

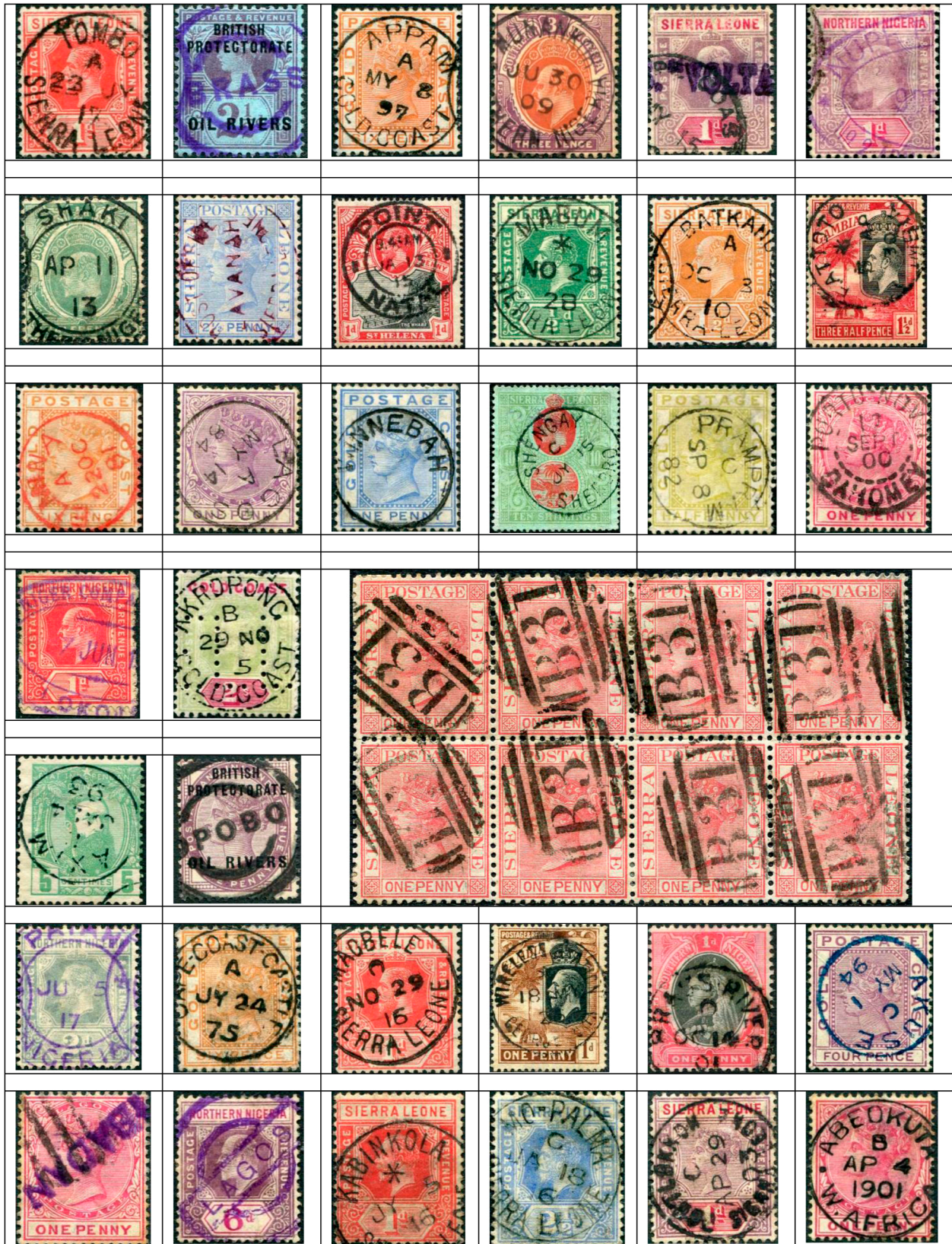
CAMEO

The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle



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WHOLE NUMBER 112

JANUARY 2021



MICHAEL HAMILTON

THE UNUSUAL in POSTAL HISTORY, POSTMARKS, STAMPS

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Front Cover

August 1918 cover from Tinto, Cameroons to the UK bearing telegraph cancellations of Tinto and Ossidinge. See p52.

Editor's Notes

The newsletter accompanying this issue of *Cameo* includes booking details for a virtual meeting on 6 March 2021, taking into account the continuing concerns about the propagation of COVID infections throughout the world. We hope the Salisbury meeting in June and the weekend conference in September will be able to take place as conventional meetings, so booking details for those are included now as flyers. At the turn of this new year, I express my hope that 2021 will bring an upturn in the wellbeing of all WASC members.

The next issue will be edited by Barry Burns, datelined June 2021 and the copy deadline is 31 May 2021

Rob May

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Editorial Policy

The editors have the final say over content in *Cameo* in the interests of balance and relevance to the readership. Space in each *Cameo* may be limited as compared with the volume of material submitted by all the authors. The editors retain discretion over punctuation, spelling, grammar, use of colour for illustrations and whether to reduce the size of illustrations to fit the space available, but should not change wording, delete text or delete illustrations without full knowledge and permission of the author. If the editors consider amendment or deletion of text or removal of illustrations to be necessary, they will discuss it with contributors. If contributors are then unhappy with proposed changes, they can withdraw their items.

Scope

The West Africa Study Circle studies the postage stamps and postal history of The Gambia, Gold Coast/Ghana, the Nigerias, Sierra Leone, Cameroons and Togo, together with the South Atlantic Islands of St. Helena, Ascension, Tristan da Cunha and Gough and the British Postal Agencies in Madeira, Tenerife, St Vincent and Fernando Po.

Annual Subscription

From 2019, until further notice, a subscription of £5 per annum will provide all members with an electronic copy of *Cameo* via the WASC website three times a year. Alternatively, members can choose to receive a printed copy of *Cameo* by post for £20 per annum. The cost of postage to overseas members unfortunately means that those who prefer to receive *Cameo* in print format will need to pay WASC a further charge of £7.50 to Europe or £12.50 to the rest of the world. There is no entry fee. The subscription term is for calendar years.

Advertising Rates

All advertising is printed in colour. All advertisers in *Cameo* are also featured on our website for the period of their paid advert and we provide weblinks to each advertiser's website. For auctioneers we regret that we are no longer able to provide members' address lists due to the Data Protection laws but we can offer to put a link on our website for any forthcoming auction which includes a substantial number of lots of West African material.

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WASC on-line

Visit the West Africa Study Circle website at <http://www.wasc.org.uk>
Web Manager is Ray Harris FRPSL. Contact webmanager@wasc.org.uk

New content includes

- searchable digital copies of all issues of *Cameo* up to October 2015
 - Elder Dempster timetables and route maps drawn by Peter Wingent
- Coming soon – a spreadsheet for digital analysis of colours; extending the SG colour chart



Letters to the Editor

Should anyone wish to reply to any of these letters, please do so through the Cameo editor in the first instance to enable a consolidated follow-up to be published in conjunction with the study editors as appropriate.

Correspondence on any subject is always most appreciated. Any form of contact is welcome, whether by letter, telephone or email.

The joint editors' addresses are listed on the front page of all Cameo issues.

Rob May & Barry Burns

✉ Mueba, Cameroons

Dear Rob & Barry,

Further to the two *Cameo* articles about Mueba PA in West Cameroon. I cannot add anything philatelically without scouring my collection for anything from there. However, some comments as a result of living in West Cameroon for two years in the early 1970s. I used to travel the route from Kumba via Tombel to Bamenda regularly. I vividly recall that night travel was a no-no, and that we needed a written permit to travel that route (for our own security). I do not think we actually had a police or military escort, but we did hurry through.

I have an atlas that was published in 1971 which I purchased in Buea. It clearly shows MWEBA situated just south of Bangem, very close to the border with East Cameroon. This must be the same place as MUEBA. It would be interesting to know if both spellings occur on postmarks.

A couple of other geographical observations. Lobe is well west of Kumba, just east of Ekondo Titi, but it would be reasonable to suppose that it would come under the control of Kumba Post Office.

Bob Maddocks wrongly states that Kembong is 25 miles north of Mamfe. It is in fact ten miles or so south-west of Mamfe. Access north of Mamfe (at least when I was there) was by foot only, and there were no significant human settlements in that area at all. By contrast, Kembong is on a road with easy access to Mamfe.

Very sadly, the Tombel/Mweba (Mueba) area will be totally unsafe today, with civil war raging in large parts of the former English-speaking part of Cameroun.

I have always regretted that I did not pursue any philatelic interests while I was there. I lived next door to Buea Post Office throughout my time there. What a missed opportunity!

John Smith
Greasy, Wirral

✉ Illegal Stamp Issues

This e-mail was originally addressed to Eddy Akpan

Dear Rob,

Whilst researching a dubious miniature sheet allegedly issued by Nigeria in 2017 to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, I found a website which provides very useful information on bogus issues, with this link leading you to the Nigeria section.

I am unsure if you or anyone at the WASC is aware of it. I may have missed the relevant correspondence or article - but it is certainly worth reading:

http://golowestamps.com/reference/Illegal%20Stamps/Nigeria%20Illegal%20Stamps/nigeria_illegal_stamps.htm

Richard Rice
South Croydon

✉ GB to Gold Coast by Aeromaritime

Dear Rob & Barry,

In the last *Cameo*, number 111, October 2020, Barbara Priddy asks if someone can decipher the pencil note on the letter illustrated on page 147, figure 9.

I think the mark can be read like this:

"Received on 9th March '38 (9/3/38)
Replied on 11th March '38 (11/3/38)"

Benoit Lebourcq
Neuvy, France

✉ Cameo on-line Archive

Dear Rob & Barry,

All issues of *Cameo* up to number 96 (October 2015) are now on-line as downloadable PDFs and screen-readable files.

The direct link is

<http://www.wasc.org.uk/WASCCameoDigital.html>

(with those upper-case letters), and there is also a link on our home page.

Later issues will be added gradually.

Ray Harris
Swanley, Kent

☐ The Scope of the West Africa Study Circle

Dear Editor,

In answer to Peter Kelly's "tongue in cheek" letter (*Cameo* Oct. 2020) our Society was indeed known as the British West Africa Study Circle from 1959 until 1983. Having begun as a Gambia study group the Circle had expanded to all the former British Colonies in West Africa together with Atlantic Islands and Postal Agencies.

Early collectors had concentrated on stamps but as the interest in postal history grew the sea routes, and latterly air routes, brought connections with other adjacent countries. Greater co-operation between collectors and researchers was recognised and it would have seemed obvious to recruit collectors interested in those other areas. The committee put it to the AGM that we drop 'British' from our title and welcome any collectors with West African interests. However, as there were already existing Societies for French Colonies, German Colonies and Atlantic Islands we did not wish to aggressively steal away membership from those groups.

