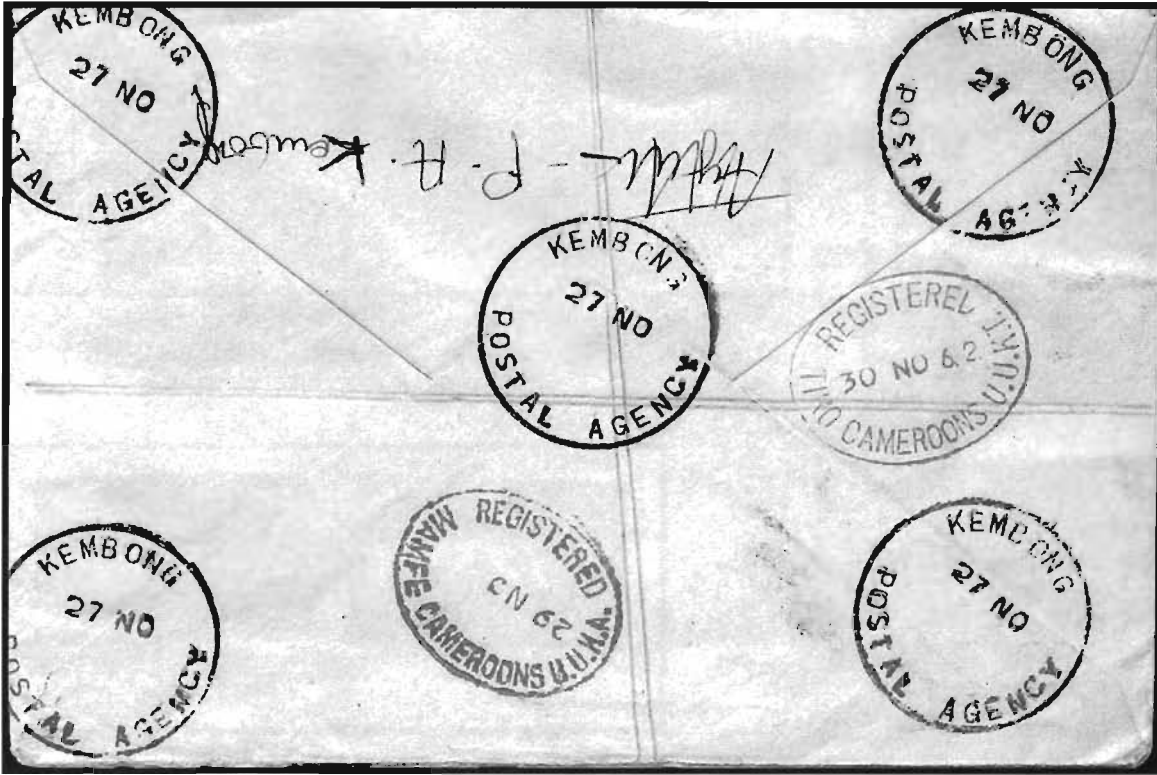


Fig. 3. Mamfe 29 NO, without 62 year slug. Tiko 30 NO 62 with composite year.

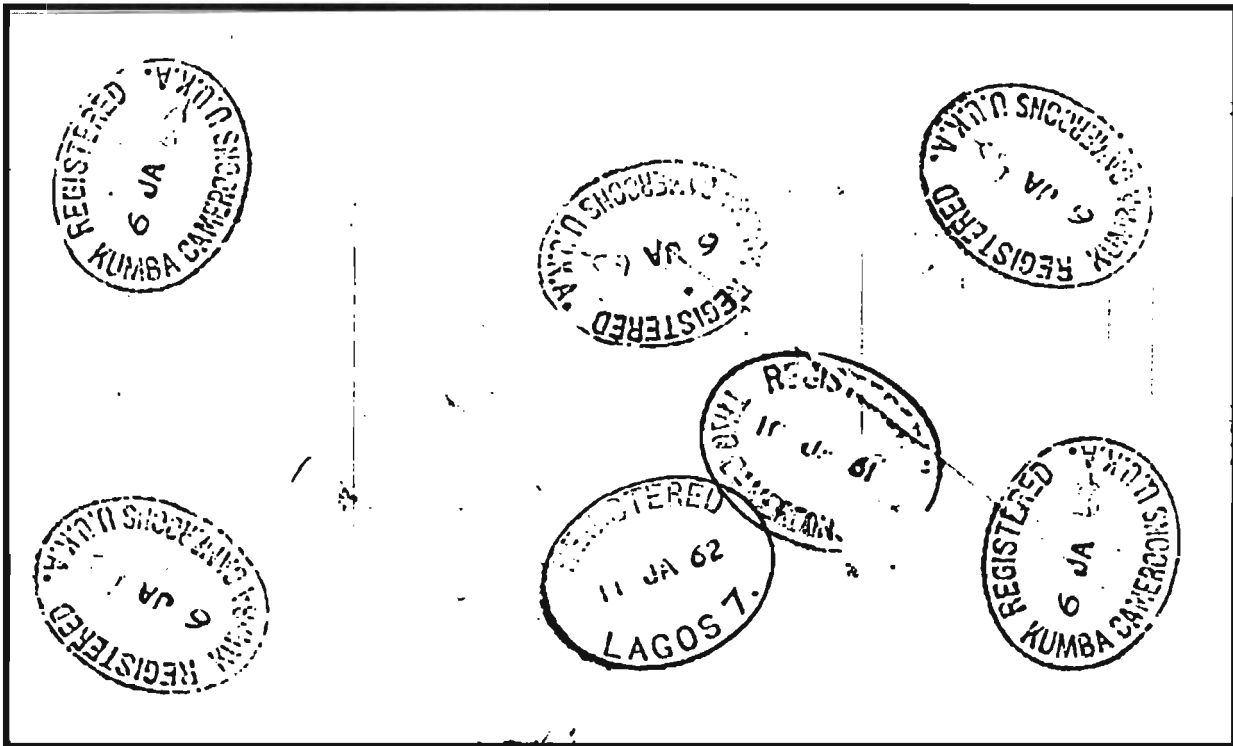


Fig. 4. Tiko 10 JA 61, old year slug left in place at the start of 1962. Kumba 6 JA, with manuscript 62.



Fig. 5. Victoria Parcels 5 OC, without 62 year slug but with 19 inserted above the date.



Fig. 7. Kumba 1962 5 FE, with composite year.

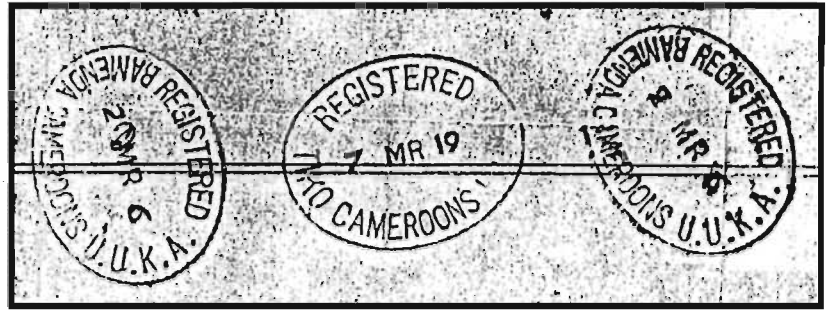


Fig. 6. Tiko 7 MR 19, without 62 year slug. Bamenda 2 MR 6, without 2.



Fig. 8. Buea Savings Bank 28 JA, without 63 year slug.

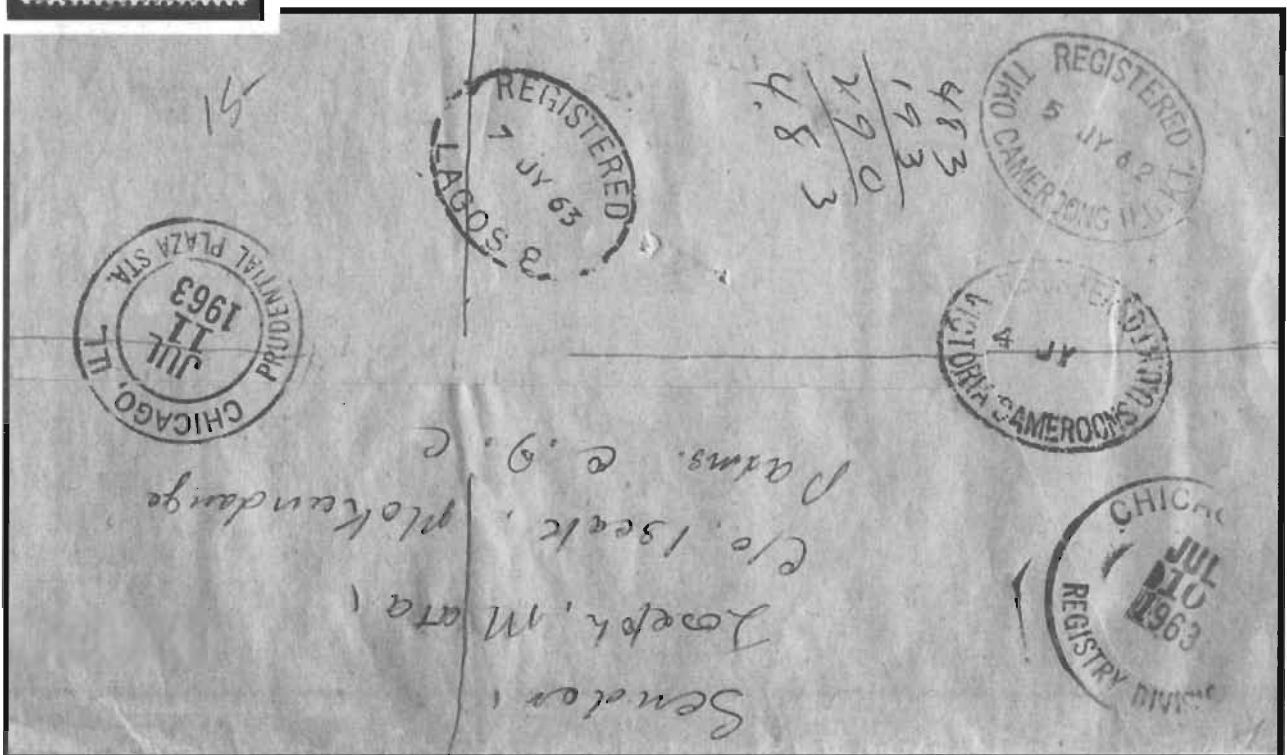


Fig. 9. Victoria 4 JY, without 63 year slug. Tiko 5 JY 62, old composite year left in place.



Fig. 11.
Kumba 1963 11 MY,
with composite year.

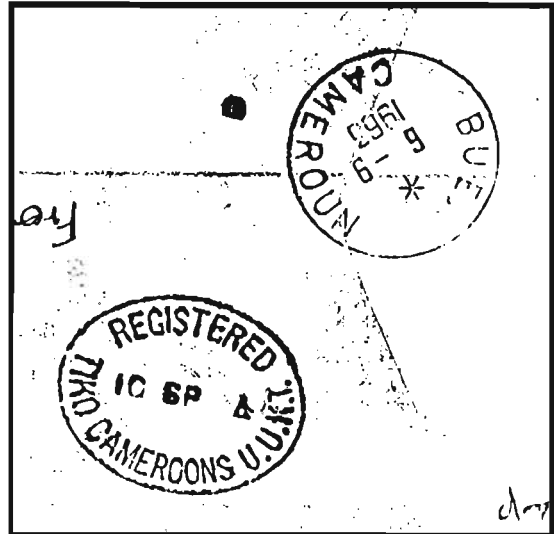


Fig. 10.
Tiko 10 SP 6,
without 3.

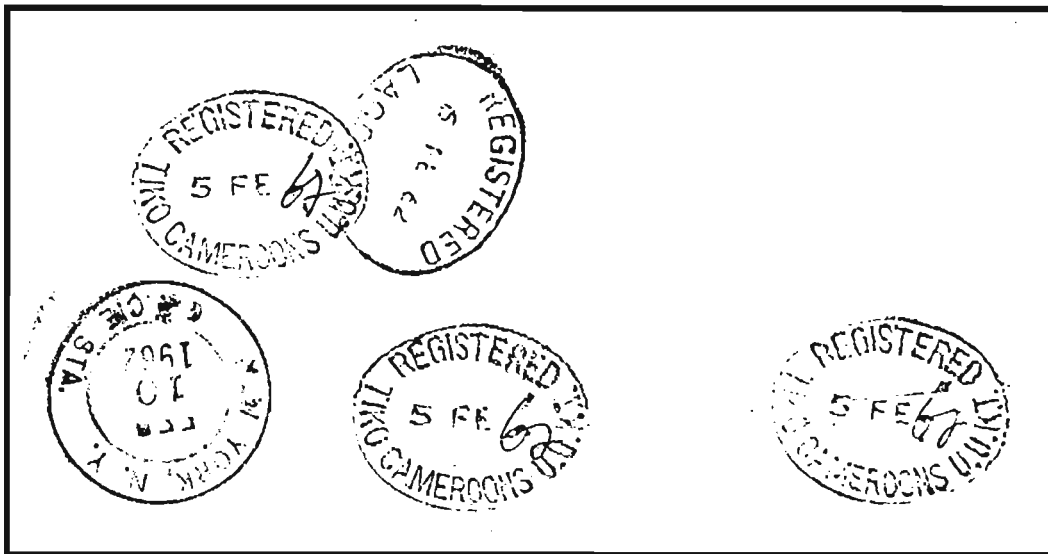
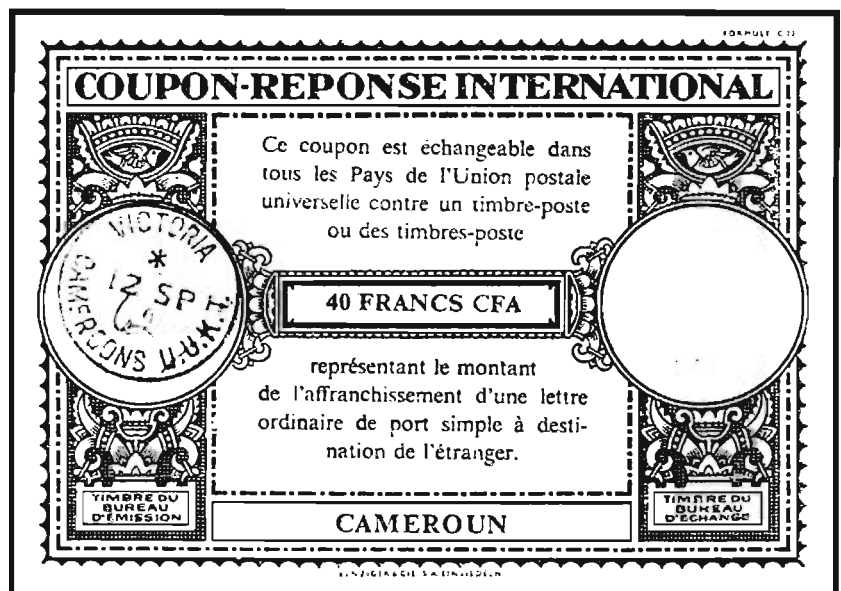


Fig. 12. Tiko 5 FE, with manuscript 62.

Fig. 13.
Victoria 12 SP,
with manuscript 62.



Obituary - Ralph Stanton (1923-2010)

Many collectors of Ascension and St Helena will be sad to hear of Ralph's recent death; he was a WASC member for many years until 2003. This tribute was written by our member Bill Thorpe who was working with Ralph in compiling a detailed study of the Island's 1922 - 1937 'Badge' sets. I will be publishing an article by Ralph in the October edition - Barry Burns

Ralph passed away quietly on 21 April aged 86. He was a world-renowned Mathematician, with a 64 year academic career marked by many achievements and honours. He will be long remembered by a large number of people in many spheres.



Ralph was born on Trafalgar Day 1923 in Lambeth, Ontario, as the first of 4 siblings. He was educated at the Universities of Western Ontario and Toronto, and taught at the latter from 1946 to 1957. He then taught at York University, and in 1970 moved to the Department of Computer Science at the University of Manitoba. There he served as Head, Professor, and was appointed Distinguished Professor in 1984. He was still working until only a few days before his death.

His philatelic interests were wide ranging, and his collection in some areas was probably one of the finest in the world. He will be best remembered by our members for his articles in the *St Helena and Ascension Supplement* and *Cameo*, which were always worth reading, although his views and comments did not always suit everyone.

We had been corresponding for over 6 years, but sadly I never had the opportunity of meeting him in the flesh. However, the Internet proved a good substitute. The last 3 years spent trying to 'sort out' the Badge Sets of St Helena and Ascension have been amusing, instructive and hard work, particularly in trying to keep up with Ralph's knowledge and stamp collection. It is sad to know that he will not see the finished publication, which I can only hope will be a fitting tribute to him.



Sierra Leone Misplaced 2½d Overprint on 3d Revenue

Frank Walton FRPSL

In 1897, the Sierra Leone post office was running short of 2½d stamps, which at the time paid the basic letter rate to the UK. To ensure a continuous supply, a local overprint was made on the tall Stamp Duty revenue stamps. Four values were overprinted: 3d, 6d, 1s and 2s (Barefoot 6-9).

Although the sheet format was six rows of ten stamps, the overprint forme was half this size, i.e. three rows of ten stamps. Thus to complete the printing of a sheet, the forme had to be pressed twice, once on the top half of the sheet and once on the bottom half.

By and large, the overprinting was carried out to an acceptable quality, although two sheets of the 3d value did have errors on them. On one sheet the two impressions of the overprint forme were overlapped by exactly one stamp height, causing the overprint to be doubled. The marginal copies of the resultant stamps show that this was Row 3 of the sheet, showing that the upper impression of the overprint forme was correctly positioned with the lower impression being one row high.

It is the second sheet that is the focus of this article. The overprint forme on the top half of a sheet was printed approximately 12 mm too low. This had the effect of the bars missing the top row of stamps completely, and Rows 2 and 3 having the bars at the top rather than the bottom.

Examples of stamps from this sheet are not easy to find. Over the years I have only recorded nine examples. Good images of each of these have been analysed, and I am confident that these stamps can be reconstructed to show that they all originated from the same half sheet. The stamp from Row 3 Stamp 10 of the overprint forme is marginal showing that it is from Row 3 of the sheet rather than Row 6.

