

CAMEO



The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle



Nigeria Independence 1 October 1960

VOLUME 11 NUMBER 6
WHOLE NUMBER 81

OCTOBER 2010

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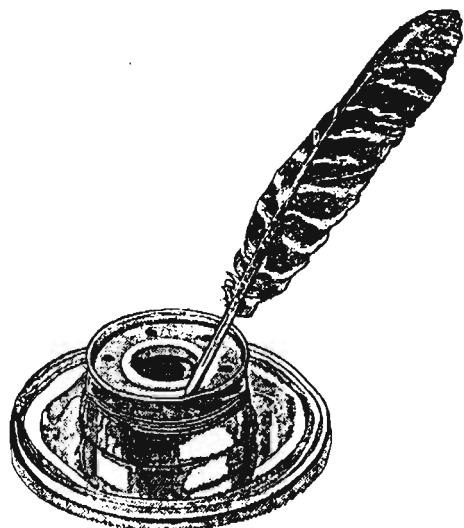
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Contents

Editorial		358
Letters to the Editor:		359
Mayne, Martin (2), Murray, Debenham, Heap, Bratzel, Gledhill, Peters, May		
Obituary - Don van Reken	Michael St. J. Wright	362
Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals		362
Air Mail Routes & Rates Cameroun to UK WWII	Marty Bratzel, Bob Picirilli	363
Sierra Leone Air Letter Cut-Outs	Keith Hanman	370
New St Helena Forgery	Roger West	371
Use of 1960 Nigeria Ind. Stamps in S. Cameroons	Bob Maddocks	372
Nigerian Independence 1960 - Shell Publicity Label	Bob Maddocks	375
Double Perforation on St Helena QV Stamp	Bob Deakin	378
Notes on a Rather Silly Modern Philatelic Fad	Anne T. Fad	379
'Four Pages Only' for St Helena Boer Prisoners	Bob Deakin	380
FAM-22 First Flight from Gambia to Natal	John Wilson	381
Down the Rabbit Hole - Sierra Leone Cover	Kevin Lowther	383
Airmail to St Helena?	Jim Graue	389
Togo - Undercover Mail from WWI?	John Mayne	391
Lagos Post Offices	Bob Maddocks	393
Maurice Fiévet and Nigeria 1953 2/6d Faux-pas	Bob Maddocks	395
Lagos Postmark Letter Plugs	Tony Nicholson	396
Sierra Leone 'Wilberforce Investment'	Kevin Lowther	396
CEF Opts. on Kamerun Yacht Stamps, Update 4	Marty Bratzel	397
How to Look After Your Collection - Basic Guide	David Beech	400
Cameroons Campaign, The Gambia Company	Jeremy Martin	403
Damaged by Sea Water - December 1942	Barbara Priddy	404
Telegraph Offices in Nigeria and Cameroons	Bob Maddocks	407
Accra RC, RAC and RDC Postmarks	Philip Quirk	408
Calabar Parcel Cancel - a New Type?	John Cooper	410
Contentieux Postal Yaounde / R.U.C.	Bob Maddocks	411
Sierra Leone 1963 Postal Commemorations	Robin Peters, Roger West	412
The Burning of N. Nigeria's £25 Stamps in 1909	Simon Heap	415
1945 OHMS Cover from Tristan da Cunha	Ross Debenham	417
Another St Helena Letter Card	Bob Deakin	418
Sierra Leone 1951 Postal Stationery Card	Keith Hanman	419
The John Forrest Collection Auction, May 2010	Jeremy Martin	419
West Africa in the British Library Philatelic Coll.	Press Release	420
PAA from Cairo in WWII	Bob Wilcsek	421

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

Burghard Wollenhaupt at Corinphilia

Dear Rob,

I refer to the cover and cards illustrated in my auction report in *Cameo*, June 2010, pp293-295. I am sorry to say there is a frustrating postscript to this report. I bought all these items from Corinphilia but the registered packet by which they sent them to me has gone missing in the post. Can I therefore ask any member who sees these, probably unique, items to contact me as quickly as possible?

John Mayne
Bridgnorth

Paquebot Calabar Postmark

Dear Barry,

I refer to the article by Marty Bratzel and Michael Wright in *Cameo* Volume 11 of June 2010 pp338-339. By a strange coincidence I have in my collection a similar cover which was illustrated in *Cameo* Volume 7, January 2001 p24.

My example does not have a Nigerian arrival datestamp but does have one for Niamey, the date not being clear. There is, however, a receipt cachet dated 8 August 1945. So we now have two examples of late use of this PAQUEBOT/CALABAR mark

Jeremy Martin
East Harnham

Sierra Leone - WWII Internee Mail

Dear Barry,

I refer to John Pollard's article in *Cameo*, June 2010 p355 about a French internee at Bo in Sierra Leone. I have a similar cover but sent from the *Internment Camp Freetown Sierra Leone*. The writer's name is not clear (almost certainly French) but it is not Raymond Durand. My cover has exactly the same cachets as John's and also arrived at

Lisbon on 6 July 1942.

I wrote about POW's and internees in *Cameo* twice, Volume 7 pp 128-131 and 175-176. The articles were based on information received from the International Red Cross in Geneva. However, no mention was made about French internees in Sierra Leone.

Jeremy Martin
East Harnham

Nigeria SG 58bw and QEII 5/- Proof

Dear Barry

Re. Ed Sherman's letter (*Cameo* 80 p292) the block of 4 of Nigeria SG 58bw sheet number 122 was offered to me by Muscott's for £22,000, entitled 'The first recorded mint examples'. The description read 'There is one tiny surface mark on the first stamp and apart from that the piece is in lovely fresh mint condition. The stamps are all unmounted mint with white gum so clearly it has not resided in the colony or if it did so, then not for very long....the tiny flaw.... requires a magnifying glass to see adequately and most dealers would not even bother mentioning it.'

The item was too dear for me and, despite other dealers I spoke to commenting the price was 'flying a kite', I heard at London 2010 the block had been sold for the asking price.

Re. Rob May's article on the un-issued QEII 5/- proof from Philangles (*Cameo* 80 p295). The estimate was £70-80 and my bid was comfortably surpassed by the winning realisation of £286.

Graeme Murray
Newbury

MV *City of Cairo* at St Helena

Dear Barry,

I wish to enquire if any survivor mail is known from the passengers and crew of the

Ellerman Lines MV *City of Cairo* who ended up on St Helena following the torpedoing of that vessel south of the Island in November 1942? I believe I saw a photo of a cover from a survivor in a publication I read many years ago, but maybe I was imagining things. Perhaps a St Helena specialist can assist? Once again thank you for your fine publication

Ross Debenham
Soldiers Point, NSW



Mail v. Passengers

Dear Rob and Barry,

I recently read a very interesting article by Gordon Pirie of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, on 'Passenger traffic in the 1930s on British Imperial Air Routes: Refinement and Revision', in *Journal of Transport History* (25), 2004, pp63-83.

One sentence in particular caught my eye: 'In 1939 the volume of parcels and letters generated began to displace what the General Post Office's air mail adviser called "fluctuating, comfort demanding, troublesome, capricious human freight"'.
Dr Simon Heap
Oxford



Don van Reken and the Biafra War

Dear Barry,

The passing of Don van Reken is a loss at many levels. Fortunately, Don shared his knowledge about various aspects of Nigeria postal history through articles in *Cameo* and other publications. While at the American Philatelic Society StampShow in Richmond, Virginia in August, I chanced to meet Mark Isaacs who, seated next to me at a dealer's table, overheard my interest in Nigeria. Mark mentioned that he had written in 1970 an article about unit markings and civilian postmarks on mail sent to Lagos by Nigerian military personnel engaged in the Biafra war.

Mark's article led to correspondence with Don who, through missionary contacts, had obtained similar covers sent to Kano. Mark encouraged Don to prepare two articles for the programs for COMPEX, an annual Chicago philatelic show. Don published an article on the subject in *Cameo* in 1980. The articles that Don (and Mark) published for COMPEX are available through the American Philatelic Research Library, whose on-line catalogue can be accessed through <http://www.stamps.org>. It's a small world indeed. Thanks Don.

Marty Bratzel
Windsor, Ontario



Oil Rivers GB Overprints Controls

Dear Rob,

I wonder if, through *Cameo*, any of your members can help me fill in gaps in my pictures of Oil Rivers GB Overprint controls. These are very elusive! Although I've got the references from various sources (basically early SG catalogues and Oliver and Vallancey) of what controls have been reported, I've only managed to pick up pictures or scans of two of them. For GBOS purposes (and my 'Compendium of Overprints on GB stamps') I need a 'proving image', as we all know that catalogues and other reference lists can include some very persistent ghosts! Just because an item is listed in a catalogue doesn't prove it actually exists, as they often copy misprints from other catalogues, rely on mistyped lists, etc. That's why I want pictures. Photocopies or scans are equally acceptable. Unfortunately none of the sources I've used actually indicate the marginal perforation types. I have got 'proving images' of the ½d 'E' and 'K', both with fully perforated bottom margin (though I wouldn't place money on their not being perfect encroachments on 'imperf' bottom margins). The items that I have not got are, basically, anything other than the above: viz

½d Ei, Ki, Li, Lp, Mi, Mp

1d Li, Lp, Ni, Np, Oi, Op, Pi, Pp, Qi, Qp

('i' means imperforate margin, 'p' means fully perforated; both exist for all the above controls without overprint, but that doesn't mean that both perforation types exist **with** overprint).

If any of your members can help me by sending me photocopies or scans, I would be immensely grateful. I hope at some point in the next year or so to publish a definitive list of proved known controls (i.e. those for which I've got pictures, not merely somebody's report...), and it would be silly if fellow collectors were sitting on items that I'd not been able to verify in this way. Or even worse, items that I didn't even know existed!

Regards

Dr John M Gledhill
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SG West Africa Catalogue Mistakes

Hi Barry,

I have noticed two typo mistakes in the SG West Africa First Edition Catalogue. I have emailed SG but as yet have not received a reply. The two 'errors' are both for Sierra Leone:

p117 SG 275 should be 9d on 1½d, not as shown
p119 SG 414 should be 17½c on 50c, not as shown

There may be others!

Robin Peters
Fakenham

These mistakes have been present in the SG 'Part 1' catalogue for several editions. If any readers notice other examples please contact the appropriate Study (or Cameo) Editors - Barry

Varieties in SG's 'Elizabethan' catalogue

Dear Barry,

During correspondence with Hugh Jeffries I suggested that the sectional catalogues might provide a good opportunity to list QEII varieties that have not been included in the SG catalogues since the demise of the *Elizabethan* in the mid 1970s. Hugh Jeffries reply on this point is interesting:

'I would certainly like to put some of the more prominent Elizabethan varieties into the catalogue, although I have to say that quite a few were a bit small for *Part 1*. The problem is that we no longer have the stamps or the original black and white illustrations in most cases, so if you know of anyone who can provide good high-resolution scans, I will certainly consider them'.

I think this provides an interesting window of opportunity for our members who are QEII

collectors of each of our Commonwealth territories to make a value judgement about the varieties that were listed in the old *Elizabethans* and to send scans to Hugh Jeffries of examples from their own collections. I am sure Hugh would appreciate a co-ordinated response for each territory, possibly via each of our study editors.

Rob May
Princes Risborough

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

The Publications Committee Chairman
is Frank Walton

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

Newly available is a searchable spreadsheet of Nigerian town and village names created by member Graeme Murray from our publication *The Cancellations and Postmarks of Nigeria 1914-1980* by Neville Jones. Graeme retains the copyright to the spreadsheet but he is making it freely available to members. It will assist you in identifying offices when only a part of the cancellation is legible. There is also a document listing in text form all the offices in the book

The booklist was updated in September 2010

Obituary - Don van Reken (1920-2010)

Michael St. J. Wright

Our longstanding (over forty years, latterly Honorary Life) Member, Don van Reken died on 29 May 2010, aged 90. He was born in New Jersey and was married before the USA entered WWII. He became a Lieutenant in the USAAF and co-pilot of a C-47A troop carrier, dropping paratroops and supplies before dawn on D-Day, and in daylight on the following day (when two planes in his squadron were shot down), and later during the battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes. Sometime after the war he took his family, including two children under 5, to Nigeria where he was a lay-missionary for eight years. I believe this was among the Tiv people in the south-east part of the former Northern Province; three more children were born there.



On his return to the USA he resided in Holland, Michigan (on the east side of Lake Michigan) where he was a teacher and Librarian at Holland Christian Schools, and an elder of the Christian Reformed Church. He took a wide interest in the contemporary philately of Nigeria; I recall buying some Nigerian postal orders from him. He found oddities in perforations and shades of the stamps, and kept the small leaflets of their issue. Eventually he steadily sold his collections, some in this country. While travelling through the USA I once stayed a night with him at his home, and he later stayed in my home for a few days on a trip to England.

He retired in 1985 and wrote no less than fourteen books about his town, and compiled an index of all the articles in its English-language newspapers from the nineteenth century to 1985.

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.

Stamp Lover (Journal of the National Philatelic Society), Volume 101, Number 6, December 2009
p152, John Yeomans, *Kamerun - French Equatorial Africa Border Survey Commissions of 1911-1913 and the Aftermath*

Journal of the France & Colonies PS, Volume 60, Number 2, June 2010
pp44-51, Barbara Priddy, *WWII Airmail Rates from French Equatorial Africa*
pp65-68, Marty Bratzel, *Scarce as Hen's Teeth - the Booklet Stamps of French Cameroun*

Air Mail News, Volume 53, Number 210, August 2010
pp108-110, Various Writers, *Nigeria to Hong Kong in 1936: Nigeria to Lundy in 1937*

Gibbons Stamp Monthly, Volume 41, Number 3, August 2010
pp65-68, David Horry, *Gambia Postmarks Within the King George VI Period 1937-1953*

London Philatelist, Volume 119, Number 1377, July-August 2010
pp213-226, Philip Quirk, *Perforations of the First Sierra Leone 6d: Line or Comb?*

Air Mail Routes and Rates from Cameroun to the UK during World War II

Martin P. Bratzel, Jr. and Robert E. Picirilli

This is a revised version of an article by the same authors that first appeared in the Journal of the France & Colonies PS, December 2008 - Barry

The study group researching air mail rates used in French colonies up to the end of 1945 continues to make progress. The France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain will publish a book with the results, scheduled for 2011.

This article begins with 1 September 1939. It reveals a problem and raises questions that we hope others will be able to help answer. And though the article is specific for French Cameroon (hereafter Cameroun), much of it applies equally to French Equatorial Africa. Unlike the rest of French Africa, including Madagascar and Reunion, these territories declared for de Gaulle's Free French government shortly after the Armistice of 22 June 1940 - all but Gabon in August and that colony in November - and were known, collectively, as 'Free French Africa (AFL = *Afrique Française Libre*).

Air mail letters from French areas prior to 1946 typically paid the basic letter rates (some call this 'surface') - and registration, if desired - in addition to the air mail surtaxes required. Basic and registration rates differed, depending on whether the letter was destined for another part of the worldwide French community ('domestic basic') or for a place not a part of the French community ('foreign basic'). Thus one must know these first. Table 1 shows the foreign basic rates used in Cameroun (up to 100g) from 1939-45. (Ref. 1)

Date	0-20g	+ per 20g over	+ Registration
1 Jan 1939	2f 25	+ 1f 25	+ 2f 50
1 Feb 1940	2f 50	+ 1f 50	+2f 50
1 Feb 1944	4f	+ 2f 40	+4f

Table 1 Foreign Basic Rates in Cameroun 1939-45

When it comes to determining the air mail surtaxes to be added to these basic rates, the matter is not so simple. One reason is that the official journal of Cameroun (*Journal Officiel du Cameroun*, hereafter *JO Cameroun*), during this period, did not publish the air mail surtaxes to the UK or other foreign destinations, only to France and part of French Africa. Perhaps the wartime constraints and frequently changing circumstances contributed to that. Regardless, this leaves us for the most part dependent on cover evidence as a means of determining the surtaxes involved. The discussion that follows deals with this evidence, and with other related information available, according to defined periods of time.

Air Mail Routes during World War II

Prior to June 1940, air mail destined for the UK was generally routed - by airlines under contract to the French - from Cameroun via France (Note 1), but the Armistice left northern France occupied by Germany and the southern part under a puppet government at Vichy. Though Air France ceased operations, the Vichy government established Régie Air France to fly the old routes into Africa. As noted above, however, Cameroun and AEF declared for de Gaulle's Free French, and Vichy flights to Cameroun and AEF never became a reality.

Air services through Douala were re-established in October 1940 when Sabena, by arrangement with BOAC, inaugurated a service connecting Takoradi (Gold Coast) through Lagos (Nigeria) to Douala and on to Cairo. Although there was some shifting of schedules, by the end of October 1941 the Free French had

established a regular route from the French Levant to the French Congo in nearby AEF; by mid 1943 there was a circuit from Pointe Noire - Libreville - Douala - Lagos - Accra - Kano - Fort Lamy and return. By November 1943 the old Aéromaritime route (now under LAM) from Dakar to Lagos was extended to Douala and Pointe Noire. (Ref. 2)

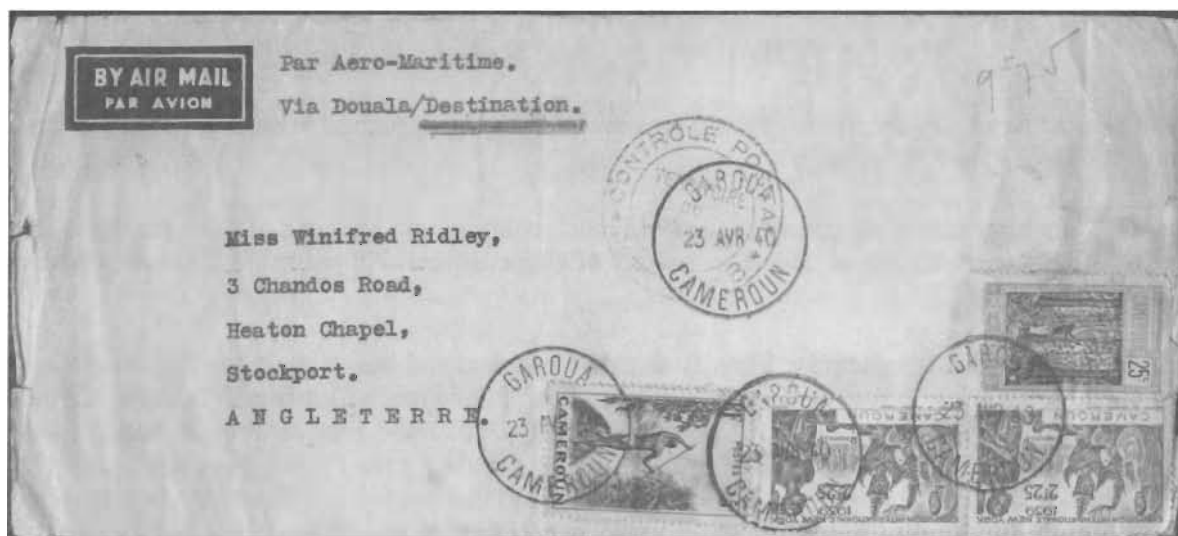


Figure 1

Envelope postmarked Garoua 23 Avr 40. No transit marks. Commission B (Yaoundé) postal control mark
 Typed "Par Aero-Maritime / Via Douala / Destination"
 Postage paid – 9f75 = 2f50 basic + double 3f (5-10 g) air to France + 1f25 air France to England
 (Illustration courtesy Owen Scott)

September 1939 to June 1940

During this period, as noted, the usual way for air mail to go from Cameroun to the UK was via France. Connections between Paris or Marseille and Cameroun remained open, as did those between Paris and London. A person sending air mail by this route could pay only the surtax between Cameroun and France, if desired (and this was often the case), or add to it the surtax between France and the U.K. (often referred to as OAT, for onward air transmission). The surtaxes involved were:

3f / 5g air to France; + 1f 25 / 20g air France to the UK

At this point we have photocopies of eight covers that made the trip during this period:

- 1 16 Jan 1940 @ 6f = 2f25 basic + 3f air to France + 75c overpay? (Note 2)
- 2 15 Mar 1940 @ 5f50 = 2f50 basic + 3f air as far as France
- 3 27 Mar 1940 @ 9f75 = 2f50 basic + double 3f (5-10g) air to France + 1f25 OAT
- 4 15 Apr 1940 @ 15f75 = 2f50 basic + four x 3f (15-20g) air to France + 1f25 OAT
- 5-6 23 and 30 Apr 1940 @ 9f75 = 2f50 basic + double 3f (5-10g) air to France + 1f25 OAT
- 7-8 21 May and 11 Jun 1940 @ 6f75 = 2f50 basic + 3f air to France + 1f25 OAT

June 1940 to October 1940

From late June to September 1940 Cameroun enjoyed no air service. (Note 3) We have no photocopies of covers from Cameroun to the UK between 11 June 1940 (above) and 17 October 1940 (below).

October 1940 to the end of 1941

As noted, Sabena included Douala on its African route in October 1940, flying westbound as far as Takoradi - apparently the only airline touching Cameroun during this period. We have photocopies of eleven air mail covers to the UK from then until the end of 1941:

- 1 17 Oct 1940 @ 6f = 2f50 basic, leaving 3f50 for air mail
- 2 13 Feb 1941 @ 9f75 = 2f50 basic, leaving 7f25 for air mail
- 3 21 Feb 1941 @ 6f = 2f50 basic, leaving 3f50 for air mail

- 4 1 May 1941 @ 6f50 = 2f50 basic, leaving 4f for air mail
- 5 29 May 1941 @ 9f25, registered = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration, leaving 4f25 for air mail
- 6 6 Jun 1941 @ 9f = 2f50 basic, leaving 6f50 for air mail
- 7 27 Jun 1941 @ 6f75 = 2f50 basic, leaving 4f25 for air mail
- 8 10 Sep 1941 @ 5f50 = 2f50 basic, leaving 3f for air mail
- 9 18 Sep 1941 @ 8f50 = 2f50 basic, leaving 6f for air mail
- 10 2 Oct 1941 @ 6f75 = 2f50 basic, leaving 4f25 for air mail
- 11 7 Nov 1941 @ 3f75 = 2f50 basic, leaving 1f25 for air mail

Most of these covers (except for 1, 3, 4 and 6) would support the same air mail surtaxes as listed above: namely, 3f/5g air mail to France + 1f25/20g OAT. But with Cameroun's withdrawal from Vichy alignment, air mail would not have been routed via France. Perhaps some patrons or postal clerks continued to use the old surtaxes even though the routing would be different?



Figure 2

Envelope postmarked Douala 29 Mai 41. Transit Lagos 30 MY 41 on back
 Commission A (Douala) postal control marks and Passed by Censor / 12 / Nigeria (Lagos) mark
 Inscribed "Par Avion". Postage paid – 9f25 = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration, leaving 4f25 for air mail
 (Illustration courtesy Michael Pigginn)

What about the route? How were these covers flown to the UK - if they were? We have only the markings on the covers, especially the censorship markings, to help us. At least ten of them passed through Lagos, Nigeria, as evidenced either by a transit stamp or a censor's marking. Otherwise they have nothing in common except for censorship in Cameroun itself. Probably they were flown only within Africa, perhaps from Cameroun to Lagos, and went from there to the UK by surface. Even for the British colonies in West Africa there was apparently no civilian air mail to the UK during this period; see further below.

1942-43

Some of the 1942-43 covers begin to show a recognisable pattern: namely, an air mail surtax of 6f/5g. The evidence for this is as follows:

- Seven @ 8f50 (23 Feb 1942 to 31 Dec 1943) = 2f50 basic + 6f air mail
- One @ 11f, registered (20 Jul 1943) = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration + 6f air mail
- Three @ 14f50 (Mar-Dec 1942) = 2f50 basic + double 6f air mail (5-10g)
- Three @ 17f, registered (22 Aug 1942 to 17 May 1943) = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration + double 6f air mail

- One @ 20f50 (2 May 1942) = 2f50 basic + triple 6f air mail (10-15g)
- One @ 23f, registered = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration + triple 6f air mail (10-15g)
- One @ 26f50 (29 Sep 1942) = 2f50 basic + four x 6f air mail (15-20g)
- One @ 29f, registered (29 Aug 1943) = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration + four x 6f air mail (15-20g)
- One @ 42f50, registered (15 Jul 1943) = 4f basic (20-40g) + 2f50 registration + six x 6f air mail (25-30g) (Note 4)

To be fair, these nineteen represent just half of the covers in our database during 1942-43; the others do not fit this pattern. However, at least ten of the others flew via the USA, which meant twice across the Atlantic via Pan American (FAM 22 westward, then FAM 18) - a slow and sometimes unreliable service:

- One, a registered letter canceled 26 Mar 1942 in Lolodorf, made transit in Lagos (2 Apr), Miami (13 Apr), and NY (14 Apr), thus making time that was unusually good for FAM 22 mail at the time. But it paid only 6f40: 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration, leaving just 1f40 for air mail, an impossible amount!
- Three (1 May 1942, 19 Dec 1942; 21 Aug 1943) @ 23f = 2f50 basic, leaving 20f50 for air mail - a much more realistic amount. Being unregistered, there are no transit markings to confirm the route (Note 5)
- Four (19 Jun 1942 to 18 Jun 1943) @ 46f, registered = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration, leaving 41f for air mail (possibly double 20f50 or double 20f with overpayment)
- One (7 Sep 1943) @ 66f, registered = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration, leaving 61f for air mail (possibly triple 20f/5g with overpayment or triple 20f50 with underpayment). Not *marked* to go via the US, but with transit stamps in Miami (29 Sep) and NY (1 Oct) -and a P.C. 90 censor tape (No. 552) that might have been applied in Bermuda
- One (27 Nov 1943) @ 28f50 = 2f50 basic, leaving 26f for air mail

The other covers not analysed here fit no pattern - some are marked postage due - and offer no help in determining the route or surtax involved, or the extent that air service was provided.

