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CIVIL CENSORSHIP STUDY GROUP

Hon Editor and Librarian

☎ 01 984 624 527

25 October 2007

Graham Mark
Oast House West
Golden Hill
Wiveliscombe
Somerset TA4 2NT

Rob May Esq
Longdown Farm Cottage
Cadsden
Princes Risborough
Bucks HP27 0NB

Dear Rob,

Thank you for your letter of 21st.

The Postal Censorship report from the National Archives can be used, but I suggest the extracts not be reproduced *en masse*, rather in separate articles about particular countries. In any event editors can defend publishing extracts for our kinds of journals can be claimed to have restricted circulations and that we are merely disseminating information for an educational purpose among our members. The National Archive reference for the "Report on Postal Censorship during the Great War (1914-1919)" is DEFE 1/131. Its original War Office reference was 63/2/661 and it was dated 31 March 1920. The author was LtCol ASL Farquharson

I expect I also sent extracts from the Cable Censorship Report. Our permission for this is a bit different (no doubt a different officer dealing with our enquiry some years after the first request). CCSG can reproduce the whole of the postal report and sell it to our members, but for the cable report I am only allowed to copy extracts. In any event much of the 400 pages are of peripheral interest to postal historians as it goes into some depth of how the telegraph stations were closed, operated and monitored, etc. On the basis that I did send you country reports from the cable volume I am sure that you can extract the interesting bits about the early postal censorship. The reason these appear in the cable report is that during the autumn of 1914 the cable and postal censorships in London were put under a single Chief Censor. He no doubt called for reports to be sent in early 1915 (after six months experience) although when they began to arrive the two censorships had been separated again. The "Report on Cable Censorship during the Great War (1914-1919)" has National Archives references DEFE 1/130 and WO 106/5984, and was dated 13 December 1919. The author was Col Lord Arthur Browne.

Regarding Barbara Priddy's questions on censorship of two covers from Dakar: the first with a South African UC8 censor label is the province of Chris Miller. I will be seeing him next week and will put the query to him. *Prima facie* it looks like a mis-routing but when I see Chris I will ask him for his opinion. Most South African labels are tied by a handstamp of the censor station - this one is not tied, so suspicion begins to arise. The other cover with a British PC90 label is a bit easier to explain (I think). Senegal in April 1941 was pro-Vichy (the Free French Government of this colony was not established until June 1943) but there were British landings at Dakar in March 1941. Morocco was also Vichy at the date of this cover. With a British presence in Dakar it is likely they ensured that any mail was censored and for that it was sent to Britain. By sea both ways plus censorship resulted in twenty weeks between despatch and arrival.

I will write further after talking to Chris.

Best regards Graham.

CIVIL CENSORSHIP STUDY GROUP

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5 July 2007

Graham Mark
Oast House West
Golden Hill
Wiveliscombe
Somerset TA4 2NT

Rob May Esq
Longdown Farm Cottage
Princes Risborough
HP27 6NF

Dear Rob

Following our telephone conversation I enclose some extracts from the two Reports on censorship written after WWI.

From the 'Postal', I have extracted two groups of pages - the first described the legislation or decree etc which regulated the censorship - the second describes what went on. Some of these paragraphs are not wholly accurate as for instance ~~for~~ Cyprus it says there were no PoWs but recent research has shown there were internees and PoWs there. I have no indication as to how accurate the West Africa section^s are. *for*

In the 'Cable' extracts you will see references to the censoring of mail. This arose because during the Autumn of 1914 the Chief Cable Censor in London took on the overall responsibility for both postal and telegraphic censorship. During his time in charge of both channels he called for interim reports from the colonies which were submitted in January or February 1915. In some cases the postal section of these interim reports is printed, in others not.

The reason for the Cable Censor to take on the Postal sections was because the Admiralty had more forethought and got its systems up and running before war broke out. The War Office was also prepared but in a different way, so upon the outbreak of hostilities all the staff responsible for the planning and running of censorship rushed off to France and Flanders leaving one retired officer to start the postal censorship. He began work under a distinct handicap for the basics of the plans had been drawn up, and with papers discussing the roles of the Post Office, the Foreign Office etc, these were all safely locked away in the safe of another department of the War Office and were not discovered until after the armistice. So much for 'Military Intelligence'! ***

I hope these will be useful.

Best regards

Graham

** Cables ran under the sea so they were ^{an} Admiralty interest.*

Mail Censorship was vested in the War Office.

REPORT ON CABLE CENSORSHIP.

APPENDIX II.

REPORTS FROM CENSORSHIP STATIONS OVERSEAS.

[NOTE.—The originals of the Interim Reports from Overseas Censors are contained in 63/2/479. The originals of the Final Reports are in 63/2/478.]

M.I. 8,
WAR OFFICE.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:-

WO 106/5984

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NIGERIA.

LAGOS.

INTERIM REPORT.

Cable Censorship.

No special difficulties have been met with in carrying out the duties of the cable censorship, due principally to the cordial co-operation and courtesy of the officials of the African Direct Telegraph Company. Though very cramped for room they have done everything possible to meet my requirements in the way of accommodation, and to facilitate the work of the Assistant Censors.

For the Lagos cable station three Assistant Censors were appointed who worked in six-hour reliefs, but after a few weeks' trial it was found that the strain, in this climate and under the conditions in which they have to work, was too severe, and a fourth officer was added. When the Cable Company ceased to remain open all night the number was again reduced to three. All the Assistant Censors were Government officials who, as far as was compatible with being in attendance at the Cable Office, carried out their ordinary duties.

Inland Telegrams.