The illustration shows the reconstruction of this half sheet.

The nine stamps have been plated by using the Type of 2½d, and also distinguishing features that are constant on the forme such as the 'Broken Large 2' on Row 2 Stamp 5, and the 'Square Stop' on Row 2 Stamp 8.



The illustration shows the reconstruction of this half sheet

Stanley Gibbons have relatively recently added stamps from the top row as SG 55d with a description of 'Bars Omitted'. They do not list the stamps with 'Bars at Top'. Given that all of the extant examples appear to be from the same half sheet, it is possible to state how many examples of each Type were printed:

SG Number	WASC Type	SG Type	Description	Total
SG 55d	A	8	Bars Omitted	10
SG 55 var	A	8	Bars at Top	12
SG 56 var	C	10	Bars at Top	5
SG 57 var	D	11	Bars at Top	2
SG 58 var	E	12	Bars at Top	1

One completely unanswered question about this misplaced overprint is 'What happened to the lower part of the sheet'? If it was correctly printed, then Row 4 of the sheet would have the bars at both the top and the bottom of the stamps; I have never seen such a variety.

If anyone has any further examples of this misplaced overprint variety it would be good to record them for posterity.

Acknowledgements

My thanks go to Tom Butlin [Row 1 / Stamp 7, 2/5] and the Colonial Stamp Company [3/3-4 (pair), 3/7, 3/9] for providing me with illustrations from their collections. One example has been taken from eBay [3/10]. The other two examples are from my collection.

Oil Rivers Protectorate 'Broken R' Variety

Dr Simon Heap



Fascinated by Roger West's Broken 'I' Variety in *Cameo* (Ref 1), and checking the listing of flaw varieties on this overprint in Ince and Sacher (Ref. 2), I illustrate a Broken first 'R' variety from my own collection, which is not in that list. The unaltered horizontal lined red tablet remains in the background, but the first 'R' of RIVERS is broken into three distinct pieces.



As well as their listing of flaw varieties, Ince & Sacher also state on p186 "Owing to the presence of loose perforation discs during overprinting, especially on the 2d value, ink has been prevented from registering, resulting in broken or incomplete lettering."

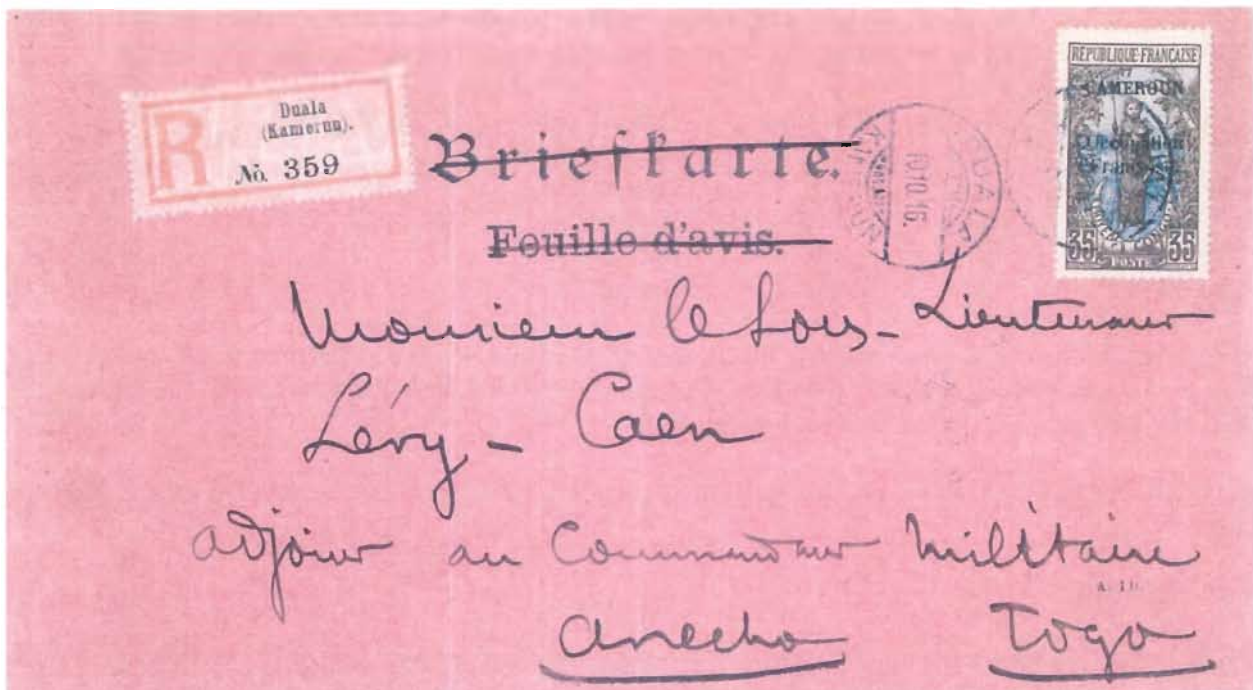
References

1. West R., "Oil Rivers Protectorate 'Broken I' variety", *Cameo*, Volume 11 p193, WASC, October 2009
2. Ince J.F. & Sacher J., *The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region Prior to 1914*, pp186-188, RPSL, London 1992



German Stationery used in Occupied Cameroun and Togo

John Mayne



I recently acquired from a small French auction house a salmon pink 'Briefkarte Feuille d'avis' envelope sent registered post from Duala on 10 October 1916 to a Lieutenant and Adjutant to the French Military Commander at Anecho, Togo (Fig. 1). The correct postage and registration fee was met by a single 35c stamp of the third "Occupation" overprint issue. This was routed via Lome 24 October 1916 and reached Anecho the same day. A German registration label of Duala was employed and the cover has a wax seal on the reverse which is unfortunately too unclear to identify the sender.

I was puzzled about the postal stationery envelope, numbered A. 1b. towards the right hand bottom corner. I sent a copy to a friend in Germany who manages a specialised German Colonies auction. He told me this envelope was an official envelope for use by any German post office to hold the registered advice notices which was then placed at the top of outgoing mail bags. He tells me he has never seen this envelope used in Kamerun or Togo during the German period; the only examples he has seen are from German South West Africa.

In this case the envelope is clearly being used as an ordinary envelope for a registered postal item with the original purpose struck out with ink lines, but we now know that these envelopes will have been stocked by the German post office at Duala before the Anglo-French occupation. In *Cameo* January 2005 (Ref 1) I reported the use of a similar envelope from Togo in July 1915, with the printed reference number A 1b. In that case the envelope measured 195 x 140 mm as opposed to 195 x 110mm for this new example.

Inbound registered mail to Togo in the early days of the occupation of Togo is very scarce [*ed- it may be worth noting that Maddocks (Ref 2) shows documentary evidence that there was no registered mail service from the occupied Cameroons during British control of Duala post office, which ended at the handover to the French on 1 April 1916. This cover was posted at the French post office later in 1916 when registration had become a normal service*]

References

1. Mayne J., "Togo Mail Collected by Belgian Ship", *Cameo*, Volume 8 pp282-283, WASC, January 2005
2. Maddocks R.J., *The Postal Arrangements of the Anglo-French Cameroons Expeditionary Force 1914-1916*, pp184-188, Author, Oswestry 1996



St. Helena Reversed 'R' Registered Purple Handstamp Registered Mail from the Island - 12th June 1899

Alan Stone

The purple reversed 'R' registered handstamp was used on mail posted from St. Helena on 12th June 1899, with Bristol and Banbury transit marks of 30th June 1899. By 5th August 1899 and subsequent posting the cork cancellation was in the corrected form. I became interested in this mailing following purchasing lots from the Justine Collection from St. Helena (Phoenix International Sale 90 – 6th March 1993). One of the envelopes purchased was displayed on a page that also contained the following entry:

"It is said that only six of the reversed 'R' have been recorded, at least three of which were addressed to A. E. J. Ackerman of Banbury, and posted on 12th June 1899".

Since purchasing the original cover I have searched for others with the reversed handstamp, with a view of trying to establish how many were actually posted on 12th June 1899. I have used for reference old auction catalogues, the internet, stamp dealers web-sites etc. and to date have been able to establish that there were at least 12 different covers posted on 12th June 1899 to A. E. J. Ackerman with that handstamp.

Recently, I purchased Brian Mabbett's excellent book on St. Helena Postal Markings 1815-2000 (Ref. 2). On page 74 it is stated that:

"A large series of covers all addressed to A. J. Ackerman, 32 Middleton Road, Banbury show a large reversed R struck in violet. The covers all posted on 12th June 1899 show registration numbers between 57 and 147, so they are quite common".



Figure 1

Although the registration range quoted is between 57 and 147, I have in my collection of Ackerman postal history an envelope with the reversed R struck in violet with the registration numbers 149 (Fig. 1). I also have a separate envelope with registration number 147.

It may be a thankless task, but I am now keen on trying to establish as accurately as possible the number of envelopes with the reversed R handstamp and whether as suggested in the note from the Justine Collection any were sent to addresses other than E. J. Ackerman of Banbury.

I would be grateful for any further information on covers held by members that have the purple reversed 'R' registered handstamp, accompanied where possible by a scanned copy of the envelope. If requested, I will happily send details of the covers I have traced to date to any member who provides me with additional information. I can be contacted on the following E-mail:

Reference

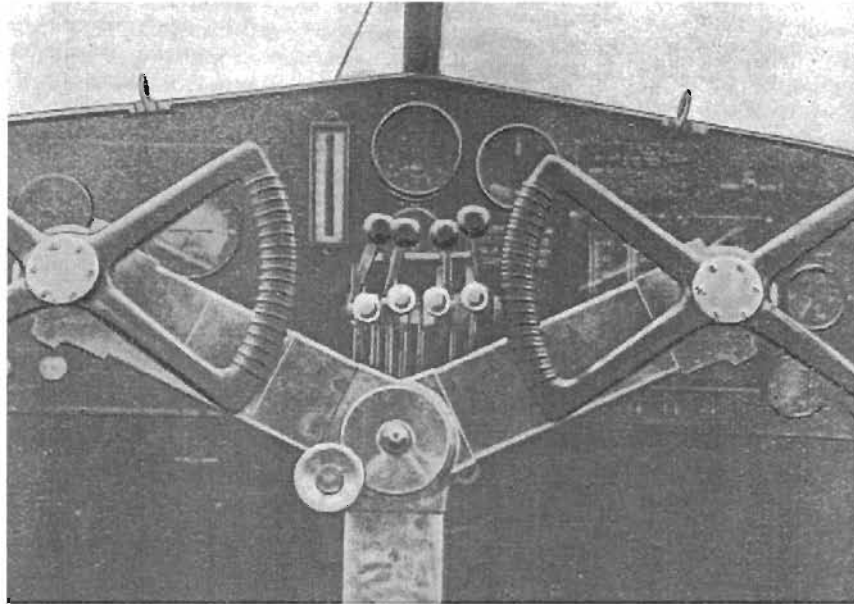
1. Justine Collection from St. Helena (Phoenix International Sale 90 – 6th March 1993)
2. Mabbett B., *St Helena; the Postal, Instructional and Censor Markings 1815-2000*, p74, WASC, Dronfield, 1st Edition, 2002



Piloting the Air Mail from Lagos to Khartoum, 1937

Dr Simon Heap

In 1937, Captain R. O. O. Taylor, the Operations Manager and Chief Pilot of Imperial Airways (Nigeria and Gold Coast) Limited, wrote about one of his flights taking the air mail from Lagos to Khartoum (Ref 1). The air mail service in both directions between Nigeria and Khartoum, where connections with all parts of the world were made, had begun in February the previous year (Ref 2).



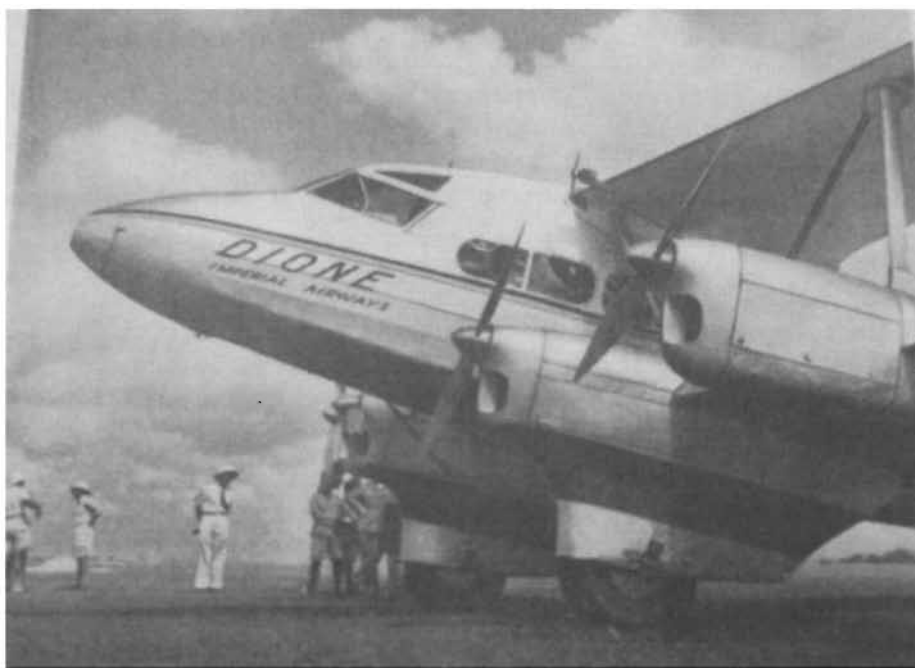
Some of the instruments and parts of the controls as seen from the pilot's seat on board the Lagos-Khartoum Air Mail aeroplane

Captain Taylor starts his informative article by saying: "I have been asked to take you with me on an imaginary flight in the mail plane which leaves Lagos each week *en route* for England." (Ref 3)

Before the flight leaves at 11 on Thursday morning, one pre-flight job was getting the mail out to the Apapa airfield:

"The mail at the G.P.O. has just been closed and the weights of the bags are being telephoned through to the Traffic Officer on the aerodrome, in order that they may be entered up on her necessary papers and due allowance made for them in the loading of the aeroplane." (Ref 4)

Then, just fifteen minutes before departure time, "the Royal Mail van arrives; the mail is checked over and quickly stowed away in the place allotted for it." (Ref 5)



An early photo of the airmail being loaded at Apapa airport, Lagos, before its flight via Kano and Khartoum to London (Ref. 6)

The plane takes off, passes 1,000 feet above the Lagos Marina, then heads to its first destination: Oshogbo, fifty minutes away: “The throttles are shut now and our speed falls rapidly, the wheels touch the ground gently at 70 mph, a touch on the brake, and in a moment we are taxi-ing into the administrative building to pick up the mail.” (Ref 7)

Fifteen minutes later they are airborne again, heading north to Minna, where “our arrival is tapped out to Lagos and Kano, and we land here for mail and petrol.” (Ref 8)

Kaduna and then Kano follow, parking the plane in the latter place’s hangar at 5pm, six hours after departing Lagos. The next day at 7am they are off to Maiduguri, the last call in Nigeria, before crossing into French territory:

“Here we land at Fort Lamy and Abeche, and on to El Geneina, a frontier post in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, for the night. That is Friday, and on Saturday afternoon we arrive in Khartoum, having landed for food at El Fasher and El Obeid. This finished our journey; at Khartoum our mail is handed over to the Main Air Line from South Africa and our job is over.” (ref 9)

References

- 1 *With the Pilot of the Air Mail, Captain R. O. O. Taylor’, Nigeria, 11, July 1937, pp4-7.*
- 2 *Nigeria Annual Reports on Posts and Telegraphs Department, 1937, p4.*
- 3 ‘With the Pilot of the Air Mail’, p4.
- 4 ‘With the Pilot of the Air Mail’, p5.
- 5 ‘With the Pilot of the Air Mail’, p5.
- 6 *Nigeria, 13, March 1938, p51.*
- 7 ‘With the Pilot of the Air Mail’, p6.
- 8 ‘With the Pilot of the Air Mail’, p6.
- 9 ‘With the Pilot of the Air Mail’, pp6-7.



Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals

Members are invited to contact either editor by e-mail, post or telephone when they notice any article they may feel might be of interest to other members. Articles which we hope to reproduce in *Cameo* at a future date are not listed here.

Gibbons Stamp Monthly, Volume 40, number 10, March 2010

pp49-56, David Horry *Sierra Leone Postmarks within the King George VI Period 1937-1955*

London Philatelist, Volume 119, number 1375, May 2010

pp114-123, Peter Richards *Air Mail Services from the UK to West Africa during the Second World War* (this will appear in a future *Cameo*)

pp133-143, Peter Fernbank *De La Rue Sheet Numbering*

Journal of the France & Colonies PS, Volume 60, number 1, March 2010

pp6-7, Bob Deakin *Interesting St Helena Items* (1868 steamer cover from Marseille to St Helena and 1971 FDC of the St Helena stamp issue for the 150th anniversary of the death of Napoleon I)

p7 Bob Maddocks *Cameroun Post Offices: Bda Up Station*

p8 Rob May *World War II—Northbound airmails by the British air route*

pp11-14 Bill Mitchell *Dahomey Internal Communications at the turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries: a Supplement*

pp27-29 Bob Maddocks *The Alpha and Omega of Field Service Correspondence from the Cameroons Campaign 1914-1916*

Civil Censorship Study Group Bulletin, Volume 37, number 1, February 2010

p7, Marc Parren *Postal Censorship in Chad: the 1971 Coup d’État Attempt*

'Via North Atlantic Air Service': UK - West Africa 1942 - 1943

Barbara Priddy

Having read with interest Robert Johnson & Peter Richard's article in *Cameo* (Ref. 1), I remembered some covers (which I had filed away years ago under PAA as I had been unable to find a satisfactory explanation for them) which, now that a lot more information is available on wartime services, may have a bearing on the question. All three are going from UK to West Africa by air, are endorsed 'Via North Atlantic Air Service' and are franked at the 4/6 rate. The first (*Fig. 1*) is most probably philatelic, as it is from L.N. and M. Williams to 'Takoradi Fortress, West Africa Force' and was posted registered at Golders Green 14 December 1942. Someone, probably a postal clerk, has endorsed it 'No air mail service', and there is no arrival backstamp. The other two are commercial. The second (*Fig. 2*) was posted at Liverpool 8 March 1943 and is backstamped at Lagos 26 May 1943. The third (*Fig. 3*) was posted at Manchester 1 October 1943, again to Lagos, but there is no backstamp.