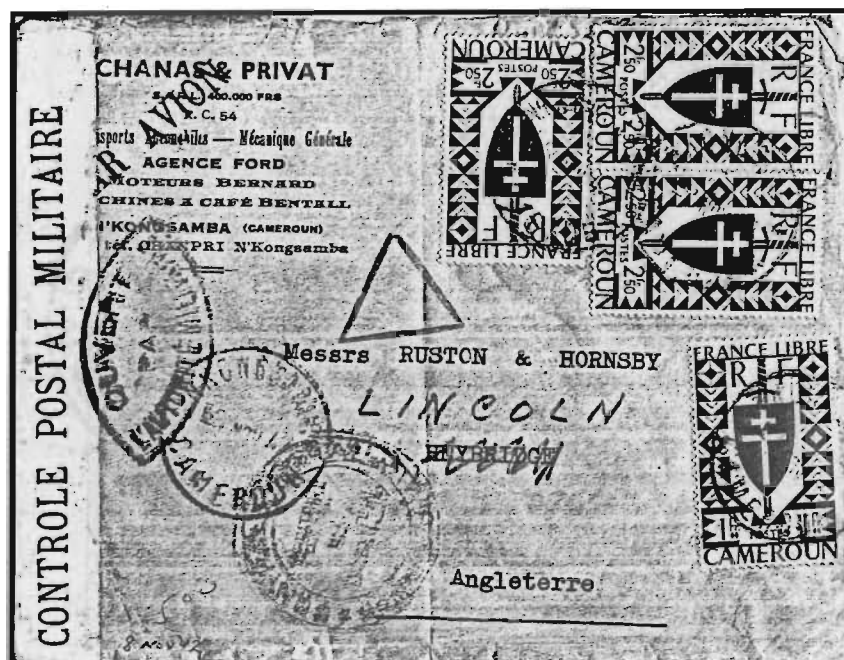


Figure 3

Envelope postmarked Nkongsamba 8 Nov 42. No transit marks. Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape tied with eye-shaped Ouvert / par / l'Autorite Militaire mark
 Triangular postal control mark reportedly applied at Lagos. Handstamped "Par Avion"
 Postage paid – 8f50 = 2f50 basic + 6f air mail

The operative question, then, is whether there was any alternative, during 1942-43, for an air mail letter to be flown from West Africa to the UK, other than going twice across the Atlantic via the US; and whether the 6f/5g surtax (evidenced by the covers above) was intended to cover air transport all the way to the UK.

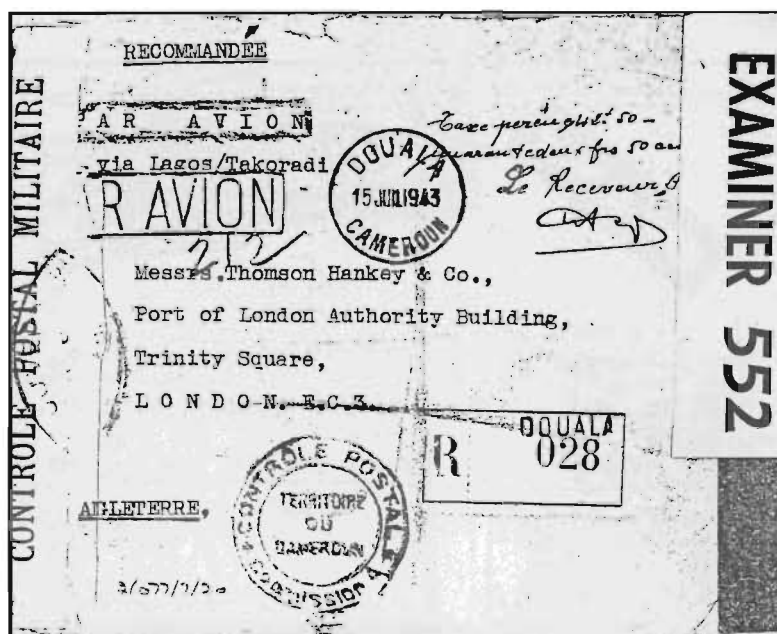


Figure 4
Envelope postmarked Douala 15 Jul 43
Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape tied with eye-shaped mark
British resealing tape imprinted "Examiner 552" overlays dark resealing tape
Handstamped "Par Avion" and typed "Par Avion / via Lagos / Takoradi"
Postage paid in cash – 42f50 = 4f basic (20-40 g) + 2f50 registration + six times 6f air mail (25-30 g)
(Illustration courtesy Michael Wright)

Even from the British West African colonies this was an issue. Barbara Priddy and Rob May have established that (with few exceptions, especially from Bathurst in The Gambia) civilian air mail was not carried directly from West Africa to the UK after June 1940 until some allotments were allowed on BOAC flights (UK bound only) beginning in May/June 1942 - after which most air mail went that way rather than via the US. (Ref. 3)

How much air mail from Free *French* colonies - Cameroun and AEF - might have been included in this is not clear, however. Some students of the period are convinced that none was regularly flown this way, although an occasional letter might have been included on a space available basis (Ref. 4). Essentially all of the covers listed above, for 1942-43, made transit in Lagos, again evidenced either by censor or transit stamps, whether marked to go by the US or not. Though most covers of the period were not back-stamped on arrival in London, one of the 6f/5g covers, mailed 22 August 1942, has a manuscript arrival note dated 1 September placed beside the addressee's business logo. If this is accurate, then, and it seems credible, it would appear that the letter went faster than by surface mail from West Africa to the UK, and that it did not go via the US. This may count, then, as evidence that at least a few letters from French colonies were flown by BOAC to London. (Many of the letters were also apparently censored in the UK: several have the well-known P.C. 90 tapes, 'OPENED BY EXAMINER xxx.' Checking the numbers used against those known used in Bermuda and Trinidad shows that only two of them (as noted above, one of which clearly went via the US) might have been applied there. These tapes, therefore, provide no real help in determining the route travelled.)

February 1944 to the end of 1945

As of 1 February 1944, foreign basic changed from 2f50 to 4f (up to 20g; see Table 1 above). From this point until the end of 1945 we have photocopies of thirty-eight air mail covers from Cameroun to the UK. Some patterns may identify the air mail surtaxes involved.

First, there are seven covers posted in February - April 1944. Two of these are franked at 10f and three at 16f, apparently expressing the same 6f/5g air mail surtax as seen above: 4f basic + single or double 6f air mail. The sixth is at 23f, which may represent a 1f convenience overpayment (or error) for 4f basic + triple 6f air mail. The seventh is at 39f, registered, which does not fit this pattern and may represent either an overpayment or error.

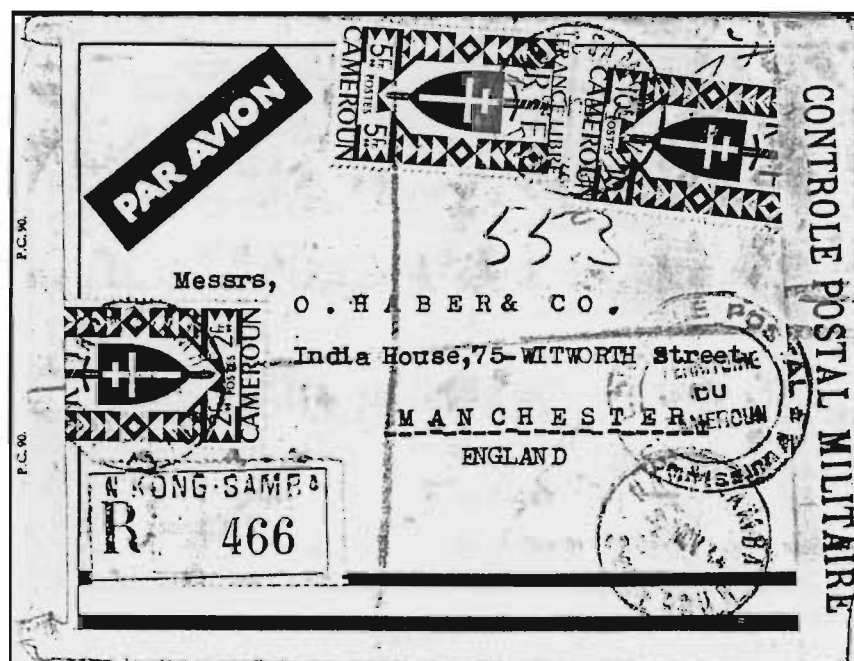


Figure 5
Envelope postmarked Nkongsamba 2 Nov 44. Transit Douala 2 Nov 44 on back
Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape
British resealing tape imprinted "P.C.90" and (on back side of envelope)
"Opened by / Examiner / 1963" surmounted by crown. Imprinted "Par Avion"
Postage paid – 17f = 4f basic + 4f registration + 9f air mail
(Illustration courtesy Michael Piggin)

The other thirty-one covers range from 16 June 1944 to 26 November 1945, and two fairly well-defined patterns emerge. First, eleven of them support a 9f air mail surtax (possibly double 4f50?):

- Five @ 13f = 4f basic + 9f air mail
- Six @ 17f, registered = 4f basic + 4f registration + 9f air mail

However, fifteen support a 13f air mail surtax (possibly double 6f50?):

- Fourteen @ 21f, registered = 4f basic + 4f registration + 13f air mail
- One @ 34f, registered = 4f basic + 4f registration + double 13f air mail

The other five covers support no pattern. The problem is that these two rates are intermingled rather than representing two different periods of time. The resolution of this apparent difficulty may be that different routings were involved, but if so there is no indication of this on the covers themselves (Note 6).

Concluding Thanks

There is much to be gained from having many covers for comparison. Our work has benefited greatly from the generous sharing of covers for our database. Any collector with air mail covers dated earlier than 1946, from any French colony (not France itself) to any destination, is urged to contact Bob Picirilli, 301 Greenway Avenue, Nashville, TN (USA) 37205; email picirillir@bellsouth.net.

Thanks are extended to Bill Mitchell for kindly reviewing a draft of the original article and, as usual, providing numerous corrections and helpful insight.

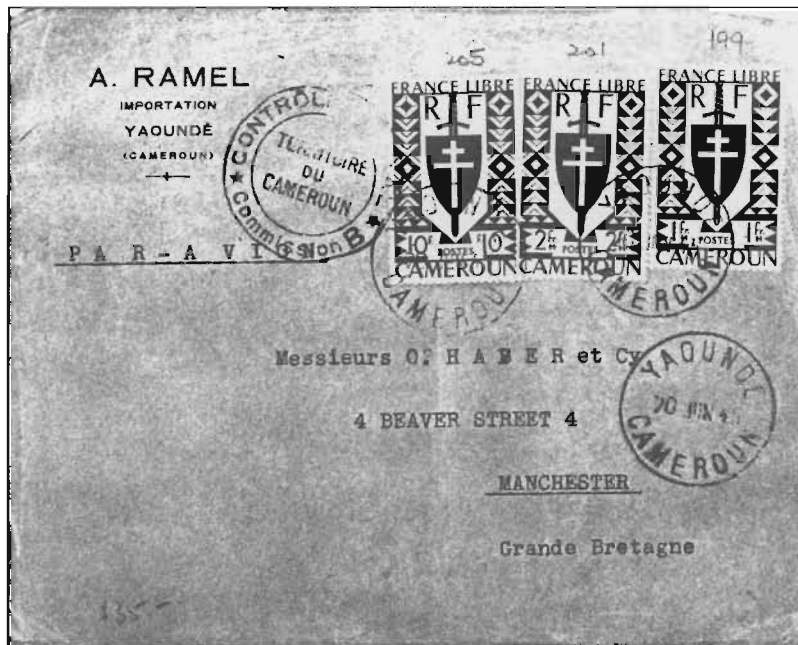


Figure 6

Envelope postmarked
Yaoundé 20 Jun 45
Commission B (Yaoundé)
postal control mark
Typed "Par-Avion"
Postage paid – 13
= 4f basic + 9f air mail
(Illustration courtesy Peter Singer)

Note: for related articles in this effort (by Robert Picirilli), see:

- "Airmail Letter Rates from French West Africa to France to 1945," in *France & Colonies Philatelist* (hereafter *F&CP*) No. 257 (55:3), July 1999; or in *The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society* (hereafter *JFCPS*) No. 212 (49:2), June 1999
- "Airmail Letter Rates from FWA to the UK and other European Countries before WWII," in *JFCPS* No. 223 (52:1), March 2002
- "Airmail Letter Rates from French West Africa to the United States before World War II" in *F&CP* No. 269 (58:3), July 2002
- "Airmail Rates from French Indochina to France Prior to World War II" in *The Indo-China Philatelist* No. 159 (33:4), September 2003
- "Airmail Letter Rates from French Equatorial Africa to France 1930-1945," in *JFCPS* No. 235 (55:1), March 2005; or in *F&CP* No. 279, 280 (61:1, 2), January and April 2005
- "Airmail Letter Rates from French Equatorial Africa to the United States to 1945," in *F&CP* No. 285 (62:3), July 2006
- "Airmail Routes and Rates from French Indochina to France, 1940-41," in *The Indo-China Philatelist* No. 183 (38:3), May 2008.
- "Airmail Rates From French Guiana To The US, 1930-1945" in *Airpost Journal*, No. 941 (79:11), Nov. 2008
- "Confusing New Caledonia Airmail Rates" in *F&CP*, No. 295 (64:4), October 2008

Notes

- 1 Alternatively, air mail could be sent via Imperial Airways, which served British West Africa, but the higher surtax made that route less desirable
- 2 It is possible that the sender or postal clerk was unaware that the OAT surtax from France to the UK had changed from 75c/20g to 1f25/20g as of late November 1939
- 3 Given the political uncertainties, it is doubtful that any air mail would have been carried via non-French services, such as Britain's Imperial Airways (note 1), during this period
- 4 Unlike the rest in this list, this cover has a censor tape (No. 552) that might have been applied in Bermuda, indicating that it (like those to follow) might have been flown via the US. In that case, the analysis would be 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration, leaving 37f for the unknown air mail surtax
- 5 From the official journal of AEF we know that the air mail surtax from AEF to the UK for the double Atlantic crossing, as of 15 August 1943, was 22f/5g. There is a little evidence among AEF covers that it was 20f/5g before 1943, as early as October 1942. Given the nearly identical situation of Cameroun and AEF during this period, it is possible that these covers were paying about the correct amount (perhaps 50c overpaid for convenience?)
- 6 In 1944-45 there were alternative routes; BOAC went from Lagos via Rabat (French Morocco) and Lisbon, while Sabena went from the Congo to Lisbon and London; there were even connections via Cairo. See Henri Truc, "Etude rétrospective résumée sur la Poste Aérienne de juin-juillet 1939 à fin 1945," *L'Aviette Postale*, part 4 (no. 155-56, Sep-Oct 1945), p114. It is also possible that a letter might go via France, as before the war, paying one or both of the two surtaxes. But we know those surtaxes (6f/5g Cameroun to France; 2f/10g France to the UK) and these amounts do not fit them; nor is there any sign that the letters passed through France

References

- 1 Bratzel M.P. Jr., *The Postal Tariffs of Cameroun under French Administration - 1916-1959*, MPB, Windsor Canada, 2007
- 2 Maddocks R.J., "West African Airmails Carried by the French Aeromaritime Service," *Cameo*, Volume 5, pp63-66, WASC, July 1995; Truc Henri, "Etude Retrospective Résumée sur la Poste Aérienne de Juin-Juillet 1939 à fin 1945," *L'Aviette Postale*, Jan-Feb, Mar-May, Sep-Oct, Nov-Dec 1946 (Nos. 147-48, 149-51, 155-56, 157-58); "Les Lignes Aériennes Françaises," *Les Cahiers Français* No. 45 pp29-32, 1 July 1943
- 3 Priddy Barbara, *West African Airmails: The McCaig and Porter Collections*, Introduction, p262, WASC, Dronfield, 2002; also her chapter four in Ensor Michael (Ed), *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast 1901-1957*, pp162-3, WASC, Dronfield 1998. May Rob, "West African Airmail links with Europe after June 1940", *London Philatelist*, Volume 115 pp382-407, RPSL, December 2006, has cited official evidence. That most covers went (by surface or BOAC) directly to the UK does not mean that all of them did; some still went via the US, as did also some from AEF
- 4 Chauvin François, "1942: de l'A.E.F. à Londres via Sabena et BOAC," *Timbres Magazine*, pp129-31, January 2005, describes a July 1942 cover as flown from Libreville to Lagos via Sabena or BOAC, and from there by a BOAC seaplane, skirting French West Africa, to Lisbon "where it caught a connection to Britain"

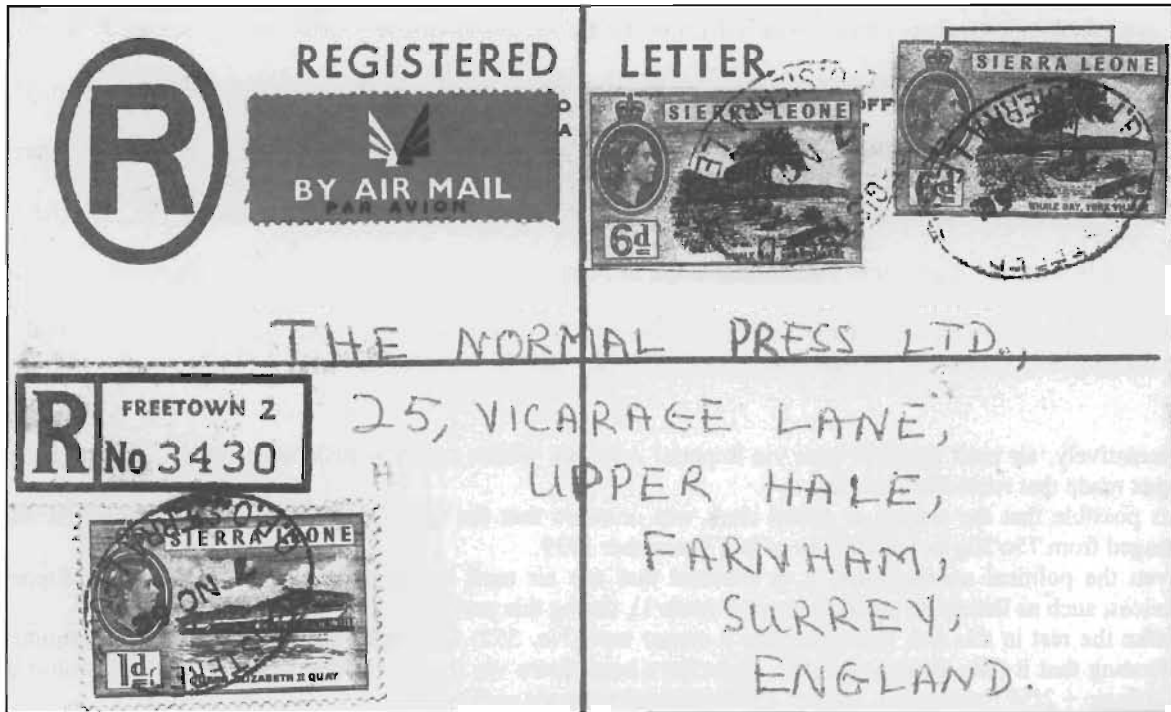
Note - Figure 7 is illustrated opposite, p371- Barry



Sierra Leone Air Letter Cut - Outs

Keith Hanman

I purchased this cover at auction fairly recently and would appreciate some assistance with one aspect of it.



It is a standard 1958/9 QEII registered envelope, size G, with the correct 1/3d air mail rate to England. A 2d adhesive is affixed to the reverse. The stamps are cancelled by the usual REGISTERED / G.P.O. SIERRA LEONE cancels of 7 NO 60. There is a backstamp of Farnham, Surrey, but the date is unclear at 1x NO 60.

Now my problem is that the two 6d 'stamps' have been cut out from two 1956 air letters and stuck onto the envelope. It is alleged by the vendor that this was permitted by the postal authorities. Some credence can be given to this as there is no demand for postage due to offset the one shilling, but was this correct practice or was it a one-off to cover a particular occasion? Any help would be welcome.



Figure 7

Envelope postmarked Douala 9 Avr 43

Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape tied with eye-shaped mark

Handstamped "jusqu'a destination" and manuscript "Voie Amérique"

Postage paid – 46f = 2f50 basic + 2f50 registration + 41f (probably double 20f50 for 5-10 g) air mail
(Cover offered on eBay)

New St Helena Forgery

Roger B. West

Having studied the forgeries of St Helena for 40 years, I was most surprised to come across a new type previously unseen and unrecorded, at least, unseen by me. Figure 1 shows the discovery piece being un gummed paper bearing four images printed directly onto it. At first sight the four examples appear to be Type 8 identified by the additional outer frame line. The portrait however does not conform to this type nor indeed, any other known type. Of greater significance however are the values themselves - One Penny, Four Pence and One Shilling - which are so inscribed whereas the originals of course were surcharged. Figures 2 to 5 show enlargements of the four values, while Figure 6 shows the regular Type 8. Being aware of what marvels modern desk-top printers are capable of, I'm reluctant to proclaim this as a 'new type' and would welcome any comments.



Figure 1 (left)



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 1a

From registered cover with mixed franking, 'U.K.T.T.' & 'Nigerian Ind.' stamps, pmk. BAI 13 FE 61



Figure 1b (right)

Piece with mixed franking incl. 2d pre-independence definitive postmarked KUMBA 2 JU 61



Figure 1c (above left) Nigerian Independence franking postmarked NYASOSO 28 AP 61



Figure 1d (above right) Nigeria Independence 1/3d stamp postmarked KUMBA 29 MY 61 -an interloper?



Figure 1e

Registered cover with mixed franking to Nigeria, postmarked KUMBA 27 MR 61

Quirky Usage of 1960 Nigerian Independence Commemorative Stamps in Southern Cameroons in 1961

Bob Maddocks

Under date 24 September 1960 the Director of Posts & Telegraphs in Lagos, Mr J.C. Farrer, inserted the following public notice in the *Nigeria Gazette*:

It is notified for general information that, in commemoration of the achievement of Independence, special postage stamps in the 1d, 3d, 6d & 1/3d denominations will be on sale at all Post Offices and Postal Agencies throughout Nigeria - excluding Northern and Southern Cameroons - from 1st October 1960 until 31st December 1960 or until stocks are exhausted, whichever is the earlier. Each stamp will bear the inscription 'Federation of Nigeria' and 'Commemoration of Independence 1960'.

Later that year, on 29 December 1960, it was further announced in the *Nigeria Gazette* that a new definitive set of 13 values for the newly independent state would go on sale on 1 January 1961 and that the current 1953 (Colonial) issue was to be withdrawn on 31 December 1960. It was this latter and last British Nigeria issue which had meanwhile been overprinted 'Cameroons / U.K.T.T.' for use in Northern and Southern Cameroons when these two United Nations trusteeship territories, previously administered as part of the Nigerian Federation, reverted temporarily to direct British administration from London effective 1 October 1960. This was necessary so that U.N. sponsored and supervised plebiscites could be held for Cameroonians to decide whether their political future should be with independent Nigeria or the neighbouring independent Cameroun Republic.

During the following period of direct British rule which, concerning Southern Cameroons, was to end on 30 September 1961, the Posts and Telegraphs services continued to be provided by the Nigerian P & T Department in Lagos under contract. An Agency Services Agreement had been drawn up between independent Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons Government with postal rates continuing in line with the prevailing Nigerian tariffs. Hence, as mentioned above, the introduction of the then current Nigerian definitive stamps overprinted 'Cameroons / U.K.T.T.' on 1 October 1960 in the Trust Territories.

