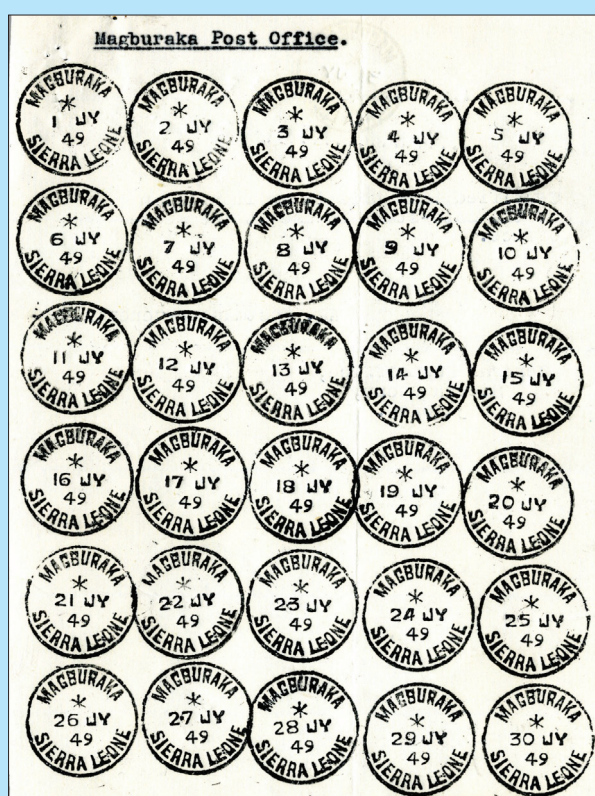


Sierra Leone

Certified Postmark Impressions from 1949



Frank Walton RDP FRPSL
2nd Edition - 2021

Sierra Leone Certified Postmark Impressions from 1949

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Front cover illustration

The front of the sheet of certified date stamps from Magburaka Post Office

Back cover illustrations

The certified date stamps from Blama, Daru, Gbap Kambia, Lunsar and Moyamba office or agency.
These images are reduced in size.

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Introductory Notes

Background

In the late 1980s I was avidly researching postmarks from the West African country of Sierra Leone; this led to the publication in 1990 of *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961* by the West Africa Study Circle (WASC). In 2015, a second edition was produced under the co-authorship of Walton, Quirk, Hamilton & Horry.

In the introduction of the first edition I described one source of illustrations as follows:

During Summer 1949, each post office in Sierra Leone was required to provide the GPO with a sample of their handstamps. These have survived, complementing the Impression Book records which are particularly sparse in this period.

Also in the introduction two examples were reproduced, namely Boajibu and Freetown-Bo TPO. I made excellent use of the material available, including illustrations from 40 offices in the first edition of the postmark publication.

However, I never saw the original material as I only worked from photocopies. Most annoyingly I cannot now trace who provided me with the copies. Since this date, I have been asked several times where this source material was - but I never could answer this question.

At Spring Stampex 2018 in London a dealer called me over and told me that he had found a pile of very strange material relating to Sierra Leone in the bottom of an old suitcase. He didn't have it with him, and we agreed that I would return the next day and look at what he had unearthed.

The next day came, and I duly revisited the standholder. He showed me a pile of folded and unloved slips of paper that had clearly been Sellotaped to some album page many years before. I recognised this 'hoard' immediately as being the certified originals that I had seen copies of several decades ago. A deal was struck, and I purchased the material and brought them away to study in detail.

When these items had been analysed, I decided that the information should be published to allow it to be shared with other collectors of Sierra Leone postmarks. This led to the first edition of this work being published by WASC.

Much to my surprise and delight, I was contacted by a friend who doesn't collect West Africa at all, but who had an eye for anything 'unusual'. He told me that he too had an accumulation of these sample impressions! I acquired the additional examples and the two piles were reunited.

Description of Material

There were 58 original examples in the first group and 18 in the second, each covering a different post office or agency, i.e. 76 altogether. Additionally a photocopy of the return for Boajibu is known, making 77 in total. The vertically laid paper is good quality, cream coloured and has a watermark of thin parallel horizontal lines 26 mm apart. The size varies somewhat, but they are typically 18 cm tall and 13 cm wide.

Of the 77 offices recorded, 47 locations applied one example of their handstamp, eight applied two impressions, three struck three examples and 19 applied more than three. The office's handstamp was normally set to the same date on each sheet, other than places that struck examples of many different combinations of day, month or year. The dates shown almost all in the range 13 July to 30 July 1949, with a few in August.

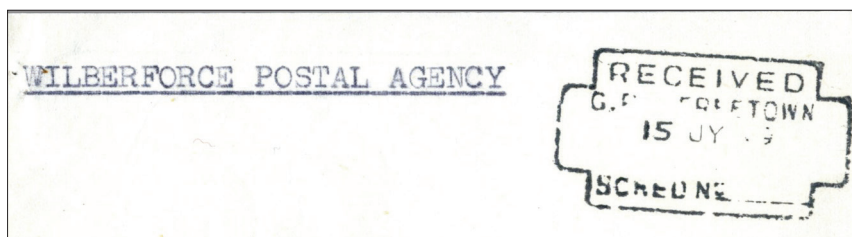
The 19 offices that struck many examples somewhat over-delivered. Perhaps the most robust response was from the agency at Mange, who decided to send a proof strike which showed all 12 months, and a variety of year digits between 1920 and 1940.



The detailed return from the Postal Agency at Mange.

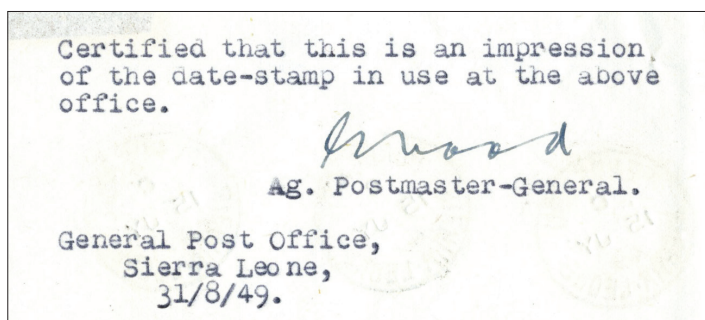
The procedure was that the GPO circulated a pre-prepared slip of paper to all offices and agencies, and that they should strike their current handstamp and returned the item back to the GPO in Freetown.

Of the 77, just two (Wilberforce and Kaballa) were struck with the RECEIVED / G.P.O FREETOWN / SCHED N^o framed handstamp (Walton Type 711.04). This seldom-seen handstamp is described by Philip Quirk in *Cameo* (see Bibliography [3]).



'RECEIVED...' handstamp used on the returns from Wilberforce and Kabala.

All of the returns seen are signed off with the same standard endorsement (shown reduced):



Scope of Post Office in Sierra Leone in Summer 1949

Somewhat serendipitously, there was a small booklet published by His Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) entitled *Handbook of British Colonial Stamps in current use, September 1949 - comprising historical, geographical and general information obtained from official and other reliable sources*. This booklet was compiled by R. Courtney Cade MBE of the Colonial Office. The Sierra Leone section includes a list of the 21 full post offices, and comments that there are 54 postal agencies, i.e. a total of 75.

The table on the page following this introduction lists 80 locations where an analysis of the published opening and closing dates suggest that the office was open in July 1949. This list includes two Travelling Post Offices (TPOs) as well as the Registration and the Garrison Mail sections of the Freetown GPO. Allowing for these, the difference is just one. Unless the details of Cade's list of Postal Agencies are seen, then a reconciliation is impossible.

There are two offices (Bo and Cline Town) and one agency (Panguma) that are absent from the accumulation. Bo almost certainly made a return as Ted Proud used an image date 16 Jul 1949 in his book. There is no evidence regarding the other two; it is possible that they were never created.

Reproduction of the Postmarks

The table on the next page shows highlighted which postmarks were reproduced from this archive in the three postmark studies. The references with a yellow background are definitely utilised, and the one in pink (Bo) is almost certainly also from the same source, but sadly it is no longer with the remainder of the collection.

Altogether 40 images were used in the first edition of *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961*; of these, 11 prevailed to the second edition. Ted Proud utilised 35 of the certified postmarks in his 1994 publication *The Postal History of Sierra Leone*.

Although some images were used in both books, several were used only by me or by Proud. There is a total of 45 that were used somewhere. This goes to confirm the importance of this certified archive to collectors of this material.

Publication Details

This booklet is intended to be published only in digital form, and will be made publicly freely available as a pdf download from the WASC website.

All of the images included in the body of this publication are 100% sized when printed.

Frank L. Walton RDP FRPSL

Dronfield
United Kingdom

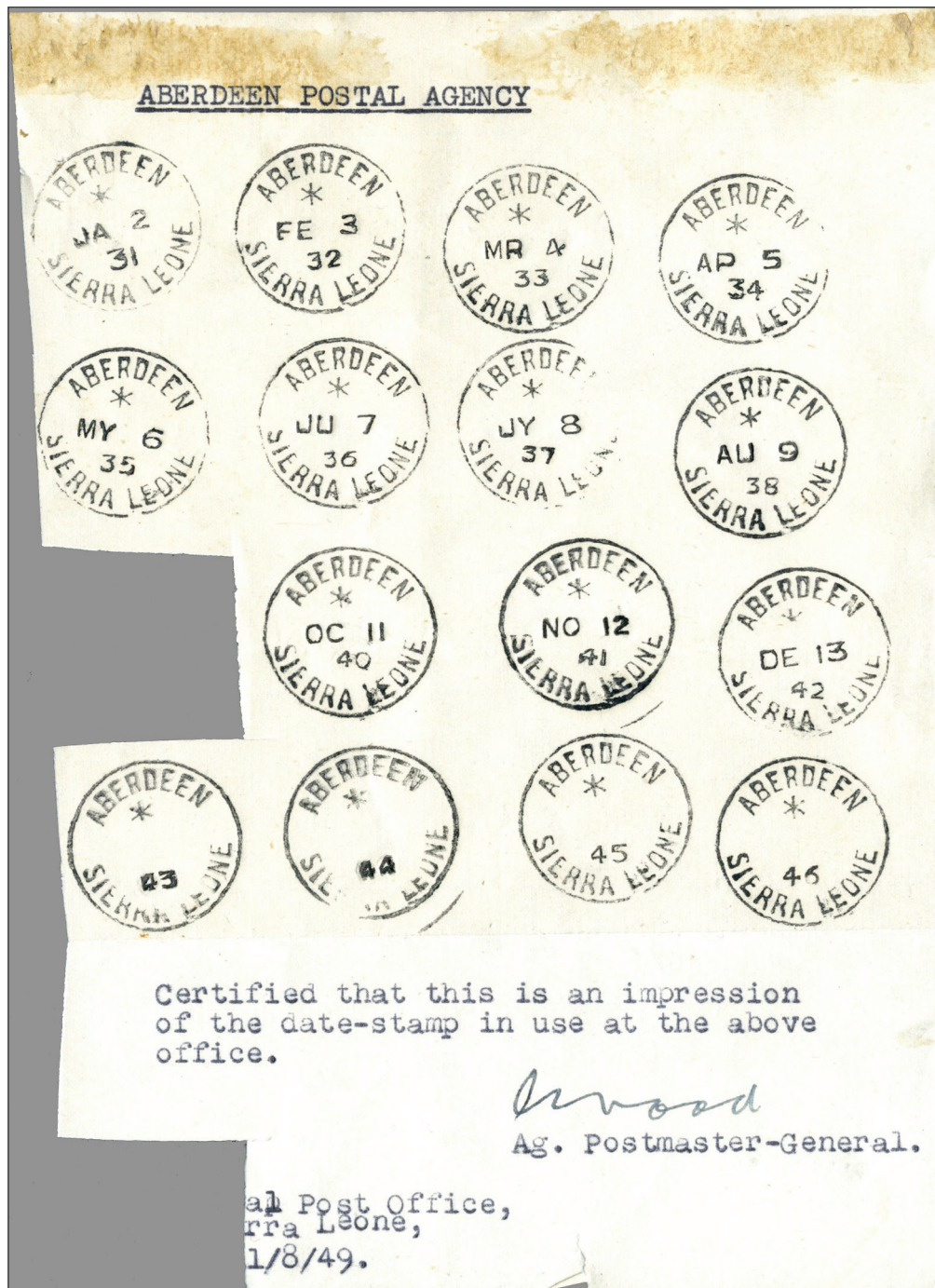
15 August 2021

Details of Postmarks identified in the Certified Archive

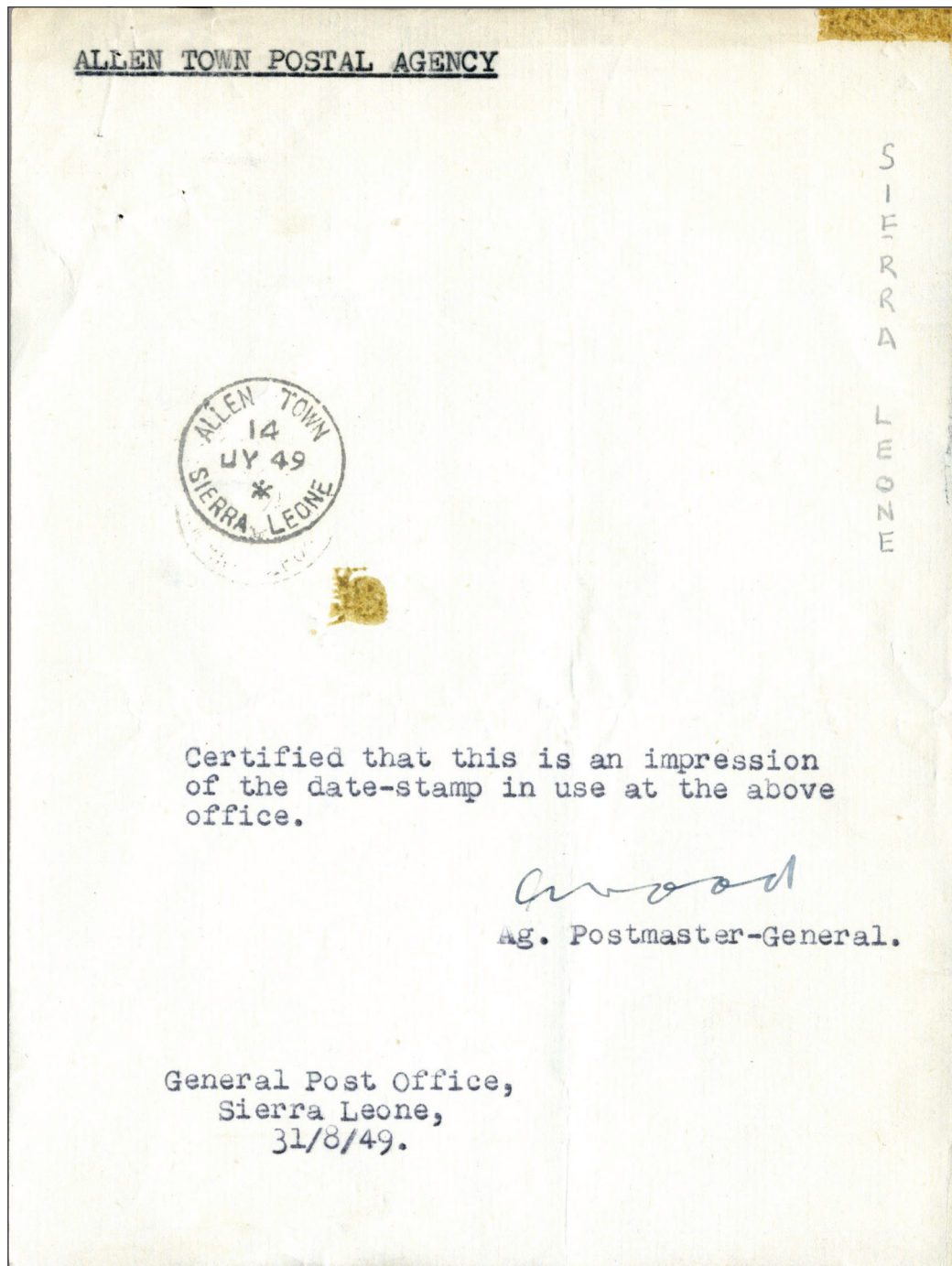
Office Name	Office Type	Walton 1990	Proud 1994	WQHH 2015	In sample?
Aberdeen	PA	001.01	D2	001.01	Yes
Allen Town	PA	002.02	D2	002.02	Yes
Baiima	PA	004.03	D4	004.03	Yes
Bananas	PA	005.02	D3	005.02	Yes
Baoma	PA	008.01	D2	008.01	Yes
Batkanu	PA	010.02	D3	010.02	Yes
Bauya	PA	011.02	D4	011.02	Yes
Blama	PO	015.02	D3	015.02	Yes
Bo	PO	016.04	D4	016.04	No
Boajibu	PA	017.02	D2	017.02	Seen
Bonthe	PO	018.05	D5	018.05	Yes
Bradford	PA	019.02	D3	019.02	Yes
Cline Town	PO	025.03	D3	025.03	No
Commendi	PA	027.01	D2	027.01	Yes
Daru	PO	030.03	D4	030.03	Yes
Freetown GPO	GPO	035		035	Yes
Freetown GPO Registered	GPO	535		535	Yes
Garrison Mail	GPO	320.04	D6	320.04	Yes
Gbangbatoke	PA	041.01	D2	041.01	Yes
Gbap	PA	042.01	D2	042.01	Yes
Gerihun	PA	045.02	D3	045.02	Yes
Gloucester	PA	047.03	D4	047.03	Yes
Goderich	PA	048.03	D4	048.03	Yes
Hamilton	PA	049.02	D3	049.02	Yes
Hangha	PA	050.03	D5	050.03	Yes
Hastings	PA	051.02	D3	051.02	Yes
Kaballa	PA	057.02	D3	057.02	Yes
Kailahun	PO	064.01	D3	064.01	Yes
Kamabai	PA	060.01	D2	060.01	Yes
Kamakwie	PA	061.01	D2	061.01	Yes
Kambia	PA	062.03	D4	062.03	Yes
Kangahun	PA	063.01	D2	063.01	Yes
Kenema	PO	072.03	D4	072.03	Yes
Kent	PA	073.03	D4	073.03	Yes
Kissy	PA	075.03	D3	075.03	Yes
Koribundu	PA	077.01	D2	077.01	Yes
Kumrabai Mamila	PA	079.01	D1	079.01	Yes
Levuma	PA	085.01	D2	085.01	Yes
Lunsar	PO	089.01	D2	089.01	Yes
Mabang	PA	090.02	D2	090.03	Yes

Office Name	Office Type	Walton 1990	Proud 1994	WQHH 2015	In sample?
Mabonto	PA	091.51	D2	091.51	Yes
Makene	PO	099.01	D2	099.01	Yes
Magburaka	PO	102.02	D2	102.02	Yes
Mange	PA	105.03	D4	105.03	Yes
Mano	PO	106.04	D4	106.04	Yes
Mattru	PA	112.02	D2	112.02	Yes
Moyamba	PO	117.02	D3	117.02	Yes
New England	PA	119.03	D2	119.03	Yes
Newton	PA	120.02	D3	120.02	Yes
N'Jala	PA	121.02	D2	121.02	Yes
Panguma	PA	123.03	D4	123.03	Yes
Pendembu	PO	124.01	D2	124.01	Yes
Pepel	PA	125.01	D2	125.01	Yes
Port Lokko	PO	126.02	D3	126.02	Yes
Pujehun	PO	129.02	D4	129.02	Yes
Regent	PA	131.03	D4	131.03	Yes
Rokupr	PA	135.02	D2	135.02	Yes
Roruks	PA	137.01	D2	137.01	Yes
Rotifunk	PO	138.03	D3	138.03	Yes
Russell	PA	139.03	D3	139.03	Yes
Sefadu	PA	140.01	D2	140.01	Yes
Segbwema	PO	141.03	D5	141.01	Yes
Sembehu	PO	142.01	D3	142.01	Yes
Serabu	PA	144.03	D3	144.03	Yes
Shenge	PA	145.06	D4	145.06	Yes
Songo	PA	128.02	D4	128.02	Yes
Sulima	PA	146.04	D4	146.04	Yes
Sumbuyah	PO	147.02	D3	147.02	Yes
Taba	PA	149.01	D1	149.01	Yes
Tiama	PA	151.01	D3	151.01	Yes
Waterloo	PO	156.02	D3	156.02	Yes
Wellington	PA	157.03	D3	157.03	Yes
Wilberforce	PA	158.03	D4	158.03	Yes
Yamandu	PA	159.01	D2	159.01	Yes
Yonibana	PA	162.02	D2	162.02	Yes
York	PA	163.03	D4	163.03	Yes
York Island	PA	164.03	D4	164.03	Yes
Yoyema	PA	165.03	D3	165.03	Yes
Bo-Pendembu TPO	TPO	206.02	D5	206.02	Yes
Freetown-Bo TPO	TPO	202.03	D5	202.03	Yes

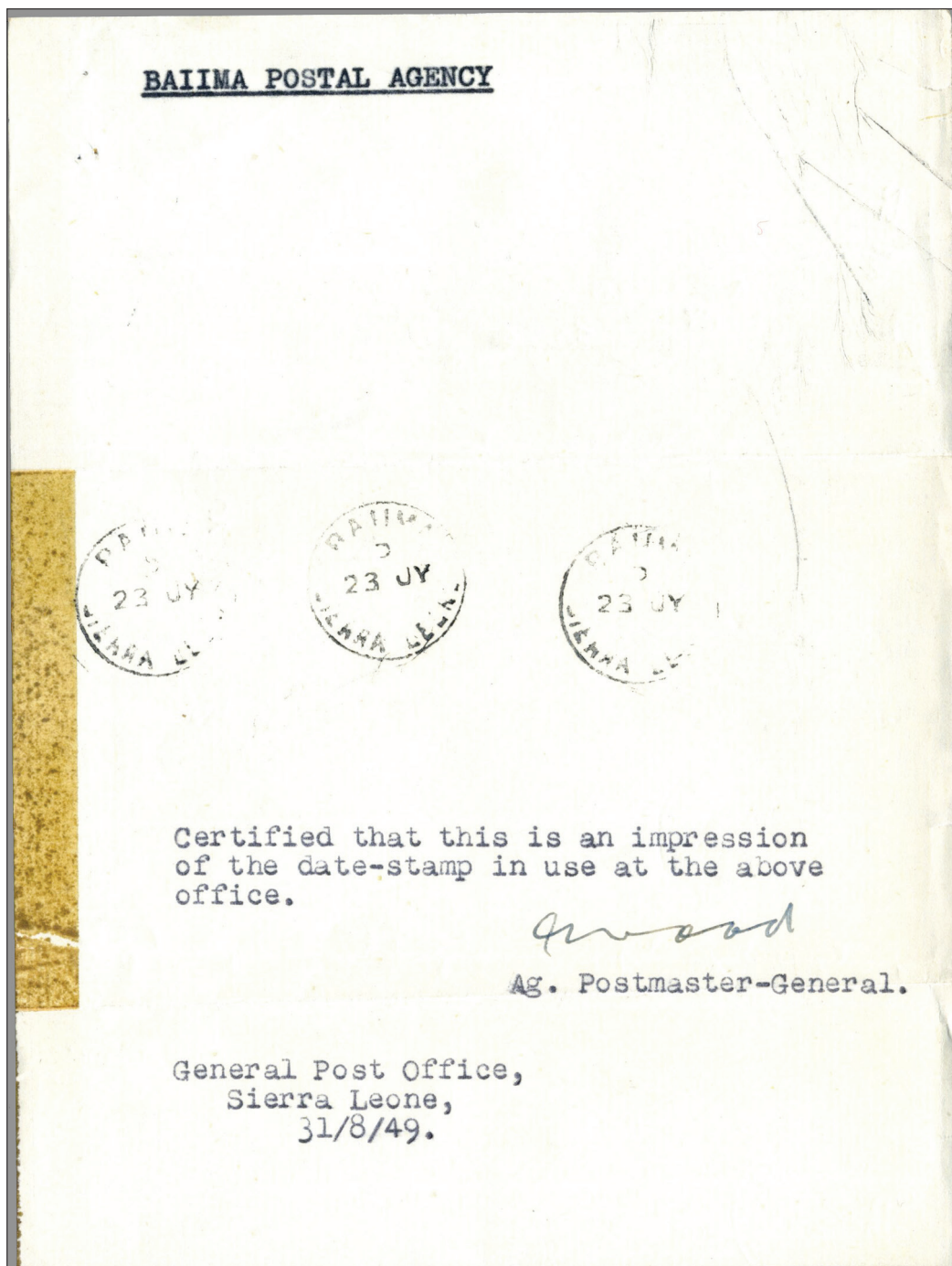
Aberdeen



Allen Town



Baiima



Bananas

BANANAS POSTAL AGENCY



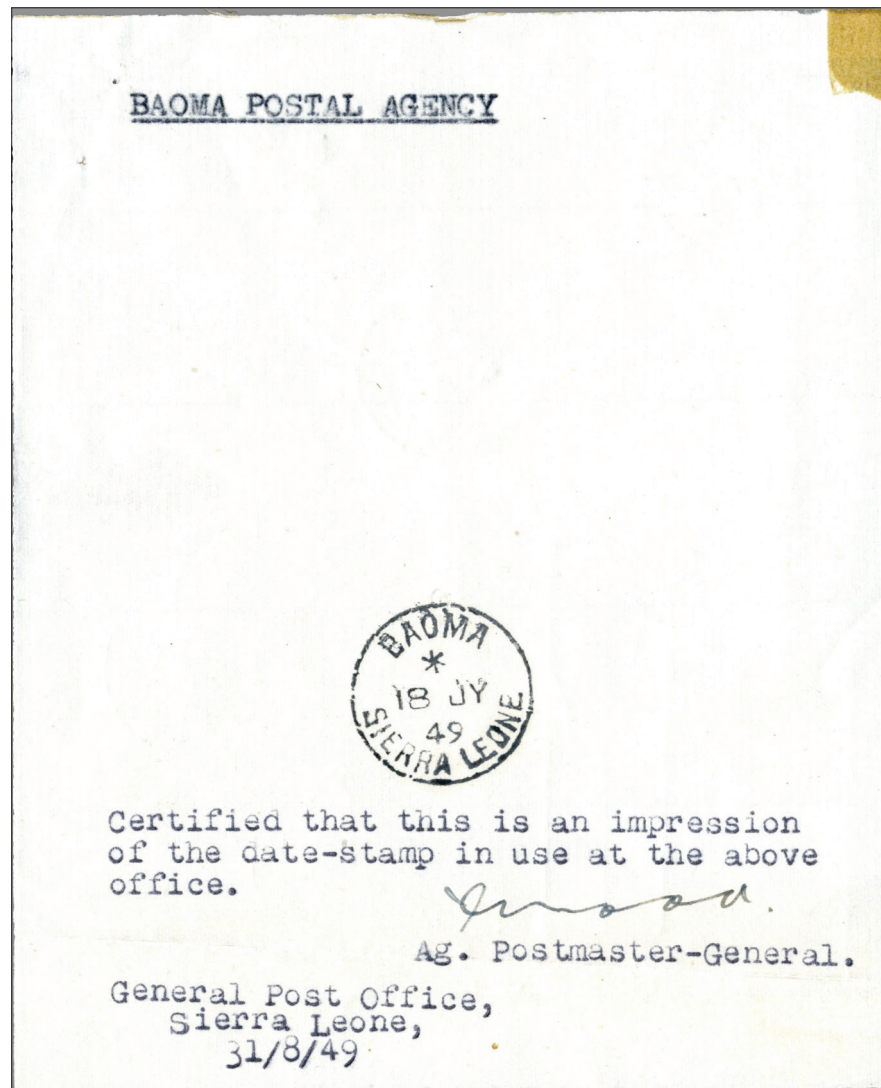
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

Wood

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Baoma



Batkanu

BATKANU POSTAL AGENCY

02.7
New



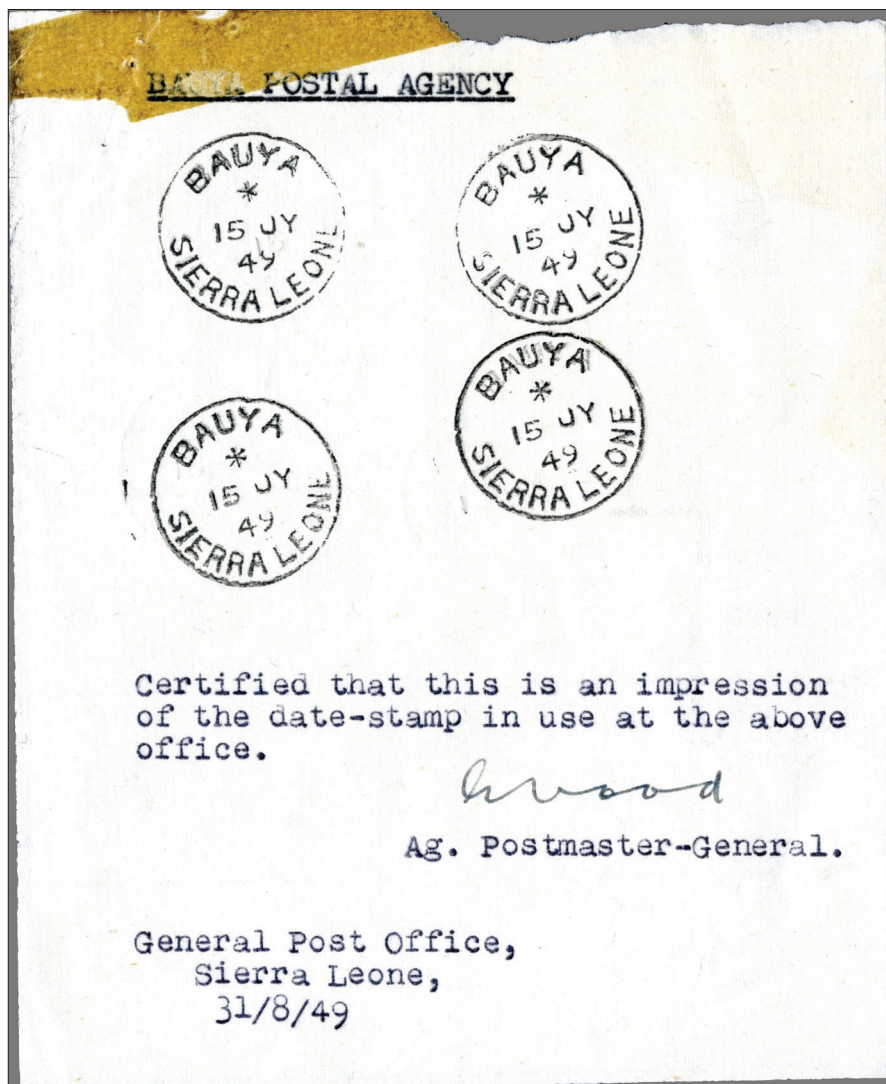
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely of the Agent Postmaster-General.