Figure 1

Were all these covers, including the two mentioned in Johnson & Richards' *Cameo* article which are not apparently endorsed 'Via North Atlantic Air Service', intended to go by air all the way, and did they in fact go by air all the way? The rate certainly suggests that they were intended to go all the way by air: although this rate is not specifically mentioned in the Post Office leaflets seen by Johnson & Peet (Ref 2), rates are given for USA - 1/3; Mexico via New York - 2/-; Argentina and Brazil via New York - 3/6: 4/6 seems a logical rate to West Africa via New York and Brazil and compares well with the rates from Gold Coast and Nigeria to UK by the PAA 'double Atlantic' route. The absence of any mention of this rate from GPO records does not necessarily mean that it did not exist: pre-war, the PMG in London informed the PMG in Lagos in July 1936 in relation to the Régie Air Afrique - Sabena trans-Saharan service, "As you are aware air mail correspondence from this country for Nigeria is normally forwarded by Imperial Airways' service, the air postage rate being 6d per ½ ounce. As an exceptional arrangement, correspondence for Nigeria coming to hand specially superscribed for transmission by the foreign service and fully prepaid at the rate of 1/3d per half ounce [underlined in original] is forwarded accordingly, but this arrangement is not advertised in the Air Mail leaflet, or in any other way, and members of the public

making enquiry regarding the air mail service to Nigeria are informed only of the normal service unless they make specific application regarding the foreign service.” (Ref. 3)



Figure 2: commercial letter from Liverpool 8 March 1943, rated 4/6d by North Atlantic Air Service

Figure 2a; Lagos back-stamp 26 MY 43. There are no other markings

If they did go all the way by air, starting off across the North Atlantic, not all of them can have taken the same route between the UK and West Africa, as the transatlantic services varied considerably between summer and winter, and from year to year. These services were, due to wartime constraints, slow, irregular and expensive but were the only way for civilians to send ‘ordinary air mail’, i.e. letters in envelopes, to West Africa.

In April 1942, when the cover illustrated on the front of the January 2010 *Cameo*, was posted (I cannot make out the day, perhaps 6 or 8? - and why is the hand-stamp dated April 1945?), the routing for UK mail across the North Atlantic was by KLM (under charter to BOAC) from Bristol to Lisbon and by PAA FAM-18 Lisbon to New York via Bolama, Belem, Port of Spain and Bermuda (Ref. 4). Lisbon - New York took between 3 and 5 days. Throughout the month, the OMB reported that they were expecting PAA to substitute Foynes for Lisbon as the eastern terminal of this route, and indeed on 4 April, believing what they had been told by PAA’s London agents, that the first flight to Foynes would arrive on 6 April, they despatched to Foynes

“all air mail correspondence on hand for North America and Australasia, nearly 800 kg”.

When the flight did not materialise all this mail was brought back to the UK and forwarded to Lisbon on 10 April. No reference was made to West African mail being sent by this route in this or indeed in any other

OMB report, which suggests that the volume was very small, probably because the service was not advertised. Mails could be delayed in Lisbon if there was no capacity on the Clipper flight : for the week ended 18 April 1942 OMB reported

“A westbound flight left Lisbon on the 11th of April, reaching New York on the 14th. Mails despatched from London on the 30th and 31st of March and the 2nd of April were conveyed by this flight (the despatch of the 1st of April failed to connect with the “Clipper” and a despatch made on the 4th which was sent to Foynes in expectation of the Clipper extension and was subsequently diverted to Lisbon apparently also did not connect).”

For the week ended 25th April OMB reported

“A westbound Pan-American flight left Lisbon the 13th of April, reaching New York on the 17th. Mails despatched from London on the 4th, 10th and 11th of April, as well as the delayed mail despatched on the 1st of April were conveyed by this flight” (Ref 5)

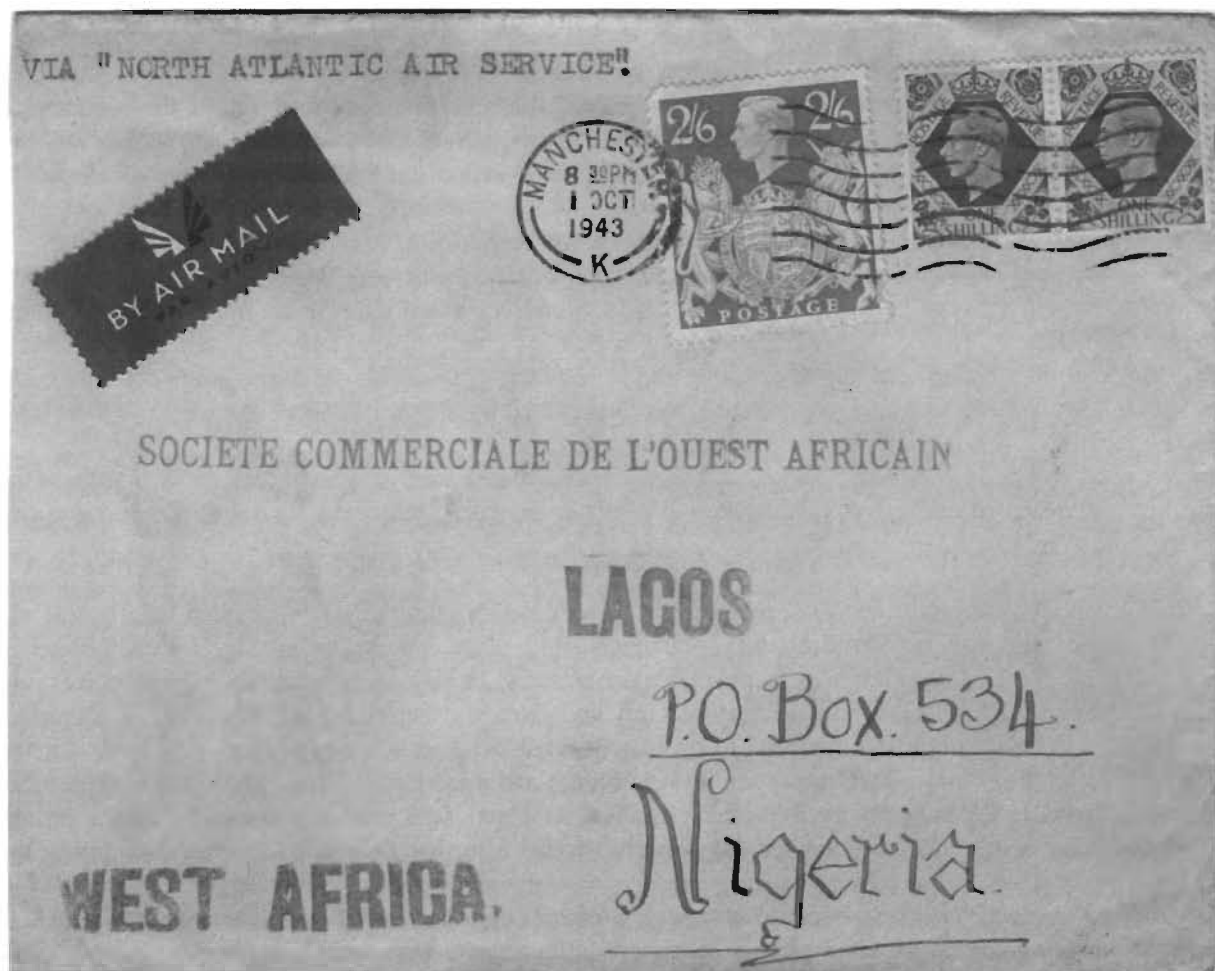


Figure 3

In May 1942, the PAA route New York to Foynes via Botwood finally materialised, the first flight leaving New York 18 May and reaching Foynes 20 May, a day late. On 18 June 1942, therefore, when Peter Richards' cover was posted, this was the service North Atlantic mail was sent on: OMB expected it to become twice-weekly, but reported that it was still operating somewhat irregularly. However for the week ended 27 June 1942, OMB reported

“... despatches made on the 20th and 22nd of June reached New York on the 24th” (Ref. 6)

From August 1942, military and civilian mail was also carried by American Export Airlines on this route (Ref. 7)

In October 1942 PAA and AEA reverted to a winter clockwise route, PAA flying New York - Bermuda - Lisbon - Foynes - Lisbon - Bolama - Fisherman's Lake - Natal - Belem - Port of Spain - San Juan -

Bermuda - New York and AEA flying New York - Bermuda - Foynes - Bathurst - Port of Spain - New York. (Ref. 8) As well as the route itself taking much longer than the direct Foynes - Botwood route, there was now a very heavy weight of correspondence intended for this route, and, even though US military aircraft were now also accepting mail, delays due to lack of capacity were frequent and airmail despatches had from time to time to be transferred to the sea route. For the week ended 19 December 1942, when the cover in Fig 1 was posted, OMB reported

"The service continues to be disorganised owing to operational and other difficulties and no opportunity for a despatch by air, in the westbound direction, occurred during the week; (according to present information none is likely to be available before the Christmas period). The whole of the correspondence on hand, with the exception of a few valuable packets for which air transmission is regarded as essential, was accordingly forwarded by three fast sea outlets, the relative despatches being made on the 15th, 17th and 18th of December."

which explains the endorsement 'No air mail service'. These arrived in New York during the week ended 9 January 1943 (Ref. 9).

By March 1943, when the cover in Fig. 2 was posted, the situation was still much the same: mail despatched by air was regularly taking up to three weeks to reach New York and some despatches still had to be transferred to the sea route. The cover was posted in Liverpool on 8 March: for the week ended 13 March, OMB reported

"westbound mails were despatched from London on the 9th and 13th of March for conveyance by air. A further despatch may be possible during the weekend and, in that event, it is hoped that sufficient aircraft accommodation will be available to clear all trans-Atlantic correspondence on hand (about 2 days' postings)" (Ref. 10).

In the event, that opportunity did not materialise and a despatch of unregistered correspondence was made by sea on 16 March. Registered correspondence was despatched by air on 17 March *"at very short notice"*. The next opportunity for despatch by air was on 27 March:

"arrangements had been made for a despatch by sea, but at the last moment capacity was offered on United States military aircraft to accommodate the whole of the correspondence on hand, viz. 3 to 4 tons." (Ref. 10)

In May 1943 the transatlantic services reverted to their summer route from New York to Foynes via Botwood, which was still in operation on 1 October 1943 when the cover in Fig. 3 was posted in Manchester (Ref. 8). The situation was somewhat more orderly, as there were now four services carrying North Atlantic mail: PAA, AEA, US military aircraft and from the beginning of July 1943, a Canadian Government service (although this had had to be suspended in August and September). However, for the week ended 2 October 1943, OMB reported that although a despatch had been made on 26 September which had arrived in Canada on 29 September (arrival at New York not yet reported), and a further despatch had been made on 27 September, no opportunity for a further despatch had occurred during the week

"owing, it is understood, to a temporary shortage of aircraft capacity caused by an accumulation of U.S. Army mails awaiting air conveyance from Foynes exceptionally by Pan-American Airways aircraft. In consequence, almost a ton of trans-Atlantic civil air mail correspondence was awaiting despatch at the end of the week".

The situation deteriorated fast: for the week ended 9 October 1943 OMB reported that, although they had managed to get 500 lb of Canadian mail off by the Canadian service,

"No opportunity occurred during the week, however, for a despatch of correspondence by the American-operated trans-Atlantic commercial air service, and a little over 2 tons of correspondence, mostly for the U.S.A., had accumulated in London by the end of the week. The whole of this correspondence, with the exception of the registered portion - about ¼ ton - was accordingly despatched from London on Saturday, the 9th of October, for conveyance by sea. This is the first occasion on which such a step has been necessary, so far as westbound correspondence is concerned, since the 28th of April last".

This mail arrived in New York 29 October. (Ref. 11)

So, one way or another, and sooner or later, these covers arrived at New York. Or did they? The Post Office always tries to send the mail by the fastest available route consistent with the rate paid, so, when no aircraft capacity was available and airmail had to be sent by sea to New York, would they have separated out the

(presumably very small) mail for West Africa, and sent it by sea direct to West Africa? There is at present no firm evidence one way or the other.

If all the covers arrived in New York, what happened next?

From December 1941 PAA were also flying a South Atlantic route, FAM-22, from U.S.A. to Lagos and Leopoldville via South America, on a six-day schedule each way. The details and life of this route have been extensively discussed in recent issues of APJ and AMN. Effectively, the service was flown fortnightly in both directions until November 1942 (Ref. 12).

It is therefore possible that both Robert Johnson's and Peter Richards' covers were flown by this service. (Although Robert Johnson's cover, following the winter route, could have been off-loaded in Bolama on the way to New York, it would have been unable to travel from Bolama to Brazzaville by air: there was no service by any airline over this route.) (Ref. 8) Peter Richards' cover arrived at Lagos 13 July, suggesting that it was held at an intermediate airport waiting for aircraft capacity to become available. However the three covers illustrated in Figs 1, 2 and 3 were all posted after the demise of this service, when the nearest that PAA came to Lagos was Fisherman's Lake (Ref. 8).

In December 1942 and March 1943, FAM-18 and the AEA service were being flown clockwise only. (Ref. 8). The cover in Fig. 1, probably despatched by sea to New York, could then only have reached West Africa by air by being flown back from New York to Foynes and off-loaded either at Bathurst by AEA or at Fisherman's Lake by PAA. The cover in Fig. 2, probably despatched by air, could have been off-loaded on the first go-round, but it is clear from the arrival date of 26 May that that did not happen. Either the cover was held up somewhere awaiting aircraft capacity, or at some point it was transferred to a sea route. It is difficult to see how any advantage in transmission time could have accrued from sending these covers 'Via North Atlantic Service', if, as appears likely, they were first carried to New York and back.

The cover in Fig. 3 is in a different case. Although the summer route in 1943 of both FAM-18 and the AEA service was Foynes- Botwood- New York, PAA was also flying a circular route around the South Atlantic: New York- Bermuda- Port of Spain- Belem- Natal- Fisherman's Lake- Bolama- Lisbon- Horta- Bermuda-New York, flown weekly, clockwise and anti-clockwise in alternate weeks. (Ref. 8) Whether this cover reached New York by air or by sea, this was the only available air mail service, and it too would have been off-loaded at Fisherman's Lake.

Finally, how did they reach Gold Coast and Nigeria? This is a very big question, as it affects not only the comparatively few covers from UK to West Africa by the North Atlantic Air Service, but an enormous number of covers from countries east of Lagos which were endorsed at this time to go by air via Lagos to U.S.A. From China, for example, they are endorsed "By B.O.A.C. to Lagos via Calcutta and thence by P.A.A. to destination"; from India, "India-Lagos-USA"; from Turkey, "via Cairo-Lagos"; from several other countries simply "via Lagos" or "via Pan-American". The answer at the moment is that we do not know. The only clues come from App C, in which it is recorded that when Pan-American Airways - Africa ceased service on the routes Freetown-Accra, which called in Liberia, in August 1942, and Takoradi-Khartoum, which called at Lagos, in October 1942, the services were operated by the RAF and USAATC respectively; i.e. they were militarised. (Ref. 8) Neither carrier appears in the App C records for 1943 onwards. Our best guess at the moment is that mail between Fisherman's Lake and Lagos was carried by USAATC, but it may simply have been transferred to surface mail. Clearly this lacuna was also a problem for mail originating in USA: fig. 4 shows a cover from New York to Cameroun, posted 7 May [1943] and backstamped at Douala 7 June 1943. Any suggestions or evidence one way or the other would be most welcome.

Conclusion. All of these covers were intended to go all the way by air from UK to West Africa, via the 'double Atlantic route', for which the rate was 4/6, and at least some of them probably did. However, in the absence of transit and arrival markings it is not possible to say this with certainty. The absence from both Post Office leaflets and the OMB reports of any reference to mail for West Africa being sent by the North Atlantic service means that the possibility of this route needs further research.