As to the lack of a response on the website I can tell you that the descriptions used were penned by members who specialised in each country. Personally, I think some of them need beefing up! But if Peter, or any other member, writes a description of the philatelic pedigree of any of the 'blanks' I am sure that the Web Manager would be pleased to load it on the system.

Ian Anderson (former President & Treasurer,
currently Bookseller and Archivist.)
Edinburgh

☐ The Scope of the West Africa Study Circle

Ed - this letter has been edited by removing opinions expressed by the writer about his dealings with specific persons.

Dear Rob & Barry,

To you both, an open letter in response to Peter Kelly.

I hold strongly to the view those who collect West Africa generally or specific areas should decide whether to join WASC, F&CPS or both, as is the case with many members, including Peter. Michael Ensor was President of both!

As a strong Brexiteer I am appalled by the recent European attitude to us. I always held they wanted us as members and allies who had done so much to defend Europe in two great wars.

I joined F&CPS first and was a member for just under 50 years, making what I saw as a major contribution, but was "kicked out" when I raised concerns about possible financial irregularities. I have never cared for the casual French style of administration in which accounts may never be audited. So, I would not wish to see a large French intrusion which might ultimately lead to a change in approach by WASC; the more friendly society.

John Mayne
Malvern

Ed - I hope I do not presume too much by expressing my own views on this letter. I am also a member of both societies. The scope of the F&CPS is very wide in that it covers France and all its Colonies and former Colonies. Francophone West Africa is just a small part of the scope of that society, which means there is no logic in combining these societies, as John seems to fear.

Peter Kelly suggested that WASC might consider taking an interest in the philately of West Africa as a whole, making a strong point that communications to, from and through Francophone West Africa are bound up with the study of the postal history of Anglophone West Africa, and vice versa. There need be no conflicts of interests when students of Anglophone and Francophone philately and postal history can gain more insight from collaboration. That has been happening for many years, in any case.

☐ Nigerian Fakes and Phantasy Stamps

Dear Rob & Barry,

It may be that I have missed some previous articles in *Cameo* on the subject of Nigerian fantasy stamps, but just having seen Jeremy Martin's article today I am wondering whether he has seen these two beauties before.

The first is interesting because it is a clearer use of the same phony AP 14 94 cancel as his example but, curiously, the code C has been magically turned down. The second is.....what it is, but I just love it!



Best regards,
Simon Binsted
Andorra

📄 **Request for help -uses of Nigerian postal stationery in Cameroons**

Dear Rob,

As you know, I am working on a book on Nigerian postal stationery including reply coupons and postal orders. I will also include a chapter on such items used in Cameroons, but a number of main types have apparently not yet been recorded used there or are only known in the form of cut-outs, so I would be grateful for good colour scans or photocopies for inclusion in my book of the following items:

Envelopes:	1959 Jebba Bridge 3d
Registration envelopes:	1914 KGV 2d size H2
	1952 KGVI 3d circular indicium size H2
Aerogrammes:	1956 Ife Bronze 6d with 3 lines of text in upper left corner and with blue overlay inside as well as outside
	1958 Tin mining 2d
Reply coupons:	Imperial Reply Coupons 3d (any sub-type)
	International Reply Coupons 6d & 8d

Also, any use of post-independence items such as the 3d Oyo Carver envelope, 9d Coat-of-arms registration envelopes and the 3d Oyo Carver and 6d Benin Mask aerogrammes would be of great interest. Although not likely to exist there is still a theoretical chance, bearing in mind that contemporary Nigerian stamps have also been seen used in Cameroons. For British postal orders - either overprinted for use in Nigeria, or not - only three overprinted items have been recorded used in Cameroons:

KGV 15/- issued at Buea 15 JA 26, QEII 5/- issued at Batibo 9 JY 60 and QEII £5 issued at Kumba 15 JU 61



Colour scans of any of these would be greatly appreciated. The second item appeared in a WASC auction back in 2003, so it must have been bought by a member.

I am also very interested in postal stationery items used in Northern Cameroons prior to its incorporation into Nigeria. So far, I have only seen a 1s IRC issued at Mubi in 1960 (Figure 1).

Peter Hørlyck
Holback, Denmark

Figure 1

Obituary: Robert Nelson

Our long-standing and very active member, Robert Nelson, has passed away on 26 September, aged 85.

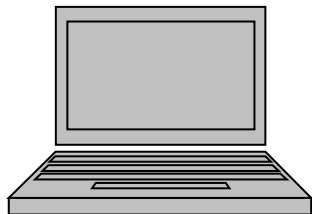
He was born in Staffordshire in 1935 and was educated at home before attending Repton school from the age of ten. Those early years at home set the course of his lifelong interests in reading, history and stamp collecting. He went up to St. Catherine's College, Oxford to study Law then went to the Bar as a junior. At a party in London he met Anneliese, his future wife. They were married in Denmark, her native country, in 1959 and celebrated 61 years together. Their family grew to four children who are now scattered between Australia, the Bahamas and the UK.

Robert soon left the legal profession to take his career forward in merchant banking, with particular expertise in tax law. He worked for the Ionian Bank, which by 1977 had become purely a London-based merchant bank, for almost 20 years. He enjoyed a long and active retirement including 12 years living in Ireland where he was known as a legendary host and made many friends. They returned to England in 2013, settling at Grayshott, Hampshire which proved to be his last home.

Robert was a very active philatelist and postal historian with special interests in Gold Coast, Nigeria and Military Mails. He built many exceptional collections which he shared with the West Africa Study Circle with high quality displays over the course of the 50 years of his membership, before selling them on through his preferred auction houses – Stanley Gibbons and Spink. His remaining collections will be sold by the family through Spink in 2021.

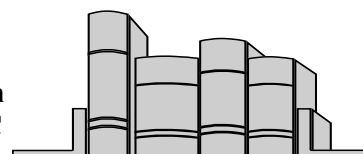
Robert was *Cameo* Editor from July 1991 to January 1996 (a total of ten issues) and was WASC President in 1992-1994. He was urbane, warm, sometime irreverent and always good company. He is much missed.

Rob May FRPSL



Sources

Views expressed by reviewers are their own
and are not necessarily endorsed by WASC
or the editors of *Cameo*



For all WASC book orders and payments please contact the Treasurer (address on contents page). Authors will distribute their own new publications to members, whilst distribution of purchases from older stocks is arranged via the Treasurer.

📖 *Pan American Airways Wartime Transatlantic Air Mail – Censorship and the LATI Substitute* by John Wilson & Frank Walton RDP FRPSL published by the RPSL 2020. ISBN 978-1-913015-08-4. Price £44 to non-members of RPSL, £39 to RPSL members, plus postage. Reviewed by Rob May FRPSL

For the past few years, the WASC website has hosted the *Pan American Trip Summaries* for the World War II period, generously made available by the Richter Library, Miami and collated with considerable effort by John Wilson. This is a superb resource for philatelists who want to identify the routes taken by particular covers, but the sheer volume of information made it difficult to draw out a “golden thread” of historical narrative of the ever-changing air routes and the steps taken to intercept mail for censorship.

This book triumphantly rises to that challenge. The partnership between two highly-experienced postal historians has brought together John Wilson’s meticulous investigation of original sources over many years with Frank Walton’s experience of marshalling complex content for publication; helping John to identify a narrative thread to frame his tables of routes, rates and censorship markings.

Three previous books that have tried to tackle the wartime Pan Am transatlantic flights have, in various ways, missed their target; in the case of Boyle by considering only the North Atlantic component and in the case of Aitink & Hovenkamp because they were writing before the resources of the Richter Library were freely available. Both editions of Proud’s *Intercontinental Airmails volume 1* are confused on this topic.

The scope of this new book is much wider than the “LATI substitute” title might suggest. All of Pan Am’s Atlantic route changes from the end of 1941 are tabulated, then each is considered in detail with clear maps that show each phase. The book is profusely illustrated with covers from John’s collection.

An appendix provides tables of every Pan Am Atlantic flight on each of the 15 identified routes, in each direction, and a long table lists every Pan Am transit through Bermuda. This book also usefully analyses the weight of mails carried by these Pan Am flights to give an estimate of the number of letters passing each way.

A second appendix provides the air mail postage rates from each of the countries from which mail was accepted for carriage by Pan Am. The history of Anglo-American censorship from the end of 1941 is taken from original sources which show the reasons why mails were routed variously via Trinidad, San Juan, Bermuda and Miami and show the marks added to covers by the censorship offices. This reviewer had not previously recognised the significance of the bag and batch marks of the San Juan censorship office.

Readers should be careful to avoid concluding that all Atlantic mails were carried on Pan Am Boeing 314 Clippers. Whilst Pan Am carried much of the civilian mail (which is therefore most familiar to collectors) the volume of mails to and from the fighting forces, especially after the United States entered the war, was considerably greater than the loads shown in the Pan Am trip summaries and most of that mail was carried by the USA Air Transport Command using landplanes, flying via Ascension after its airport was completed in July 1942. BOAC also owned three Boeing 314s which flew mail across the Atlantic. Short Sunderland and several other older types of flying boats flew forces mail, air letters and Airgraphs on routes along the African Coast to and from the UK.

Is this the end of the story? Far from it – John Wilson ends his epilogue “There is certainly more to be discovered. Over to you.” This reviewer would like to find out more about how mails crossed Africa to connect with Pan Am flights, how much of that mail was re-routed via the Mediterranean after Italy surrendered, also how USAATC flights were organised. I might have to accept John’s challenge and do some of that myself!

📖 *St. Helena - The Undivided Back Picture Postcards 1900 – 1902* by Bernard Mabbett & Cliff Masters. A4, soft bound, 113 pages, illustrated in colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-905647-28-6. Available from sthelena.postcards@ntlworld.com at offer prices (for orders before 14 February 2021) of: UK £18 post free, Europe £18 plus £4 postage, Rest of the world £18 plus £8 postage.