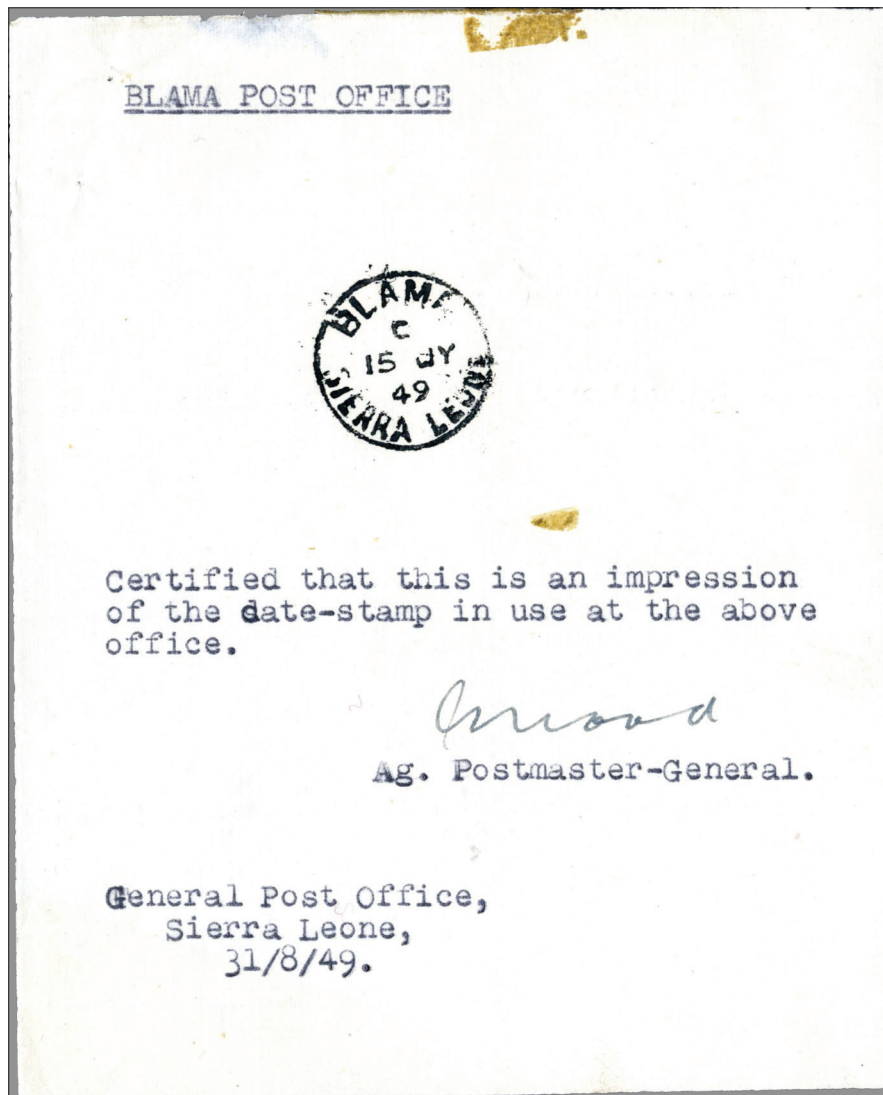
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Bauya



Blama



Bo



Illustration taken from page 8 of *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961*, second edition. Bo is not represented in the accumulation acquired, but examples were used in the published handbooks suggesting that a page did exist for this office..

Boajibu

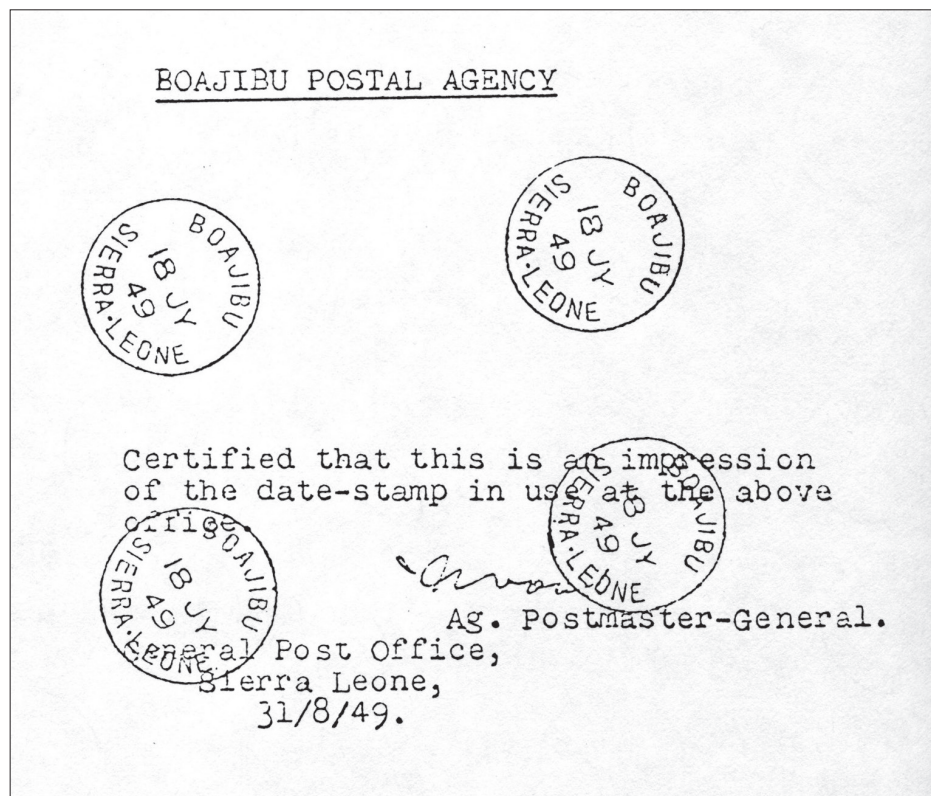
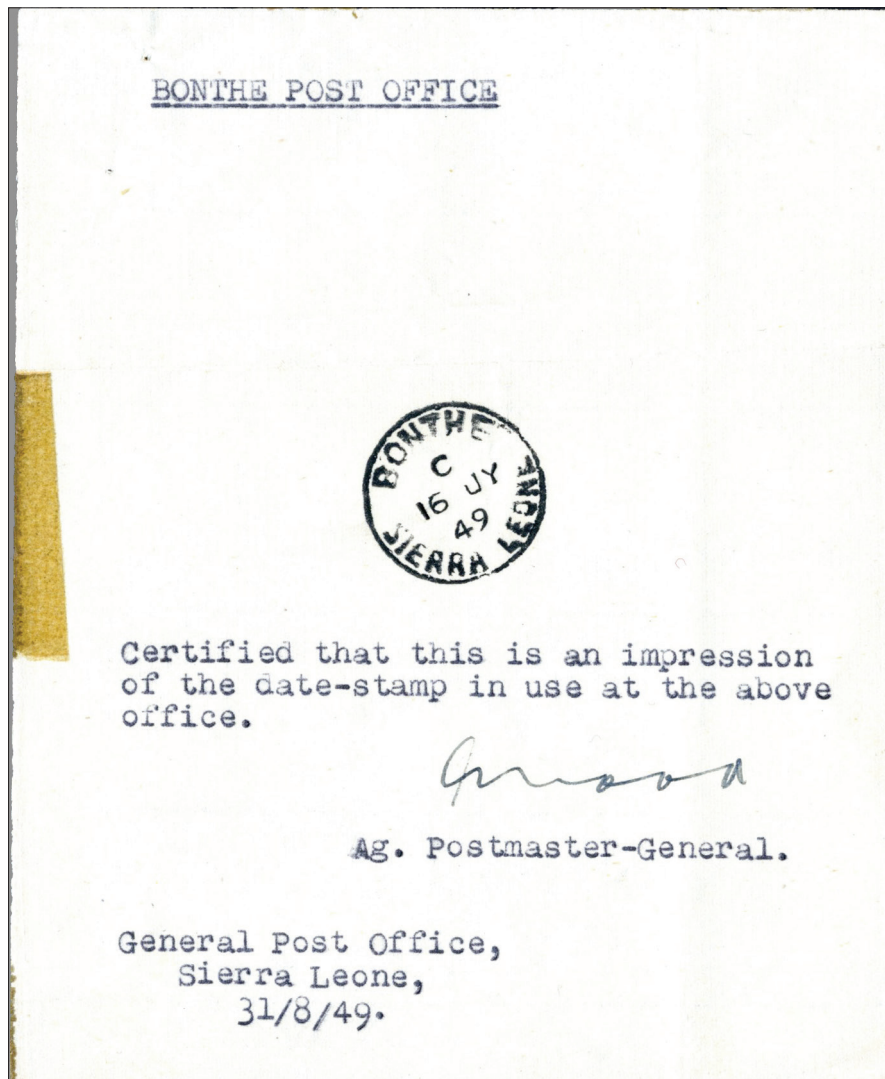
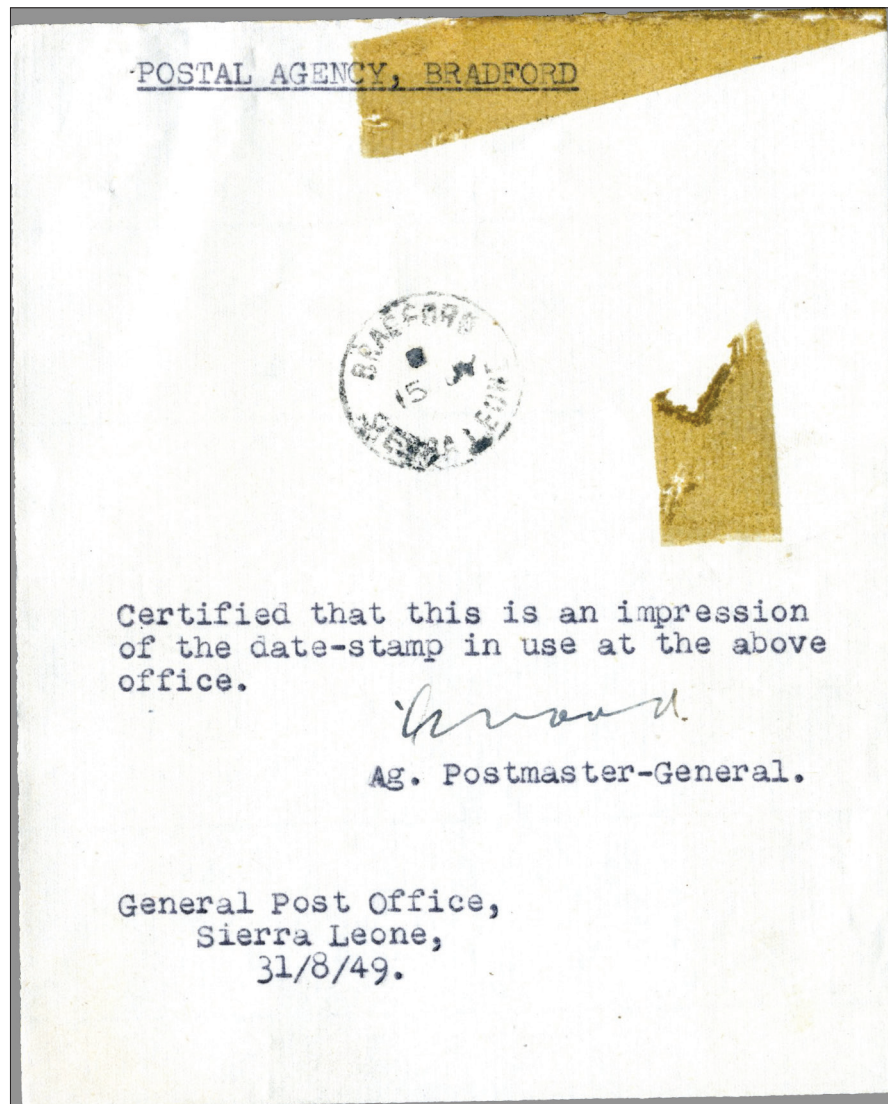


Illustration taken from page 8 of *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961* by F.L. Walton (WASC, 1990). This particular office was not in the accumulation acquired.

Bonthe



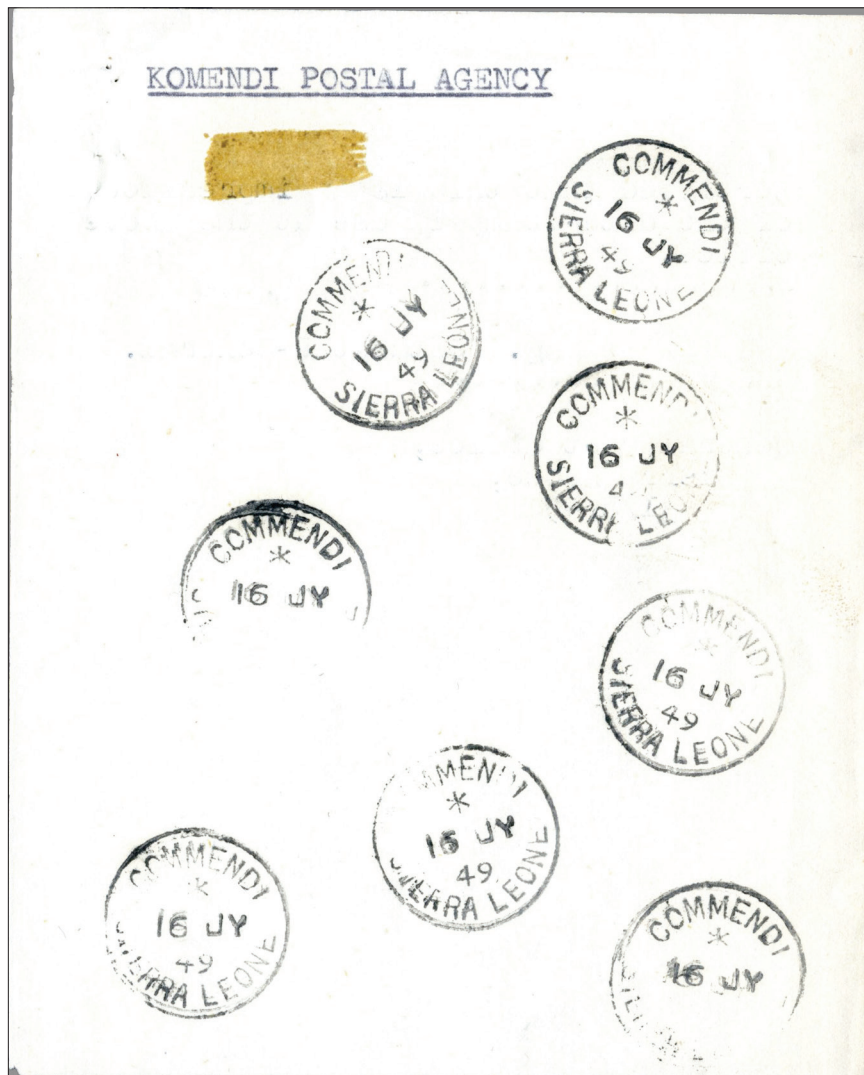
Bradford



Cline Town

Cline Town is not represented in the accumulation acquired, nor have any examples been seen.

Commendi



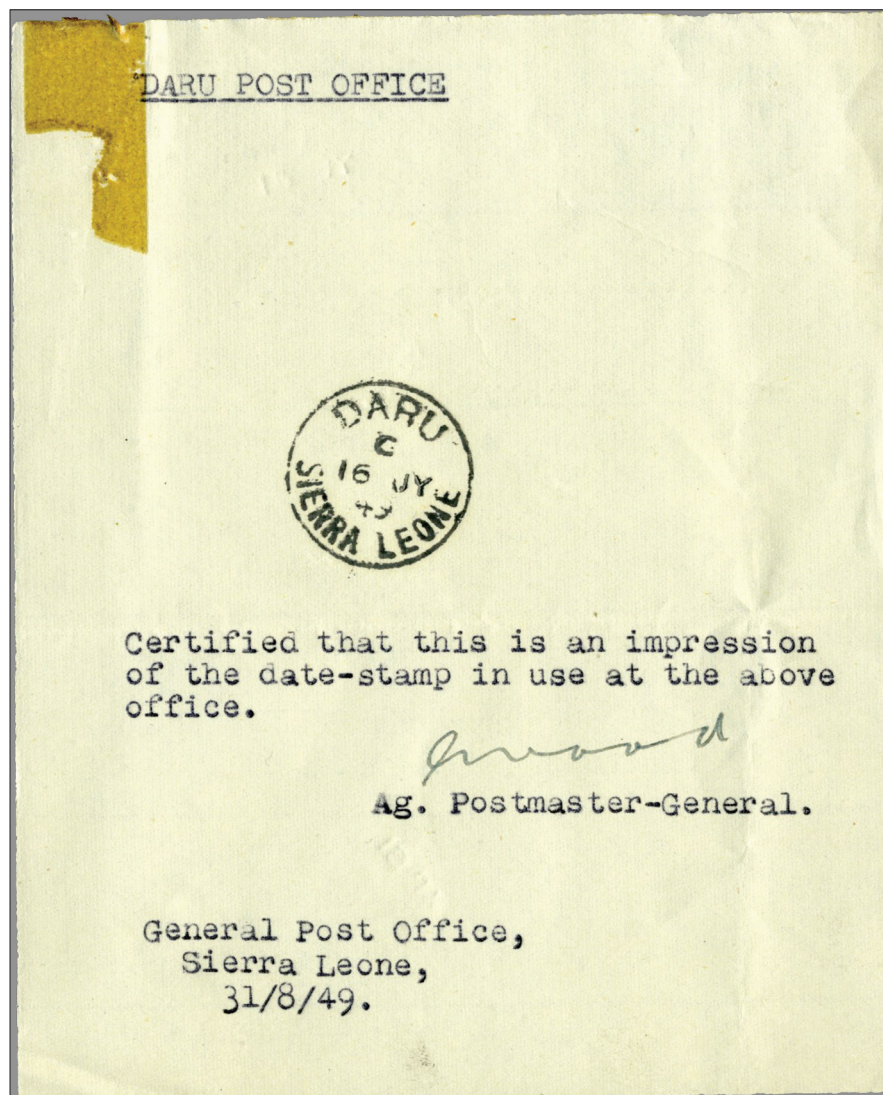
Commendi, continued

Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

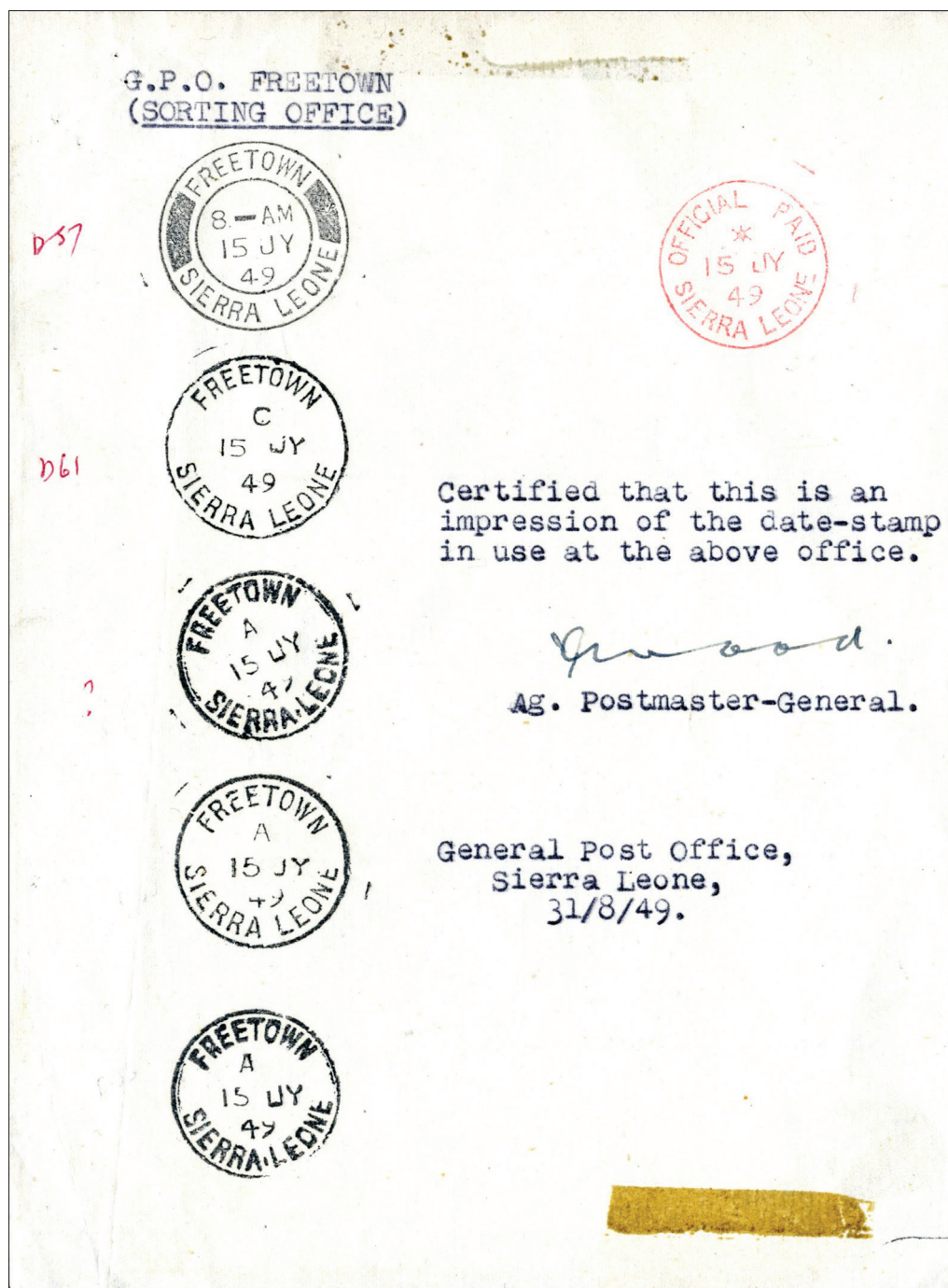
[Signature]
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49

Daru



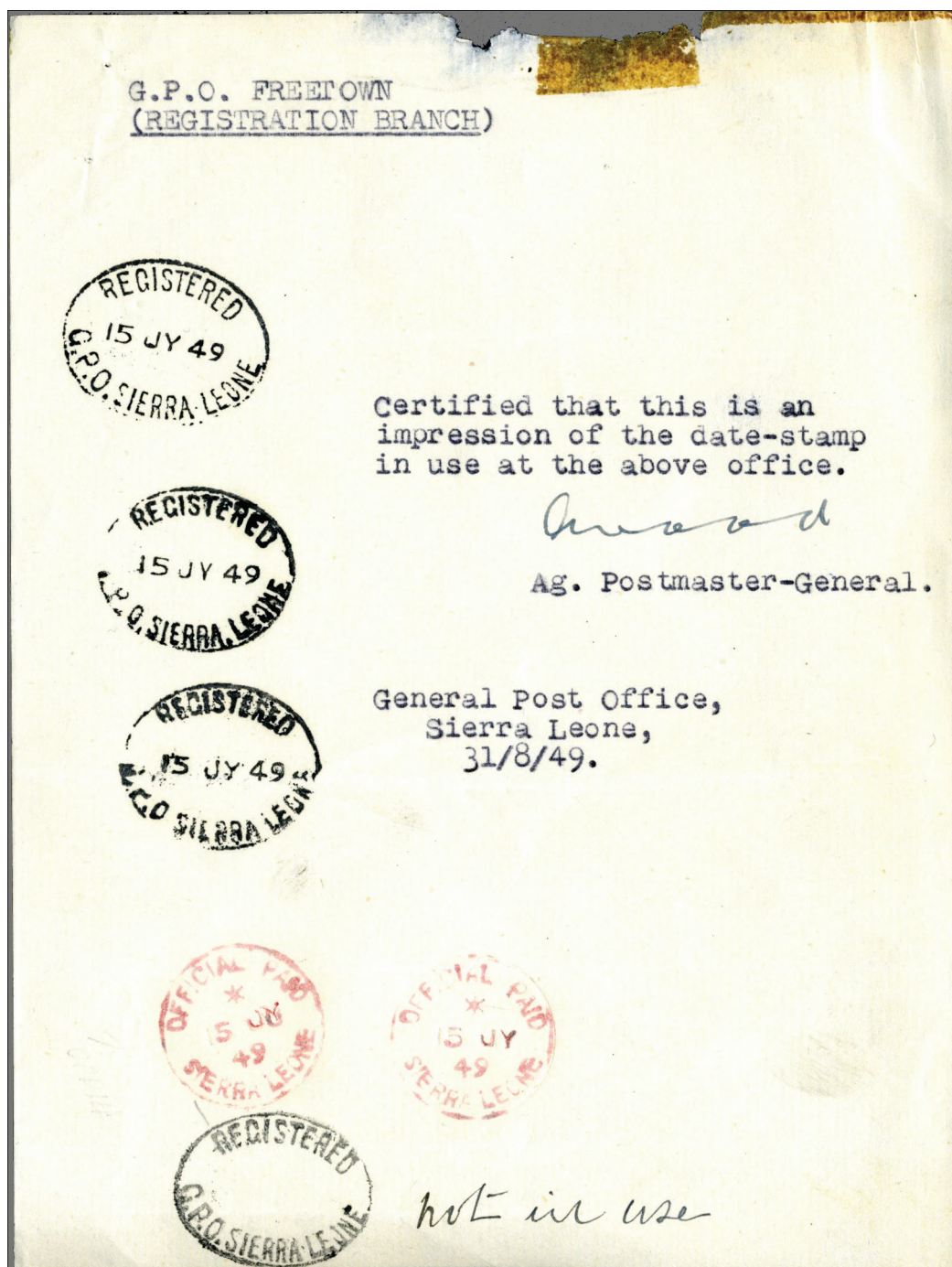
Freetown GPO



From top, the five FREETOWN datestamps are Types 035.42, 035.45, 035.36, 035.37 and 035.39. The OFFICIAL PAID datestamp struck in red is Type 035.99.

These handstamps are described by Philip Quirk in Bibliography [2 and 3].

Freetown GPO - Registration



From top, the four FREETOWN oval datestamps struck in black are Types 535.18, 535.15, 535.13 and 535.16.

The OFFICIAL PAID datestamps struck in red are not listed in the standard handbooks. The spacing between the 'S' of Sierra and the 'O' of OFFICIAL is not the same as in Type 035.99. These handstamps are designated Type 035.99B and described by Philip Quirk in Bibliography [2 and 3].

Garrison Mail

G.P.O. FREETOWN
(H.M. FORCES COUNTER)



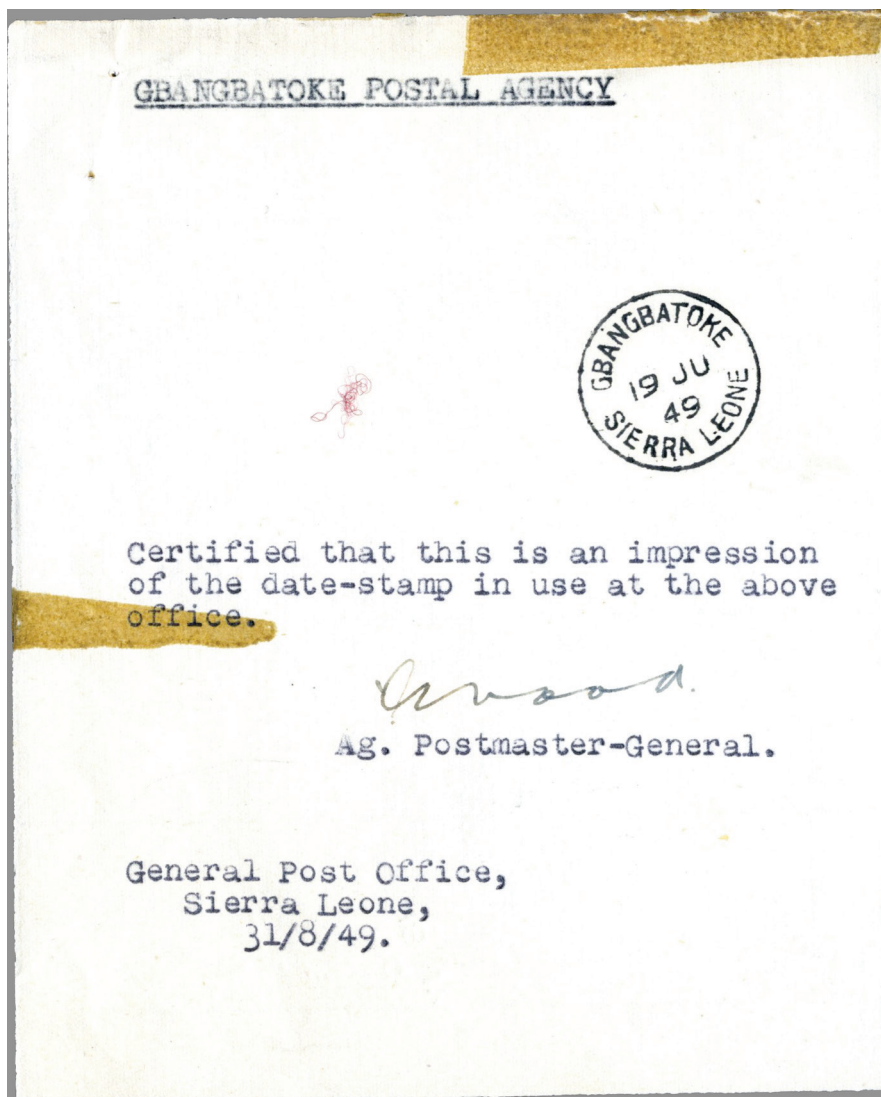
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

Wood

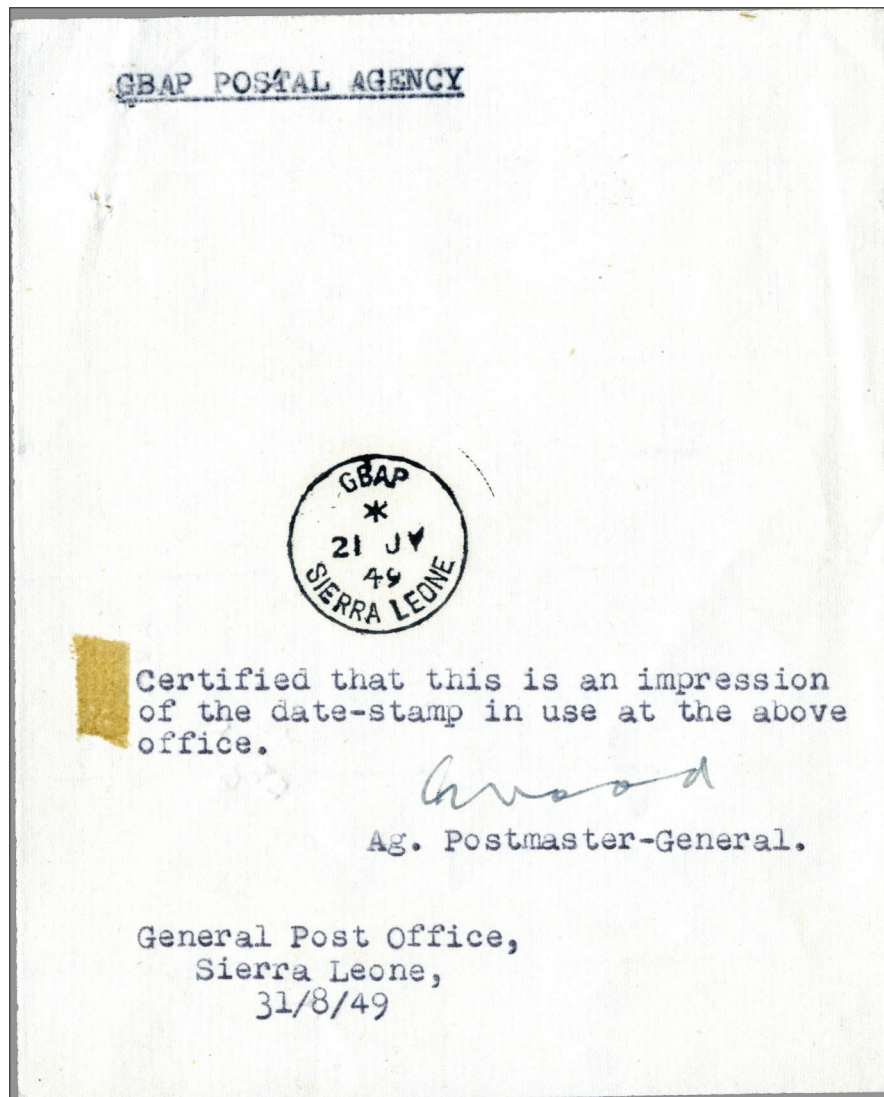
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49