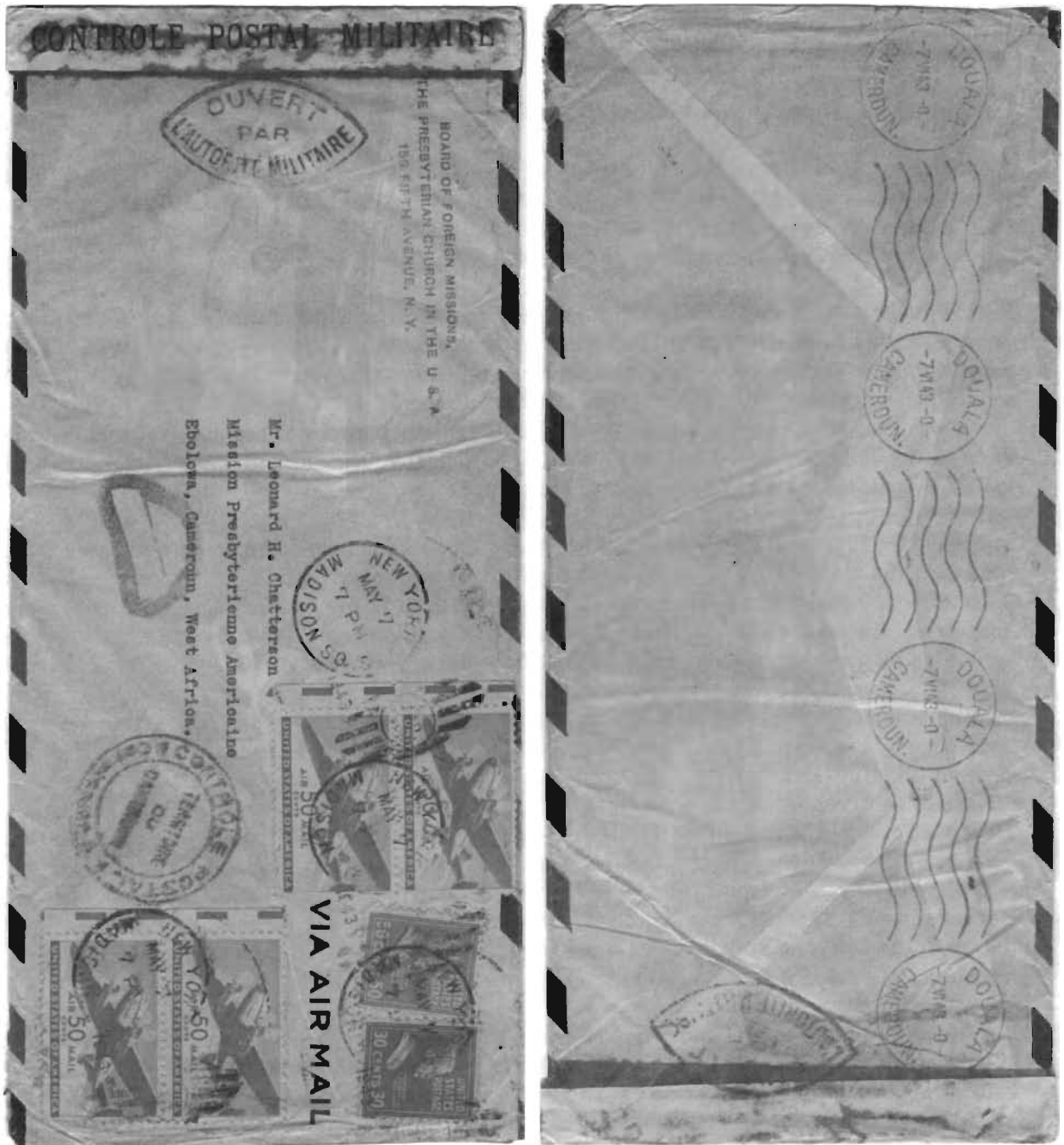


Figure 4: front and reverse of cover from New York 7 May [1943], to Douala Cameroun, backstamped 7 June 1943 (shown 75% of actual size)

Postscript - censorship. Of the covers which I have seen, an admittedly small sample, those from SCOA in Manchester to SCOA in Lagos do not bear any censorship marks. The philatelic cover in Fig. 1 similarly bears no censorship markings. Of the others, the two mentioned in the *Cameo* January 2010 have been opened and sealed by the censor - presumably both in England, although the reverse of Robert Johnson's cover is not illustrated - and the cover in Fig. 2 has received the purple half-moon of Lagos. I have little knowledge of censorship, but the correlation between SCOA company covers and lack of censorship may suggest some form of exemption. Perhaps others have a better explanation.

I am most grateful to John Wilson and Peter Wingent for their suggestions and comments on a first draft of this note (and indeed for their willingness to share research and information over the years). The paragraph on the lack of airmail connection between Fisherman's Lake and Lagos owes much to our discussions at Charlecote last year.

Abbreviations:

AMN - Air Mail News

AEA - American Export Airlines

APJ - Air Post Journal

App C - Report on the Progress of Civil Aviation, Appendix C (transcribed in Wilson, J., Report on the Progress of Civil Aviation, WASC 2009.)

BOAC - British Overseas Airways Corporation

OMB - Overseas Mail Branch Weekly Reports 1939 to 1944, edited by John Daynes to include Censorship and Air Mail Services, reproduced with permission from original records in Royal Mail Archives, privately published, July 2005

PAA - Pan American Airways

RMA - Royal Mail Archives

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Air Mail Carriage by BOAC Boeing Flying Boats in WW2

John Wilson

In two previous articles (Ref.1, 2) I began to explore the question "Did the BOAC Boeing 314A flying boats carry airmail from West Africa to the United States during WW2"? The reason for my interest in this subject was that for the last fifty years there has been a much repeated tale that the BOAC Boeing aircraft were in some way prohibited from carrying air mail across the South Atlantic. Typical of the "authoritative statements" on the subject is the following paragraph from a recently published book by Edward Proud (Ref.3)

"In 1941 BOAC acquired three Boeing 314A flying boats, which had been ordered by P.A.A., paying them a substantial premium for the privilege and agreed that they could not be used for commercial purposes, i.e. paying passengers and carrying ordinary airmails, in competition with P.A.A."

The passage goes on to say:

"There is no evidence that any ordinary Transatlantic mail was ever carried by them. It is surprising that the commercial clause was still enforced after America came into the war in December 1941 as the airmail Transatlantic service was overloaded for much of 1942.....There is no evidence that they ever did until 1946 when the clause was waived by P.A.A."

In my article “The Boeing A314 aircraft of BOAC” (Ref. 1), I analysed the contents of files in the National Archive which included copies of the original sale and purchase contract between the British Government and Pan American Airways, and found that there was not a single reference to any restrictions placed by Pan American Airways on the uses to which the three Boeing aircraft could be put. Indeed, there is a memorandum from the Director General Civil Aviation to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Air which includes 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.”

This clearly contradicts the statement by Proud (and others) regarding restrictive clauses, but there must have been some source for this misunderstanding on the subject of air mail carriage for it to have persisted for such a long time. This emphasises the dangers of repeated hearsay without proof, and as is acknowledged by most academic authors, unreferenced statements based on hearsay cannot be trusted. Proud customarily never gives any references in his books and consequently his source cannot be verified. I am happy to supply a transcript of the PanAm sale contract free on request to

Where did the confusion begin?

Proud and his predecessors made the significant error of failing to acknowledge that there were several air routes across the Atlantic and ignored the BOAC winter route of the Boeing 314A flying boats from Bathurst to Baltimore; instead sweeping this into the northern route data. Not that they are alone; there is evidence of confusion within the UK establishment itself as to the correct interpretation of the airmail situation during the war. I hope that I may be able to present a coherent explanation based on a substantial amount of research on my part, with particular emphasis on the carriage of mail by the BOAC Boeings from West Africa to the United States.

Control of aircraft passage into and out of the United States is vested in the US Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), and it was to their records that I first referred. CAB Docket No. 618 dated July 22nd, 1941, covers the requirement for a modification of a previous permit (Docket 401 dated July 29th 1940) to allow BOAC to substitute Baltimore for New York as the US terminus of a trans-Atlantic service, and explains that because BOAC were using flying boats (the Boeing 314A), and there was no spare capacity at New York, the use of Baltimore was necessary for maintenance of the BOAC aircraft. However, a significant part of this CAB Docket says:

“The applicant’s existing permit authorises it to engage in foreign air transportation of persons, property, foreign mail and United States and foreign-transit mail between a terminal point in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, via Canada, Newfoundland and Ireland or via Bermuda. The permit issued to the applicant contains several conditions, one of which provides: ‘that the service terminates in the United States at a port of entry serving New York and used by a United States air carrier as the terminus for a reciprocal transatlantic service’.”

There are ten special conditions applied in Docket 401, that quoted above being condition (b). Condition (g) is also restrictive, stating:

“That notwithstanding that this permit is valid for a term of fifteen years from the first day of June 1936, the privileges afforded herein to Imperial Airways shall not be available unless and until the United States airline company shall operate its reciprocal scheduled transatlantic service.”

Did someone whisper “Restrictive Practices”?

A later paragraph in the CAB Docket 618 goes on:

“At the present time there is no United States air carrier operating transatlantic commercial airline service between New York and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In view of the fact that the application in the present proceeding is for the privilege of operating from Baltimore only for the duration of the present conflict, unless facilities are established elsewhere in the meantime, and since in the proposed operation the applicant will be functioning not as a commercial air carrier but merely for the

purpose of affording transportation to those representing Great Britain or furthering the British war efforts, the proposed use of Baltimore instead of New York would not be adverse to the public interest.

The significant sections of this CAB Order are that in order to establish an airmail service, the US terminal had to be at an airport serving New York, and that the arrangements were reciprocal with operation of an equivalent service by an American airline. By using Baltimore, BOAC were no longer at an airport serving New York and there were no reciprocal American services from Baltimore, so no service was possible. Secondly, by a masterpiece of devious drafting, the British Government agreed not to function as a commercial air carrier. Someone should have seen that one coming...!

On 29th May 1941, a British committee was formed under the heading of "Civil Aviation Progress Committee". This met weekly in Whitehall, the members being Sir Francis Shelmerdine, the Under Secretary of State for Air, together with representatives of the Air Ministry, BOAC and the Ministry of Aircraft Production. At many of its meetings there were also representatives of the Post Office. Fortunately I was able to locate the minutes of these weekly meetings (Ref.4) and they proved to be most informative as to the discussions that took place regarding the operation of the Boeing 314A flying boats.

At the 22nd meeting on 27th November 1941, under the heading "***Boeing 314s***" there is mention of the flights from West Africa to Baltimore, triggered by the Boeings adopting their winter southern route:

"The meeting noted:

(ii) that no question of priority was likely to arise in view of the small amount of traffic offering. For Berwick's next flight from West Africa only one passenger and one kilo of mail were forthcoming. In addition there was 45 lbs. from Trinidad."

(v) a statement by P.U.S. (Sir Francis Shelmerdine) that the present situation, under which the Boeings on their westbound South Atlantic flights travelled almost empty, must be terminated as soon as possible; means must be devised for the conveyance of loads from U.K. to Bathurst where the Boeings ex-Lagos could pick them up and take them on to U.S.A."

It would seem from this that mail (albeit small quantities) was being carried from West Africa to the United States as a matter of course. Later in the same winter period, at the 32nd meeting on 12th February 1942 we find a heading "***Carriage of mails from West Africa to U.S.A.***" under which is:

"(c) (i) Mr. Runciman said that owing to the irregularity of the P.A.A. Clipper service between U.S.A. and West Africa, mails from Africa, the carriage of which to U.S.A. had been advertised by P.A.A., were subject to much delay. The suggestion had been made locally that these mails should be carried by B.O.A.C. Boeings.

(ii) Major McCrindle said that in his opinion the permit from the Civil Aeronautics Board would not be infringed by the carriage of mails provided that no money was paid over to B.O.A.C. If the Air Ministry retained the money the carriage of mails would not rank as a commercial transaction.

(iii) Mr. O'Halloran said that the G.P.O. would have to consult the Postal Administrations in Africa on the financial aspect. Possibly the British Colonies would not be obliged to make any payment to the G.P.O. in view of the contributions they made to the Empire Air Mail Scheme. Some air mail from the Sudan had already been received via the U.S.A.

It was agreed:

(i) that B.O.A.C. should arrange for the carriage of mail from West Africa, beginning, if possible, with Bristol's forthcoming flight across the South Atlantic.

(ii) that the G.P.O. should examine the financial implications."

The statement by Major McCrindle (Deputy Director-General BOAC) was very positive but he introduced a note of confusion in a later meeting on the 7th May 1942, where, under the heading "***North Atlantic Flying Boat Services***" he said:

" (iii) Major McCrindle said that B.O.A.C. were unable themselves to carry mail to U.S.A. because of the terms of their Baltimore permit."

On the face of it, a very definite statement and confirmation of the conditions laid down in CAB Docket 618, but in a letter dated 11th May 1942 [Ref.5] from McCrindle to W.P. Hildred (Director of Civil Aviation) of the Air Ministry, we read:

“Dear Hildred,

I have received your letter of the 9th instant with regard to the carriage of mail by American Export Airlines, We are, in fact, precluded from commercial traffic to and from the United States by the terms of the C.A.B. authority to operate from Baltimore.....You misunderstood my remark at the last Progress Meeting on the question of carrying mails to and from America. I said that we were precluded from carrying mails between the U.K. and America as long as we operated the South Atlantic route. This, of course, was because our maximum capacity over the Lisbon – Bathurst bottleneck was required by the Priorities Board for West African traffic.”

And there we have the basis of the confusion. This letter and the meeting to which it refers date from the resumption of the North Atlantic summer route of the BOAC Boeings and thus the Baltimore restrictions applied. However, when the Boeings were using the South Atlantic route and flying from Bathurst to Baltimore via Natal and the West Indies, the restrictions of Docket 618 did not apply, and BOAC could, and did, carry mail from Africa to the United States by transferring it at Bermuda before going on to Baltimore. The only restriction on westbound mail via the South Atlantic was the fact that ordinary mail from the UK to West Africa and the United States was limited by lack of capacity on the Lisbon to Bathurst stage of the route.

Confirmation of the West Africa to United States carriage of mail during the winter months comes in another C.A.B. Docket No. 801, dated 24th November 1942 relating to an application by BOAC to carry loads from West Africa to Trinidad and Bermuda, which concludes:

“IT IS ORDERED, That the foreign air carrier permit held by British Overseas Airways Corporation be amended so as to authorise it to engage in foreign air transportation with respect to persons, property, foreign mail, and United States and foreign-transit mail (to the extent to which the Postmaster General shall from time to time tender such United States and foreign-transit mail to said British Overseas Airways Corporation) between a terminal point in the United States and a terminal point in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland via Canada, Newfoundland and Ireland, or via Bermuda, for a period of fifteen years from the first day of June 1936, or via Lisbon, points in West Africa, Trinidad, and Bermuda, from the effective date of this permit, as amended, to June 30, 1943, without prejudice, however, to the filing by British Overseas Airways Corporation of a future application for further transfer of said permit to any other company controlled by British Overseas Airways Corporation, as being in the public interest.”

In my article “Did the BOAC Boeings carry commercial mail from West Africa to the United States?” (Ref.2) I described a series of covers flown from Leopoldville to New York which suggested that they had been carried by BOAC to Bermuda. The dates of the covers start in November 1942, and this may be taken as coincidental but it is an interesting coincidence that November 1942 was also the date of the CAB Docket No. 801.

My conclusion is that some commercial mail was carried from West Africa to the United States by the BOAC Boeing flying boats when they were using the winter South Atlantic route, nominally from late October to May of the following year. It is unlikely that commercial mail was carried by these aircraft when flying the summer route direct from UK to the United States, but one never knows. It is also unlikely that mail was carried from UK to the United States during the winter because of the lack of capacity on the Lisbon to Bathurst stage from UK to West Africa. This shortcoming is explained in greater detail in a comprehensive article by Richard Beith published earlier in 2009 (Ref.6)

This is a hypothesis based on my own research. I have given references to enable other researchers to question my conclusions and refine my work if necessary, and am always pleased to discuss and share any data that I may have.

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Pan Am Africa Inaugural Airmail from Cairo

Richard Beith, Bob Wilcsek, Peter Wingent & John Wilson

The following is a summary of a recent e-mail correspondence which has been edited by Rob May on behalf of the four correspondents



Figure 1: philatelic first flight cover from Cairo 25 May 1942 (reduced)

Richard Beith has described the circumstances of the launch of Pan Am Africa in 1941 as part of Pan Am's transport route across the Atlantic and Africa to assist the Allied campaigns in North Africa and the Middle East (Ref. 1). He states that "their first scheduled flight to Khartoum and back departed from Accra on 22 October 1941 and by December that year their route had been extended to Basra".

Figure 1 shows a philatelic cover commemorating the first flight to provide through carriage of mail from Cairo to the USA by Pan American Airlines throughout. CAA Appendix C has under the section for "Gold Coast 1942" that PAA-Africa operated Takoradi-Accra-Lagos-Kano-Maiduguri-Fort Lamy-El Geneina-El Fasher-El Obeid-Khartoum until 3 March 1942 and from 4 March extended to Cairo. The abbreviation of the postmark date of 25MA42 denotes a date in May, not March. Richard Beith has a similar cover with a pencil note 'Recd 6/4/42' which, in American notation, means that it arrived on 4th June 1942. PAA had an established pattern of flying survey flights prior to a formal inauguration of service. No record of such flights has yet been found in this case, but it is a possible explanation for the apparent discrepancy between the CAA date of 4 March 1942 and the date of this commemorative flight on 25 May 1942.

For ordinary mails there would be no way to distinguish the mails carried by PAA-Africa and those carried by BOAC over this route as they would have been carried in bags sealed to destination. Pan Am was flying pretty much daily between Khartoum and West Africa using DC3s, and those landplane flights continued beyond Accra to an airstrip called Benson Field, adjoining Fishermans Lake (Ref 1, page 12) to connect with the Trans-Atlantic flying boats, and also to Freetown.

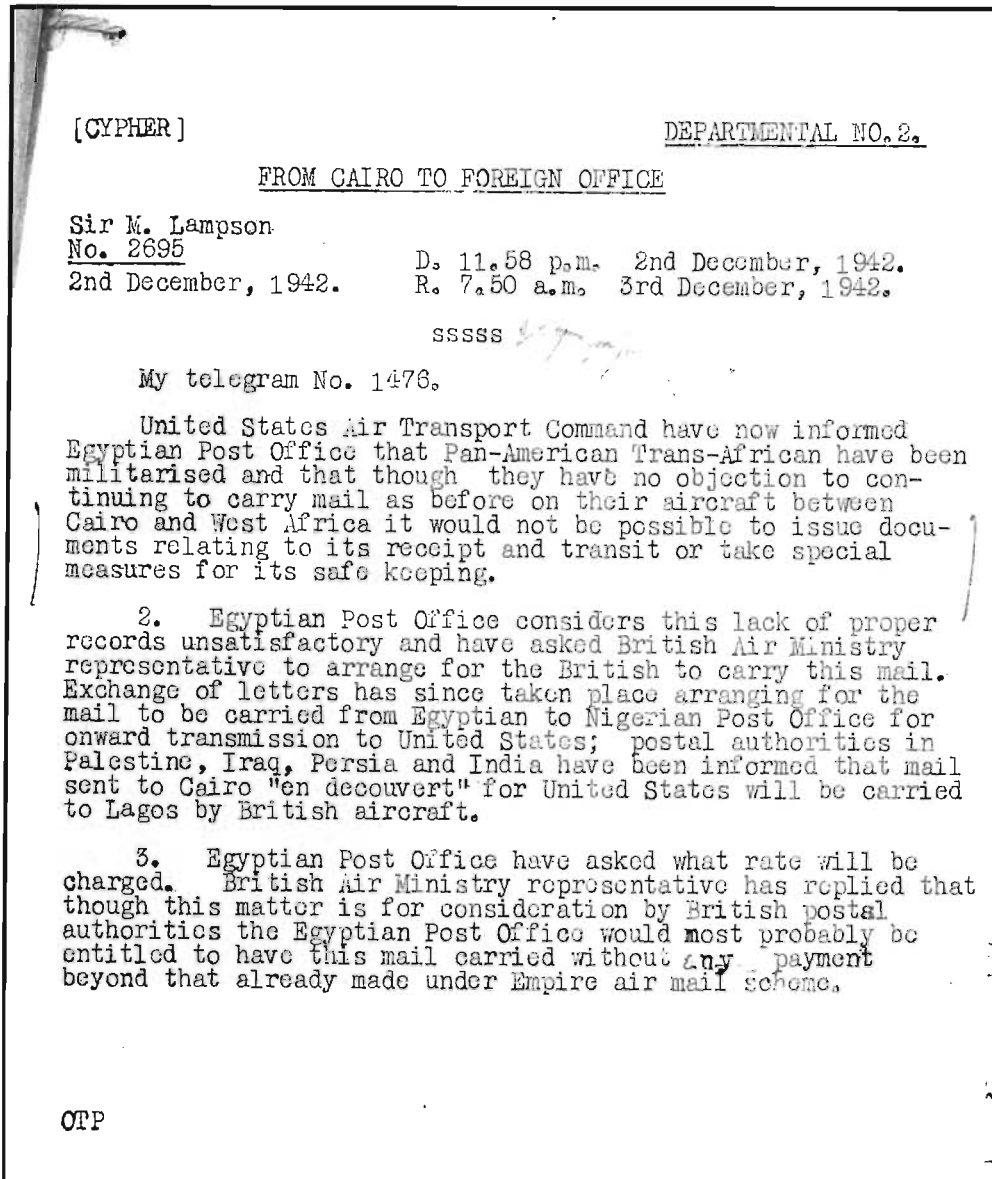


Figure 2; copy of telegram dated 2 December 1942 (reduced to 75%) (Source ref. 2)

Pan Am Africa was militarized at the start of December 1942. The aircraft and crews continued to fly the same routes but no longer as civilians. Existing civil contracts with Pan American were terminated. The telegram at figure 2 shows that this caused the Egyptian post office concerns about continuing with the USATC (Air Transport Command) as a mail carrier, preferring to redirect all the mails to BOAC.