At the beginning of the war, and owing to the fact that there were a number of German subjects scattered through Nigeria and the close proximity of some of our stations to the Cameroon border, a strict censorship on inland telegrams was established; the use of all codes, with the single exception of the use of one code word by the Bank of British West Africa to ensure authenticity, was prohibited, and any suspicious messages stopped. The work was carried out at out-stations by the official in charge of the station or some other official detailed by him, and special attention was given to the stations at Calabar, Obura, Yola and Maidugari, which are close to the Kamerun frontier.

After a short time, it was found possible to reduce the work of these officers by excluding official telegrams from censorship, and in December, when all German or Austrian subjects had been deported, all restrictions were withdrawn, and the bank and firms were permitted to use their private codes.

Postal Censorship.

The censorship of local letters was confined to those addressed to or by German and Austrian subjects and was subsequently extended to letters to or from Ottoman subjects. This work was carried out by the postal officials, and the letters forwarded or handed to me. These letters were not very numerous, and in nearly all cases innocuous.

It was not considered necessary to censor all letters in transit, nor could the staff necessary for such work have been found, but the following arrangements were made:—On the arrival of the mail from England, one of the Assistant Censors who had a fluent knowledge of German, assisted by any other officers who were acquainted with that language, attended at the Post Office and went through the mail, and put on one side all letters or postal matter addressed to German, Austrian or Ottoman subjects, any letters which were in way any suspicious, either from the nature of the handwriting, or from the fact that they were addressed to people who had been on intimate business relations with the German and Austrian firms. The remainder of the mail was then handed to the native sorting clerks, and the letters set aside submitted to censorship.

The outward mail was dealt with by the postal authorities handing to the Assistant Censor all mail matter addressed to foreign countries. The Assistant Censor went through them and passed them or otherwise. Special precautions were taken to prevent undesirable letters being posted at the last moment, and any that were the least suspicious were kept back till the following mail.

The stations under my control are Lagos and Zungeru, although every station in Nigeria may be said to have also been under my control as far as the censoring of inland telegrams was concerned. I have discussed the matter with His Excellency the Governor-General and he has decided that no extra remuneration should be paid to the officers at stations other than Lagos, Zungeru and Bonny. Bonny is a separate Censorship and not directly under my control.

His Excellency the Governor-General has approved of the following rates of allowances for officers performing the duties of Censors and Assistant Censors:—

From 3rd August to 30th September—
Censors, 6s. per day.
Assistant Censors, 4s. per day.
From 1st October, onwards—
Censors, 3s. per day.
Assistant Censors, 2s. per day.

I attach a list of officers who have performed the duties up to date; the somewhat frequent changes have been due to invaliding, departmental requirements, leave, &c. The break for the period 22nd September to 9th October, when Mr. Birtwistle performed the duties of Censor in my place, was due to my having been temporarily appointed Staff Officer to the Officer Commanding the Kamerun Expeditionary Force. I am proceeding on leave of absence to England, and the duties of Censor are being taken over by Mr. H. Bedwell, C.M.G., Acting Administrator of the Colony of Lagos.

The average number of messages dealt with monthly at the Lagos Cable Station is 4,353.

(Signed) H. C. MOORHOUSE, Major.

FINAL REPORT.

Censor's Office,
Lagos,
12th March, 1919.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your cablegram of the 7th, of which the following is a copy:—

“Please furnish as soon as possible a short report on cable censorship during the war and any suggestions for amendments you may think desirable for future operation. Special reference to be made

2. *Personnel.*—At the commencement of hostilities the officers detailed by Government of Nigeria, in accordance with "Secret" instructions from the Secretary of State, immediately took over the cable censorship. The staff consisted of at Lagos a Censor and three Assistant Censors, and at Bonny of a Censor and one assistant censor. Owing to practically continuous absence of the troops this staff has been found almost exclusively from the civil staff of the colony. There have of necessity been frequent changes, but the officer occupying the position of Censor, and therefore in charge of the cipher and records, has always been one of the senior officers of the colony.

3. *The public.*—There has been no friction with the public, and every possible publicity was given to the requirements of the Censor, with the result that the number of cables that had to be returned was surprisingly few after the conditions became known. The Bank of British West Africa did not consider that their interests were sufficiently safeguarded against fraud by the permission to use one code word in their messages, and they produced evidence that they had been defrauded by means of a forged telegram. Representations on the subject were made to the Chief Censor, who, however, could not see his way to allow a second code word. The bank got over the difficulty by altering their code.

4. *Relations with Cable Company.*—We have been fortunate throughout in having a succession of superintendents who made the work of the Censor as easy as possible in spite of the fact that a certain amount of their already limited accommodation had of necessity to be occupied by the censoring officials. At the risk of being invidious, I would mention Messrs. Foster, Coleman and Watson as having gone out of their way to facilitate the work.

5. *Relations with the Chief Cable Censor.*—The early repatriation of all enemy subjects, and the fact that the great bulk of cables received and despatched were either on behalf of Government or reputable and old-established British firms and merchants, reduced correspondence with the Chief Cable Censor to a minimum. Where reference was made the decisions were quickly and clearly given.

6. *Recommendations.*—I have had the opportunity of consulting the officer who was originally appointed Censor at the outbreak of war and the present superintendent of the Cable Company, and I have no recommendations to make for future occasions. Any suggestions that have been put forward have been purely matters for local arrangement.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) G. N. Cocks,
Censor.

SEKONDI.

FINAL REPORT.

21st March, 1919.

Sir,

600

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your cipher cable of the 8th instant, and, as requested, I transmit to you herewith a short report of the work of cable censorship at Sekondi during the period of the War.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JOHN MAXWELL, *Censor*.

The Cable Censor.