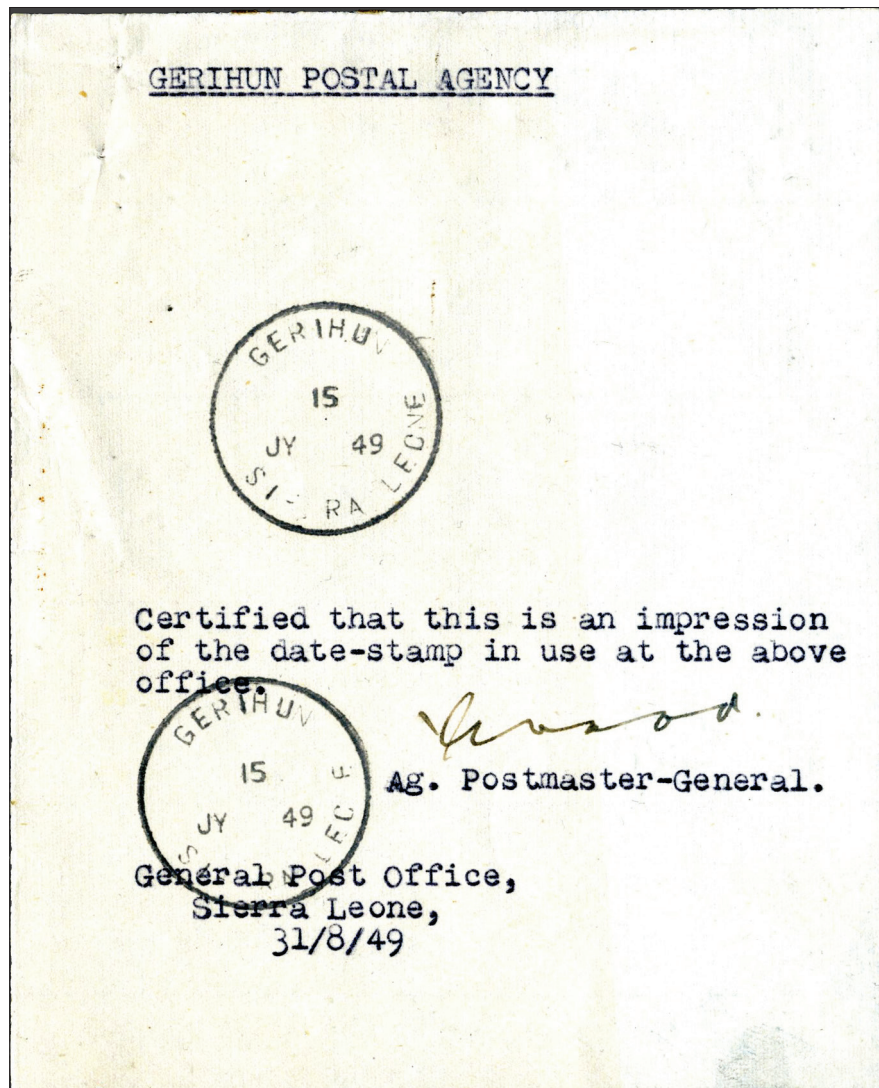
Gbangbatoke



Gbap

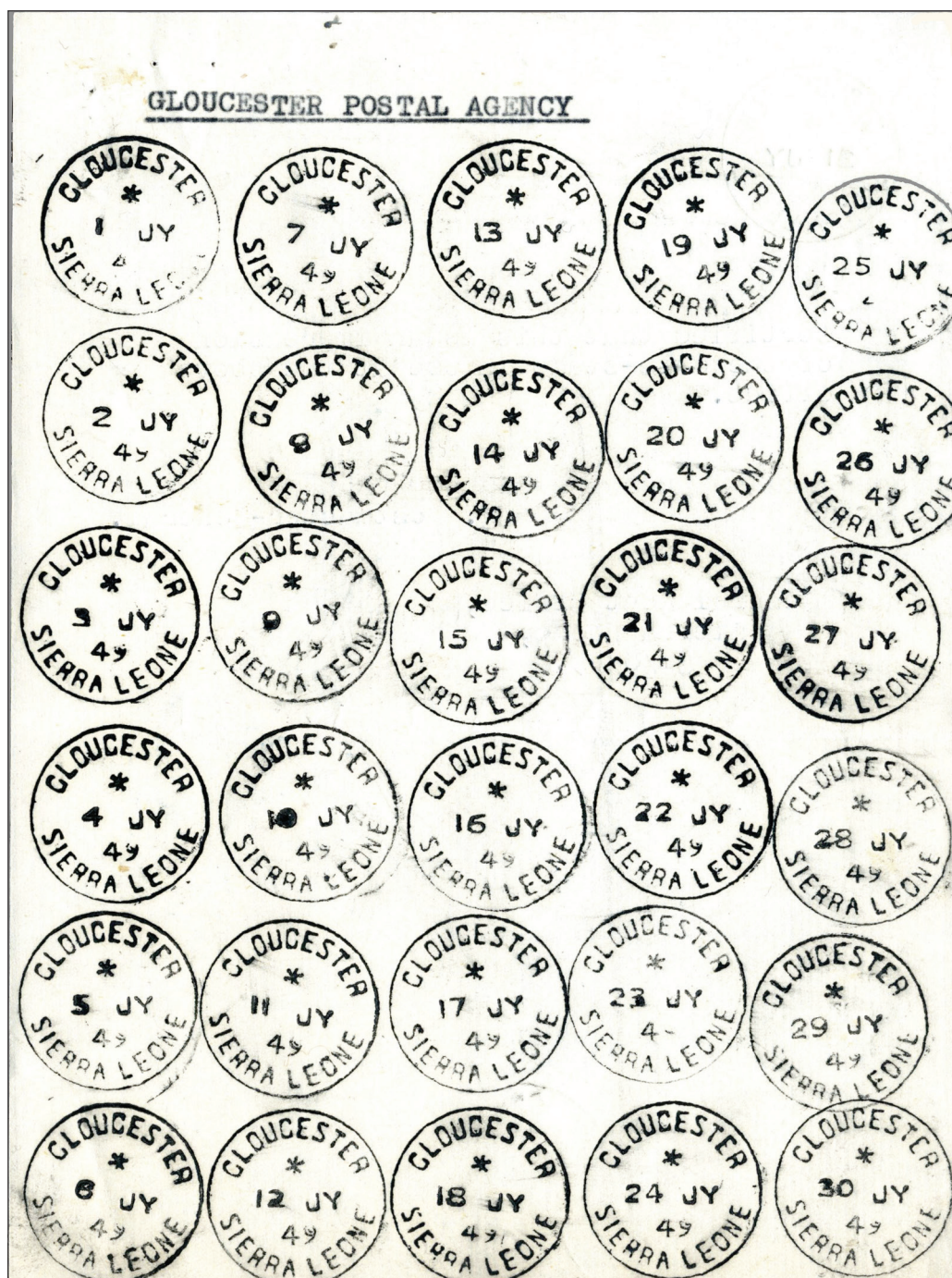


Gerihun

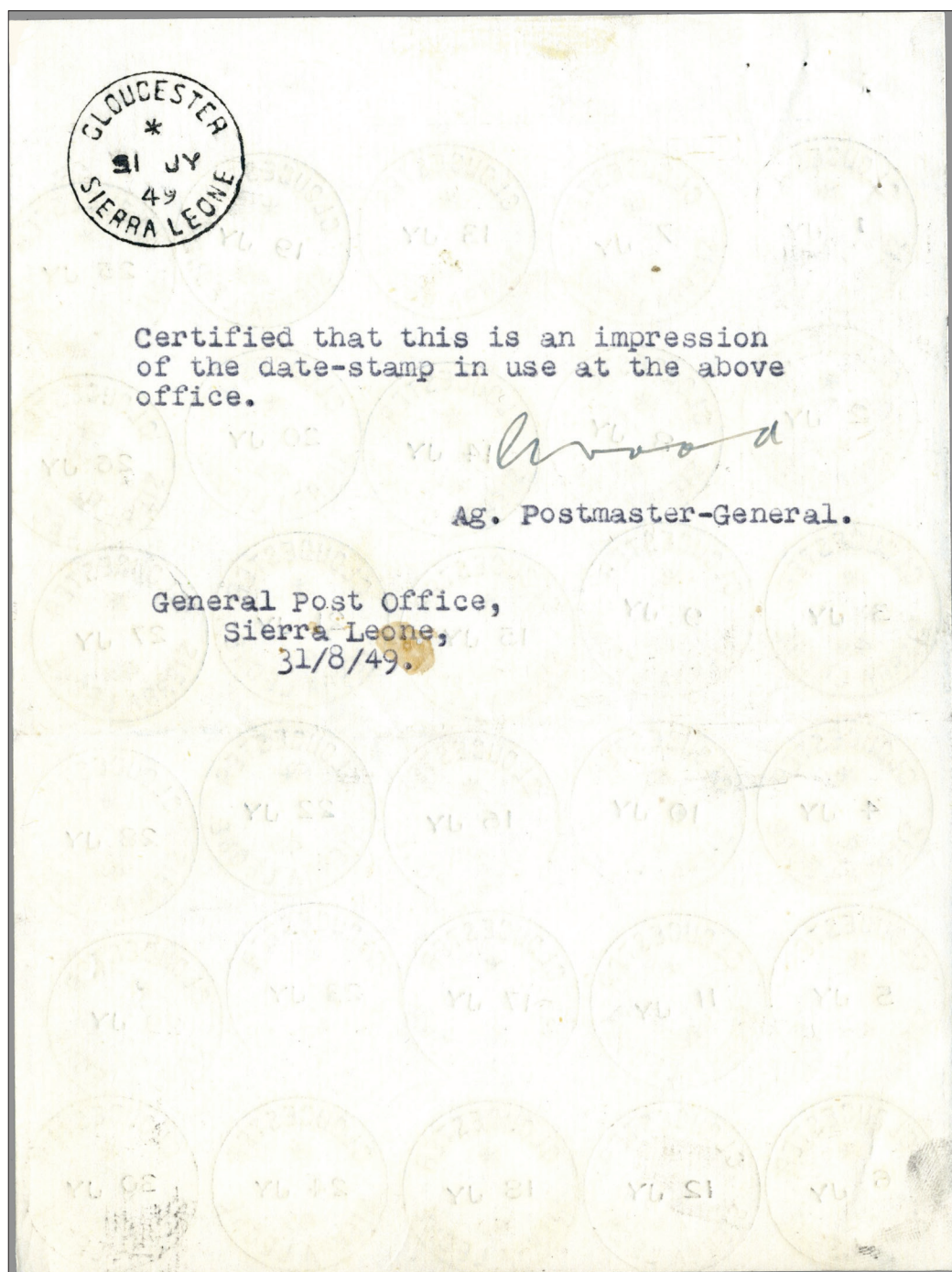


This is the only skeleton handstamp in the collection. Note the day number '15' in the position normally associated with a code, and that the 'N' of 'GERIHUN' is weak; this postmark is recorded with 'Missing N' in *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961*, 2nd edition (Bibliography [6]).

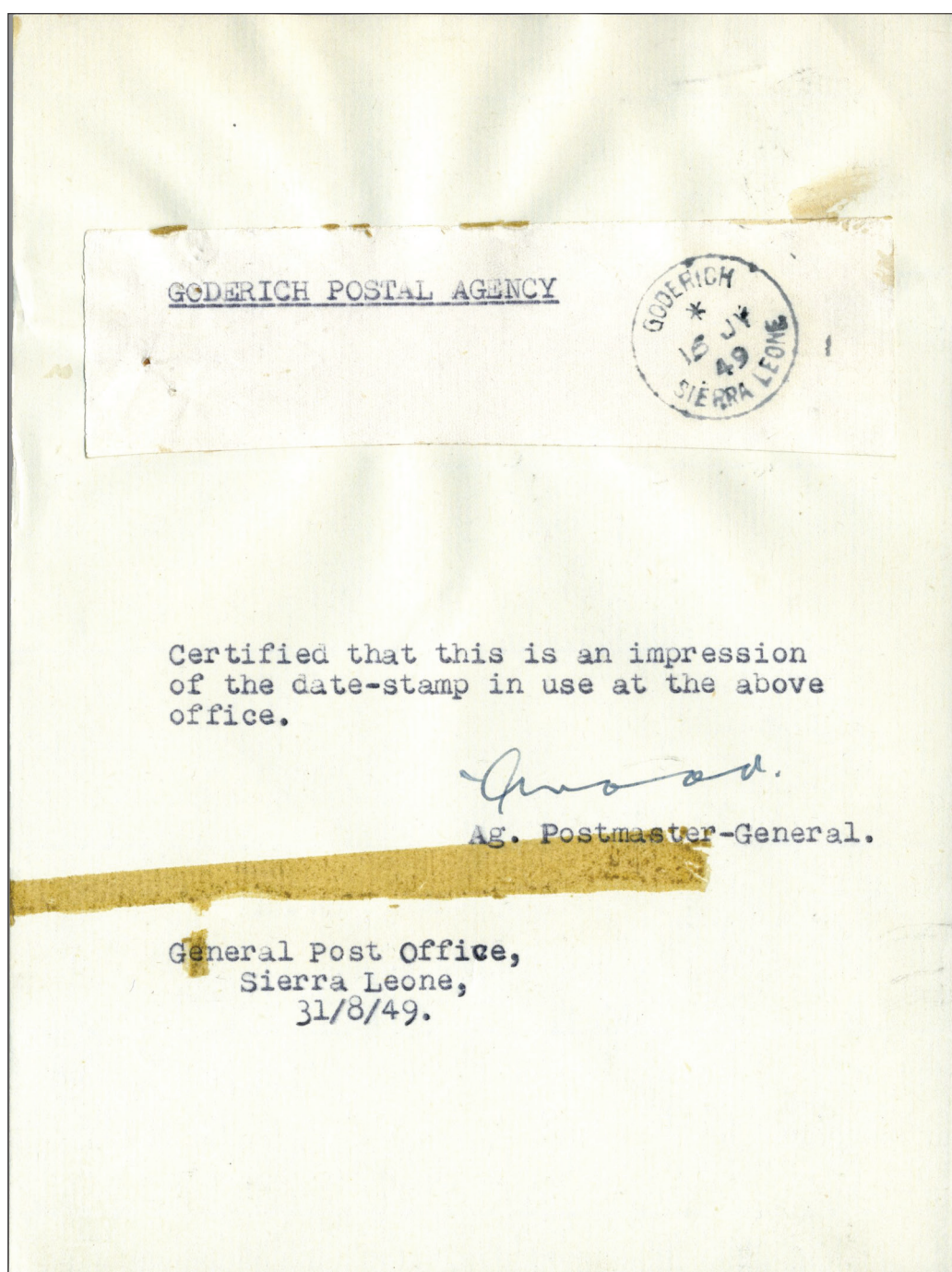
Gloucester



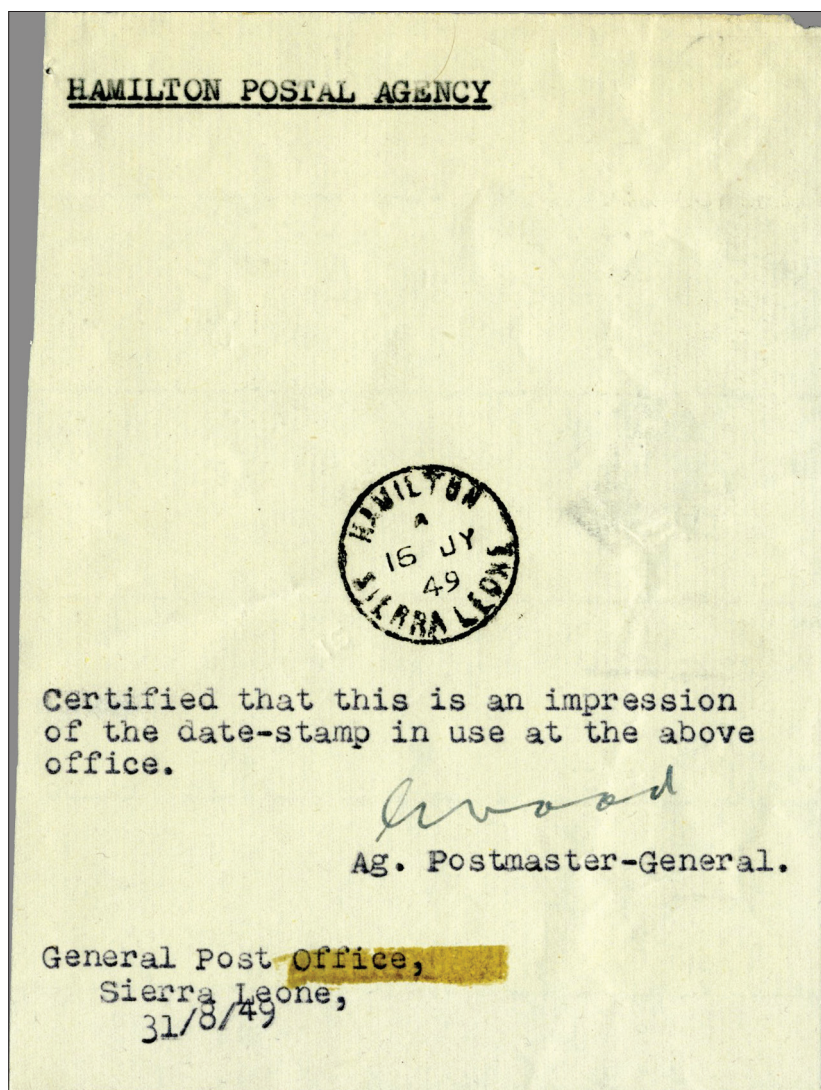
Gloucester, continued



Goderich



Hamilton



Hangha

HANGHA POSTAL AGENCY



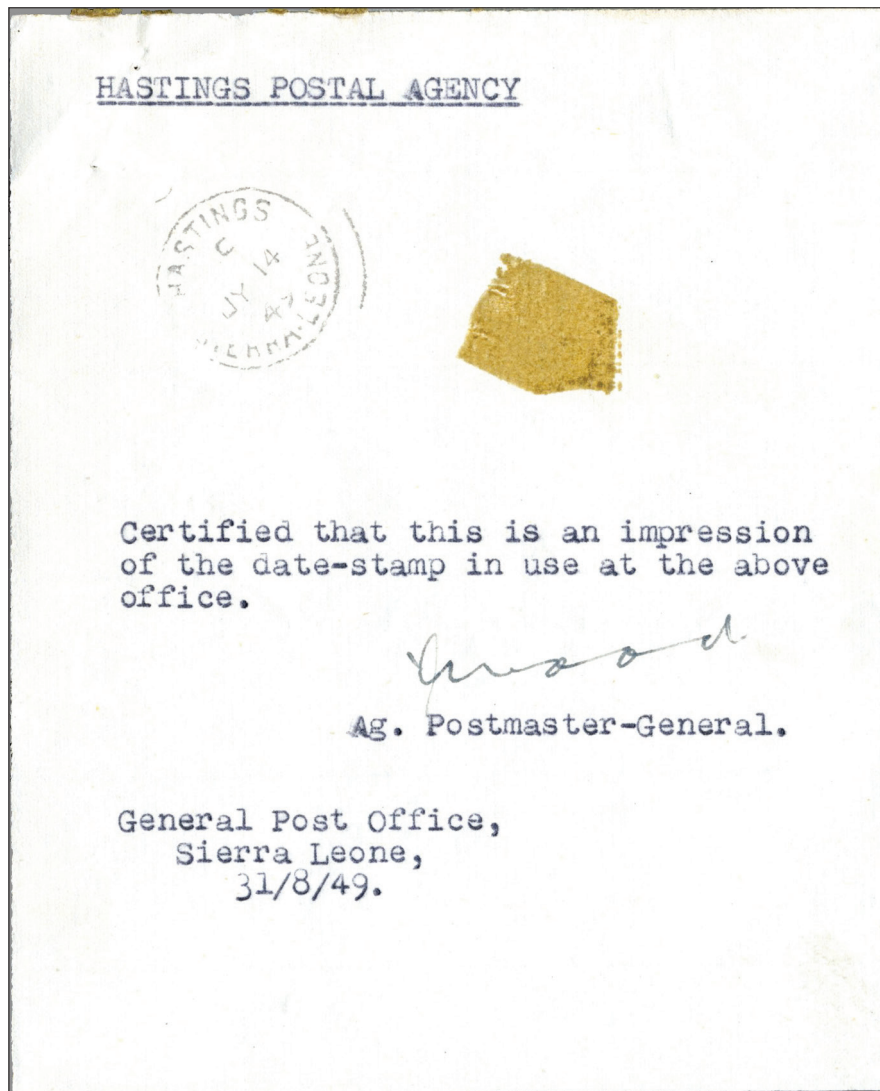
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely of the Ag. Postmaster-General.

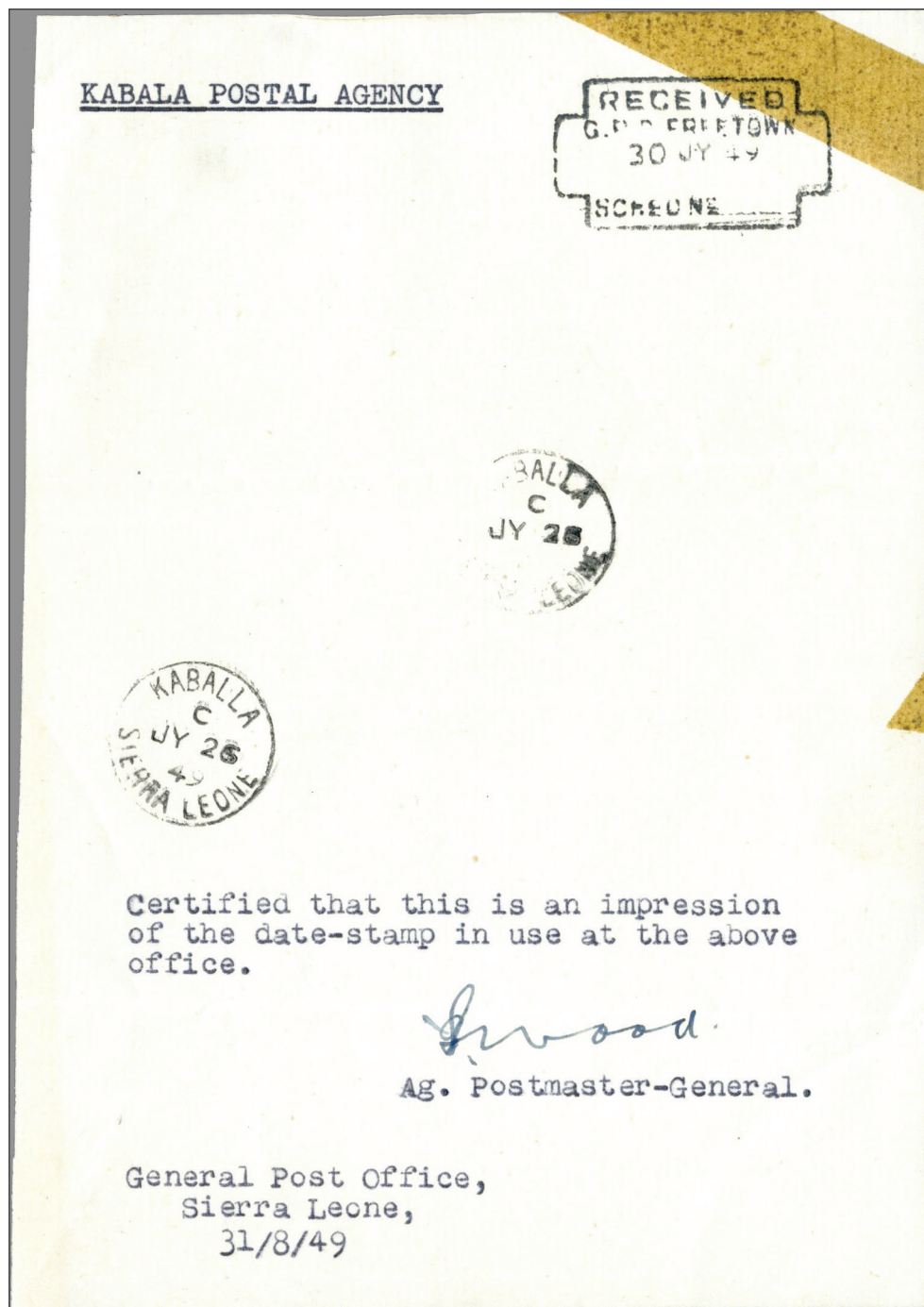
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

