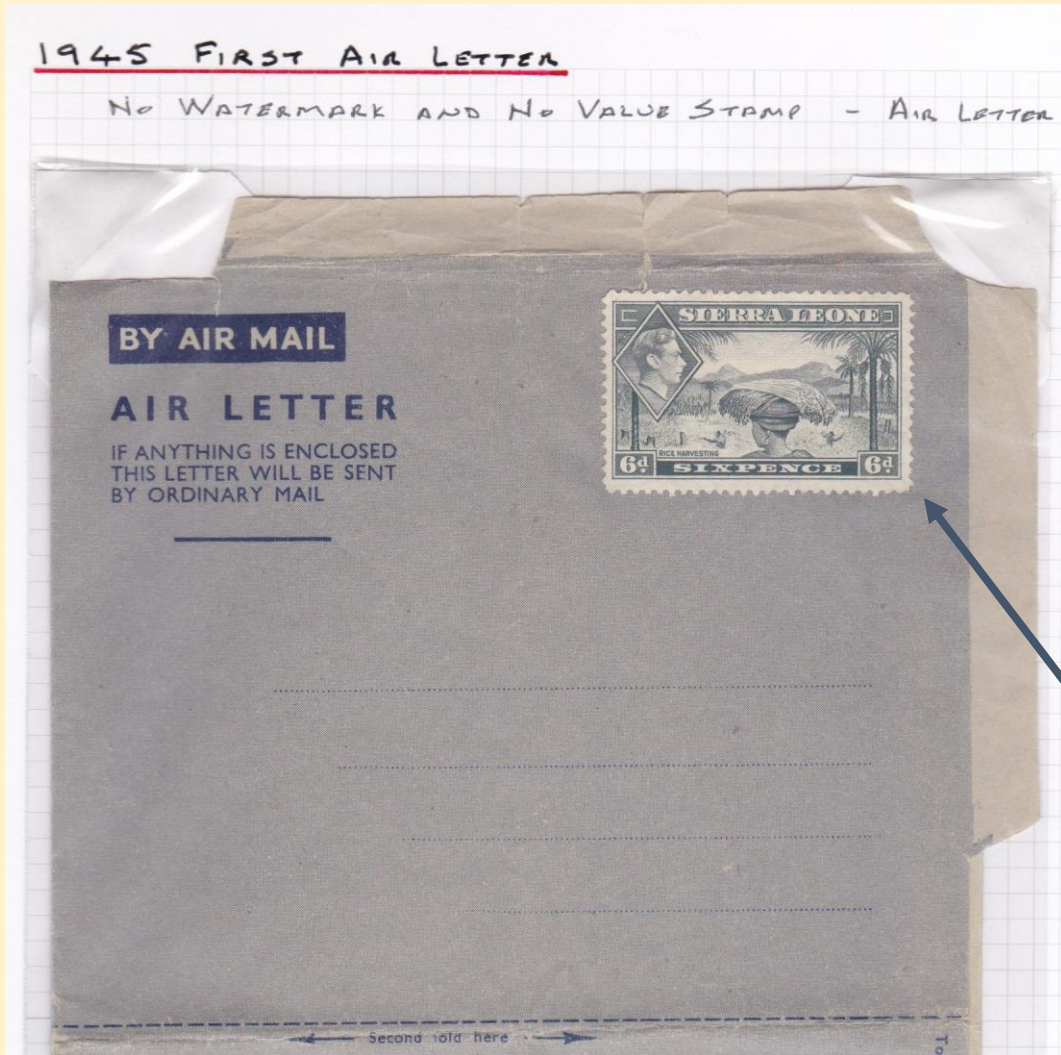


# **Formular Air Letters of Sierra Leone – part 1**

**Peter Rolfe**

(presented by Philip Quirk)

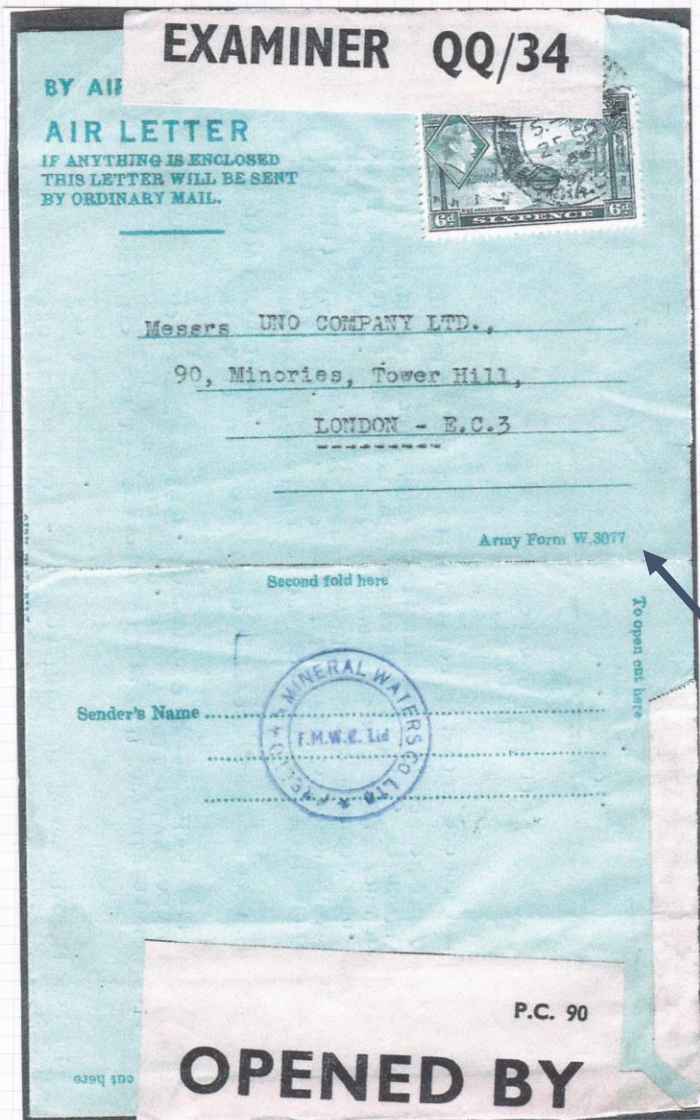
# What is a formular (formula) air letter?