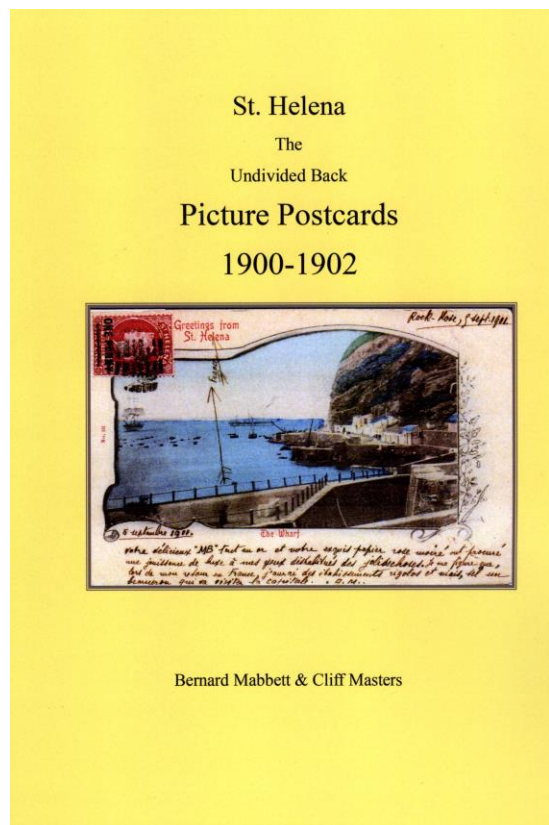
Reviewed by Wilf Vevers FRPSL

Following the departure from the Island of the Royal Navy's West Africa Squadron in 1864, and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 which drastically reduced calls from passing shipping, St. Helena entered a period of depression. With the commencement of the Second Anglo-Boer War in October 1899 everything changed. The Eastern Telegraph cable from the Cape to the UK was routed via the Island and a base station established. At the same time the British garrison on the Island was increased.

In April 1900 the first Boer prisoners of war arrived, and by the end of the war there were some 5500 prisoners on the Island. The British garrison had also increased to over 1500 and there was a British Navy guardship stationed off Jamestown. With this large increase in the population and also additional shipping activity, there was a considerable demand for postcards and as a result a number of individuals set out to satisfy this demand.

This book goes into detail regarding each of these persons producing cards on the Island in this period. It also gives details of a number of overseas firms who also produced cards related to St Helena and the prisoners of war as well as some of the cards produced by the prisoners themselves.

Lavishly illustrated, the publication gives extensive information on the different series of cards that each business produced. For students of the history and postal history of St. Helena and the Second Anglo-Boer War, this is an invaluable source of information.



St Helena Emigration Office Handstamp

James Podger FRPSL

Cameo 110 dropped through my post box this morning. I glanced through it and noticed Barry's article on St Helena fiscal uses of the 1938 5/- adhesive (Ref. 1). I have attached the example that I have, unfortunately not on full page. According to a note on the back, it cost £8.50!

The date on mine is 12 JUN 1946. The 12 and 6 are in black manuscript and in the same ink are initials just to the left of the adhesive.

Reference

1. Burns, B.M., "A few Revenue uses of the KGVI Definitive Set", *Cameo*, Volume 21 p92, WASC, June 2020



The Compendium of Nigeria Postage Stamps 1914 – 2014

The Compendium of Nigeria Postage Stamps 1914 – 2014 is a chronicle and a colourful presentation of images of all postage stamps issued in Nigeria from 1914 – 2014 in a book form. The book is A4 size, printed in full colour and contains a total number of 440 pages. For purchase details please e-mail cps100yrs@gmail.com or gm.counter@nipost.ng. Price USD30 / 10,000 Naira plus postage.

This book published by the Nigeria Postal Service (NIPOST), Tacoms Int. Ltd and their partners is a philatelic manifestation of Nigeria over a period of 100 years. By virtue of her philatelic policy Nigeria through NIPOST has projected her image and identity at national, regional and international levels.

The book is a trajectory of Nigeria history. Its scope covers the period of amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 up to year 2014, which marked the centennial anniversary of Nigeria.

A concise narrative is written about Nigeria history as presented by each stamp. These narratives are titled **History of Nigeria** and the stamps are presented as **Stamp Notes**. It covers a spectrum of themes and subjects of diverse interest such as; History, Heritage matters, Geography, Economy, Politics, Diplomacy, Human Right and Human Diversities, Flora and Fauna, Health Issues, Sports, Culture, Environmental matters and other details of cutting edge issues relating to Nigeria between 1914 and 2014.

The book contains five chapters, which are chronologically arranged as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------|
| 1. Pre – independence Nigeria | - | 1914 – 1960 |
| 2. Independent Nigeria | - | 1960 – 1972 |
| 3. Post-Independent Nigeria 1; | - | 1973 – 1980 |
| 4. Post-Independent Nigeria 2; | - | 1980 – 1999 |
| 5. Democracy and new millennium | - | 2000 – 2014 |

This book reveals the inherent value of producing postage stamps and how Nigeria was able to utilize those values for communication, Information dissemination, Fiscal Purposes including Stamp Duty, Advocacy, Charity and record keeping over a period of one hundred years.

The book also examined the evolution of Nigeria stamps and circumstances that led to the issuance of each set of stamps under review.

This compendium intends to call people’s attention to see the postage stamp beyond its primary function of payment for postal services. It presents postage stamp as a medium of visual communication, a great object of Historical, Educational and Cultural values and a means of preservation of heritage, legacies and historical landmarks for posterity.

To philatelists and stamp collectors this book attempts to examine the technical details of each stamp, which include: the Theme, Date of Issue, Perforations, Format, Description, Denomination, Designer, Printing Process, Security Printer etc.

This vital philatelic information on the status of the stamps provide easy access to philatelists who are preparing for local, regional or global competitive exhibitions. This will also enable collectors of thematic classes worldwide to know more about topics on Nigerian stamps.

To the global philatelic community and investors in philatelic business, the compendium provides a guide on the authentic and genuine postage stamps issued by Nigeria in the last hundred years. This is to prevent fake, forgery and illegal stamp issues, which have become a scourge in postal and philatelic business.

May I use this medium to inform our readers that this publication is a work in progress, therefore observations on any issue raised in this book should be directed to the publisher at cps100yrs@gmail.com to enable us cross check our facts, correct verified mistakes where necessary to make future editions better. On a final note, this compendium is an attempt to tell a true story of Nigeria from 100 years as recorded by postage stamps. It promises to be an educative, entertaining, and informative book on Nigeria.

Thank you
J ‘Femifola Durosomo

Nigeria 1953 2d black and ochre Plate 5-5

Ray Harris FRPSL

This note expands on Rob May's article in *Cameo* 110 about the Nigeria 2d definitive in black and ochre, plate 5-5 (Ref. 1). The dates he has quoted for consignments of this stamp being sent to Nigeria are the dates on which the Crown Agents released each printing. However, the Crown Agents books held at the British Library record some more detail, which throws further light on the use of plates 5-5.

The first release of the 2d definitive on 1 September 1953 was of the 77,000 sheets of 60 stamps ordered in requisition 1622/1 and despatched by Waterlow & Son from 1 December 1952 to 24 August 1953, using plates 1-1 and 2-1 as stated. The plate issue books record that border plate number 1 was destroyed on 28 November 1952; from then, border plate 2 was used together with vignette plate 1.

The release of 18 August 1954 was of an order for 400,000 sheets of 60, requisition number 1170/1. These are noted as despatched from 8 February 1954 to 29 November 1954. At the earliest of these dates the stamps would still have been from plates 2-1. The first use of both border plate 3 and vignette plate 2 was 23 February 1954, giving rise to sheets of plates 3-2, from which I have a used plate block dated 4 October 1954 and one mint plate block. Vignette plate 2 was destroyed after less than one month, on 18 March 1954, so the combination 3-2 is quite scarce. From that date vignette plate 3 came into use and the majority of this requisition would have been from plates 3-3.

The release date 21 September 1955 was in the despatch period of an order for 600,000 sheets of 60, requisition 3934/1. These were despatched from 24 December 1954. Vignette plate 4 was first used on 29 October 1954, but my notes show an error of date (1958) in the plate issue book for border plate 4. No sheets from plates 3-4 are known, so I assume that border and vignette plates 4 came into use together. However, not all the stamps for this requisition came from plates 4-4. The plate issue book shows that both border and vignette plates numbered 5 were used from 15 August 1955. The last despatch date recorded for this requisition was 6 February 1956. The usual process seems to have been to put the old plates aside from the date new plates were used, but it is possible that plates 4-4 continued to be used in parallel with the introduction of plates 5-5. We know that plates 4-4 were still viable as they were later used by De La Rue for a printing in grey with Southern Cameroons overprints.

The date of the order for stamps with the Royal Visit overprint is not in the Crown Agents book, but it has requisition number 8130/1 (also recorded as 8130/56) for 88,000 sheets of 60. The production of the overprinted sheets appears to have been done in quite a hurry. The intended issue date in Nigeria was 28 January 1956 but the earliest despatch was 12 December 1955. It appears that it was by surface mail, and there must have then been a worry that the stamps would not reach Nigeria in time for the issue date, as there were also two despatches by air, of 16,000 sheets on 3 January 1956 and 24,000 sheets on 16 January. If plates 5-5, available from 15 August, had been prepared only for the Royal Visit stamps, there should have been plenty of time for earlier despatch, despite the need also to prepare the overprint plate. I suggest that plates 5-5 were probably used for the ordinary definitives before being taken over for the Royal Visit stamp. Certainly, I infer from the final 6 February 1956 despatch date of 3934/1 that plates 5-5 were in use for the final printing of this requisition. I have a used plate block, but it is dated 7 June 1957 and so gives no further clues to the date of purchase.

The Crown Agents Bureau, which held stock for stamp collectors and dealers, received 63,000 sheets from the requisition 3934/1, presumably in time for release on 21 September 1955. The dates suggest to me that all the stamps supplied to the Crown Agents for that release were from plates 4-4; plenty of complete mint sheets from this plate pair still appear on the market. In that case, the sheets of definitives from plates 5-5, quite a small number, are assumed to have all been sent to Nigeria, which would explain their scarcity.

Reference

1. May, R., "Nigeria QEII 2d black and ochre Plate 5-5", *Cameo*, Volume 21 p118, WASC, June 2020

Ejinrin - is this Nigeria's Oldest Post Office trading in its original building?

Rob May FRPSL

Ejinrin is situated on the northern bank of the lagoon to the east of Lagos. There are several references to Ejinrin in the series of Nigerian Gazettes on the WASC website (Ref. 1) which give evidence of the development of the postal service to this place. I start with the 1925 report which includes:

Advantage has been taken of Mr Bailey's launch service between Lagos and Ejinrin for Calabar Express mails for Ijebu-Ode. Ijebu Ode is about 17 miles north of Ejinrin, at that time undertaken on foot, whilst the alternative route for mails to Ijebu Ode was 66 miles - first by launch to Ikorodu, then by motorable road via Shagamu and Ilishan.

The 1928 report goes on to say:

A postal agency was opened at Ejinrin on the 25th May and this will be converted into a departmental Postal and Telegraph Office when the post office now being built is completed early in 1929.

The 1929 report confirmed that the new building was completed and that the Post Office (as opposed to postal agency) opened at Ejinrin in July. The 1929 report also says:

The Ijebu Ode mails were accelerated by utilising Messrs. Elder Dempster's new bi-weekly launch service between Lagos and Ejinrin.