However, in addition, and notwithstanding the specific exclusion, for obvious reasons, of sales of the Nigerian Independence stamps in both Cameroons, as mentioned in the first of the above Gazette announcements, it is most surprising to note that, somewhat out of the blue, these stamps became available for franking of public mail at one particular post office and its Agencies in Southern Cameroons. The Post Office concerned was Kumba, together with its Bai and Nyasoso Agencies. There is the possibility that four other of its Agencies - Lobe, Manyemen, Mbonge and Tombel - may also have received such stamps but usage there has not so far been reported. The evidence of Cameroons postal usage is shown by these photocopies of a selection of frankings on piece and on cover, postmarked between February and June 1961. The 1d, 3d and 6d values are the most commonly seen; the 1/3d denomination, which would have been used for air mail letters, is believed the scarcest as anon. (Figures 1a - 1e, page 372)

Quite how Kumba, seemingly alone of the six full post offices in Southern Cameroons, came to be selling these withdrawn Nigerian Independence stamps is a mystery. It is logical, however, to assume that early in 1961 Kumba Post Office was unaccountably running short of the more commonly used low denominations of the 'U.K.T.T.' overprints and thus indented for a further supply from the Posts and Telegraphs Department, Lagos. The latter, presumably finding it held no reserve stamps, supplied their remaindered withdrawn 'Independence' stamps instead as a cost effective expediency. Quite likely too, they also sent unoverprinted values of the also withdrawn 1953 Nigeria definitives - vide Figure 1b (2d). Both issues, already obsolete in Nigeria, were obviously invalid for use in another country - the Southern Cameroons was no longer part of the Nigerian Federation. Whilst such action by the Nigerian P & T was irregular, it was probably justified in the changed and changing political circumstances in the Trust Territory. By now, in February 1961, neither Britain nor Nigeria - the latter, notwithstanding the Agency Services Agreement, not being particularly well disposed towards its erstwhile federal associate - was prepared to incur further

and unnecessary expenditure on maintaining the postal service of Southern Cameroons. The Southern Cameroonians were about to end in a few months time their near half century-long ties with both countries in favour of a new political union with the Cameroun Republic. The Agency Services Agreement was due to expire on 30 September 1961. Thereafter responsibility for the posts and telegraphs was to be transferred to the newly created Federal Republic of Cameroun.

From my own observations of the frankings found on both ordinary and registered covers from Kumba and two of its Agencies, using Nigerian Independence stamps, it may well be surmised that only mail to destinations within Cameroons and Nigeria were involved.

The inland postage was 3d per first ounce and 2d for each additional ounce or part thereof; the registration fee was 6d. Thus, as is illustrated in Figure 1, the frequent use over a five month period of the three low values of the Nigerian Independence set in Kumba District.

First class air mail postage to overseas countries began at 1/3d per half ounce. I have not, however, come across any overseas addressed covers bearing either the 1/3d Nigeria Independence stamp or the others of the same set making up this amount of postage.

Would it therefore be totally irrational even to conjecture that, as a cost effective alternative to further printings of the 'U.K.T.T.' stamps, the P&T Department in Lagos, contracted to provide postal services in Southern Cameroons, opted to supply Kumba with its withdrawn Independence stamps? This could likely have been on the understanding that such stamps were to be used on inland (including to Nigeria) mails only and not on international items. Whatever, it is not known whether the United Nation officials, then supervising the plebiscite in South Cameroons and ever sensitive to any perceived Nigerian hegemony, became aware of this perceived indiscretion by the Nigerian P&T and, if so, their reaction. In any event, it was a fait d'accompli and, no doubt, entirely 'practical' within the 'stretched' terms of the Agency Services Agreement, precise details of which have not been found.

But this still leaves the question of whether the 1/3d Independence stamp was, in fact, also sent to Southern Cameroons. The used example illustrated as Figure 1d bearing a Kumba postmark dated 29.6.61 is decidedly an anomaly. Being off-piece/cover it cannot, in isolation, be determined whether it was used for air mail postage. Probably, it was a by-favour cancel. It is unlikely that this value was ever officially ordered by or supplied to Kumba Post Office. The issue remains open-ended.

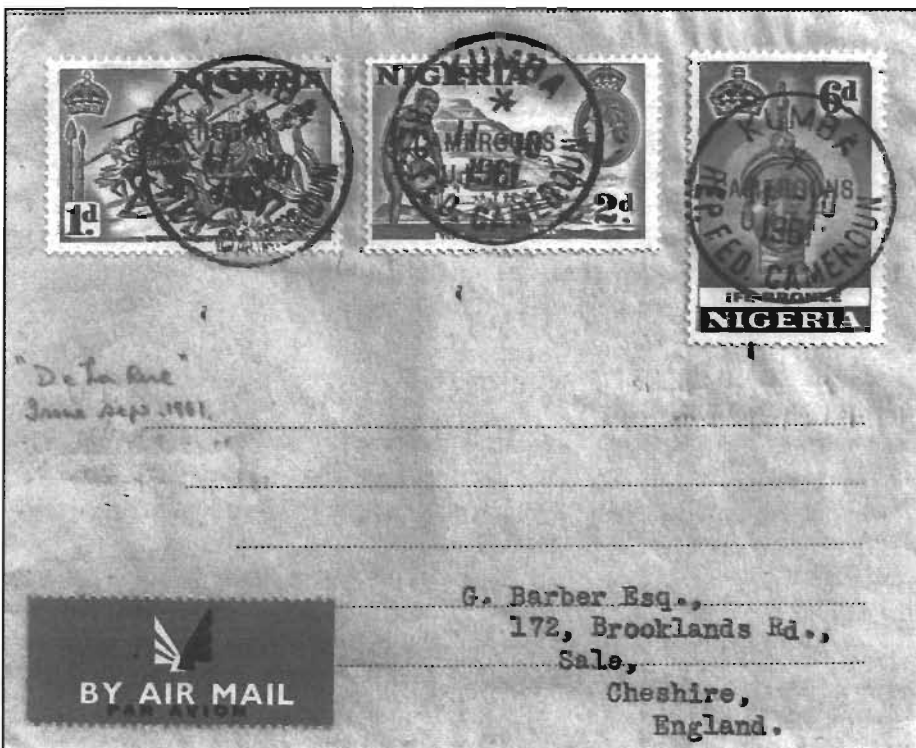


Figure 2 (left)

Air letter to England franked with new De La Rue 'U.K.T.T.' printings, 1d, 2d & 6d values, released 16.9.61, postmarked KUMBA/ REP.FED. CAMEROUN/ 11-10/1961 after federation had taken place with the Cameroun Republic

Bizarrely, in a final twist to events philatelic in Southern Cameroons, there were new London printings of three values of the 'U.K.T.T.' overprints namely 1d, 2d and 3d. These were released on 19 September 1961, just days before the Trusteeship ended on 30 September whereupon they should have been destroyed. However, whilst technically these stamps were invalid for use in West Cameroon (as Southern Cameroons was re-named) they did appear used there as seen together on this air letter (Figure 2) to London cancelled by favour 'Kumba / Rep. Fed. Cameroun 11.10.61'. Sterling (Nigerian) remained the legal currency in West Cameroon until mid-1962 and private holdings of both 'U.K.T.T.' and pre-independence Nigerian stamps were used in the interim to prepay postage without any penalty tax being raised.

The Southern Cameroons Government, under Premier John Foncha, had grandiose plans for an international celebration of their perceived independence - with funding envisaged from Britain's farewell handshake of a quarter of a million pounds. The outgoing British Administration poured cold water on such profligate waste of money. It pointed out that, technically, as the people had themselves freely voted to join in a federation with neighbouring Cameroun Republic, Britain was merely transferring its responsibilities to an already independent nation. It was not giving Southern Cameroons independence per se. Thus the former Trust Territory was not to have its own 'Independence' stamps or, indeed, even an earlier planned new definitive 'Southern Cameroons' set to replace the 'U.K.T.T.' overprints.



Nigerian Independence 1960

A Commemorative Publicity Label from Shell Oil

Bob Maddocks

The perforated and gummed label here illustrated (Figure 1, and cover in colour) was produced, likely in sheet format, by the Shell Oil Company in Nigeria to welcome that country's Independence on 1 October 1960. Although it was obviously used for the promotion of Shell itself, I cannot recall how exactly, most probably however on the Company's own outward mail. Whilst it may, perhaps, have been given out to customers at Shell's petrol stations it would have rather defeated the objective as it was somewhat too small to serve as say a car sticker. The label measures 45 mm x 25 mm, and is perforation 16.

Shell's Nigerian operations were then centred on oil exploration and extraction in the Niger Delta in the Eastern Region. Its Administration was sited in an extensive self contained township on the Aba Road just outside of Port Harcourt. Possibly the label was used only at this point as again I recollect only its scarcity. My label was acquired when living in Post Harcourt at the time of Independence. It probably came on an item of inward mail from Shell though it is currently kept with the Provincial Secretary's invitation to and arrangements for the Independence Celebrations in the town (Figures 3a and 3b pp376-7). Has any reader come across this label on Nigerian covers?



Figure 1 (left)

Shell Publicity Label for
Nigerian Independence 1960

(Illustrated in colour on front cover)

I also illustrate (Figure 2) examples of the 'Independence' cancellations on the pre- and post- Nigerian Independence stamps.

Figure 2 (right)
'Independence' cancellations





Arrangements for Independence
Celebrations in Port Harcourt

- Wednesday 28th September: H.M.S. LYNX and H.M.S. PUMA, frigates of the Royal Navy, arrive at Port Harcourt.
- Friday 30th September: p.m. Services in the Churches.
- 12 midnight. Ringing of Bells.
Firing of Ships' Guns.
Blowing of ships' sirens.
(Possibly a torchlight parade by Army).
- Saturday 1st October: Morning Official parade in Bernard Carr Street field.
- 9.45 a.m. Invited guests, spectators and school-children will have assembled in the field. Arrangements have been put in hand.
- 9.55 a.m. The Hon. the Provincial Commissioner, the Mayor and others leave the V.I.P. Rest House where they will have assembled.
- 10 a.m. The Hon. the Provincial Commissioner and party arrive at Bernard Carr Field and take their places.
- 10.5 a.m. The Hon. the Provincial Commissioner inspects a Guard of Honour mounted by the Royal Nigerian Navy (both of which, it is hoped, will be visiting Port Harcourt), the Royal Navy and the Nigeria Police.
- 10.10 a.m. Lowering of the Union Jack by the Nigeria Police, accompanied by the sounding of retreat. Raising of the Nigerian Flag. The band will play the Nigerian National Anthem and the assembled schoolchildren will join in the singing.
- 10.15 a.m. The Hon. the Provincial Commissioner reads the Address from the Hon. Premier.

Figure 3a

Provincial Secretary's invitation to and arrangements for the Independence Celebrations in Port Harcourt (Page 1)

Saturday 1st October: 10.20 a.m. March past of schoolchildren. The Hon. the Provincial Commissioner and the Mayor take the salute.
11.30 a.m. The Hon. the Provincial Commissioner and party leave the field.

AFTERNOON

3 p.m. Dancing Competition between teams from all parts of the Provinces. Prizes will be awarded to the best teams.

8 p.m. Fireworks by the Nigerian Ports Authority.

Sunday 2nd October: Official Services in the Churches.

Monday 3rd October: Afternoon. Wrestling competition between teams from all parts of the Province.

Evening

7.30 p.m. Independence Cocktail Party at the V.I.P. Rest House.

Tuesday 4th October: H.M.S. LYNX and H.M.S. PUMA leave Port Harcourt.

J.V.O. Smith

(J.V.O. SMITH)
Ag. Provincial Secretary,
Port Harcourt Province.

Figure 3b

Provincial Secretary's invitation to and arrangements for the Independence Celebrations in Port Harcourt (Page 2)

POSTAL SERVICES

External. There is no direct overseas air-mail service from Port Harcourt but mails are sent on most days of the week by air to Lagos or Kano to connect with the international airlines. Similarly, surface mail is despatched twice weekly by train to Lagos to connect with the mail boat service.

Internal. Mail is charged at surface rates but may be carried by air at the discretion of the postal authorities.

Postal and Money Orders are valid in the United Kingdom, while British Postal Orders may be cashed in Nigeria.

The General Post Office is situated at the corner of Post Office Avenue and Station Road.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Port Harcourt has an automatic telephone service and trunk calls may be connected to most of the principal towns in Nigeria. There is at present a dearth of lines in some parts of the township, but future plans envisage an increase in the availability of telephones and an extension of automatic telephone facilities.

Apart from a radio link with Bonny, there are no facilities for radio-telephone calls and no direct means of communication with other countries. There are also no direct facilities for the transmission of overseas cables and radio-telegrams or for telephone calls to ships at sea.

Inland telegrams can be sent to most inland towns.



Figure 4 (left)
Local Publicity Brochure

Figure 5 (above)
HMS *Lynx* at Port Harcourt
Photographed by Bob Maddocks from
the deck of HMS *Puma*

Figure 4 shows part of a local publicity brochure issued at Port Harcourt during 1960. The Provincial Secretary's invitation (Figures 3a and 3b) mentioned HMS *Lynx*, which I can illustrate (Figure 5) at Port Harcourt taken at the time.

I was present at the celebrations and remember that in the final hours of 30 September the general public had gathered at every available advantage point in the port area, including the trees. Here to witness the *Lynx* and the *Puma* fire their salutes at midnight to the new nation.

When the first and then the subsequent salvos reverberated around the surrounding crude oil storage tanks, the startled onlookers fell from their arboreal positions like apples at a cider harvest, and with other spectators on the ground fled wherever in fear. The noise, to which was added the cacophony of sirens being blown by all other ships in port, was horrendous. Independence, it seemed, was very short lived. Perfidious Albion!



Double Perforation on St Helena QV Stamp

Bob Deakin FRPSL

I illustrate (at 200%) an interesting double perforation on a St Helena 1887-1890 One Penny red, SG 37/38. There is an extra line of perforations just below the ONE PENNY surcharge, clearly visible from the reverse of the stamp.

Presumably there were at least another 11 examples, assuming the complete row was affected. It will be interesting to discover if more are reported.



Notes on a Rather Silly Modern Philatelic Fad

Anne T. Fadd

I received this short article from Ralph Stanton on 21 February this year, just two months before his untimely death. Ironically, he ended his email '....my health is improving'. It was Ralph's idea to use the pseudonym 'because it amuses me' - Barry

Now that I am an octogenarian collector, I can't help looking back over the years and recalling times before the modern craze for 'never hinged' stamps developed. There was a time when collectors realised that the important characteristics of a stamp were the paper, the watermark, and the stamp design. Gum is simply a chemical added to the back of the stamp, and it, in general, is not a real feature of the stamp. The only time that gum has any relevance whatever is for a few stamps, like the 1937 deep carmine-red reprint of the penny halfpenny of St Helena, where the brown gum allows easy identification of the carmine stamp (this is also true for the 7/6 St Helena reprint of 1937, where it is easy to mistake a very orange copy of the earlier printing for the later printing).

Indeed, I like to recall a story about a well-known dealer-collector, now deceased, who was asked to speak and show parts of his collection to a philatelic club. He carefully prepared a talk and presented the stamps in question, all face downward with only the gum showing! And he refused to display the faces of the stamps. He said, in effect, 'All you people are crazy about never hinged stamps - well, here is a fine display of the gum that you so love!'

Actually, gum can be very damaging to stamps. Brian Rumsey, of Ashford Stamps, writing on the New Zealand Chalon heads states: 'Gum on unused Chalons is not considered necessary by most serious collectors. Some of the top philatelists in earlier times soaked mint stamps to prevent the thick crackled gum from creasing or damaging the stamp'.

I have personal experience with the damage that gum can cause stamps. I once bought a set of the Canadian Diamond Jubilee stamps of 1897 that had been stored in an attic. All the faces looked fine, but the gum had undergone a chemical change to a moderate shade of brown and it was not possible to remove it; it had fused into the stamp paper. When I was a young collector, I recall buying stamps from an old-time dealer who was very experienced. He showed me a copy of a three-cent Queen Victoria Canadian small queen that was unused and looked beautiful, except that the gum had broken the stamp into two parts! In my own collection, I have a similar mint two cent Canadian Queen Victoria small queen that has suffered a similar fate - it is split right down the middle into two parts.

Now, anyone would admit that a lightly hinged stamp is superior to a copy that has been heavily hinged or that has a huge amount of ancient paper stuck to the stamp. But I can not agree that a never hinged stamp has any superiority over a lightly hinged stamp and, as I have indicated, there is reason to be wary about the effect of gum on stamps. I love the study of stamp design and especially the study of the intricacies of plating beautiful issues, such as the famous Badge issue of St Helena, but I strongly decry the craze for never hinged stamps. One can see it by observing some eBay sales where two collectors have fought viciously to obtain a never hinged copy of some particular stamp.

So, is there any hope that we may outgrow this rather childish emphasis on never hinged stamps? I see one very encouraging sign, and that is the current practice of postal authorities in selling stamps that are gummed and attached to waxed paper. One removes the stamps and immediately sticks them on a parcel or an envelope, and I see no sensible way of mounting these mint stamps in an album so as to display their gum. Perhaps the fact that the only reasonable way to keep them is to preserve the wax paper backing will lead to much less emphasis on perfect gum in never hinged condition.

Since I have mentioned sales on eBay, let me warn collectors that sellers there often have relatively little knowledge of stamps. Almost every used stamp is described as 'very fine used' or even 'superb', despite obvious bad centering or other faults. Also, I have noted that a large fraction of the 1871 Fiji stamps offered

are blatant forgeries, usually of the easily recognised Spiro type. And many St Helena offerings of the 1890s stamps are described as very fine used (at high prices), when they have the diamond obliterations that were applied to the sold remainders (and the description as c.t.o. is also false, since the obliterations, or defacements, were never applied by the Post Office).

In conclusion, let me hope that more and more collectors will begin to stress the beauty and interest of the face of stamps, the joys of plating, and the study of varieties, and that the current over-emphasis on never hinged stamps will fade away into the oblivion that it so richly deserves.

'Four Pages Only' for St Helena Boer Prisoners

Bob Deakin FRPSL

Readers may be interested in the message written on this cover (Figure 1) from Transvaal to a Boer prisoner at Deadwood Camp, St Helena.

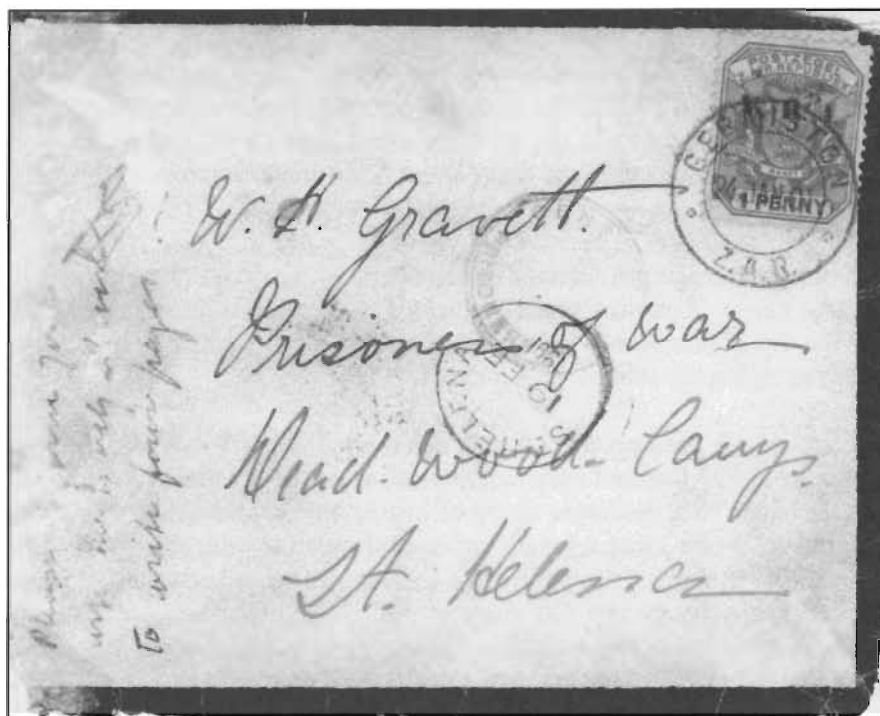


Figure 1
Cover of 1901 to Boer Prisoner on St Helena

Posted at Germiston, Z.A.R. on 24 January 1901, it is addressed to W.H. Gravett at Deadwood Camp. It was received on the Island on 19 February, and has the BW1 Censor Circle in violet. Nothing unusual there, but written in manuscript up the left side of the cover is:

Please inform your wife she is only allowed to write four pages.

I have never seen any references to a restriction on the number of pages the prisoners could send or receive, although the number of letters sent was restricted. According to Mabbett (Ref. 1), prisoners were limited to two letters per month, but there appears to have been little or no restriction on the number of postcards that they could send.

One wonders if just four, or all the pages were passed to Mr Gravett?!

Reference

1 Mabbett B., *St Helena, the Postal Instructional and Censor Markings 1815-2000*, p88, WASC, Dronfield 2002

FAM - 22 First Flight from Gambia to Natal

John Wilson

In *Cameo* for January 2010 (Volume 11 p243) I showed a note from the records of Francis Field, being a transcription of a letter from Pan American Airways in 1942 relating to the curious events surrounding the dates applied to covers intended to be carried from Bathurst to Natal, Brazil on the first flight of the FAM - 22 service.

By good fortune, and probably because I now knew what I was looking for, I found one of these covers (Figures 1 and 2) still in its original 'glassine' wrapper and containing the Pan American letter. For the record I thought it may be of interest to collectors of 'First Flights' to see this, and perhaps to illustrate why I concentrate my own collecting on those covers that were carried in proper commercial service and not manufactured with spurious dates.



Figure 1 (above) and 2 (below)
The cover described by John, posted 14 December 1941, but apparently not arriving at it's final destination for over nine months



PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS SYSTEM
General Offices, Chrysler Building
135 East 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

September 14, 1942.

We are pleased to return to you herewith the Bathurst-Natal first flight cover which you forwarded to this office early this year, for proper philatelic treatment.

As you will note, we have secured the backstamp of the Natal Postoffice on these covers as of January 1, 1942, the date of arrival of the carrying plane at Natal, Brazil.

The original flight over the Leopoldville-Lagos-Bathurst-Natal-Belem-Port of Spain-San Juan-Miami service was started from Leopoldville on December 12, 1941. The Bathurst covers are postmarked as of December 14, 1941. However, due to conditions beyond the control of this company, no stop was made at Bathurst, Gambia, westbound, on December 14, 1941. All Bathurst covers were actually carried on the first flight by Pan American aircraft from Bathurst on December 30, 1941.

The Bathurst-Natal covers were sent by this company early in April, 1942 to Natal, Brazil for backstamping. However, the Natal Postoffice improperly backstamped them as of May 1, 1942, instead of January 1, 1942. Under the circumstances it was necessary to return them to Natal for backstamping as of January 1, 1942. This accounts for the delay in returning these covers to you.

Yours very truly,

PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, INC.

By *Fred A. Lullow*
Philatelic Section.

FSL/eas
Enc

Figure 3
The Pan American letter accompanying the cover

As the Pan American letter shows, the covers from Bathurst did not travel on the first flight of 14 December 1941 but on a subsequent flight on 30 December. The covers for Natal were not offloaded at Natal but carried on to Miami, arriving there on 8 January 1942. There they sat until April when they were shipped to Natal for backstamping, and the postal authorities correctly applied the current date of 1 May 1942. The covers then returned to the United States and were once more sent to Natal with instructions to backdate the transit canceller to 1 January 1942. The poor US collector did not receive his so-called 'First Flight' cover until, apparently, September 1942.

All one can say about this dubious procedure is that these particular covers have an interesting story to tell, and were certainly well-travelled by the time they ended up in a collector's album.

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Down the Philatelic Rabbit Hole in Pursuit of a Curious Sierra Leone Cover

Kevin G. Lowther

Who mailed a registered envelope (Figure 1, page 384) from Freetown to Perth, Western Australia, on 31 March 1914? And why use a never-issued 6d stamp, overprinted 'REVENUE' thirty years earlier?