No printed indicium (stamp).

A formular air letter is simply one without a printed indicium.

A stamp or meter mark must be added to pay the postage.

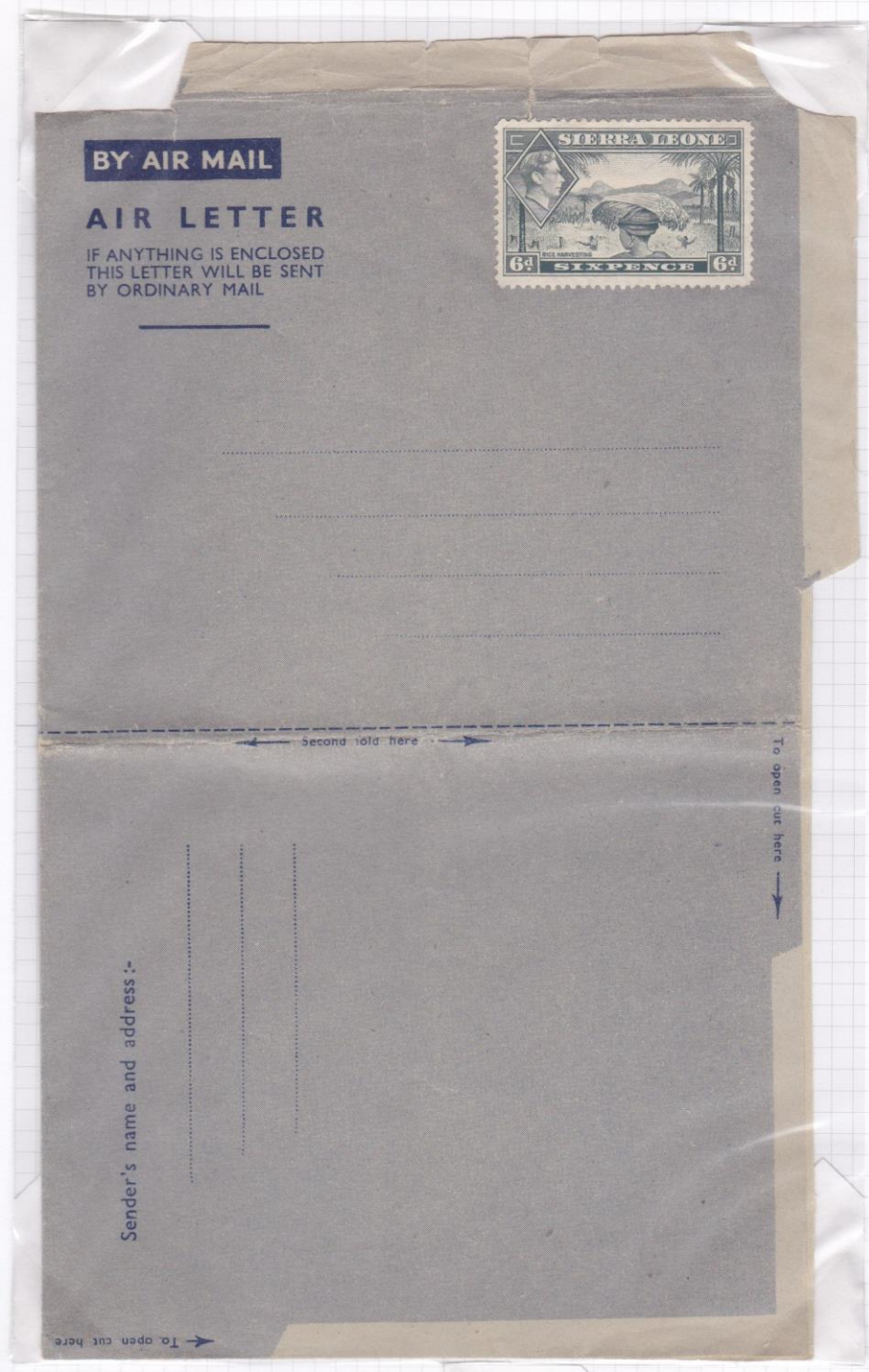


POSTMARK FREETOWN 25 SEP 44

# Air letter with Army Form inscription

Air letter forms were put on sale to the public during August 1944 (Beale). This one was used in September (**Peter Richards collection**).

The printers kept the same layout as used for the military supplies, retaining the Army Form W.3077 inscription.



# Sierra Leone first air letter

On 17<sup>th</sup> October 1944, the Crown Agents sought tenders from approved printers for Air Letter Forms: “without stamp or gumming, weight not to exceed 1lb./180 forms.”

Supplies were ordered for Nigeria, Gold Coast and Sierra Leone.

Were these sold at the Post Office with the stamp already added?

Blue Tablet

& Script



POSTMARK FREETOWN 1 JU 45

AND WITH CIVILIAN CENSOR MARK QQ/4

Sierra Leone first air letter

There were multiple printings of this design.

The top example has blue tablet and inscriptions.

Black Tablet

& Script



The bottom example uses black.