SHORT REPORT ON THE WORK OF CABLE CENSORSHIP AT SEKONDI DURING THE WAR.

The censorship of cables at Secondee was commenced on the 4th August, 1914, and from that date up to the present time the undermentioned officers have carried out the duties as Censors and Assistant Censors, viz. :—

* * * * *

The Cable Station here is a small one in charge of a European, assisted by three natives. The volume of work averages about 60 messages a day. Four visits a day—early morning, mid-day, 4 o'clock p.m. and again at 6 p.m.—are paid to the Cable Office for censorship. The bulk of the work is commercial, but Government have used the cable freely, especially the officer representing the Naval Authorities. The only foreign cables despatched from Secondee are by the two French firms here, with the exception of one or two isolated cases of cables in Italian.

With reference to suggestions as regards amendments to the regulations at present in use, I venture to suggest that well-known British firms, such as Messrs. Elder, Dempster & Company, Limited; Messrs. Millers, Limited, and other British firms of repute, who are represented at all the ports in the Gold Coast Colony, should, on application, be permitted to use their private codes forthwith, with the proviso that the Censor may at any time scrutinize one or all cables sent or received. Applications for such privileges would, of course, be submitted, with recommendations, by the Censor here to the Chief Cable Censor.

As regards the relationship between the Cable Company and the Censorship, the Cable Company kindly placed a room at the disposal of the Censor, and the various officers in charge have given every assistance and attention, so that the work has been carried out in an harmonious manner. The relations between the Chief Cable Censor and this Censorship have been cordial; advices and instructions received prompt attention. I should like to add that, during the whole period the Censorship has been in operation, I have not received a single complaint.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JOHN MAXWELL, *Censor*.

Sekondi,
21st March, 1919.

ACCRA.

FINAL REPORT.

General Post Office,
Accra, Gold Coast Colony,
13th March, 1919.

The Chief Censor,
War Office, London.

Sir,

I have the honour, in reference to your telegram No. 7679, of the 6th March, to state I was appointed Censor on the 1st September last, but there are no records upon which it is possible to frame a report dealing with the views of my immediate predecessor. Unfortunately, he was drowned at sea.

2. However, my six months' observations may be summarized as follows :—

3. The regulations meet the need completely, so far as the Gold Coast is concerned, but I would suggest embodying in them the following rule :—

At cable stations where the traffic is light, the Censor should attend the cable office every two hours, the balance of his time being devoted to letter censoring or to other duties. This suggested combination of duties would also effect a reduction on the total cost of Censor work at any station where it could be applied.

4. At Accra the Cable Censorship has, of late, been carried out on the principle now suggested for more general adoption. I have performed the duties of my substantive appointment as Assistant Accountant, Post and Telegraph Department, and the arrangement works satisfactorily. No additional delay to traffic has occurred, and the Cable Superintendent agrees to the system.

5. The payment of 6s. per diem to the officer acting as Censor is, in my opinion, sufficient to cover the cost of all attendances during non-office hours. Of course, it should be borne in mind that remuneration as a *profit* is not expected at the period of stress during which the Censorship is normally necessary.

6. Relations between the staff of the Cable Company and the Censor in the Gold Coast have always been amicable, no friction or complaint has arisen on either side, so far as I am aware, certainly not within my period.

7. No difficulty has occurred between the Chief Cable Censor and myself. All enquiries from him have been dealt with in strict accordance with the regulations. Obviously there can be no recorded opinions of any previous holder of this appointment: however, I have no reason to suppose any different report would have been furnished by any of my predecessors.

8. Although you did not so instruct me, I have forwarded a copy of this report, marked "Secret," to the Honourable Colonial Secretary for the information of His Excellency the Governor, if thought necessary.

I have, &c.,

SIERRA LEONE.

INTERIM REPORT.

From Major-General J. F. Daniell, Commanding Troops, West Africa, to the Chief Censor, War Office,
London, S.W.

Military Headquarters,
Sierra Leone,

11th January, 1915.

Sir,

With reference to your letter C.C./3595, dated December, 1914, addressed to the Censor, Sierra Leone, and requesting a report on the working of the Censorship generally since the beginning of the war, I have the honour to inform you that it has been necessary under local conditions to keep the Cable and Postal Censorship separate.

2. The local Defence Scheme charges the military authorities with the general direction of the Cable Censorship, and the General Staff Officer is the official to whom the duty is relegated. On the institution of the Postal Censorship it was considered that the same system should apply, and arrangements were made accordingly.

3. I have, therefore, obtained reports from the Cable and Postal Censors on the working of their respective offices, and forwarded them herewith.

4. As regards the censorship of local letters and inland telegrams, I wish to supplement their reports with the following remarks:—

(a.) *Inland telegrams.*—The inland telegraph lines are under the direction of the local railway administration. From the date of mobilization only *en clair* telegrams were received until the use of certain codes were permitted for cable telegrams, when the use of the same codes was permitted. The Cable Censors examine inland telegrams once a week, and at any other time if it is considered advisable.

(b.) *Local letters.*—Local letters passing through the post office are censored as stated in the Postal Censor's report. In addition there is a travelling post office in connection with the railway. This was closed for a time, but, on the urgent representation of the local Government, was reopened under conditions which so greatly delay letters sent by this means and intended for enemy subjects in Monrovia, that any information contained therein as to movements of troops or of His Majesty's ships would have lost its value.

5. The chief difficulty met with in carrying out the Censorship work here has been the frequent changes of staff. This is pointed out by both the Cable and Postal Censors, and it is difficult under local conditions to suggest a remedy. As regards postal censorship, the absence of definite instructions when it was first instituted produced a series of problems which could only be solved by common sense. The rules on which the Postal Censorship staff have acted have consequently been amplified or modified from time to time, and are now in accordance with the latest printed instructions on the subject.