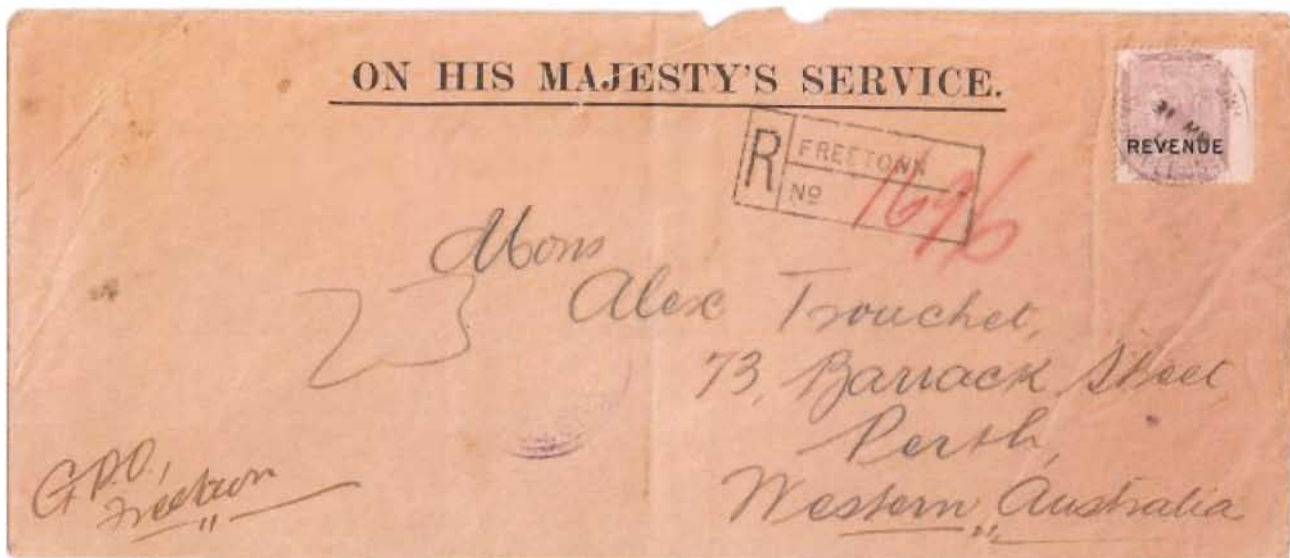


Figure 1 Registered OHMS Cover from Freetown

In his 1911 handbook on Sierra Leone's postage, Bertram W.H. Poole - perhaps the most eclectic and prolific philatelic writer of the twentieth century - tells us that revenue stamps 'for temporary use' were printed in 1884 by De La Rue and sent to Freetown. They were printed in lilac from current postage plates in values of 1d, 3d, 6d and 1s (Figures 2 & 3). The values on the 1d, 3d and 1s were inserted in carmine, brown and blue, respectively. All were surcharged 'REVENUE' in black. 'POSTAGE' was barred out on all but the six-pence stamp. (Ref. 1)



Figure 2 (above) The set of 4
Figure 3 (right) Full Pane of 6d value



Figure 4
1884 Surcharged 5s., without red marks

Without citing his sources, Poole states that 'it was decided' - presumably in the Colony - that these stamps were 'unsuitable.... The whole stock,' he adds, 'was sold to an English dealer, and though postally used copies have been reported from time to time, we know that none were ever issued for postage *or* revenue purposes. The postmarked copies, therefore, certainly never paid postage and are thus of no philatelic interest whatsoever.' (Ref. 2) Easy for Poole to say in 1911, but when I bought this cover at auction in 2009, it piqued *my* philatelic curiosity. Was it philatelically-inspired? Who mailed the envelope and why? And who was Monsieur Alex Trouchet, the addressee?

Apart from Poole's handbook, there has been sparse acknowledgment of the overprints' very existence. The Philatelic Society, London's authoritative 1906 book on the stamps of colonial Africa does not mention them; Robson Lowe's 1949 *Encyclopedia of British Empire Postage Stamps* barely notes them; Philip O. Beale refers to them in passing, without illustration, in his 1988 magnum opus, *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone*; the current Stanley Gibbons catalogue does not recognise them, although John Barefoot does in his *British Commonwealth Revenues*. (Ref. 3)

My quest for enlightenment began, logically enough, with Beale and fellow WASC member Frank Walton. They had briefly discussed the cover when it was offered at an earlier American auction. After taking a second look, Frank summarised their pro-and con- consensus regarding the cover's legitimacy:

Pro:

- 1 The stamp appears to be tied (just) to the envelope by the postmark.
- 2 The 31 March 1914 cancellation is compatible with the backstamped London arrival of 11 April 1914.
- 3 The QV stamps were not demonetised until 25 February 1932.
- 4 6d is a valid rate.

Con:

An official OHMS envelope did not require postage; and the 6d rate (including 2d for the registration fee) implied that the envelope and contents weighed between three and four ounces (one pence per full and partial ounce), which seemed unlikely, given the envelope size; and 'perhaps most damningly, Frank wrote, 'the (overprinted) stamps were never officially authorised for postal use.' 'In my opinion,' he concluded, 'it is most probable that the stamp was affixed to the envelope in Freetown in 1914 and that it did travel through the normal post to Australia. However, the stamp wasn't needed to prepay postage and it was possibly done by someone trying to generate an item of interest. They appear to have succeeded!'

 (Ref. 4)

Although inclined to agree, I was determined to explore the cover's provenance more deeply. In the meantime, Frank was prompted to ask WASC members to help create a database of known or suspected 'philatelic addresses from Sierra Leone.' He later reported eighteen such addresses in the October 2009 *Cameo*. The list, however, does not indicate which stamps were used on which covers.

Having dealt comprehensively with Sierra Leone's early postal history, Poole - born in Hereford, England in 1880 - seldom returned to the subject after moving to the United States in 1911. (Ref. 5) But thanks to Frank, Philip and some digging by WASC members Geoff Kellow, Mick Twinn and Tom Butlin, among others, we can partially reconstruct the story of the REVENUE overprints.

It is important, first, to distinguish the overprints from the one shilling green stamps which were surcharged five shillings, also in 1884 (Figure 4). These too were ostensibly intended as temporary revenue stamps. However, the Ipswich-based stamp dealer - Whitfield King & Company - having obtained the entire stock of surcharged stamps - contended in 1897-8 that these had been authorised (and used) for postage, as well as fiscal purposes, and thus belonged in collectors' albums.

Through the medium of *The London Philatelist* and *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*, Messrs Whitfield King and a collector - J.R. Hesketh of Bankfield, Ashton-upon-Mersey - conducted a somewhat heated debate over the legitimacy of the 5s-on-1s green surcharges. Hesketh alleged that the company was trying to 'hoodwink' collectors. Both sides invoked the recollections of former colonial officers, including T. Risely Griffith, who had served as Colonial Secretary in Sierra Leone from 1879 to 1889. (Ref. 6)

The REVENUE overprints remained on the sidelines of the controversy. However, a prominent London stamp dealer - Theodore Buhl - stepped forward in early 1898 to reveal that, 11 years earlier, he had 'purchased the whole remaining stock of the 5s on 1s from a gentleman in Sierra Leone whose name I am not at liberty to state.... At the same time I purchased the *whole* stock of the provisional (overprinted) Revenue stamps.' Buhl then recalled that he 'resold (them) to another dealer at the time.' (Ref. 7)

Buhl's anonymous source in Sierra Leone almost certainly was Griffith, who also served as the Colony's treasurer. According to Beale, Griffith acquired the four values that De La Rue overprinted, who then offered them to Buhl. The stamps eventually appeared on the market. 'Some,' Beale writes in his book, 'were sent out to the colony to.... have them postmarked.... alongside valid postage stamps.' (Ref. 8)

Griffith himself was a collector, as he averred in a letter dated 10 September 1887, in Freetown. In the letter, recently found by the Royal Philatelic Society's new archivist, Bill Hedley, Griffith took responsibility for the initial sale, to a dealer in England, of the entire stock of 5s-on-1s surcharges and the REVENUE overprints. He did not name the firm, however, or reveal when he sold the stamps. (Ref. 9)

Did Griffith have authority to sell the now redundant stamps on behalf of the Colony? If so, why was Buhl not at liberty, more than a decade later, to reveal Griffith as his source? It is worth noting that Griffith, responding in October 1897 to an inquiry from Messrs Whitfield King, made no reference to *how* the surcharged and overprinted stamps had reached the market. He simply affirmed - much to the Ipswich firm's delight - that the 5s-on-1s green stamps 'were usable as postage as well as revenue stamps.' He had given the same verdict in his 1887 letter. (Ref. 10)

Regardless of Griffith's true role, the question remains: When - and with whom - were the surcharged and overprinted stamps carried to England? Poole implies that the stamps were deemed superfluous soon after being delivered to the Colony in 1884. Because yellow fever had broken out that year, seriously affecting the European quarter of Freetown, a number of colonial officers - Griffith possibly among them - hurriedly departed for home. (Ref. 11) Did the stamps leave with one of them?

Here is what we can state with some certainty about the *overprinted* REVENUE stamps: They were printed in mid-1884 and sent to the Colony; they were returned unused to England; Buhl purchased them in 1887 and quickly resold them; some were then sent back privately to Freetown to be postmarked. Patently philatelic covers exist with REVENUE overprints postmarked as early as 1891 and as late as 1899.

Which brings us back to March 1914 and the registered envelope, On His Majesty's Service, mailed to Perth. My working assumption is that a British civil servant in Sierra Leone, circa 1914, who may have been a philatelist, had obtained some REVENUE overprints from a dealer in England and carried them to Sierra Leone. Only a civil servant could have used an official OHMS envelope. The return address - 'GPO Freetown' - suggests that the sender served in the Colony's postal administration.

Whoever he was, the sender had to be aware that British officialdom was concerned with postal shenanigans in the colonies. In July 1910, the Earl of Crewe - Secretary of State for the Colonies - cited the 'serious difficulties which have recently been experienced.... with issues of surcharged stamps.' He reminded local officials that they were responsible for closely monitoring supplies of postage and revenue stamps. This would avert the need for surcharging and overprinting, which invited philatelic mischief. (Ref. 12)

The problem extended to regular issues, as well. Governors, the Earl warned in his circular to colonial postmasters, 'have accepted from dealers standing orders for the supply of new issues, etc. Such arrangements are calculated to lead to irregularities and complaints, and should be discontinued. They are quite outside the ordinary functions of a Post Office....' Serious consequences were threatened. (Ref. 13)

Here our descent into the philatelic rabbit hole takes an interesting turn. We may never learn the identity of the dealer(s) who apparently stocked the overprints for decades; we might never confirm that a civil servant posted in Freetown in March 1914 was indeed a collector; but enough is known about Alex Trouchet to explain why he was the addressee.

Trouchet was born in 1870 in Mauritius, where his Normandy forebears had settled after fleeing the French Revolution. The Trouchet family became sugar planters, but moved to Melbourne, Australia, in 1880. Young Alex was apprenticed to an apothecary. He also began collecting stamps. When he finished his apprenticeship in 1894, he sold his collection. According to his grandson, Kim Trouchet, he used the proceeds to finance university studies in the United States and Canada, where he obtained a degree in pharmacy. When he returned to Australia in 1898, he headed for the Kalgoorlie gold rush east of Perth, bought a local chemist's shop and began what became, for many years, Western Australia's dominant pharmacy chain. The main store - known as Trouchet's Corner - was located on Barrack Street in Perth, to which the Freetown cover was addressed. (Ref. 14)

Until I contacted Kim Trouchet to inquire what he knew of his grandfather's philatelic interests, the family had assumed that his stamp collecting days ended in 1894 when he sold his boyhood accumulation. But then why had someone in West Africa sent him what appeared to be a philatelic cover 20 years later? The answer came when Kim Trouchet thought to approach the Philatelic Society of Western Australia. The PSWA provided him with a copy of its official history from 1893 to 1986. The society, it transpired, had folded in 1896, but in December 1912, Alex Trouchet convened a meeting of collectors in Perth to resurrect it. He was elected as one of the vice presidents *and* asked to serve as exchange secretary. (Ref. 15)

Based on correspondence which the PSWA holds in its files, Trouchet not only collected; he sold stamps via mail order from his Barrack Street pharmacy. (Ref. 16) It is reasonable to infer, therefore, that - in his capacities as exchange secretary and stamp dealer - Trouchet corresponded with numerous post office departments throughout the world. As a Francophone, he may have written often in French, which could explain why his correspondent in Freetown addressed him as 'Monsieur'.

Given the death of Edward VII in May 1910 and the advent, throughout the British Empire, of new stamps bearing the head of George V, it is not hard to imagine that Trouchet wrote to the Freetown GPO to obtain multiple sets of the new Sierra Leone stamps issued in 1912. An ample supply could have been enclosed in the registered envelope. As official GPO business, they would have travelled via OHMS, with or without the gratuitous and intriguing six-pence REVENUE overprint.

Trouchet's overextended commercial interests led to his financial demise during the Great Depression. His grandson believes, as a consequence, that he sold his 'second' collection in the early 1930s. (Ref. 17) He may, in fact, have disposed of his philatelic holdings through an elder brother, Louis, a well-known stamp dealer in Perth at the time. Alex died in 1934. (Ref. 18)

If we accept the above hypothesis as plausible, the *cover* is postally legitimate. It appears to have been sent by an official in the Freetown GPO in the conduct of official business. The cover was registered because it probably contained items of value - i.e., unused postage stamps. A faint circular customs marking also documents the envelope's postal validity.

The overprinted REVENUE stamp itself remains a philatelic curiosity - and a well-travelled one. Printed in London in 1884, it had been sent to Freetown and then returned to England. It had passed through many hands, including T. Risely Griffith's and Theodore Buhl's. At some point, probably in the early 1910s, a civil servant brought it back to Freetown. In March 1914, perhaps thinking that Monsieur Trouchet would appreciate the philatelic fillip, he reached into his desk drawer, pulled out the exotic 6d lilac overprint and affixed it to the official envelope with suspiciously geometric precision - in de facto defiance of Lord Crewe's absolute injunction against cancelling stamps 'to order'.) Ref. 19)

The cover was roughly opened when it arrived in Perth on 12 May 1914. No doubt Trouchet had eagerly anticipated its contents. Perhaps later, taking closer note of the overprinted stamp, he put the cover carefully away. Nearly a century later, having traversed several oceans, it has emerged to tell its curious tale.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Frank Walton, who reviewed several drafts of this article and provided the illustrations for Figures 2, 3 and 4. WASC members Philip Beale, Geoff Kellow, Mick Twinn, Tom Butlin, Ian Smillie and Philip Quirk also were helpful. Kim Trouchet provided essential information on his grandfather's life.

References

- 1 Poole Bertram W.H., *Sierra Leone*, pp35-6, David Field, London 1911
- 2 Ibid
- 3 Beale Philip O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone.....*, p149 and p156, RPSL, London 1988. Beale lists the 1884 overprints as 'Temporary unissued stamps', with Crown CA watermark and perforated 14
- 4 Frank Walton to the author, email dated 16 March 2009
- 5 Poole - who began dealing in stamps in the early 1900s - wrote regularly for several American philatelic journals for almost half a century after emigrating. There were few postal administrations whose early issues he did not discuss in detail. However, in reviewing American philatelic literature for another topic, the author has found that Poole revisited the early colonial issues of Sierra Leone only once, in 1951. See 'Sierra Leone, A Long-lived Design for the first stamp', *Mekeel's Weekly*, 5 January 1951, p3
- 6 Whitfield King and Company submitted to *The London Philatelist* a short letter, dated 10 April 1897, from J. Cleugh, Postmaster-General in Sierra Leone, which implied that the 5s-on-1s green had been meant for postage. The journal published the letter in July 1897, prompting a retort from George Campbell, a collector, who claimed that he had written to Colonial Secretary Griffith in 1884, and that Griffith confirmed the stamps had been issued solely for fiscal purposes. See *The London Philatelist*, August 1897. In its September 1897 edition, *The London Philatelist* published a lengthy letter from Messrs Whitfield King, quoting another letter from Griffith, in 1885, in which he said the stamps were for postage *and* revenue. Griffith, by then serving as Administrator for St Christopher and Nevis, explained, in a letter dated 12 October 1897, that the 5s-on-1s green, while intended for fiscal use only, had briefly filled legitimate postal needs. Enter J.R. Hesketh, another collector, whose long letter, dated 20 December 1897, appeared in *The London Philatelist* of January 1898. Hesketh pointed out that a high value surcharged stamp far exceeded the prevailing postage rates and could have served no legitimate postal purpose. These stamps, he charged, 'have been reposing in England since 1885, and I suppose it is considered an opportune moment to plant them on collectors' at high prices. He closed by accusing Messrs Whitfield King of 'a very daring attempt to hoodwink collectors'
- 7 Buhl Theodore, undated letter to the editor, *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*, 31 March 1898
- 8 Beale Philip O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone.....*, p149, RPSL, London 1988
- 9 T. Risely Griffith to unnamed addressee, dated 10 September 1887, in the holdings of the Royal Philatelic Society, London
- 10 Griffith to Messrs Whitfield King, letter dated 12 October 1897, *The London Philatelist*, November 1897. In the 1887 letter, Griffith argued that the 5s-on-1s surcharged stamps 'were genuine', and that the stamp firm then selling them in England 'are not swindlers'
- 11 Fyfe Christopher, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p445, Oxford University Press, London 1962
- 12 Earl of Crewe to Colonial Postmasters, circular dated 13 July 1910, reprinted in *The Philatelic Journal of Great Britain*, 20 October 1910, p192
- 13 Ibid. According to a report in *The Collectors' Journal* for November 1910, one senior colonial official already had been demoted for unauthorised philatelic sales. 'Dealers', the Rotherham - based monthly warned, 'will, in future, be unable to obtain their supplies of new issues and provisionals from the Post-Offices direct. In fact, this new order practically kills any further issue of provisional stamps. One of the chief causes of this edict is that of the Gambia, Straits Settlements, and Cayman Islands scandals, which was (sic) brought to the notice of the British Colonial Office' by William Ward, a philatelic writer. See Ward's letter, to this effect, in the *Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly* of 29 October 1910, p169
- 14 Trouchet Kim, 'Alex Trouchet - pharmacist, farmer, entrepreneur and electroculturalist', *Pharmacy History Australia*, pp8-9, February 2009, Kim Trouchet to the author, emails dated 24 August 2009 and 9 September 2009
- 15 Hooker Myrna, *Official History of the Philatelic Society of Western Australia, 1893-1986*. pp12-3, PSWA, Perth, nd
- 16 Trouchet Kim, email to author, 9 September 2009
- 17 Trouchet Kim, email to author, 24 August 2009
- 18 Trouchet L.G., 'A Great Find', *The Australian Stamp Monthly*, p219, 1 July 1930
- 19 Freetown's tropical climate, in the era prior to air conditioning, would have been unkind to materials subject to humidity and mildew. It is unlikely that the stamp used on the Trouchet cover had been in Sierra Leone for any extended period

Kevin Lowther is a US-based WASC member who taught history in 1963-65 at a Freetown secondary school. His biography of a former slave, who returned to his Sierra Leone homeland following the American Revolution, will be published in April 2011 by the University of South Carolina Press.

Airmail to St Helena?

Jim Graue

This article first appeared in The German Postal Specialist, February 2010, and is reproduced (following minor editing) by kind permission of the author (who is also the editor of that journal), Jim Graue - Barry

Covers to unusual or exotic destinations add considerable interest and a bit of spice to a postal history collection. They also challenge the collector to determine the postal history essentials: the rate, route and the means and significance of postal markings. The illustrated cover is a case in point.

The cover (Figure 1) was sent to *Matrosen* (Sailor) H. Brammer *an Bord "Schulschiff Deutschland"* at *St Helena im Atlantischen Ozean*. It was sent by air mail from Rendsburg on 10 January 1935, by *Stadtbaumeister Brammer*, whom one may surmise to be the sailor's father.



Figure 1 Intended air mail cover to St Helena

The three-masted schooner *Deutschland* (Figure 2) was built at Bremerhaven and launched in 1927. It is 1,257 GRT, 221.5 feet long, measures 39.0 feet at the beam and the draft is 16.5 feet. She served as a training ship (*Schulschiff*) for the German Navy (*Kriegesmarine*) until 1939. During that time the ship covered more than 9,000 kilometers on 12 overseas voyages, training approximately 1700 sailors. Since 1948 the ship has been anchored in Bremen. From 1952 to 2001 the German merchant fleet used it as a training ship. Today the *Deutschland* is under monument protection and is open to visitors.

In January 1935 the *Deutschland* was on one of its training cruises, homeward bound via St Helena. The subject cover was directed to it there. The *Stadtbaumeister* probably had received correspondence from his son that advised the ship's schedule, so he knew when the *Deutschland* would be at St Helena.

St Helena has no airport, even now. However, almost all trans-ocean flights in the 1930s were made with flying boats, so no airport was required in those times. But St Helena had no economic or strategic justification for a commercial air service.

Stadtbaumeister Bammer will have gone to the post office in Rendsburg to mail his letter at midday. He surely knew when the *Deutschland* would be at St Helena and that the letter would only get there in time if it was sent by air mail. The postal clerk, upon being presented with the letter, noted the weight (6 grams) at the upper left, and then would have immediately resorted to the *Luftpostliste*, the *Reichspost* listing of the air mail rates and services to everywhere. The index on page 16 of the then-latest issue (November/December 1934) shows St Helena but refers to no rate for it, indicative of no air mail service. Apparently the Stadtbaumeister insisted otherwise, but then what should the rate be?

Imperial Airways operated scheduled air mail services from Great Britain to the very substantial British interests in Africa, all the way to Capetown. The surcharge rate for air mail to South Africa was 35 Rpf per 5 grams. St Helena was out of the way, so a surcharge rate of 40 Rpf per 5 grams was deemed appropriate and three stamps totaling RM1.05 (25 Rpf international letter + 2 x 40 Rpf per 5 grams air mail surcharge) were applied. St Helena was a British territory and Imperial Airways served British Africa, so the letter was sent to London. It went via Hamburg, where it was processed by the *Eilbriefstelle* at 18:40 and sent by ship to Southampton as the fastest means available, there hopefully to connect with an Imperial flight south. It was not to be.

The British post office processing international mail in London knew there was no air mail service to St Helena, and that mail to the Island was sent by ship. The blue/white air mail etiquette was marked out with an obliterator, two parallel red bars approximately 7 mm wide and 38 mm long. This type of *jusqu'a* marking in various forms, indicating the end of air mail service, was used frequently in London in the 1930s. The letter was duly sent by sea to St Helena, finally arriving on 2 February 1935. By that time the *Deutschland* had come and gone. The cover was marked RECEIVED AFTER / VESSELS DEPARTURE (the rare Mabbett Type 7 - Barry) and forwarded to the home port of the *Deutschland*, Bremen. There is no Bremen postmark so the arrival date there is unknown. However, once there it apparently was finally delivered to Sailor H. Brammer as there are no 'return' markings indicating otherwise.

This is a cover of unusual interest, an air mail letter that never travelled by air. On its face it looks like many air mail covers of the time. Its real story is far more challenging and interesting. This is another in the family of covers sent to someone on a ship at a distant port. Like many of these, it 'missed the boat' and became a story in itself.

Since the publication of the original article, Jim Graue has forwarded the following update:

I did some research and came up with some interesting information which may also be of interest to readers. There are several interesting aspects with regard to the Schulschiff *Deutschland*. Firstly there is the scenario of Herr Brammer persuading the postal clerk to affix stamps on the letter to his son. Brammer was the Stadtbaumeister for the city of Rendsburg City, the building or construction manager. In other words, he was a man of influence and power, and one can imagine him using the power of his position to get the letter sent, even if the clerk had no proper information for getting mail sent to far away St Helena. In 1935, German officials were not hesitant about browbeating persons of lower social standing.



Figure 2 Schulschiff *Deutschland* at Bremen today

The other interesting fact concerns his son, Matrose H. Brammer. I made the assumption that when the letter was mailed the young man was a cadet on the *Deutschland*. I thought that he probably was of the right age to be an officer in the U-boat service. As is well known, the German submarine service sustained enormous losses from 1943 until the end of the war and it was difficult to fill the ranks of the crews with experienced men. Might Brammer have been a U-boat captain? Checking a list of submarines, their fates and the names of their last captains in the book *U-Boat Commander* by Peter Cremer, I found the name Brammer, the captain of U-1060, lost with all hands on 27 October 1944.

Further internet research revealed that *Oberleutnant Zur See* Herbert Brammer was aged 30 and came from Rendsburg. He had made six patrols as captain of a supply U-boat, conveying torpedoes to the submarines based in Norway. On 26 or 27 October, his U-boat was detected in Norwegian waters by planes from the British aircraft carrier *HMS Implacable*. They disabled U-1060 and she was sunk by land-based bombers. One source states that some of the crew members were saved, but apparently not Brammer. There can be little doubt that the captain of U-1060 was the same young man as Matrose Brammer. The name Brammer is unusual, to say the least, he came from Rendsburg and his first name begins with H, the same as on the letter.

John R. Norris, MD



Togo - Undercover Mail from World War I?