We cannot be sure that USATC planes did not carry mails. The military authorities could have agreed to meet the stringent demands of the Egyptian post office at a later date. As John Wilson has cogently said "Absence of proof is not proof of absence". The study group has noticed that all the documentary evidence so far seen omits to show any civil air service by which mails crossing Africa to connect with the Pan Am Trans-Atlantic flights would have reached Benson Field / Fishermans Lake after November 1942.

Reference

1. Beith R., "The United States involvement in West African Aviation and their contribution to the carriage of mails, 1941-1945", *Cameo*, Volume 11 pp7-20, WASC, January 2009
2. British Postal Museum and Archive, 'Empire Air Mails - Wartime Arrangements', file POST 33/5608.

Lagos & Southern Nigeria Telegraphs Handstamps of the ARMY TELEGRAPHS/ ARMY SIGNALS Design

Michael St J Wright

I thought I would try to bring together as much as possible of the literature on these handstamps, when used for postal purposes.

Schelling (Ref 1) described the construction of the similar ARMY/TELEGRAPHS and ARMY/SIGNALS handstamps, of Swiss manufacture and used in the Boer War and British-occupied German East Africa, indirectly quoting the “Manual of Instruction in Army Telegraphy—Field Telegraphs 1897”:

A steel stamp engraved with “Army Telegraphs” and having nine steel type wheels, each revolving freely on a common axis, which can be set to print any desired combination. Wheels 1 and 8 each having thirteen letters of the first half of the alphabet A to M and a dash or hyphen. Wheels 2 and 9 each having thirteen letters of the second half of the alphabet N to Z and a dash or hyphen. Wheels 3 to 7 having numerals to print any date.... The type wheels are intended to be set either to print the code of the office or some combination representing approximately the name of the station at which the office is established.

The necessary restriction of each wheel to have only half of the alphabet may explain some of the awkward codes—apparently no secrecy was normally intended—but the existence of codes beginning with S, and/or having three letters together (eg SBM used in Bamenda, and upside down in the bridge) shows that the wheels could be taken out and re-ordered. Schelling also suggested that the S might, in the SBM context, be an abbreviation for Station, a common term for any outlying administrative or police/army post. Other authorities say it stood for Signals.

Proud’s book (Ref 2) has a long list of these handstamps, inscribed SOUTHERN NIGERIA/ TELEGRAPHS and the letter codes used to indicate their place of use. The letters are not, as he records them in his list, each followed by a stop (he did not record dashes in his list, but they appear in his illustrations). The overall diameters are about 35mm, with a central bridge on which the code and date is set usually 11½mm wide but sometimes 13½mm. The letters of the date-stamp are usually 4½mm high, whilst the numerals are usually 4mm (always slightly smaller than the letters) but sometimes 2½mm in which case they have a stop after day, month and year.

Often the letter codes appear to be more-or-less transparent (an extreme case being OYO for Oyo) but not always, for example SGA for Dschang. No evidence is given in Proud’s book for the attribution of codes to places. He listed only five examples of postal use in Nigeria proper, and four for the British-occupied Cameroons which also appear in Maddocks & Bratzel. (Ref 3):

in the Colony & Protectorate of Nigeria

- AK Akure (without dashes in the illustration, p246)
- C R- Calabar-Duke Town (described as ‘tentative allocation’ and listed under Duke Town, p333)
- IB Ibadan Station (stated on p158 to be known postally used but not illustrated on p410)
- S IR (Signals?) Ikirun (his illustration shows this, but his list shows only I.R., p458)
- O W- Owo, illustrated on p720, but not stated to be known postally used on p158.

in the Occupied Cameroons

- SBM Signals Bamenda, p849
- SGA- Signals Dschang (a place later transferred to the French Cameroun), p854
- O -S Ossidinge (later renamed Mamfe), p862
- T AU Tinto, p873

Ince & Sacher (Ref 4) also mentioned the existence of Telegraphs handstamps, and listed those which had been used postally after the period of their book. They recorded the following on page 447, distinguishing

the spacing, but not the existence of dashes (except in their two illustrations) for both Nigeria and the Cameroons:

GR S Signals ?
O- -S Ossidinge
S BO Signals Branch Office Ibadan ?
SBM Signals Bamenda
SP H Signals Port Harcourt
S AK Signals Akassa
SGA Signals Dschang
S M Signals Minna ?
T AU Aunde

They recorded a similar handstamp for LAGOS GOVERNMENT / TELEGRAPHS which is also recorded used for postal purposes during or soon after the First World War. They listed two of these on page 447 with measurements similar to the Southern Nigeria types:

AB Abeokuta
S IR Signals Ikorodu

I have a Southern Nigeria one not in any of these books:

E- -N probably from Enugu? The cover is back-stamped at Onitsha

I also have a drawing by an unknown hand of a Lagos Government handstamp with the code SH -A

Finally, at an auction (Ref 5) a few years ago there was another example of an S AK strike dated 25X18 on a cover to the USA backstamped with transit cds's of Ilesha 30 Oct and Oshogbo 2 Nov 1918. This was not the same as the A K listed by Proud above, unless it has been reset; it was presumably also from Akure. There was also the following un-attributed assertion "It is understood that this cover results from an intense period of signals training resulting from the lack of experienced signallers to the Nigerian brigade sent to reinforce Allied forces in East Africa depleted by sickness". Estimated at £100-150, it fetched the rather remarkable figure of £240 (plus 17.625% buyer's premium) The rate of 1d raises a question, unless the contents were printed paper.

One might ask various questions about the statements recorded above. For example, if Proud recorded IR in his list, but -S IR in his illustration, are there a number of other S's missing from his list? He decoded IR as Ikirun, but Ince & Sacher record S IR on the Lagos Government handstamp as Ikorodu. They may have been from the same place—if it was Ikorodu, which is near Lagos, might one handstamp simply be a later version of the former? Ikirun was on the railway, and just inside the Lagos Protectorate, as shown on Ince & Sacher's end-paper maps. Proud places -T AU at Tinto, whilst Ince & Sacher have it at Jaunde; neither gives reasons or evidence for their choice.

Ossidinge, of which there are the most strikes recorded, raises problems. Ince & Sacher's illustration shows O- -S, with the earliest date, but all the later ones show -O -S. These are Maddocks & Bratzel 23VIII18 (pp31 & 56), Proud 21III19 (pp158 & 862), Schelling 14VIII20 (p83) and my copy (at one time owned by Porter) 18V20. One does not need to assume an error here, or any reordering, because if the drawing in Ince & Sacher is correct, there must have been two different handstamps. Their drawing shows a wide bridge, with small letters and numerals, while the other drawings or example show a narrow bridge with larger characters. Apparently different drawings might suggest two handstamps for Dschang, but that seems unlikely.

There is no mention of either type in Jones N.M., *The Cancellations and Postmarks of Nigeria 1914-1980* 2nd edition 1999. Reports of further such postally used Telegraphs handstamps of this period with dates would be most welcome; if at all possible with photocopies.

Since drafting all the above I have seen a further reference to Telegraph cancellation used postally. Herbert G. Porter wrote a series of articles in *Stamp Collecting* in 1935 (Ref 6), and illustrated a Southern Nigeria / Telegraphs handstamp and a Lagos Government / Telegraphs handstamp with the codes S- -A and IB R- respectively. According to Proud (Ref 2) S.A. was the code for Sapele and I.B.R. was for the Ibadan Residency. Porter attributes the use of the Southern Nigeria one, which he listed as Nigeria type 23, to Eket;

maybe he simply knew of the use of these sort of postmarks to cancel stamps in Eket, but chose to illustrate the practice by some clearer examples which were on telegraph forms. He did not suggest where the Lagos one was used.

Summary: dates and other variations* recorded, in alphabetical order of assumed office:

Place	Source ref	Earliest (or only) date	Later date(s)	Width of bridge mm	Height of numerals mm
Abeokuta	4	?	?	Not illustrated anywhere	(Lagos Govt.)
Akassa	4	?	?	Not illustrated	
Akure (A K)	1	12.III.17		13½	2½
Akure (S AK)	5	25.X.18		13½	2½
Calabar-Duke Town?	1	19.IX.18		13½	2½
Bamenda	1,2,3	10IV19	4 V III 2 0 (inverted)	11½	4
Dschang	1,3	13III19	13 I 20 3VIII20	11½	4
Enugu		28VII16		13½	4
Branch Office Ibadan	4	?	?	Not illustrated	
Ibadan Station	1	?	?	Not illustrated	
Ikirun (-S IR)	1	21.III.19	13.V.19 28.V.20	11½	2½
Ikorodu? (S IR)	4	2VII17		11½	2½ (Lagos Govt.)
Minna (?)	4	?	?	Not illustrated	
Ossidinge (O- -S)		28VII16		13½	4
Ossidinge (-O -S)	1,3	23VIII18	21III19 14VIII20 18V20	11½	4
Owo (O W-)	2	21.VI.19		13½	2½
SH -A		2 VI 17		13½	2½ (Lagos Govt.)
Tinto	1,3	18VIII18		13½	4

*Most of these are taken from reproductions in books, or drawings, possibly from poor strikes, and may not be totally accurate (particularly SH -A). In view of this I have not tried to distinguish between possible small variations. I have included dots after the figures of the dates where I have seen them, or previous authors have shown them, assuming that if they appear after one part of the date they were meant to appear after all sections.

References

1. Schelling J.E., "Telegraph Cancellers used in British Cameroons (1920)", *Cameo*, Volume 3 pp83-85, WASC, July 1986
2. Proud E.B., *The Postal History of Nigeria*, p158 and under offices, Proud Bailey, Heathfield 1995. He does not mention Lagos Government Telegraphs handstamps.
3. Maddocks R.J. & Bratzel M.P., *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons Under British Administration 1916-1961*, p31 and under offices, MPB Canada 1994.
4. Ince J.F. & Sacher J., *The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region Prior to 1914*, pp446-447, RPSL, London 1992.
5. Grosvenor Auctions, London. 25 May 2004, pp70 & 84. (This was not from the Neville Jones collection, although lotted among his.)
6. Apparently *Stamp Collecting*, July 27th, 1935, page number not on the cutting seen.

Nigeria - Onitsha B.O. Money Order postmark

Michael St, J Wright

Neville Jones (Ref 1) categorised types of date-stamps used in Nigeria including as separate categories ones inscribed specifically for special usages: Official, Registration, Parcel, Savings Bank, Telegraph and Special (mostly first day), Travelling Post Offices and Mobile Post Offices. He did not specify a category for money orders. The illustration shows a 28 kobo registered letter used from Onitsha to Hamburg, Germany, inscribed ONITSHA B.O. MONEY ORDER / 2, applied on 19/16 DE / 87 (after the period of Neville's researches, of course). For some reason the reverse also has a skeleton postmark of ENUGU DLY / OFFICE (sic) of 24 DE and another single-circle date-stamp ONITSHA 8 / 571. Maybe they had a Christmas rush which accounted for the unnecessary journey, and slow transit.

It also has a small label attached on arrival in the West German post office to draw attention to the fact that it was registered—the Onitsha Branch Office having abbreviated the sending office to ONBO and omitted the conventional R. Maybe a money order was bought, and the letter posted, all in one transaction.



Reference

1. Jones N.M., *The Cancellations and Postmarks of Nigeria 1914-1980*, WASC, Dronfield 2nd Edition 1999

Nigeria - Another New Mobile Post Office Cancel

Ray Harris



A cover sent from Nigeria to Prague shows several examples of a cancellation not recorded by Jones (Ref. 1) or Proud (Ref. 2). The cover is certainly sent to someone interested in stamps but the use of the Mobile Post Office may not be a deliberate part of a philatelic creation. The canceller is 31mm in diameter, inscribed MOBILE POST OFFICE/LAGOS, dated 16 FE 1967 and used on a registered cover with a handwritten "MOBILE PO/LAGOS R NO 41".



References

1. Jones N.M., *The Cancellations and Postmarks of Nigeria 1914-1980*, WASC, Dronfield 2nd Edition 1999
2. Proud E.B., *The Postal History of Nigeria*, Proud Bailey, Heathfield 1995

Tristan da Cunha: 1981 Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Expedition issue

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

The following article first appeared in the London Philatelist of February 2008, 117-6, and is reproduced here with permission of the author and editor.

Going through the Crown Agents' Philatelic and Security Printing Archive held by the British Library, in the albums *Proofs from 1913* there are two very similar proofs for the Tristan da Cunha Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Expedition issue of 1981.



Figure 1: imperforate colour proof of un-issued design



Figure 2: issued stamp

They comprise two se-tenant strips of three imperforate colour proofs, all 25p values, showing the Duke barbecuing burgers with some uncooked sausages waiting to be done (Fig. 1).

The proofs are in a *Questa* folder with a manuscript note "Printed and prepared by successful tenderer to illustrate 'medal' strips and alternative logos. This design was rejected by HRH and dropped. However, logo was adopted for all issues in the omnibus. C.B. Penny 24/11/81"

A set of four stamps, SG 311-314, for the Awards scheme was issued on 14 September 1981, the 25p value showing just the head and shoulders of the Duke of Edinburgh (Fig. 2) The rejected proofs were placed in the archives two months after the stamps had been issued.

My thanks go to Paul Skinner, Curator of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library, for his help in going through this archive.

Côte d'Ivoire authorisation of postage due as franking during 2005

Marc Parren

This article was submitted to both *Cameo* and the *Journal of the France & Colonies PS* where it appeared in March 2010.

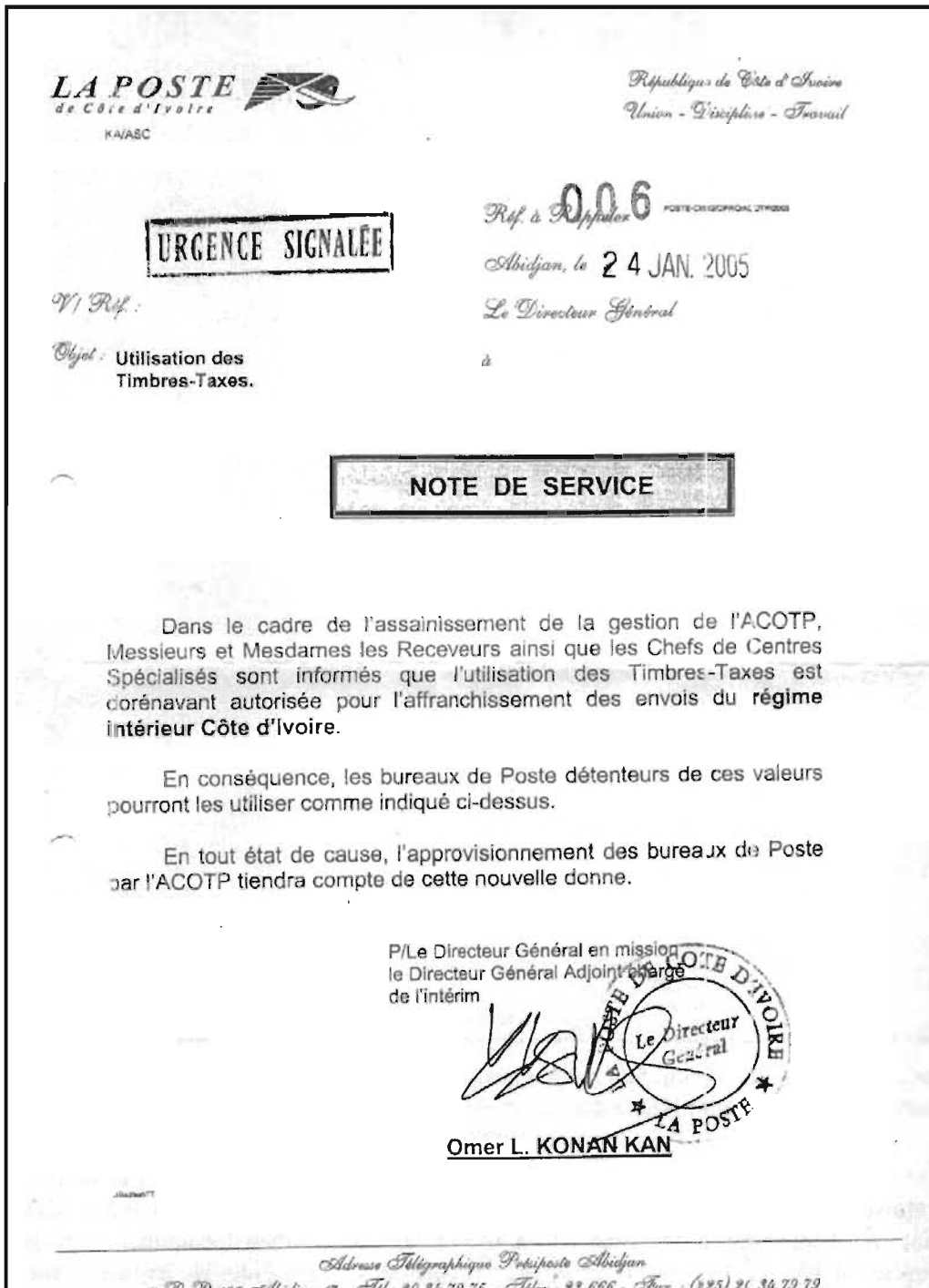


Figure 1: official directive by *La Poste* dated 24 January 2005 authorizing the use of postage dues for franking on domestic correspondence