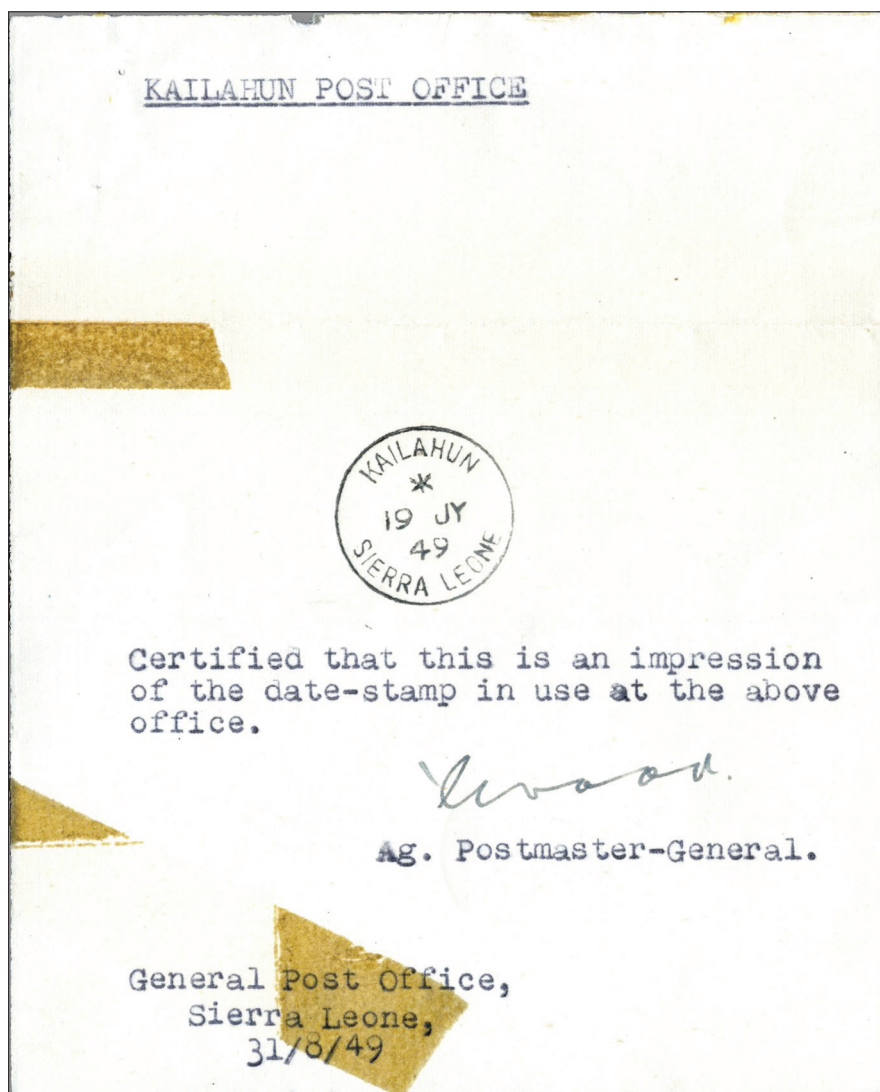
Hastings



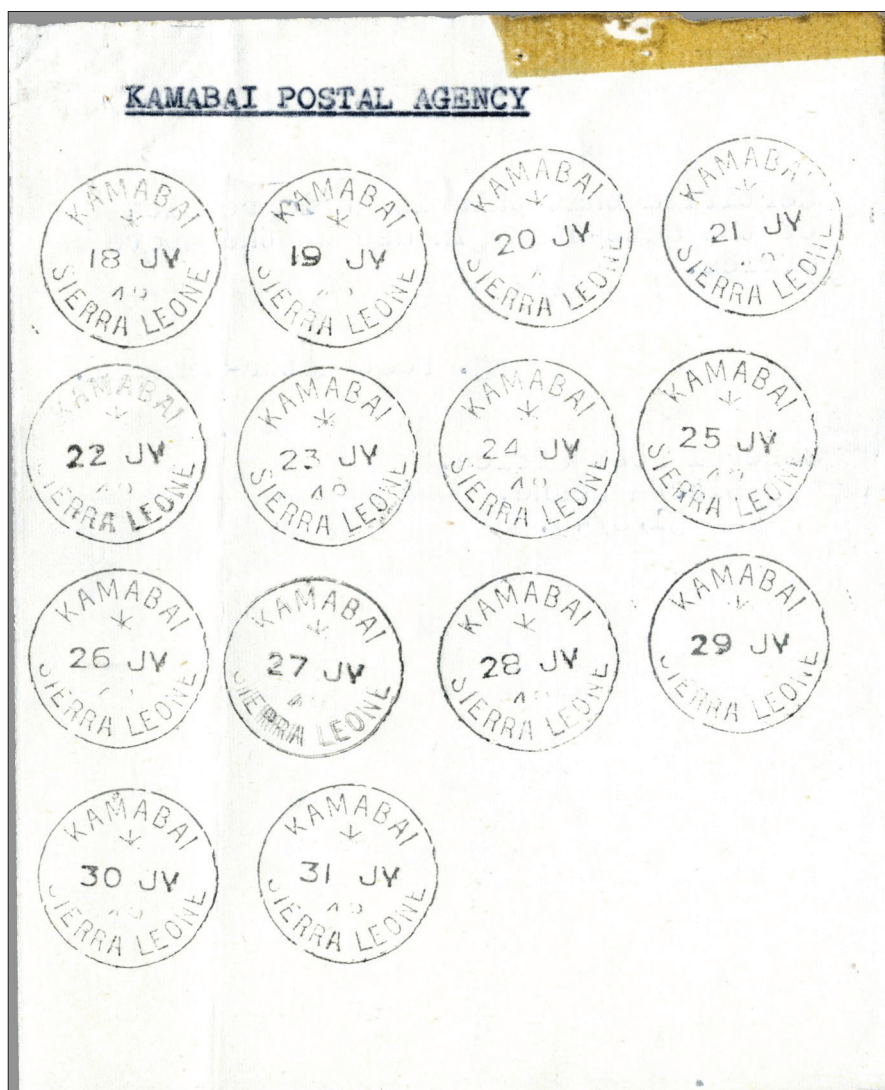
Kaballa



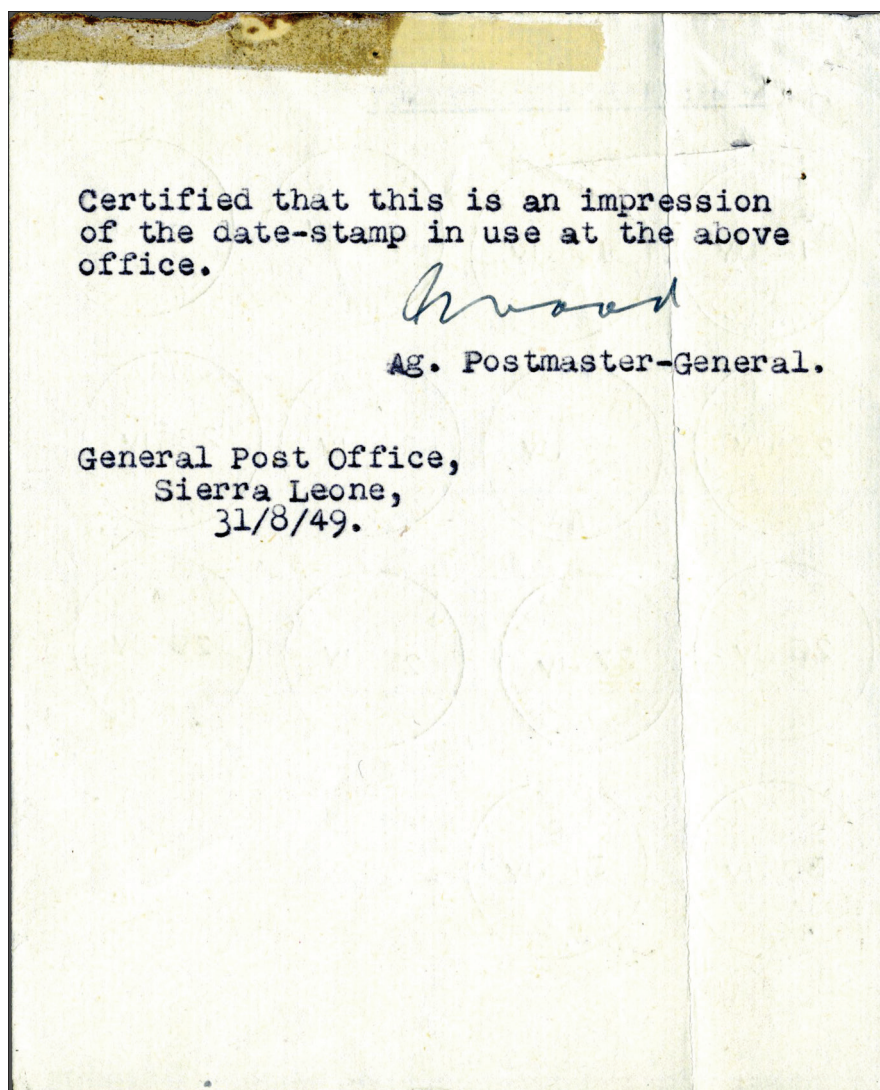
Kailahun



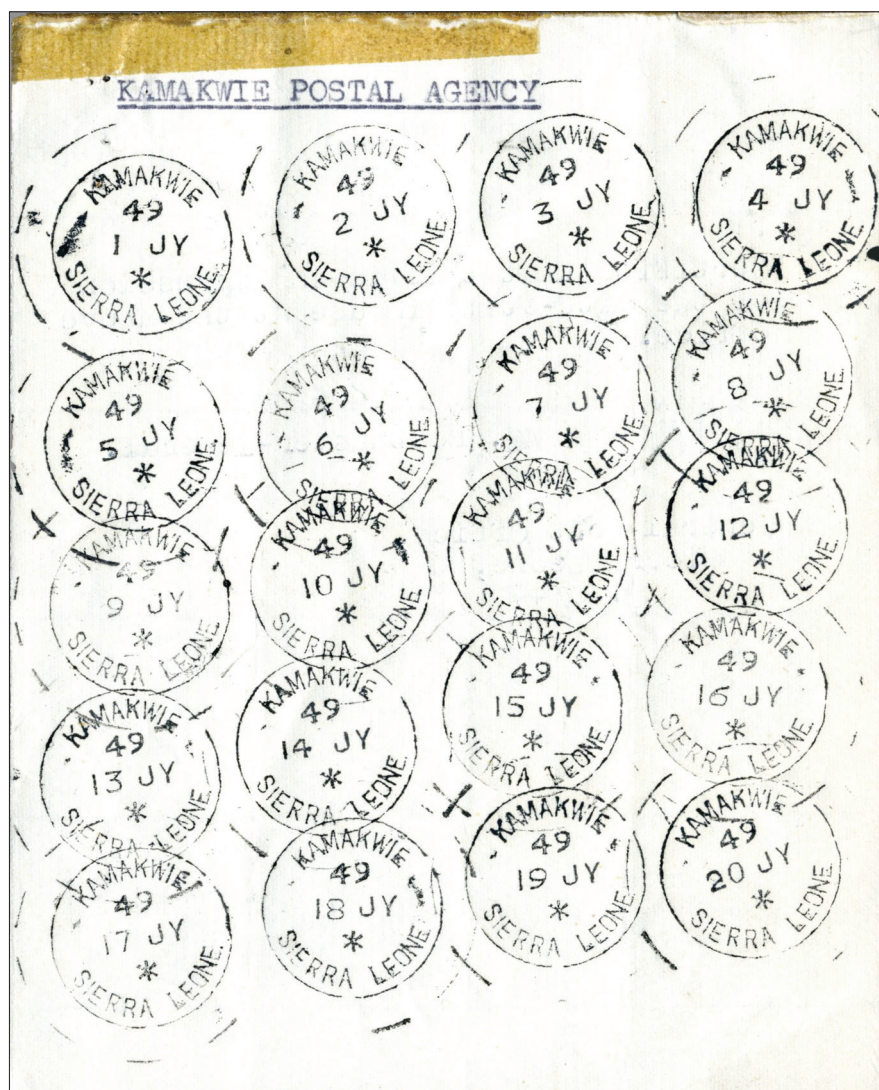
Kamabai



Kamabai, continued



Kamakwie



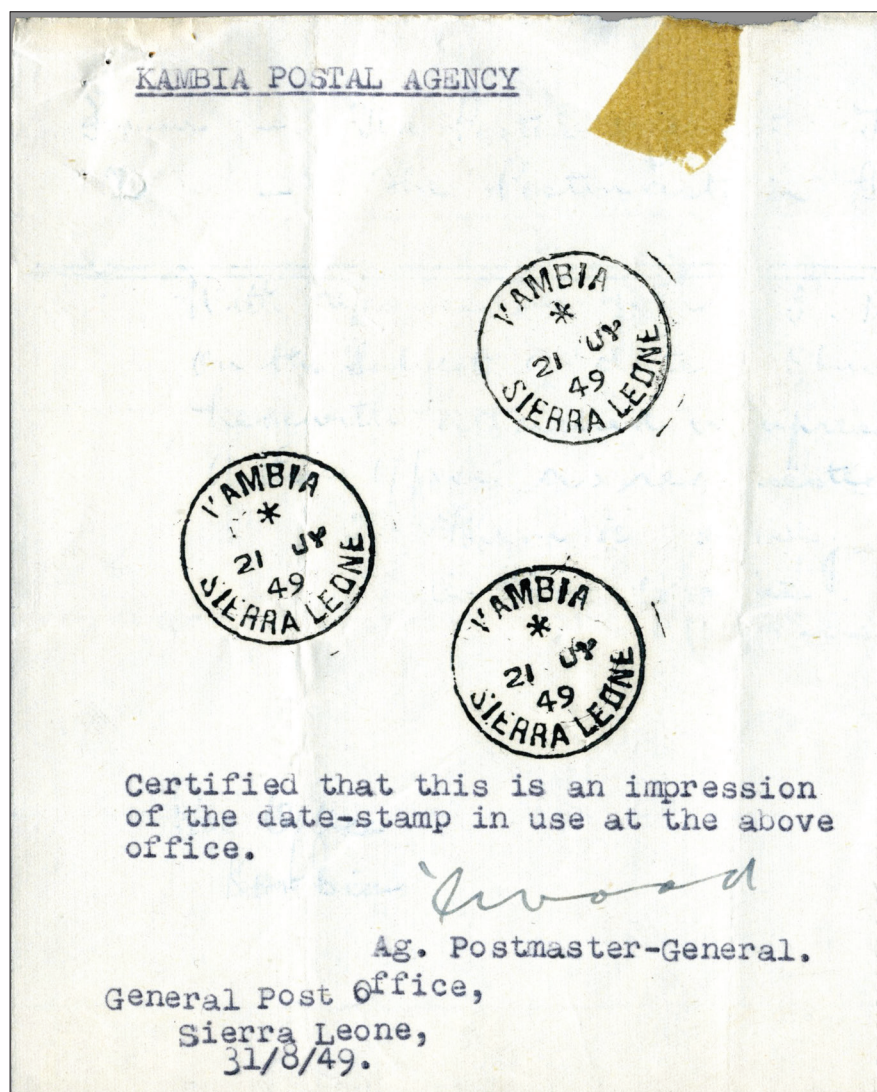
Kamakwie, continued

Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

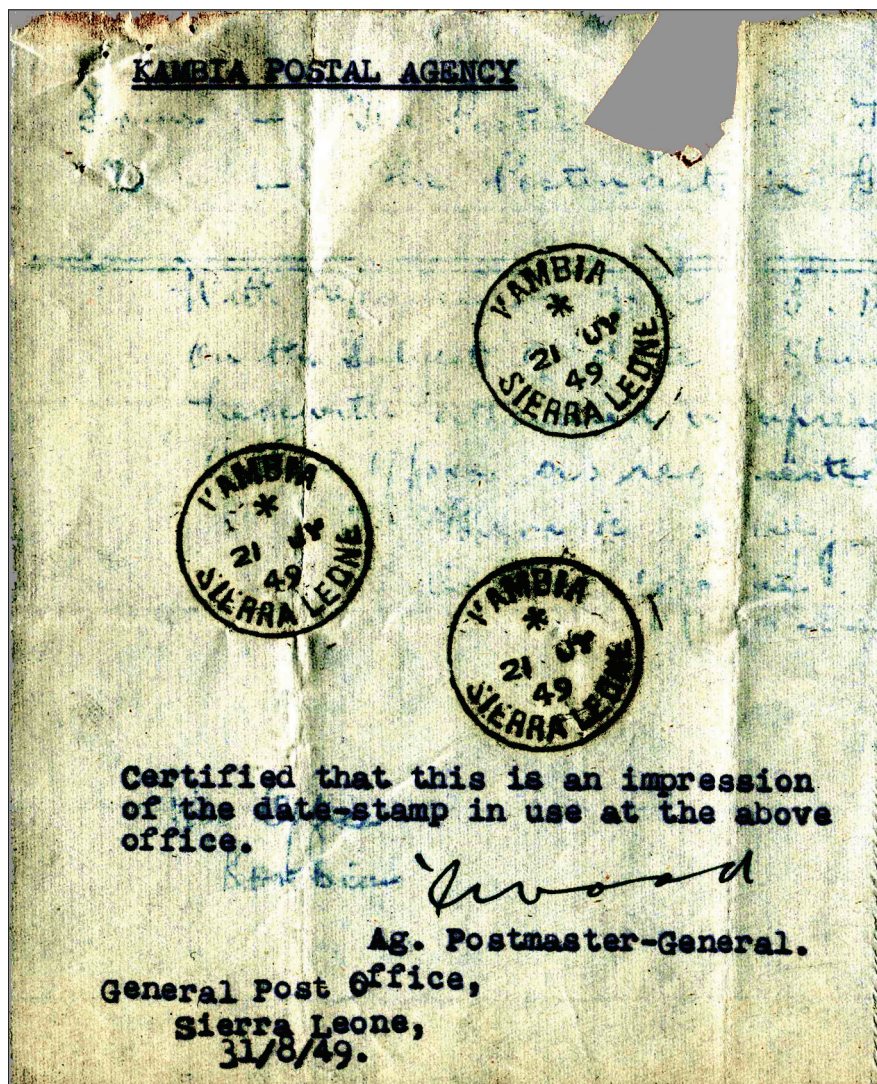
Wood
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49

Kambia



Kambia, continued



The example from Kambia has faint manuscript writing on the paper which appears to be some sort of transfer from a carbon copy. The above image has been digitally enhanced to allow some of the text to be decipherable. If anyone can read the note then the author of this booklet would be delighted to hear from them.

Kangahun

KANGAHUN POSTAL AGENCY



Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

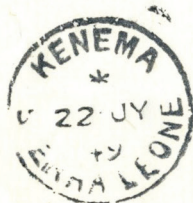
Wood

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Kenema

KENEMA POST OFFICE



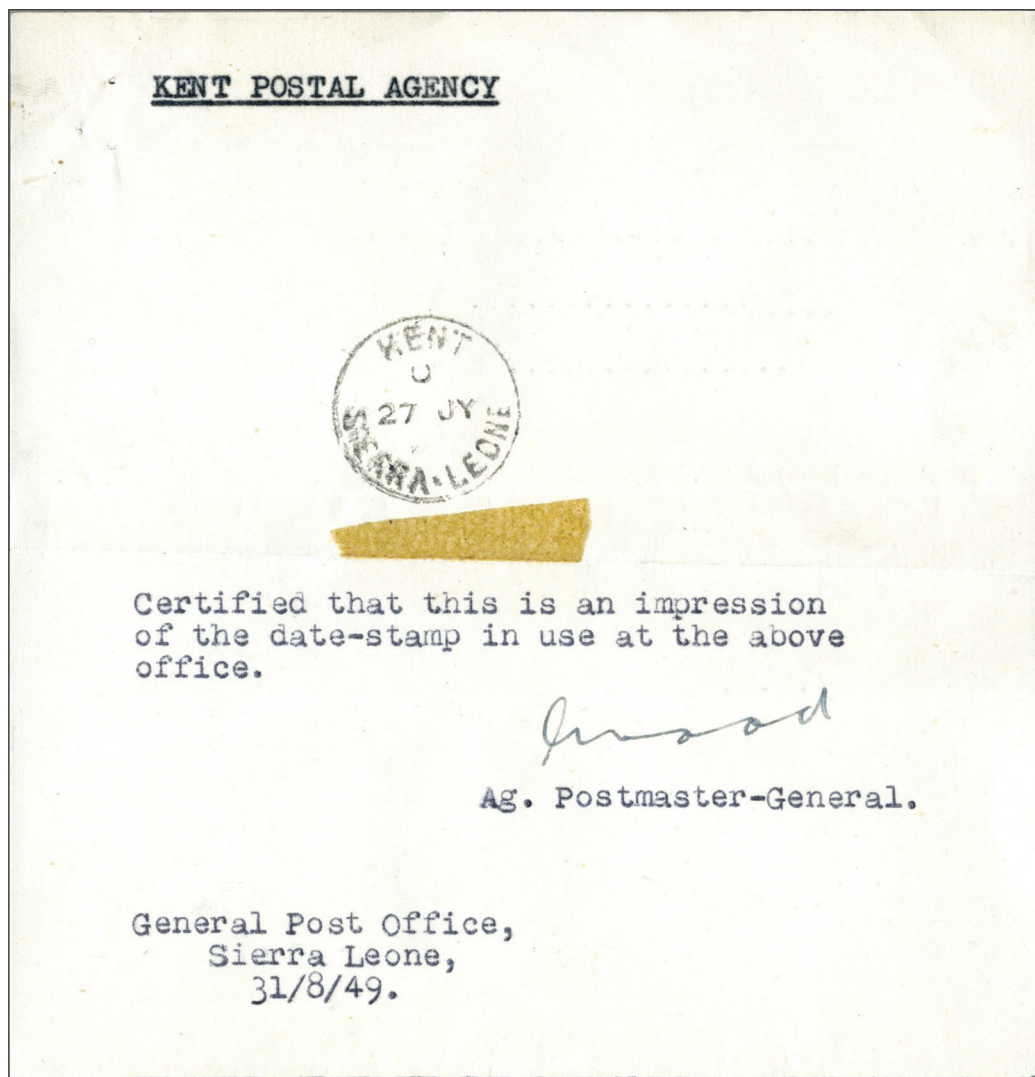
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

Wood.

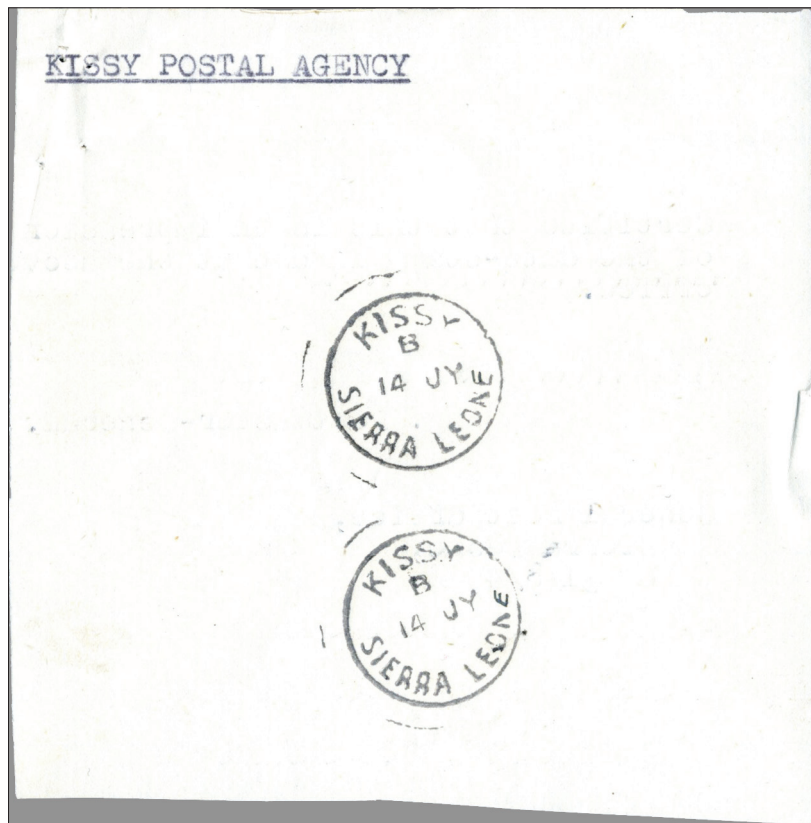
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

