

C A M E O



JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

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EDITORIAL

To mark the 30th anniversary of the Circle, this issue of CAMEO is larger than usual and smaller print has been used in an endeavour to keep down costs.

The article by Ian Warn on Airmail Routes during the Second World War covers an area of research where there is much still to be learnt. Our thanks are due to him. He is not a member of our Circle but, with your Editor, a member of the Postal History Society.

"Stamp Collecting" of January 17th 1980 published an important article by our member Roger B. West on "Plating Early St. Helena Issues".

The longer one collects our area of British Africa, the more we seem to discover which is as it should be. For newcomers there is still much research to be done and recorded. There should be enough for the next thirty years.

"TRADING IN WEST AFRICA 1840-1920"

The above book, published in 1976 by Crook Helm, London, comprises a collection of memoirs, edited by P.N. Davies, of some traders during that period. The most comprehensive, and to me, the most interesting, is that of Harry Cotterell who first arrived in Bonny, 39 days after sailing from Liverpool on 1st January 1863. He spent much of his early years at New Calabar, Bonny and Old Calabar and his account of the times provides not only fascinating reading but the background information essential to any philatelist concerned with this period. In addition Mr. Davies' bibliography (as one might expect of a senior lecturer at one of our universities) is comprehensive and that, with the detailed notes at the conclusion of each section, provides a ready source for avenues of further study.

As Chairman of the Court of Equity (a local body set up and recognised by both white traders and African suppliers of produce) Mr. Cotterell recalls that he was repeatedly called to settle disputes. In 1867, there used to be sometimes as many as 20-30 ships and hulks lying in Bonny River at any one time as it was then the principal loading port for Bonny and New Calabar. There was therefore plenty of activity and business life going on although there was only one mail per month. This usually arrived about the 24th of the month, the vessel remaining in the river for about 10 days, the other ports in the Delta being served by a branch steamer from Bonny. One of the duties of the Chairman of Equity was to act as Post-

master, collecting and distributing incoming mail. Probably there was some similar arrangement for home going mail but the inference is that most traders handed in their individual mail direct to the ship's captain.

There is much more of general interest and I commend the book to anyone who is able to locate a copy (it is still currently on sale - price £7.50!)

J.F. Ince.

ASANTE: KINGDOM OF GOLD

At the Museum of Mankind, Burlington Gardens, London a fascinating exhibition is now open and should remain so until at least the end of 1981. For those interested in the background to one of the areas we collect, a visit is recommended.

An Exhibition pamphlet explains: "The Kingdom of Asante rose to power in 19th Century Ghana, expanding by military conquest and enriched by trade. This exhibition reveals the ceremonial splendour of the Asante Kings and Chiefs, with their gold regalia and jewellery, fine silk cloths and carved wooden chairs, stools and other insignia of office.

The sophistication of the royal capital, Kumase, is contrasted with reconstructions of the simple surroundings of rural village life. The exhibition illustrates the role of European trade and colonialism in the rise and fall of the great Asante empire, and demonstrates the continuity of Asante tradition to the present day".

Admission is free. The Museum is open from Monday - Saturday 10 - 5, Sundays 2.30 - 6.00. Closed 24 - 26 December.

J.J.M.

THE SHORTEST DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO POINTS : 1844 K.J. MACRAE

In the course of examination recently of some missionary archives, I came across the following extracts which may interest members. The missionary concerned had to go home urgently but had missed the only trading vessel for some weeks from his station at Cape Coast Castle to England.

"10th June, 1844. Cape Coast, Western Africa - "The quickest way of getting home will be, I think, crossing to Ascension and waiting a day or two for a homeward-bound East India-man. Capt. Dunlop of H.M.S. "Star" has promised to give me a passage to Ascension.-----"

28th Aug., 1844. Cowes, I. of W. - "I am 10 weeks and 3 days from Cape Coast Castle, calling at "Princes Island" and "Ascension" on my way. I went from Cape Coast Castle to Ascension in H.M. Sloop "Star" and from thence I took a passage on board the Barque "Oriental" bound from Calcutta to London. I left the Barque in the Channel yesterday evening and came in to Cowes in a Pilot Boat. I intend sleeping in Southampton tonight and hope (to be) in London tomorrow."

It is also interesting to note that he expected his second letter to his superiors in London to arrive before he did when written and posted in Cowes the night before.

DE LA RUE MANUSCRIPT "SPECIMEN" STAMPS

J.F. INCE

From the date of an International Bureau circular of 19th June 1884 and until 1948, stamps have been distributed by the issuing country to the member countries of the Universal Postal Union overprinted "Specimen". For the British colonial issues, the required number of stamps for this purpose was ordered from the printers and distributed by the Colonial Office through the Bureau in Berne. Prior to 1884 there had been no requirement for overprinting.

Stamps so overprinted after 1884 usually represent samples from the initial printing and are thus of value in dating shades etc.

For the Crown Colonies there does not seem to have been any organised system of distribution or exchange of specimens before this became one of the responsibilities of the International Bureau in 1879. Prior thereto, some of the "cancelled/specimen" examples which exist come either from presentation packs to V.I.P.'s; from local overprinting, or most usually, from printers' own reference collections. Specimens had indeed been issued but generally there had been no requirement for Crown Colonies supplying specimens to other postal administrations to deface them in any manner.

It is significant that in 1870 Messrs. de la Rue & Co. (who were printing most of the British and British Colonial stamps at this period) wrote to the Crown Agents seeking authority to retain examples of stamps printed by them, and also of paper used, for a reference collection, pointing out that the Board of Inland Revenue had already acceded to a similar request providing that each "label should be cancelled by writing the word "Specimen" across it". The Post Office also maintained a reference collection.

The standard reference work on this subject is Mr. Marcus Samuel's comprehensive study "The Specimen Stamps of the Crown Colonies 1857 - 1948" (published by The Royal Philatelic Society 1976). However an area of uncertainty has surrounded the authenticity of examples of nineteenth century stamps from some colonies bearing 'Specimen' in manuscript diagonally on face from bottom left to top right.

The following examples of these manuscript specimens are known to the writer to exist and all were printed by de la Rue.

Ceylon 1863/66 6^d, 2/-

Gambia 1869 - 4^d; 1874 - 6^d; 1880 - ½^d, 6^d.

Gold Coast 1884/91 - ½^d, 1^d, 2^d, 2½^d, 4^d.

Lagos 1882/85 - 3^d (two copies); 1884/86 - ½^d, 1^d

1887/1902 - 2^d, 4^d (two copies) 6^d, 1/-, 2/6 (two copies)
5/-, 10/-

From examples seen, there exists probably three different types of handwriting.

In order to carry the study of these manuscript specimen cancellations further, I would be grateful if any member holding examples would write giving me details and, if possible, a good photocopy so that the handwriting can be identified.

OCCUPATION ISSUES AT SOTHEBY'S

J.J. MARTIN

An important sale of "Postage Stamps of the 1914-18 War" was held at Sotheby's, London on March 26th, 1981. Of interest to West African collectors were the sections on the Cameroons and Togo. Highlights are noted below. Realisations include the 10% buyers premium; for UK collectors there was an additional 15% for VAT. Estimates are in brackets.

There were just five lots of Cameroons. The 2s. on 2m; 'S' inverted, S.G.11a, a few small tones, fine unused large part o.g. with 1979 B.P.A. Certificate fetched £121 (£120/£150). A copy of the 3s. on 3m; surcharge double, tiny gum tones, fresh unused o.g.; S.G.12b, reached £2200 (£2000/£2200). A 3s. on 3m; surcharge double, one albino, a fine example with normal surcharge and what appeared to be a clear second, but albino, impression; unused o.g. B.P.A. Cert 1979 declining to express an opinion, started at £20 (ex 10%) but was sold for £82.50 (£25/£30).

A ½^d on 5 pfg. Postal Stationery card, unused, was over-estimated at £50/£70. It sold for £22.