6. So far, the Censorship staff have received no remuneration beyond the salaries they receive, as officers of the Colonial Government. They have worked loyally and well under difficult conditions. The Cable Censorship staff have received much kindness and assistance from officials of the cable company, and the local post office staff rapidly adapted themselves to unusual conditions and have helped the Postal Censors in many ways.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) J. F. DANIELL, Major-General,
Commanding Troops, West Africa.

Report on the working of Cable Censorship in Sierra Leone.

To the General Staff Officer,
Sierra Leone.

6th January, 1915.

Sir,

With regard to the Chief Censor's request for a report upon the working of the Censorship Establishment generally, which report the Chief Censor desires under four heads, I now have the honour to forward a report covering the particulars required in so far as they affect the Cable Censorship Establishment:—

(i.) Any special difficulties that may have been met with in carrying out the duties of Cable Censorship:—

The chief difficulty experienced here is that the work suffers very much by the constant change of staff. This will be more clearly seen from the report under head four. This is unfortunately a disadvantage which will always be present in any West African Colony. It takes three or four days before a censor or assistant censor can be trusted to act alone.

Difficulty was experienced in controlling the radio-telegraph work; as a rule the operator on duty is a native. It would be well if arrangements could be made where practicable for a censor's operator who thoroughly understands the work. The Censor controls this work only through the ready co-operation of the Cable Company's officials.

(ii.) Any arrangements that may have been made to censor local or transit letters or inland telegrams:—

The Cable Censor deals only with inland telegrams. These are allowed to be sent uncensored, but once a week the telegrams are carefully gone through so that anyone sending doubtful telegrams can be placed under surveillance.

In Sierra Leone the firms are all well known and the danger is small. Special attention is given to telegrams to and from places near the Liberian Frontier in view of the Monrovia—Pernambuco cable.

(iii.) Any other information that may be of interest:—

For at least a week after the establishment of Cable Censorship, the Censors are largely in the hands of the cable officials, since they cannot read the signals and it takes time to become familiar with the cable system. It would be a great help at the beginning in small stations if one of the Censors could be appointed from among the Cable Company's staff. The Government Censor would be responsible for all stopped cables, so that friction between the Cable Company and the public would not arise.

(iv.) Lists of all stations under your control at which Censors are stationed showing rank, names, dates of appointment, rates of pay, &c., of Censors and subordinate staff; also average number of messages dealt with per month:—

The Cable Censor is established at the office of the Cable Company, and inland telegrams are sent over to him weekly from the head telegraph office, where they are collected. There is, therefore, only one Cable Censorship Establishment.

The following list gives the personnel of the Cable Censorship Establishment since the beginning of the war:—

Two decoding clerks have been arranged for to come on duty as soon as the use of codes is allowed inter-colonially. This number may have to be increased to four if the work increases. These clerks are fourth grade clerks at salaries of 70%, rising to 100% by 5% increments.

There are also two messengers at 1s. per diem each.

The average number of messages passing per month which require to be censored are as follows:—

Going out from Sierra Leone	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	608
Coming into Sierra Leone	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	496
Passing towards Conakry	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,110
Passing from Conakry	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	810
Total monthly average	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,024

A diary has been begun, and the past can be written up from the information contained in the files, which is very complete.

Before closing this report I wish to speak of the great help the Cable Censorship staff has received from the Cable Company's officials, who have willingly undertaken a great deal of extra work, and who have been a constant source of information and help to a constantly changing staff.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) HENRY SIMMS, Censor.

FINAL REPORT.

From Cable Censor, Sierra Leone, to Chief Censor, London.

Sierra Leone,
24th March, 1919.

Sir,

68

2

208

In accordance with your cipher telegram No. 7679, dated the 6th March, 1919, *re* Cable Censorship, I have the honour to forward the attached remarks.

The marginal numbers hereof refer to the order in which the various regulations appear in the "Regulations for Censorship (A. 1589)," with which I have dealt in sequence.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) LENNARD MEAD, Cable Censor,
Sierra Leone.

PART II.

3. Last clause regularly carried out and worked very satisfactorily.

4. This was done.

6. (a.) This sub-clause has been most rigidly enforced during the whole of the war.

(b.) Shortly after the convoy system of ships started it was noticed that on the day of or day after the sailing of a convoy, cables would be handed in by Syrians to the Canary Islands inquiring after a person's health or making some such personal request. These sudden solicitudes seemed to be suspicious, as there was no steamer communication between here and the Islands, so the telegrams were heavily delayed. paraphrased, and in some cases stopped altogether, and the matter reported to Military Headquarters.

The contents of a telegram of this nature—paraphrased or not—appears to be immaterial, as the sole fact of sending a telegram may convey all the necessary information.

Cables from sailing vessels plying between the Canary Islands, &c., and this station were stopped. The visits of these vessels were later prohibited.

Certain senders after a time apparently noticed that these cables were being dealt with by the Censor, and they then proceeded to send their messages through the agency of banks. Careful inquiries were made into these instances, and as they were found genuine the telegrams were passed, but always after delay and careful scrutiny.

These cables would either be in English or French.

Endeavouring to avoid the Censorship, persons from ships in transit to England would hand in cables such as "Arriving seven days after Tom's birthday." This, obviously, was open to serious objection and was immediately suppressed, the principle adopted being never to allow any cables from ships to pass in a form which could possibly give any idea of a vessel's movements; and cables from transports and other vessels were held sometimes till a week after their sailing.