# Formular air letter design with printed indicium

1950 6<sup>d</sup> VALUE

RICEFIELDS DESIGN AS KG VI DEFINITIVE ISSUE 6<sup>d</sup> VALUE - No Wmk

H & G Type F.1

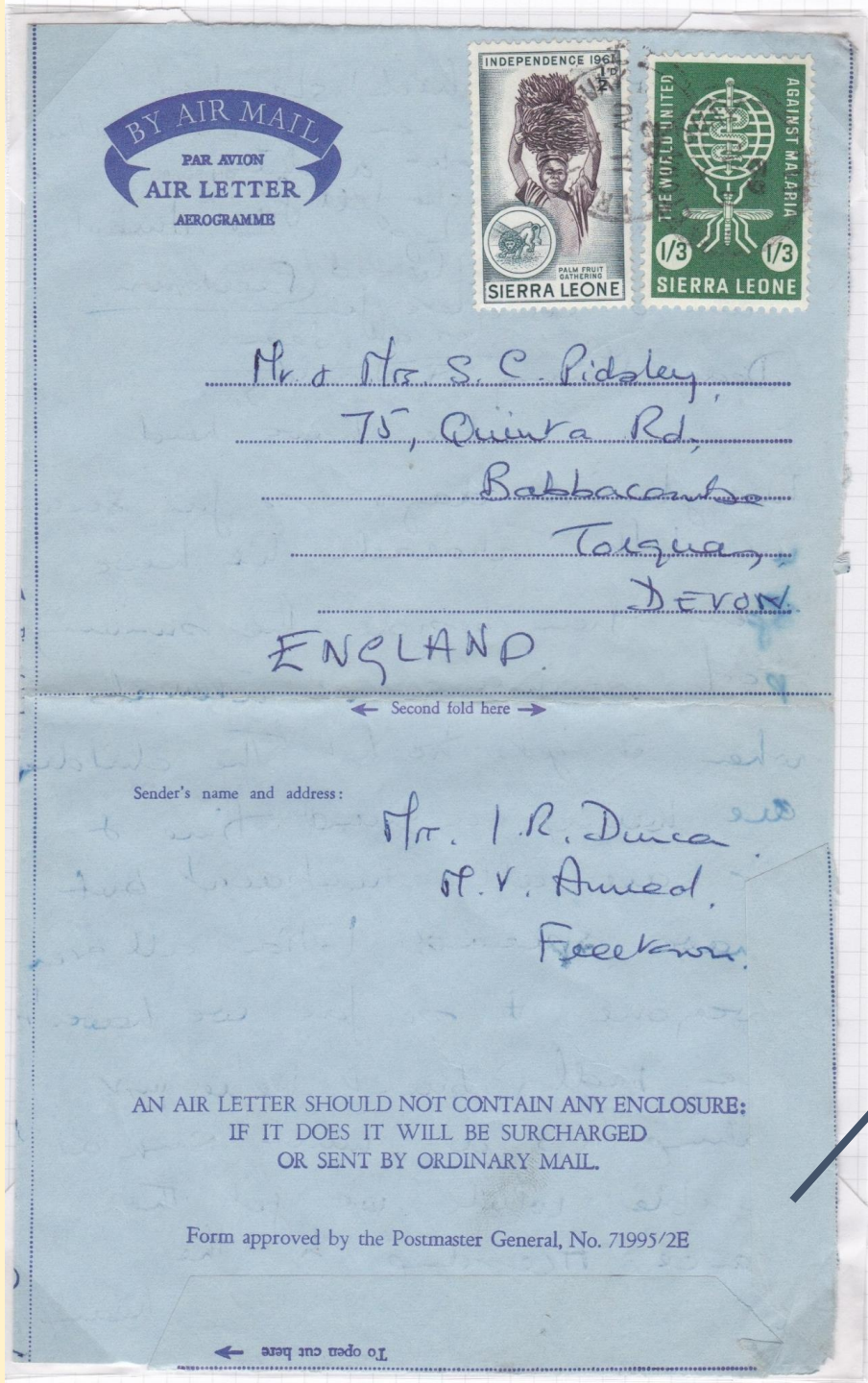
3 dots  
(Harris  
p.9)



AIR LG 1702

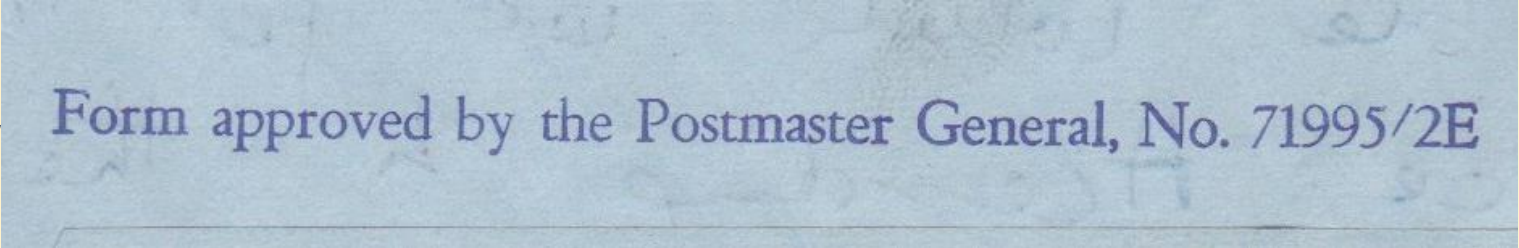
37 M

The design was adapted in 1950 for use with a printed indicium, the first such air letter for Sierra Leone.



# Approval of Formular Air Letters

By the 1960s, air letters were being produced by many different companies. The manufacturers adopted a standard format, and often added an inscription confirming that their product had been approved by the UK Postmaster General, along with a Licence number.



This air letter was produced for Elder Dempster and was used on MV Aureol.

# Imperial Air Mail, 1965

This air letter has exactly the same layout as the previous one.