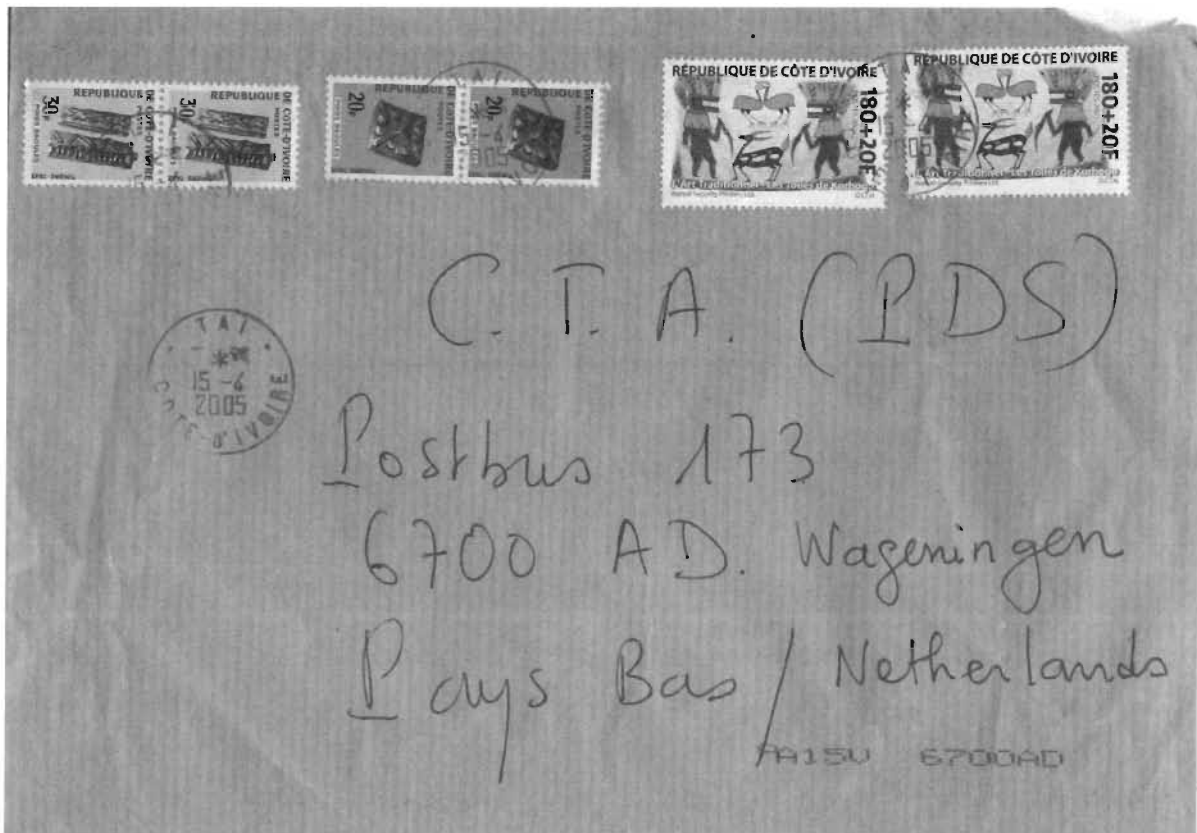


Figure 2: cover franked 500F made up of a mixture of surcharged stamps and postage dues, posted in Tai, a border town with Liberia, on 15 April 2005 (at 70% of actual size)

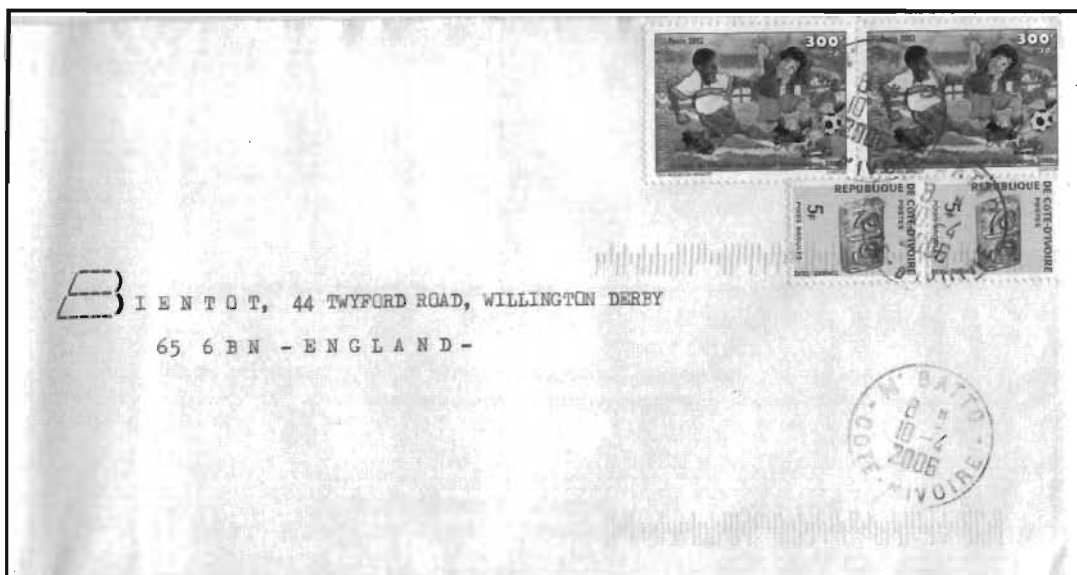


Figure 3: cover franked 650F for the first weight step to the Americas instead of to Europe, made up of a mixture of surcharged stamps and postage dues, posted in M'Batto on 10 April 2006 (at 70% of actual size)

In the course of 2005 commercial covers with postage due stamps affixed to European destinations were noted by me. However, no markings of insufficient postage were noted on these covers. This made me curious on what was happening at the time. On a recent visit to Abidjan I enquired with the financial controller of postage stamps of the Ivorian *La Poste*, Mr. Alfred Kouame Ndo. He explained me that at the end of 2004 *La Poste* ran out of low values for franking. *La Poste* was facing financial difficulties due to the crisis as a result of the civil war which raged in the country and the decline in volume of letters sent by the public. So at his instigation it was decided that the postage due stamps were allowed to be used for franking as most post offices still held a stock of these. So on the 24 January 2005 a directive was sent to all agencies

that postage due stamps were allowed only on domestic letters (see Fig. 1). However, as we can see from the examples at hand this directive was not followed to the letter as covers are known with such franking to foreign destinations as well.

In total I possess some eight covers with mixed franking including postage dues. Six are destined to the Netherlands of which one originated from Guinea in West Africa, with two to the UK (see Table 1).

Table 1. Covers with postage due stamps used as franking on covers overseas during 2005 and 2006.

Date	Town	Destination	Zone ¹	Weight	Normal stamps	Sur-taxe	Postage due	Total franking
15 ap 05	Taï	Netherlands	Europe	20g		400f	100f	500f
15 jy 05	Zoénoula	Netherlands	Europe	20g	440f		60f	500f
29 jy 05	Sinfra	Guinea	ECOWAS	20g	330f		20f	350f
29 au 05	Bongouan ou	Netherlands	Europe	20g		400f	100f	500f
03 oc 05	Guiglo	UK	Europe	20g		420f	80f	500f
21 no 05	San Pedro 02	Netherlands	Europe	40g	1050f		30f	1080f
30 ja 06	Taï	Netherlands	Europe	20g		420f	80f	500f
10 ap 06	M'Batto	UK	America	20g		640f	10f	650f

1. Zone 1 ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), Zone 3 Europe, Zone 4 America

Most covers were of the first weight class up to 20 gr. and required a total franking of 350f to ECOWAS countries, 500f to Europe and 650f to the Americas. Some interesting facts can be derived from these covers. It is common practice in Côte d'Ivoire to add up the *surtaxe*, which is meant for charity, of any such stamps to be added up to reach the total franking value (see Fig. 2).

Another cover shows that the weight of a cover destined to England was miscalculated as the postal officer in M'Batto, in the east of the country, believed it was located in the Americas instead of Europe and accordingly applied the postal rate up to 20gr for that destination (see Fig. 3).

Probably the most interesting cover is one sent from neighbouring Guinea to the Netherlands. Instead of stamps from Guinea the sender cut out a franking of Côte d'Ivoire totaling 350f, the ECOWAS rate up to 20 gr, applied before on a cover posted 29 July 2005 at Sinfra and glued the cut out on his cover. He offered this cover with used Ivorian stamps at the post office in Faranah, located on the Niger river in central Guinea, which accepted the franking and cancelled them once more on 30 October 2005 (see Fig. 4). There was unrest in Guinea at the time as well which might explain the acceptance of this extra-ordinary franking.

We have established when the use of *surtaxe* stamps was permitted as from late January 2005. However, this directive was meant to be limited to domestic covers which was apparently not respected by the different post offices dotted along the south of the country. It should be noted that at this time the northern part of the country was controlled by rebels and the post offices in this zone were not operating. Of course the shortage of low value postage stamps was not limited to domestic covers alone and so one can speculate that creativity to make up the correct postal rate for foreign destinations caused the postal officers to apply the same regulation to these destinations as well. When the shortage of regular low value postage stamps was overcome is not clear but at some post offices this situation lasted at least until the first half of 2006 as two covers posted in that year demonstrate. According to Mr. Alfred Kouame Ndo no directive was issued to end officially the use of these postage dues as franking. It would be of interest to see whether any domestic covers with postage dues applied in this way survived.



Fig. 4 Cover franked 350f for the first weight step to ECOWAS countries , with a 20f postage due stamp to make up the postal rate, cancelled at first on 29 July 2005 in Sinfra, Côte d'Ivoire while later re-used and posted in Faranah, Guinea on 30 October 2005.



Paquebot Calabar Postmark

Marty Bratzel and Michael Wright

The cover in Figure 1 was sent from Santa Isabel, Fernando Po to Niamey, Niger. Given its somewhat remote inland location, a convenient route for mail to Niamey was via Nigeria, inland from the coast. This cover was not, however, posted at Santa Isabel but, rather, was given to an officer of a ship plying the route from Santa Isabel to Calabar. The cover was handed over to the Nigerian post office upon arrival at Calabar, and the two 5-centavos Spanish Guinea stamps were cancelled with the undated skeleton Paquebot / Calabar postmark. The accompanying Calabar / Nigeria postmark establishes the time and date as 7 AM 14 AU 45. The subsequent French colonial transit marks are somewhat illegible, but the one is dated 8 Sept 45.

According to a Nigerian Post Office circular (contained in C.R. Walker's scrapbooks) issued at Lagos in March 1923, paquebot cancellers were being supplied to post offices at Bonny, Calabar, Degema, Forcados, Lagos, Opobo, Port Harcourt, Sapele, Warri, and Victoria (Ref. 1). The devices are not otherwise described but presumably were skeletons. Proud (Ref. 2) recorded skeleton devices for Lagos and Port Harcourt, and Drechsel (Ref. 3) and Hosking (Ref. 4) both recorded or noted skeleton devices for Calabar, Lagos, Opobo, and Port Harcourt.

The Cameroun stamp in Figure 2, which saw use primarily between 1916 and the mid-1920s, bears the same skeleton as on the 1945 cover. Drechsel (Ref. 3) reported use of this cancel from the 1920s to 1934, and Hosking (Ref. 4) for 1935. The examples shown confirm a range from the mid-1920s to 1945.



Figure 1

Covers have been recorded between Fernando Po via Calabar to up-country in the Cameroons (Ref. 5); these are postmarked Santa Isabel. Mail was also transported between Santa Isabel and Victoria, Cameroons via non-government motor launch (Ref. 6). Might mail with Spanish Guinea stamps also exist that was given to someone on the launch at Santa Isabel and subsequently handed over to the post office at Victoria? If so, then perhaps the yet-to-be-seen Paquebot Victoria skeleton cancel might be found.

The cover in Figure 1 was offered as Lot 1994 in the November 16, 2009 Soler y Llach auction. Against an estimate of 95 Euros, the cover sold for 170 Euros. The auction house is in Barcelona, Spain.



Figure 2

References

1. Wright, Michael St. J. Nigeria: C.R. Walker's Scrapbooks. *Cameo*, Vol. 11, No. 2, June 2009, pages 130-139.
2. Proud, Edward B. *The Postal History of Nigeria*. Proud-Bailey Co. Ltd, Heathfield, East Sussex, United Kingdom, 1995.
3. Drechsel, Edwin. *The Paquebot Marks of Africa, the Mediterranean Countries, and their Islands*. Robson Lowe, 1980. 72 pages. ISBN 0-85397-187-4.
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6. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961*. MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 1994. viii + 136 pages. ISBN 0-9694026-1-9.

Ghana Independence Overprint AR Flaw on 1½d

Philip Quirk

Four values of the 1957-58 Ghana Independence overprint definitives, the 1d, 4d, 2s and 5s, have long been recorded with a black flaw between the A and R of "MARCH". The Elizabethan catalogue (Ref 1) lists the variety as V10; the JL catalogue (Ref 2) as V111-114. Both give the sheet position as row 7, stamp 3 for all four values. An enlargement of the flaw on the 5s value is shown in Fig. 1.

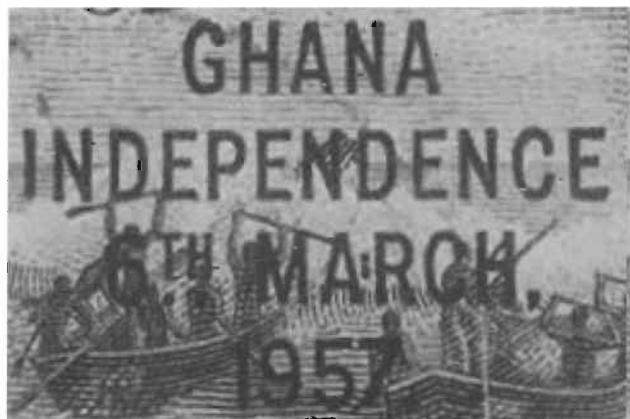


Figure 1: AR flaw on 5s value



Figure 2: AR flaw on 1½d value

The occurrence of the flaw in the same sheet position on four different values indicates that the overprinting forme remained unchanged for some time, in the course of which it was apparently used for both black and red (1d) overprints. There seemed no logical reason why the flaw might not occur on other horizontal format values in the set, and whilst examining fairly large quantities of these stamps, I discovered three examples of a similar flaw on the 1½d (Fig. 2). The flaw is slightly curved, and actually resembles the catalogue pictures more closely than does my example of the 5s. As all three stamps were singles, the sheet position cannot be confirmed, but the variety must be at least semi-constant.

Does any member possess blocks or sheets of the 1½d stamp, which might allow the position and constancy of this variety to be confirmed?

References

1. Stanley Gibbons *Elizabethan Catalogue*, 1970.
2. *JL Catalogue of Varieties on Queen Elizabeth II Postage Stamps*, Shelley Stamps, 1967.



West African Airmail First Flights by National Carriers an update for 1969 - 1983

Marc Parren

As an addition to the earlier listings made by Jeremy Martin and Tony Plumbe on FFCs I now can report six more flights to destinations in Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

1969	6 November	Douala – Geneva first flight Air Afrique
1970	5 November	Douala – Zurich first flight Air Afrique
1972	6 December	Douala – Brussels first flight by SABENA

1980 30 October Port Harcourt – Amsterdam first flight by Nigeria Airways
 1983 First flights by Ghana Airways postponed by one week as evident from postmarks
 10 April Accra – Amsterdam first flight by Ghana Airways (Fig. 1)
 12 April Amsterdam – Accra first flight by Ghana Airways, Flight No. GH 701 (Fig. 2)



Figure 1; delayed first flight Accra—Amsterdam

Amsterdam - Accra
GH 701 5-4-'83



Figure 2: delayed return first flight Amsterdam—Accra

References

1. Martin J.J., West African Airmail First Flights, Part 6., *Cameo*, Volume 7 pp116-119, WASC, January 2002
2. Martin J.J. & Plumbe T., West African Airmail First Flights, Part 7. *Cameo* Volume 7, p174, WASC, July 2002

Gandorhun, Sierra Leone Skeleton Handstamp

John Hossack



In 2006 Frank Walton listed all skeleton handstamps known in Sierra Leone before independence (Ref. 1). There were 31, used at 29 post offices including two travelling post offices.

I have recently acquired another example on a stamp as illustrated above. This is for Gandorhun, although the name is incomplete, and is dated 15 April 1955 with the 15 being offset high. The post office, in the eastern province of Sierra Leone was opened on 1 April 1955, and the earliest recorded date (ERD) for use of the permanent canceller is, to my knowledge, 13 January 1958 (Ref. 2).

It is quite possible that examples of other skeletons will be found, especially from the 1950s, when many new post offices were opened. Some could be estimated by comparing the opening dates of post offices with the ERDs of the permanent cancellers. In other cases it could be that the permanent cancellers arrived before a skeleton was deployed. For example this may have happened at Tikonko where the ERD for the permanent canceller of 25 September 1952 is just one day after the post office was opened (Ref. 2).

Thanks to Frank Walton and Philip Quirk for information on recorded dates for Gandorhun.