The traffic circulating over the French cables (Conakry, Dakar, Brest) which do not touch London have been carefully watched, and it seems to have been strictly censored by the French authorities, as comparatively speaking we have had to stop but few messages. The chief offenders were telegrams from Holland to Dutch ships lying or detained in different ports, *i.e.* St. Vincent, Cape Verde Islands, &c. The Senior Naval Officer gave us much useful information on this subject. I can only think the Dutch firms used this route in the hope of avoiding the British Censorship entirely, seeing that Sierra Leone is the sole British Cable Station the messages would pass through.

The Swiss traffic over this route gave very little trouble and was easily dealt with.

Owing to the Accra staff being unable to deal with the Portuguese language, the War Office transferred the censorship of traffic between Portugal and Portuguese Colonies to Sierra Leone—this, of course, entailed extra work on the local staff, as although the number of cables was not in the aggregate large, there was and still is a large number of "Black-listed" and suspected persons in these countries. The list of "stopped" telegrams at this station confirms this.

Since the Armistice the Portuguese seem to be under the impression that the Cable Service is working under pre-war conditions and this traffic has to be still very carefully watched, and frequently telegrams have to be held for signature or on account of other contraventions of the regulations.

(c.) Strictly adhered to, subject to the modifications sanctioned by the Chief Censor from time to time.

7. Duly carried out—part of daily routine.

8. Frequently necessary to do this, especially with transit cables for neutral countries.

9. Enforced.

10. During the time outward South African and Indian convoys were calling here, the Cable Company were continually receiving complaints of non-delivery of cables handed in here by passengers in transit. Of course senders were advised that no information could be made public under existing conditions, but investigation, for our own satisfaction, proved that all of these cables were in order and had duly passed the censorship here, and had been despatched from this station. The only solution I can offer being that they must have been stopped at the Cape or elsewhere.

The present staff are capable of dealing with all messages in the French language, but this did not apply in earlier stages of the war. This could, however, generally be dealt with locally.

11. The best proof that this regulation has been carried out is, I think, the fact that no complaint has been received from any department.

12. Carefully complied with.

13. Same remarks as Clause 6 (sub-section "C") apply.

14. Since the entry of Liberia into the war, telegrams of the kind provided for in this clause have not circulated *via* Sierra Leone, but copies of one or two Spanish Government telegrams from the Spanish colony of Gaboon have been sent to London.

15. Complied with.

16. Consular telegrams so dealt with.

17. Rigidly enforced.

18. Enforced. Notably it was necessary to bring this clause into work when the ship carrying a West African Labour Corps was sunk in the English Channel and many lives lost.

19. Enforced. All local press traffic was submitted to Military Headquarters before publication.

20. For transit traffic *see* Clause 6 (sub-section "B") traffic *via* French cables.

21. Enforced.

22. Enforced.

23. This clause was carefully acted upon, and, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Censor, the communications of any suspected person in the colony rendered harmless.

24. Enforced, but the Admiralty, having the control of the wireless telegraph station, and its being used solely for Admiralty traffic, the last phrase of this clause did not arise.

As a still further safeguard, codes included an arrangement with shipping firms whereby names of vessels or their masters should not be referred to in cables. A secret code of names or numbers for vessels of different lines was agreed upon, and worked satisfactorily.

25. Enforced.

26. Same remarks as Clause 24 apply.

27. The underlying idea of this Clause worked well and the local Banks' private code books were inspected at different times and checked against cables handed in by them.

28. Enforced with amendments sanctioned by Chief Censor.

29. Enforced.

30. Enforced.

31. Complied with.

32. Carried out with amendments as—

(a. and b.) Sanctioned by Chief Censor.

(c.) Sanctioned by Chief Censor, but none passing this station.

33. Complied with.

34. Adhered to.

35. Obvious—The Censors during the war signed an "honour certificate."

36. This cipher was in possession of the Cable Censor during the war. When the Censorship Staff left for the United Kingdom the cipher was returned to Military Headquarters.

37. Done. Such matters here chiefly concerned neutral ships—any information obtained was at once given the Deputy Chief Censor and Senior Naval Officer.

GENERAL NOTES.

Wireless Station.—This was taken over by the Admiralty at the beginning of 1918 and is still entirely staffed by Naval Ratings. The Admiralty are now accepting radios from certain ships, on ships' business only, which we duly pass after their authenticity has been guaranteed by the Senior Naval Officer.

Belgian Congo Traffic.—During 1918, a small question arose with Accra as to who should censor this traffic—but it was immediately settled—Accra having apparently misread the Regulations, which provides for this being done at Bonny.

Complaints from the Chief Censor.—Since the present staff took over there have only been two enquiries from the Chief Censor as to alleged irregular censoring in this station, and in each instance we were able to prove, after investigation, that the fault was not here.

Staff.—Since the departure of Mr. J. W. Watt, the Assistant Censors have all been members of the European Staff of the Cable Company. Prior to his departure to United Kingdom the Deputy Chief Censor resided at the Cable Company's Staff Quarters. This was found to be a great help, as he was more frequently available for consultation than if he had resided elsewhere and only made the usual visits of inspection.

In conclusion, I should like to say that the outstanding feature has been the smooth manner in which everything has worked—the small local questions that did arise being promptly and satisfactorily disposed of, and I feel sure that if the Deputy Chief Censor (Captain Napper) was still here he would confirm this report in all ways.

GAMBIA.

INTERIM REPORT.

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies presents his compliments to the Chief Censor, War Office, and begs to transmit herewith a copy of a report which has been received on the working of the censorship in the Gambia since the beginning of the War.

Downing Street,
26th February, 1915.