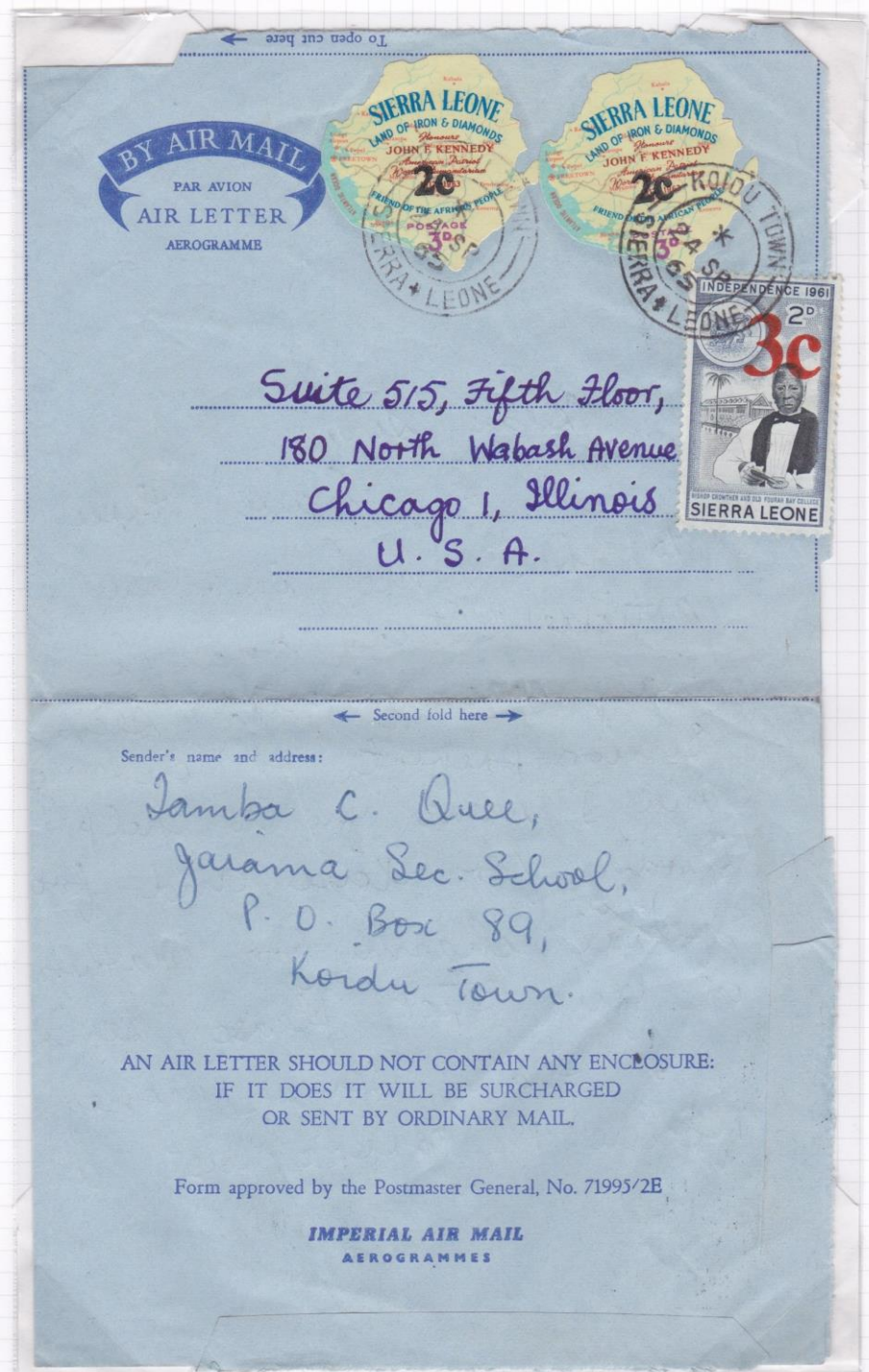
Besides the approval notice, it also bears the name of the firm: Imperial Air Mail.

Form approved by the Postmaster General, No. 71995/2E

**IMPERIAL AIR MAIL**

**AEROGRAMMES**

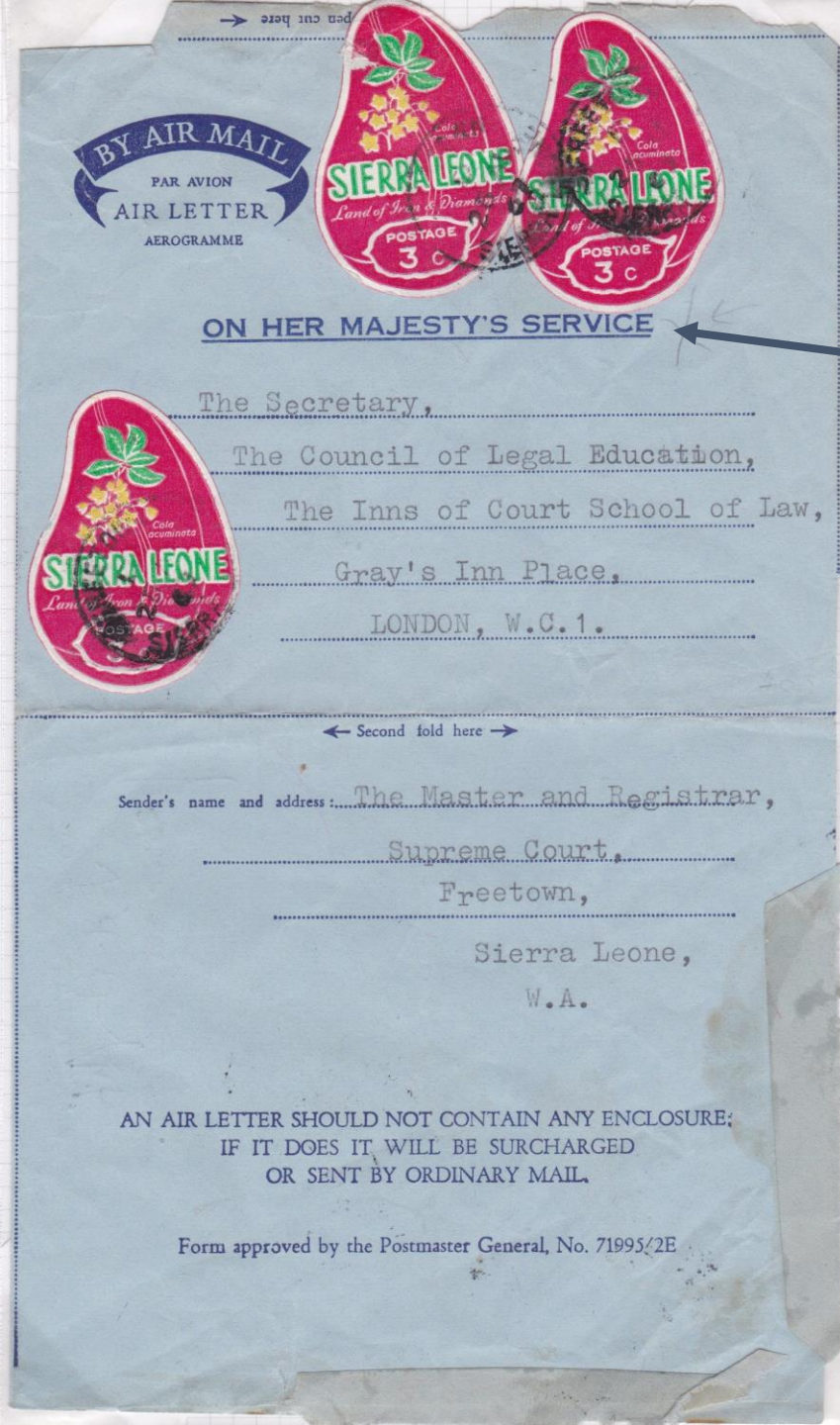
The licence number is the same as that for the Elder Dempster item, suggesting that both were produced by Imperial.