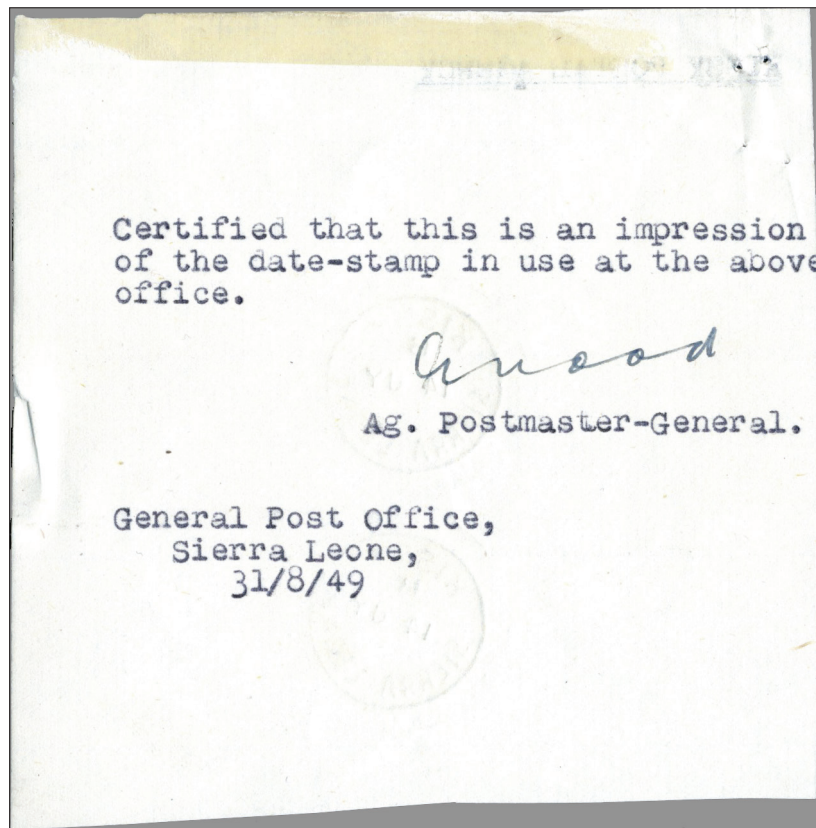
Kent



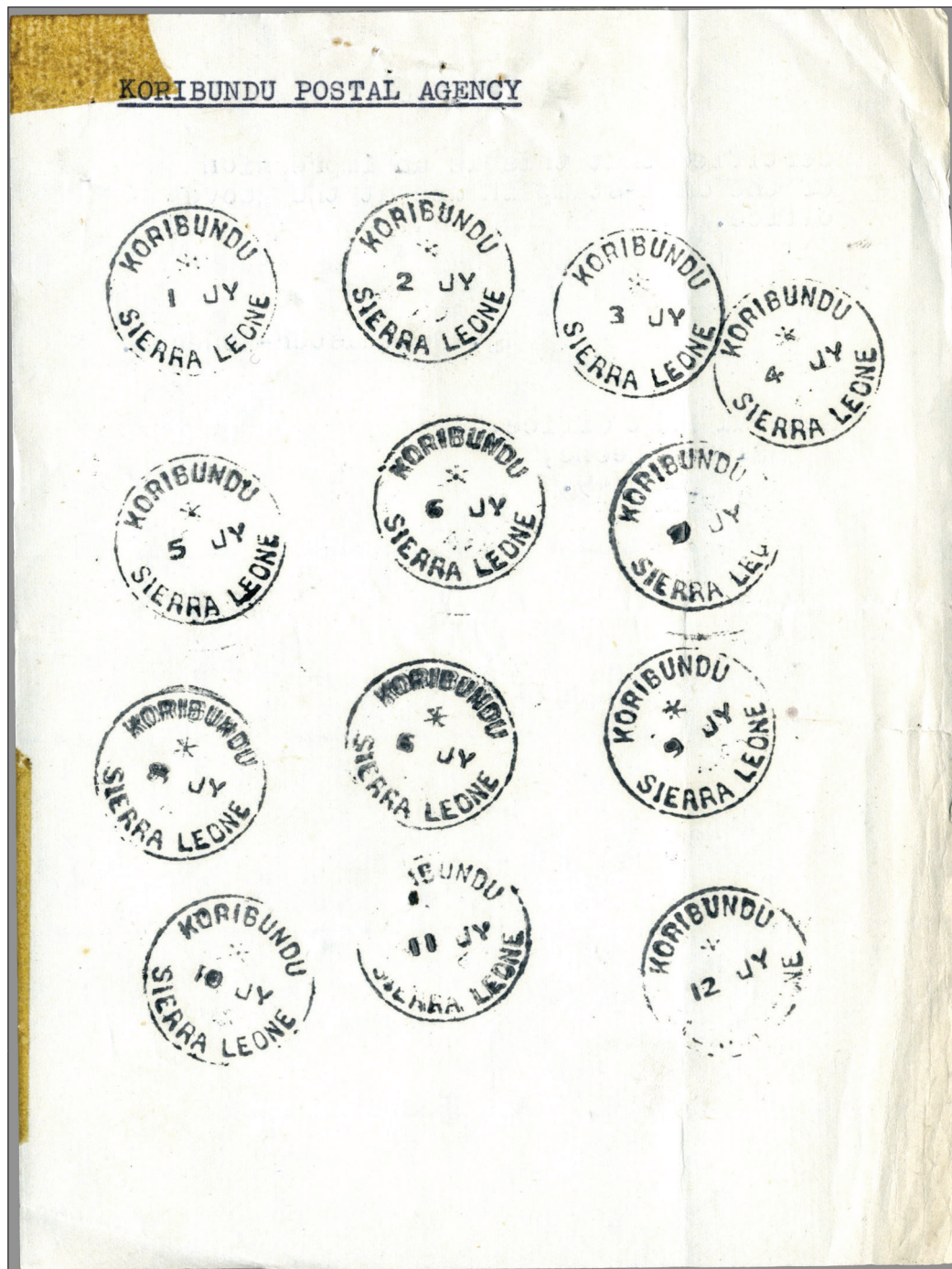
Kissy



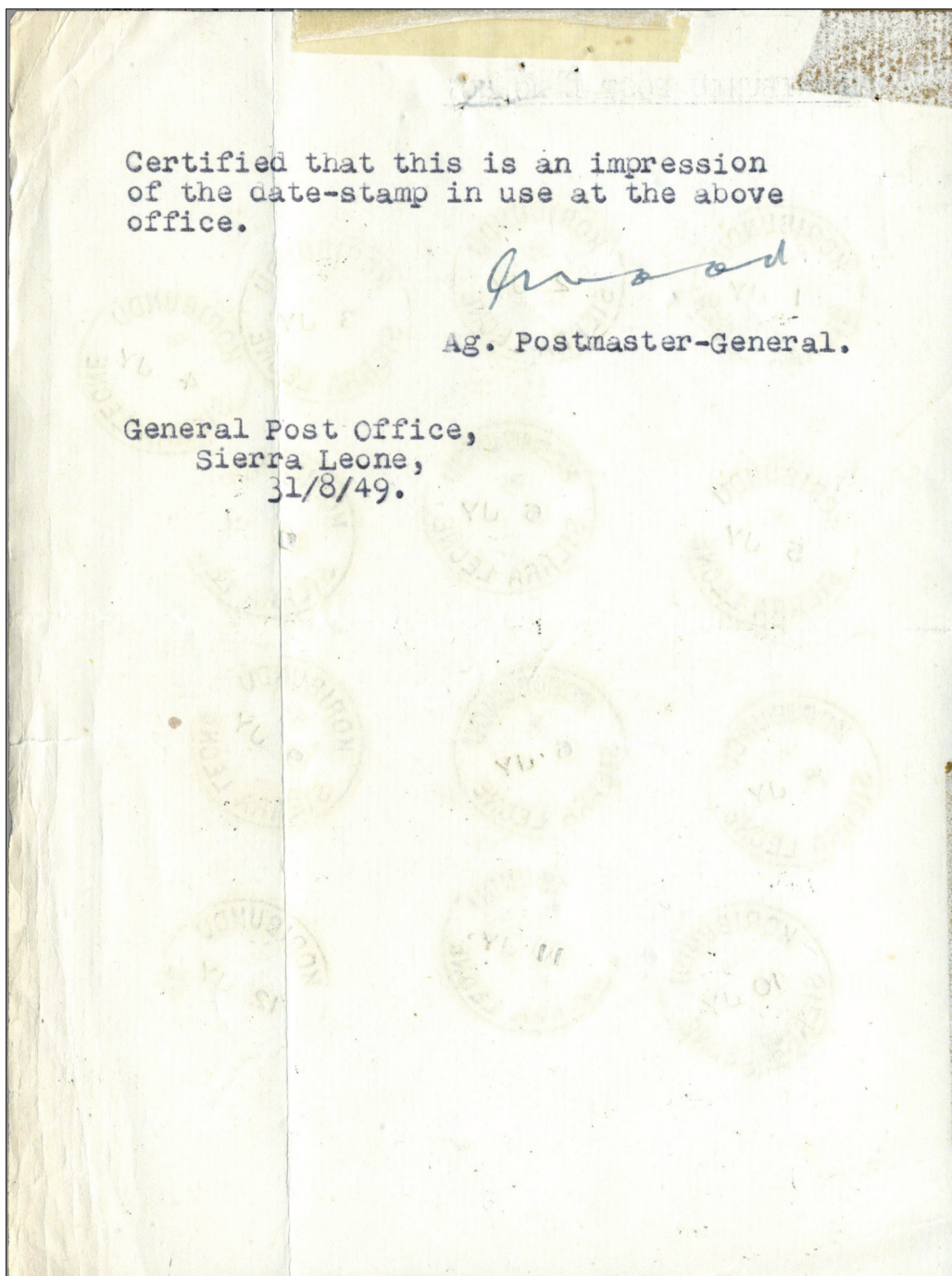
Kissy, continued



Koribundu



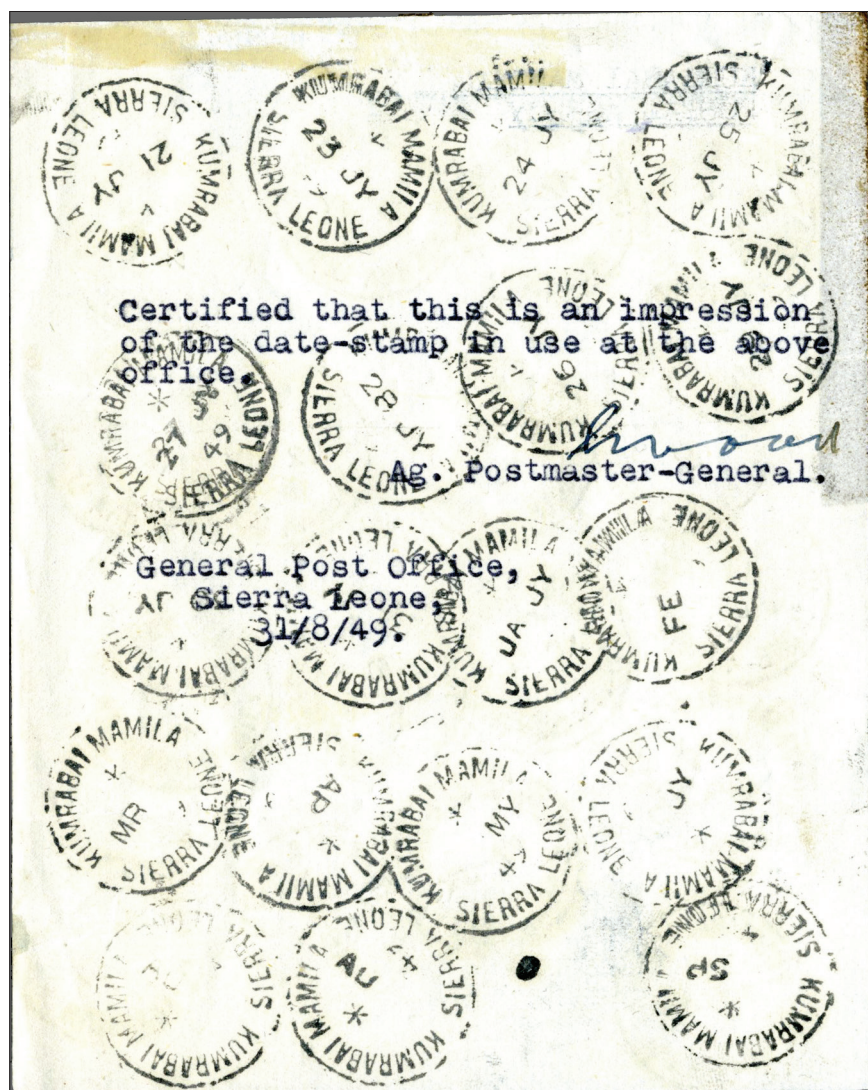
Koribundu, continued



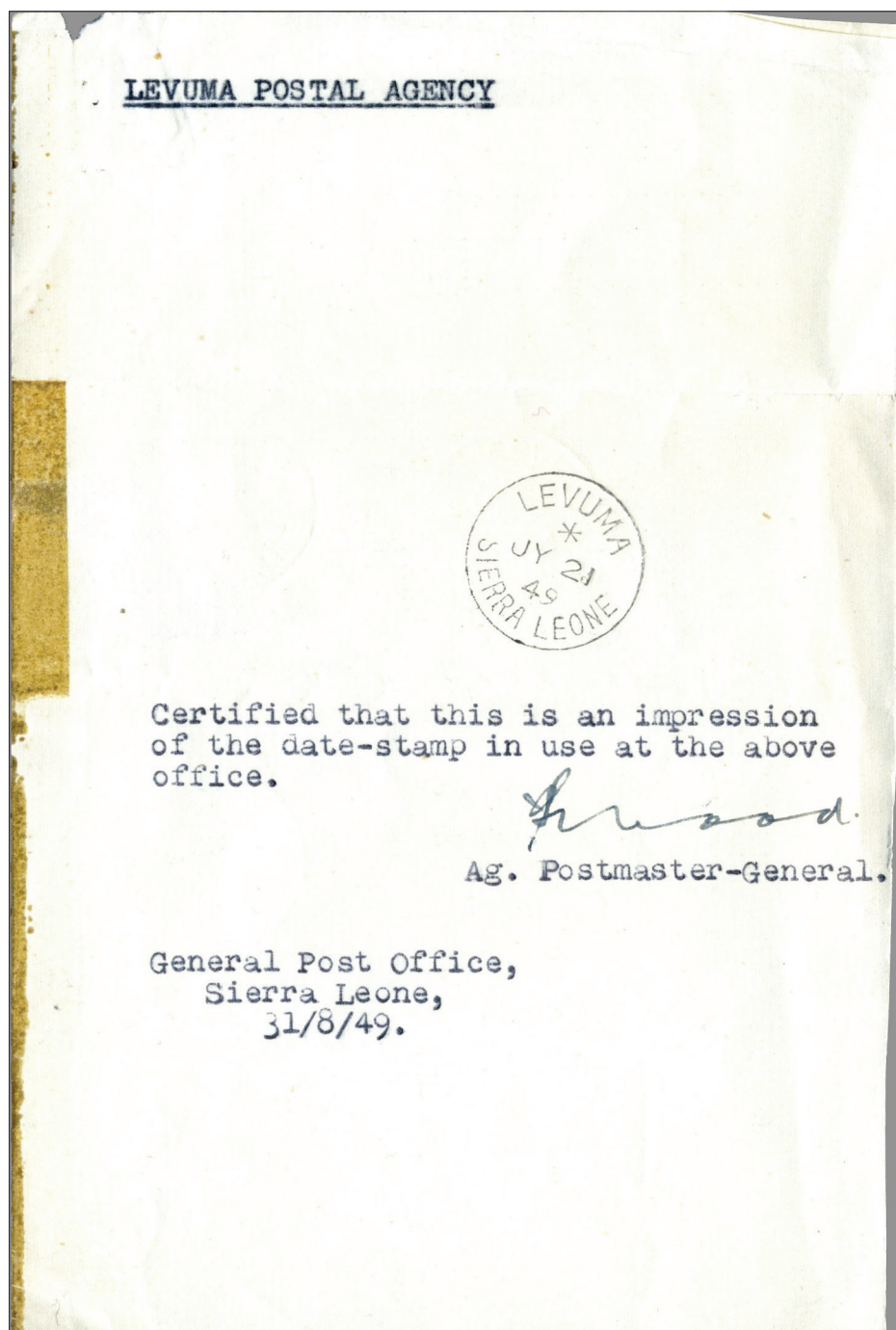
Kumrabai Mamila



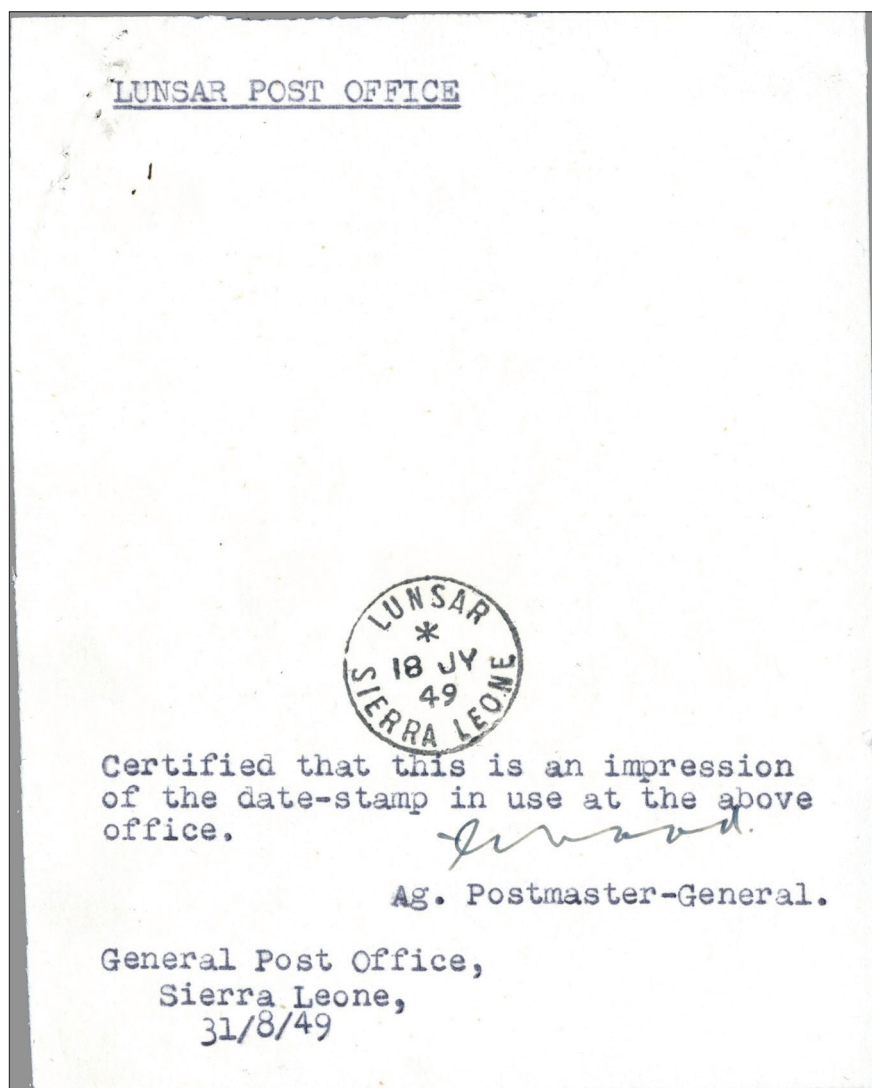
Kumrabai Mamila, continued



Levuma



Lunsar



Mabang

MABANG POSTAL AGENCY



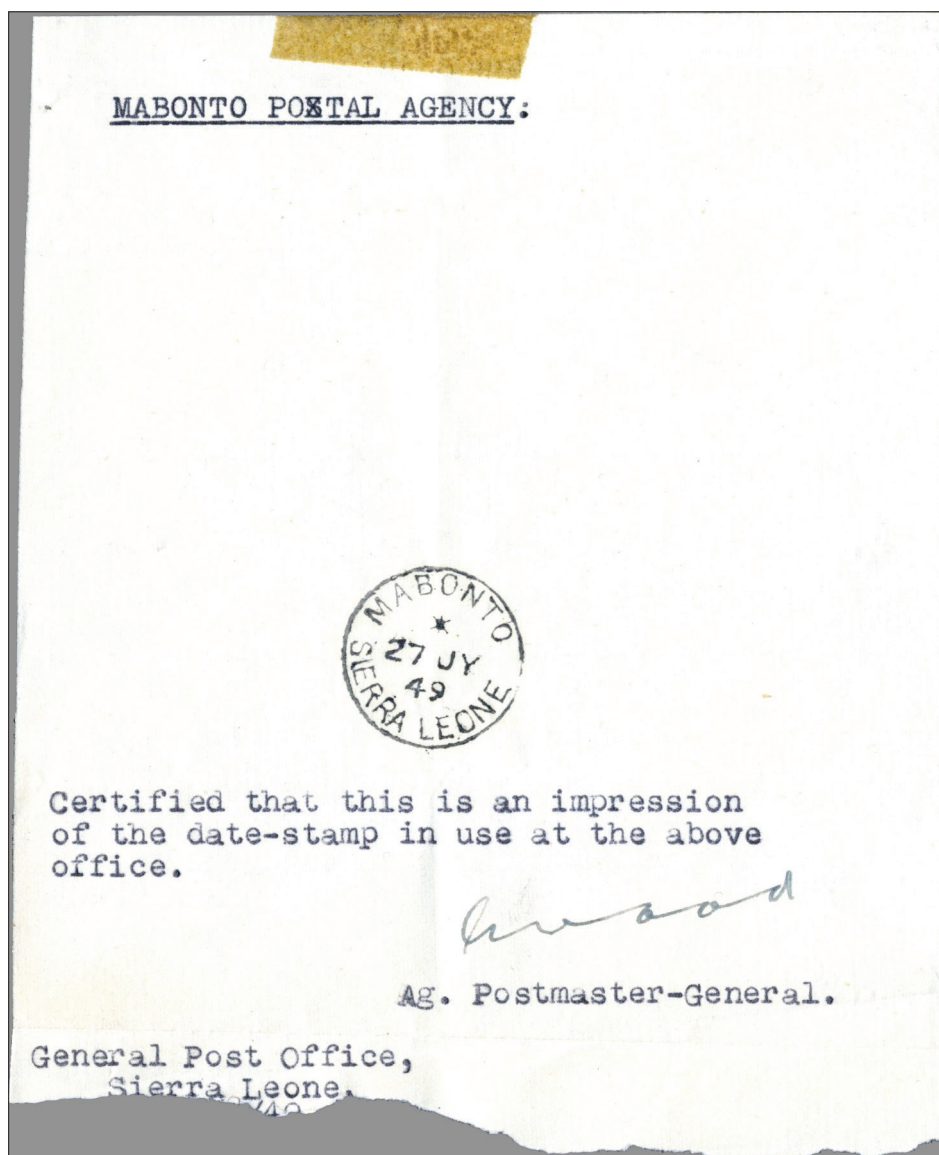
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. M. A. D."

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Mabonto



Source of the image in Ted Proud's book

Makene

MAKENI POST OFFICE



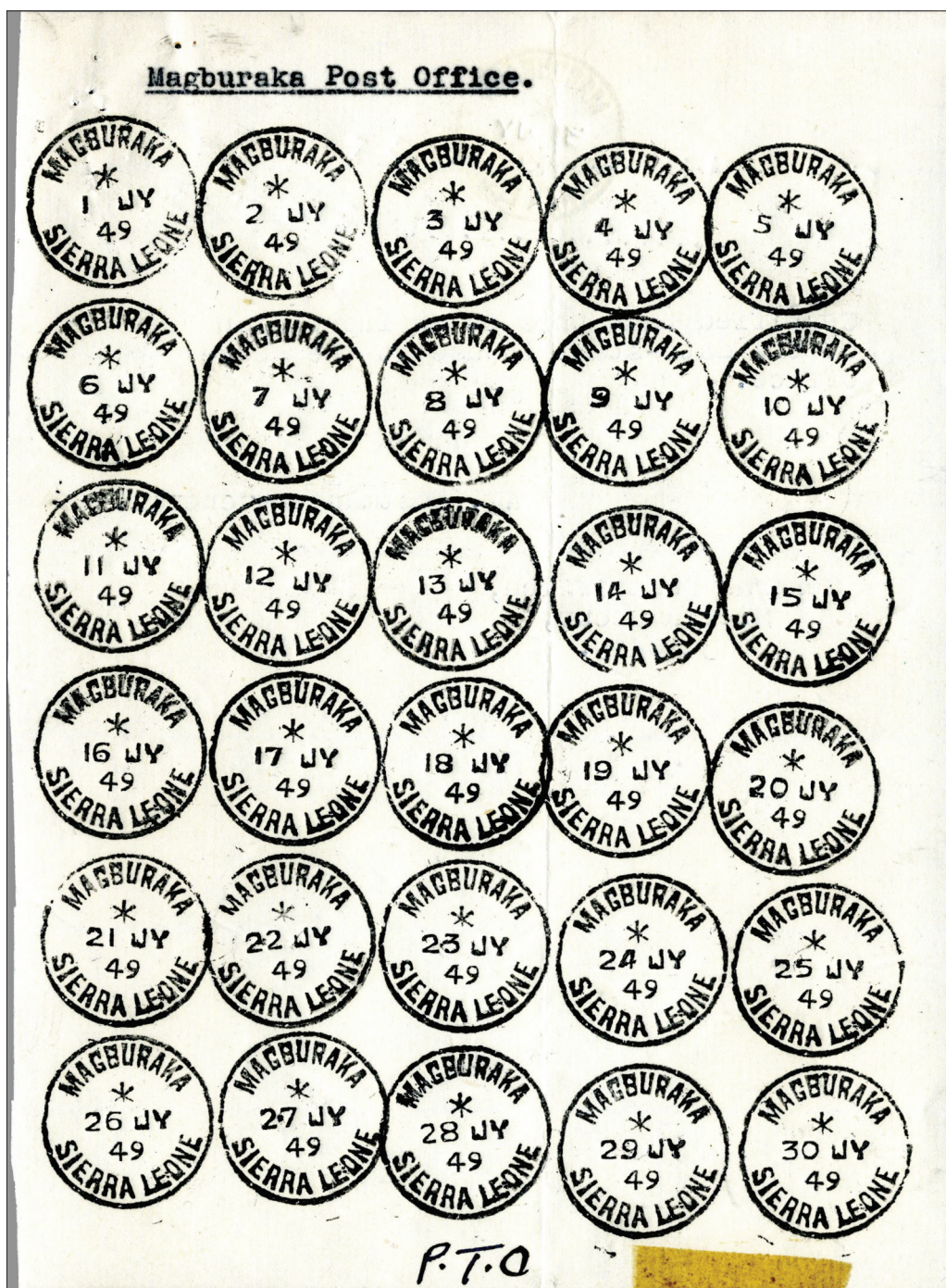
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the
above office.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wood".

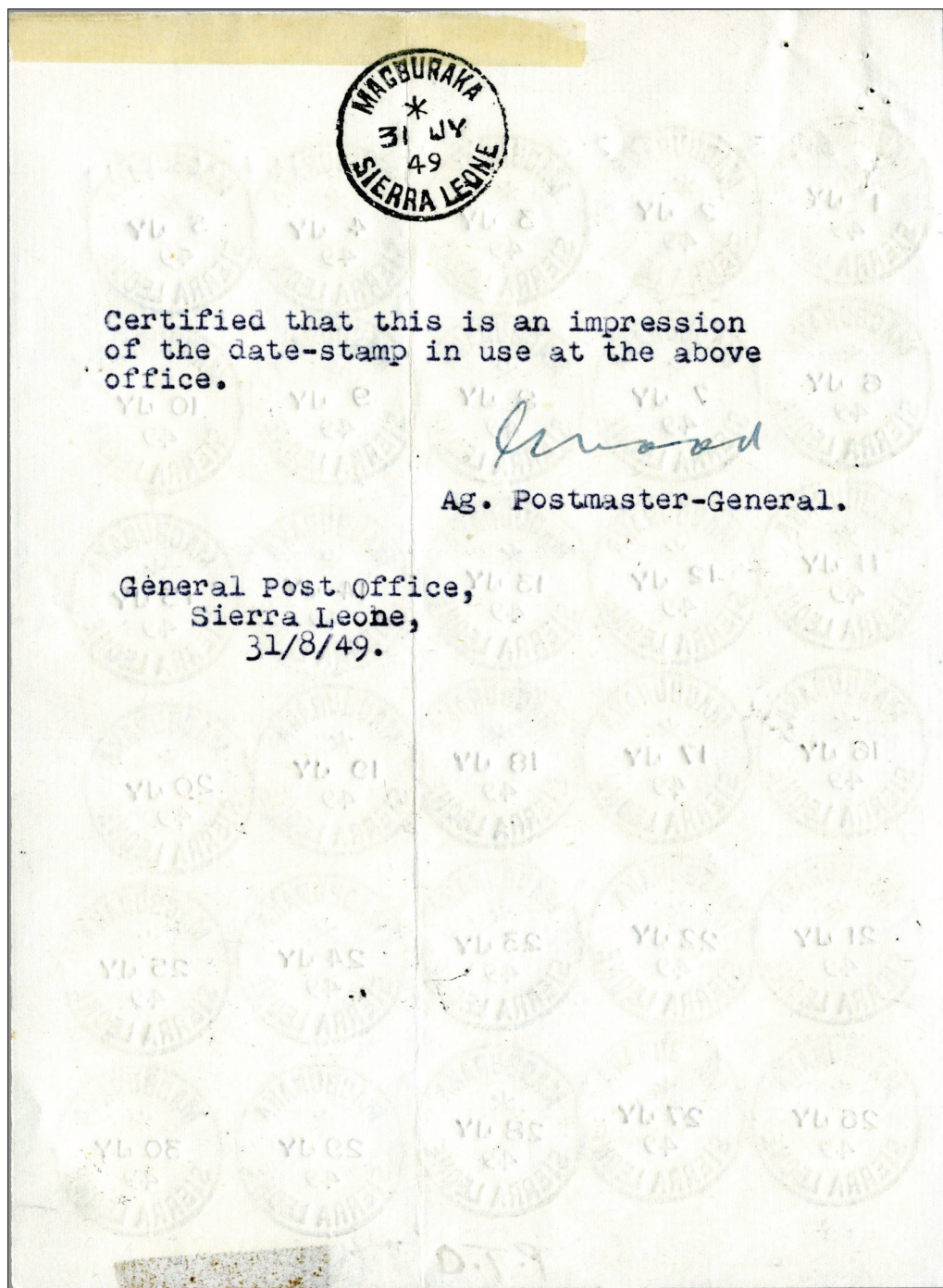
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Magburaka