John Mayne

A little while ago a leading German auction house which holds specialist sales of German Colonies in addition to other material, offered the cover shown here, Figure 1 (front, below) and Figure 2 (reverse, p392). I thought their reserve out of proportion to the value of what could nevertheless be an interesting item.



Figure 1
Pre-printed commercial envelope posted from Lome

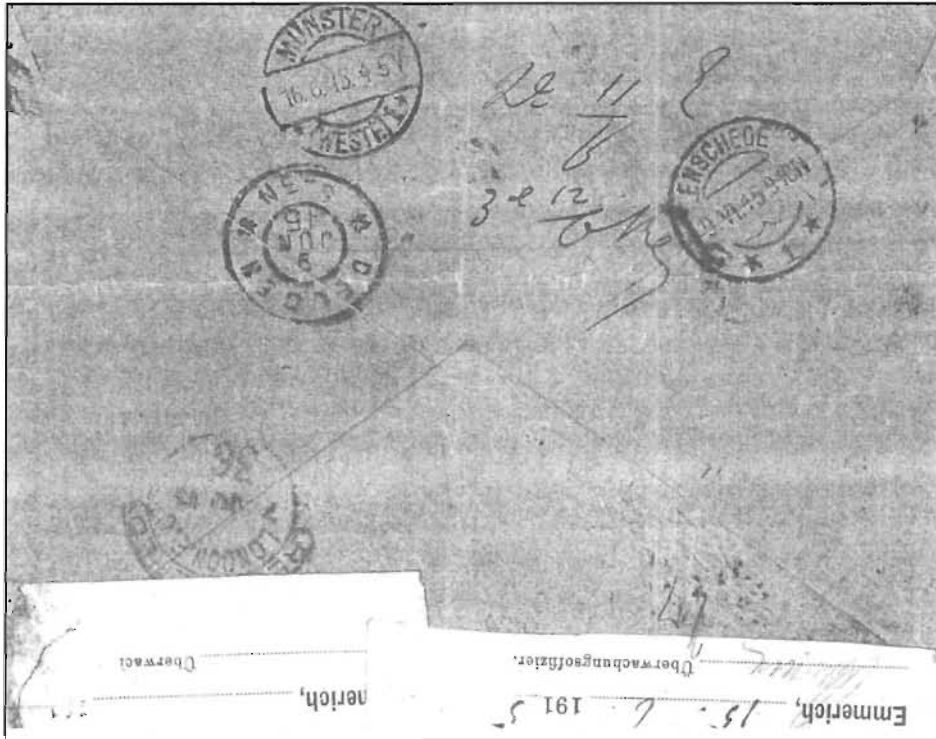


Figure 2
Reverse of the commercial envelope

The stationery used is a pre-printed commercial envelope for the German merchants Bödecker & Meyer, Lome branch. I have seen other printed covers from this company. The envelope was posted from Lome on 20 May 1915, addressed to Holland, correctly franked 4½d by registered post using standard Gold Coast issues in current use. There is nothing unusual in that. The German bridge cancel was in standard use; likewise the German registration label.

I understand from the address that the letter was first sent to a convent at Enschede, a town close to the German border, where it arrived on 9 June 1915, having been routed via the registered letter office at London two days earlier. It was then redirected to Delden, also just inside the German border, reaching there on the same day.

Again it was re-directed, this time to Munster, Germany arriving on 16 June 1915 after being opened and examined at Emmerich the previous day. Here it received a censor cachet but no transit strike. I see nothing unusual in that treatment of a cover clearly coming from a former German territory at that time under Allied occupation.

The particular value in this cover would lie in whether it has been sent via an undercover address. The auction house stated that they recalled a similar cover to the same original address but were unable to clarify whether this was an undercover address for incoming mail to Germany. Any thoughts or suggestions from other members would be welcome.

This report and scans have also been sent to the Civil Censorship Study Group to see if any of their members can answer this query - Rob May



Lagos Post Offices

Bob Maddocks



Figure 1
'6 LAGOS -
The Post Office'
Around 1900

I can illustrate two postcards of the original post offices in Lagos, Nigeria. The first (publisher not given), Figure 1, shows the old Post Office around the year 1900. The second, Figure 2, illustrates its replacement by a grander building which was in use until 1960/1961. This original card is in colour, produced by C.M.S. Bookshop, Lagos.

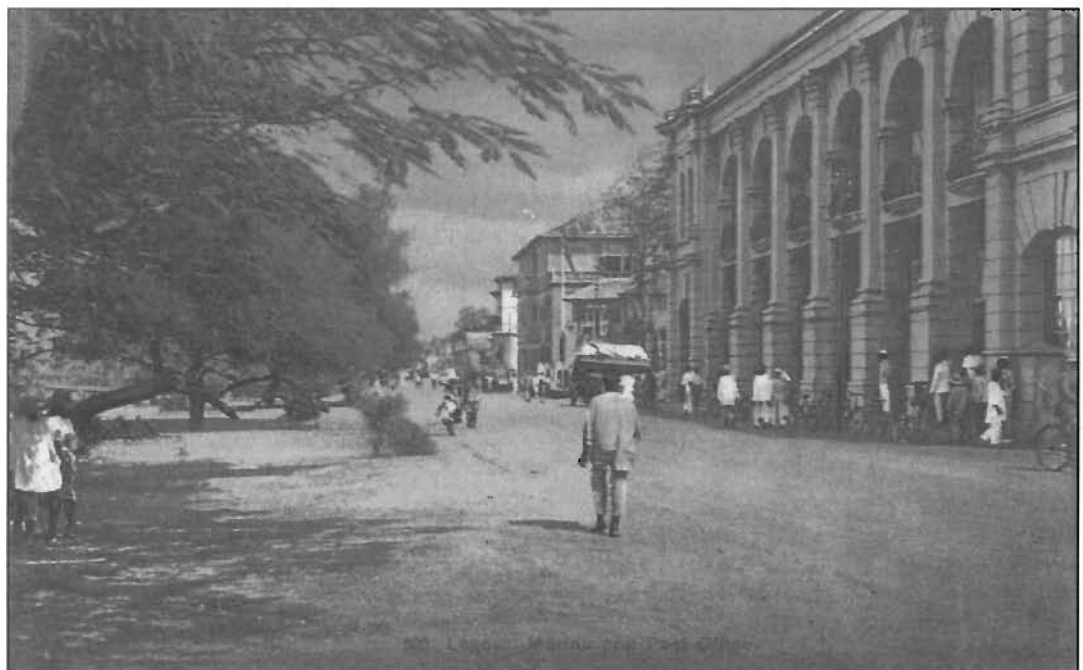


Figure 2
'390
Lagos: Marina and
Post Office'
In use until
1960/61

Figure 3 illustrates an artist's impression of the new General Post Office, opened late 1960 or early 1961. This is from the *Nigerian Trade Journal*, Lagos 1960, and I believe it may be in Moloney Street.

Finally, I illustrate in Figure 4 the Organisation Chart for the Post and Telegraphs Department in the late 1950s, from an undated official report.

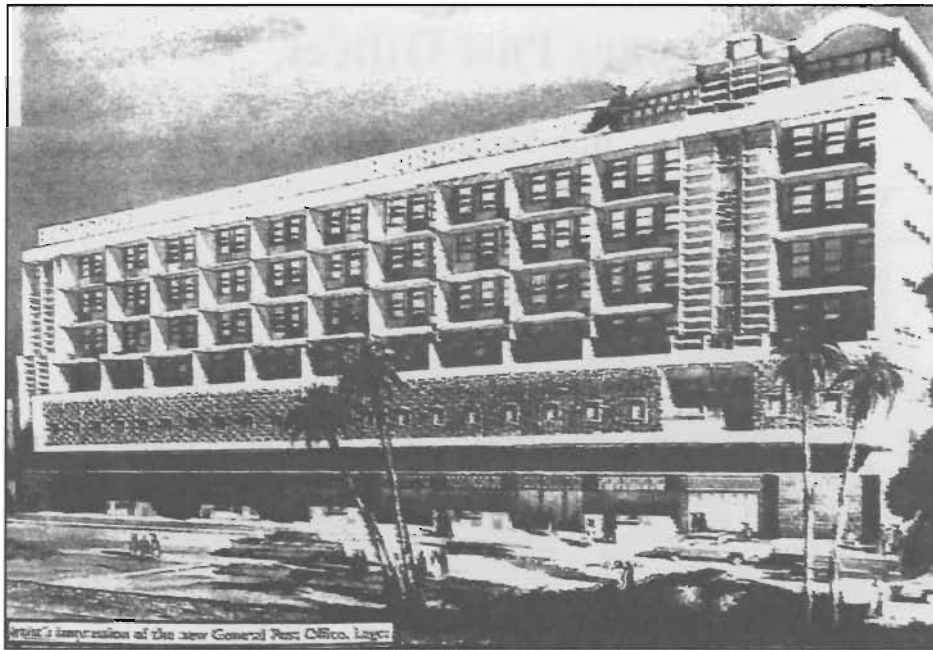


Figure 3 'Artist's impression of the new General Post Office, Lagos'

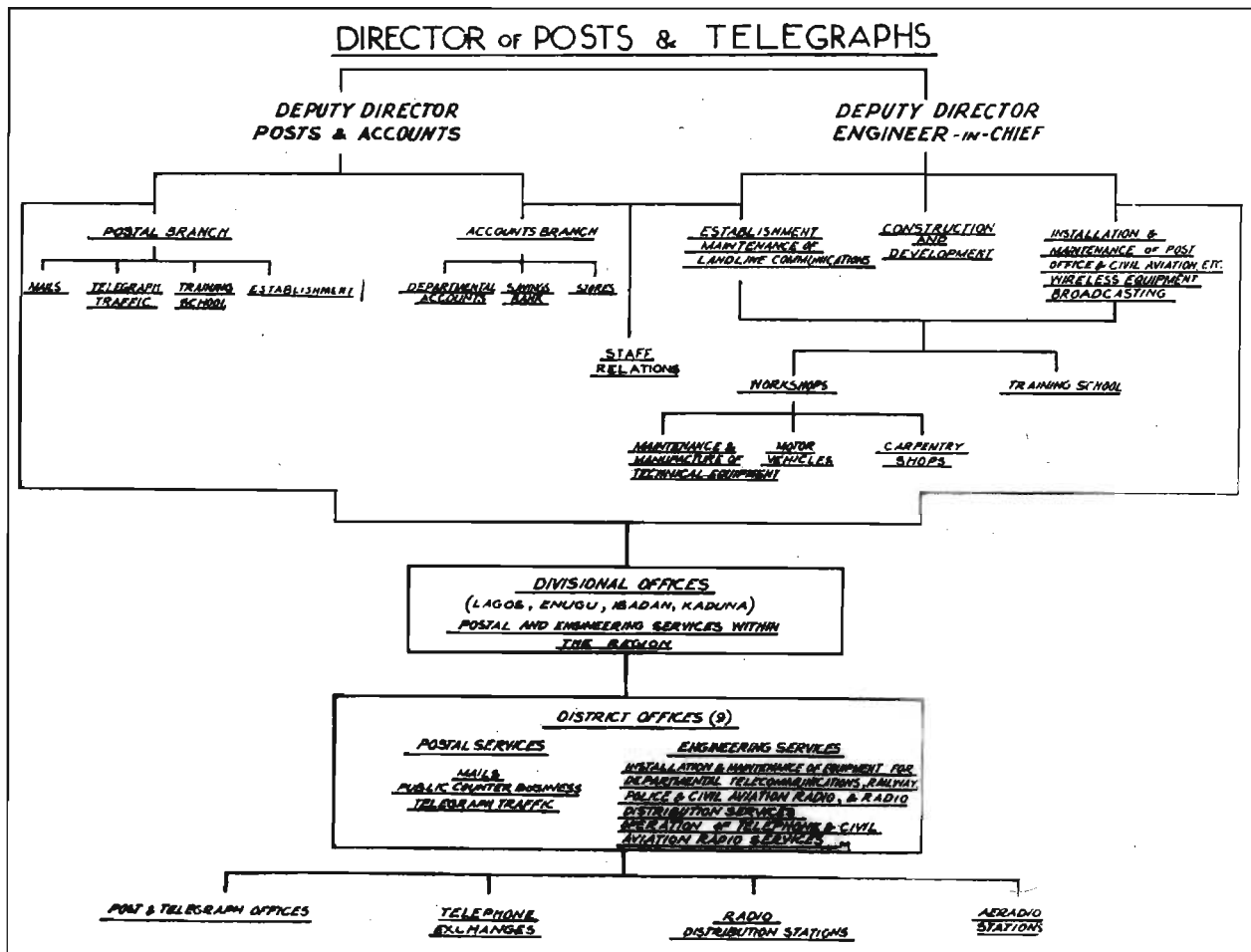


Figure 4 Late 1950s Posts & Telegraphs Organisation Chart



Maurice Fiévet and the 1953 Nigeria Definitives

A Designer's Faux-pas on the 2/6d Value Showing Victoria Harbour

Bob Maddocks

In *Cameo* Number 74 of June 2008 (pp256-265) Rob May and Jeremy Martin wrote a most interesting background history of the talented artist, Maurice Fiévet, and the designs he submitted for the 1953 QEII definitive stamps for Nigeria and the Cameroons. Simon Heap added further biographical details in his letter to the Editor in *Cameo* Number 79 of January 2010 (p221).



Figure 1
1953 Nigeria / 1960 Cameroons 2/6d Definitive
as designed by Maurice Fiévet

The adopted design for the 2/6d value, Figure 1, shows Victoria Harbour with the Cameroon mountains in the background with native canoes and bananas in the foreground. For this Fiévet obviously drew from his own visit to the Cameroons. One of his sketches, *A Scene at Victoria*, adorned the front cover of the *Nigeria* magazine published in 1950, Fig. 2. A further sketch, that of a plantation worker carrying bananas, Fig. 3, appeared inside to illustrate an article *In the Land of Banana Plantations, Victoria Division* by George Duckworth.



Figure 3 Sketch of Plantation Worker at Victoria
drawn by Maurice Fiévet



Figure 2
Cover of *Nigeria Magazine* Number 35 of 1950
drawn by Maurice Fiévet

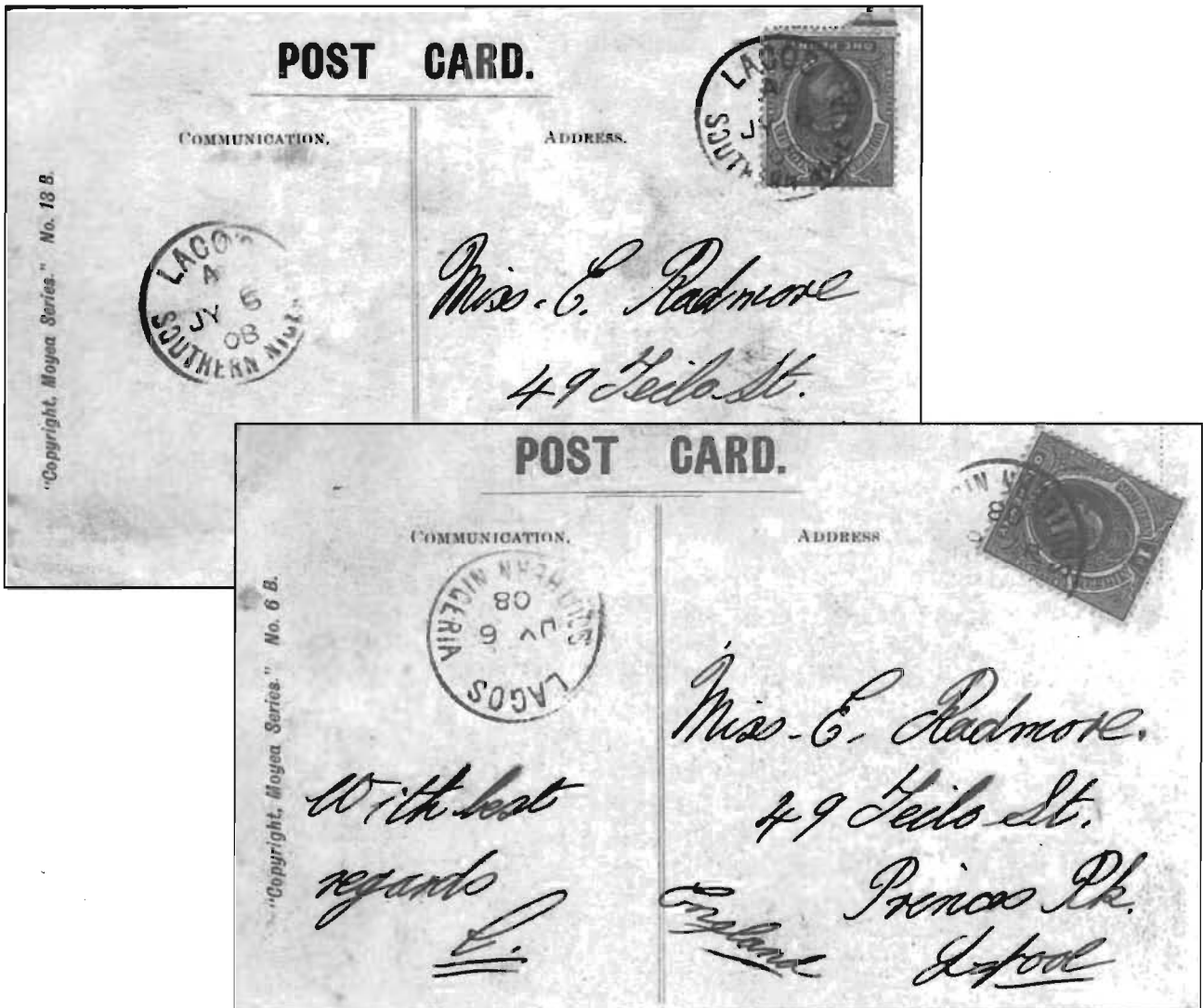
To the punctilious, however, what has gone unnoticed, as far as I am aware, from the time this 2/6d stamp was issued is that Fiévet got his bananas thereon in a twist! The three bunches he had drawn at the bottom right are *au contraire* to nature. Referring to the banana tree, also featured above them, one can see that the fruit thereon actually, and correctly, points not downwards from, but upwards to the carrying stem.

A mystery, perhaps, to be added to those previously discussed by the late David Wright in his article *QE2 West African Stamp Mysteries* in *Cameo* Number 73 of January 2008!

Lagos Postmark Letter Plugs

Tony Nicholson

Whilst re-jigging my collection of Nigerian postcards I came across a pair of cards posted in Lagos on the same day, 6 July 1908, by the same person to the same recipient. One appears to be Proud Type 24 with the letter plug A present, but in the second the letter plug is absent. Both marks are 25mm in diameter.



Sierra Leone 'Wilberforce Investment'

Kevin Lowther

If you have a set of the Sierra Leone 1933 Wilberforce or the Falklands Islands 1933 Centennial issues, these may once have rested in the safe of a pre-World War II investor. While trawling through the files of the American magazine *Stamps* for 29 April 1939, I found the following item in 'Philatelic Notes', by George Van Den Berg:

'Why the recent flurry of buying Sierra Leone Wilberforces and Falkland Centenaries? Not so much to meet orders for flush collectors belatedly becoming aware of their scarcity, as to fill a standing buy order for A.G. Neshirian, a wealthy Levantine domiciled on the Riviera, who believes them sterling investment material and who currently owns nearly 100 sets of each.'

CEF Overprints on Kamerun Yacht Stamps

Update Number 4

Marty Bratzel

In three earlier articles (Refs. 1-3), information was provided to supplement and expand Robert Gibbs' definitive treatment of the CEF overprints on Kamerun yacht stamps (Ref. 4). This article provides a further update, including four additional genuine varieties, two forgeries, plus three other varieties, certificate notwithstanding, about which the author is skeptical.



½d. on 5 pfennig, from left to right:

- Figure 1 double overprint. Both impressions fully inked and almost exactly superimposed
- Figure 2 double overprint. Faint impression displaced to the left 5¼ mm. Faint C in right margin. The faint E is superimposed on the fully inked C and the faint F on the fully inked E
- Figure 3 double overprint. Faint impression displaced upward 5mm. Tops of faint CEF in bottom margin and faint stops in top margin
- Figure 4 double overprint. Both impressions fully inked but displaced. Previously unreported

The ½d. on 5 pfennig Double Overprint

Two double overprints have been reported. For the one, both blue overprints are fully inked and almost exactly superimposed (Figure 1) and, therefore, easy to miss. For the second, Gibbs (Ref. 4) reported: 'I do have a photograph of another double overprint on an unused 5pf. stamp, but the two impressions are about 4 mm apart, one of them is extremely faint....' Previously confirmed (Ref. 1) is the existence of a stamp with the faint overprint displaced to the left about 5¼ mm (Figure 2). Another 5 pfennig yacht stamp with a double overprint has now been identified, with the faint overprint displaced upward approximately 5 mm (Figure 3). Thus, *three* sheets of stamps were doubly overprinted. The faint overprints were probably the result of the sheets not being removed from the press after the initial, fully inked overprint was applied, with residual ink on the overprint plate transferred to the stamp. Gibbs did not indicate if the faint overprint was displaced horizontally or vertically, so he may have been referring to the stamp in either Figure 2 or Figure 3.

Or, were *four* sheets doubly overprinted? Lot 7928 (Figure 4) in the 64th Gert Mueller Auction, held 19-21 August 2010 is another fully inked ½d. on 5 pf. double overprint, unrecorded by Gibbs and not otherwise reported in the philatelic literature. The stamp is accompanied by a 1985 Diena certificate. The author is skeptical about whether the overprints are genuine.



Figure 5 (above, left) ½d. on 5 pfennig forged double overprint
Figure 6 (above, right) ½d. on 5 pfennig forged black overprint

A definitely forged double overprint (Figure 5, far left) is easily recognised by the wider spacing between the overprints, the absence of a stop after the d, and a forged cancel dated 4 DEC 1915; the forged double overprints were applied to a later, wartime printing of the basic stamp.

(main text continues on page 399)



1d. on 10 pfennig, from left to right:

Figure 7 blue double overprint. Possibly from the previously unreported third sheet

Figure 8 triple overprint, two albino. Front, blue overprint

Figure 9 triple overprint, two albino. Offset on reverse



2½d. on 25 pfennig, from left to right:

Figure 10 double overprint, possibly from previously unreported vertically overprinted column

Figure 11 genuine single overprint

Figure 12 double overprint, one officially erased, Position 71

4d. on 40 pfennig, from left to right:

Figure 13 plate flaw, coloured dot, position 77

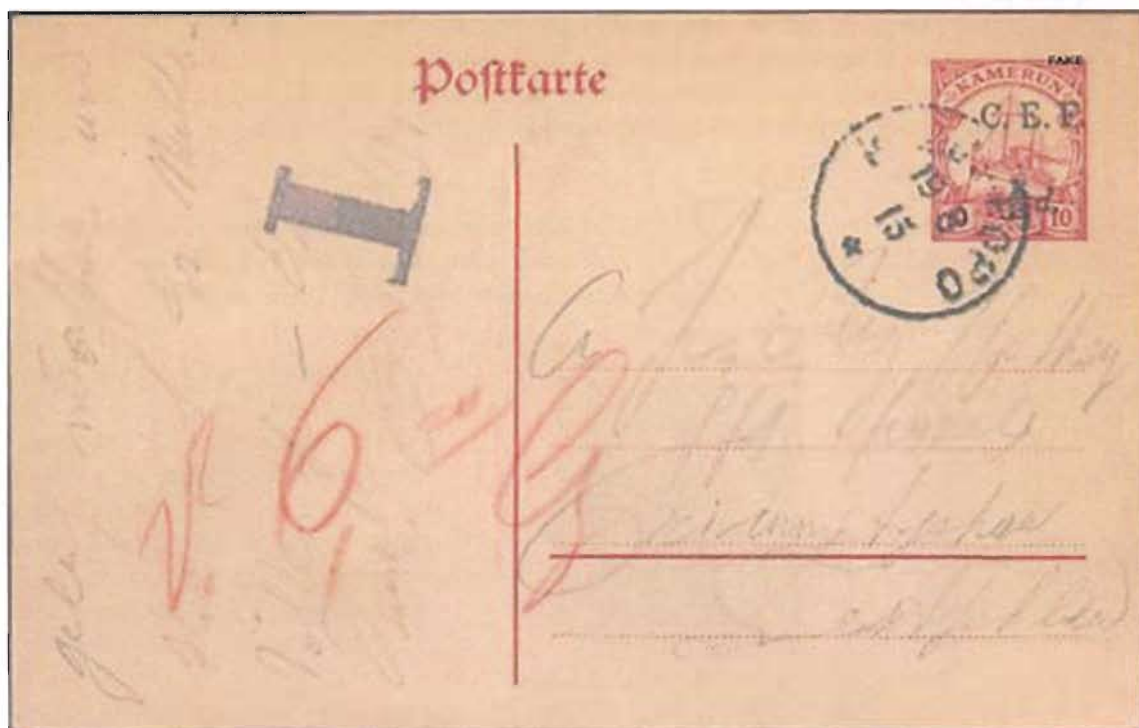
Figure 14 plate flaw, broken line, position 96



Figure 15 (below)

½d. on 10 pfennig post card, forged overprint, Front.