Imperial, 1966, for  
Barclays Bank DCO



# Imperial 1967, OHMS



ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

Form approved by the Postmaster General, No. 71995/2E

Used by the Supreme Court, Freetown.  
But why the OHMS inscription, since Sierra Leone had become a republic, and normally used OSLGS on official stationery?

BY AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION  
AIR LETTER  
AEROGRAMME



A. E. Jones,  
199, Wood Street,  
London E. 17,  
ENGLAND.

← Second fold here →

Sender's name and address:

J. H. Black,  
Import/Export Control,  
George Street, Freeetown,  
Sierra Leone,  
West Africa.

AN AIR LETTER SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY ENCLOSURE:  
IF IT DOES IT WILL BE SURCHARGED  
OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

Imperial, 1969,  
with indicium added

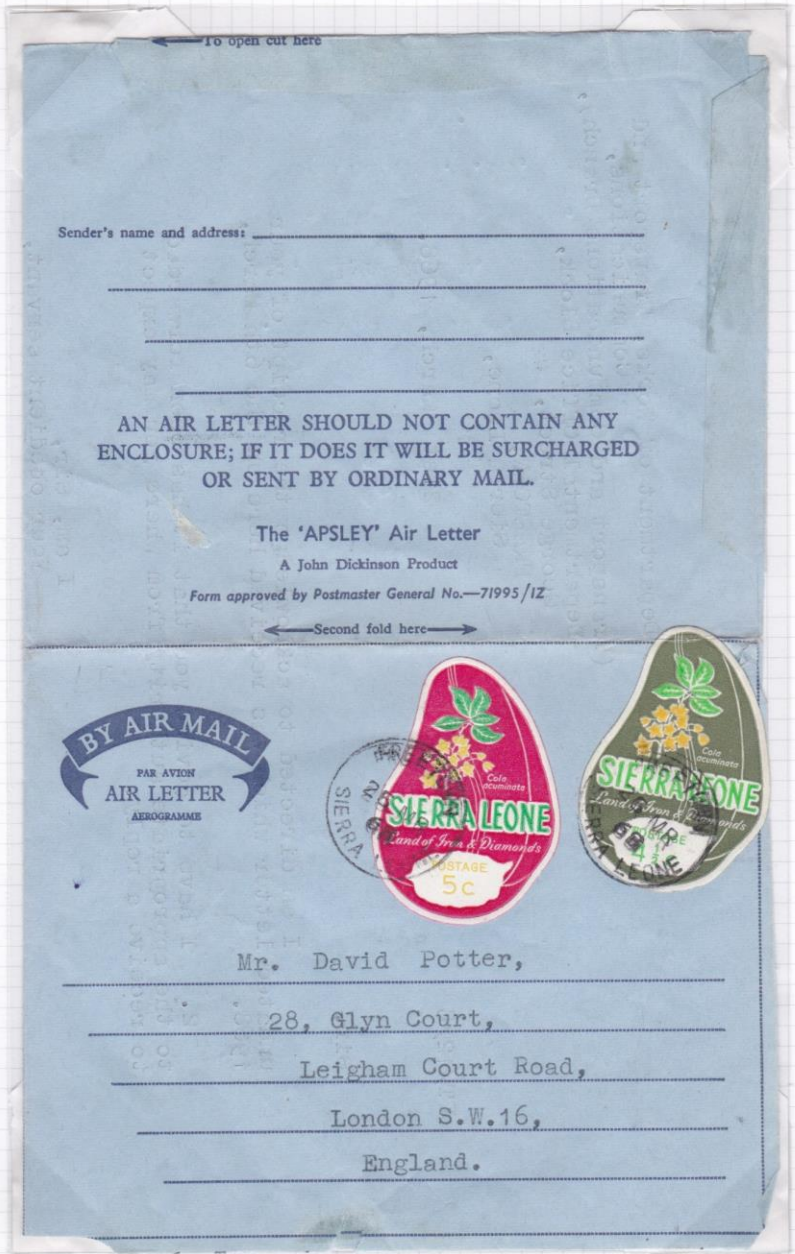
An emergency printing on a commercial form, with the company name and approval details overprinted in dark blue.

From the dimensions of the bars, this is probably an Imperial air letter.