A 1930 *Communications Guide to Nigeria* (Ref. 2) records that Ejinrin was served by the Government-run Lagos – Sapele steam launch service. Lagos to Sapele took 48 hours, calling also at Epe, Oni, Eba, Gbekabo and Koko, with a connecting service to Forcados and Burutu. Privately-owned motor launches also made frequent trips to Ejinrin. The draught at Lekki Flats (beyond Ejinrin), was limited to five feet. The frequency of this service in 1930 is not stated but the Nigeria P&T Annual report for 1950 states that the Lagos-Epe-Ejinrin launch service was increased from thrice weekly to daily.

The Nigerian Post Office did not offer doorstep delivery except in Lagos. Most residents collected their post from their nearest post office after the arrival of the ocean steamers or of the connecting local road, creeks or river services, but the Post Office also advertised portorage of mail to villages served from each post office. The 1932 Post Office Guide (Ref. 3) lists ten villages served by portorage from Ejinrin Post Office, of which five (Agbowa, Igboodu, Oke Osho, Oruba and Orugbo) were served by canoe. Proud (Ref. 4) records opening dates and cancellations for later postal agencies at four of these villages between 1941 and 1956, only one of which was controlled from Ejinrin post office, and that only for a short time.

I conclude that the postal traffic through Ejinrin post office did not develop as strongly as elsewhere in Nigeria. Tony Plumbe has told me that Ejinrin had a produce jetty and two cranes each capable of loading one ton. Although large ships in the produce trade continued to dock there into the 1960s, the lack of a rail connection meant its status as a port declined, as did the produce market. The dockside warehouses have been left to fall into disrepair. The general improvement of roads and the change from runner to motor transport reduced the importance of internal water transport through the lagoons, so that Ejinrin has become a dead end by road from Ijebu Ode.



Figure 1 2018 view of Ejinrin Post Office (right) and Postmaster's house (left)

In 2020 Edet Akpan forwarded to me a group of images, taken during a 2018 visit to Ejinrin by Charles Orebola Oresanwo, and a text written by Taiye Olaniyi. Figure 1 shows the Post Office to the right and the Postmaster's house to the left as they were in 2018. The post office is the 1929 building referred to above, and is still open and trading, but these internal views (Figures 2 and 3) show little evidence of postal business and the telegraph machine is unserviceable. The Elejinri of Ejinrin is campaigning for funds to establish the historic trading port (Figure 4), warehouses and post office as a tourist attraction but heritage is not a priority of the Nigerian government at this time of crisis.



Figure 2 The Postmaster



Figure 3 Ready for a customer



Figure 4 At Ejinrin Wharf - is this the launch which has operated the Lagoon service from Lagos?

Taiye Olaniyi met Oba Babatunde Rafiu Ishola Balogun, His Royal Majesty the Elejinri of Ejinrin, who claims this to be the oldest standing post office in Nigeria. Most post office buildings constructed before 1929 will have been redeveloped during the post war boom of mail traffic in Nigeria, but Simon Heap has already written in *Cameo* about an older post office building which is still standing at Ibadan (Ref. 5). That building is now used as offices and storage having been replaced by a newer public post office building. So, does anyone know of a better claim to be the oldest one still trading?

References

1. www.wasc.org.uk
2. *Nigeria Communications Guide and Map* (1st edition) Public Works Dept., Lagos 1929 p69
3. *Post Office Guide*, Nigerian P&T Dept, 1932, p119
4. Proud E., *The Postal History of Nigeria*, pp226, 437, 512 & 680, Proud Bailey, Heathfield 1995
5. *Heap Dr. S.*, "Ibadan's General Post Office 1922", *Cameo*, Volume 13 p96, WASC, June 2012

Ascension - the Postal Services & Censorship Arrangements WWII

Graham Mark

In Rod Vousden's article in *Cameo* 108, October 2019, pp131-135, he surprised me with his expression, near the top of p132, *As a result, it appears the Ascension censor stamp ceased to be used*

I mentioned my reservations concerning this to Wilf Vevers and said to him that the official history makes it quite clear that a decision was taken to suspend censorship of civilian mails because there was so little of it. Wilf was not aware that there is a comprehensive history of the British Empire censorship during WWII - it is the *History of the Postal and Telegraphic Censorship Department 1938-1946*, 2 volumes xiv + 658 and iv + 339pp, published by the Home Office 1952, National Archives Kew reference DEFE1/333 and 334. Copies of the relevant paragraphs are attached.

(2) ASCENSION ISLAND

1222. Postal and Telegraph censorship was introduced on 1st September, 1939. Cable and Wireless Limited had an important cable station on the Island and at the beginning of the war the Island was inhabited solely by their employees, numbering about 130, and a British Military Unit consisting of two officers and about 26 other ranks. It was decided in March, 1940, that the outgoing mail from Ascension was so small and unimportant that postal censorship could be discontinued. In the Spring of 1942, the question of re-imposing censorship arose, as the United States had decided to establish an air base on the Island, and sent a party of about 1,300 military engineers. Arrangements were made whereby the British and American Unit Censorships examined their respective Army mail, but postal censorship of civil mail was again undertaken by the Medical Officer of Cable and Wireless. There was no external telephone circuit in use.

(26) ST. HELENA

1429. Censorship was imposed from the beginning of the war. The organisation consisted of two officers, namely the Government Secretary, who acted as Postal and Press Censor, and the Manager of Cable and Wireless Ltd., who acted as Telegraph Censor. There was no external telephone circuit in use. Instructions for Censorship in Ascension Island were routed via St. Helena for onward transmission.

Clearly an executive decision was taken, whether in London or on St Helena is not stated, but I am confident it would not have been taken on Ascension Island. Moreover Martin & Walton, *West African Censorship*, p9, stated; *Civil censorship was discontinued in March 1940* " so they appear to have seen the official history.

In a survey of mail not marked by any censorship device it seems unusual to pick three items which appear to have been addressed by the same hand. These simply reinforce the theory that a known handwriting of a trusted civilian was sufficient for such mail to be passed unexamined. Can the writer be identified? It seems unlikely that these covers are from a family correspondence as, of two of the covers shown, one was addressed to Miss McNair, the other to Mr Macnair. A relative of both would surely spell the names consistently!

In his penultimate paragraph Mr Vousden makes an assumption that *letters were censored on board a ship ...* with which I take issue. Censors of civilian mail were appointed, and no other individual was so authorised. I quite accept that military and naval mails might be subject to different rules, but it must be born in mind that those mails were subject to censorship prior to reaching the Post Office. Civilian mail was extracted from the postal stream for censorship and then handed back to the Post Office. The Post Office then made up bags, which were sealed, before passing them to whatever transport facility (truck, railway, ship or aircraft) and the seals were inspected to check they were unbroken upon arrival at the destination Post Office. So, I believe that censorship on board a ship en route to West or South Africa can be eliminated from any discussion unless documentary evidence can be found.

Turning to Martin and Walton - they state that the colour of Type 3 handstamp (boxed crown / PASSED / XX/...) corresponds with the route of the mail. This could reflect different individuals handling the mails as much as whether the mail was going north or south. I do not know how much censored mail is in collectors' hands but, unless there are a few hundred covers with the Type 3 handstamp available, I suggest it is difficult to come to firm conclusions unless the local Ascension 'instructions to censors' can be located. As Ascension was a dependency of St Helena, does a similar pattern appear there on outbound mail?

British Cameroons Forces Post Office 573 Datestamps – Update

Marty Bratzel

British troops were sent to the Southern Cameroons during the transitional period extending from just before Nigerian independence on 1 October 1960 through to unification of the territory with the former French Cameroun on 1 October 1961.

The FPO 573 Datestamps



Figure 1 Cover postmarked FPO 573 dated 10 AU 60, without index

In our 1994 publication (Ref. 1), *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration – 1916-1961*, Bob Maddocks and I reported that two Field Post Office 573 date-stamps were used at APO Buea during 1960 and 1961. One had an asterisk above the date (No. 185 in our book) and the other an ‘A’ (No. 186) and we described distinguishing characteristics for each device. In our 2007 *Supplement* (Ref. 2), we reported that FPO 573 postmark No. 186 (with Index A) also existed with Index B dated 22 AU 60.

We also originally reported that an FPO 573 postmark dated 10 AU 60 existed without index and that the datestamp was the same as that with Index A. This was based on information received from John Daynes (Ref. 3) who further advised that the information had been provided to him and that he had not seen the postmark. Accordingly, we noted this variant as No. 186.

In mid-2019, a (the?) cover with a FPO 573 postmark dated 10 AU 60 without index was offered as a buy-it-now item on eBay for a modest price and was duly acquired (Figure 1). Upon examination, we conclude that the postmark is not No. 186 but No. 185, that is, the datestamp without index is the same as the strike with an asterisk above the date. Key distinguishing characteristics are a break to the outer circle below the killer bar to the right of '573' and a small gap above the O in POST. We hereby correct our listing, 25 years later!

As an aside, strikes of the FPO 573 postmarks without index and with asterisk were re-examined. In addition to the two breaks to the outer circle noted above, it appears that the device underwent further deterioration during its use in the Southern Cameroons. The two breaks appear to have grown larger with time, and a large gap above the 'D' in FIELD is often present. The presence and extent of apparent damage is influenced in part by the extent of inking of the handstamp, as evidenced by differences observed for multiple strikes with the same date.

The dates of the postmarks without index – 10 AU 60 – and with Index B – 22 AU 60 – deserve some mention. As previously described, a reconnaissance party carried out a 10-day study in the Southern Cameroons during May 1960. They were followed by the Civilian Works Organisation and the Royal Engineers who, in three months, constructed five permanent camps to house more than 1,300 military personnel. The first troops arrived on 14 September 1960 and assumed operational command seven days later. The dates on the two postmarks predate their arrival in the Southern Cameroons. An advance party of vehicles and troops left Lagos on *LST Empire Curlew* in early August, arriving to Tiko on 12 August. Thus, the postmark without index was struck while the advance party was en route, and the postmark with Index B after the advance party had arrived but before the main body of troops arrived.

The sender's return address on the back of the cover deserves mention. The acronym N.A.A.F.I. stands for the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, a company created by the British Government on 9 December 1920 to run recreational establishments needed by the British Armed Forces and to sell goods to servicemen and their families. It runs clubs, bars, shops, supermarkets, launderettes, restaurants, cafés and other facilities on most British military bases and also canteens on board Royal Navy ships.