References

1. Walton F.L., "Sierra Leone Temporary Handstamps", *Cameo*, Volume 9 pp157-157, WASC, January 2006
2. Walton F.L., *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854-1961*, WASC, Sheffield 1990



Nigeria Forged Meter Marks

Jeremy Martin

The International Postage Meter Stamp Catalog (Ref. 1) in the Nigeria section states that "Starting around 1995 the Government of Nigeria banned the use of postage meters because of widespread counterfeiting". Some examples were illustrated. In my collection I have one similar example in red, illustrated as figure 1 opposite, with no date in the canceller but a firm's receiving date-stamp on the back, of 7 Feb 1994.

The 2007 WAASC meeting at the Morrison Hall, Salisbury included a stimulating discussion of meter marks that should encourage collectors to study them.

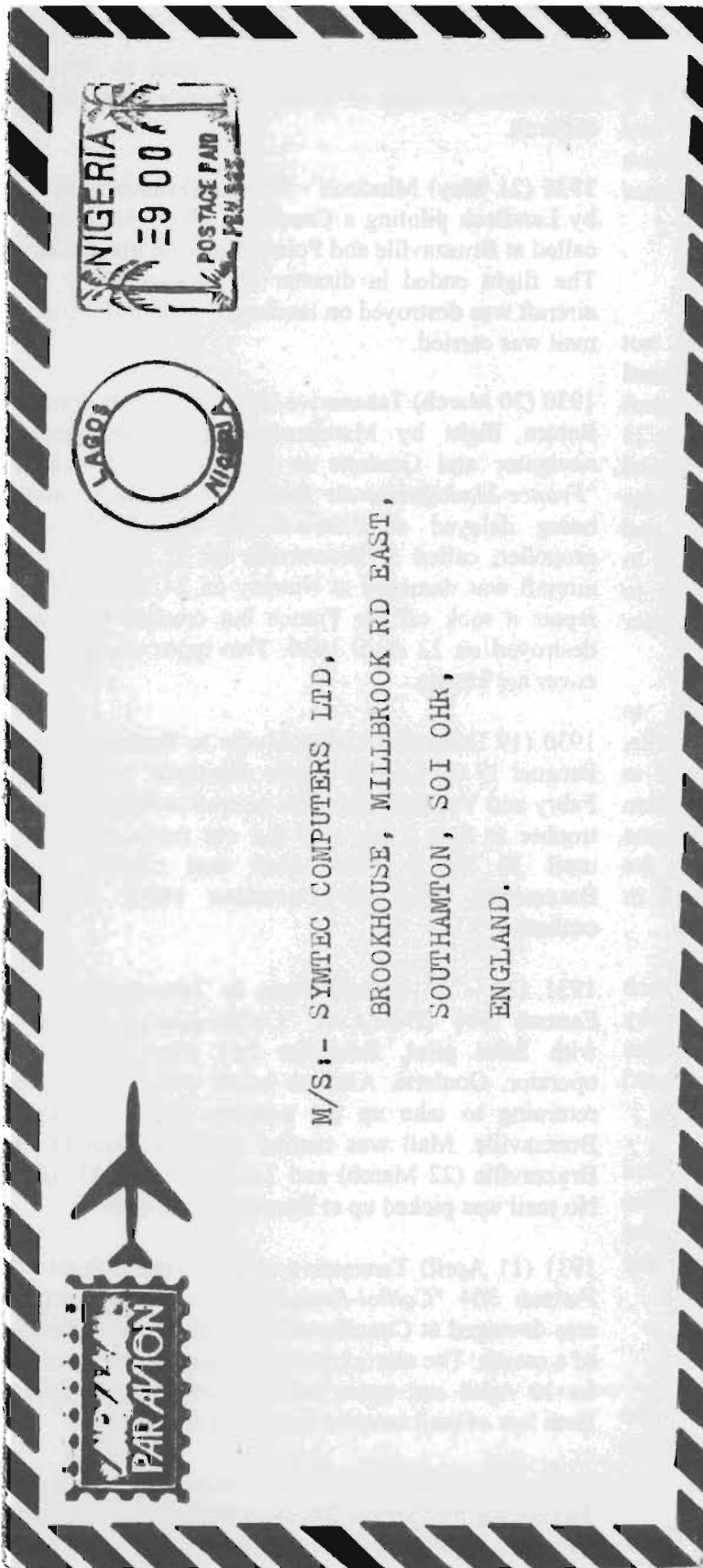


Figure 1, full size

Reference

1. Hawkins, Joel A. & Stambaugh R., *The International Postage Meter Stamp Catalog*, p823, 1st edition, published by the authors in the USA, 2005

Airmails of the French Congo

John Hammonds

The following article first appeared in the Journal of the France & Colonies PS in June 2009 and is reproduced here with permission of the author and the editor. At the end of this article is a response from Bob Picirilli that appeared in the same Journal in September 2009

Introduction

The air routes to Sub-Saharan Africa were not exploited until the 1930s, partly due to the depressed economic times, lack of money and suitable aircraft able to fly across the Sahara Desert. However, on 23 May 1930 a Franco-Belgian Convention was signed providing for the creation of an air route from Europe across the Sahara Desert, the Belgian Congo and ending in Madagascar. It took until 1 March 1935 to achieve this aim with the opening of the route to Brazzaville and that to Madagascar on 9 November 1935.

On 13 June 1937 the Air Afrique route to Madagascar was changed to go via Stanleyville, cutting out Brazzaville. An air service continued to call at Brazzaville, but it was on a branch line from Bangui. Pointe Noire on the Atlantic Coast became the terminus of the Aéromaritime service along the West African coast from Dakar which opened in 1937.

After the Armistice on 25 June 1940 the French Congo started by giving allegiance to the Vichy Government in France, but soon changed sides supporting General De Gaulle. Civil aviation ceased and new routes were created by the Military.

When the war ended civil air lines came back and services were re-opened between France and the Congo by Air France who had taken over the operations of Régie Air Afrique and Aéromaritime until independence in 1960.

Pioneer Flights

There were several pioneer flights which visited the French Congo on their way to Madagascar and the Belgian Congo. A brief summary is given:

1925 (3 December) Brazzaville - Pointe Noire by Landiech piloting a Caudron C60 (F-AGDH) - Some mail was carried. The return flight was made on 6

December. No further flights were made as climatic conditions and lack of landing grounds made flying difficult.

1926 (21 May) Mindouli - Sikasso (French Soudan) by Landiech piloting a Caudron C60 (F-AGDH) - called at Brazzaville and Pointe Noire on his journey. The flight ended in disaster at Sikasso where the aircraft was destroyed on landing. It is doubtful if any mail was carried.

1930 (20 March) Tananarive (Madagascar) to France. Return flight by Marchesseau, pilot, Bourgeois, navigator and Goulette in Farman 192 (F-AJJB) "*France-Madagascar-Ile Bourbon*". The flight, after being delayed at Elisabethville by a damaged propeller, called at Brazzaville on 21 March. The aircraft was damaged at Niamey on 24 March; after repair it took off for France but crashed and was destroyed on 22 April 1930. Two types of a special cover are known.

1930 (19 December) Léopoldville to Bruxelles by a Bréguet 19 (OO-AKP) "*Reine Elisabeth*" with pilots Fabry and Vanderlinden. The aircraft suffered engine trouble at Fort Lamy and did not reach Bruxelles until 30 March 1931. Mail was carried from Brazzaville dated 16 December 1930. Various cachets.

1931 (14 - 26 March) Paris to Tananarive by a Farman 304 (E-ALCA) "*Caillol-Roux-Dodement*" with Salel pilot, Boutillier 2nd pilot and radio operator, Goulette. Also on board was S.E. Alfassa returning to take up his position as Governor at Brazzaville. Mail was carried from Le Bourget to Brazzaville (22 March) and Tananarive (26 March). No mail was picked up at Brazzaville. (Figure 3)

1931 (11 April) Tananarive to Paris return flight of Farman 304 "*Caillol-Roux-Dodement*" The aircraft was damaged at Coquilhatville which caused a delay of a month. The aircraft picked up mail at Brazzaville on 12 April and again when repaired on 11 May. Both lots of mail reached Paris on 1 June 1931.

1931 (23 November - 14 December) Paris to Tananarive by Farman 198 (E-AJNH) with Arrachart pilot and Puillet engineer. A passenger Capt. Lentz was carried between Bangui and Brazzaville. Mail dated 4 December 1931 was carried from Brazzaville

to Tananarive.

1931 (9 December) Brazzaville to Bangui by a Potez T.O.E, pilot Lucciardi, passenger Capt. Lentz. Having completed his business in Brazzaville Capt. Lentz was returned to Bangui by a military aircraft. Mail dated 9 December with no air surcharge was carried on this flight.

1932 (18 February-15 March) Pointe Noire to Paris by Farman 190 (F-AJMV) pilots Avignon and Lebeau, engineer Cottier. The journey to Paris was uneventful. Mail was carried from Brazzaville and Pointe Noire to Paris arriving on 15 March 1932.

1932 (27 April/1 May) Brazzaville to Paris by Farman 190 (F-AJRY) "*Marcel Lallouette*" with pilot Salel, navigator Goulette and the Governor General of Moyen Congo as a passenger. Mail was carried from Brazzaville and Pointe Noire to Paris arriving on 8 May 1932.

Airlines serving French Congo

(a) Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation (CTA)

Founded in 1929 by Jean Dagnaux who had founded Societe Air Afrique in 1925 which was closed on the formation of the new company.

Ownership was shared by Aéropostale and the French Government, Dagnaux remaining as Managing Director. The company was awarded a 15 year concession to operate routes on behalf of France in French Africa, namely the Congo and Madagascar.

The Company made very few flights but the financial difficulties of Aéropostale in 1931 and the general economic situation meant that the development of the routes in Africa was not undertaken until 1934 when Régie Air Afrique was formed. Air Afrique absorbed the Company 1935

(b) Régie Air Afrique

Formed by the French Government in 1934 to help link the French Colonies in Africa.

On 7 September 1934 the first regular airmail service between Algiers and the Congo began using Bloch 120 Aircraft. The route was opened for the carriage of passengers on 27 April 1935.

In 1934 the company absorbed Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation founded by Jean Dagnaux

and in 1935 the trans-Saharan route of Compagnie Générale Transsaharienne which ran motor car and air services across the Sahara.

In November 1935 the Algiers to Congo route was extended to Elisabethville and was operated fortnightly in conjunction with SABENA.

On 9 December 1935 Régie Malgache reached Elisabethville and a direct link to Madagascar was made. On 19 April 1936 the first commercial passenger service to Madagascar began.

In 1937 the French government combined the services of Régie Air Afrique, Régie Malgache and Lignes Aériennes Nord Africaines to form Air Afrique. Régie Malgache continued to operate within Madagascar.

(c) Air Afrique

Air Afrique continued the work of Régie Air Afrique in linking the French colonies in Africa. Its main route being from Algiers, across the Sahara to Gao. From Gao a route went west to Dakar. Another route went to Niamey for connection with the Aéromaritime service to Cotonou.

The main route went to Bangui, where it divided: one route going to the Congo, the other to Elisabethville and Madagascar.

(d) Aeromaritime

In 1935 the Compagnie des Chargeurs Réunis together with Compagnie Marseillaise de Navigation à Vapeur (Cyprien Fabre) decided to duplicate their maritime route around West Africa with an airline.

By a contract signed on 23 March 1935 between the Minister of War, the Minister for Air and the Company, Aéromaritime was to provide a weekly service between Dakar and Pointe Noire in five days; also included was a weekly service on the Cotonou to Niamey route.

The company also took over the running of the route from Cotonou to Niamey which had been operated by the Compagnie Générale Transsaharienne between December 1934 and June 1935 to join with Air Afrique. The new company took the name "Compagnie des Chargeurs Réunis (Aéromaritime)".

In 1945 Aéromaritime ceased operations and was absorbed by Air France.

Summary of Air Routes to French Congo until 1940.

1. SABENA

- (i) (Brazzaville)-Leopoldville-Boma-France (By sea)
- (ii) (Brazzaville)-Leopoldville-Boma-France (By air from Dakar or Casablanca)

2. AIR AFRIQUE

Brazzaville-Coquilhatville-Bangui-Fort Archambault-Fort Lamy-Zinder-Niamey-Gao-El Golea-Algiers (France by Air France).

3. AEROMARITIME

Pointe Noire-Libreville-Douala-Cotonou-Abidjan-Monrovia-Conakry- Dakar. (Figure 2)

Commercial Services to and from French Congo

1. SABENA

1929 (26 March) Opening of service from Brazzaville to Europe via Léopoldville (Belgian Congo) and Boma/Matadi from where mail would have gone to France by sea. Alternatively it could have gone by sea to Dakar or Casablanca where it would have been unloaded and transferred to an Aéropostale aircraft on the France-Morocco-South America service.

Prior to this mail could have gone to Pointe Noire by river (the railway was not opened until 1934) or alternately via Léopoldville to Matadi by rail (railway opened 1898) or by the SABENA air service to Boma for the onward journey to be made by sea.

Postage rates for a 20gm letter using the air service to Boma from Brazzaville were 50c postage + 1f25 air surcharge.

Par Avion
LÉO - BOMA

On some mail a cachet was applied "Par Avion/LÉO-BOMA" this is also found in manuscript.

2. REGIE AIR AFRIQUE

Between September 1934 and February 1935, before Air Afrique opened its air service to the French Congo, there were ten trial flights between Algiers

and Brazzaville; all except the first carried mail. The mail was free from an air surcharge and most bore the cachet "*Lettre Transportée Exceptionnellement Par Avion A Titre de Propagande*" or similar.

Trial Flights from Brazzaville.

1st - 19 September 1934; arr Algiers 21 September 1934. No mail carried

Pilots Poulin and Pharabad, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Massias. J Dagnaux travelled as a passenger.

2nd - 19 October 1934; arr Algiers 23 October 1934. Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Lambert, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Guignier (Figure 5)

3rd - 16 November 1934 arr Algiers 20 November 1934. Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Avignon, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Guignier

4th - 29 November 1934 arr Algiers 4 December 1934. Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Pharabad, Engineer Carrey, Radio Massias. An aircraft of Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation was used.

5th - 14 December 1934 arr Algiers 18 December 1934. Mail carried.

Pilots Pharabad and Lambert, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Guignier. An aircraft of Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation was used.

6th - 20 December 1934 arr Algiers 1 January 1935. Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Avignon, Engineer Carrey, Radio Guignier. The route of this flight from Algiers was modified to reconnoitre landing grounds in Cameroun for a possible shortening of the route. From Zinder the aircraft went via Garoua to rejoined the original route at Bangui.

7th - 11 January 1935 arr Algiers 16 January 1935. Mail carried

8th - 25 January 1935 arr Algiers 29 January 1935. Mail carried

9th - 8 February 1935 arr Algiers 12 February 1935. Mail carried

10th - 19 February 1935 arr Algiers 26 February 1935. Mail carried

The dates of the return flights vary according to which source is used.



Figure 1: the pre-war extent of air routes in West and North Africa



Figure 2: Publicity card for the West African coastal route by Aéro-maritime



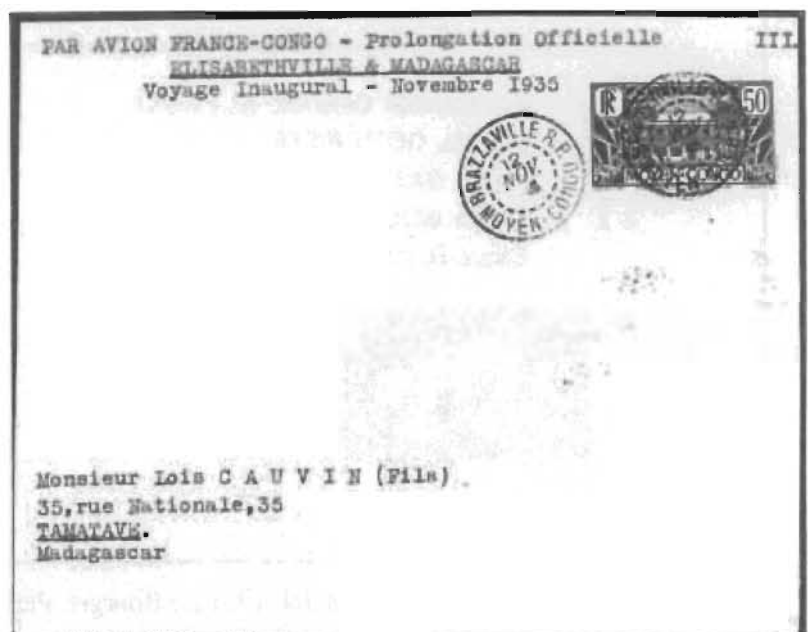
Figure 3: 14 March 1931 Le Bourget, Paris to Brazzaville

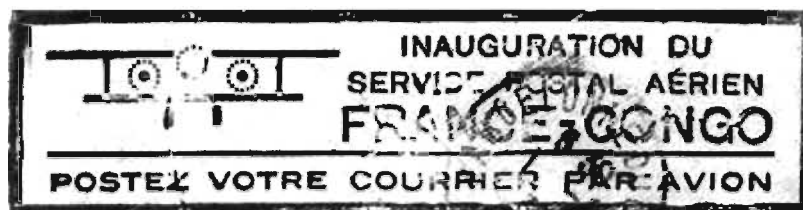
Figure 4: proof of label commemorating Jean Dagnaux



Figure 5: 19 Oct 1934, cover carried on the 2nd return trial flight Brazzaville to Algiers at 50c. This was the basic rate, carried free of airmail surtax as was often the case on such special flights

Figure 6: 12 November 1935, Brazzaville to Tamatave, Madagascar, also at the 50c basic rate without airmail surtax





Cachet "Inauguration Du Service Postal Aerien France-Congo /Postez Votre Courrier Par Avion"

25 March 1935 Official opening of the route from Brazzaville to Algiers. Aircraft Bloch 120, Pilots Pharabod and Plamont, Engineer Lefebvre Radio Massias. The aircraft arrived at Algiers on 28 March 1935.

9 November 1935 Inauguration of the entirely French route Algiers to Tananarive (Madagascar) (Figure 6)

13 June 1937 Algiers to Tananarive via Stanleyville omitting Brazzaville as a stop on this route. Mail for Brazzaville was off loaded at Bangui and was flown on a feeder service.