(The reverse is illustrated on page 400)



(Text continued from page 397)

The ½d. on 5 pfennig Black Overprint

As noted by Gibbs (Ref. 4), both the Stanley Gibbons and the Scott catalogues list the ½d. on 5 pfennig stamp with a black overprint. Such a stamp in all probability does not exist. A forged black overprint is shown in Figure 6.

The 1d. on 10 pfennig Blue Double Overprint

Porter (see Ref. 4) reported that three sheets of 10-pfennig stamps were doubly overprinted 1d. with fully inked blue impressions. Examples from two of the sheets are frequently offered on the philatelic market. The double overprints are positioned differently relative to one another on the two sheets, so it is straightforward to determine which sheet a particular stamp is from. Neither Gibbs nor the author have seen examples from the third sheet. The doubly overprinted stamp in Figure 7 does not match examples from the first two sheets, so could well be from the hitherto unseen third sheet. The stamp was offered as Lot 6178 in the 110th Württembergisches Auktionshaus Auction of 4 September 2010 and was accompanied by a 1985 Diena certificate. Nonetheless, the author is skeptical.

The 1d. on 10 pfennig Triple Overprint

Figures 8 and 9 respectively show the front and back of a 1d. on 10 pfennig stamp with triple overprint, two albino. The inked impression is in blue. Although Gibbs recorded a double overprint, one albino, he made no mention of the triple overprint variety. The albino does not reproduce in the illustrations, but two marginal examples to hand both show offset ink on the back. A third example, Lot 7930 in the 64th Gert Mueller Auction, may be from the same sheet. The position of the inked overprint on the front matches the other two examples to hand; however, the back does not appear to have any inked offset, which proves nothing one way or the other. The Mueller example is accompanied by a 1992 Holcombe certificate.

The 2½d. on 25 pfennig Double Overprint

For this denomination, each column of 10 stamps in a sheet of 100 stamps was overprinted separately. Porter (see Ref. 4) reported that the last vertical column of 10 stamps was doubly overprinted on three sheets; Gibbs believed that only one sheet was involved. The two examples that he illustrated have 'the first overprint.... high, the C.E.F. being cut by the top perforations, and angled slightly to the right as it went down the column.' The double 2½d. overprint on 25-pfennig stamp in Figure 10 does not match Gibbs' description and could be from one of the other two columns that Porter reported. Although accompanied by a 1985 Diena certificate, in the author's opinion, the numeral 2 (at least) in the overprint does match the 2 in other overprinted stamps to hand (such as in Figure 11). The stamp was offered as Lot 6180 in the 110th Württembergisches Auktionshaus Auction.

Gibbs also reported: 'Double overprint, the first impression being partially and officially erased prior to the printing of the second impression.... A sheet must have slipped off its 'stops' as it was being printed and a diagonal impression was registered across the lower left corner, registering on positions 81 and 91, and perhaps partially on position 71. The printer attempted to clean the sheet while the ink was still wet and then printed the first column correctly.... Position 71 has not been recorded and may not exist.' The stamp illustrated in Figure 12 is, in the author's opinion, position 71. The stamp was offered as Lot 9018 in the November 2009 Gärtner auction. A double overprint, one albino also exists.

4d. on 40 pfennig Plate Flaws

Two plate flaws have been identified for the basic 40 pfennig yacht stamp. The first is a coloured dot below the 0 of the right numeral of value; the flaw occurs twice in a sheet, at positions 27 and 77. The second plate flaw is a broken line above the 0 of the right numeral of value; the flaw occurs only once in a sheet, at position 96. When overprinted, two additional CEF varieties were created. Only 200 overprinted stamps with the dot (Figure 13) and 100 with the broken line (Figure 14) can exist. The flaws on the overprinted yacht stamps have previously been reported (Ref. 5).



Figure 16 (left, reduced)

½d. on 10 pfennig post card,
forged overprint, Reverse

*(The front is illustrated
in colour on page 398)*

Forged C.E.F. 1d. Overprint on 10 pfennig Post Card

The post card illustrated in Figures 15 and 16 (front and back respectively) was offered – and sold! – on eBay. The overprint is forged, the Klein Popo (Togo!) cancel is forged, as is the T and likely the Crixmitschau backstamp. Caveat emptor!

Thanks are extended to Lars Zinow, Gert Mueller GmbH & Co. KG for copies of the Diena and Holcombe certificates plus a high-quality scan of the reverse side of the triply overprinted 1d. on 10 pfennig stamp. Reports of additional varieties of the CEF issue are welcomed.

References

- 1 Bratzel Marty, "CEF Overprints on Kamerun Yacht Stamps", *Cameo*, Volume 6, pp326-327, WASC, July 2000
- 2 Bratzel Marty, "CEF Overprints on Kamerun Yacht Stamps – A Further Update", *Cameo*, Volume 7, pp40-41, WASC, January 2001
- 3 Bratzel Marty, "CEF Overprints on Kamerun Yacht Stamps – Another Update", *Cameo*, Volume 7, p309, WASC, May 2003
- 4 Gibbs Robert M., *G.R.I. The Postage Stamps of the German Colonies occupied by the British 1914-1918*, Christie's Robson Lowe, London 1987. xv + 275 pages, ISBN 0-85397-428-4
- 5 Bratzel Marty, Holschauer George and Gyapjas Joseph, "Plate Flaws on the 40-pfennig Yacht of Cameroon", *German Postal Specialist*, Volume LV, pp94-97, February-March 2004



How to Look After your Collection - A Basic Guide

David R. Beech FRPSL

David's letter to the Editor in the January 2010 Cameo (p220) mentioned the fading of philatelic materials and the importance of caring for our collection, and he kindly agreed for the publication of this article in Cameo. It is based on a Paper given at the 87th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, Derby on 8 July 2005. David is the Curator and Head of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library - Barry

Introduction

Many philatelists understand that they are the guardians of the material in their collections for themselves and for future owners. It is unfortunate when some collectors show a disregard for looking after their collection and dismiss comment with a remark like "it will be OK in my life time". It is to show that looking after your collection is not a complicated affair that I have written this article. Having said that this is a brief or basic guide only and interested parties seeking more comprehensive information should consult a professional paper conservator.

The British Library is custodian of national collections of international importance some of which have been in its care for over 250 years. During this period it has developed, along with the library and archive community, policies and practices designed to protect those collections. The curators' job is to understand the issues and work with the conservator, who will have specialist knowledge and practical experience. In 1989 the British Library published the book *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials*, written by the late T.J. Collings, a leading paper conservation expert, and R.F. Schoolley-West, FRPSL former Head of the Philatelic Collections. This title appeared in two editions, one in collaboration with the American Philatelic Society.

To break down the subject into manageable portions I have divided it into seven sections which are: Environment, Light, Paper, Gum, Plastics, Physical issues and Treatments.

Environment

Philatelic Collections should be stored at a temperature under 18 centigrade and with relative humidity of between 55 and 60%. Recent research has shown that gummed and perforated material is under less stress at these slightly more moist conditions than had previously been recommended. Outside these conditions collectors run the risk of the growth of fungi if too hot and too humid. Remember that one cause of foxing is believed to be dead fungal growth so by avoiding bad conditions you can help to avoid those unsightly stains. If too dry paper suffers stress and with an unused stamp with gum a tension will develop between the gum and the paper. This tension may be sufficient to split perforations. Dampness is probably one of the main dangers to paper and especially to gum. Ventilation of a room or storage container is likely to reduce the level of moisture; some mild and gradual heating may be of assistance in carrying moisture away. Never heat a damp room without adequate ventilation as this may promote the growth of fungus.

Clean air is important too as pollutants may cause damage. Smoking is incompatible with philately because of damage from ash, staining and the transfer of smell.

Light

The best lighting conditions to keep your collection in is complete darkness. We do need to study our material and show it to fellow philatelists and for this we need light; but how much? In simple terms material on exhibition should be shown in no more than 50 lux, which is 50 candles worth at a distance of one metre. Light contains ultra violet (UV) and a maximum of 10 micro watts per lumen is advised. It is the duty of all philatelic exhibition organisers to arrange these conditions. This is the same standard as is used by art galleries for exhibitions of prints and drawings, so it is not impossible to achieve.

While most organisers will at least avoid direct sun light nearly all fail to come even close to the conservation standard of 50 lux. Clearly it may be a difficult and expensive thing to achieve but measures should be taken to reduce levels and the resulting damage. That damage has taken place is clear from the examination of collections protected from light and these include the British Library's Philatelic Collections and the Royal Philatelic Collection where the bright and fresh colours are often remarked upon.

One international exhibition held in Europe since 2000 under Federation Internationale de Philatelie (FIP) rules and supervision seemed to have no or little regard for the dangers of light. The exhibition halls had one third glass roofs resulting in high lux and UV levels. These were measured on a cloudy day randomly around the halls. The minimum was 91 lux and 165 micro watts per lumen and the maximum was a horrifying 3,395 lux and 479 micro watts per lumen. Over half of the frames, where the levels were measured, exceeded 1,000 lux!

Fading undoubtedly resulted. If FIP supervision of international exhibitions is to have any meaning for the protection of material on show it must at least set standards that seek to avoid the worst of the bad conditions. I challenge FIP to do so before it is too late!

Photocopying of material has its hazards too in the form of not only of light but heat too, the latter causing a stress in the paper. Some more modern machines may be less harmful and further research work here is needed.

At the Philatelic Collections office at the British Library all of our lights have UV filters as do the windows and we never leave material exposed to light unnecessarily.

Paper

Papers are complicated in form and structure. For this basic guide it is perhaps sufficient to say that the best papers have a pH of between 6.0 and 8.5. pH is the measure of the extent to which material is acidic or alkaline. Paper which is acidic usually goes brown like modern newspapers and paperback books. Philatelic material may suffer from being acidic and the most obvious examples of this are postal stationery post cards. Many of these are so bad that they probably have a life of only a few years, perhaps in some cases ten to twenty years. The problem can be addressed by deacidifying the item but it is recommended that this be undertaken by a professional conservator. Post cards that have been used with typewriting or manuscript addresses or messages and perhaps with additional adhesives will need special care as the process is one where wetting is involved. The deacidification process will arrest the acid attack at the time of treatment but it will not reverse the browning of the paper.

Clearly album pages should be such that they cause no damage to the material mounted on them and so need to be acid free and comply to ISO 9706 standard for permanent paper.

Gum

As I have indicated gum is often in tension with the paper it is applied to and this can be reduced under the appropriate storage conditions that I give in the Environment section above. If the gum becomes too dry (and especially if it is thickly applied) it may crack and go on to crack or damage the paper of a stamp or cover, etc. The removal of gum is probably in the best interests of stamps in the long term. This is controversial and further work needs to be carried out as to how this may be achieved with the best results. Removal by water may not be the answer in many cases and inks may be affected.

Pressure sensitive adhesives, that is self adhesives on stamps, are emerging as a major conservation concern. Clear tapes, like *Sellotape* and other similar products, are pressure sensitive and as most of us know the adhesive turns brown and leaves a stain on just about anything that it has been stuck to. Will this be the case with self adhesive stamps? By the way, never repair any philatelic item with a pressure sensitive tape; it was never designed for this purpose.

Plastics

A great deal has been written about plastics in philately which are used as mounts and protectors. Here I am only going to say that top museums, libraries and archives only use polyester (*Mylar* and *Melinex* are commercial names) without any anti static coatings, with paper or similar materials. They never use PVC which can ooze plasticisers and forms acid as it decomposes.

Physical Damage

That care should be taken in handling material should be taken for granted. One University library that lends books had or has a notice that said something like "Books should be stored with care and should be kept away from rodents, silverfish, insects, children and other vermin".

I have seen small photo corners cause much damage especially to covers. The act of using them may cause physical damage to the corners of a cover over time. Clearly material should be handled with clean hands, but even so the moisture on all skin will transfer to the stamp or cover. This is why in libraries and archives rare materials are often handled with special gloves.

Peelable stamp hinges if applied correctly are safe to use. Many collectors are not good at using hinges and it would be a good idea if philatelic societies gave lessons to new collectors on their use. In any event minimal moisture should be used and the hinge should only be applied to the very top of a stamp. Plastic mounts are a safe alternative if made of polyester.

The writing in pencil on covers of a price by dealers and others should be avoided as every time it is removed by eraser it will damage the paper and if repeated will eventually cause a hole in the paper.

It may be of interest to the reader to give the policy we apply at British Library Philatelic Collections on the mounting and housing of its collections. Such arrangements have to last one hundred years. Stamps or covers are mounted in polyester mounts on conservation quality album pages which are placed in a polyester protector. These, about sixty at a time depending on the material, are stored in conservation quality boxes with a waterproof buckram covering, which are kept upright on the shelf.

Treatments

Philatelic material that needs any kind of treatment should be shown to a paper conservator. Not all treatments are advisable, indeed some will cause damage. This many not at first be apparent but it may emerge in time. The bleaching of items is not recommended and many of the methods or techniques carried out in the past have ruined stamps and covers. Do not be tempted to do it yourself!

Another point to remember is that repairs, cleaning, etc may be acceptable in some areas of paper object collecting, but not in philately as in some instances fraud may result either in a sale or in exhibiting. Only in exceptional and rare instances will any repair work be acceptable. A good example of this is the first stamps of Hawaii, the Missionary stamps of 1851-52, which are printed on very thin and fragile paper. Many of the 199 copies that exist are repaired. If they had not been they probably would not exist today!

As I said at the beginning you are the custodian of your material for your life time or until you sell. Do look after it for future generations otherwise nothing will exist to collect, study, research and enjoy!

I should like to thank Barry Knight, Head of Conservation Research at the British Library, for checking aspects of this paper.

David Beech is a Past President of The Royal Philatelic Society London, a Trustee of the philatelic charity, the Stuart Rossiter Trust, and a Trustee of the Revenue Philately Trust.

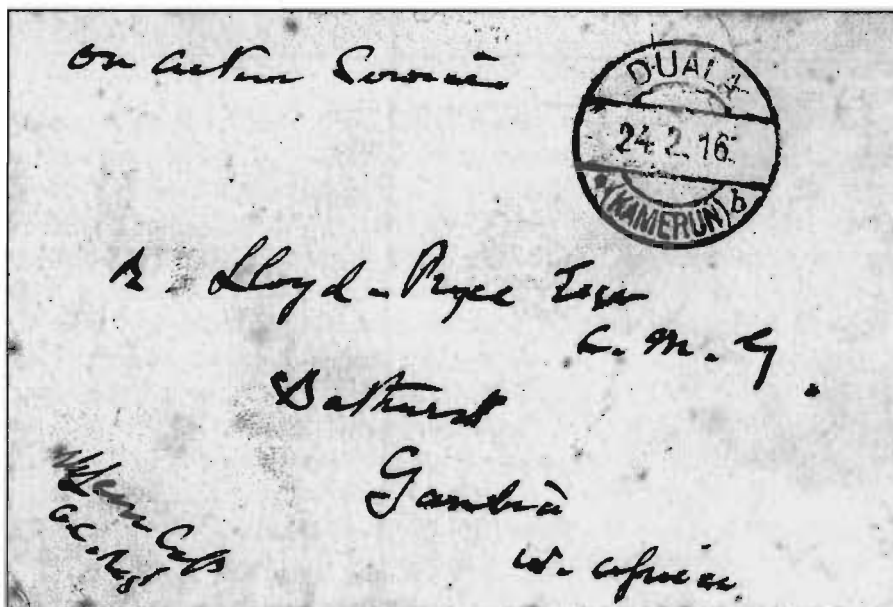
Copyright

Cameroons Campaign, The Gambia Company

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

David Parsons of Spink kindly sent me a photocopy of this cover that appeared in their 14 to 15 July 2010 sale. It is from Duala 24.2.16 via Freetown, Sierra Leone MR 19 16 arriving Bathurst AP 8 16. Marked *On Active Service*, it has been signed by a Captain in the G.C. Regt.

A very small contingent of the Gambia Company was attached to the Gold Coast Regiment.



Damaged by Sea Water - December 1942

Barbara Priddy

In November and December 1942, and January 1943, postal communications between Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom faced serious problems, both by sea and by air. Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa, had begun 8 November (Ref. 1), and British warships had been diverted from convoy escort duty to take part in this; escorted convoys of northbound merchant ships had ceased with convoy SL 125, which left Freetown 16 October 1942 and arrived in Liverpool 9 November, and would resume only with convoy SL 126, which left Freetown 12 March 1943 and arrived in Liverpool 1 April. However, a few single unescorted merchant ships did make the voyage safely, in times of between nine and thirteen days (Ref. 2). BOAC's flying-boat service from Lagos to Poole via Freetown and Bathurst was being maintained with three Catalinas and Guba, which were frequently delayed by bad weather, mechanical breakdown or congestion in the harbours; during November 1942 they made six flights, during December 1942 eight flights, and during January 1943 five flights (Ref. 3), at extremely irregular intervals.



Against this background please see the cover shown in Figure 1, which I recently acquired in a Sinais auction. It was posted at Pointe Noire 14 November 1942, addressed to London, endorsed Par Avion, and paying more than 10 francs. There has been much discussion recently about whether Free French mail was carried by BOAC all the way to UK, as (from May 1942) Nigerian air mail was, or whether it was carried by Sabena to an intermediate port (Lagos, Takoradi or Freetown) and forwarded by ship. In this case there can be no doubt that it was off-loaded at Freetown as it bears a Freetown backstamp of 30 November 1942 (Fig. 2). At some point in its journey onwards it lost at least two adhesives and some censor tape and acquired the cachet DAMAGED BY / SEA WATER. On the face of it, it appears to have been involved in some maritime disaster. It also appears to be one of a group of covers from around this time, mentioned in Hopkins (Ref. 4) and Hoggarth & Gwynn (Ref. 5) and discussed by Stewart Duncan in an article in *Cameo* and subsequent correspondence (Ref. 6). A total of 14 separate covers have been identified so far. These have cancels from FPO 109 (Bathurst), FPO 41 (Freetown) and Freetown. The earliest date is 8 November 1942 and the latest (in manuscript) 16 December 1942; one is endorsed as received 11 January 1943. Unsurprisingly, the spread of dates indicates the clearance of a long back-log of mail sometime in mid-December 1942.

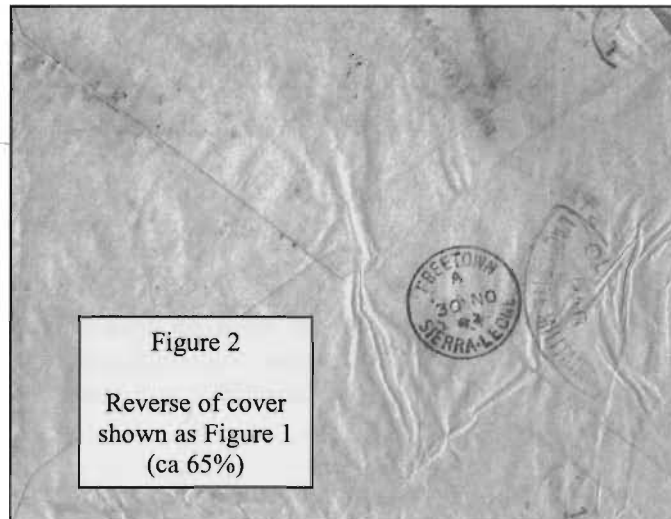


Figure 2
Reverse of cover
shown as Figure 1
(ca 65%)

Both Hopkins and Hoggarth & Gwynn class these covers as coming from an unidentified vessel. With all the information now available, both in archives and on the internet, there does not seem to be any reason why this shipwreck, if shipwreck it was, should remain unidentified. Starting from the premises that the covers were uplifted 16 December or later, and arrived in the UK 11 January or earlier, googling variations on shipping losses + December 1942 led me to, among others, two very useful internet sites: www.convoyweb.org.uk and www.battleships-cruisers.co.uk. The former gave me the names of ships leaving Freetown in December 1942 and January 1943, and the latter gave me lists of merchant navy ships lost and damaged in the same period. None of the former appeared in the latter. But how far does one trust internet sites? The British Postal Museum and Archive holds a set of Post Office Circulars including 1942 and 1943 (Ref. 7). These include notices of mail lost due to enemy action and from other causes, sometimes months after the event. The only such notice of mail lost from West Africa during this period appears in the P.O. Circular of 3 March 1943:

Surface Mails Lost by Enemy Action

Letters and printed papers from:-	Approximate dates of posting
Gold Coast Colony	16 - 29 December
Nigeria	21 - 25 December at Lagos and correspondingly earlier elsewhere
Letters, printed papers and parcels from:-	
Gambia	3 - 16 October
Parcels from:-	
Gold Coast Colony	16 - 29 December

Leaving aside the Gambia mail, which clearly belongs to a much earlier incident, there is no mention of Sierra Leone mail from this loss. The Gold Coast and Nigeria mail cannot belong to the incident in question. It is posted too late for salvaged mail to reach the UK by 11 January, and probably belongs to the loss of the Elder Dempster MV *William Wilberforce*, torpedoed by the U-boat U-571 on 9 January 1943 west of the Canaries, while en route from Lagos and Takoradi to Hampton Roads and Liverpool (Ref. 8); no salvaged mail is known from this disaster. (In general, the only time it was possible to recover mail from ships irreparably damaged or sunk by enemy action was when the ship was crippled close to land and managed to reach shore.) Moreover, the Post Office Daily Lists, also held in the BPMA, include with July 1942 (the last list available) routing instructions for mail and details of ship sailings, which I would interpret as showing that ships to UK sailed either from Freetown or from Lagos and Takoradi, but not both on the same voyage (Ref. 9).

If, then, these covers do not come from a shipwreck, can they come from an air crash? None of them have paid the air mail fee, nor been endorsed for carriage by air beyond Freetown, but could they have been carried exceptionally by air to clear the back-log? Not a civil one; there were no BOAC crashes or other

incidents involving the flying-boats coming from West Africa in this period (Ref. 3). It is moreover extremely unlikely that these flying-boats, already laden with Forces mail from the east and civilian air mail from West Africa, would or could have accepted any quantity of surface mail. The other air mail possibility is an RAF crash; this is at first sight an attractive idea as the majority of the covers are postmarked FPO 109 and sent by S/Lr R.C. Politeyan. However, the RAF squadrons in Gambia and Sierra Leone at this time (95, 200, 204 and 270) were employed mainly on anti-submarine patrols, search and rescue missions and escort duties (Ref. 10), and, once on base, did not return to UK.

Could these covers, then, be fakes? Most of them, after all, show no signs of the water damage advertised by the cachets. However, the strikes are identical to those seen on wreck and crash covers both before and after this period, the handstamps were in the keeping of the GPO, and some covers, including the cover illustrated in Figure 1, do show signs of water damage.

Two explanations remain: either that mail-bags were accidentally dipped in the sea or splashed with sea-water during loading or off-loading, or that a fire, either accidental or caused by enemy action, occurred on board the ship carrying the mail and the mail-bags were consequently dowsed with water. None of the known covers show signs of fire damage, but the mail-bags could have been adjacent to the area of burning. If so, which ship could this have happened on? Only five ships left Freetown bound for UK between 30 November 1942 and 5 January 1943, and only one of these left after 15 December 1942. None of these ships called at Lisbon, and all followed a route well out into the Atlantic in order to keep clear of U-boat patrols, with one exception:

Depart Freetown	Ship	Place & Date of Arrival and Subsequent Movements
2 December	<i>Atlantis</i>	Belfast Lough 11 December
4 December	<i>Franconia</i>	Liverpool 16 December
4 December	<i>Ruys</i>	Clyde 15 December
7 December	<i>Nieuw Holland</i>	Liverpool 18 December, to Falmouth 20-22 December, to Clyde 27-29 January
10 December	<i>California</i>	Clyde 21 December
16 December	<i>Orduna</i>	Gibraltar 23 December with Convoy MKF5 (Algiers-Clyde) 26-31 December

There were no further sailings from Freetown to UK until 5 January 1943.

If the MS date of posting of 16 December and the MS date of receipt of 11 January are to be believed, the *Orduna* is the only possible candidate. It is however not beyond the bounds of possibility that these are misleading, or that mail with earlier dates of posting was carried on one of the earlier sailings (indeed it is difficult to see why it would not have been, except that there seems, from dates of posting and receipt on other surface covers, to have been a permanent backlog of a month or more), or that two similar incidents occurred on different ships which resulted in the cachet being applied. I would therefore conclude that the covers from Gambia and Sierra Leone, and my cover from Pointe Noire, bearing the damaged by sea water cachets, were involved in a handling incident, or a fire on board, involving one or more of these ships, probably the *Orduna*, which resulted in damage to the mail.