Next, Togo. There were twenty-eight lots, all German overprinted stamps. First, the Wide Setting. A 10 pfg; overprint inverted, S.G. 3a, unused without gum, very rare as of the 50 made it is believed that probably only three remain in unused condition, with 1978 B.P.A. Cert, fetched £4400 (£4000/£4600). The same value fine used on small piece sold for £2750 (£3000/£3600). Another 10 pfg; error "No Watermark", S.G. 3c; very fine used on small piece went for £4400 (£4000/£4400).

Another rarity, the 2m. blue, overprint inverted, S.G. 11b; of which only eight were made, fresh, slight wrinkles, unused large part o.g. was knocked down for £8800 (£8000/£9000).

Turning now to the Narrow Settings. A 5 pfg. green, S.G. 15, fine used went for £374 (£300/£360). A 40 pfg fine unused o.g., 100 made, S.G. 20, sold for £484 (£300/£360) and the 1m; S.G. 23 fresh unused without gum, slight thin, small black ink smudge on the surface; very rare as only 50 made, fetched £2200 (£2000/£2500).

The "TOG" for "TOGO" error on the 1d. on 5 pfg; S.G. 28a, fresh unused o.g. sold for £77 (£70/£90).

This was a fascinating sale with some unusual material. Prices were much in line with estimates but, for UK collectors, the 10% "buyers premium" and then 15% VAT, made many items rather expensive.

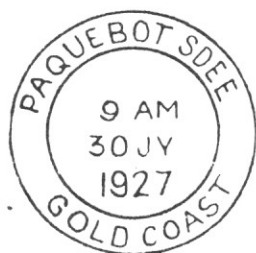
THE PAQUEBOT MARKS OF AFRICA, THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

AND THEIR ISLANDS

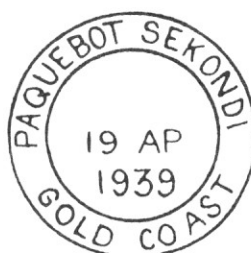
BY EDWIN DRESCHER

This new book from the Robson Lowe stable deals, as the title indicates, with African paquebot markings, a subject that, to the writer's belief, has not been studied by our Circle previously.

For West Africa, Mr. Dreschel has listed all the recorded Paquebot marks known from 1894 onwards through the 1920's and 1930's when many different types appeared to the modern ones.



1



2

The book has 72 pages and limp covers; 18 West African countries are covered as well as Ascension and St. Helena. Of the 18 countries, there are entries for 34 ports with 89 types listed and 88 illustrations. Five different boxed POSTED ON STEAMER cachets are recorded for Sierra Leone.

A fascinating book. Published by Robson Lowe Ltd and available from them at 39, Poole Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH2 5PM. price £7.50. Postage and packing extra at 50p U.K. and Europe, £2 overseas.

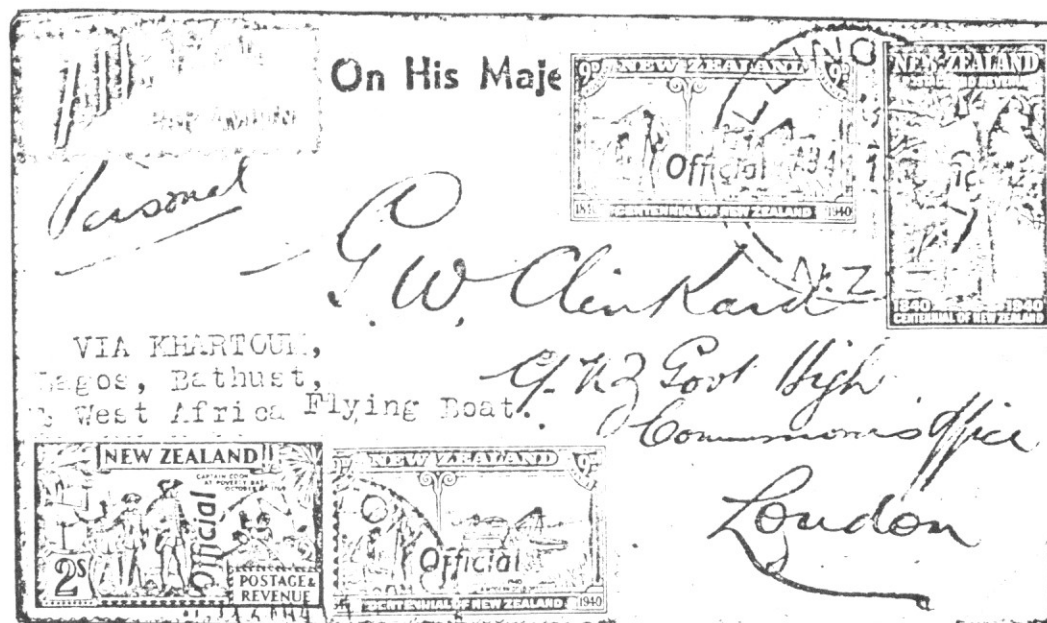
J.J.M.

WORLD WAR II AIRMAIL ROUTES

THROUGH WEST AFRICA

I.M. WARN

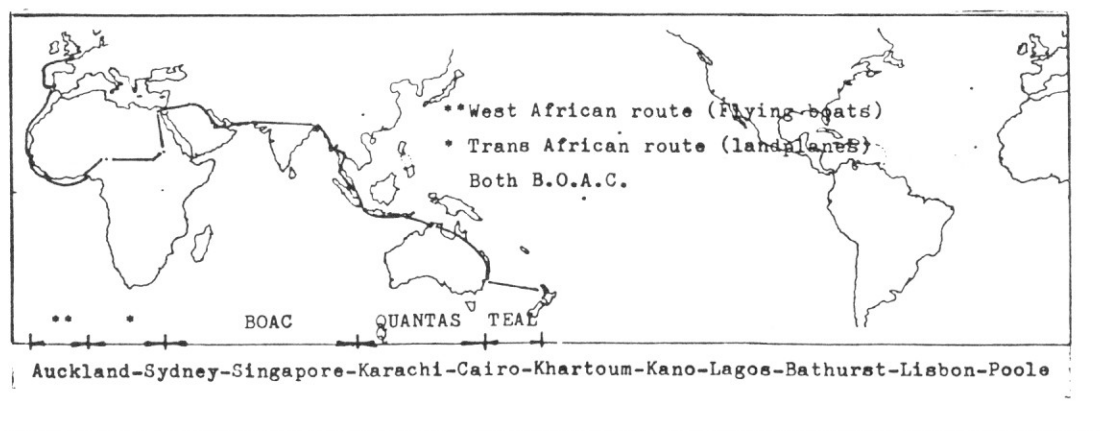
The war closed many of the usual airmail routes and new routes had to be found.



The above cover is an official letter posted at Wellington, New Zealand on August 13th 1941. Postage 4/6^d.

From October 1940, BOAC began a regular flying-boat service to West Africa. For one year this was the only British all-air link to the East.

Carriage on these aircraft was restricted to officially nominated passengers, official mail and urgent military freight.



I have another item, a front, from Egypt to Switzerland bearing the Nigeria  half moon censor cachet and a closure label of Bermuda. It is dated February 26th 1943 at Alexandria and went 'double Atlantic' to Switzerland.

AUCTION REALISATIONS

Robson Lowe Ltd. November 5th 1980

Ascension 1968 Fishes 4^d; 8^d; 1/9^d and 2/3^d. handpainted essays by M.C. Farrar Bell each on a piece of board (179mm x 114mm), the 4^d depicting Triggerfish (unaccepted and later changed to Blackfish) showing photographic portrait of the Queen affixed in oval; the other three designs (all accepted) with portrait oval blank. All with pencil endorsements for changes in lettering design or colour. £250 (£200).

Bournemouth Stamp Auctions. December 3rd/4th 1980

Gold Coast 1884-91 6^e on front with Kumasi c.d.s. of 1899 and "NORTHERN TERRITORIES/GOLD COAST" handstamp in violet; and 2½^d on piece with the Kumasi c.d.s. of Dec. 1898 and the same handstamp £72.50 (£60).