FPO 573 Registration Label

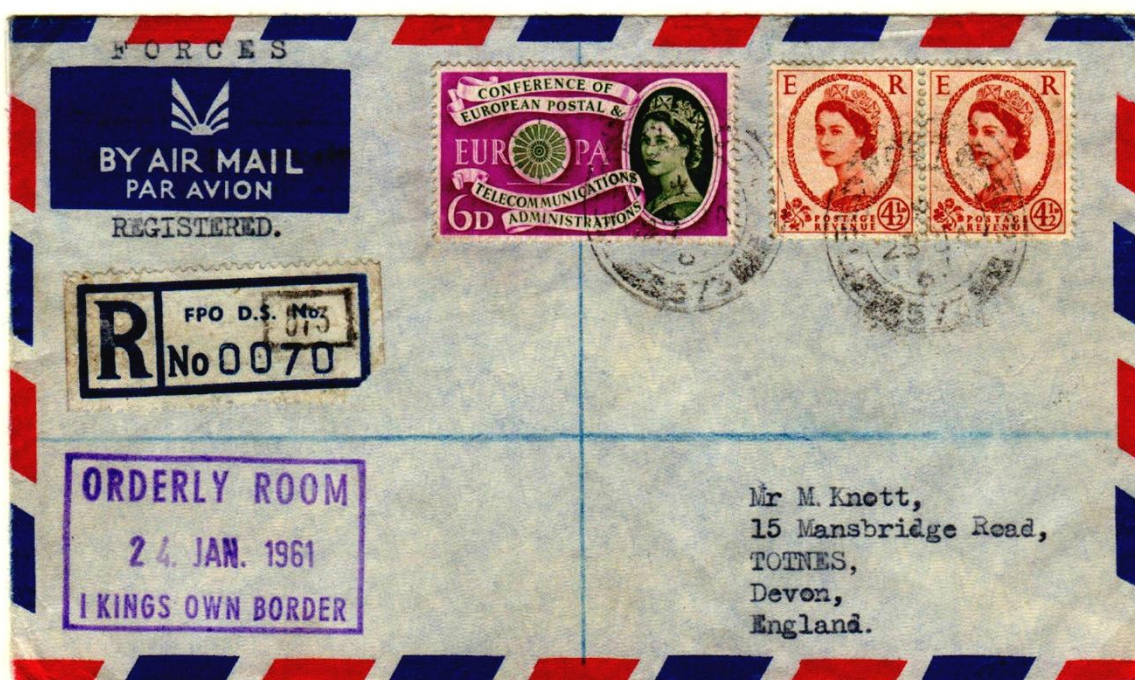


Figure 2 Cover postmarked FPO 573 dated 25 JA 61, with asterisk. The registration label is hand-stamped with a boxed 573. Note: At first glance, the postmark date appears to be 23 JA, but the strike is partially doubled. The strikes on the back of the cover and on the accompanying registration receipt are clearly 25.

In our *Supplement*, we illustrated a registered cover with a printed registration label reading FPO D.S. No. plus a handstamp 188. Depicted in Figure 2 is a cover postmarked FPO 573 with asterisk and dated 25 JA 61. The registration label which reads FPO D.S. No. is hand-stamped with a boxed 573, the only example recorded to date.

As always, additional information and comments are appreciated.

References

1. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961*, MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 1994. 136 pages ISBN 0-9694026-1-9
2. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961 – Supplement*, MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 2007. 115 pages ISBN 978-0-9694026-5-7
3. Letters to the author from John Daynes dated 19 February and 20 May 1992

Gambia Imperial Censor Update

John Wilson

Thanks to the sharp eyes of Graham Mark (Civil Censorship Study Group) I was recently able to add another Gambia Imperial Censor cover to my collection. Sent from Bathurst to Freetown by air in October 1942, the cover had been opened and re-sealed by Examiner 7219, one of the team of five Imperial Censors sent to the Gambia in February of that year in order to examine transit mail being carried by the Pan American “LATI substitute” flights between Natal, Brazil and Lisbon.

As we know (Ref. 1) the Censor function was only partially successful, and censor activity was transferred to San Juan, Puerto Rico at the end of July 1942. The censor team remained in Bathurst until December 1942 when they were transferred to Lagos, at which point their censor numbers vanished never to be seen again. From August to December the Imperial team busied themselves assisting the local censorship by examining terminal mail, and the cover shown here is just such an item. I have not seen another example of mail from Gambia to Sierra Leone examined by Examiner 7219; in fact, I have not seen any similar cover Bathurst-Freetown showing examination by an Imperial Censor.



Figure 1 1/3d air mail cover posted Bathurst 22 October 1942 to Freetown

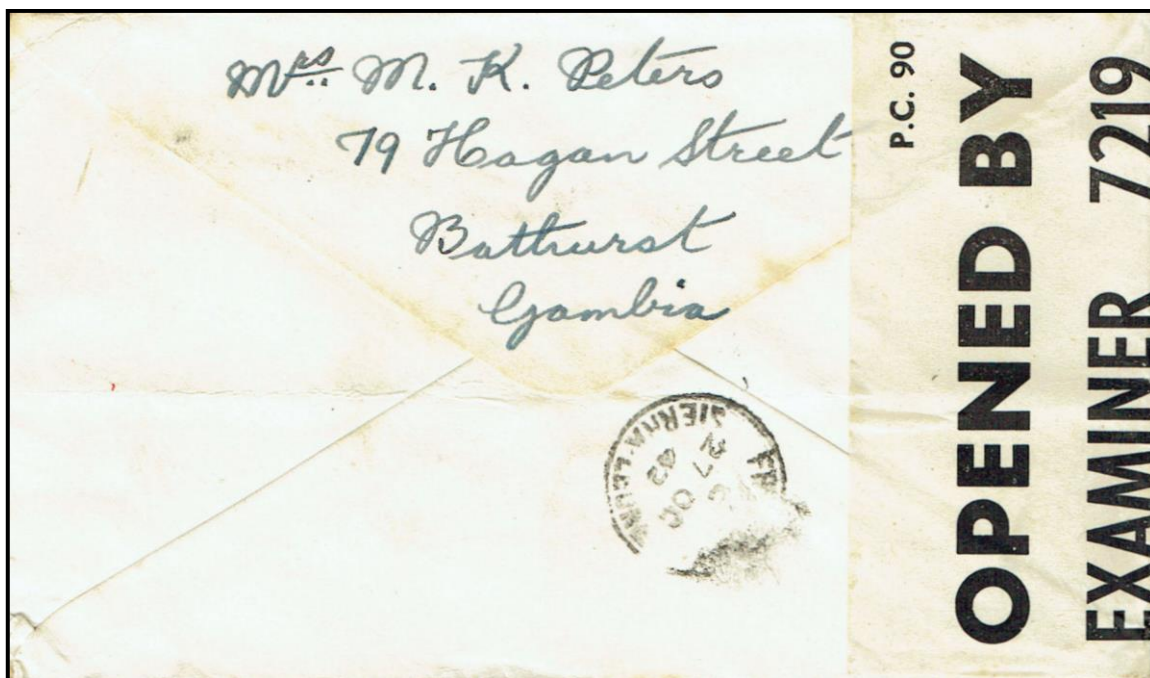


Figure 2 Reverse of the same cover, received Freetown 27 October 1942

The cover became even more interesting when I investigated how it might have been transported. I had imagined that the Pan American Airways (Africa) service flying from Accra to Bathurst would have carried this mail but as I showed in an earlier article in *Cameo* (Ref. 2), PAA (Africa) issued a schedule dated 16 September 1942 in which the service to Bathurst had been discontinued. According to Intelligence Summary 168 issued on 2 September 1942 the service ended on 30 August and was taken over by the Royal Air Force using a ‘borrowed’ DC-3. See the rather poor copy here:

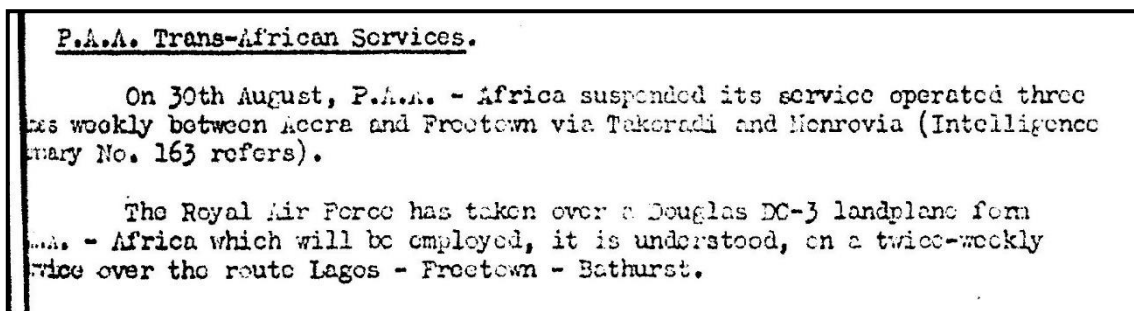


Figure 3 Civil Aviation Intelligence Summary 168, 2 September 1942

It seems unlikely that the cover could have travelled by surface from Bathurst to Freetown, so one must assume that it was carried on the R.A.F. twice-weekly DC-3 service?

References

1. Wilson J., *Imperial Censorship Operations in the Gambia in 1942*, p14, Civil Censorship Study Group, 2014
2. Wilson J., “Inter-colony air services in West Africa 1942”, *Cameo*, Vol. 20, p35, January 2019

Nigeria: new Censor Tape in 1942?

Stanley Field & Graham Mark

I can illustrate a censor letter that has a censor tape not listed in West African Censorship, 3rd Edition.



The type 4 censor tape recorded in that publication has the words Opened by Examiner on one line (Ref. 1). The P.C.90 censor tape on this cover has the same words, but in two lines, along with a censor number, 2048. The cover is date-stamped Aba on 5 January 1942 and backstamped Lagos on 8 January 1942. The half-moon censor handstamp is type 2.1 and the letter is addressed to Bray, Ireland.

A scan of this cover was forwarded to Graham Mark of the Civil Censorship Study Group who is able to identify this type of censor tape as GB type 1N; a fairly uncommon one which is rated 9 on a geometric scale 1-10. The CCSG database does not yet include censor 2048 so this will be added to their database.

Stanley Field answered Graham's query about the unusual pink colour of this tape saying that this is an artefact of his faulty scanner and that the actual tape is white, as normal.

Reference

1. Martin J.J., Walton F.L & Harris R., *West African Censorship*, p88, WASC, Princes Risborough 3rd Edition 2015

West African Air Letters - Honour Overprints and Letters 1943 - 1945

Peter Richards

A military Air Mail Letter Card (AMLC) service was introduced for all personnel in the West Africa Command on 6 October 1941 (Ref. 1). The service enabled letters of significant length to be sent home in a much shorter time and, during this period, at lesser risk than surface mail. [For example, in 1943 a surface letter from a soldier serving in the Gambia to the UK was taking about thirty-five days whereas an AMLC took about eight (Ref. 2)]. Being lightweight, the AMLC also reduced the demands on aircraft capacity which in these difficult days was often at a premium. On 3 December 1943 (Ref. 3) the term AMLC was discontinued and the letters were referred to as Air Letters but for clarity I will refer to them as AMLCs throughout the article.