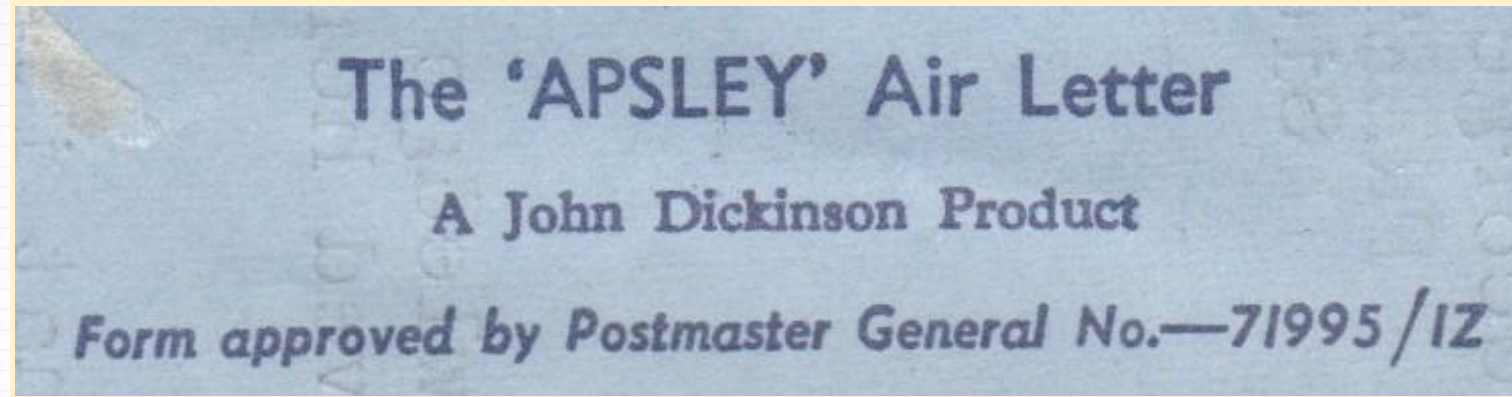
1968 - 1970 "APSLEY" AEROGRAMME

No WATERMARK - With PRINTER'S AND APPROVAL INSCRIPTIONS

DARK BLUE  
PRINTING



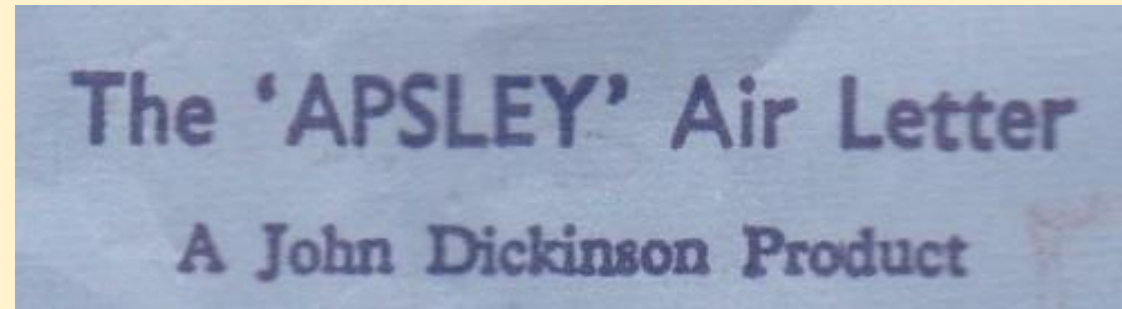
# Apsley, John Dickinson, 1968



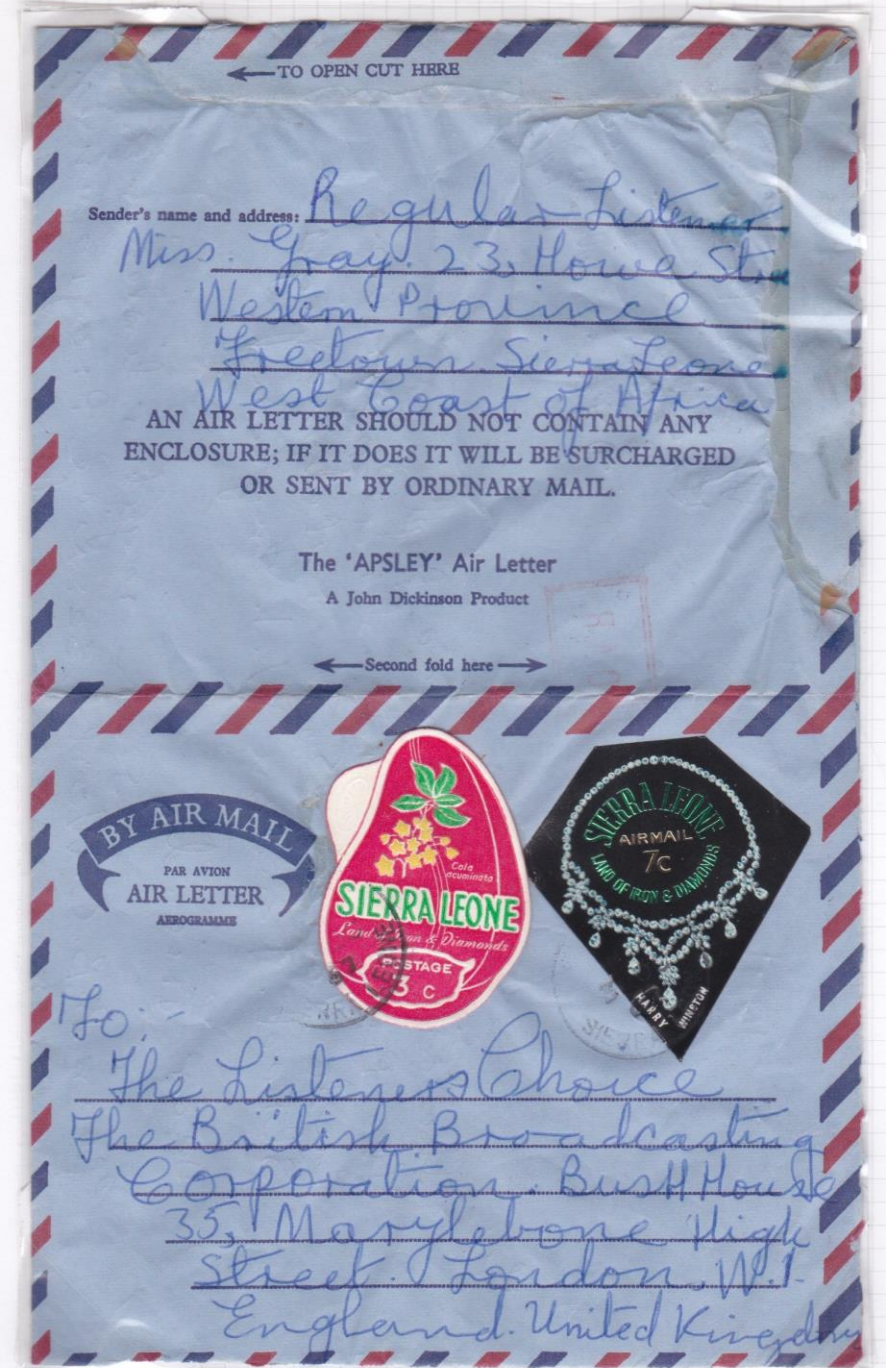
POSTMARK FREETOWN 26 MR 68

# Apsley, 1967

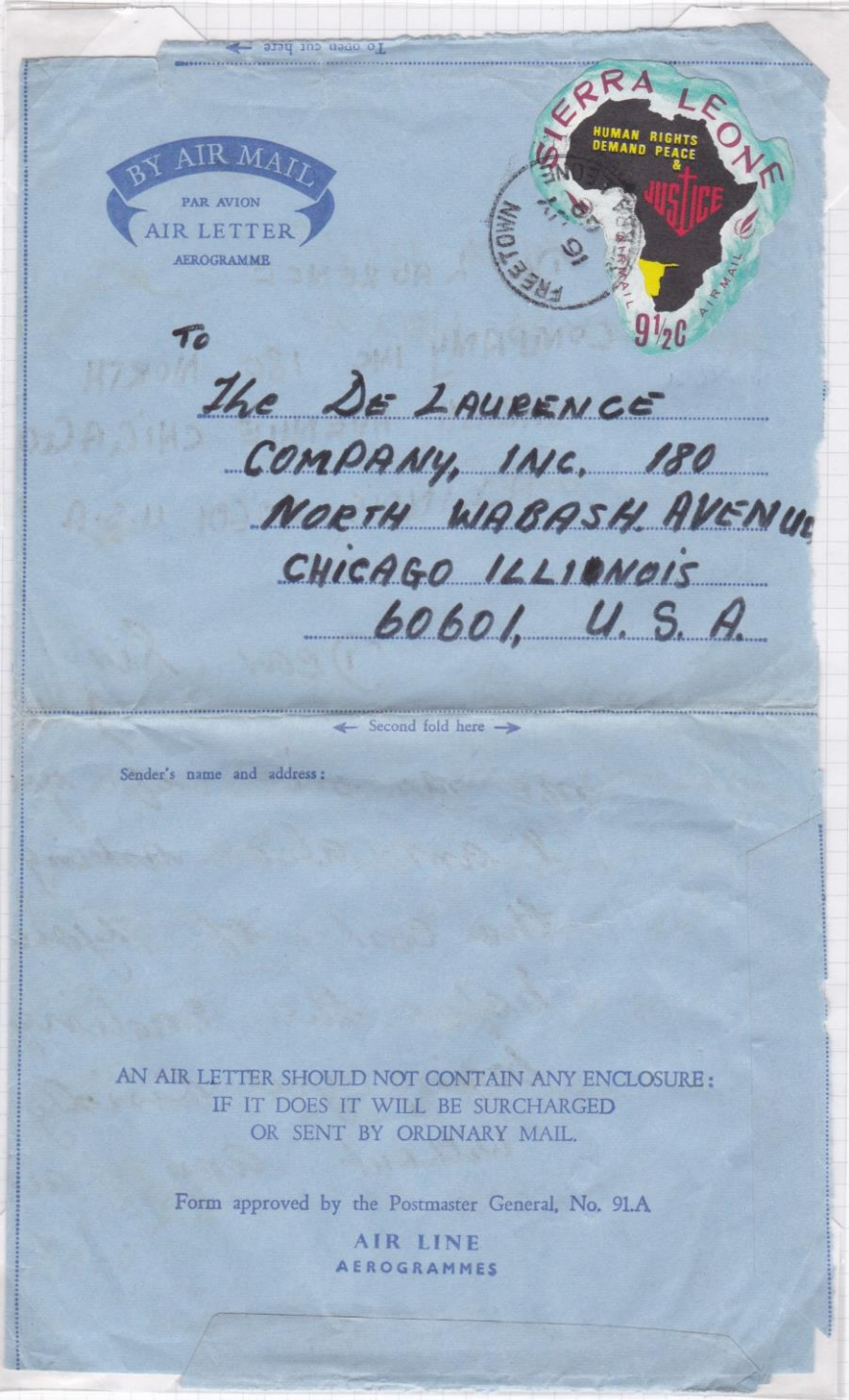
John Dickinson also produced an Apsley-branded design with coloured borders.



This form does not have an approval statement or licence number.



# Air Line 1969



Form approved by the Postmaster General, No. 91.A  
AIR LINE  
AEROGRAMMES

BY AIR MAIL

PAR AVION  
AIR LETTER  
AÉROGRAMME



~~L.H.~~ DE LAWRENCE

180 NORTH WABASH—  
AVENUE,  
CHICAGO ILLINOIS—  
60601,  
U.S.A.

SECOND FOLD HERE →  
JAHAMMED HENRY G. MARAH  
CATHOLIC KABALA  
SENDERS NAME AND ADDRESS: S. D. A. Secondary School, Yele  
P. O. Box 11, Magburaka, KABALA  
Sierra Leone. W. A.