Bournemouth Stamp Auctions. January 7th/8th 1981

Ghana 1957 (June*-Sept.) rough drawing on tracing paper of 2½^d. Signed by Whiteley £11 (£15).

Stanley Gibbons Auctions Ltd. January 22nd 1981

Gambia 1874 6^d deep blue horizontal marginal strip of three from top right of sheet. £1100 + 10% buyer's premium (£750)

Gambia 1883/93 1^d imperforate watermark Crown CA sideways. A Circle member advises that this is the first example that he has come across £850 + 10% buyers premium (£600).

Gambia 1989 handpainted essay of duty portion of 4^d value in brown with country and value tablet shading handpainted in blue and value picked out in white. A Circle member believes that this is one of four that have been auctioned over the past nine years. £750 + 10% buyers premium (£350).

Bournemouth Stamp Auctions. February 4th/5th 1981

St. Helena 1829 entire letter from "Plantation House" to Clifton showing manuscript '4' in black and Bath c.d.s. on reverse. Apparently carried privately to England. £75 (£40).

Robson Lowe Ltd. February 11th/12th 1981

Ascension 1916 envelope to England bearing G.B. 1^d cancelled by partly indistinct Ascension c.d.s., showing "CENSORED" h.s. (62 x 8mm.) in blue. £16. (£20)

Ascension die proof in black on wove paper (60 x 68mm.) of the central vignette, used for the 1^d, 2^d, 8^d and 2/6^d. values, showing incorrect latitude figures but without meridians or parallels of latitude £220 (£150).

Ascension a similar lot (60 x 51mm.) but with meridians and parallels of latitude added, vertical crease clear of design. £210 (£150).

Cavendish Philatelic Auctions. May 9th 1981

Southern Nigeria 1901 - O2 5/- as S.G. 8 but the scarce Sperati Forgery (used) £28 (£25).

STEEL AND RUBBER STAMP IMPRESSION BOOKS : ASCENSION

The following date-stamps and cachets are reproduced from the Impression Books by courtesy of P.O. Archives. All in black except ASCENSION in rectangle. The dates shown indicate when sent to the island.



Volume 8 (2), Page 150
Feb/Mar 1858



Volume 22, Page 31
4th June 1864



Volume 22, Page 87
6th Nov. 1872



Volume 22, Page 107
22 Aug. 1879



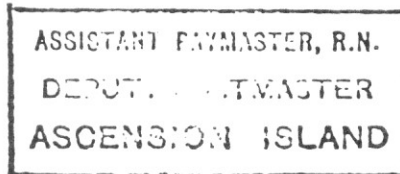
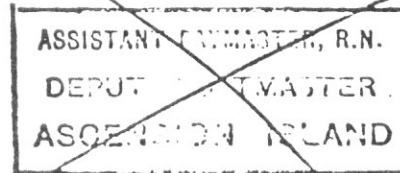
Rubber Volume 5, Page 139
24 Sept. 1892

502219/98 Ascension



Handed to Mr Corke to go with other stores

Volume 51, Page 33
Dec. 1898



16113/00
 skin 8/70
 Ascension Island Post
 Despatch 26/9/00

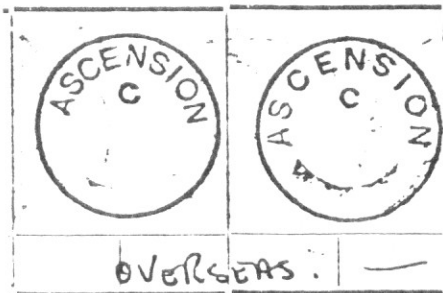
Volume 51, Page 57
 26th Sept. 1900



Volume 51, Page 70
 4th Dec. 1901



Volume 51, Page 142
 9th Oct. 1909

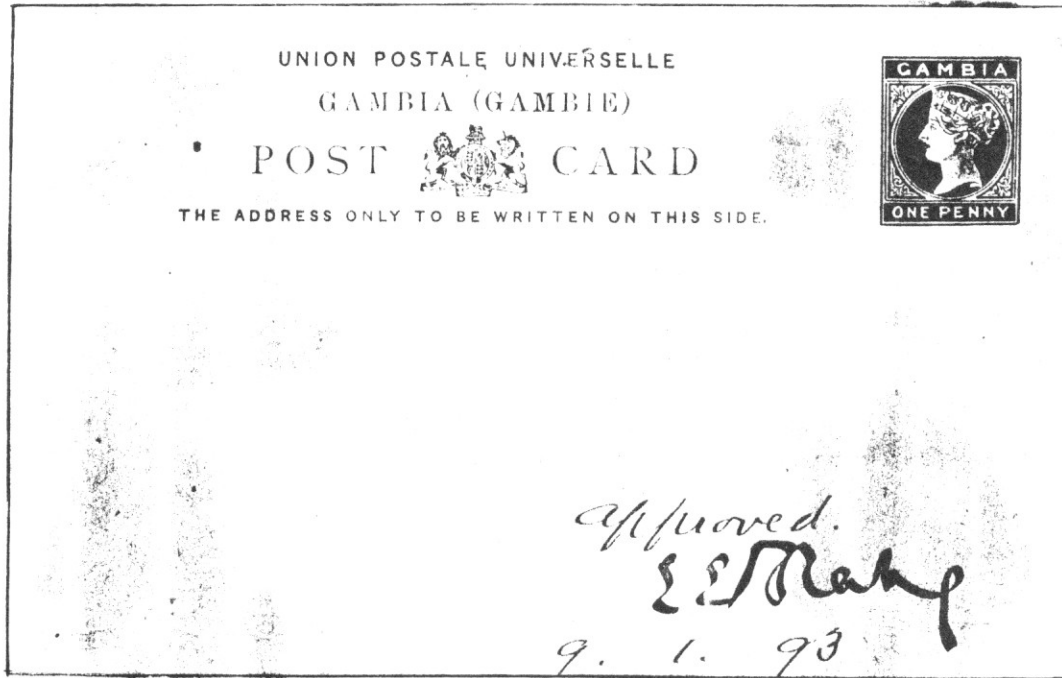


Volume 60, Page 139
 30th Oct. 1959

Thirty to forty years of 'impressions' of the first half of the 20th century are missing, probably due to war damage.

J.J.M.

GAMBIA : ESSAY FOR 1893 1^d POSTCARD



This essay is in the De La Rue records. It is handpainted in deep red matching the printed lettering. Dated January 9th 1893.

AIR MAIL SERVICE TO GAMBIA: MARCH 1926J.J. MARTIN

For some time your Editor has been researching the development of the air mail routes to and from the West Coast of Africa and, in particular, the routes via Dakar. In this, and future, issues of Cameo, I hope to show the background to the speeding up of the mail services.

I should like to thank the staff of PO Archives for their help and for their permission to print what follows. Details can be found in PO Archives under Reference 2439-40 File No. M 14303/1928.

On Monday, 1st June 1925 it was announced that the Latecoere Company was to commence an air service for mail between Casablanca and Dakar as an extension of the Toulouse-Casablanca service. The aeroplanes were to leave Toulouse and Marseilles every Monday and Dakar every Saturday. The first plane arrived at Dakar on 3rd June. At 2700 miles, this was claimed to be the longest air mail service.

The G.P.O. on July 9th, 1925, enquired of the French P.O. if mails could be transmitted from Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

In the file is a letter from J.L. Fenton, Director of Posts, Bathurst dated July, 21st 192 , to the G.P.O. London. This is reproduced in full:

"I have the honour to advise the despatch to you of a bag of official mail by the air route from Dakar to London - via Casa Blanca, Toulouse - Paris.

I am anxious to learn that the procedure is in accordance with established custom and that a regular service of official and private letters may be effected on the coming into force of the Stockholm Convention on the 1st October next - I shall feel grateful for any advice that would be of guidance to me, encourage the traffic and lessen inconvenience.