Legal Adviser's Office,
Bathurst, Gambia,
4th February, 1915.

1. On 2nd August, 1914, Mr. E. St. J. Jackson, Legal Adviser to the Governor of the Colony, was appointed by His Excellency the Governor to be Censor of Submarine Cable Communications.

2. When Mr. Jackson proceeded on leave, Mr. M. F. J. McDonnell, Police Magistrate and Acting Legal Adviser, was on 10th November, 1914, appointed by His Excellency the Governor, to be Censor of Submarine Cable Communications, and has filled that post ever since.

3. No Assistant Censors have been appointed.

4. The quarters which have been occupied by the Censor throughout are in the bungalow situated next to the station of the African Direct Telegraph Company. The quarters have also been used by the Censors concerned as their offices in carrying out their ordinary duty as Law Officers of the Crown in the Colony.

5. An allowance of 6s. a day for the remuneration of the Censor has been approved.

6. On the 15th January, 1915, on the coming into force of the new rules extending the permitted use of codes, Mr. P. J. Cooper, the officer in charge of the cable station of the African Direct Telegraph Company was appointed decoding clerk on the staff of the Censor of Submarine Cable Communications at a remuneration of 3s. per day.

There are no other stations under the control of the Censor at Bathurst.

7. No difficulties have been experienced in carrying out the duties of the censorship of cables in this Colony and the Censors have on many occasions to acknowledge the care and courtesy displayed by the three successive officers in charge of the African Direct Telegraph Company.

8. The importance of the maintenance of a censorship at Bathurst lies in the fact that it is the only British station through which cablegrams to or from Bissao and Bolama in Portuguese Guinea may have to pass in transit to or from Europe *via* Madeira or the Azores and the Cape Verd Islands.

9. The average number of messages per month dealt with in Bathurst in the last five months of 1914 was 635.

10. The trade of this Colony is to a very great extent in the hands of French firms. The figures of the Census of 1911 reveal the presence at that date of only 18 Germans and 1 Hungarian among the 169 non-British Europeans in the Colony and Protectorate, but so far as is known at or since the outbreak of the War there have been no German or Austrian subjects in the Colony or Protectorate.

11. In the same Census there were enumerated 73 Syrians and 27 Arabs. The first term is loosely used of Christian, the latter of Moslem non-coloured people. Each includes a variety of Levantines, and the latter comprises a number of natives of Morocco. Hence the number of subjects of the Ottoman Empire is not as large as would at first sight appear.

12. There are no inland telegrams in the Colony or Protectorate of the Gambia.

13. The arrangements made to censor local and transit letters have not been under the control of the Censor of Submarine Cable Communications but were vested by His Excellency the Governor in the Officer Commanding the West African Frontier Force, who detailed one of his subalterns to examine detained postal matter which, I am informed, has consisted of letters, post-cards and newspapers to or from Germany or the Ottoman Empire.

(Signed) MICHAEL F. J. McDONNELL,
Censor of Submarine Cable Communications.

FINAL REPORT.

Government House,
Bathurst, Gambia,
4th April, 1919.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a communication covering a report on the working of the Cable Censorship during the war, which I have received from the Censor of Submarine Cable Communications at Bathurst.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) EDWARD J. CAMERON,
Governor and Commander-in-Chief.

The Secretary,
War Office, London.

Censor,
Submarine Cable Communications Office,
Bathurst, Gambia,
24th March, 1919.

Sir,

In reply to telegraphic instructions received from the Chief Censor I have prepared a report on the working of the Cable Censorship during the war which I forward in duplicate for transmission to the War Office.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) MICHAEL F. J. MACDONNELL,
Censor of Submarine Cable Communication.

His Excellency, The Governor,
Government House, Bathurst.

Report of the working of the Cable Censorship in the Colony of Gambia during the war.

The Cable Censorship in this colony has practically throughout the war been under the control of one or other of two of the legal officials of the Administration.

Mr. E. St. John Jackson, O.B.E., formerly legal adviser in this colony, now Attorney-General of Nyasaland, performed the duties from August to October, 1914; from October, 1915, to April, 1916; and from December, 1917, to June, 1918.

2. Apart from a period of 10 days in the month of January in the present year when Mr. C. S. Masser, Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor, acted as Censor, owing to the writer's enforced absence on duty in the Protectorate, the writer of this report, who formerly filled the post of Police Magistrate and in September, 1918, succeeded Mr. Jackson as legal adviser has been Censor during all the remaining period, comprising some 41 months out of the 55 which have elapsed since the outbreak of the war.

3. The remuneration of the Censor has been an allowance of 6s. a day.

4. The working of the censorship in this colony calls for little comment. Its importance as a transit station between Portuguese Guinea and the Azores and Cape Verde Islands was diminished upon the entry of Portugal into the war, and the principal function of the Censor during later stages was to prevent the dissemination of shipping intelligence.

5. The non-British European residents in this colony are chiefly French or Danish, with a sprinkling of Swiss, and there is a large community of Syrians—technically subjects of the Ottoman Empire, but clearly out of sympathy with any cause other than that of the Allies. From none of these was any indication perceived of attempts to evade the censorship with a view to assisting the enemy.

6. The relations maintained between the Censors and the successive Superintendents of the African Direct Telegraph Company have been uniformly smooth as have been those with the Chief Censor.

7. The returns called for weekly under Regulation 32 of the Regulations for Censorship have been made up monthly and sent as opportunity offered, packets for England frequently sailing only at intervals of six weeks.

8. Of the permitted codes, "A," "B," "C," and Bentley are most in use, Scott very rarely and the others not at all in the traffic passing through the station.