My thanks to Robin Gwynn for his corrections and suggestions, particularly that of a shipboard fire.

References

- 1 The Times Atlas of the Second World War
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- 3 BOAC flight charts (courtesy of John Wilson)
- 4 Hopkins A.E., *A History of Wreck Covers*, Robson Lowe 1948
- 5 Hoggarth Norman & Gwynn Robin, *Maritime Disaster Mail*, Stuart Rossiter Trust 2003
- 6 Duncan Stewart and others, *Cameo Volume 7* pp153-4 and pp190-193, WASC, January and July 2002
- 7 POST 68
- 8 www.uboat.net
- 9 POST 43/96
- 10 Rawlings John D.R., *Coastal Support and Special Squadrons of the RAF and their Aircraft*, Jane's 1982

Telegraph Offices in Nigeria and Cameroons

Bob Maddocks

This was originally written by Bob as a 'Letter to the Editor'. However due to its length and complexity I reproduce it here whilst retaining the letter format - Barry

Dear Barry,

Just a quick response to Michael Wright's article on Southern Nigeria Telegraph Service Handstamps (Ref. 1). In this initial composite study he has drawn on several earlier studies of relevance but the findings are incomplete, at variance with each other and contain discrepancies. Moreover there is a dearth of substantiative material from official sources. This is particularly the case in drawing speculative conclusions concerning the code letters included in the make-up of a particular telegraph handstamp and where, in turn, it was utilised.

Moreover, current research seems to have concentrated on those military handstamps noted used in British Occupied Cameroon in WWI (indicated by inclusion of code letter 'S' for Signals) whereas a better understanding would be gained by considering the operation overall of the entire Nigerian telegraphs service. To do this one has to move a decade ahead of the mentioned time frame for an authoritative source.

Accordingly, I enclose a complete list telegraph offices in Nigeria and the Cameroons showing their respective identifying code letters (Figure 1). This is to be found in the *Military Report on Nigeria* published in 1929 for H.M. Government by Harrison & Sons Ltd., London, on behalf of H.M.S.O. Notwithstanding the time difference, it is the only benchmark I know of from which a reassessment of the previous studies can be made, with discrepancies noted duly corrected for the updating of the work in hand.

Yours sincerely,
Bob Maddocks

Figure 1
List of Nigerian Telegraph Offices
and their Code Letters, 1929

299		Chap. 16—Table 1	
Lome, Kotonou, Niamey, Zinder, Nguigmi, Agadez, Fort Lamy and Duala are the nearest to Nigeria.			
TABLE 1.—Telegraph Offices			
The following list gives the telegraph offices (exclusive of purely railway telegraphs) and their code letters:—			
Aba	BA	Jos	JS
Abakaliki	AI	Kaduna	KD
Abeokuta	AT	Kaduna Junction	—
Abuja	—	Kano	KN
Afikpo	AO	Katsena	KT
Agbor	AG	Keffi	KI
Agenebode	GB	Koko Town	KK
Aboada	AH	Kontagora	KG
Akode	AKO	Kumba	KB
Akure	AK	Kwale	KE
Apapa	—	Lagos	LG
Asaba	AB	Lagos (Clearing House)	CH
Awka	WK	Lagos (Marina)	LM
Bamenda	BN	Lau	LU
Bansara	BS	Lokoja	LA
Barkin Ladi	—	Maiduguri	MG
Baro	BR	Makurdi	—
Bauchi	BH	Mamfe	—
Bende	BE	Meko	MK
Benin City	BC	Minna	MA
Bida	BD	Nafada	NI
Birnin Kebbi	BN	Numan	—
Bonny	BY	Obubra	OB
Buca	BU	Offa	OF
Burutu	BT	Ogoja	JA
Calabar	CR	Oguta	OG
Damaturu	—	Ogwashi-Oku	—
Degema	DA	Okigwi	—
Duchin Wai	—	Ondo	—
Ebute Metta	—	Onitsha	ON
Ede	—	Opobo	OP
Eket	KT	Oron	OR
Enugu	EN	Oshogbo	GO
Epe	PE	Owerri	OI
Forcados	FR	Owo	OW
Funtua	—	Oyo	OO
Ibadan	IB	Port Harcourt	PH
Ibadan Residency	IR	Potiskum	—
Ibi	BI	Sapele	AP
Ife	—	Sokoto	ST
Ifon	FN	Tinto	TO
Igbein Hill	—	Ubiaja	UB
Ijebu Ode	IE	Ugwashi-Uku	—
Ikom	KM	Umuahia	—
Ikot Ekpene	IK	Uyo	UY
Ilesha	HA	Victoria	VA
Imo River	—	Warri	WR
Ilorin	RN	Yelwa	TA
Iseyin	IN	Yola	YI
Itu	TU	Zaria	ZA
Jebba	JB	Zungeru	ZG
Jemaa	JA		

Reference

- 1 Wright Michael St J., "Lagos & Southern Nigeria Telegraph Handstamps of the ARMY TELEGRAPHS/ ARMY SIGNALS Design", *Cameo* Volume 11 pp329-331, WASC, June 2010

Accra RC, RAC and RDC Postmarks

Philip Quirk

Several Accra postmarks include the letters RC, RAC or RDC. This note aims to list the different types and comment on some of their uses.

Gold Coast

Inscription	Type	Source	Years used
ACCRA R C 5	Skeleton (Mackin type 12B)	Mackin, Proud (Refs. 1, 2)	1954

Ghana

Inscription	Description, Type	Impression Book, Year Proofed	Years used
R.C.1. ACCRA	Double circle + thin arcs (Mackin type 20)	Yes, 1958	1958 - 1959
R.C.2. ACCRA	Double circle + thin arcs	Yes, 1958	Not recorded
R.D.C.3. ACCRA	Single circle, asterisk (Mackin type 21*)	Yes, 1958	1974
R.D.C.4. ACCRA	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1958	Not recorded
R.D.C.5. ACCRA	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1958	Not recorded
R.A.C.11. ACCRA	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1958	1958 - 1974
ACCRA.R.DC.5.C.11.	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1958	Not recorded
ACCRA RC 3	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1960	Not recorded
ACCRA RC 4	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1960	Not recorded
ACCRA R.C.5	Single circle, asterisk	No	1958 - 1980
ACCRA RC 7	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1960	Not recorded
ACCRA RC 8	Single circle, asterisk	Yes, 1960	Not recorded
ACCRA RC 9	Oval (Anderson type 23)	Yes, 1961	Not recorded
ACCRA RC 10	Oval	Yes, 1961	Not recorded
ACCRA RC 12	Oval	Yes, 1961	1962 - 1969
ACCRA RC 13	Oval	Yes, 1961	1964 - 1967
ACCRA RC 13	Double circle + thin arcs	No	1988
ACCRA R A C	Double circle + bridge (Anderson type 24)	No	1996—2003
ACCRA R A C 2	Double circle + bridge	No	1997—2002
ACCRA RDC 2	Double circle + bridge	No	1999

Impression book - see Ref. 3; other cancels and some dates of use from Ref. 4.

What might the letters stand for? Having discussed this problem with Ian Anderson, and with the knowledge that these postmarks are mostly found on registered mail, we venture to suggest that RC is Registration Counter, RAC is Registered Acceptance Counter and RDC is Registered Delivery Counter. Some support for this hypothesis comes from the existence of Kumasi and Tamale cancels inscribed 'Registered Acceptance' and 'Registered Delivery'.



Figure 1
Accra to UK registered air mail cover, 22 May 1962, postmarked R.A.C.11. Accra

Uses

The R.A.C.11. ACCRA, type 21* cancel is frequently found on loose stamps, and was certainly one of the devices employed to cancel the stamps on registered covers (Figure 1), along with a Registered Accra type 21* and other type 21* marks. Later the RAC type 24 was used in this role. I have noted one example each of the R.D.C.3. type 21* and the RC 13 double circle + thin arcs cancelling loose stamps, but none on cover.



Figure 2
Front and back of Bisa to Accra registered cover, 29 September 1958, Accra R.C.5 receiving mark

The other RC postmarks also appear to be uncommon, and to date I have seen only four covers bearing them. All four were registered covers addressed to Accra, and in each case the RC cancel was used as a receiving backstamp. I illustrate the R.C.5 type 21* on a 1958 internal Ghana cover (Figure 2) and the RC 12 oval on a 1969 cover from Senegal, routed through Sierra Leone (Figure 3). Such use may explain why these marks are not found on stamps. I would welcome other reports of these cancels, particularly those not yet recorded in use.



Figure 3 (above, and left)
Front and back of Dakar Ponty, Senegal, to
Accra registered cover, 08 October 1969,
Accra RC12 receiving mark

Acknowledgement

I thank Ian Anderson for many stimulating discussions.

References

- 1 Mackin M.T., *The Gold Coast, The Post Offices / Agencies and their Cancellations 1875 - 1957* (1st edition), p12, BWASC, 1985
- 2 Proud E.B., *The Postal History of the Gold Coast*, p104, Postal History Publications Co., Heathfield 1995
- 3 Beale P.O., Martin J.J. and Walton F.L., *West African Post Office Impression Books* (2nd edition), WASC, Dronfield 2001
- 4 Anderson I., personal communications

Calabar Parcel Cancel - a New Type?

John M. Cooper



I recently purchased the illustrated Nigeria 1935 1/- Silver Jubilee (page 410). Of interest is the violet parcel cancel of Calabar, which appears to have serriffed lettering. This is not listed in Ted Proud's book, and I am wondering if it's the first example known?

Tony Plumbe replies: Not unknown, but unrecorded in published references. Congratulations John for spotting it.

'Contentieux Postal Yaounde / R.U.C.' **An Uncommon Cameroun Postal Service Date Stamp**

Bob Maddocks

Here illustrated (Figure 1) is an official free frank cover bilingually headed in French and English, 'Posts and Telecommunications of Cameroon' and addressed to the Director of Posts, Paris. The sender was the Department of Posts in the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (Yaounde) as evidenced in the top right-hand corner by an overlarge 47mm double ring cachet or seal struck in violet. Its wording is also in both of the country's official languages - 'Republic of Cameroon / Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications' within the outer ring and 'Department of Posts' above the national emblematic head of a Cameroon girl in the inner one.

Alongside, also struck in violet, is the impression of a standard size single circle postal service date stamp reading 'Contentieux Postal Yaounde/R.U.C./16.8.1984', which translates as 'Postal Litigations Yaounde'.

Of incidental interest is that the aforementioned official cachet must have been expeditiously introduced that August since it reflects the then formal change of the country's name from United Republic of Cameroon (usually abbreviated in French as R.U.C. on postal date stamps) to the Republic of Cameroon. Note, however, the error in the French text: Cameroon instead of Cameroun! A contentious issue for Francophiles?

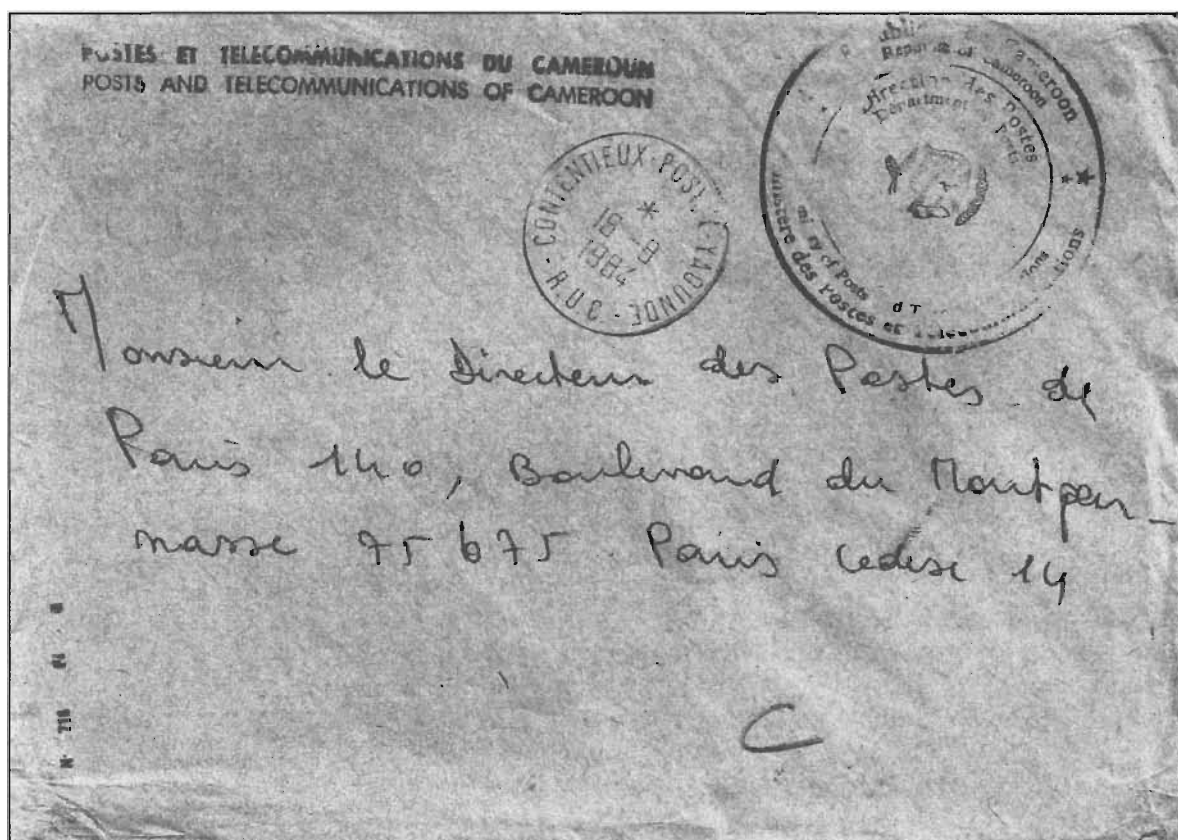


Figure 1 The 1984 cover to Paris

Sierra Leone 1963 Postal Commemorations

Robin Peters and Roger B. West

The Postal Commemorations set, issued 4 November 1963, was made up of two types of overprint or surcharge on certain previous issues. The set was divided into two types, Postage (SG 273-278, Scott 251-256) and Air (SG 279-284, Scott C8-C13). It is renowned for many variations of the 'overprint', and this is the result of our research so far. It is worth mentioning that one of Gibbons' listings is erroneous, i.e. SG 275 is 9d on 1½d, not 9d on ½d - as in the catalogue.

Quantities produced - Postage

3d SG 273 Scott 251 90,000 (1500 sheets)
4d on 1½d SG 274 Scott 252 60,000 (1000 sheets)
9d on 1½d SG 275 Scott 253 60,000 (1000 sheets)
1s on 1s 3d SG 276 Scott 254 36,000 (600 sheets)
1s 6d on ½d SG 277 Scott 255 36,000 (600 sheets)
2s on 3d SG 278 Scott 256 30,000 (500 sheets)

Quantities produced - Air Mail

7d on 3d SG 279 Scott C8 60,000 (1000 sheets)
1s 3d SG 280 Scott C9 60,000 (1000 sheets)
2s 6d on 4d SG 281 Scott C10 24,000 (400 sheets)
3s on 3d SG 282 Scott C11 24,000 (400 sheets)
6s on 6d SG 283 Scott C12 24,000 (400 sheets)
£1 SG 284 Scott C13 11,700 (195 sheets)

Overprinted or Surcharged by Government Printers in Freetown. The events commemorated are: 1853 First Post Office; 1859 First Postage Stamps; and 1963 Newest G.P.O. in West Africa

Varieties - Postage (c = constant, nc = non-constant)



Examples of overprint varieties

Figure 1 (left) 1895 for 1859
Figure 2 (centre) Dropped 'i' in Africa
Figure 3 (right) Obliques for Dashes

SG 273 - 3d Black and Bright Blue

R2/1 c Small blue spot in front of 3 of value

R2/3 c 1853/1859/1963

R2/3 nc 1853/1859/1963 but also showing missing 'er' (S vice)

R3/3 c Date error - 1895 for 1859

R3/6 nc Wrong font used on the 'e' and a heavy 's' in Oldest

R5/2 nc 'e' for 'o' in Postal (Pestal)

R5/3 nc 1353 instead of 1853

R5/3 nc Oldest for Oldest ('c' instead of 'e'), also 's' is from a broad font, and the 't' is finer

SG 274 - 4d on 1½d Black and Ultramarine

R1/2 c Date error - 1895 for 1859
R2/1 c Small period after the 4d value
R2/2 nc Short tail to '9' of 1859
R2/2 nc Broken '5' in 1853 and 1859
R3/2 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)
R5/2 c Dropped 'c' in Service
R7/4 c Broken '3' in 1853
R10/1 c No stop after 'O' but stop after Africa
R11/4 nc 1853 1859*1963
R11/4 c 1853•1859*1963 (1st asterisk is lower)
R11/4 nc Dropped 'a' in Africa
R12/4 nc 'c' in Service virtually missing (Servi e)
R?/4 nc Raised 'ca' in Africa
R?/4 nc Broken '3' in 1853 and broken 'd' in 4d (possibly R7/4)

SG 275 - 9d on 1½d Black and Ultramarine

R1/4 c Dropped 'i' and raised 'ca' in Africa
R3/2 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)
R3/2 nc Raised 'ca' in Africa
R5/1 nc Dropped 'a' in Africa
R5/2 c Dropped 'c' in Service
R7/4 nc Broken '3' in 1853
R7/5 nc No stop after O (G.P.O) and no stop after Africa
R8/4 nc Missing first 'e' in Newest (N west) & 't' in Oldest also raised 'ca' in Africa
R8/4 nc Short tail to '9' in 1859
R8/4 nc Broken '8', short tail to '5' and raised '3' in 1853
R10/1 c No stop after O (G.P.O) but stop after Africa
R11/4 c 1853•1859*1963 (1st asterisks at medium height, 2nd slightly higher)
R12/4 nc Top of 'A' of Africa filled in (The Star variety)
R?/? nc Dropped 'i' in Service
R?/? nc Star variety between 't' in West and first 'A' of Africa

SG 276 - 1s on 1s 3d Turquoise-blue and violet

R3/4 c 1853*1859*1963
R5/2 nc Raised second 'e' and dropped 'c' in Service
R7/4 nc Missing serif at top of 1s
R7/5 nc Missing serif at top of 1s
R10/2 c 1853*1859*1963

SG 277 - 1s 6d on ½d Black and Deep Lilac

R2/2 c Missing serif at top of 1s6d
R2/3 c Missing serif at top of 1s6d
R4/5 c 1853*1859 1963 (says Stanley Gibbons)
R4/5 ? 1853 1859*1963 (says G.V. Base)
R4/5 nc Missing 'l' in Postal
R4/5 nc Missing lower part of 'l' in Postal
R11/1 c 1853•1859*1963 (low left star, medium right star)
R11/1 nc Small 'v' in Service
R11/2 nc Missing 'i' in Service
R11/2 nc Missing 'd' in Oldest
R11/2 nc Missing bottom of '3' in 1963 and part missing 'd' in Oldest (looks like ollest)
R11/2 nc Missing 'i' & small 'v' in service, lower part of '3' missing in 1963 and faded 's' in Postal
R12/2 nc Dropped 'vi' in Service
R?/? nc Missing 'A' in POSTAL
R2/?/? nc Top of '1' in 1/6 missing

SG 278 - 2s on 3d Black and Bright Blue

R2/3 c Thick 's' in 2s

R2/3 c 1853/1859/1963

R4/7 c Broken '2' in 2s and dropped '3' in 1963

R4/7 nc Broken '2' in 2s, '3' in 1963 normal level

R4/10 c Date error - 1895 for 1859

R4/10 nc Date error - 1895 for 1859 plus dropped 's' in 2s

Varieties - Air Mail (c = constant, nc = non-constant)



Examples of overprint varieties

Figure 4 (left) Dates Partly Missing
Figure 5 (centre) Dots for dashes
Figure 6(right) Asterisks for Dashes

SG 279 - 7d on 3d Black and Rose Red

R1/2 c No stop after 'O' of G.P.O

R1/12 c Dropped surcharge

R2/3 c 1853.1859.1963

R2/4 nc 1853.1859.1963

R2/10 nc 1853.1859.1963

R3/6 c Date error - 1895 for 1859 (constant on plate 1 1 only, date correct on plate 1A 1A)

R4/2 nc 1853.1859-1963

R4/4 c Date error - 1895 for 1859

R5/3 c Raised Printer's quad in front of ' in West Africa'

R4/10 c 1853.1859.1963

Note: some stamps have a point (.) between the dates, some have a short dash while others have a long dash

SG 280 - 1s 3d Black and Blue

R1/3 c Broken '18' at top of date in 1859

R3/2 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)

R7/3 nc Date error - 1895 for 1859 (only on half of the 1000 sheets)

R7/3 nc Bottom of dates missing

R8/2 Second 'A' or Airmail missing

R8/3 c No stop after 'O' of G.P.O

R8/3 c Bottom of 'p' in stamp is missing

R8/3 nc Bottom left serif of 'P' in G.P.O. is missing

R10/4 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)

R?/? Overprint positioned to left ('A' of Airmail in stamp margin)

SG 281 - 2s 6d on 4d Turquoise-Blue and Scarlet

R2/5 nc Broken '3' in 1853 and missing 'r' in Africa

R2/5 nc Broken 'es' of West and 'ri' of Africa is missing

R2/6 nc Broken 'est' of West

R3/2 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)

R7/3 c Date error - 1895 for 1859

R7/4 nc Lower part of '18' in 1853 is broken

R8/3 c No stop after 'O' of G.P.O

R9/1 c Wrong font second 'i' in Airmail

R9/5 nc Broken '2' in 2/6

R9/5 nc Dropped "airmail" and dropped '2/6' (continued p415)

SG 281 - 2s 6d on 4d Turquoise-Blue and Scarlet (continued from p414)

R10/1 nc Broken '6' in 2/6
R10/4 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)
R11/4 nc missing 'AIL' in AIRMAIL (occurs in only a few sheets)
R?/? nc Dropped 'IL' in AIRMAIL
R?/? nc Broken tail to '9' in 1963

SG 282 - 3s on 3d Black and Rose-Red

R1/2 c No stop after 'O' of G.P.O.
R2/3 c 1853.1859.1963
R2/4 nc Lower part of 'GP' missing in G.P.O.
R3/3 nc Date error - 1895 for 1859 (only 20 examples exist)
R4/10 c 1853.1859.1963
R5/3 c Raised spacer in front of 'in West Africa'
R5/12 nc Broken 'm' in Stamp
R?/? nc The '5' in 1859 is virtually missing

SG 283 - 6s on 6d Black and Yellow-Orange

R1/1 c Date error - 1895 for 1859 (only 200 examples exist)
R1/3 nc Broken '18' in 1859 and broken '8' in 1853
R2/3 nc Broken '1' in 1853 and broken 'c' in Africa
R3/2 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)
R8/3 nc No stop after 'O' of G.P.O.
R8/3 nc Faded 'm' in Airmail
R10/4 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)
R?/? nc Dropped 'g' in Postage
Col 1 nc Overprint misplaced and twisted to left

SG 284 - £1 Black and Orange

R4/5 c 1853*1859*1963 (asterisks at medium height)
R11/1 c 1853*1859*1963 (first asterisk is low, second is medium height)
R11/2 nc Faint dash between 1853 and 1859
R11/4 nc Date error - 1895 for 1859 (only 60 examples exist)
R11/4 nc Faint dash between 1853 and 1859
R11/5 nc Faint dash between 1853 and 1859
R?/? nc Airmail overprint displaced to the right

Acknowledgements

Gerry Mobbs
Peter Rolfe

General References

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Stanley Gibbons *Elizabethan Catalogue* 1978 Edition
Scott Catalogue 2002 Edition

The Burning of Northern Nigeria's £25 Stamps, 1909

Dr Simon Heap

In April 1904, the Crown Agents sent out nine sheets each of 120 £25 stamps to Northern Nigeria's postal authorities - a grand total of 1080 stamps. Ince and Sacher (Ref. 1) state, 'Very few mint stamps have survived, but a plate block of four is held in The Royal Collection'. Indeed, the £25 stamp is one of the scarcest and most prized stamps around, selling at auctions for tens of thousands of pounds, and catalogued mint at £50,000 by Stanley Gibbons. Their scarcity and subsequent high value can be largely accounted for

by what happened at two locations in Northern Nigeria in February 1909; there is a file in the Nigerian National Archives in Kaduna recording the deliberate destruction of over one thousand of these stamps.