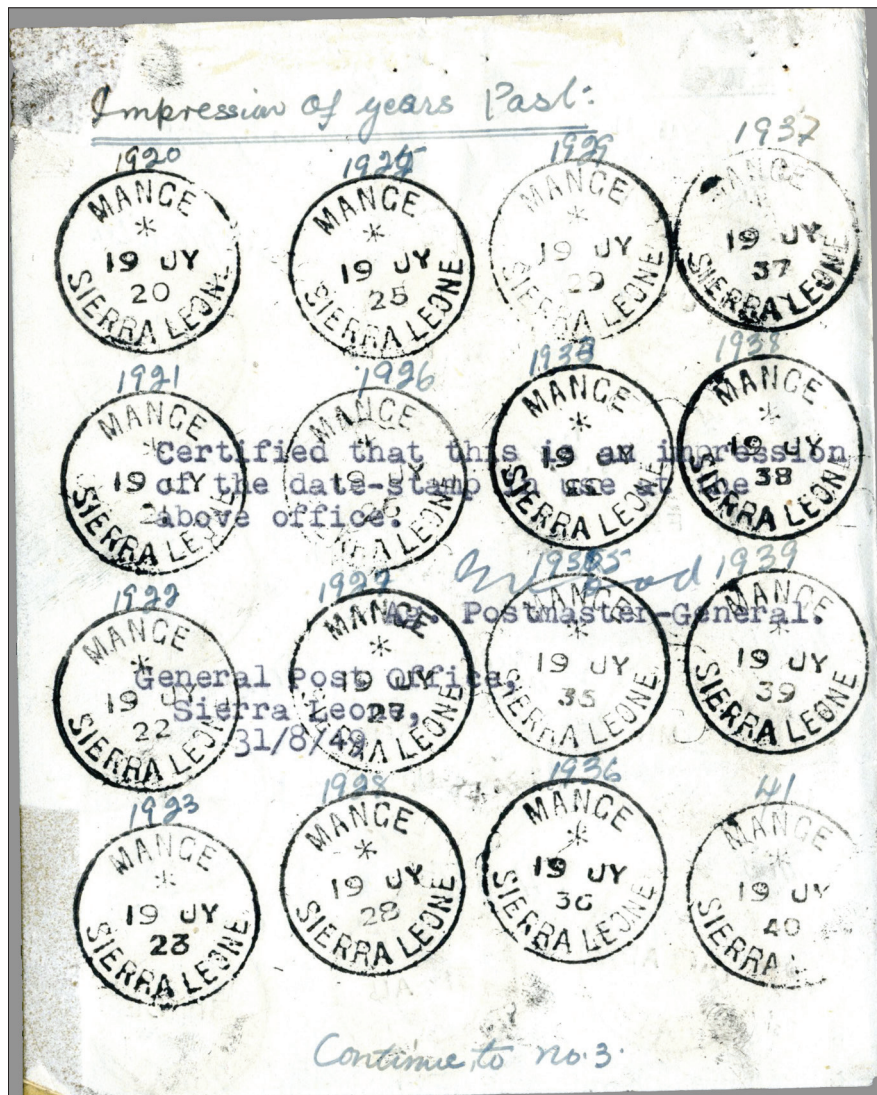
Magburaka, continued



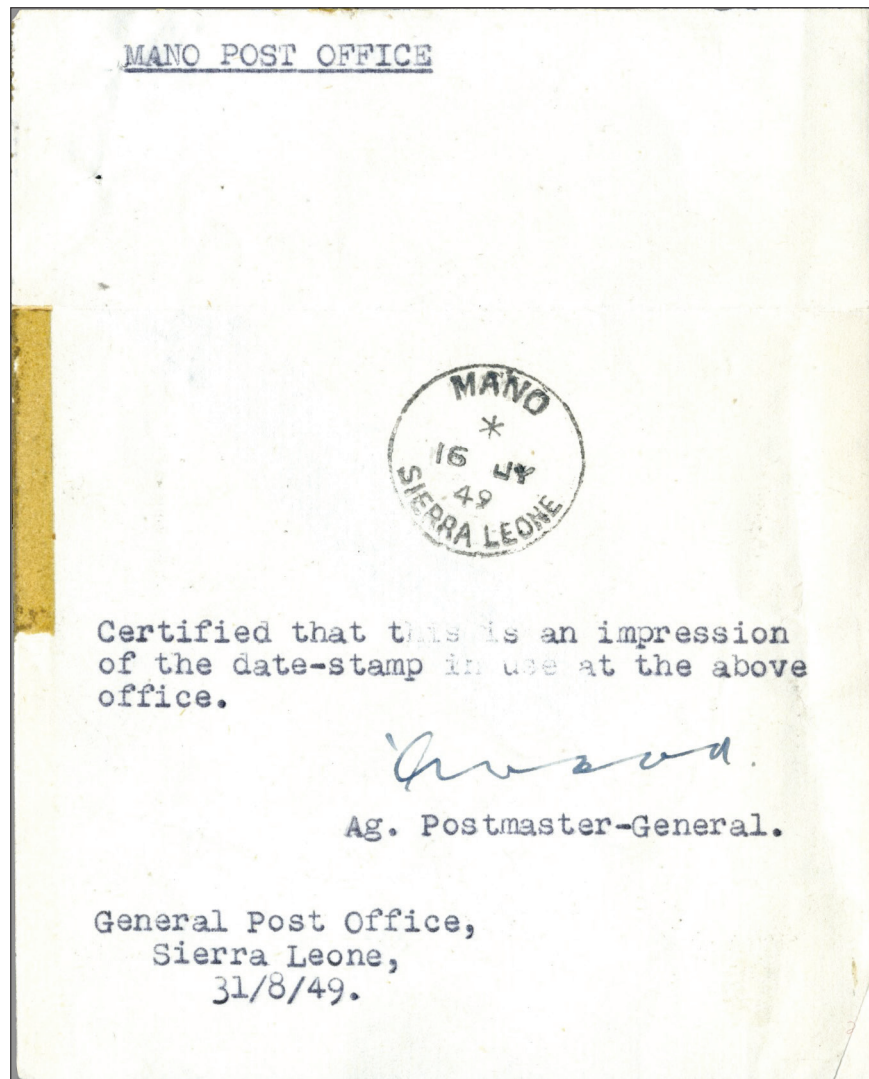
Mange



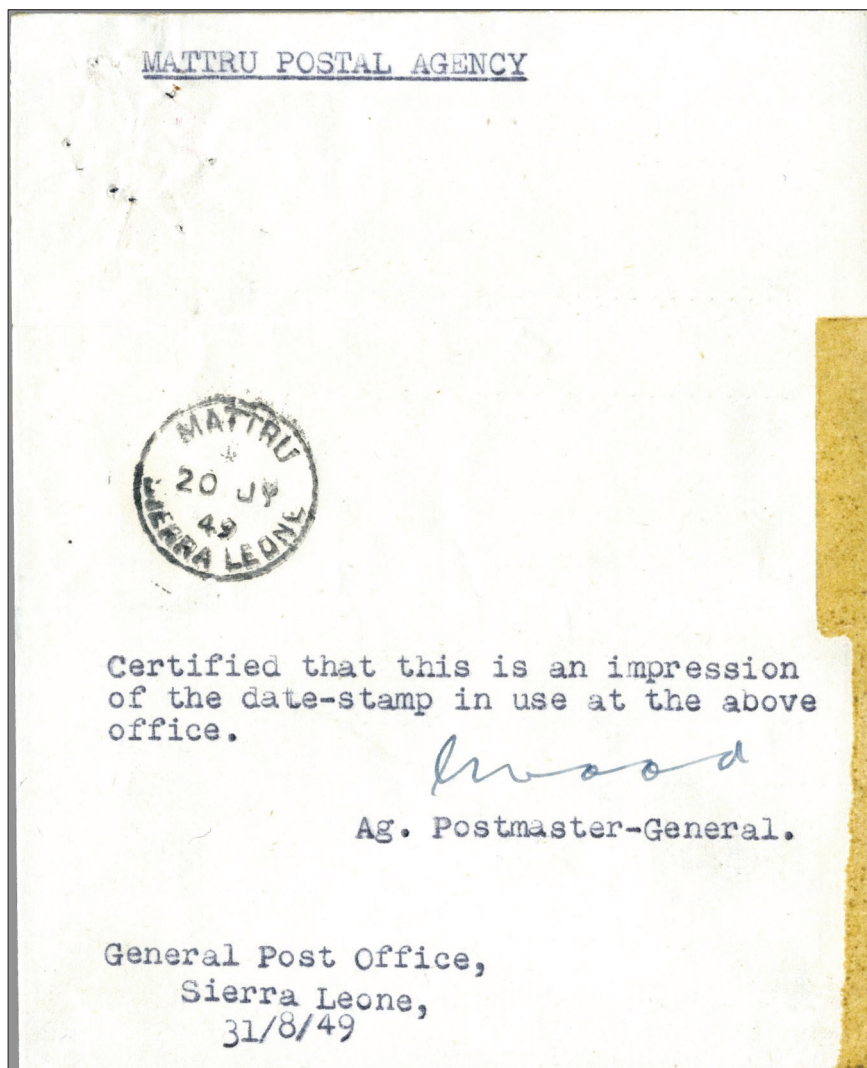
Mange, continued



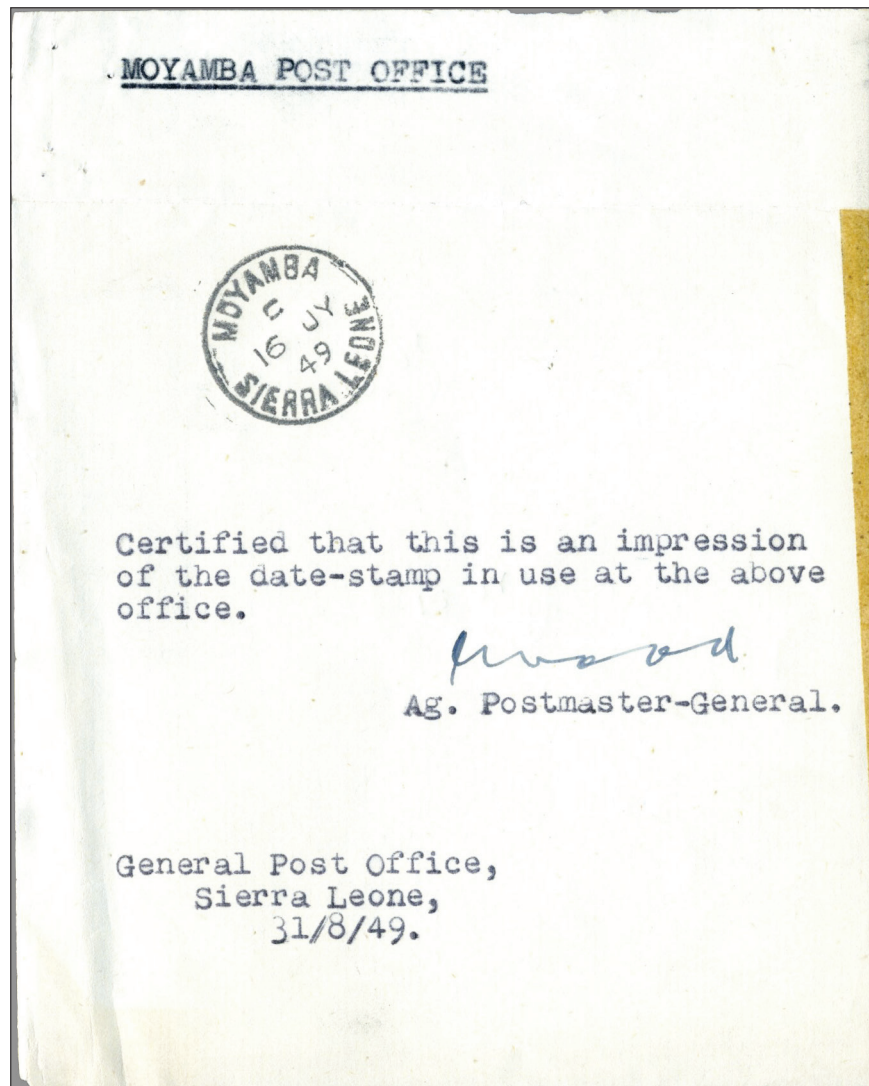
Mano



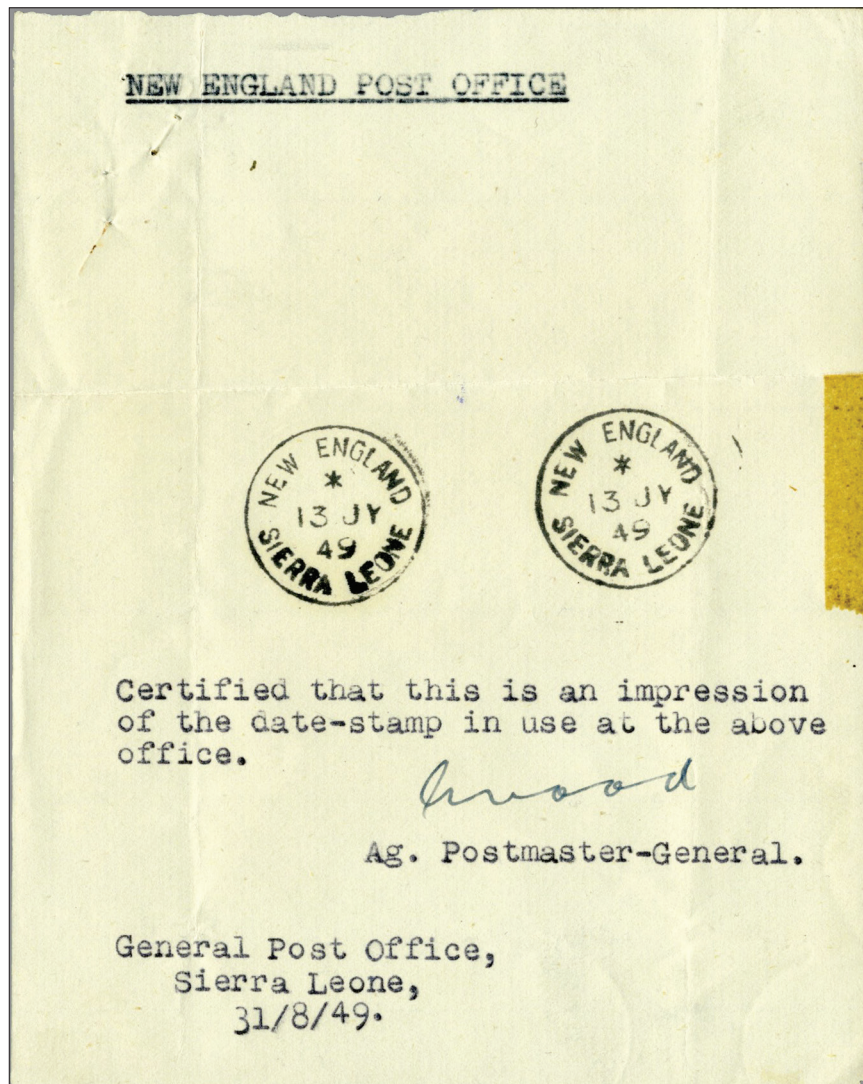
Mattru



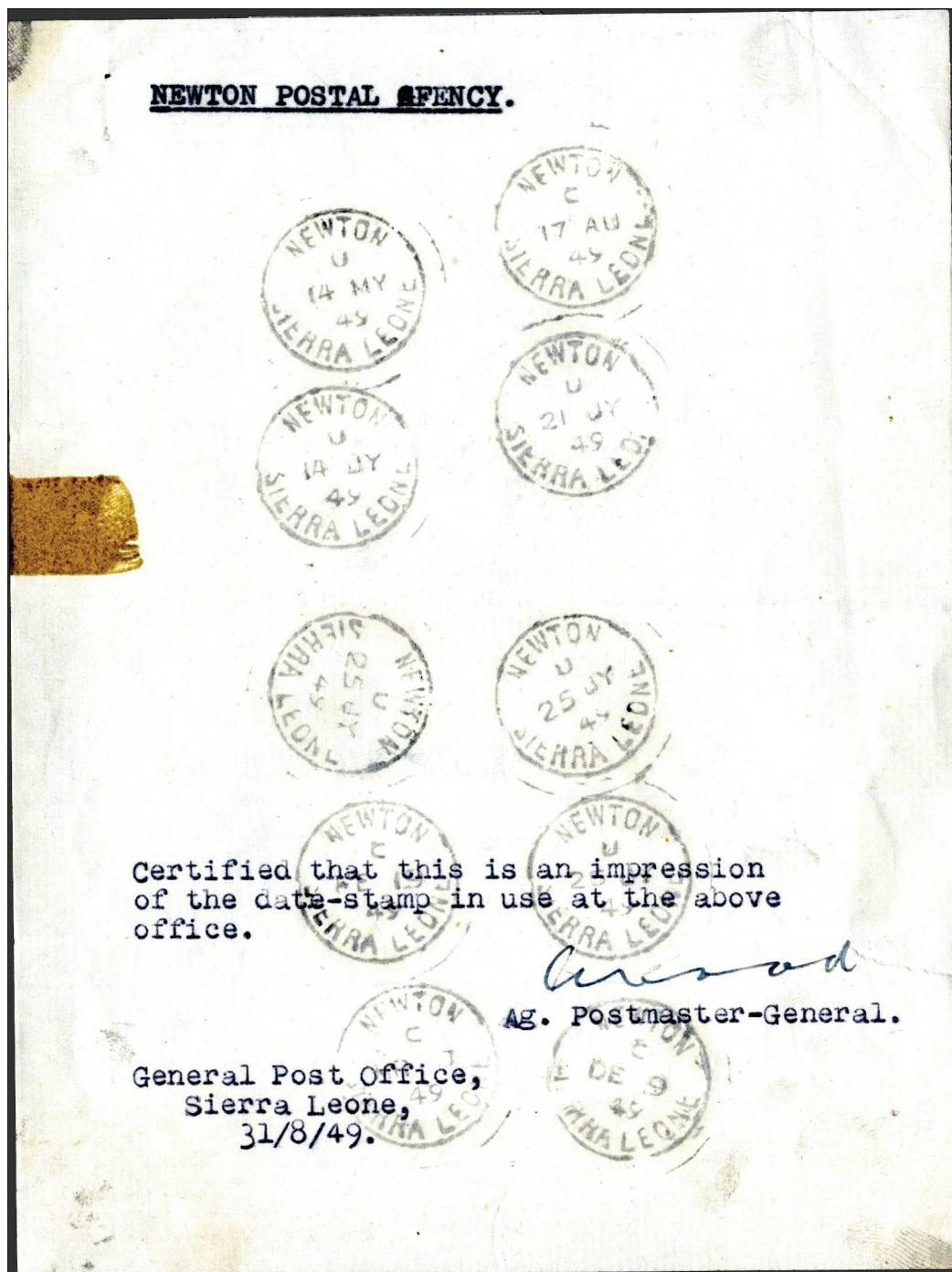
Moyamba



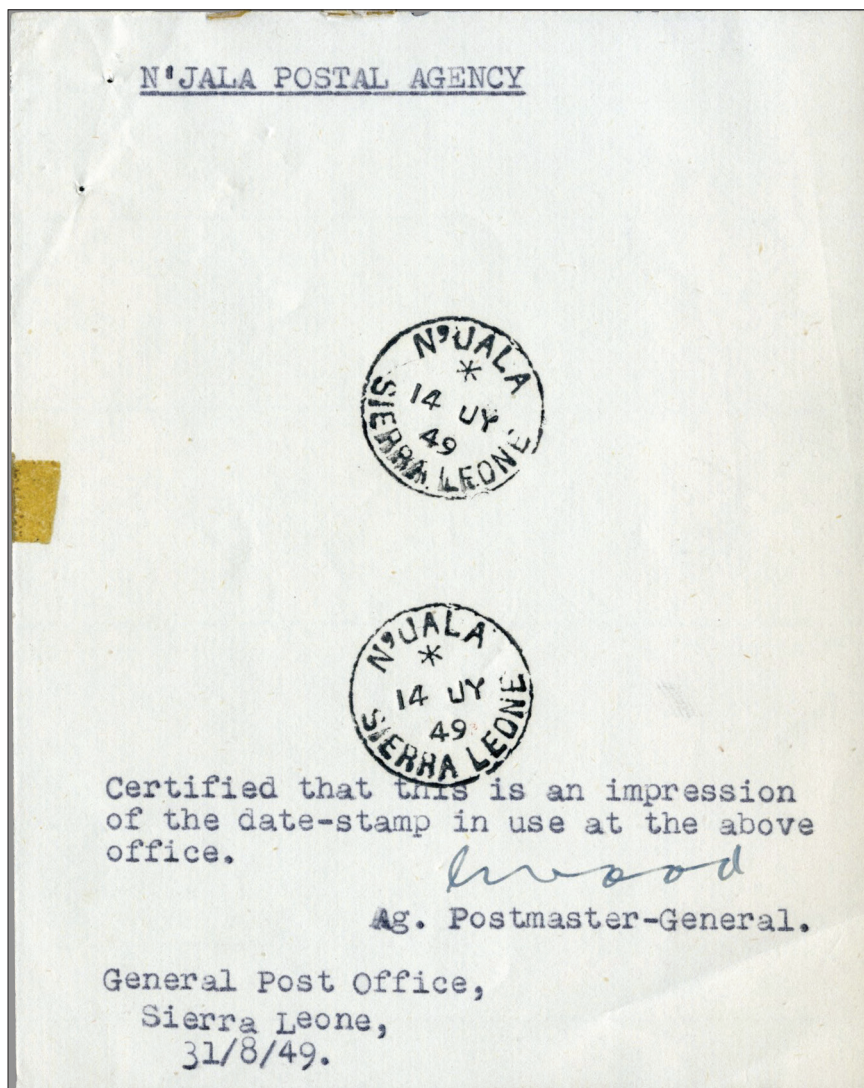
New England



Newton



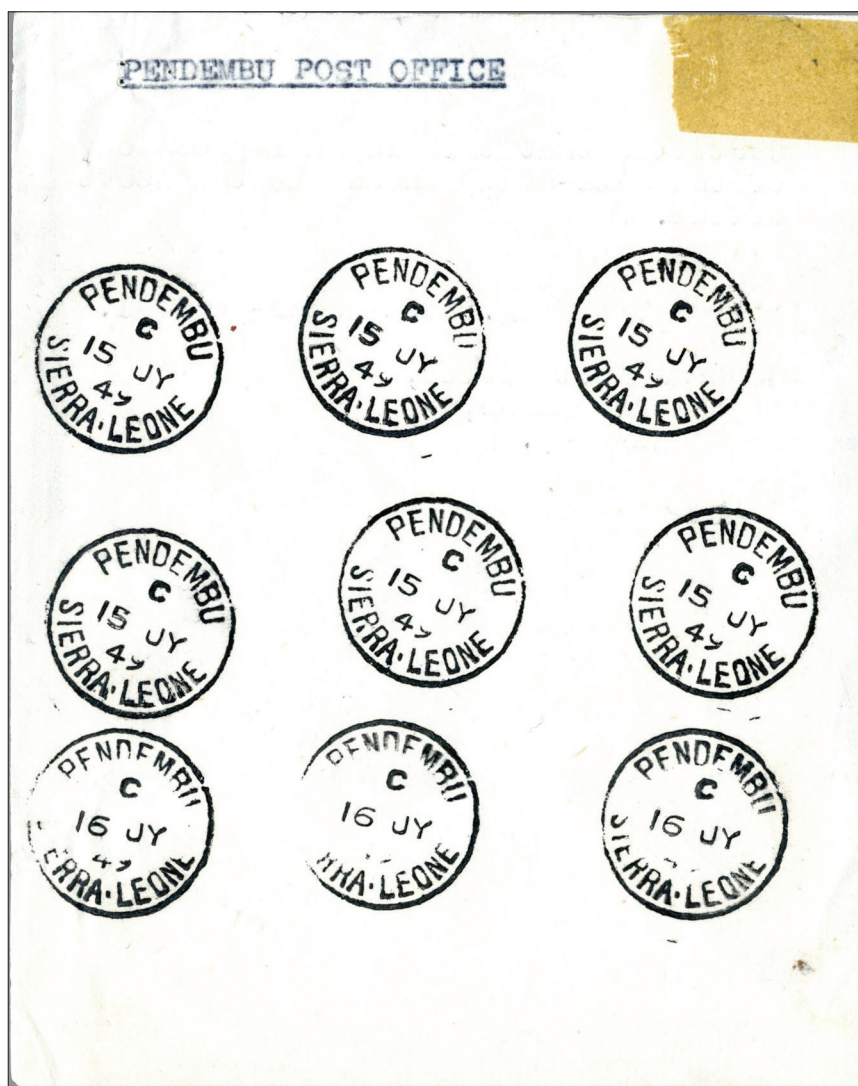
N'Jala



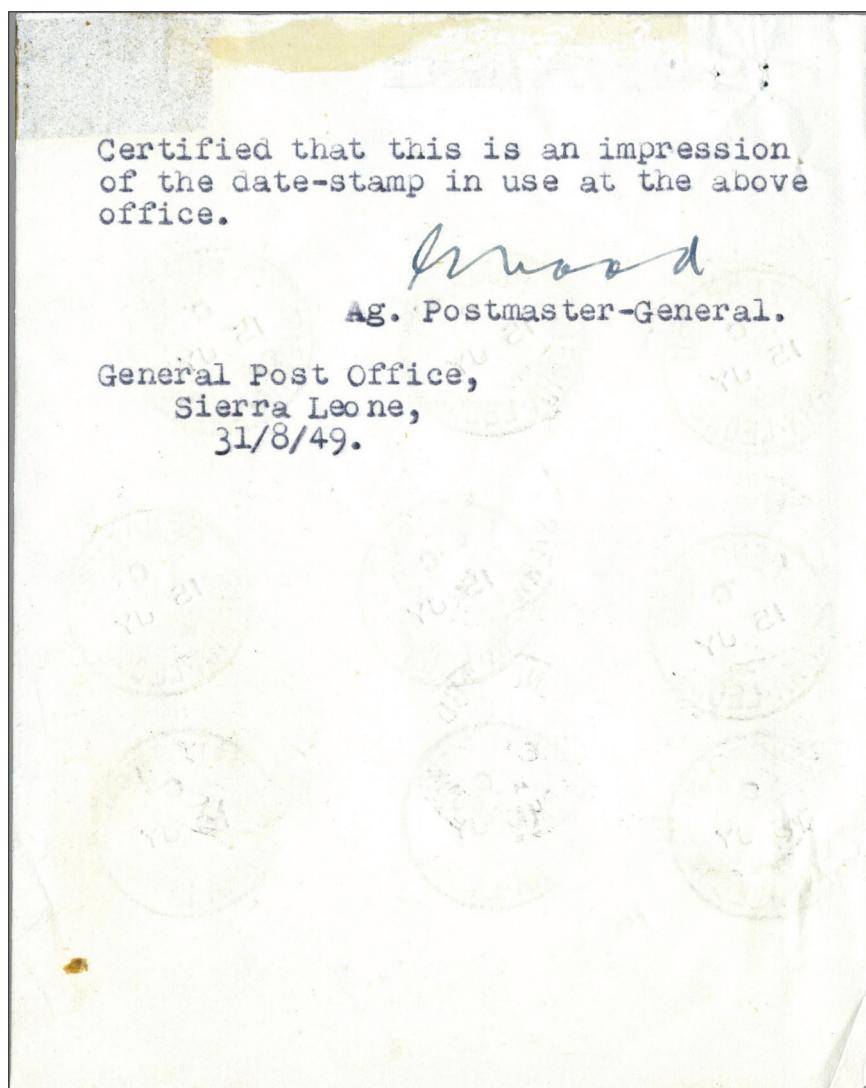
Panguma

Panguma is one of only three offices that were open in the summer of 1949 that does not have an entry in this series. The office re-opened on 1 Apr 1949, with the earliest recorded postmark of this period of opening recorded on 4 Jul 1949. The office may have not been on the list when the instructions were originally circulated.

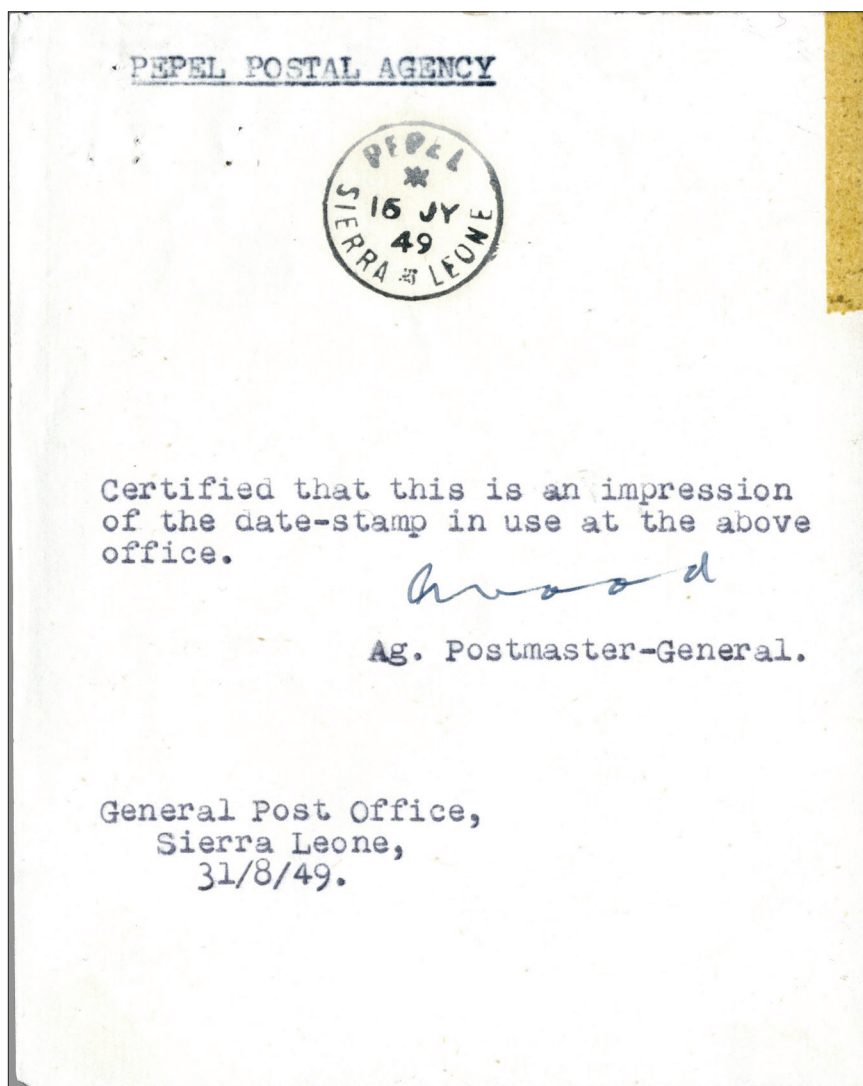
Pendembu



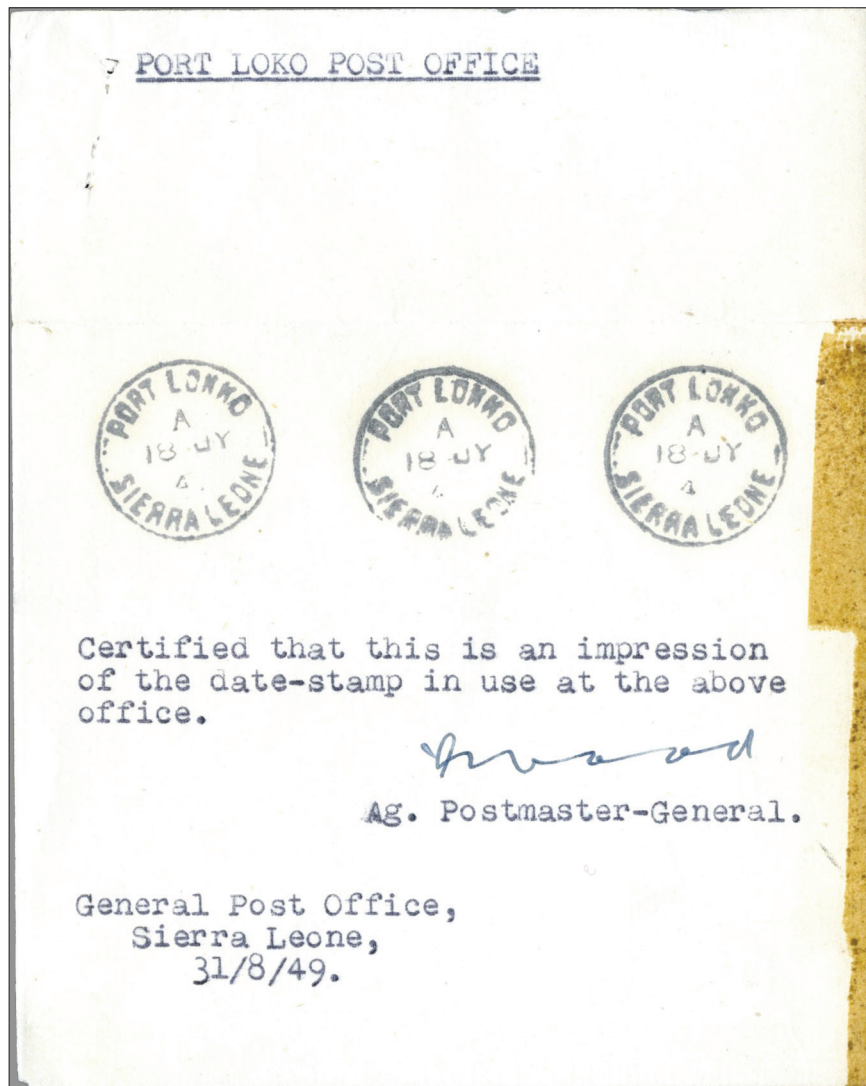
Pendembu, continued



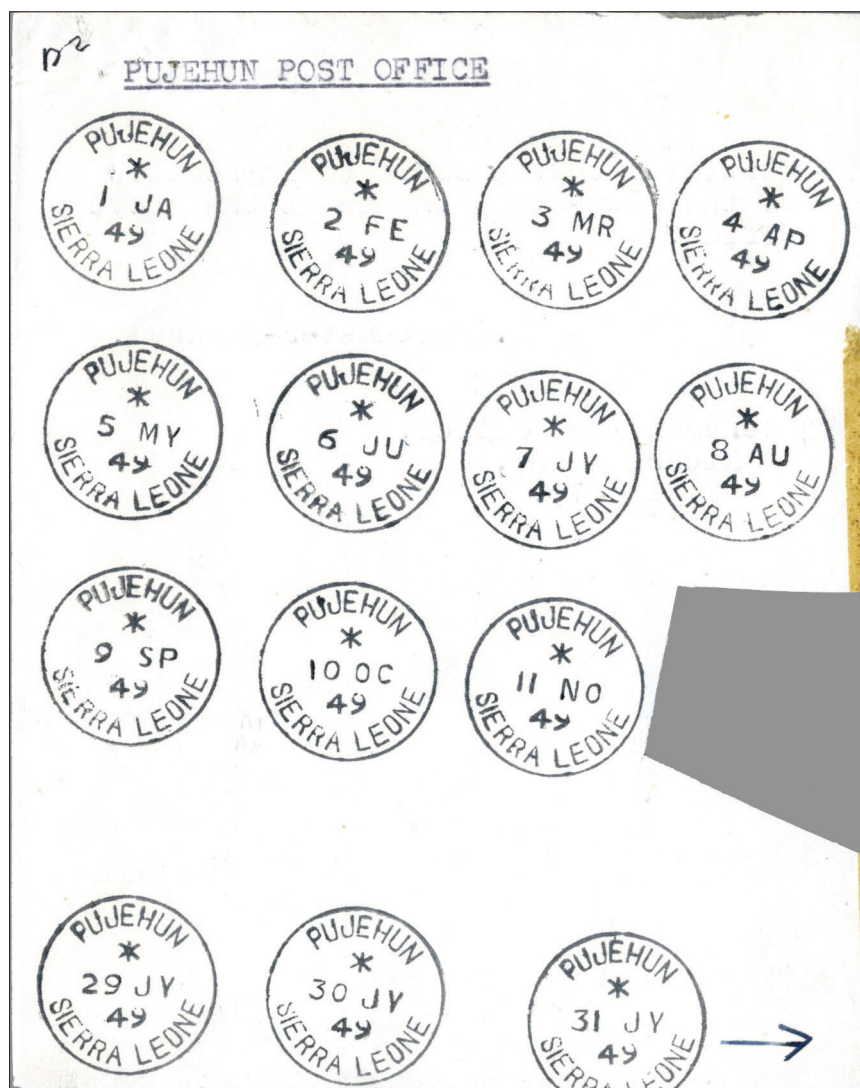
Pepel



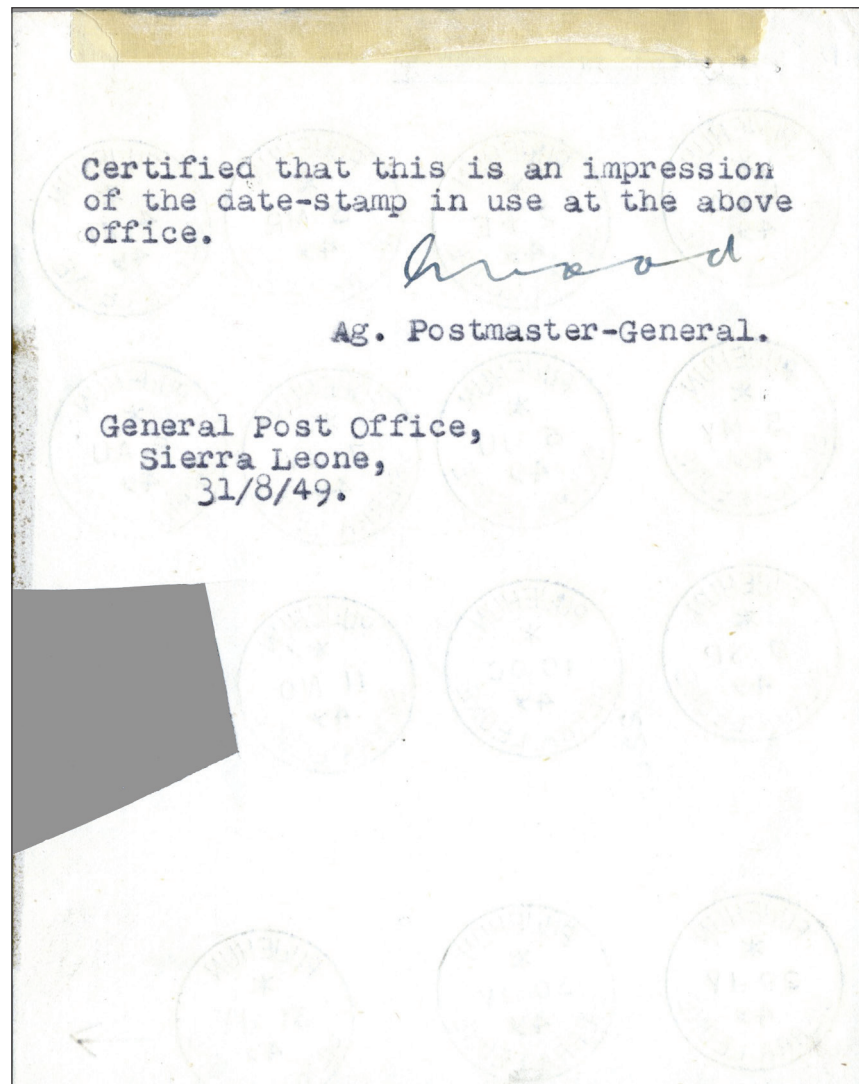
Port Lokko



Pujehun

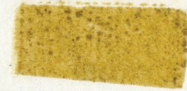


Pujehun, continued



Regent

REGENT POSTAL AGENCY



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of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

Wood

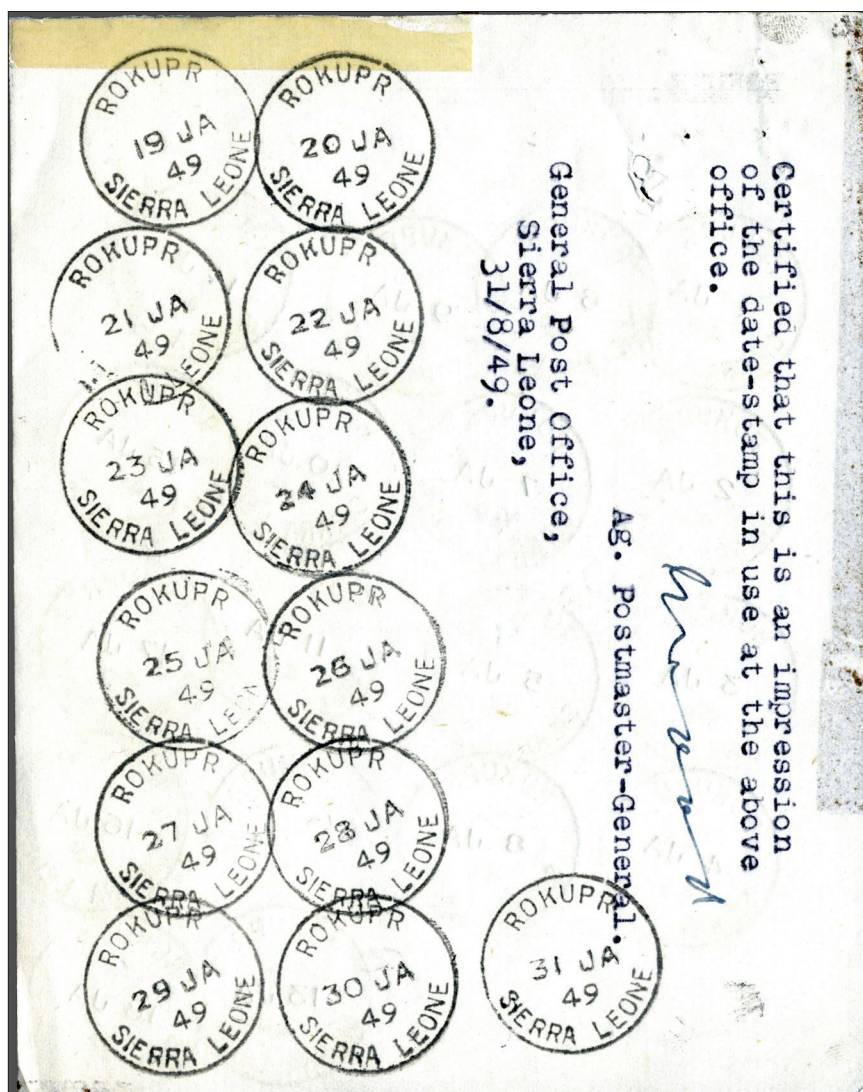
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