9. Owing to the increase of trade in this colony and protectorate due to the demand for vegetable fats, the number of cables emanating from or addressed to the Gambia has increased during the war by between 250 and 300 per cent.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) MICHAEL F. J. MACDONNELL,
Censor of Submarine Cable Communications.

The Chief Censor,
War Office, London, S.W.

ASCENSION.

INTERIM REPORT.

Confidential.

No. C.S.C. 1.

Sir,

His Majesty's Island of Ascension,
8th February, 1915.

I have the honour to forward for transmission to the Secretary of the War Office, for the Chief Censor, the accompanying report from the Censor of the Submarine Cable Communications here.

I have, &c.,

Captain, R.M.L.I.,
Commandant.

To the Secretary of the Admiralty,
Admiralty, London, S.W.

Seen.

(Intd.) D.B., Chief Censor,
Admiralty.

No. C.S.C. 1.

Censor's Office,
His Majesty's Island of Ascension,
8th February, 1915.

Sir,

In accordance with your letter of December, 1914, I have the honour to report as follows on the working of the censorship generally since the beginning of the war.

1. *Special Difficulties.*

(a.) Rerouting of "held" messages by stations on either side of the Censor's station, instead of transmitting the Censor's queries to the office whence the held messages emanated.

This difficulty, experienced at the commencement of the censorship, has already been reported (*vide* my letter, No. C.S.C. 1 of 17th September, 1914), and has now ceased, but while it lasted it weakened the censorship.

(b.) The uncertainty as regards foreign proper names, which, unless one is acquainted with them, may well be spurious and of code significance.

This difficulty has already been reported (*vide* my letter, No. C.S.C. 1 of 22nd November, 1914), and it is particularly apparent at this station where the work is mostly "transit," and includes a great deal of traffic between nationalities of which the nomenclature is unfamiliar to the Censors, who have no means of assuring themselves of the *bona fides* of the senders or addressees.

(c.) The chief difficulty experienced here has, however, been to evolve a line of action within the Regulations which, while precluding the transmission of messages with possible code significance, should not unduly hamper neutral trade—the terms used in connection with the latter being in many cases obscure to the Censors.

A satisfactory discrimination is much more easily made now than earlier in the war, on account of the knowledge acquired day by day of the various forms of trade messages most frequently in transit.

2. *Censorship of Letters and Inland Telegrams.*

The arrangements as regards letters are in the hands of the Commandant, not being covered by my Warrant.

No inland telegraph system exists in the island.

3. *Staff, &c.*

A list of Censors, showing ranks and dates of appointment, is attached. The question of pay is referred to in Ascension letter No. C.S.C. 1 of 20th January, 1915.

The average number of messages dealt with per month is approximately 25,000.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) CHAS. F. WEBBER, Censor,
Paymaster, R.N.

FINAL REPORT.

Sir,

Admiralty,
15th May, 1919.

I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit herewith a copy of a report which has been received from the Naval Censor at Ascension. My Lords would be glad of the remarks of the Chief Cable Censor on the various questions raised.

I am, &c.,
(Signed) J. W. S. ANDERSON.

The Secretary,
War Office.

From the Censor, His Majesty's Island "Ascension, to the Chief Censor, London."

13th April, 1919.
The following report on Cable Censorship at this Station during the War, is submitted in accordance with your telegram No. 7679 of 6th March, 1919.

Staff.—The staff allowed is:—1 Censor, 3 Assistant Censors and 1 Decoding Clerk. In addition, the services of one of the staff of the Eastern Telegraph Company are available for assistance in the translation of telegrams in Spanish language.

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The Censor and Assistant Censors have been commissioned officers of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, borne on the island for other duties. The decoding clerk has been a naval rating from the Accountant or Victualling Staff, having a knowledge of typewriting and clerical work.

Censorship and the routing of telegrams.—The work at this station may be divided into several classes, viz. :—

- (a.) Local telegrams to and from any part of the world—this includes radio-telegrams handed in by His Majesty's Wireless Telegraph Station.
- (b.) Telegrams from Europe to South Africa and beyond, which pass through the "relay" circuit direct between London and Capetown in both directions.
- (c.) Telegrams between North America and Argentine.
- (d.) Telegrams between South Africa and Argentine.
- (e.) Telegrams between Argentine and Europe, transiting London.
- (f.) Telegrams between Argentine on the one hand, and Europe and Asia on the other hand, not transiting London.

(Class A.)—Local telegrams consist of government and private messages. The latter are of no importance as all persons on the island belong to the garrison or are employees of the Eastern Telegraph Company. Radio-telegrams are rarely handed in by His Majesty's Wireless Telegraph Station and are generally messages from masters of ships to ship owners, giving the position of their vessels.

(Class B.)—Telegrams passing through the relay circuit between London and Capetown are not dealt with at this station because they pass through the hands of the London Censor.

(Class C.)—Telegrams between Argentine and North America pass through this station as "through numbers" to London, and are therefore not censored here.

(Class D.)—Very few telegrams are exchanged between Argentine and South Africa, but they are dealt with here and also by the Censors in South African stations they transit.

(Class E.)—Telegrams between Argentine and Europe which pass through London are not censored here, but it should be noted that many telegrams between Argentine and Northern Spain, e.g., Barcelona, Bilbao, &c., may be routed *via* London and pass through this station as "through numbers." As the greater part of this Argentine and Northern Spain traffic is routed *via* Ascension and Gibraltar, it is possible for persons to send their cablegrams by two different routes and therefore detract from the efficiency of censorship.

(Class F.)—Telegrams between Argentine on the one hand, and Asia on the other hand, and not transiting London, form the bulk of the messages brought to the notice of Censors here.