Would you be so good as to send to this office 6 copies of the leaflet mentioned on page 52 of the current issue of the Postal Guide."

With this correspondence was a Letter Bill stamped at Bathurst 19 JY 25 and received London 1 AU 25. The Registered Correspondence consisted of 4 Registered Articles entered on 1 list and Closed Mails was 'one bag addressed The Secretary of State for the Colonies'. Thus this journey took twelve days.

The reply to the Director of Posts at Bathurst, dated August 17th is also reproduced:

continued.....

"Toulouse - Dakar Air Mail Service"

With reference to your letter of the 21st ultimo, I am directed by the Postmaster General to enclose, for your information and guidance, a copy of a letter from the French Post Office concerning the conditions under which the above-mentioned service can be made use of for the transmission of Air Mail letters. It is hoped to make arrangements at an early date for the transmission by the service to Dakar of letters from this country to Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone and other parts of West Africa. On Air Mail letters for these destinations the British public will probably be charged a special fee (in addition to ordinary foreign or Imperial postage) of not less than 6d. for the first $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., 9d. for $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 oz., and 3d. additional for each additional ounce. The rate finally decided upon will be notified in the Post Office Circular in due course. On the assumption that the French Post Offices concerned will duly recognise the Imperial rate of ordinary postage paid on Air Mail letters for destinations in British West Africa, it is not proposed at present to ask the French postal administration to accept closed Mails for transmission by the new air route to British West Africa.

The French postal administration was asked on the 9th ultimo to send to you directly particulars of the conditions under which you could make use of the Dakar - Toulouse air service for letters to this country and beyond, and you will probably have already received the necessary information.

Six copies of the current Air Mail leaflet were sent to you separately on the 4th instant."

A manuscript note was added: "Your despatch by the air route on the 19th of July, bearing serial number 26 was received in London by air from Paris on the afternoon of the 1st instant. Your further similar despatch of the 23rd ult., Serial No 28, was received at Plymouth by the "Appam" on the 2nd inst. together with your ordinary despatch of the same date Serial No 27".

Another note went to The Controller in London: "The Mails should be accepted. Please state the time of transit, and route by which received, in the case of the next 4 Air Mails received from Bathurst, and state whether private letters are enclosed, and what rate of air postage is being prepaid (if any) in addition to the ordinary postage". This was dated 18/8/25.

There was also pressure in England for an air mail service. Harold Hopwood, a West African merchant in Manchester, wrote to the G.P.O. in April 1926 to enquire if it was possible to have an air mail service to the Gold Coast and Nigeria.

continued

A Post Office Circular of March 24th 1926 included the following announcement:

"AIR MAILS

1. Toulouse-Dakar Air Mail Service. Letters may now be posted under the usual general conditions for transmission by a new weekly Air Mail (an extension of the Toulouse - Casablanca Air Mail) to French Senegal, serving also Gambia and certain countries beyond. Particulars of the service are given in tabular form below. The first despatch will be made from London on the evening of Wednesday, the 31st instant.

Route No.	Mail closes London G.P.O.,	AIR ROUTE	(a) Delivery normally obtained at certain principal places. (b) Onward connexion by ordinary route	Estimated saving in time of transit	Useful period of post- ing at G.P.O. London
9 A	6.0 p.m. each Wednesday	Toulouse- Casablanca-Dakar	(a) Dakar (French Senegal) 4½-5 days. (b) By steamer from) Dakar to: Gambia) (Bathurst) French) Guinea (Konakry)) Sierra Leone,) Belgian Congo.)	6 - 9 days See Note	Contin- uous See Note

Note. The Air Mail offers in effect:- For letters to (1) Gambia, (2) French Guinea, in probably every week an earlier arrival, or a later posting for the same arrival, with an average saving of about 4 days in time of transit; (3) Sierra Leone, in any week when there is no ordinary despatch by steamer on Wednesday, a gain of 4-7 days, and in other weeks a later posting by (in London) nearly one day, with an average gain of about 5 days over the next ordinary mail; (4) the Belgian Congo, a supplementary despatch in the week following an ordinary despatch by French Packet (which it should normally overtake at Dakar).

2. The special fee payable (in addition to ordinary postage at foreign or Imperial rate according to destination) will be: 8d. up to ½ oz.; 10d up to 1 oz.; 1s.2d. up to 3½ oz.; 6d. additional for each additional 3½ oz. or fraction thereof. Letters should be marked underneath the Air Mail label (or manuscript equivalent) "Par avion de Toulouse a Dakar".
3. Circulation. - Air Mail letters apparently intended for transmission by the Toulouse - Dakar Air Mail route should be circulated to the London Foreign Section in the usual way."

The G.P.O. issued a Press Notice P.N. 411 on March 25th.

"The Postmaster General announces that letters may now be posted under the usual general conditions for transmission by a new weekly Air Mail serving French and British West Africa as far as Sierra Leone, and, in certain weeks, the Belgian Congo. The mail will be closed at the General Post Office, London, each Wednesday at 6 p.m., beginning on Wednesday next, March 31, and should normally reach Dakar (French Senegal) on the following Sunday evening or Monday morning. The service offers, for letters to French Senegal, an advantage over the ordinary Mail of from six to nine days, and a similar but somewhat less pronounced gain for letters to Gambia (Bathurst), French Guinea (Konakry), Sierra Leone and the Belgian Congo. Details of the actual advantage obtainable in each case can be supplied on application at any Head or Branch Post Office.

Letters intended for transmission by the new Air Mail should be plainly marked below the Air Mail Label (or manuscript equivalent) "Par avion de Toulouse a Dakar", and should be prepaid with a special fee (in addition to ordinary postage at foreign or Imperial rate according to destination) as follows:- 8d. up to $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; 10d. up to 1 oz.; 1/2d. up to $3\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; 6d. additional for each additional $3\frac{1}{2}$ oz. or fraction thereof".

The first official service left London on March 31st 1926, arriving at Bathurst on April 17th by a boat which left Liverpool on April 4th. The Director of Posts, Bathurst commented "Delayed unnecessarily at Dakar".

Although much of the information will be repeated, members may like to see a copy (reduced size) of the notice issued by the General Post Office, Bathurst on March 27th giving details of the new service.

See Over.

AIR MAIL

Via Dakar to Morocco, France (for continental destinations) and Great Britain.

1. **Any kind of Letter Packet may be sent by Air Mail**, i.e., letters, postcards, printed and commercial papers and samples. Registered Packets are permissible. **Neither Insured articles nor Parcel Post are accepted.**
2. Any packet intended for the **air mail may be posted in the ordinary way of posting.**
3. Any packet intended for transmission by the Air Mail, besides conforming to the ordinary regulations of the letter post, **MUST**:— (1) bear a printed or manuscript label "**Par avion de Dakar a Toulouse**" on the top left-hand corner of the cover of the packet. Labels can be obtained free on application to any Post Office.
4. The **Air Mail Fee** must be prepaid with postage stamps in the ordinary way—**Any Packet Which Is Not Fully Prepaid With The Appropriate Air Mail Fee Will Not Be Sent By Air Mail.**
5. The limits of weight and dimension are the same as for articles transmitted by ordinary post.
6. The rates of postage on letters including the Air Mail Fee are:—

	To Great Britain.		To France.		To Morocco.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Up to $\frac{1}{2}$ oz	0	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	9	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over $\frac{1}{2}$ oz—1 oz	0	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	11	0	9
Over 1 oz—3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ozs	1	8	1	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
.. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$..—7	2	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	6	2	1
.. 7 ..—10 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	6	3	0

7. **Express delivery** at the place of destination is not covered by the Air Mail fee. An additional fee of 6d. (a packet) must be paid and the packet marked "**Express**".
 8. The **Ordinary Postage** due (in addition to the Air Mail fee) on an Air Mail packet **MUST** be prepaid at the rate applicable to the class of letter packet concerned, i.e., at the letter rate, printed paper rate, sample rate, etc., as the case may be.
- WARNING.**
9. The Postal Service of the Gambia accept no responsibility in case of the postponement of the departure of the Air Mail from Dakar or for any delay whatsoever and the date of the despatch of letters sent for Air Mail depend upon the facilities of conveyance to Dakar.