The number of AMLCs issued to personnel was rationed. Initially every individual in the West Africa Command was issued with one AMLC every fortnight but on 1 July 1943 (Ref. 4) this was increased to one a week. AMLCs were censored at Unit level (shown by the individual undertaking the censorship signing the letter usually in the bottom left-hand corner). The AMLC was very popular with personnel, but the time taken in censoring this volume of mail at Unit level must have been considerable. For surface mail a system had existed since the First World War whereby an individual sending a letter would sign a declaration on the back of the envelope stating that, on their honour, the letter only referred to private and family matters. This declaration removed the necessity for censorship at Unit level although the letter could still be censored at Base level. The envelopes were known as honour envelopes and were often printed in green.

In October 1943 (Ref. 5) this honour system was applied to AMLCs and it was decided that of the four AMLCs issued to an individual per month one would be in the honour format with an honour declaration on the back and a blue triangle (usually in the bottom left-hand corner) on the front to distinguish it. This necessitated the printing of AMLCs with the honour declaration and blue triangle. In West Africa, a number (but by no means all) of the honour AMLCs used were produced locally as was the case with ordinary AMLCs. On 7 March 1944, the AMLC ration was further increased to three per person per two weeks but it was confirmed on 11 March 1944 that the number of honour letters remained at one of the six AMLCs issued per month. From 1 August 1944 the AMLC ration was further increased to two per week but the entry does not make it clear whether the number of honour letters was increased (Ref. 6).

The production and use of honour AMLCs in West Africa was tackled by O.R.J. Lee in 1983 (Refs. 1, 3, 5 & 6) and by J Daynes and N Lutwyche in 2006 (Ref. 7). This latter work is essential to the study of West African AMLCs and I have used their classification numbers throughout the article. Both publications give the impression that West African produced honour AMLCs are scarce and that the earliest ones were produced by overprinting existing AMLCs of both West African and UK origin.

Recently the correspondence of Aircraftman Stanley Moss of 298 Wing RAF came onto the market and I was fortunate enough to acquire the honour overprints in it. I have also over the past few years acquired another couple of examples and I felt that these two factors together justified this article.

Figure 1 illustrates a Daynes and Lutwyche (D&L) Type WA 11.01 honour envelope created by an overprint on an existing West African AMLC (D&L Type WA 07 02). The honour triangle on the front is equilateral having a base and a height of 2.2cm.

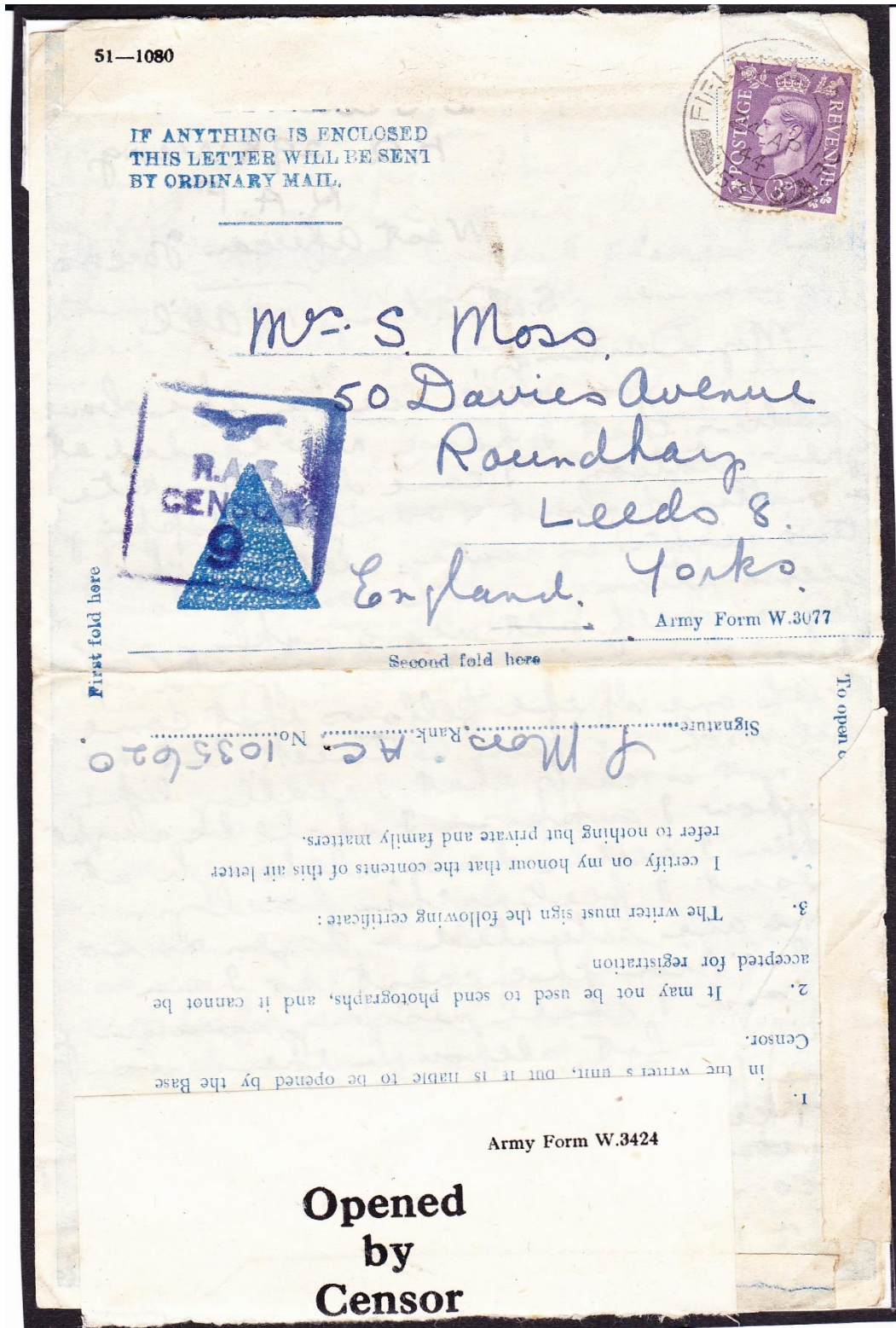


Figure 1 24 April 1944. FPO 537, Sierra Leone to the UK. D&L Type WA 11.01, a West African overprint of the honour declaration and blue triangle on an existing West African AMLC (D&L Type WA 07.02).
Opened by Base Censor.

The honour declaration on the reverse is very similar to that on Fig. 2 (D&L Type WA.11.10) although there are some differences in the positioning of the words of the declaration. The serial number of an honour AMLC (printed in the bottom right hand corner of the front panel) should be W3077A but it is a feature of these West African overprints that the serial number remains that of an ordinary AMLC - W3077 further confirming that they are overprints. In their book D&L list one example of this type which is only a front so, as far as I am aware, the illustrated example from Aircraftman Moss' correspondence is the first recorded example showing the honour declaration on the back.

Revised (from D&L) Record of Use – Fig. 1 WA 11.01

- Gambia:
- Gold Coast: FPO 106 16 May 1944
- Nigeria:
- Sierra Leone: FPO 537 24 April 1944

Figure 2 shows a D&L Type WA 11.10 honour envelope. It is very similar to Figure 1 WA 11.01 but on this occasion the overprint is on a UK-produced AMLC rather than a West African one. Again, as with Figure 1 WA 11.01, the honour triangle is equilateral with a base and height of 2.2cm. The honour declaration shows a slight difference in the spacing of the wording. In Figure 2 WA 11.10 the last word of Note 1 - 'Censor' and the last three words of Note 2 – 'accepted for registration' are aligned with the rest of the text whereas in Figure 1 WA.01 they are aligned with the Note number. Again, the serial number reads W3077 rather than W3077A.

D&L also list as Type WA 11.20 this same type but with the honour declaration deleted by a stamp reading CANCELLED, so it reverts to being an ordinary AMLC. This is curious as the dates of the usage of this type are very similar to those of the other overprinted honour types. Perhaps it re-enforces the suggestion that West African printings of AMLCs were to top up supplies. Perhaps it was felt that the number of honour AMC's was sufficient but more ordinary ones were required, so some of the honour declarations were cancelled.

Revised (from D&L) Record of Use – Fig. 2 WA 11.10 (NB No effective change as the new example comes within recorded use dates).

- Gambia
- Gold Coast FPO 106 12 Jan 1944 to 19 February 1944
- Nigeria FPO 46 29 Dec 1943
- Sierra Leone

Figure 3 shows Type WA11.30 (which is a previously unrecorded type). This type is not recorded by either Lee or D&L, so I have allotted it a number in the D&L sequence. It is similar to WA 11.01 (Figure 1) in that it is an overprint on an existing West African AMLC; the example in Aircraftman Moss' correspondence being on WA 07.01. I acquired another example of this type a few years ago and on this one the overprint is on WA 07.02. With this type the blue honour triangle on the front of the letter is isosceles measuring again 2.2 cm on the base but the height is 2.5cm. Also, the honour declaration on the back is in a more compact form and has a smaller type face. Once again, the serial number is W3077 rather than W3077A.

New Record of Use: Fig. 3 WA 11.30

- Gambia:
- Gold Coast:
- Nigeria: FPO 46 7 April to 30 May 1944
- Sierra Leone:

Figure 4 shows D&L Type WA 10.02. D&L listed this type before the overprinted types presumably because these are the only known West African printed AMLCs that were produced specifically as honour AMLCs although in date they are later than the overprinted types: – there is a gap of almost a year between the latest recorded use of an overprinted letter and the first recorded use of these types.

D&L record two varieties of this type; WA10.01 and WA10.02 (illustrated here). In WA 10.01, in the admonition in the top left-hand corner, the D in the word 'enclosed' is between the N and T of 'sent' whereas in WA 10.02 the D is slightly to the left of the N of 'sent'. In WA 10.02 the words 'Cut Here' with a line underneath appear in the top right corner (although unsurprisingly these words have been often been cut off!)

With these types the blue honour triangle on the front of the letter has a blank centre as is the case with most non-West African produced honour letters. Like Figures 1 and 2 the triangle is once again equilateral and has a base and height of 2.2cm. The serial number in the bottom right-hand corner now reads W3077A and the honour declaration on the back of the letter is now in a much more concise form. Few examples of these two types have been recorded.