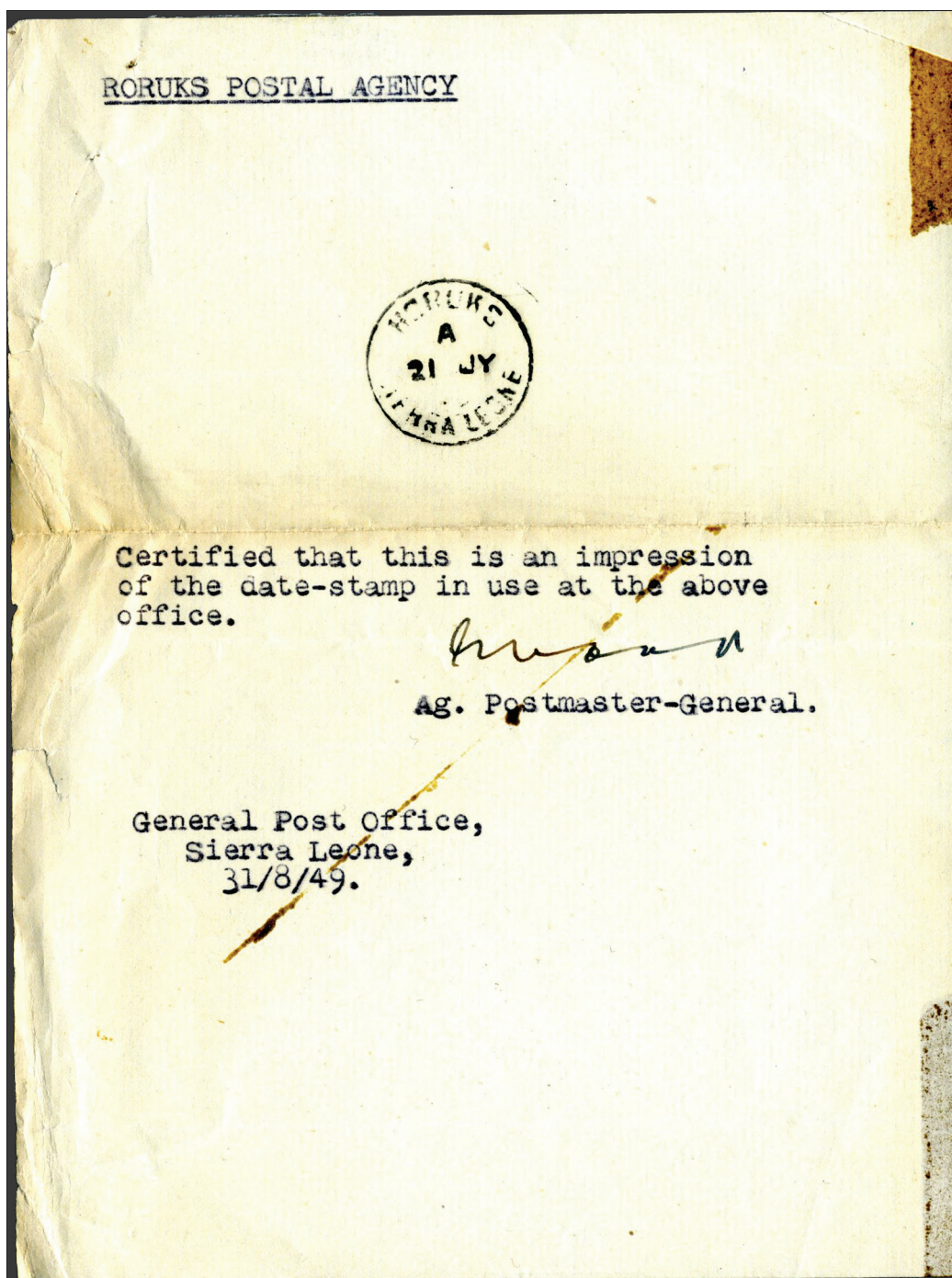
Rokupr



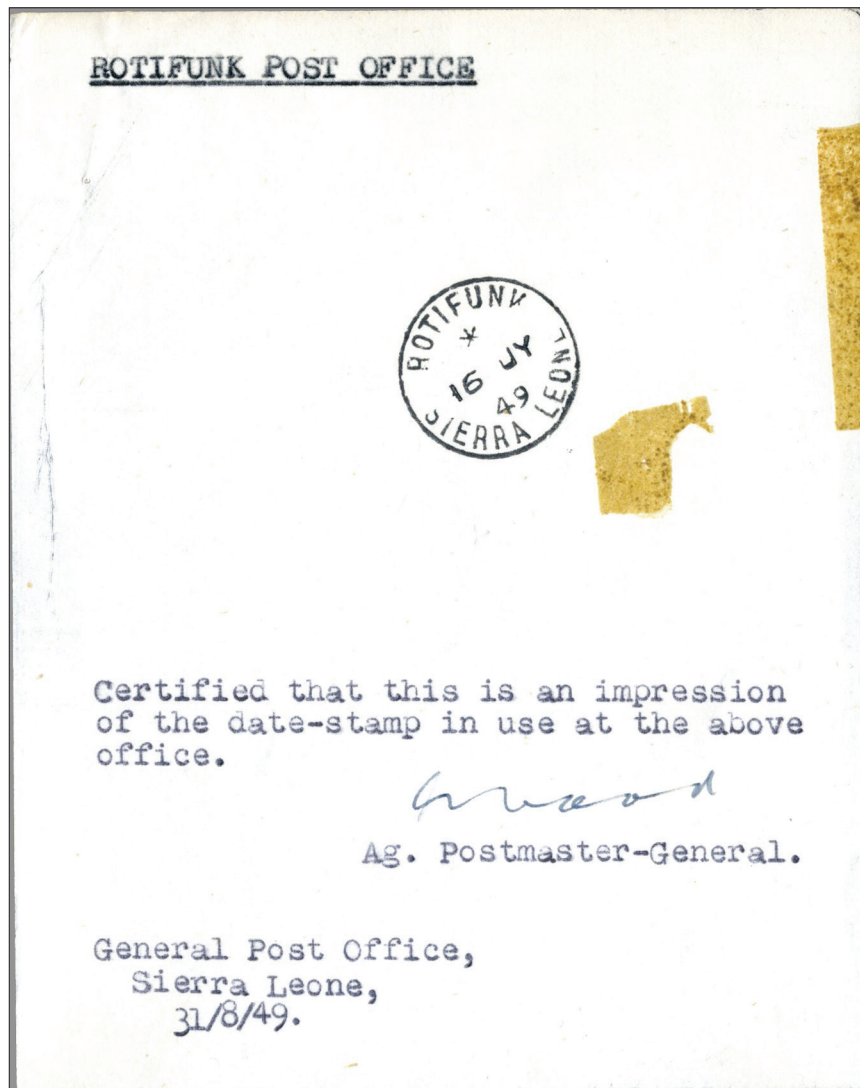
Rokupr, continued



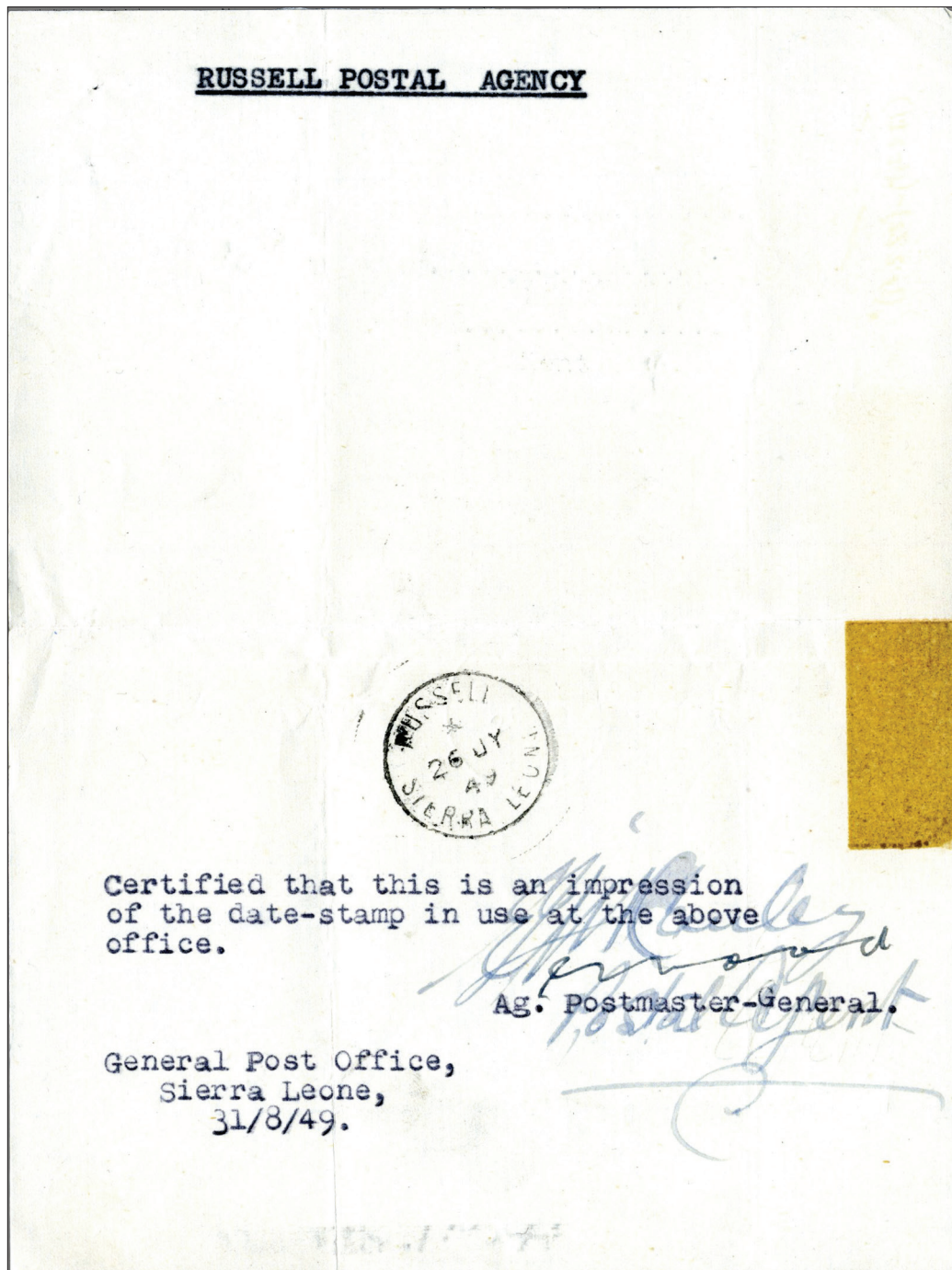
Roruks



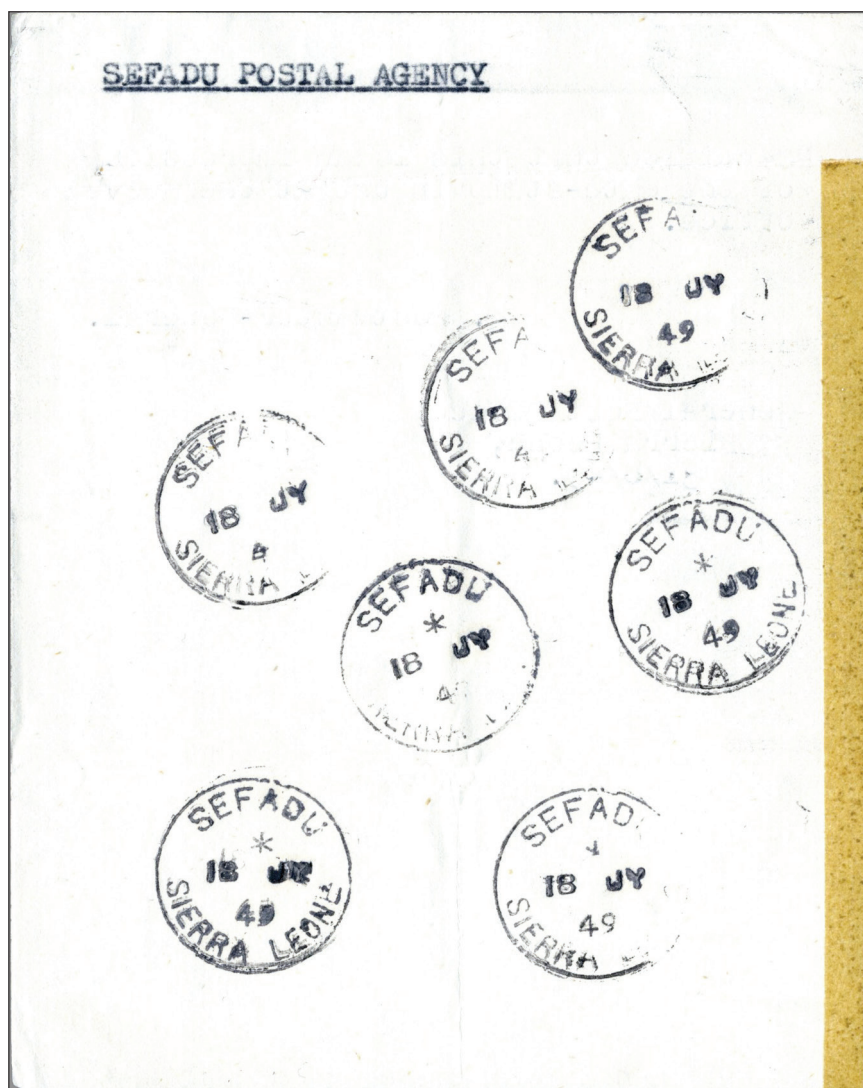
Rotifunk



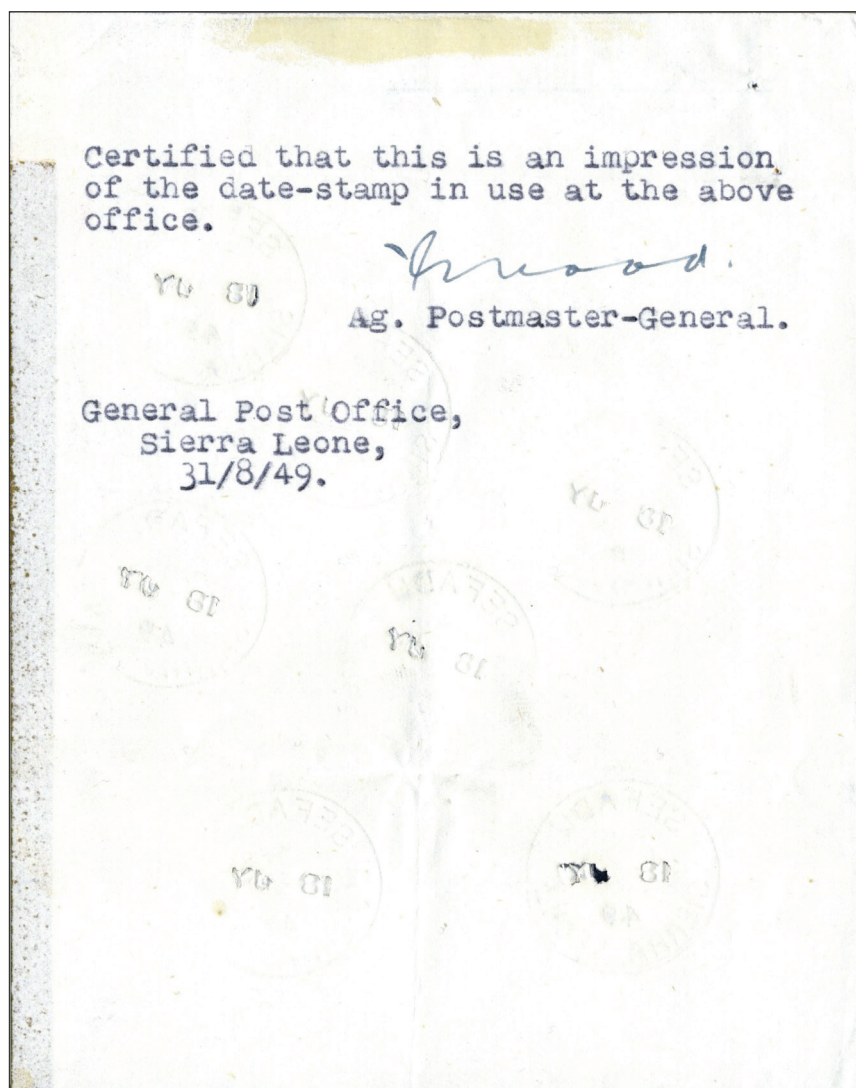
Russell



Sefadu



Sefadu, continued



Segbwema

SEGBWEMA POST OFFICE



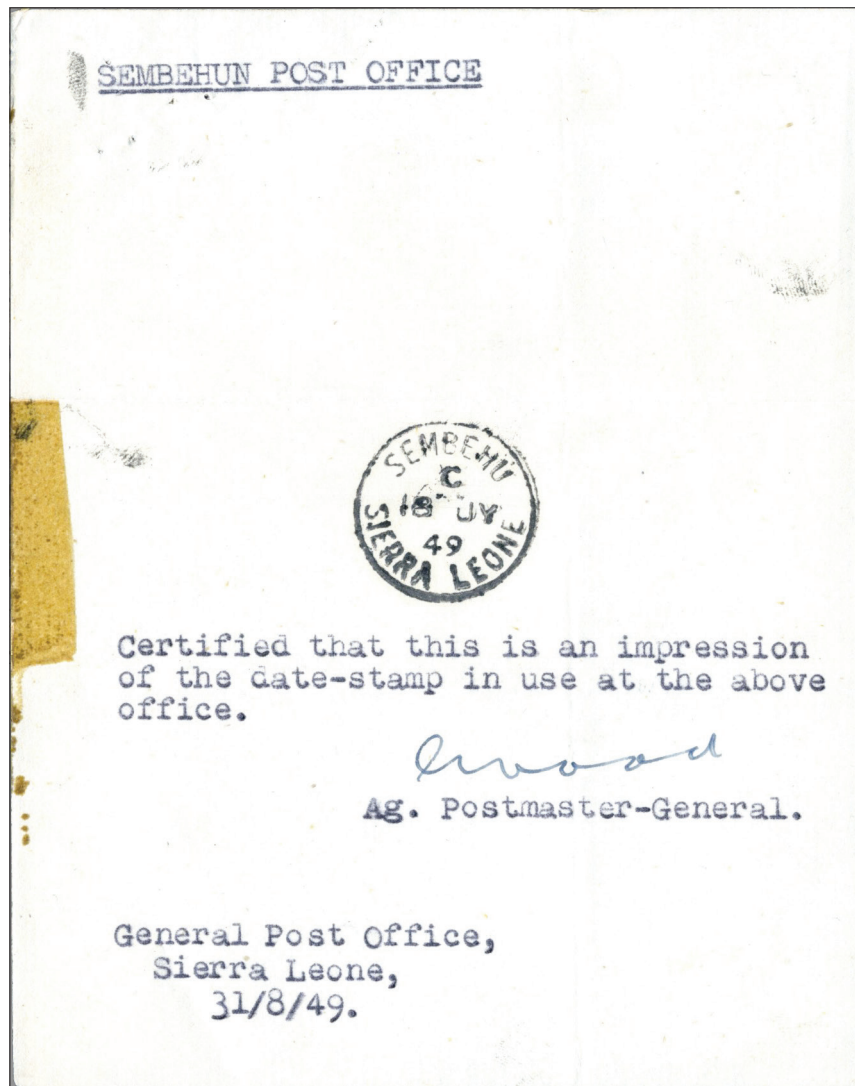
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

[Signature]

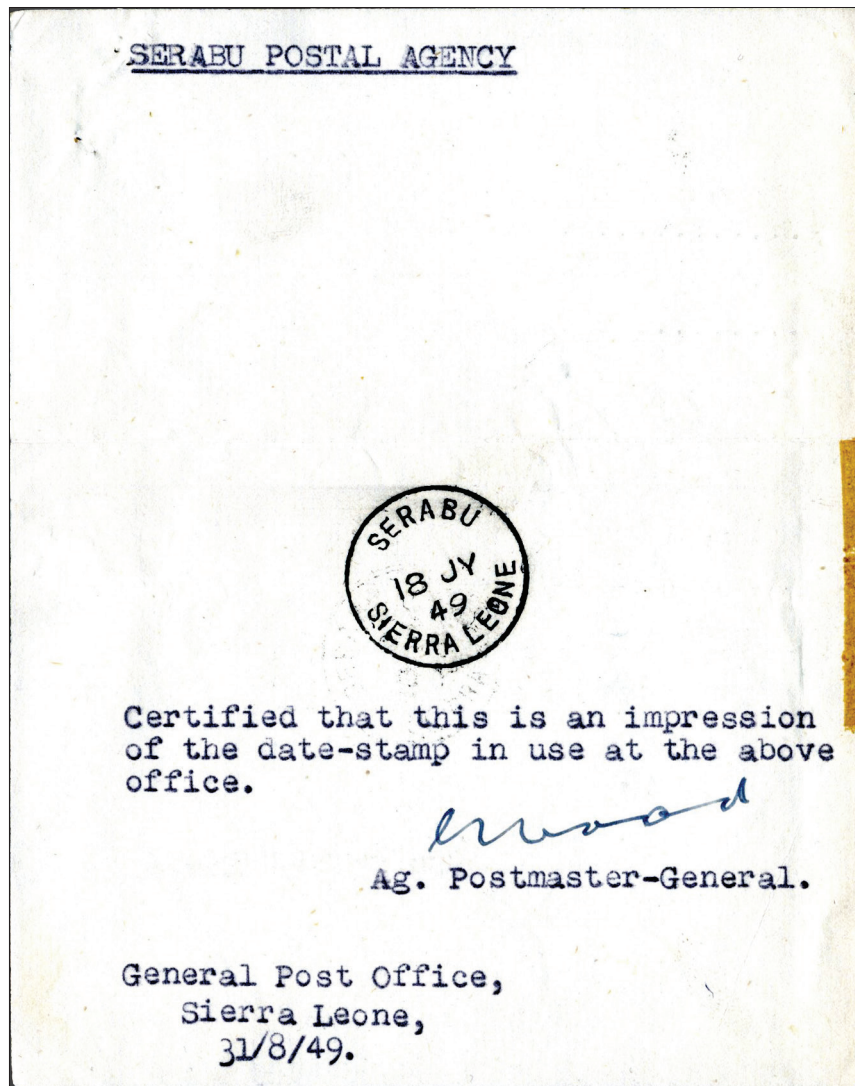
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49

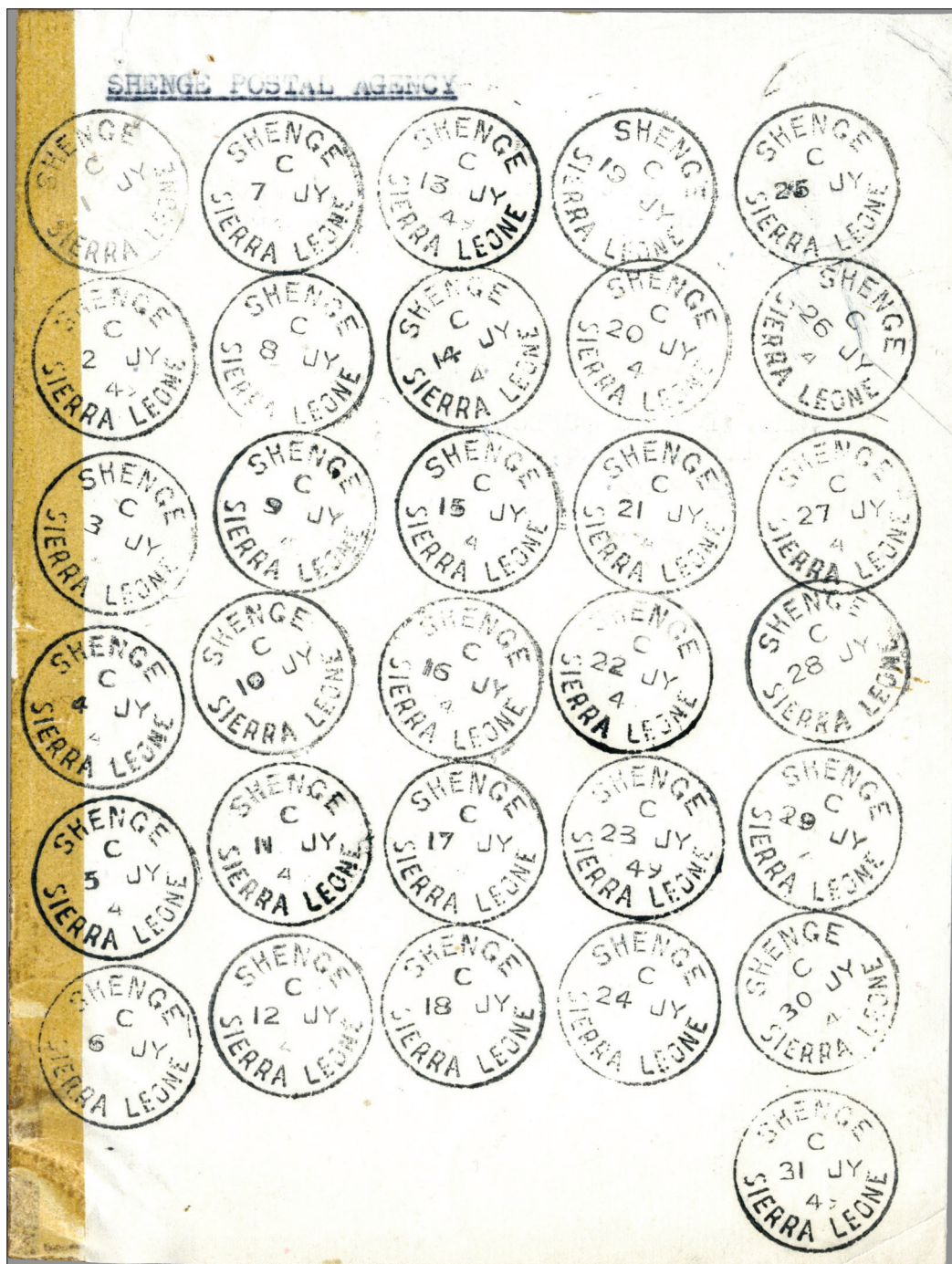
Sembehu



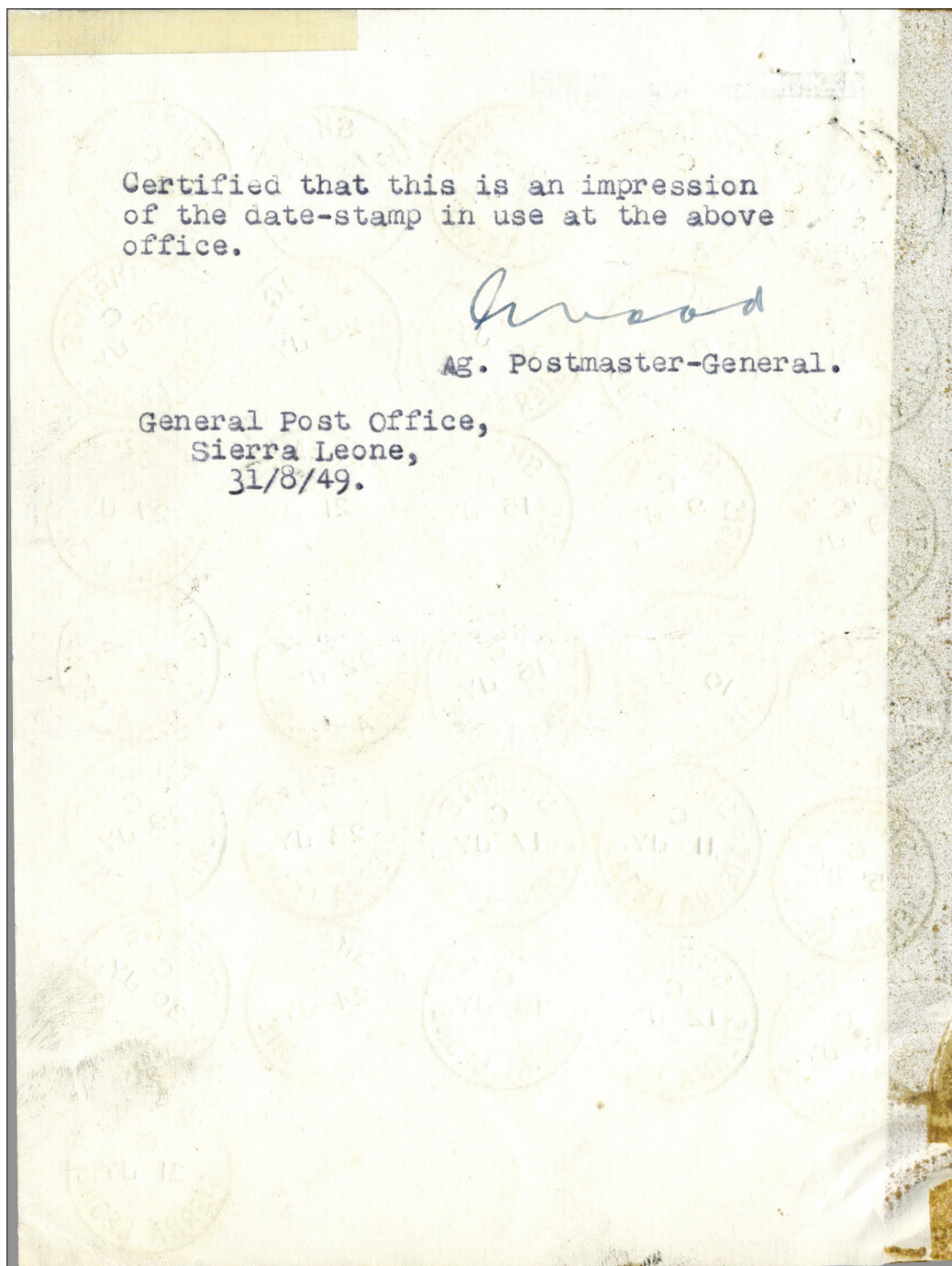
Serabu



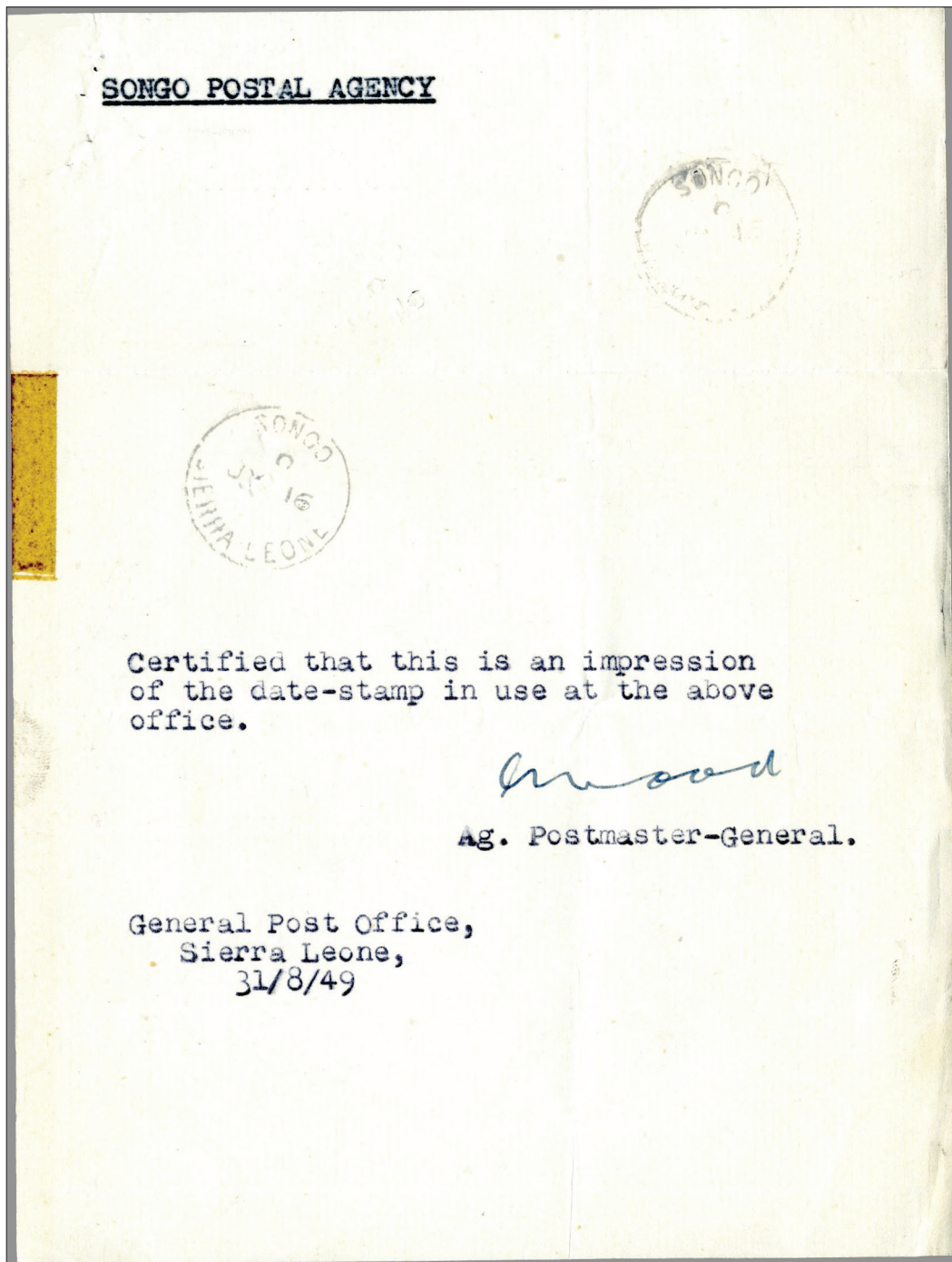
Shenge



Shenge, continued



Songo



Sulima



Sumbuyah

SUMBUYA POST OFFICE.



Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. M. S. D."

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Tabe

TABE POSTAL AGENCY



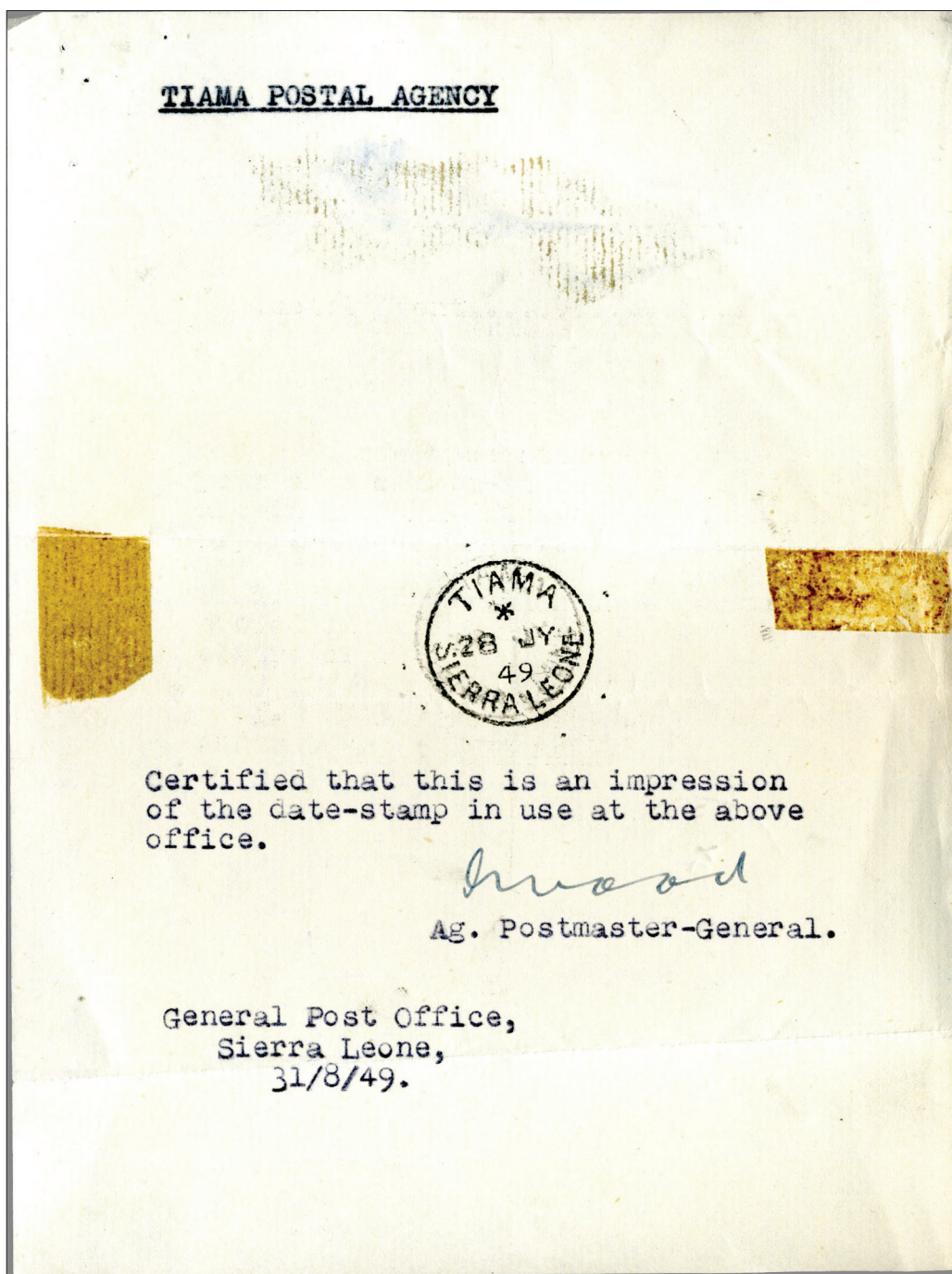
Certified that this is an impression
of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

Wood

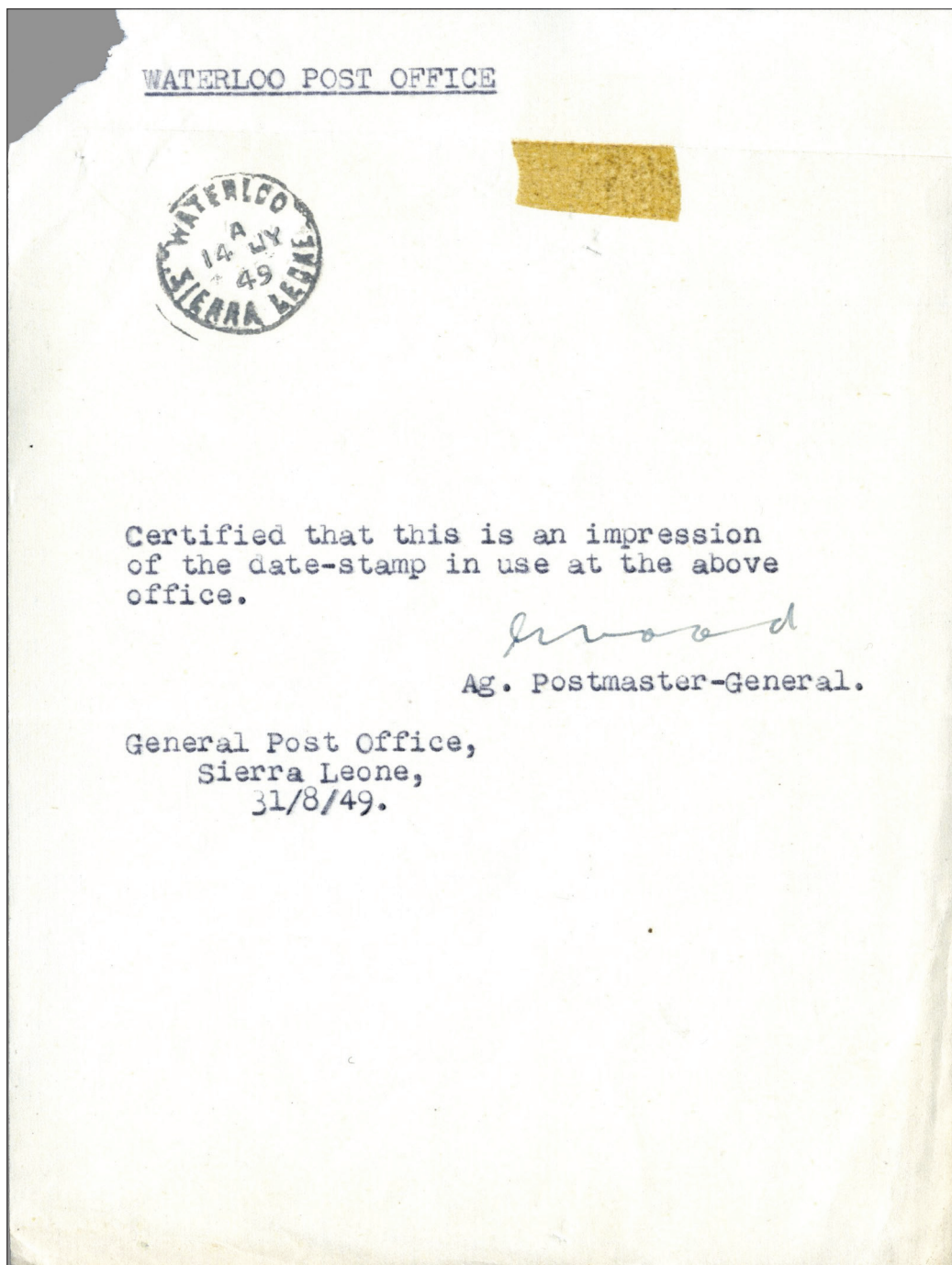
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

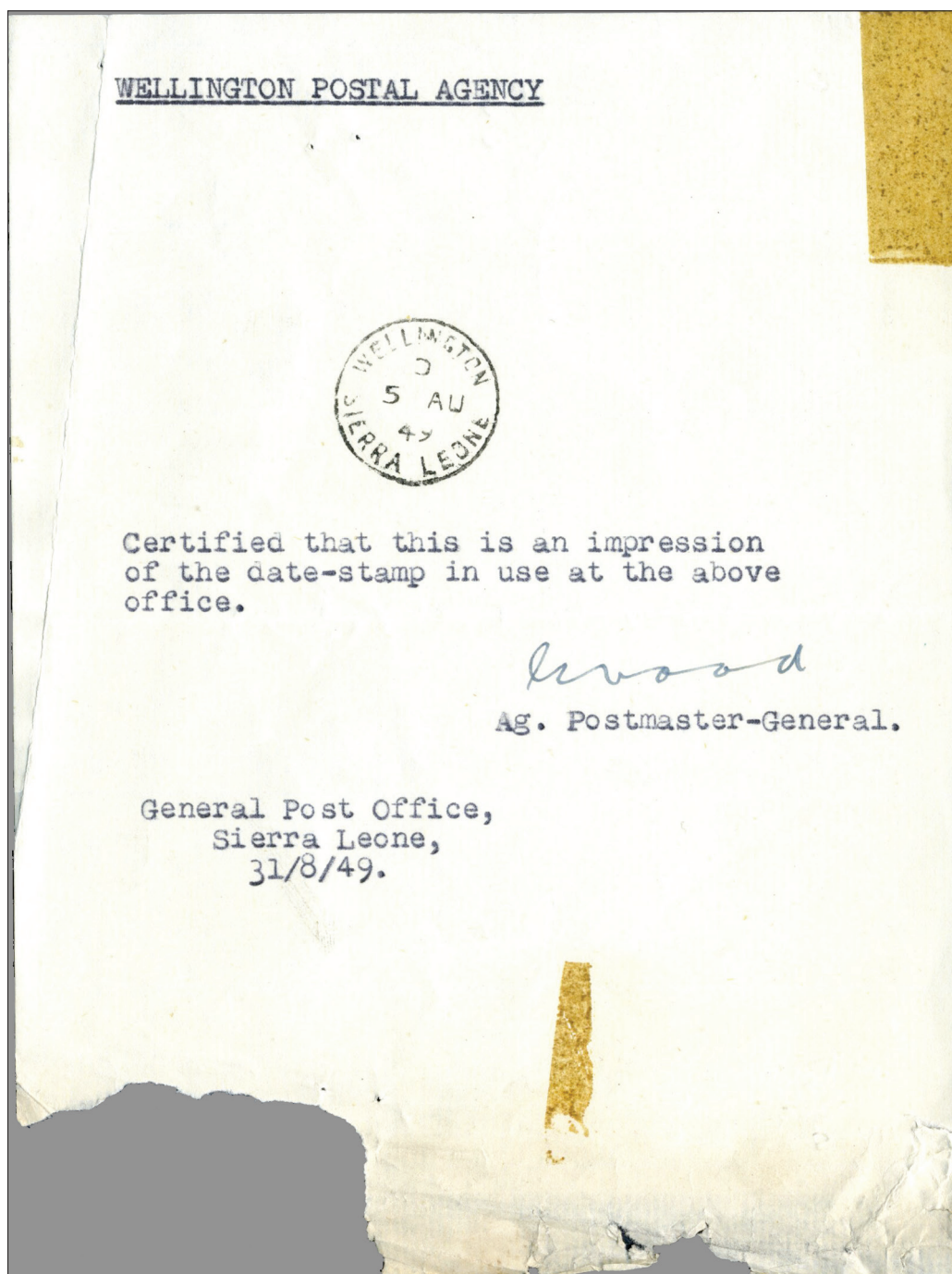
Tiama



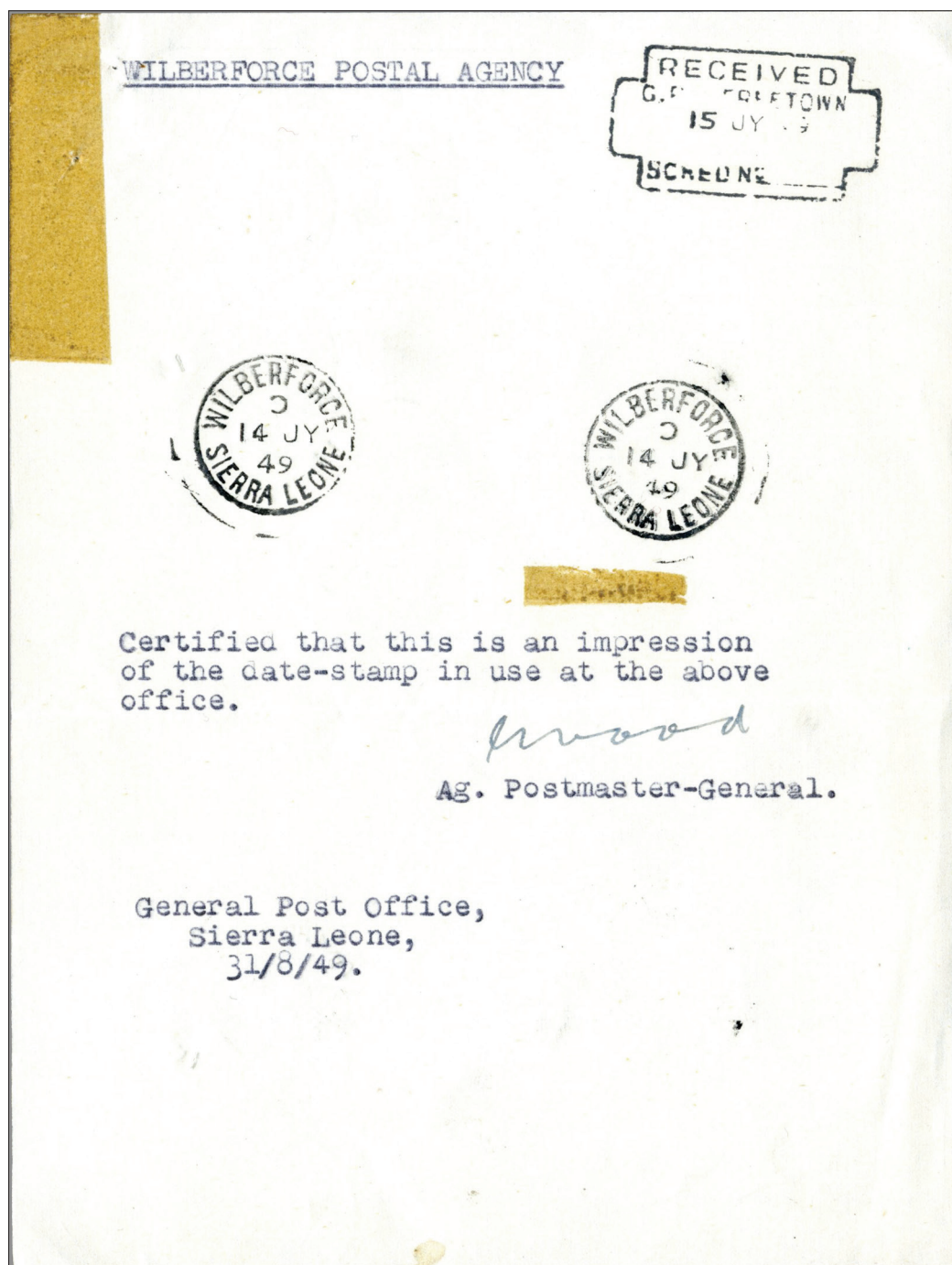
Waterloo



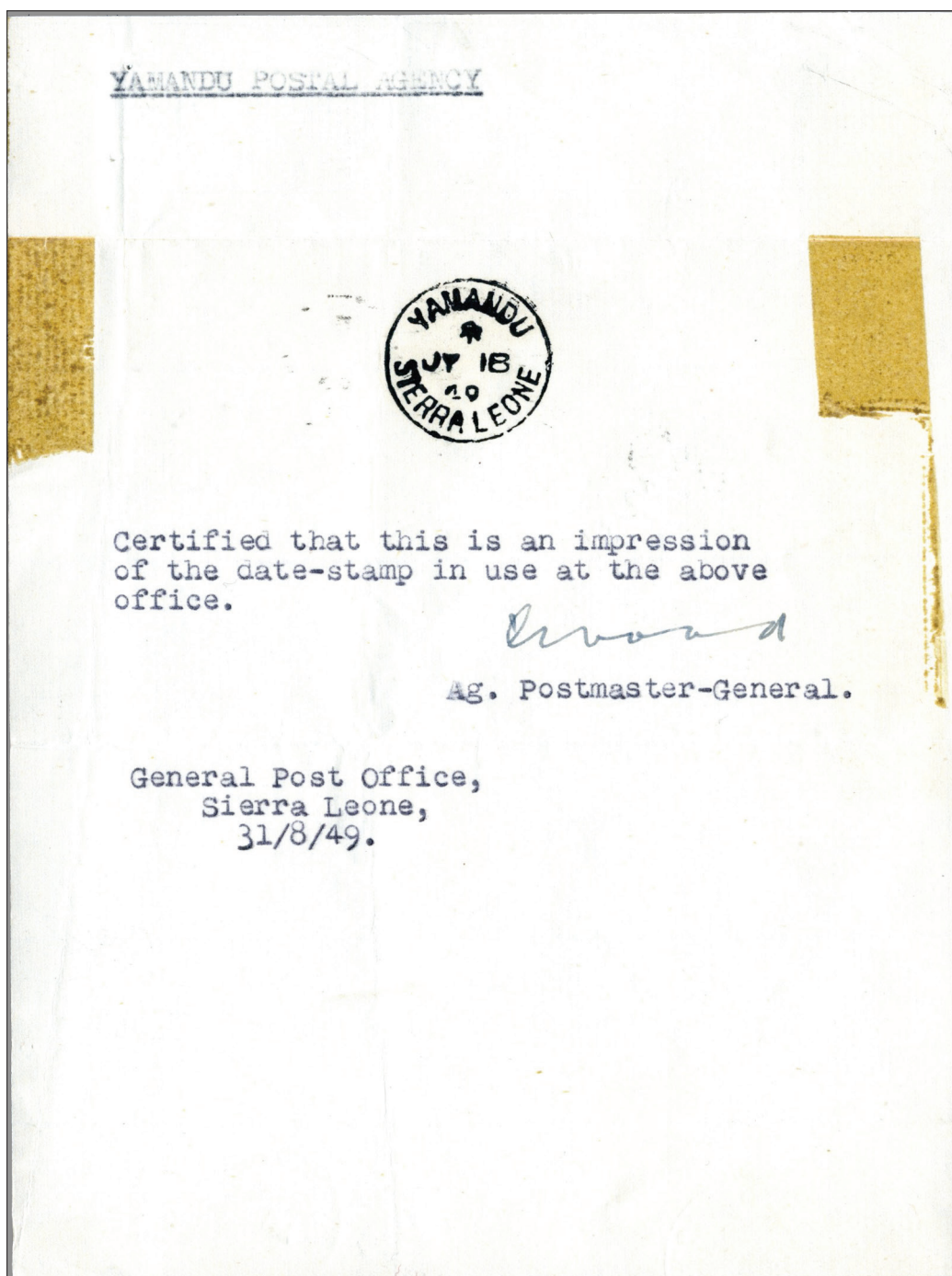
Wellington



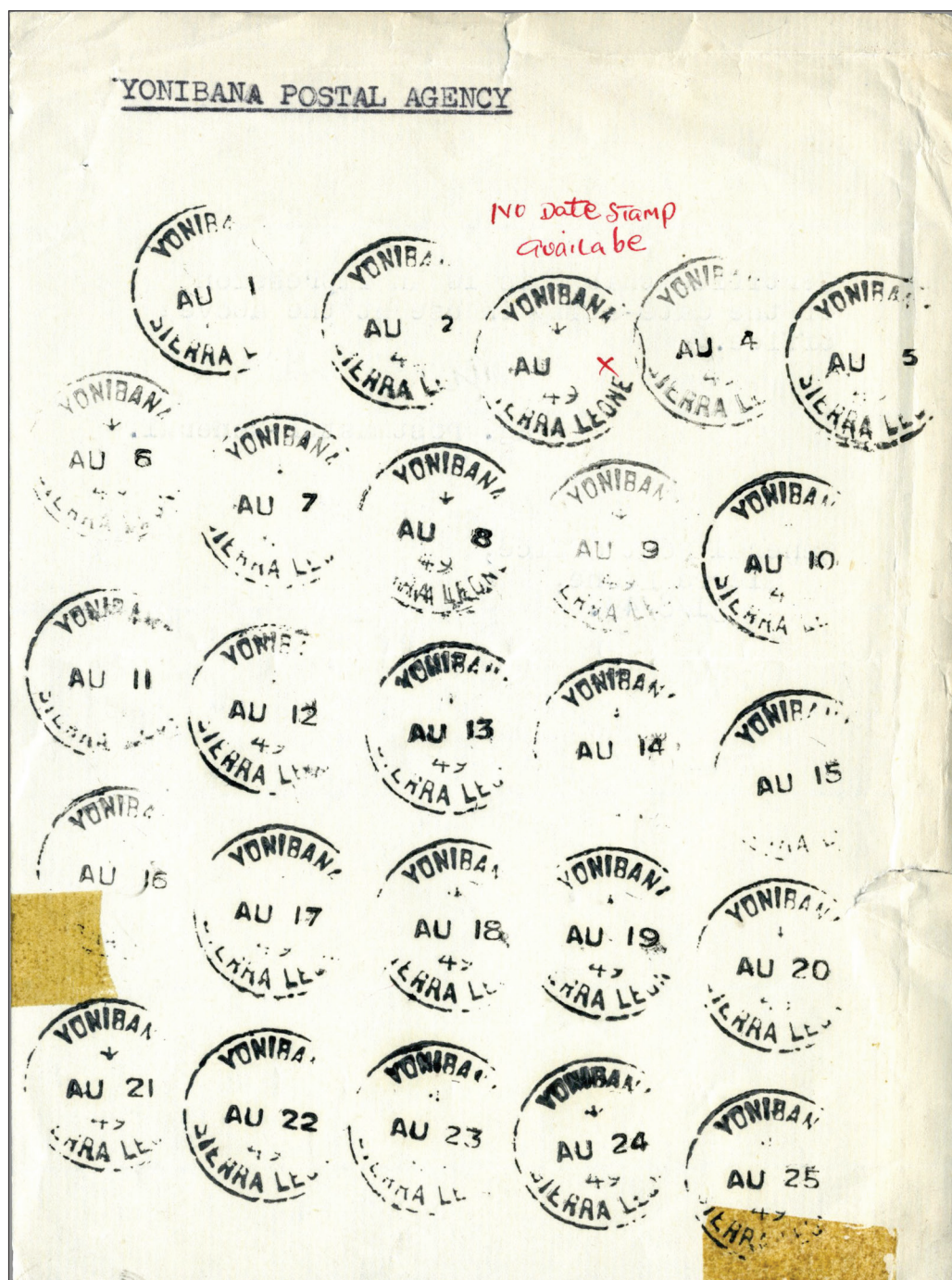
Wilberforce



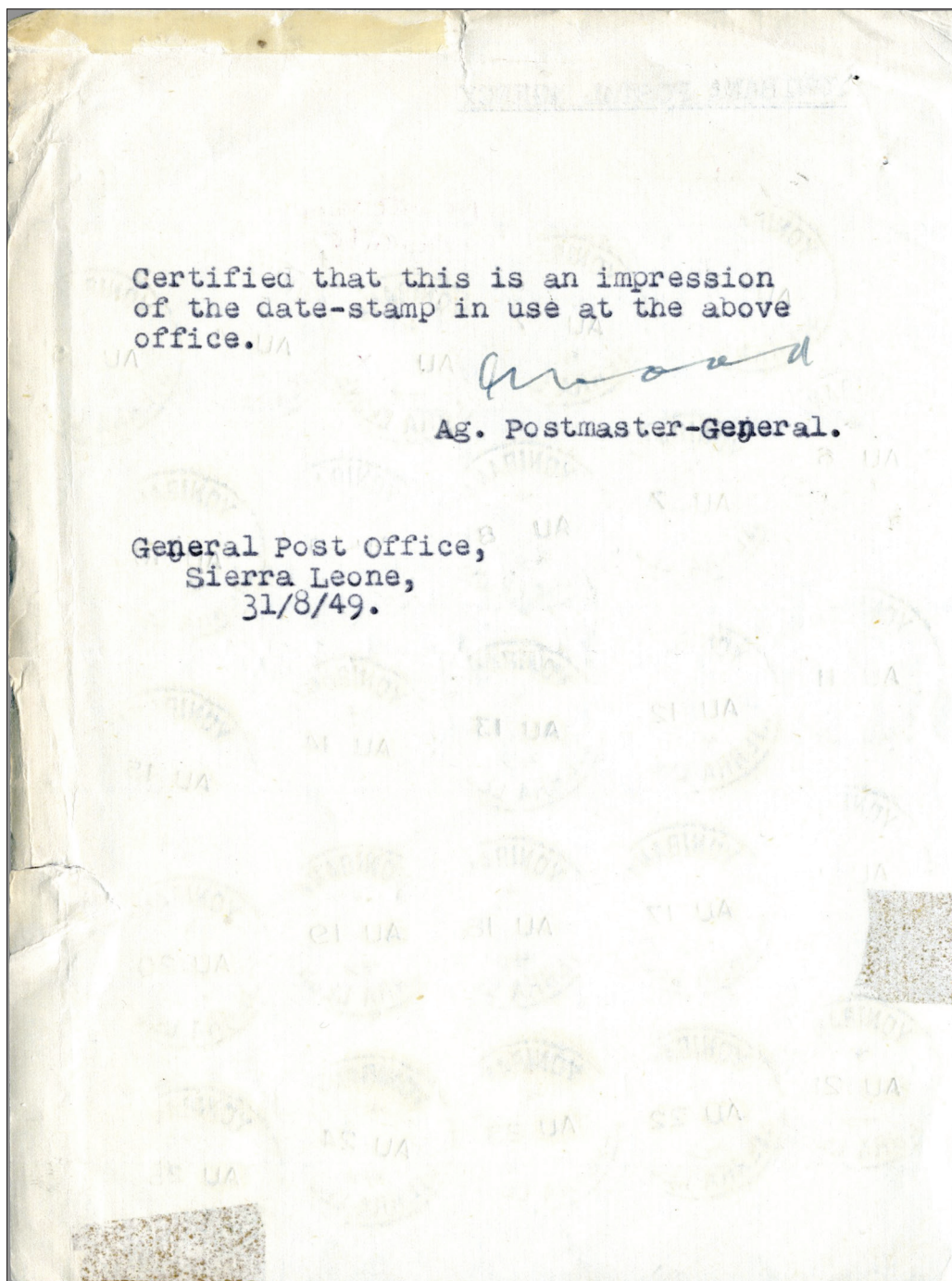
Yamandu



Yonibana

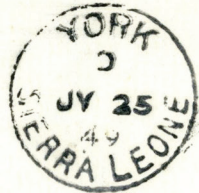


Yonibana, continued



York

YORK POSTAL AGENCY



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of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

E. J. J. J.

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York Island

YORK ISLAND POSTAL AGENCY



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of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

W. A. D.

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Yoyema

YOYEMA POSTAL AGENCY



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of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

M. J. J. J.

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Bo-Pendembu TPO

BO/Pendembu, Travelling Post Office



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of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

Wood.

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

Freetown-Bo TPO

Freetown/BO, Travelling Post Office.



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of the date-stamp in use at the above
office.

Wood.

Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

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1. Cade R.C.: *Handbook of British Colonial Stamps in current use September 1949 - comprising historical, geographical and general information obtained from official and other reliable sources*, HMSO, 1950.
2. Quirk, P.G.: "The Postmarks of Freetown – Part 2", *Cameo*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp170-179, 2019.
3. Quirk, P.G.: "The Postmarks of Freetown – Part 3", in preparation for submission to *Cameo*, 2021.
4. Proud E.B.: *The Postal History of Sierra Leone*, Proud Bailey, 1994.
5. Walton F.L.: *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961*, WASC, 1st edition, 1990.
6. Walton F.L., Quirk P.G., Hamilton M. & Horry D.: *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961*, WASC, 2nd edition, 2015.
7. Walton F.L.: *Sierra Leone Certified Postmark Impressions from 1949*, WASC, 1st edition, 2018.

West Africa Study Circle

A Specialised Philatelic Society

www.wasc.org.uk

The Study Circle, formed in 1950, is the international specialist society for the study of the stamps, postal stationery and postal history of the geographical area formerly known as British West Africa.

It originated from small specialist groups that already existed, and has undergone several expansions to its scope. The following philatelic areas are now covered:

- Ascension
- Biafra
- Cameroun
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Gold Coast
- Nigeria Region
- St Helena
- Sierra Leone
- Tristan da Cunha
- British Occupation of Togoland and the Cameroons

Additionally, several smaller areas are also included:

- British Postal Agencies on Madeira, Tenerife, St Vincent (Cape Verde Islands) and Fernando Po.

Study dates from the earliest times of British influence to the present day and includes military campaigns, maritime and airmail services.

Membership numbers around 230 and includes specialists living in the United Kingdom, North America, Africa, Europe, the Far East and Australia.

Members each year receive three issues of the Journal, *Cameo*, which has been awarded Gold Medals in the Literature Classes at International Exhibitions.

Members' meetings are held twice annually in London, once annually in Salisbury and occasionally elsewhere including North America. The Circle also publishes books on relevant subjects. In addition there are postal auctions, and there is a library service. Further information about the Circle's activities can be found on the website, www.wasc.org.uk

Applications to join the West Africa Study Circle should be sent to the Membership Secretary, John Hossack by email to hoss-28@virginmedia.com.

Information correct as at August 2021

BLAMA POST OFFICE



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Wood
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

DARU POST OFFICE



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Wood
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

GBAP POSTAL AGENCY



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Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

KAMBIA POSTAL AGENCY



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General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

LUNSAT POST OFFICE



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Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.

MOYAMBA POST OFFICE



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Wood
Ag. Postmaster-General.

General Post Office,
Sierra Leone,
31/8/49.