General Post Office,
Bathurst, Gambia.

27th March, 1926.

J. L. FENTON,
Director of Posts.

A P.O. Circular of May 26th, 1926 announced an increase of postage rates. A familiar story.

"Toulouse - Dakar Air Mail service. Increase of fee:- With reference to paragraph 2 of the notice in the Post Office Circular of the 24th of March last, page 116, the scale of fees there shown has been raised, and will now be as follows:- 10d. up to $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; 1s. up to 1 oz.; 1s.4d. up to $3\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; 1s.8d. up to 7 oz.; 6d. additional for each additional $3\frac{1}{2}$ oz. or fraction thereof.

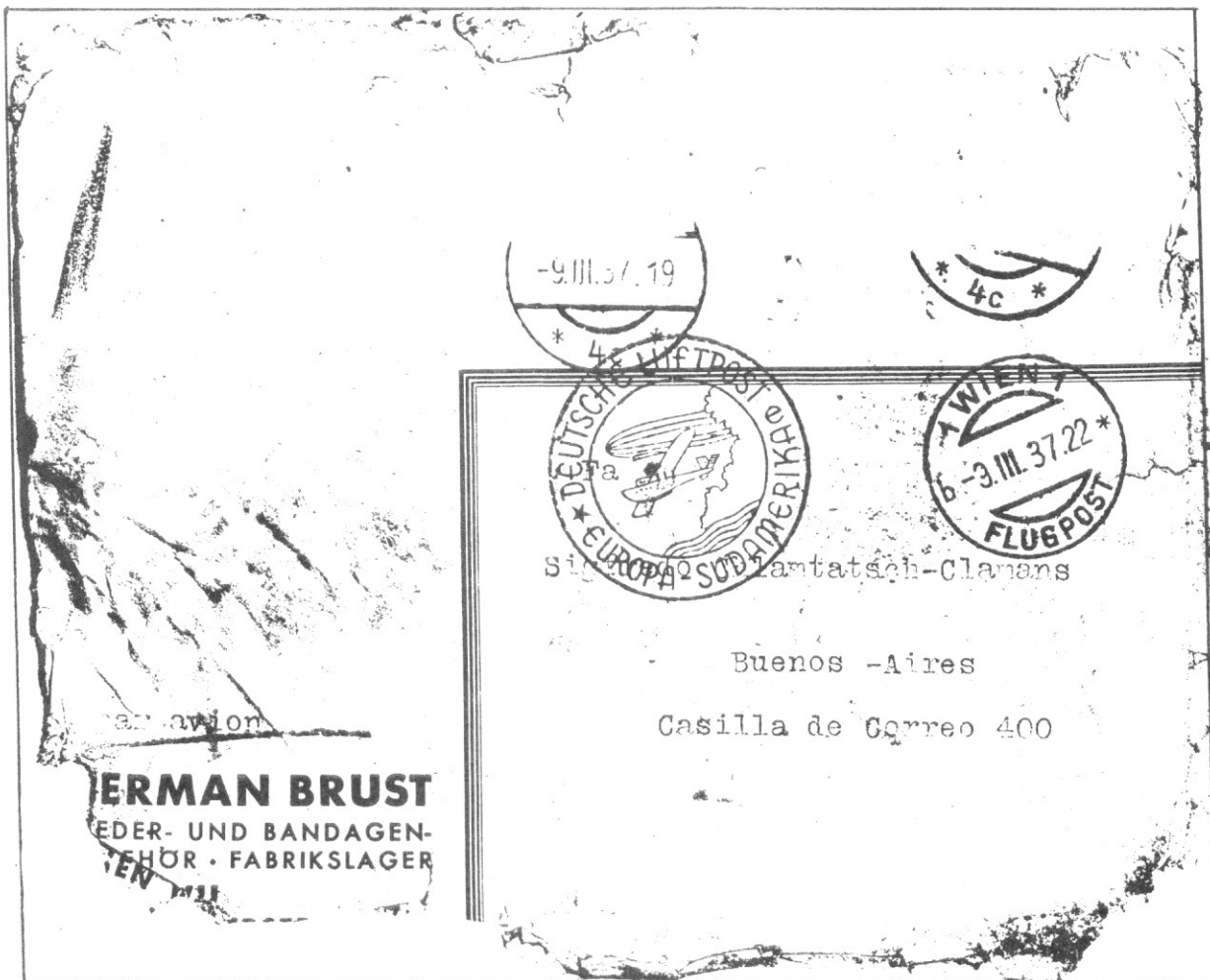
There will be an additional despatch by this route from London each Thursday morning (Mail closes at the G.P.O. at 6.15 a.m.) beginning on Thursday, the 3rd of June."

The G.P.O. Bathurst wrote to the G.P.O. London on September 17th, 1926 "..... the letters by the Air Mail, via Toulouse and Dakar, which left London on 1st September were delivered here at 7.0 a.m. on the 7th September". A manuscript note indicated that this was 6 days as against 12-15 by ordinary mail. Mail acceleration was being achieved.

This is a fairly detailed account extracted from a mountain of P.O. correspondence. I hope that, despite its length, members find the story of interest. Future articles, of shorter length, will deal with proposals for other routes.

GAMBIA. THE 1937 LUFTHANSA CRASHP.O. BEALE

The Times reported this crash in these terms 'The pilot, wireless operator, and mechanic of a mail aeroplane of the German-South American air service as well as the first officer of the Ostmark (one of the vessels used as floating bases for the relay aeroplanes), are believed to have been killed when their machine crashed near the estuary of the River Gambia yesterday' (13.3.37). Baldwin's 'Gambian Air Mails' states that most of the mail was saved and marked 'Accident D'Aviation'. However, the cover illustrated bears no such cachet. It shows clear signs of both burning and of water for the stamps have been floated off.



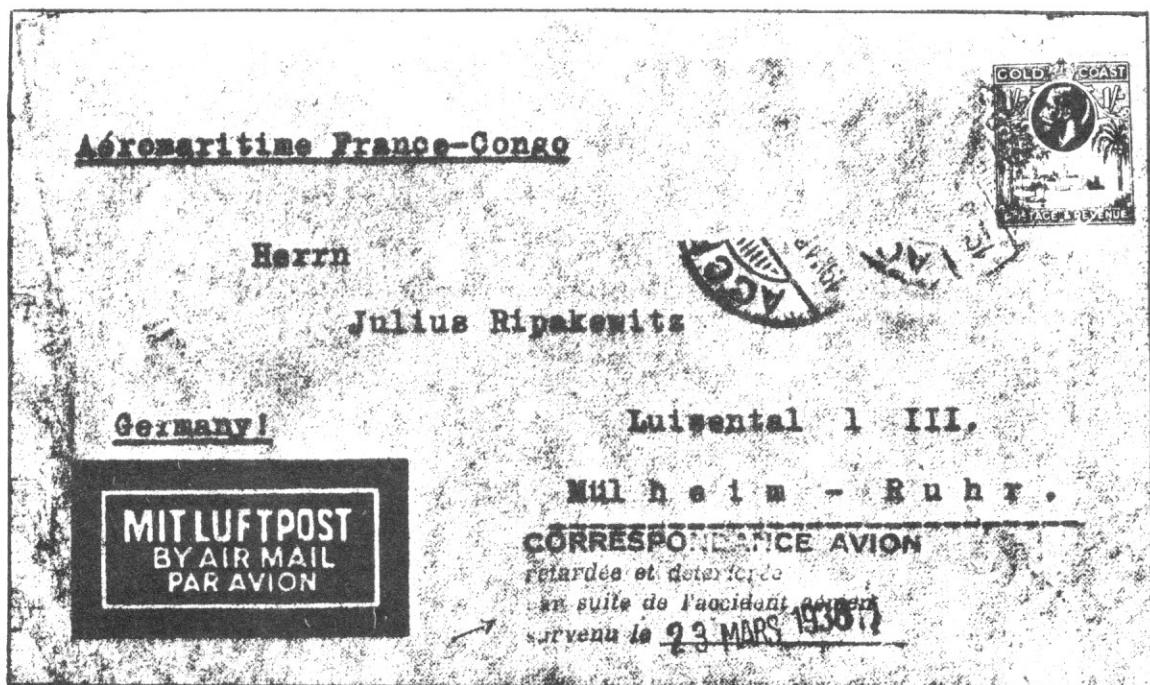
GOLD COAST 1918 WAR TAX STAMP

The Robson Lowe Ltd. sale of November 6th 1980 (lot 1912) included an overprinted 1913 - 21 1^d with manuscript "War/Tax".

