

Questions:

Covers for collectors, Gold Coast / Ghana, and A.
E. K. Browne Esq.

Martin Giles

martingiles032@gmail.com

This starts with Liberia

- Research area:
 - Understanding the channels through which overseas dealers and collectors could access philatelic materials from Liberia's rather rudimentary and chaotic postal system
- A strange case study:
 - Andrew G. Flesch
 - Dealer in the New York City borough of Queens in the 1940s and 1950s
 - Flesch started stamp dealing as a teenager
 - Sadly, in 1958, at the age of 32, he was found hanged in his Nassau Street office, leaving behind a widow and several children

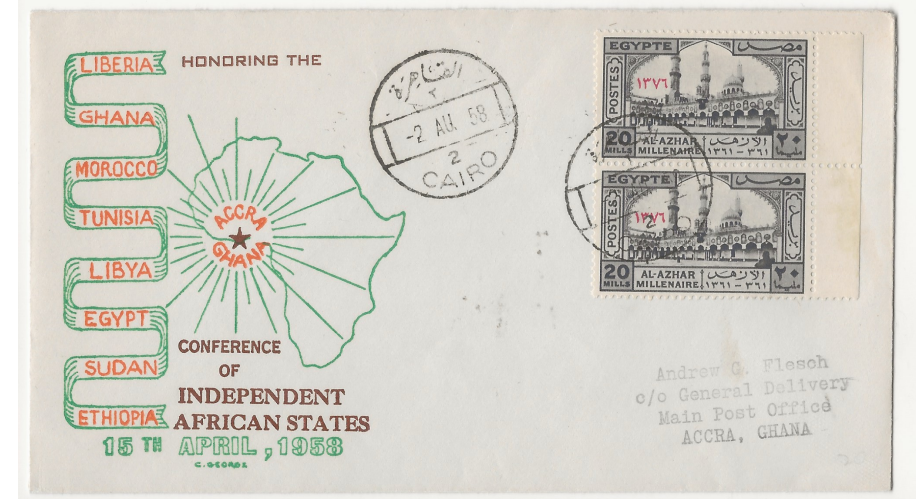
Andrew G. Flesch and Liberia

- Flesch sourced and produced many, *many* covers for Liberia
- These covers appear to be aimed at the “I want that stamp/set on cover” market
- Many are odd, e.g. affixing not just stamps but also sections of sheet margins or even colour proofs (perf and imperf)
- I have found few clues as to his sources or processes for Liberia
- I have found no in-country



Andrew G. Flesch and Gold Coast / Ghana

- In the last year before his suicide, Flesch pivoted to a new identity, “the specialist dealer of Ghana (former Gold Coast)”¹
- The first cover here is in his familiar format
- The second, from Cairo, celebrates the First Conference of Independent African States.
 - The Conference, hosted by Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah, published a 17-page booklet of “Greetings from World Statesmen and Others to the Conference of Independent African States, April 1958”²



1. Jal Cooper, “A New Field for Social Workers”, *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, Volume 79, (October 26th 1958), 61

2. *Greetings from World Statesmen and Others to the Conference of Independent African States, April 1958* (Pretoria, South Africa: The Government Printer; 1958)

A clue to a source—from Ghana

- None of Flesch's Liberia covers (found so far) offers anything like an in-country sender's address
- This registered cover, however, gives us "A. E. K. Browne" from Tarkwa, in the Gold Fields
- I know nothing about Browne, except that he was a man (he is otherwise addressed as "A. E. K. Browne, Esq.").



Front and reverse of registered cover

Browne in the Gold Fields

- I see covers mailed to Browne's Tarkwa P.O. Box from Tarkwa itself
- I also see covers mailed to A. E. K. Browne from Aboso, the next station along the western rail line (or apparently a two-hour walk, post-office-to-post-office)
- Did he mail covers to himself?
- Did he have an employee do it?
- Did he service other dealers?



Questions

- Is A. E. K. Browne already a well-known figure within Ghanaian postal history?
 - Is anything known about his life?
 - Is the scope of his philatelic activities already understood?
- Is Andrew G. Flesch familiar in the Ghana context?
- Do we understand the practical steps—in the more general philatelic ecosystem—which brought covers and other materials from Gold Coast / Ghana to dealers and collectors overseas (aside from the Ghana Philatelic Agency)?
- Are there lessons from other West Africa philatelic ecosystems which I may be able to apply to Liberia?