Revised record of use. Fig. 4 WA 10.02

- Gambia:
- Gold Coast: FPO 45 21 April 1945 to 18 September 1945
- Nigeria:
- Sierra Leone:

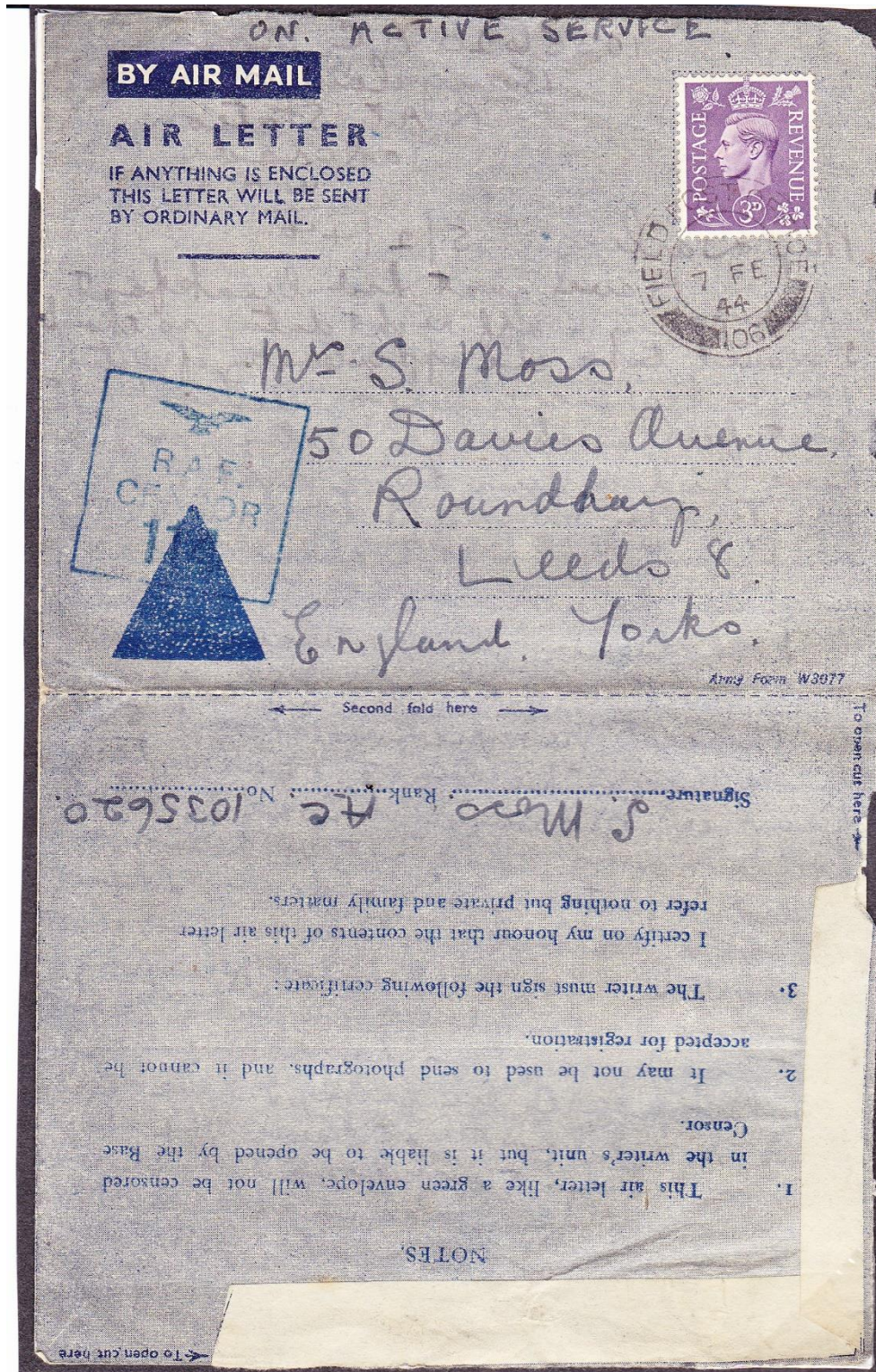


Figure 2 7 February 1944. FPO 106 Takoradi to the UK. D&L Type WA 11.10. Similar to Fig. 1 (D&L Type 11.01) but the West African overprint is on a UK-produced AMLC. Passed by RAF Censor 114.

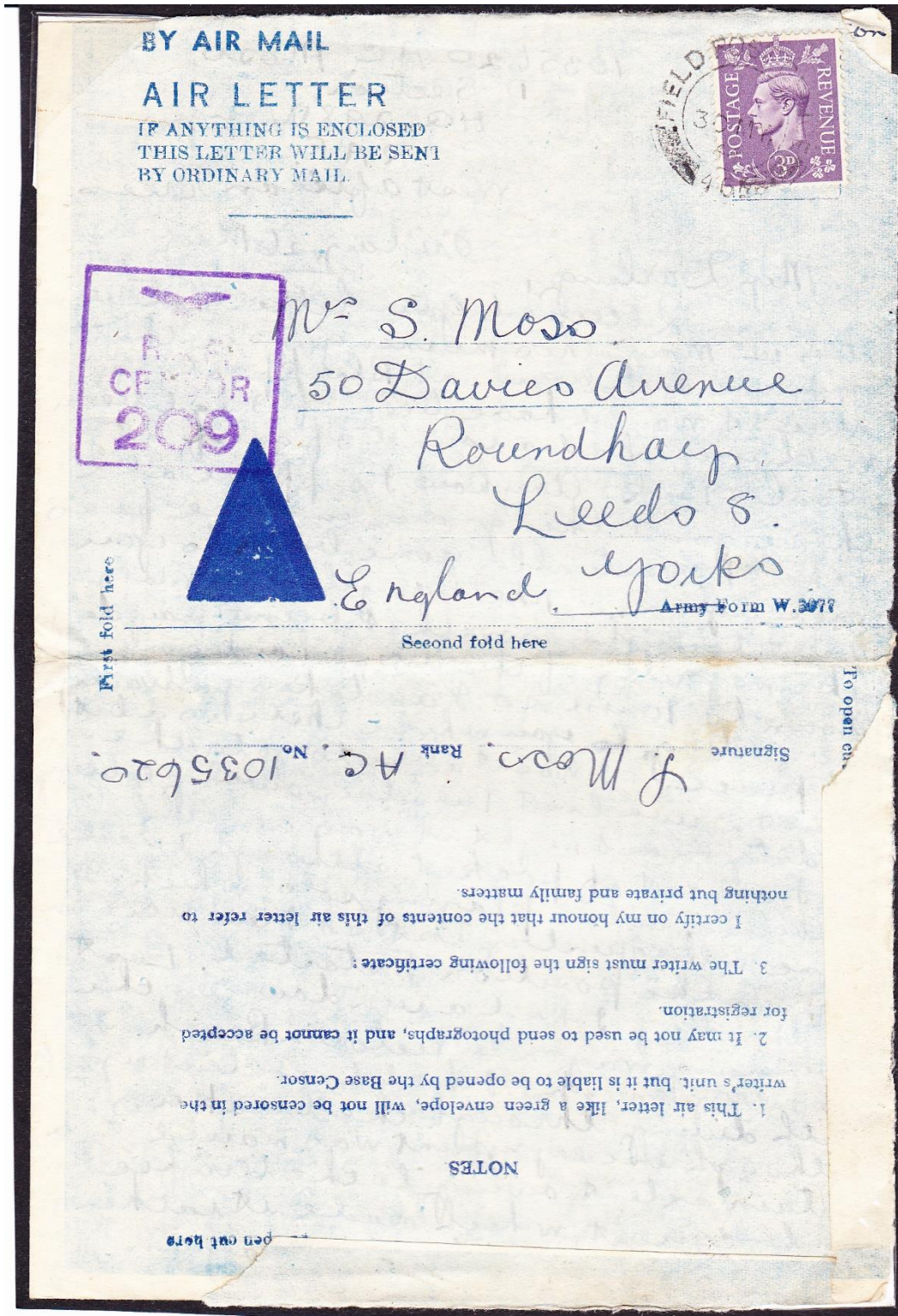


Figure 3 30 May 1944. FPO 46 Nigeria to the UK. D&L Type WA 11.30. A previously unrecorded type. A different sized blue triangle and a different format of honour declaration to Figures 1 and 2. Passed by RAF Censor 209.

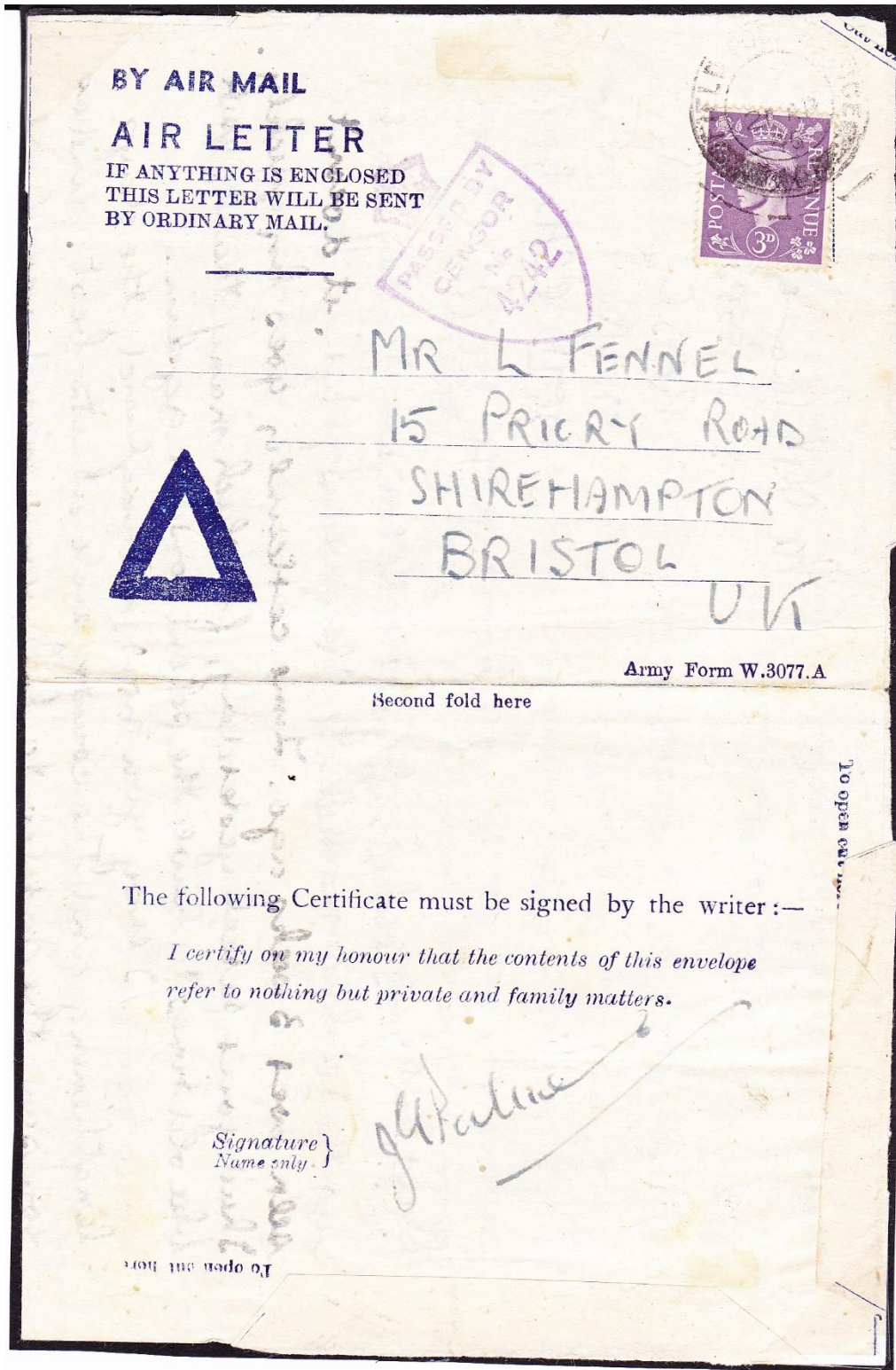


Figure 4 21 April 1945. FPO 46 Nigeria to the UK. D&L Type WA 10.02. The blue honour triangle is now blank in the middle and the honour declaration is in a more concise form. Passed by Army Censor 4242.