Your Editor cannot recall seeing any previous reference to this.

GOLD COAST 1938 AIR CRASH COVERJ.J. MARTIN

I recently obtained the cover illustrated which had obviously been involved in an air crash. It was from Accra to Mulheim in Germany and carried by Aero Maritime. Two stamps are missing.



My local library were most helpful and checked copies of the London "Times" for March 1938 and came across the following article in the 25th March edition.

"All eight occupants, including five passengers, were killed last night when the Air France liner from West Africa crashed in a fog at a height of nearly 8,000 ft.; near Corsavy, at the eastern edge of the Pyrenees. Among the victims was a British engineer, Mr. White, resident in Australia.

A search party from Corsavy took three hours this morning to reach the wreck, which lay on rugged snow covered ground. Most of the mail was intact".

The cover bears a violet cachet "CORRESPONDANCE AVION/retardée et détériorée/par suite de l'accident aérien/survenu le 23 MARS 1938".

LAGOS POSTAL STATIONERYJ.F. INCE

At long last the mystery surrounding the issue date of the 1883 post card seems to have been cleared up. In preparation of the Lagos study within the Circle in 1978/79, no member was able to produce an example of a card used prior to 1887. Since then, a Canadian member, Mr. Philip Wolf, has acquired one dated 14 May 1886. Now, in Harmer's Sale Catalogue for 12/13 May 1981, lot No. 374 is described:

"Lagos: 1883 message part of 1½d and 1½d red brown reply card
 "addressed to London and then re-addressed to Hitchin, bars and
 "circular "Lagos/A/Jy 10/83 cancellations"

This usage relates closely to the date of the first invoice from de la Rue's (the printers) of 6th March 1883. Harmer's, in their description of this lot, refer to this early date "..... this is clearly a commercially used cover".

Perhaps a few were released prior to exhaustion of stocks of the 1879 card, or one or two were unofficially released!

NIGER COAST PROTECTORATE POSTAL ORDERD.W. CHITTY

Members may recall the Study Circle's reproduction of the article "Fort Stuart and the Post Office Service of the Niger Coast Protectorate" by T.A. Wall, who was Vice Consul at the time. The article describes the total destruction by fire of Fort Stuart on the night of 24th November 1895, the ground floor of which housed the Postal Customs Departments.

As early as the following morning, we are told, incoming mail was being sorted in a temporarily improvised office.

continued.....

The illustration shows an un-redeemed 1/- Postal Order issued by the Old Calabar office, payable at London and with the Old Calabar River c.d.s. 'A' dated October 13 '97. It is signed by T.A. Wall as Postmaster with manuscript V.C'sul.

NIGER COAST PROTECTORATE.
Old Calabar Office. No. 41

Stamp of Issuing Office.

£	s.	D.
1	0	

PAY the Person named in my Letter of Advice the sum of £ One Shilling

To the Post Office at London
T.A. Wall Postmaster. *PAID*

The person to whom this Order is made payable, must sign here. In the case of a Firm, the usual signature will suffice if so advised. } *Received the above*

Signature of Payee. _____

N.B.—If the Order be not paid before the end of the twelfth calendar month after that in which it was issued, all claim to the money will be lost. AFTER ONCE PAYING A MONEY ORDER, BY WHOMSOEVER PRESENTED, THE OFFICE WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO ANY FURTHER CLAIM.

Stamp of Paying Office.

[SEE BACK.]

NIGERIAN FIRST FLIGHTSS. DICKSON

May I add a little information to one or two articles in CAMEO.

First Flights - CAMEO 3/49 and 6/123. I have a cover carried on this flight (Kano - London); the addressee noted that following cancellation at Port Harcourt 13 Feb. 36, the letter was carried to Kano by rail and was eventually received in Derby on 26 Feb. 36, only one day after arrival in England.

Further to the updating article CAMEO 4/77. I have a cover Nigeria - Hong Kong via Khartoum and Penang (according to the typed legend) with an initial cancellation Kano 9 Apr. 36 and on the reverse c.d.s. on arrival at Cairo (13 April), Kowloon and Victoria, Hong Kong (21 April).

I should be pleased if any other members can tell me more of this second item.

CENSOR STATION AT CALABARD. MAYO

A cover in my possession establishes the existence of a W.W.II censor station at Calabar. The stamps are postmarked at Calabar on 28 Oc 41. The resealing tape is tied on the back by an Aba registry postmark dated October 29th, two days earlier than the Lagos backstamp.

Calabar, bigger than Aba, and the gateway to the Cameroons, is the more likely location for a censor station. Thus far, 20 is the only examiner number (in the PASSED BY CENSOR/NIGERIA cachet) definitely identified as having been used in Calabar; 19 and 33 may also have been used here.

MASTER MEAD CORRESPONDENCEB. MABBETT

Fifteen letters are known addressed to Master Mead from St. Helena between 4th December 1836 and 23rd June 1842. I have only one in my own collection, this is dated St Helena 4th July 1839. The entire shows the stepped 'Deal Ship Letter' in black and the postage rate of 3½d in red manuscript. The letter was redirected from London to Exeter and shows the Exeter arrival mark for 25th September and Paid 1/4d mileage charge in black.

continued

"My Dear Dear Jon,

Your kind letter I received on the 26th June and was happy to find you were quite well, your dear Grandmother desires her kind love to you and is much pleased with the letter you wrote her. She will write to you soon, when next I write to your Uncle I must tell him of your kind letter to Nanna I am sure he will be much pleased. We seldom have an opportunity of writing to the Cape, about one in two or three months as vessels so seldom go from the Island to the Cape.

Agnes Thomas has arrived safe at the Cape on the 4th June. She was sea sick a week, from the kindness of Capt Cerreu and his son she soon recovered, she wrote in excellent spirits to Aunt Thomas, as I have such an excellent opportunity of sending your writing desk and watch by Mr. Philips which I promised you.

I trust my dear that you will take every care of them for the sake of your dear departed father, I give you this advice my dear you are but young and do not think about things, you had better get the watch and desk repaired these are a present to you on your birth day you will keep them in remembrance as a birth day you will keep them in remembrance as a birth day present from your affectionate Mamma.

I am happy to say that dear Nanna is quite well, Nanna and myself went to the country church on Thursday last she still rides about I saw Aunt Louisa she asked me to make her kind love to you, she often thinks of you. The watch I have put in the long draw at the back take the pin out that fastens the draw.

This is a short letter as I have not time to write a longer one. I am going over to Nannas to day as she wants me to do some business for her. The letters and writing desk I have send to town to Mr. S. Pritchard and he will give them to Mr. N..... himself. Mr and Mrs Ward go tomorrow for England. Your dear Grandmother Aunt Louisa and Aunt Thora joins with me in kind love to you. Make my love to your Grandpapa Aunts and Uncles.

P.S.

Let me hear from
you as soon as you
hopefully can after receiving the
desk and watch as I shall be
anxious.