AN AIR LETTER SHOULD NOT CONTAIN  
ANY ENCLOSURES; IF IT DOES IT WILL BE  
SURCHARGED OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL

*A Newton Mill Production*  
MADE IN ENGLAND

FORM APPROVED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL No. 116

# Newton Mill, 1971



Produced for the Seventh Day Adventist  
Secondary School, Yele, but repurposed by  
a student at the Catholic School in Kabala!

Anonymous, 1970, with  
licence number

BY AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION  
AIR LETTER  
AEROGRAMME



DE - LAURENCE  
180 NORTH WABASH AVE.  
CHICAGO ILLINOIS  
U.S.A. 60601

Form approved by the Postmaster-General No. 99

← Second fold here →

Sender's name and address: MR. LANSANA JACKSON  
16 GBANDAWA ST. NEW SITE  
BO SIERRA LEONE.

AN AIR LETTER SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY  
ENCLOSURE ; IF IT DOES IT WILL BE SURCHARGED  
OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

Form approved by the Postmaster-General No. 99

← To open cut here ←

BY AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION  
AIR LETTER  
AÉROGRAMME



PROFESSOR DE LAURENCE  
180 NORTH WABASH AVENUE  
ILLIONUS CHICAGO  
U.S.A  
AMERICA

← Second fold here →

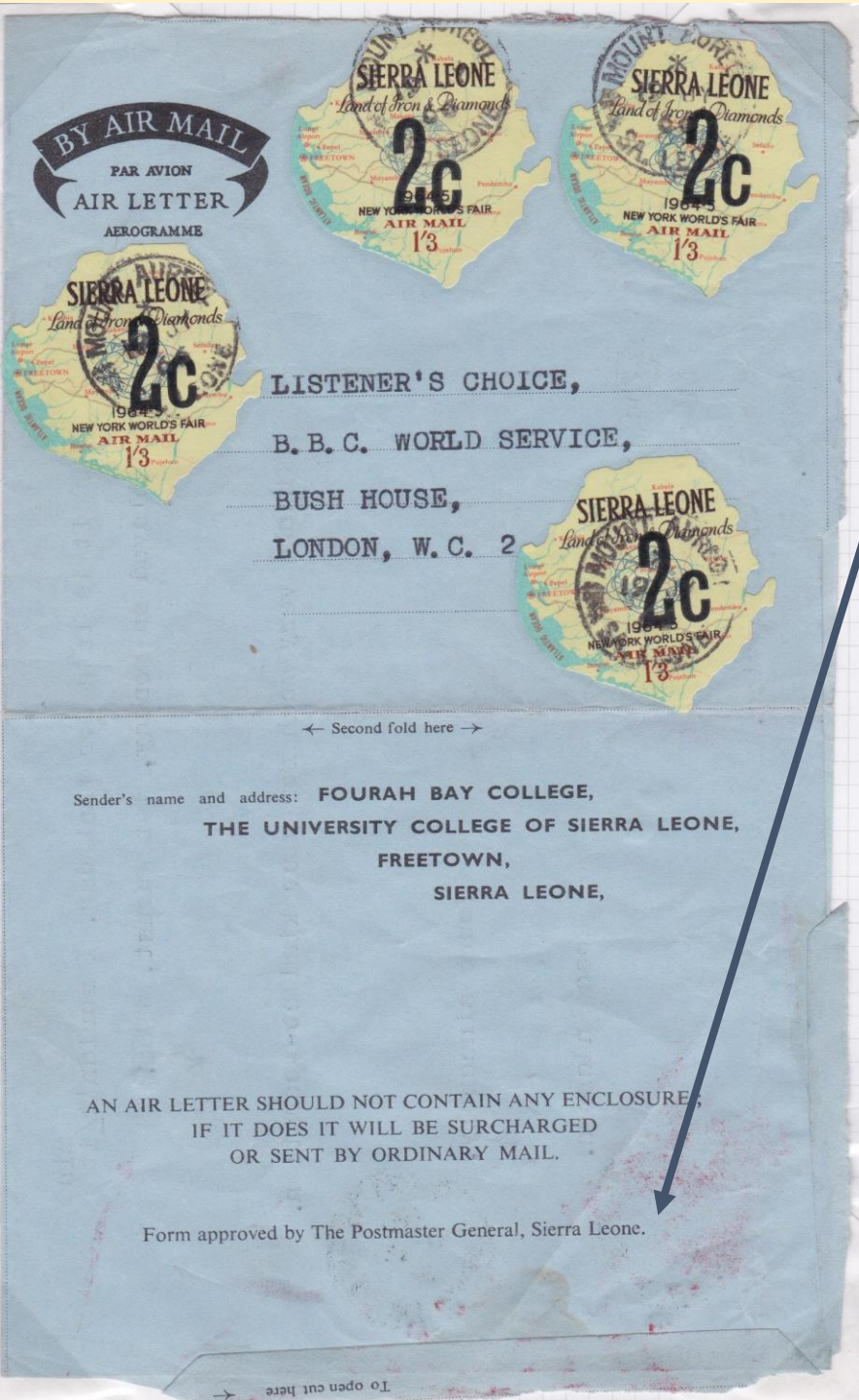
Sender's name and address: George Va-Mhien  
Sherbro Minerals Ltd  
P.M.B. Freetown  
S. Leone West Africa

AN AIR LETTER SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY  
ENCLOSURE ; IF IT DOES IT WILL BE SURCHARGED  
OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

← To open cut here

Anonymous, 1970, with  
no approval statement

# Fourah Bay College, 1966



Form approved by The Postmaster General, Sierra Leone.

Approved by The Postmaster General,  
Sierra Leone.

Possibly locally printed?

Thank you for your attention!

Please return for Part 2 at a later date.