As then capital of the Colony, Zungeru held the bulk of the stamps - in fact precisely 8 sheets, or 960 stamps. One sheet, we can surmise with some certainty, went to Lokoja. Those in Zungeru were never used, while those in Lokoja were. Their use could have been at Lokoja itself or maybe elsewhere in the Colony.

When checking the use of the £25 stamps since 1904, an official at the Northern Nigeria Secretariat minuted on 22 January 1909 that 'at an average issue of two stamps a year, there are sufficient to last 534 years (therefore 1068 stamps). I would suggest that 100 stamps be kept and the remainder destroyed.' (Ref. 2) In fact, concerned about the possible theft of £25 stamps, the colonial government deemed that figure still too many to be safely kept, and plumped for half that figure.



In February 1909, Governor Hesketh Bell appointed the Marine Superintendent, Lokoja, to be President of a Board to be held at Lokoja,

For the purpose of destroying a certain amount of stamps of £25 denomination. It would appear that at present there are in charge of the Lokoja Treasury stamps of this denomination to the face value of £2,700 (that is 108 stamps), His Excellency has directed that only 25 such stamps be retained at that Treasury. (Ref. 3)

The Board also consisted of two other members: the Customs Officer and Cantonment Magistrate. On 22 February 1909, at Lokoja, on behalf of the Marine Superintendent, Mr S. Ray reported that 108 stamps had been counted and 83 £25 stamps destroyed.

The next day, at 7am on 23 February 1909, a Board assembled at Zungeru, for the purposes of counting the number of £25 stamps in the Zungeru Treasury, and destroying all but 25 of them. Appointed by the Governor, the Board's President was Captain A.E. Johnson, while Captain G.O. Nugent, Assistant Secretary, and Mr F.H.H. Graves, Accountant in the Public Works Department, were members. At the dawn burning, two other people were in attendance: Mr C. Gwyn and Mr S. Levin. The Board counted 960 stamps, destroyed 935 by fire and returned 25 stamps to the Zungeru Treasury. In their report, the Board attached a certificate of destruction. (Ref. 4)

Some calculations can be made. Only twelve stamps were used between issuance in April 1904 and the burnings of February 1909, of which two were used at Lokoja between March 1907 and October 1908. (Ref. 5) With 1068 counted back in October 1908, it can be calculated that five stamps were used in the period since then up to the time when 83 stamps at Lokoja and 935 stamps at Zungeru - a grand total of 1013 - were burnt in February 1909. Consequently, fifty mint stamps remained, available to buy and keep or buy and use from February 1909 until Northern Nigeria's incorporation into Nigeria on 1 January 1914. After that date, presumably there was a final disposal of remaining stock.

References

- 1 Ince J.F. & sacher J., *The Postal Services of the British Nigeria region Prior to 1914*, RPSL, London 1992
- 2 Nigerian Archive, Kaduna [NAK], Secretariat, Northern Provinces [SNP] 7/9/6601/1908, Minute by C.S., Secretariat, Northern Provinces, Zungeru, 23 October 1908
- 3 NAK, SNP 7/9/6601/1908, M.H.D. Beresford, Secretary, Northern Provinces, Zungeru, to The Marine Superintendent, Lokoja, 13 February 1909
- 4 NAK, SNP 7/9/6601/1908, Beresford to Captain A.E. Johnson, Zungeru, 18 February 1909; *Proceedings of a Board assembled at Zungeru*, 23 February 1909
- 5 NAK, SNP 7/9/6601/1908, Minute by C.S., Secretariat, Northern Provinces, Zungeru, 23 October 1908



1945 OHMS Cover from Tristan da Cunha

Ross Debenham

In accordance with Rob May's request in the June *Cameo* for articles of a wider variety of topics, I attach illustrations of a Tristan da Cunha OHMS wartime cover (Figure 1), ca. October 1945, with enclosure (Figure 2). I picked it up recently at a Sydney auction at what I consider a bargain price.

As can be seen, the letter was signed by the Island's RNVR Chaplain. The cover was censored using Naval Censor Mark Type N109, and signed *HC 20/10/45* then resealed with OHMS label.

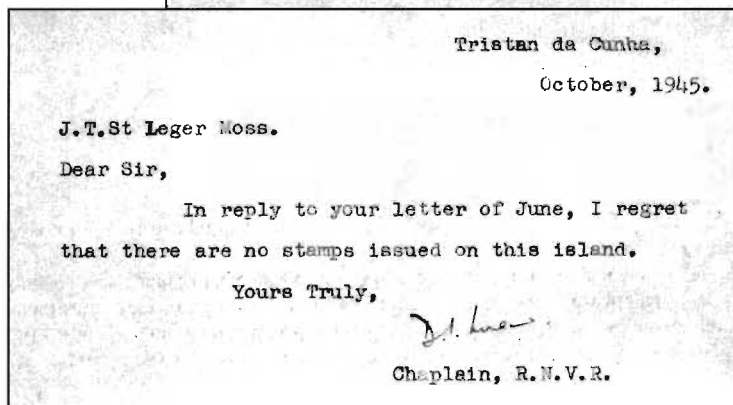
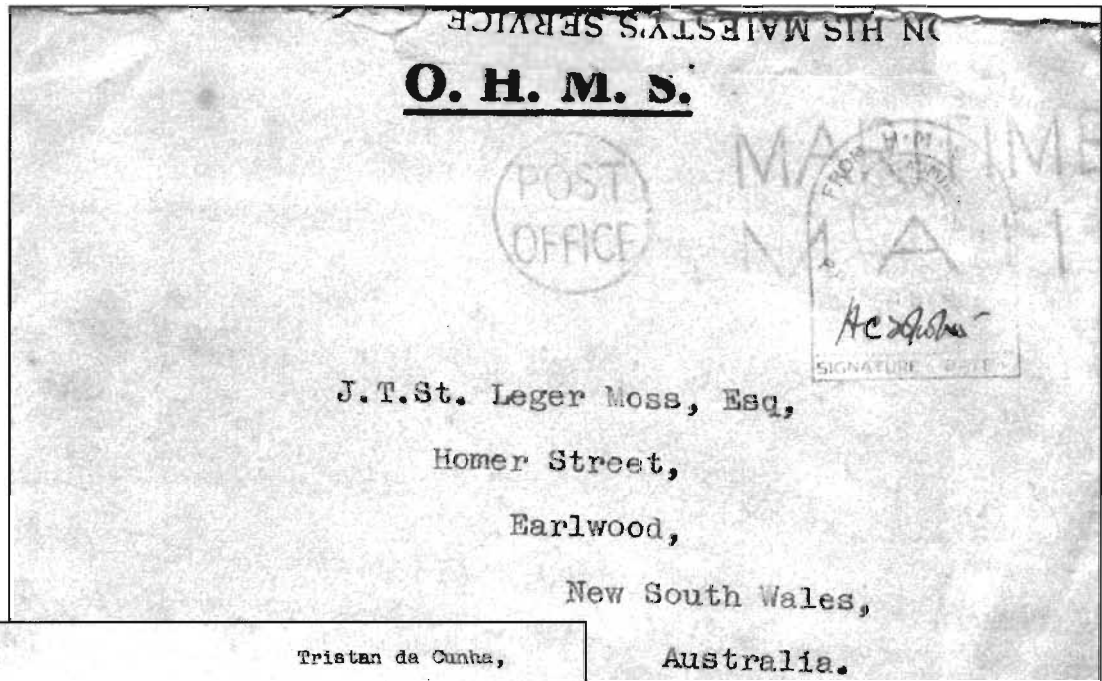


Figure 1 (above)
The 1945 cover from Tristan

Figure 2 (left)
Enclosed note, signed by RNVR Chaplain

I believe the HC initials to be those of Dr H.S.A. Corfield who was the Surgeon Lt. Commander of the Garrison from 1944 to 1945 (Ref. 1). The OHMS label was printed at Cape Town. Unfortunately there are no backstamps so I am uncertain where the Maritime Mail mark was applied - it may have been Cape Town or the UK.

An interesting addition to my African Censorship collection, and although some may consider it philatelic - considering the letter's subject matter - how many covers are found from this period in the Island's history?

Reference

- 1 Crabb George, *The History and Postal History of Tristan da Cunha*, pp136-7, Author, Epsom 1980

Another St Helena Letter Card

Bob Deakin FRPSL

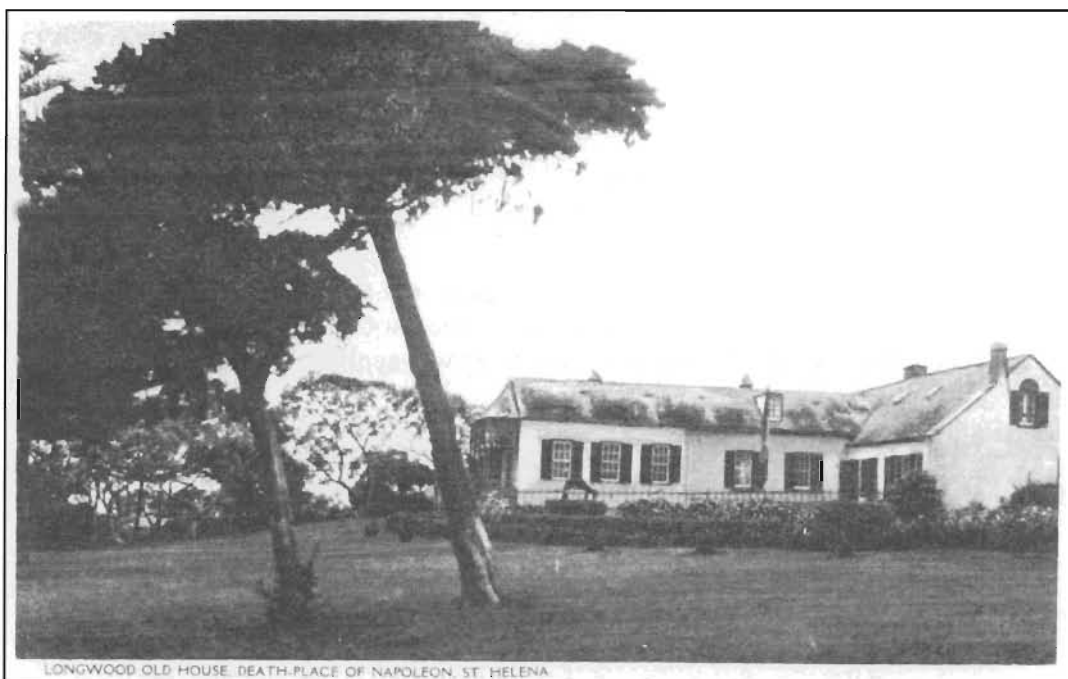
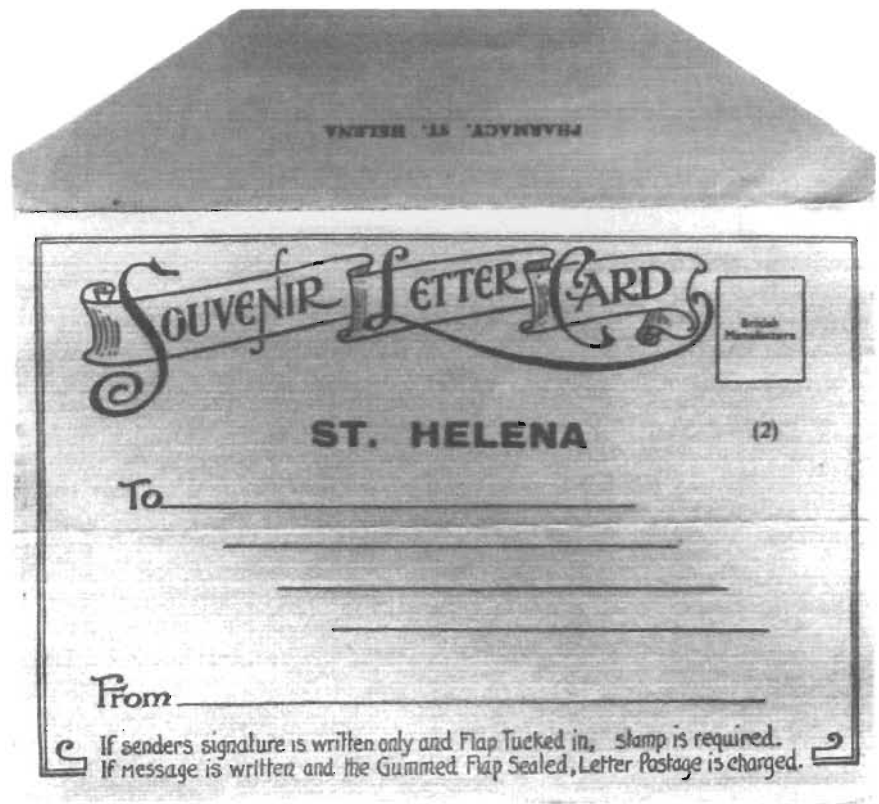
I was most interested in the article *Private Letter Cards of St Helena* by Klaus Hahn in the January 2010 *Cameo*, pp275-281.

In my collection there is a similar card (Figure 1) to Klaus type LC1, except that it has the number (2) instead of (1) as Klaus illustrated as Figure 5. The colouring of the paper appears darker than LC1, being more an orange-brown.

Five of the views are the same as shown by Klaus for LC2, but that of NAPOLEONS TOMB. ST HELENA has been replaced by LONGWOOD OLD HOUSE. DEATH-PLACE of NAPOLEON. ST HELENA, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1 (right)
Bob's letter card, at 75%

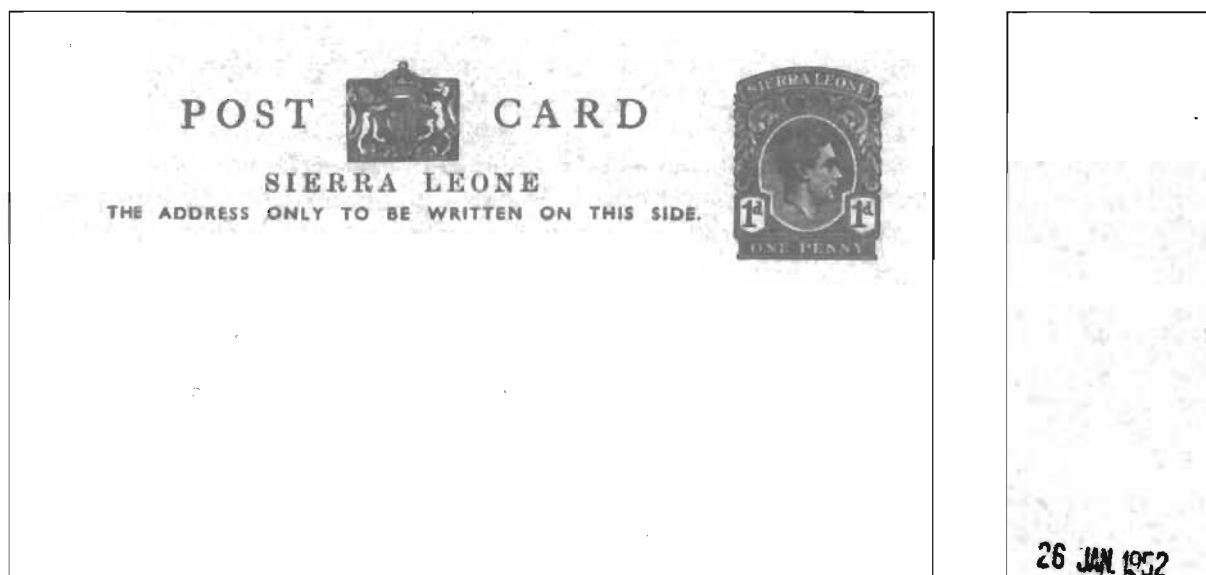
Figure 2 (below)
Longwood Old House, full size



Sierra Leone 1951 Postal Stationery Card

Keith Hanman

I bought this 1951 issue KGVI One Penny postal stationery card (Figure 1) at auction with the dated handstamp of 26 January 1952 - as shown in Figure 2 - on the reverse. It is printed in a different shade of green (more yellow) compared to my other example of the card.



Figures 1 (left) and 2 (right)

Front and back of Keith's One Penny card

Philip Beale's book (Ref. 1) states that 1,000 copies of the One Penny card were printed and dispatched on 18 April 1951. No Specimens were produced, although one proof from the Crown Agents is known marked '730/4' and '8.12.50'.

The illustrated card is alleged to be an ex-De La Rue archive 'Specimen' example. This is currently being researched, but can a reader shed any light on the situation?

Reference

- 1 Beale P.O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone*...., p222 & p226, RPSL, London 1988



The John Forrest Collection Auction, May 2010

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

This auction of Cancellations of the British Empire was conducted by Grosvenor Philatelic Auctions Ltd in London on 12 May 2010. It contained much West African material. I have recorded some of the highlights. The prices realised include the buyers' premium, inclusive of an amount in lieu of VAT, of 19.975%. Estimates are in brackets.

First up was a collection of all The Gambia, some 450 items in an album, which soared over the estimate to £2880 (£300 - £400).

Next came Gold Coast, using WASC cancellation types:

- Lot 391 Addah seal on 1881 cover £1440 (£1000 - £1200)
- Lot 410 Atuabo c.d.s. Type 5 on 1895 cover - did not sell (£120 - £150)
- Lot 418 Bole Type 5 in violet on 1900 *Ackerman* cover £360 (£100 - £120)
- Lot 450 Manuscript *Nsaba* on 1903 cover £600 (£250 - £300)
- Lot 473 Manuscript *Wa* on 1900 Northern Territories cover £1680 (£500 - £700)
- Lot 485 Type 1C No. 27 PASSED BY CENSOR cachet £66 (£80 - £100)
- Lot 486 30 Albums, balance of collection £2160 (£4000 - £5000)

In Togoland, a 1919 envelope from Agbeluvhoe, but with the spelling Agbeluhvohoe, fetched £264 (£80 - £100). Noepon on a 1920 cover seemed cheap at £90 (£100 - £120).

An album of Nigerian TPOs sold for £2040 (£300 - £400). An 1874 Lagos cover with 4d and 6d stamps, registered, went for £1560 (£700 - £900). From Kwale in Southern Nigeria a violet c.d.s. on a 1902 cover made just £66 (£80 - £100). Two albums of Cameroons, an exceptional assembly, fetched £2160 (£1000 - £1200).

Finally, Sierra Leone. A *Jebba* wreck cover made £336 (£300 - £400). An 1893 cover to Switzerland with the MANOH SALIJAH seal in red sold for £2520 (£2000 - £2500). Then a Tassoh Island c.d.s., believed to be the only known example, on a 1d postal stationery envelope reached £600 (£350 - £400). A York seal on a ½d green stamp made £384 (£200 - £250).

Altogether there were 262 West African lots. Most sold. The auctioneers had generally selected special items as single lots with the residue being grouped together as a one country lot. It was a fascinating morning.



West Africa in the British Library Philatelic Collections

Press Release

The following press release from 1 July 2010 may not have been seen by all members, so is reproduced here - mainly as an excuse to advertise the book and to show the photograph! - Barry

The West Africa Study Circle is pleased to announce the publication of a new book entitled *West Africa in the British Library Philatelic Collections* by Jeremy Martin and John Powell.

The British Library holds the world's most extensive collections of philatelic material and the book reflects this in its full title *West Africa in the British Library Philatelic Collections. A listing of philatelic material held for Ascension, Cameroons, Fernando Po, The Gambia, Ghana, Gold Coast, Lagos, Niger Coast Protectorate, Niger Company Territories, Nigeria, Northern Nigeria, Oil Rivers Protectorate, St. Helena, Sierra Leone, Southern Nigeria, Togo and Tristan da Cunha to 2000*. Comprising 176 pages, with sixteen pages of colour illustrations, it is hardbound.

It catalogues material contained in 20 collections or archives, one of these being *The Crown Agents Philatelic and Security Printing Archive* which alone has 7 sections. The list of contents itemises the collections in which West African material was found followed by a listing, in alphabetical order, of the countries in each of the collections enabling the researcher to find the country of choice. Each category is set out chronologically using catalogue dates and Crown Agents requisition numbers are recorded as found in the collections. There is also an extensive index.

David Beech FRPSL has written a section "Background to the British Library Philatelic Collections" and Philip Beale FRPSL has written Chapter 1 "Introduction to the Crown Agents".

In 2004 Jeremy Martin and John Powell started to study West African material in the Crown Agents Philatelic and Security Printing Archive, with the purpose of recording all items viewed and publishing the findings. One of the most difficult tasks for the Library is to inform the potential user of the material held so at an early stage the Curators could see the potential and suggested the authors consider listing the West African material from all collections. Over 40 all-day visits were needed over the succeeding seven years to achieve this and the results have now been published. It provides collectors of stamps, essays, proofs revenues and postal stationery with a model of what they will find in their own area of study.



The photograph shows, left to right, David Beech of the British Library, with John Powell and Jeremy Martin, authors, with a copy of the new book.

The book is available for £45 (or £36 for WASC members) plus postage at £4.30 UK, £6.00 overseas surface, £6.50 Europe and £11.50 rest of world by air. Orders to Ian Anderson, 57 Manse Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7SR with a cheque payable to the West Africa Study Circle or by e-mail with a payment using paypal to wasc_treasurer@aol.com. For further details about the Society go to: www.wasc.org.uk



PAA from Cairo in WWII

Bob Wilcsek

Bob wrote this as a Letter to the Editor, but due to the number of references quoted I am publishing it as a short article - Barry

Re. The article 'Pan Am Africa Inaugural Airmail from Cairo' (*Cameo* June 2010 p327) I quote from an article I wrote in early 2000 'Airmail Across Africa in WWII', *Air Post Journal*, April 2000. Some of you know I consider this to be my best work on the topic, but no one ever sees it (it has never been referenced to my knowledge); because the name is so generic it does not glow in a title search. I got my information from Bender and Altschul.

This (Pan American Airlines / Cairo) was a major problem in 1942, and the fact that Arthur Harris was involved in any way (in 1942!) shows how much gravitas the British assigned to this service. I still am reluctant to assign any serious weight (pun intended) to the mail PAA 'carried' over the route.

BOAC was the designated air carrier between Cairo to Lagos from February 13, 1936, and took this to be a matter of extreme gravity. Even in the darkest days of the war, BOAC was deeply and rightly suspicious of Pan Am intruding into their colonial African air turf. (continued p422)


(continued from p421) BOAC was wary about the look of post war air operations in Africa, and did not want Pan Am's presence to endure in an area they had pioneered. While the May 25, 1942 first flight covers posted from Egypt to the USA by William Watson, PAAF airport manager at Cairo, imply a "new" Pan Am service, this may be misleading. Pan Am certainly prepared stationery and a flight cachet to give the look of a first flight, but it has been suggested (Ref. 2) that this was a local mail arrangement between Egyptian officials and Pan Am, and was never legitimate for anything other than outbound Egyptian mail to Lagos for a period of only several months.

To date, no US postal bulletins have surfaced that mention this service, and it seems there was no mail contract between the Egyptian and American governments, as is typically required for FAM contracts. Additionally, there was immediate hostility from BOAC, who already owned the mail contract between Cairo and Lagos at the time. While definitely flown, the Watson covers are probably novelty philatelic souvenirs prepared for friends and family. Note the rate on these covers (97 mills) is identical to that of BOAC mail carried over the same route. Even if legitimate, the service was short lived, as PAAA started to be dismantled in August 1942 and was finished by December of the same year.

References (full list from Bob's article in APJ)


- 1 Culbert Tom and Dawson Andy, *Pan Africa, Across the Sahara in 1941 with Pan Am*, Paladwr Press, McLean, VA 1998
- 2 Bender Marilyn and Altschul Selig, *The Chosen Instrument*, Simon and Shuster, NY 1982. See pages 350-351 for perspectives on initial PAAA and PAAF initiatives, and pages 362-3 for a discussion of the PAA Cairo-Lagos route, and British resentment
- 3 See *Merchant Airmen*, His Majesty's Stationary Office, London (1946), p96, for a description of "The Tedder Plan," which describes the decision to use regional carriers for local mail in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean
- 4 Wilson John, *Report on the Progress of Civil Aviation 1939-1945; The Wartime Postal History Collector's Answer to a Thousand Questions*, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, Crown Copyright, London 1993

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CAMEROON SG B3b

1915 1d on 10pf carmine, ERROR SURCHARGE DOUBLE, upper right corner block of 4 with value imprints, brilliant unmounted o.g. Three sheets of the error existed, but this block comes from the one with the second impression misplaced upwards,



so that 'C.E.F.' also appears in the top margin (as here), while the bottom row showed '1d only double' (= SG B3c). Minor gum bends, still a superb and spectacular positional piece, with R1/9 showing the constant variety 'short serif to F'.

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