Believe me to remain
my dear Jon.
Your very affectionate
Mamma E.M. Mead

Adieu"

ST. HELENA 1912 ½d.E.H. HIBBERT

A correspondent has shown me a block of four of these stamps from the bottom of the sheet with the following words written in the sheet margin:-

EWENS new paper & shade. Print July
1922. Mult. Crown CA. Deep Yellow
Green and black. Extra thick paper.

Can any reader throw any light on this? Who or what was "EWENS" ?

The ½d. value on thick paper is not, as yet, catalogued by Gibbons, but it is catalogued by Bridger & Kay (1980) as G5a, described as a war-time printing on much thicker paper. However, the block referred to above is stated to be from a very late printing in July 1922.

ST. HELENA 1912 - 16 3d BLACK AND PURPLEE. HIBBERT

I have a copy of the above stamp (S.G. Catalogue No 77) which appears to be printed on cream paper, similar to the 8d stamp; instead of on yellow paper. The stamp is fresh and unfaded. The opinion of experts is that the stamp is S.G. 77 with the yellow discharged.

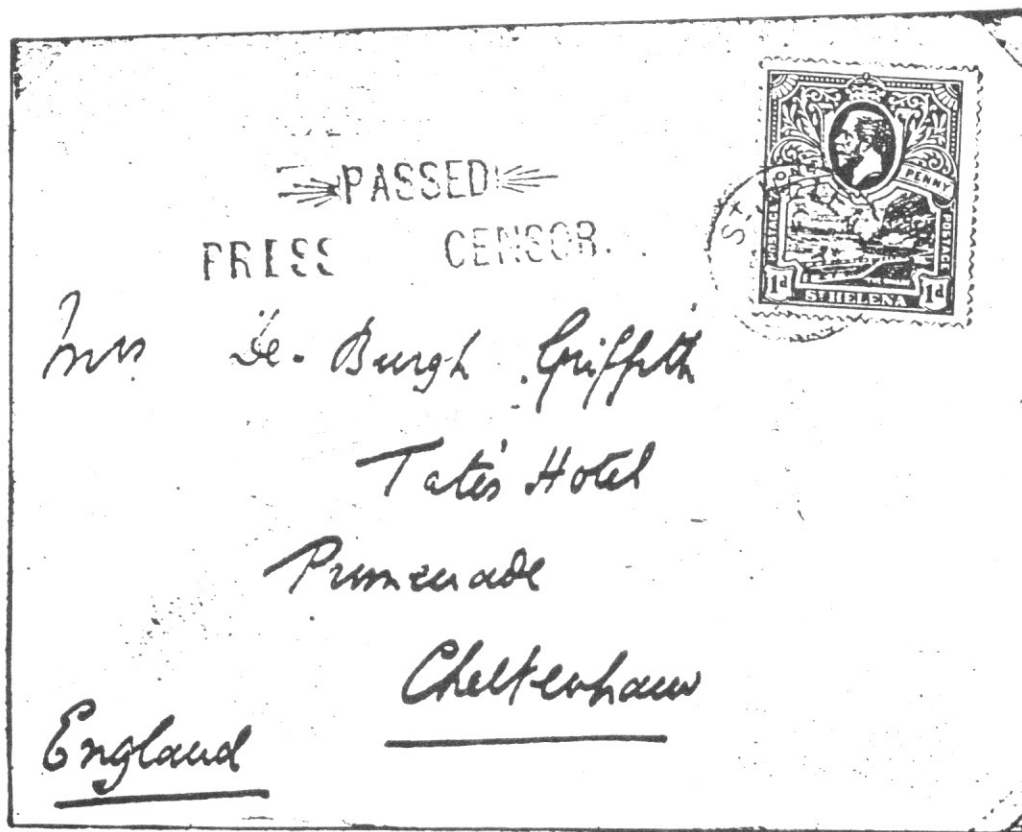
My knowledge of chemical processes is virtually nil, and I should be grateful if any reader with technical knowledge could explain how the yellow colouring in the paper on which such stamps are printed can disappear completely without the printing on the stamp or the colour of the stamp being affected in any way. The stamp cannot have been exposed to sunlight, because the density of the vignette and the purple colour of the frame are unaffected.

At least one other similar copy is known, but if the particular dye or pigment used to colour the paper was susceptible to fading one would have expected a significant number of such copies to have appeared, with some differences where the fading has been inconsistent.

PASSED PRESS CENSOR : ST. HELENAE.H. HIBBERT

This violet cachet is on a 1918 cover. I have no idea whether it was applied at St. Helena, on board ship or in England - and why Press Censor?

There are no markings on the back of the envelope.



IMMIGRANTS FROM ST. HELENA

A report in the January 18th, 1981 edition of "The Observer" may be of interest to Circle members. Headed "Falklands need folk" it continued:

"The dwindling population of the Falkland Islands may be bolstered by immigrants from St. Helena, another remote British colony in the Atlantic.

Britain, worried by a fall in the tiny population of the Falklands, the South Atlantic colony claimed by Argentina, plans to bring in families from over-populated St Helena, thousands of miles to the north-east.

With a population of about 1,700 and a flow of emigrants, especially among the young, the Falklands could face the breakdown of essential services. There is no baker in Port Stanley, the village which serves as the capital, and many of the sheep stations are short of men.

St. Helena has an unemployment problem, although its population numbers only 5,000. Many St. Helenians are on social security and are looking for opportunities to emigrate.

The plan to send a small number of St. Helenian families to the Falklands to work for the Government is likely to go ahead soon, but the question of a large migration plan has yet to overcome some tricky obstacles.

Falklands farmers are reluctant to guarantee the return passages of St. Helenian immigrants. Another worry is that some St. Helenians descend from African immigrants, which might cause a delicate problem in the tiny world of the Falklands."

Hugh O'Shaughnessy.

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FIRST STAMPS OF OCCUPIED TOGO

M. ENSOR

I believe, Mr. Editor, that you have doubts about the accepted view of the dates of issue of the British overprints on Togo stamps. It seems to me that it is not only the dates that need further thought, even if for the moment this produces more questions than answers. Since the accepted view on the British overprints is admirably summarised in J.A. Williams's article in Stamp Collecting of 13th June, 1968, that work can hardly fail to serve as something of an Aunt Sally for one's questions. I hope that, like Williams, I may be allowed also to discuss briefly the French overprints of the same stamps in the hope that the generation of more information about the stamp-issuing practices of one occupying authority may throw light on those of the other.

It seems likely that the invasions in August 1914 of Togo from the Gold Coast and Dahomey were launched without an expectation of usable quantities of German colonial stamps being found or of a printing press being found intact in Togo able to adapt any Togo stamps taken over. When, soon after the final German surrender at Kamina on 26th August, 1914, a quantity - recorded as 117,104 - of Togo stamps was unearthed, these were divided between the allies and the possibility presented itself of putting them to use. Moreover the Catholic Mission press in Lome was found to be in working order, so this enabled the British, in whose occupation zone Lome lay, to tackle the problem locally.

Williams states that on the British side preparations had already been made to supply Togo's needs with overprinted Gold Coast stamps and

that it was decided to apply to the German colonial stamps (whose lower values were, incidentally, only a little different in size) the wording chosen for the overprint on Gold Coast stamps. He adds, apparently by way of explanation, that an overprint specifically designed for stamps of the German territory would not need to include the word 'Togo' as this already featured prominently on the German stamps. Acceptance of this statement, by me at least, involves reconciling it with the similarity, to which Williams in his article also draws attention, between the practices over stamp issues of the British and French occupying authorities. This similarity was remarkably close as regards both (i) the wording used for the overprints, given the difference of language (incidentally this wording continued on both sides to be identical into the 1920s with the minor exception of the English language overprint on German postcards), and (ii) the practice adopted for meeting the shortage of the stamp expected to be in greatest demand - that required for the internal letter rate. Anyone who doubts the unusual closeness of these practices should consider how the provision of stamps for the Cameroons and other German colonies jointly occupied was handled. Now the French are not given to adopting without question British decisions, least of all in matters of language. So it seems very likely that the wording of the overprints used was discussed and agreed between the allies with the French having some influence over the decision reached. This supposition derives a little force from the use of 'Anglo-' and '-anglaise' rather than 'British' and '-britannique', which latter are adjectives more commonly used by us to describe our forces overseas, whereas the French readily use Angleterre where Britain is meant. Of course the need for brevity in an inscription to be fitted into the size of a stamp or the precedent of the condominium in the New Hebrides may have influenced the British thoughts on wording at an early stage.