4 November 1938 Algiers to Congo twice weekly service.

9 November 1938 Brazzaville to Algiers twice weekly service. (Figure 7)

AEROMARITIME

The opening of the route from Dakar to Pointe Noire was in two stages:

Stage 1 Dakar to Cotonou (1 - 3 March 1937)
Cotonou to Dakar (5 - 7 March 1937)

Stage 2 Cotonou to Pointe Noire (17 - 20 May)
Pointe Noire to Cotonou (21 - 23 May)
(Figure 8)

1937 (15 July) Special flight between Pointe Noire and Brazzaville on the occasion of the "Foire Exposition de Brazzaville": the amphibian S-43

(F-OUM) was used with a crew of pilots Pivot and Souville, engineers Fournier and Mistrot, radio Vernaz: also on board were Mr Carrié a director of Aéromaritime also Mr Pravikoff an engineer with Sikorsky. The return flight was made on 16 July. Mail exists for both directions.

1938 (11 November) An accord was signed

Timetable of flights by Air Afrique Algiers to Brazzaville and return.

1935/36	Algiers	Dep. Sunday	Brazzaville	Dep Sunday
	Brazzaville	Arr Thursday	Algiers	Arr Thursday
1937/38	Algiers	Dep Sunday	Brazzaville	Dep Saturday
	Bangui	Arr Wednesday	Bangui	Arr Saturday
	Brazzaville	Arr Wednesday	Algiers	Arr Tuesday
1938/39	Algiers	Dep Monday	Brazzaville	Dep Saturday
	Bangui	Arr Wednesday	Bangui	Arr Saturday
	Brazzaville	Arr Wednesday	Algiers	Arr Tuesday
1939/40	Algiers	Dep Friday	Brazzaville	Dep Saturday
	Bangui	Arr Sunday	Bangui	Arr Saturday
	Brazzaville	Arr Sunday	Algiers	Arr Thursday

Air Afrique flew on alternate weeks from SABENA commencing 11 March 1935



Figure 7: 8 November 1938,
Brazzaville to Paris
at 3F65 = 65c basic
+ 3F/5g airmail to France

Figure 8: 15 May 1937,
Casablanca to Pointe Noire at 2F50,
made up from 50c basic
+ 50c/10g airmail to Algiers
+ 1F50 airmail Algiers to AEF

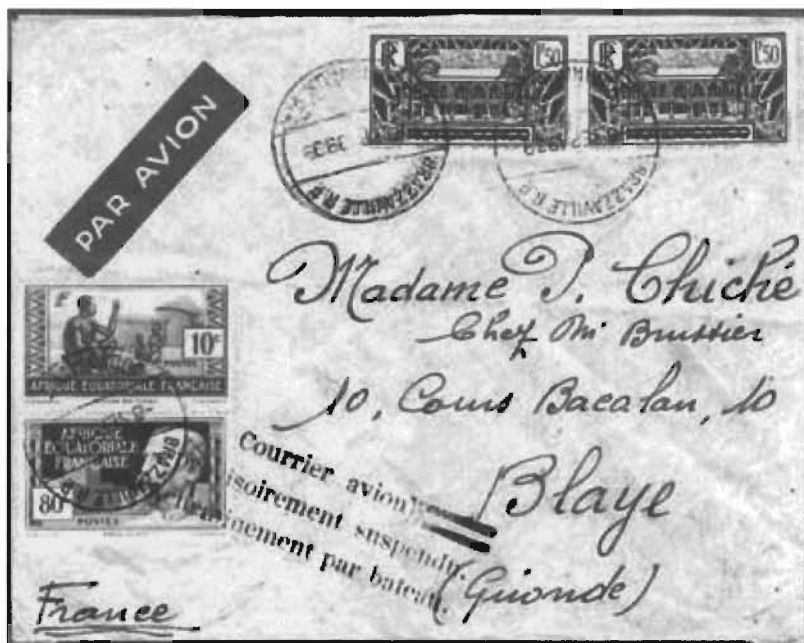


Figure 9: Airmail suspended on the
outbreak of war.
9(?) September 1939, Brazzaville to
Blaye, France at 3F90,
made up of 90c basic
+ 3F/5g airmail to France

Figure 10: 29 October 1941, Beirut to Brazzaville via LAM (Free French) at 25piastres, made up of 5p basic + 20p airmail to AEF



Figure 11: 25 November 1943 Dakar—Pointe Noire service resumed. Rated at 9F50, made up of 1F50 basic + 8F/5g airmail to AEF.

This cover illustrates the 1F50 domestic base rate which Bob Picirilli has added to the table of rates on p355; see the response set out below the table

Figure 12: 18 July 1946 resumption of direct airmail service between France and AEF. Rated at 13f postage (+2F charity) made up of 3F basic + 10F/5g airmail



between France and Portugal concerning the carriage of mail between Portugal and Angola and return. The Portuguese post office set the air fee at 6 escudos for each 10gm. The first flight was made on 19 November from Pointe Noire by Capt. Joaquim Balthazar, chief pilot of the Aero Club of Angola using a De Havilland Leopard Moth (CR-IAA).

Wartime Services.

When the mobilisation of French forces started on 2 September 1939 all French air services were suspended. On 18 September the air services restarted with modifications e.g. the service to Madagascar and Reunion terminated at Brazzaville.

At the beginning of September, during the period when the air service was suspended, air mail correspondence from Brazzaville received a cachet "*Courrier Avion Provisoirement Suspendu Acheminement par Bateau*" (Figure 9)

Following a Franco Belgian agreement SABENA on 11 February 1940 moved the starting point of its Leopoldville service from Bruxelles to Marseille.

The Armistice on 25 June 1940 caused all services to be suspended.

On 20 December 1941 the agreement of 1933 under which Air France was created was cancelled. In 1942 following the occupation of Vichy France by Germany Deutsche Luft Hansa concluded an agreement with Air France, by which the routes, aircraft and personnel were taken over by the German airline.

From August 1940, under the direction of Colonel Carretier, the military officers left in the AEF started up what services they could on an as and when basis, which went on until LAM actually got as far as Brazzaville.

During December 1940 Generale De Gaulle requested the creation of a Free French Airline to serve the countries sympathetic to his cause. This was formed under the name of Lignes Aériens Militaires (LAM) with its headquarters in Damascus. It started with a fortnightly service to Cairo and gradually the route was extended along the North African coast, to Khartoum and Tananarive and via Khartoum to Pointe Noire.

In 1944 the airlines were rationalised when LAM and Aéromaritime were all placed under the authority of Directions des Transports Aériens (DTA) for the duration of the war. DTA

reorganised its services on 22 June 1944 dividing the network into three separate divisions, the *Réseau Central* based in Algiers which provided for the link between France, Dakar and Madagascar, the *Réseau Occidental* in Dakar which linked Dakar with the rest of French West and Equatorial Africa and the *Réseau Orientale* in Damascus with routes to Madagascar and Teheran, on 16 November a *Réseau Metropolitan* serving France with a connection to London was added.

Summary of Air Routes through the French Congo during WW2.

LAM Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Bangui-Fort Lamy-Kano-Accra-Lagos.

LAM Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Bangui-Fort Lamy-El Fasher-Khartoum-Wadi Halfa-Cairo-Damascus.

LAM Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Bangui-Fort Lamy-El Fasher-Khartoum-Asmara-Djibouti-Mogadisho-Nairobi-Lindi-Tananarive.

1940 (23 August) Algiers, Gao, Bamako, Dakar service via Gao, Niamey, Zinder, Fort Lamy, Bangui, Brazzaville. A very short lived service.

1941 (October) Damascus to Brazzaville by Lignes Aérienne Militaire (LAM). The route was extended to Pointe Noire where it joined with the Fort Lamy to Accra route allowing Pointe Noire to be reached via Lagos, Douala and Libreville. (Figure 10)

The liberation of North Africa enabled LAM to link up with Aéromaritime Dakar to Cotonou service brought back into operation in stages during 1943.

1941 (10 November) Brazzaville to Beirut

1941 (10 December) Brazzaville to New York by FAM 22 via Leopoldville.

1942 (26 October) SABENA Leopoldville-Pointe Noire-Libreville-Douala-Lagos.

1943 (20 February) Brazzaville-French Somaliland-Madagascar.

1943 (21-27 April) Opening of fortnightly service Dakar-Abidjan-Douala-Pointe Noire by the western network of the Transports Aérien Militaire (ROTAM) which had replaced LAM

1943 (22 November) First regular Dakar-Pointe Noire re-opened service (Figure 11).

Postwar Developments

On 26 June 1945 air transport in France was nationalised and the operations of DTA, Air France Transatlantique and Air Bleu were taken over by Réseau des Lignes Aériennes Françaises. On 1 January 1946 this organisation was renamed Société Nationale Air France.

After the war ended civil airlines came back and services were re-opened between France and its Colonies, that to the Congo in July 1946

1946 (14 - 16 July) Brazzaville to France, red or black cachet applied. (Figure 12)

On 13 October 1949 a new company Union Aéromaritime de Transport (UAT) was formed by Chargeurs Réunis which started a regular service to the Congo on 23 January 1950 calling at Algiers, Gao, Libreville, Pointe Noire and Brazzaville.

After independence in 1960 several small airlines operated within the country. Co-operation between the ex West African colonies and with the assistance

of Air France a new company Air Afrique was formed. This operated routes world wide.

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11. *Catalogue des Aerogrammes du Monde Entier* - F Muller
12. *Tables of French Postal Rates 1849-2005* - D Richardson
13. *Airmail Directional Handstamps* - I McQueen.

Postage Rates

Postage rates up to independence ran in line with those of Metropolitan France, Moyen Congo being a colony the rates to and from France were the same as the French internal rates.

09.08.1926	Letter Rate 20g	.50c	31.01.1928	Air Mail 20g	1F25
12.07.1937		.65c	01.10.1929	10g	3F00
17.11.1938		.90c	01.09.1935	5g	2F00
01.12.1939		1F00	13.08.1938	5g	3F00
01.03.1945		2F00	02.05.1941	5g	4F50
01.01.1946		3F00	10.03.1945	5g	6F00

Overseas Rates— all letter rate 20g

01.02.1926	1F25	01.01.1940	2F50
01.08.1926	1F50	01.02.1942	4F00
01.08.1937	1F75	01.02.1946	10F00
01.12.1938	2F25		

Response by Bob Picirilli

A special thanks to John Hammonds for one very fine article "Airmails of the French Congo". It is wonderfully informative and covers the ground well. It seems to me, although I am no expert in the matter, that he has all the information needed by collectors trying to understand the airmail services touching French Congo, from the beginning of such services until the end of the war and beyond.

May I be permitted to add a little information about the postage rates given on page 66? John has probably relied on Derek Richardson (Ref 12) or Alexandre et al - as one would expect. But a few additions can now be made as a result of the research of the group devoted to airmail rates used in French colonies.

- 1 In the list of French domestic basic postal rates, one change between 1939 and 1945 should be added: namely a 1F50/20g rate agreed to in December 1943 and published in the AEF official journal for 1 January 1944 (effective date not given)
- 2 In the list of foreign ("overseas") rates, the change from 2F50 to 4F (which did take place in France in 1942, as indicated) was likewise agreed to and published the same as the preceding item (thus probably effective at the end of 1943).
- 3 In the list of airmail surcharges to France, the 4F50/5g surcharge dated 2 May 1941 (which appears in both Alexandre and Richardson) was, it would seem, a fictitious (?) rate for the service from France to AEF (not vice-versa): there was no viable service between Free French AEF and Vichy France at this time, and this surcharge does not appear in the AEF official journal; nor does cover evidence from AEF in our group's database support it.
- 4 The 1F25/20g rate dated 31 January 1928, which carried airmail only between Leopoldville and Boma (not from Boma to France; John has made this clear), changed to 80c/5g as of 1 May 1934. By the same action, some additional airmail surcharges were provided, between Léopoldville or Buta, in Belgian Congo, and France (via Sabena and Imperial), made available to patrons in AEF and published in the AEF official journal (2F50/5g from Leo, 1F75/5g from Buta), but these no doubt go beyond the scope of John's intentions for the article.

I may observe, finally, that effective dates are always somewhat troublesome; regardless, the dates for changes in France were not necessarily the dates for changes in French Congo or in any other French colonies.

Bob then went on to analyse the franking of the covers John used as his figures. His analysis has been incorporated by this editor into the captions on the previous pages.

OFFERS FROM STOCK

ASCENSION. 1935 1/- Jubilee with <i>kite and horizontal log</i> . Very fine mint. SG 34l £500	NIGERIA. 1921 1d rose-carmine with <i>watermark inverted</i> . Unmounted mint. £85
GAMBIA. 1898 2d with <i>malformed 'S'</i> (Left Pane : R.7/3). Very fine mint. SG 39a. £350	ST HELENA. 1903 1d imperf Colour Trial in brown and grey-green on gummed watermarked paper. £400
GAMBIA. 1906 1d on 3/- <i>surcharge double</i> . Very fine mint. Rare - just one pane of 60 printed. BPA Cert. SG 70a. £1400	TOGO. 1914 10pf block of four (Pos#37-48) <i>wide and narrow</i> <i>O's se-tenant</i> with ANECHO c.d.s. '22.10.14'. SG H3. £400
GAMBIA. 1935 1/- Jubilee corner pair with <i>extra flagstaff</i> <i>(partially erased)</i> . Very fine mint. Scarce. SG 146a var. £200	TOGO. 1914 ½d on 3pf corner strip of three with 2 x <i>thin 'y'</i> used on part cover with LOME c.d.s. '11.11.14'. SG H12a. £700
GOLD COAST. 1901 1d on 6d with <i>'ONE' omitted</i> . Very fine mint. BPA Cert. SG 36a. £225	TOGO. 1914 (2nd Setting) 40pf used with central LOME c.d.s. '17.10.14'. Extremely rare. SG H20. £1400
GOLD COAST. 1928 set of 10 overprinted 'SPECIMEN'. Very fine mint. Exceptionally fresh. SG 103s/112s. £160	TOGO. 1915 (3rd Setting) 5pf block of four (Pos# 1-7) used on piece with LOME c.d.s. '7.1.15'. Rare. SG H30. £500
NIGER COAST. 1893 ½d on 2½d (Type 9 in vermilion). Very fine used OCR c.d.s. 'MR 16 94'. Rare used. SG 31. £550	TOGO. 1915 20/- pair, one with <i>thin 'G' in 'TOGO'</i> (Pos# 24). Very fine mint. Rare. SG H46/46b. £550

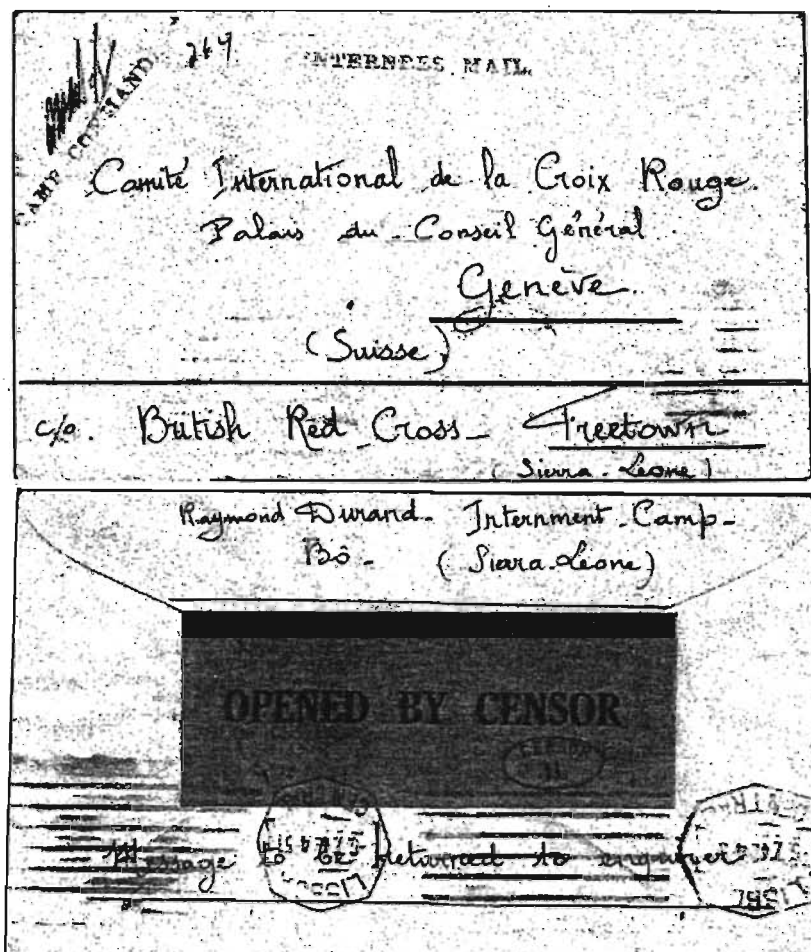
*The above is a selection from my extensive British Commonwealth stock. All items available on approval (subject unsold).
Major credit cards accepted. Illustrated lists on request (please advise collecting interests). Wants lists invited.*

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Sierra Leone—WWII Internee mail

John Pollard

The following item appeared in the *Civil Censorship Study Group Bulletin* of October 2009 and I have not yet seen a response in that journal. I have reproduced it in the hope that one of our members can elucidate.



This cover was sent by Raymond Durand, from the internment camp at Bo, 140 km SE of Freetown. The mail of internees was not mentioned by Little (Ref. 1) nor by Martin & Walton (Ref. 2) nor in the Sierra Leone paragraphs of the official *History*.

On the face the handstamp CAMP COMMANDANT is approximately 49x2mm, in violet. The other handstamp INTERNEES MAIL. is approximately 42x2mm also struck in violet. On the back is an OPENED BY CENSOR label, Little type IIAa and Martin & Walton type 2A, red print on blue paper, with oval handstamp CENSOR 11. Little type IV, Martin & Walton type 3.

There is no local postmark but a transit mark of Lisbon 6 July 1942. This date does not extend any records, after allowance for the transit time to Lisbon.

Does anyone have any information on internment in Sierra Leone? The name of the sender suggests a French man, rather than Italian or German.

References

1. Little J., *British Empire Civil Censorship Devices, World War II: Colonies and Occupied Territories in Africa*, Civil Censorship Study Group, 2000
2. Martin J.J. & Walton F.L., *West African Censorship*, pp92 & 95, WASC, Dronfield 2nd Edition 1999

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