Owing to the fact that there has been no wholtime Spanish interpreter here, and in order to avoid unnecessary delay on telegrams, certain modifications in the censorship regulations were brought into force with the approval of the Chief Censor, viz. :—

- (1.) Telegrams between France and Italy on the one hand, and Argentine on the other hand, if in French and Italian language respectively, are not censored here if they bear the Malta Censor's "understood" password. If they bear the Malta "not understood" password they are dealt with here. Similarly, these telegrams in the reverse direction are forwarded with remarks "*via* ML, Unascen."
- (2.) Telegrams to and from Spain and Argentine, if transiting Gibraltar and if in Spanish language, are censored at Gibraltar. Therefore these telegrams to Spain are forwarded without delay if they bear the Gibraltar Censor's "understood" password. Telegrams in both directions, between Argentine and Spain, if in French or English languages are censored here.
- (3.) Telegrams between these countries, i.e., Argentine and Spain, may be routed *via* Portugal—St. Vincent, Cape Verde—Ascension, from the office of origin in both directions, therefore rendering it possible for persons wishing to do so to avoid the Gibraltar censorship. Assistance in the translation of these telegrams, if in Spanish, has been rendered for the past year by one of the staff of the Eastern Telegraph Company, having a working knowledge of the Spanish language.

All telegrams not included in the above groups are censored here.

Relations between Censorship and Chief Censor.—Copies of all telegrams which might be of interest are forwarded by every mail to the Chief Censor. This includes copies of telegrams stopped, delayed and altered.

The various censorship handbooks, black lists, other records, &c., are received from the Chief Censor. The irregularity and infrequency of mails renders it difficult to keep the Chief Censor informed of doubtful trade transactions, though this may to some extent be done by cable.

Relations between Censorship and Cable Company.—The Superintendent and staff of the Eastern Telegraph Company here have at all times given most valuable assistance to the Censorship Department, and without this help it would have been almost impossible to have maintained an efficient censorship and at the same time to impose a minimum of delay on telegrams.

Suggestions for future occasions.—Staff.—(1.) If it is at any future date decided to impose a censorship on cablegrams, I am of opinion that all members of the Censorship Staff here should have a knowledge of Spanish, French and, perhaps, German languages, and thus make it possible for all traffic to be censored here. If this could not be arranged, one of the Censors, preferably the Censor in charge, should be a Spanish interpreter.

(2.) It must be observed that before the war, the number of island officers was very small, viz., Commandant, Executive Officer, Accountant Officer and also a Boatswain R.N., who is of warrant rank. There is naturally a very great deal of additional work for these officers when preparations for war are being made, and at the outbreak of the present war the additional censorship work was almost more than they could manage. The Accountant Officer at that time—Paymaster C. F. Webber—undertook the duties of Censor, having previously studied the censorship regulations. The large amount of work which therefore, fell to his lot was largely the cause of a breakdown in his health, leading to his being invalided home in October, 1916.

I am, therefore, of opinion that one officer should be available to take charge of the censorship on the outbreak of another war, and that he should have no other duties to perform. Possibly the other officers on the island would be able to perform the duties of Assistant Censors for a short time, but additional officers

Similar difficulty has been experienced in the case of the decoding clerk, as practically the whole of his time is required by his ordinary island accountant duties. Suggested, therefore, that an additional writer should be supplied for censorship purposes on the outbreak of war.

(3.) In a station of this nature, which is purely a transit station, the services of a member of the Cable Company's staff, to assist the Censor in checking telegrams not written off, would of very great value, and would diminish the amount of "writing off" work done by the cable staff. He should, of course, perform this work under the sole direction of the Censor and should be a specially selected man.

In making the above suggestions, it has been considered that a new cable from Ascension to Rio-de-Janeiro is expected to be laid in the very near future. If it is found that this cable will increase the amount of censorship work to such an extent as to require permanent watch-keeping in the telegraph office, the staff required would be one Censor and four Assistant Censors.

Routing of telegrams.—(a.) Some arrangements should be made whereby telegrams between any two places will always traverse the same censorship stations. This, of course, might not be possible in the event of pressure of work due to the interruption of any one cable. As previously explained, there are different routes for telegrams between Argentine and Spain, *e.g.* :—

Buenos Aires (B.O.)	Ascension—London—Spain.
Buenos Aires (B.O.)	Ascension—St. Vincent—Portugal—Spain.
Buenos Aires (B.O.)	Ascension—Gibraltar—Spain.

(b.) In dealing with telegrams in commercial code, it is customary that they be forwarded by various stations with the "not understood" password, and therefore decoded and dealt with by the terminal station. We have at times found that it takes a considerable length of time—sometimes weeks, to obtain corrections from the office of origin if in a distant part of the world, *e.g.*, Japan. I would suggest that there would be less delay on code telegrams if they were decoded and forwarded with the "understood" password of the first censorship station they transit, and if the terminal station were then permitted to forward the telegram without further decoding.

Scheme of Censorship.—As various modifications in the above scheme of censorship, and additional suggestions may be necessary when the Ascension—Rio de Janeiro cable is laid, and, as it is anticipated that this will in the future be one of the most important censorship centres in the British cable system, I would suggest that the Commandant, after consultation with the Superintendent of the Eastern Telegraph Company, might render an annual report as to what changes, if any, in the above scheme might be required.

In the above Report, the term "Argentine" is meant to denote all countries in South America served by the Ascension—Buenos Aires Cable, and, therefore, includes Argentine, Bolivia, Chili, Paraguay and Uruguay.

(Signed) FRANCIS J. D. TWIGG, *Censor,*
Surgeon Lieutenant, R.N.