Could such harmonisation (to use the now fashionable word) have formed part of the pre-invasion joint planning? This seems improbable, unless a title was being devised of far wider use than just use on stamps. Perhaps there was a decision on this wording at the talks leading to the agreement of 30th August 1914 which divided Togo into two occupation zones? Otherwise, I feel sure, agreement on the title of the occupation would have been reached in the continuing contacts between the two allied authorities in Togo. In short I am suggesting that a multipurpose description of the joint occupation was agreed between the allies and applied to the stamps without modification.

How was the decision on the wording to be used, wherever taken, applied to the German colonial stamps? The lettering for the British overprints evidently came from a German fount and no clichés or type needed to be sent from Accra. It looks as if the agreed English wording was passed to the Catholic Mission Press whose printers were left to apply it in different forms to the three main overprinting problems involved - the pfennig values, the wider mark values and postal stationery.

We may assume that by early September 1914 the British share of the Kamina find of Togo stamps had reached Lome and that decisions to overprint them and on the wording to be used had been taken. I suggest this position was reached by a more complicated process than can be discerned from Williams's, necessarily condensed, article.

May I now draw attention to a difference in British and French practice mentioned neither by Williams nor by Henri Tristant in his article 'The Postal Services in Togo' which was issued in translation by B.W.A.S.C. in 1969? We are told, and there is no reason to doubt this, that the Kamina find of stamps was divided approximately equally between the two occupation authorities: presumably this equal division applied to all the values found. It must have been immediately apparent to both allied authorities that the number available (2000 in all) of the red 10pf stamp - the rate for an internal letter - was, relative to likely demand, very small. Both allies adopted the same method of making up the deficiency: surcharging the more plentiful 5pf stamps (57,700 in all) with the rate for internal letters - 'one penny' in the British zone, '10' (centimes) in the French zone. The shortage thus created of the internal postcard rate was remedied by surcharging the 15,200 stamps available of the 3pf value with 'Half penny' and '05' respectively. But while the British authorities seem to have released the overprinted but unsurcharged 10pf and the surcharged 5pf more or less simultaneously in September, or at latest October, 1914, the French do not seem to have issued their share (1000) of the 10pf value at that time, or indeed later. Similarly the French overprinting of 1914, which took place at Porto Novo, the capital of Dahomey, did not cover the French share of the small number of the mark values.

Before leaving the first French issues, I would point to a difference in the founts used on them for the word 'Togo' on the one hand and for the rest of the overprinting and the surcharge, where applicable, on the other. 'Togo' is printed in a German style fount very similar, or identical, to that used in Lome for the English language overprints, while 'Occupation franco-anglaise' comes from a typically French fount. I confess to finding the several different ways that suggest themselves as to how this difference came about equally improbable.

We are told that on the British side the laboriousness of the method originally adopted for the surcharging of the 3pf and 5pf stamps led to the 'wide' setting (surely it should be 'tall' or 'deep?') being changed to the 'narrow' setting (short or shallow?). The extra work arose from the fact that, while the overprint was capable of being set up 10 x 5 so as to deal with a sheet of 100 stamps of the pfennig values in two operations, the surcharges which were originally added separately on the wide overprinted stamps could be set up only 5 x 5 and so had to be applied four times to the sheet. (This seems to have been established by finding four identical units of 25 surcharges on a complete sheet). But why should there have been this difference of capacity? It cannot have been

shortage of the letters needed for a 10 x 5 surcharge operation (for example of the y which is rare in German) as, when the combined application of the narrow overprint and the surcharge was adopted, there is no reason to suppose it was not in a forme of 10 x 5 and there were sufficient letters for this. So the only explanation must be that the 5 x 5 surcharging was carried out on a second press of smaller capacity. Presumably the smaller press could conveniently handle other small overprinting jobs also - e.g. on postal stationery and perhaps on the mark values, which came in sheets 5 x 4. But if the whole job was treated as very urgent the smaller press may have been put to use for some of the full sheets of pfennig values at the same time as the larger press, and since it is clear from the existence of two settings on all the pfennig values that no single value was overprinted in a single run operation there may have been occasional confusion between the two presses each with a different setting. Could this conceivably explain the existence of the sheet of 20pf stamps one half overprinted with the wide setting, the other half with the narrow setting?

However this may be, the accepted explanation of the change from the wide to the narrow setting leaves a question unanswered. We find that of both the 3pf and 5pf there are four types, viz:

- (a) wide overprint, not surcharged - which the catalogues suggest are not uncommon;
- (b) wide overprint and surcharged - considered rare;
- (c) narrow overprint not surcharged - rarer;
- (d) narrow overprint and surcharged - relatively common.

The co-existence of types (a), (b) and (d) is perfectly compatible with a switch from the wide to the narrow overprint relatively soon after surcharging had started in order to accommodate the surcharge in the same forme (though it does not explain why the switch was also made for the other denominations which were not to be surcharged). But it offers no reason for the existence of type (c). Some sheets of the 3pf and 5pf values must have been put into the press while it was set up for the narrow overprinting of the higher value stamps not due to receive a surcharge. If so was this due to careless treatment of the sheets out of sequence or to a contrived error? It is unlikely that we shall ever know.

Finally there comes the treatment of the subsequent find of German colonial stamps at Sansane-Mangu, which was again divided equally between the allies. On the British side, apart from giving rise to a new setting there is only one point to note. Stanley Gibbons's catalogue records the setting of this overprint as being in groups of 5 x 5, four times on a sheet. Presumably the small press was used and this was found not too laborious because of the much smaller numbers involved. These overprints were put on sale early in 1915 and include no surcharged stamps.

On the French side, however, the print used for the Sansane-Mangu find - and also it seems for the stock of the mark values from the Kamina find - was quite different from that used earlier in Porto Novo for applying "Occupation franco-anglaise". Indeed Gibbons state that this later overprint was carried out in the Mission Press in Lome (in the British zone). Whether these mark stocks were originally transported to Porto Novo and later returned to Lome or whether they never went to Dahomey is not clear.

We still have not accounted for the French share (1000) of the 10pfg. found at Kamina. That these were not added to the French share of the Sansane-Mangu find to receive the 1915 overprint in Lome is strongly suggested by the catalogue price of the 10pfg. with the French 1915 overprint being higher than that of its English language counterpart. So what happened to these 1000 10pfg. stamps?

My final observation concerns the mark values whose higher values Robson Lowe's encyclopedia claims were found only later than at Kamina (? therefore at Sansane-Mangu) which is difficult to reconcile with Gibbons's inclusion of their overprints in the 1914 issues. By the time the limited quantities of the 2m to 5m values had been divided between the allies neither side possessed enough to make their overprinting an economic operation. I am tempted to conclude that the authorities that dealt with the German stamps in Lome (though not in Porto Novo) were not solely concerned with meeting on a cost-effective basis the postal needs of the two zones: they seem to have got as much fun as they could from the operation.

When he was Prime Minister, Harold Wilson made a remark to the effect that finding the answers was something any b.f. could do; the problem lay in asking the right questions. This dictum clearly does not hold good for these stamp issues; indeed the opposite is the case. If a sight could be obtained of the official messages passing between Accra and Lome during the relevant period (mid-August to mid-September, 1914) several of the questions posted above could be answered; perhaps in a way that would help your own research, Mr. Editor. Or perhaps all the questions could be handed over to a computer to answer?