I feel that I was very fortunate in acquiring three different types of West African honour overprint letters from Aircraftman Moss' correspondence as the research I have done for this article has re-enforced my view that these West African produced honour letters are scarce. Only 25% of AMLCs sent after October 1943 would have been honour letters. After 7 March 1944 this falls to 17% and, after 1 August 1944, may fall still further. Also, of the honour letters sent from West Africa, a significant number were written on AMLCs that were produced in the UK. There is significant overlap in the usage dates of the three overprinted types and it seems quite possible that all the overprinting was done at the same time. The scarcity of all the types here may also suggest that the West African produced AMLCs were used to top up stocks as and when required.

I would like to end with an appeal for details of any more examples of West African produced honour letters that readers of this article might have. I am aware that a number of members of WASC contributed to the Daynes and Lutwyche book and that the late John Daynes in particular had many years of experience of looking for such covers. However, if anybody does have more examples, I would appreciate hearing from them by email with scans attached.

References

1. Lee, O.R.J., *British Forces Air Mail Letter Cards and Air Letters*, p4, Forces Postal History Society, 1983
2. Figures taken from the correspondence of Gunner Gilbert Morris, Royal Artillery to his friend Mr B. Angier in the author's possession. Mr. Angier meticulously recorded the date of receipt of all his letters
3. Lee, op cit p4
4. Kennedy, A., "West African Forces – Extracts from the War Office Files in Public Record Office", *Cameo*, Volume 4 p57, WASC, January 1991. Available on the WASC website www.wasc.org.uk
5. Lee, op cit p69. Lee does not give a precise date for the introduction of honour AMLCs in West Africa but gives 1 October 1943 as the date for their introduction with M.E.F and India Command
6. Lee, op cit p4
7. Daynes J.A. & Lutwyche N., *West African Forces Air Mail Letter Cards, Air Letters & Honour Envelopes 1942-1945*, pp20-25, WASC & Forces Postal History Society, Dronfield & Bromley 2006

Sierra Leone Mail Salvaged from SS *Sang Choon*

Philip Beale FRPSL and Jeremy Martin FRPSL

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Whole no 302, Winter 2020*

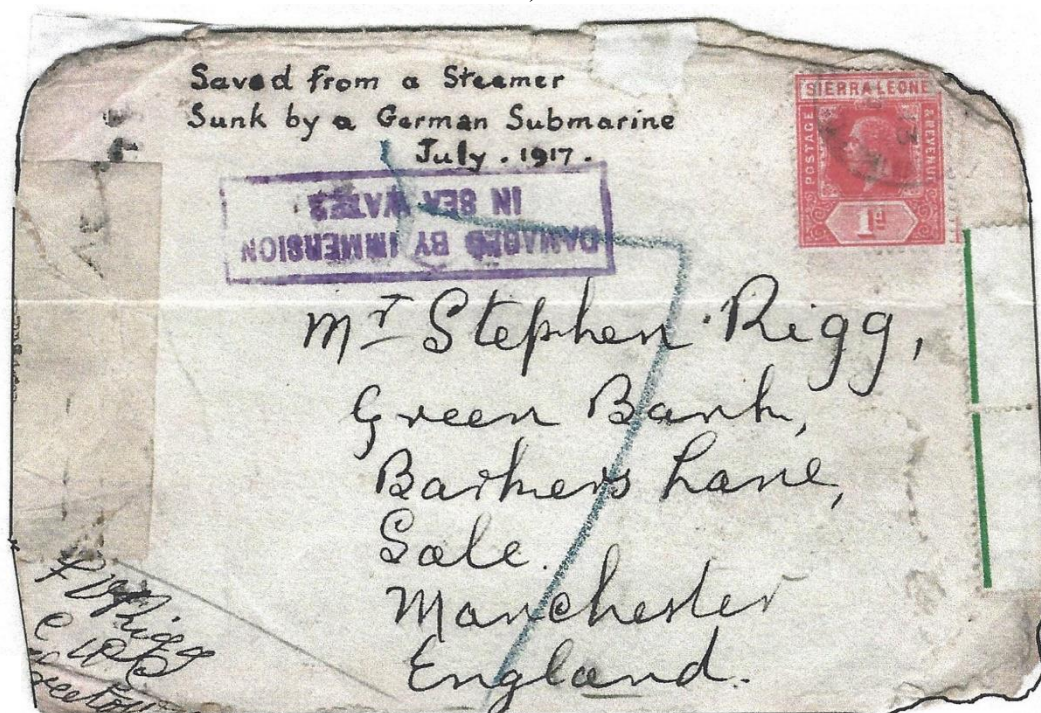


Figure 1

This cover, which is owned by Philip Beale, is one of only three identified from the wreck of the SS *Sang Choon* (Figure 1). It is recorded in Hoggarth and Gwynn (Ref. 1).

The reverse of the cover has date-stamps of Bo and Freetown. On the front there is a blue crayon censor number 7, a manuscript *Saved from a Steamer Sunk by a German Submarine July 1917* and the normal mauve boxed 2-line cachet DAMAGED BY IMMERSION / IN SEA WATER.

The steamer *Sang Choon* was torpedoed off Fastnet on 10 July 1917 by German submarine *U-87*. Nineteen members of the crew lost their lives. Two mail bags were recovered by Irish fishermen.

Reference

1. Hoggarth, Norman and Gwynn, Robin, *Maritime Disaster Mail*, pp186-187, Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, London 2003

Franco Endorsements on West African Mail via the Woermann Line

John Mayne

Chapter 8 of *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast to 1901* by John Sacher et al (Ref. 1) covers movement of mail by the German service but neither mentions nor illustrates any mail with a ‘franco’ endorsement.

Arno Gottspen and Lutz Grimmer, authorities on mail handled by the Woermann Line, draw attention to endorsements on West African mail in their book *Die Deutsche Westafrika-schiffpost 1885-1956* (Ref. 2), including ‘franco’ with the name of the port added. The following is my own loose translation of their German text in italics. The following images are all from my own collection except one from their reference book.

A rubber stamp can be found on individual postcards from Monrovia from 1905 to 1908.

Monrovia / franco

or the handwritten note with the same wording

How these annotations came to be used has not been clarified

As is well known, the “Instruction on the Treatment of Letters Delivered during the voyage of the Hamburg-West African Line”, as explained elsewhere in this guide, contains a similar provision regarding mail from the British Gold Coast Colony with regard to the identification of delivered consignments with the marking

Accra / franco

However, it is not clear why this is the case for only a few consignments. Among 260 seen, only 14 items can be found with this marking. Three postcards from 1907 were carried on the Erna Woermann with ovalstempel XLIV which bear the rubber stamp ‘Monrovia / franco’. Furthermore, there are five documents from 1906 with handwritten ‘Monrovia/franco’ conveyed by the steamer Eleonore Woermann using ovalstempel XXVII. Finally, also with the handwritten note, there are six items from 1907 handled by the Lucie Woermann using ovalstempel XXXII.

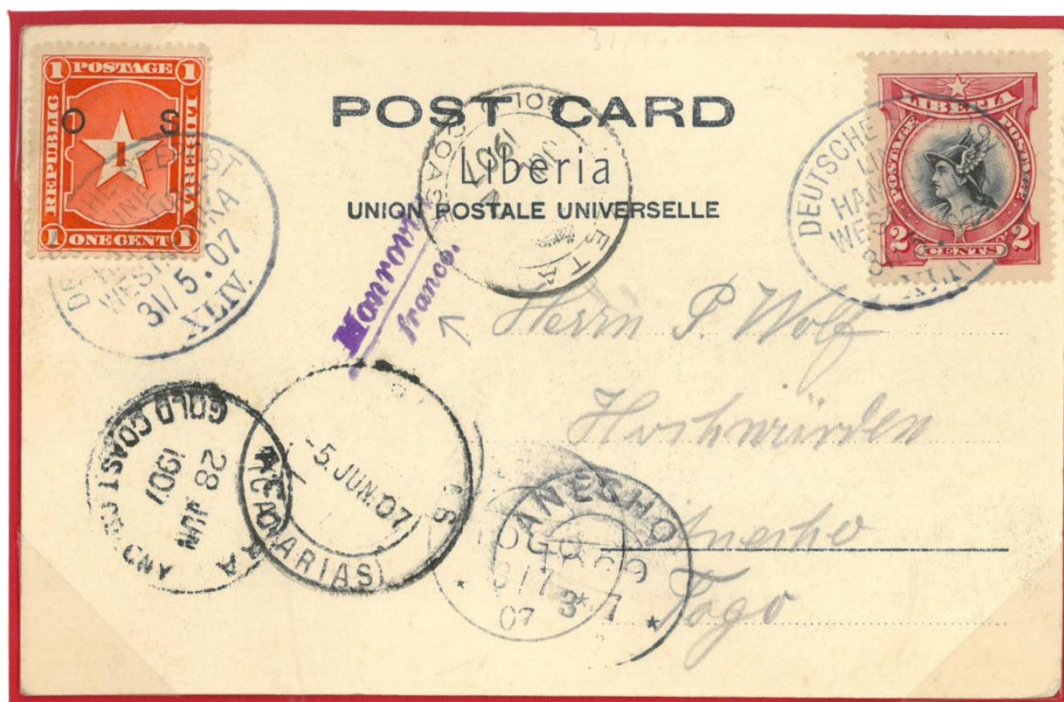


Figure 1 Postcard franked with ovalstempel XLIV on 31 May 1907 with rubber stamp Monrovia / franco carried on southbound voyage of the Erna Woermann as described in the above translation.

My own collection contains several covers and cards which widen the date ranges described by Gottspen & Grimmer. I start with another example of the rubber stamp used during a later northbound voyage.

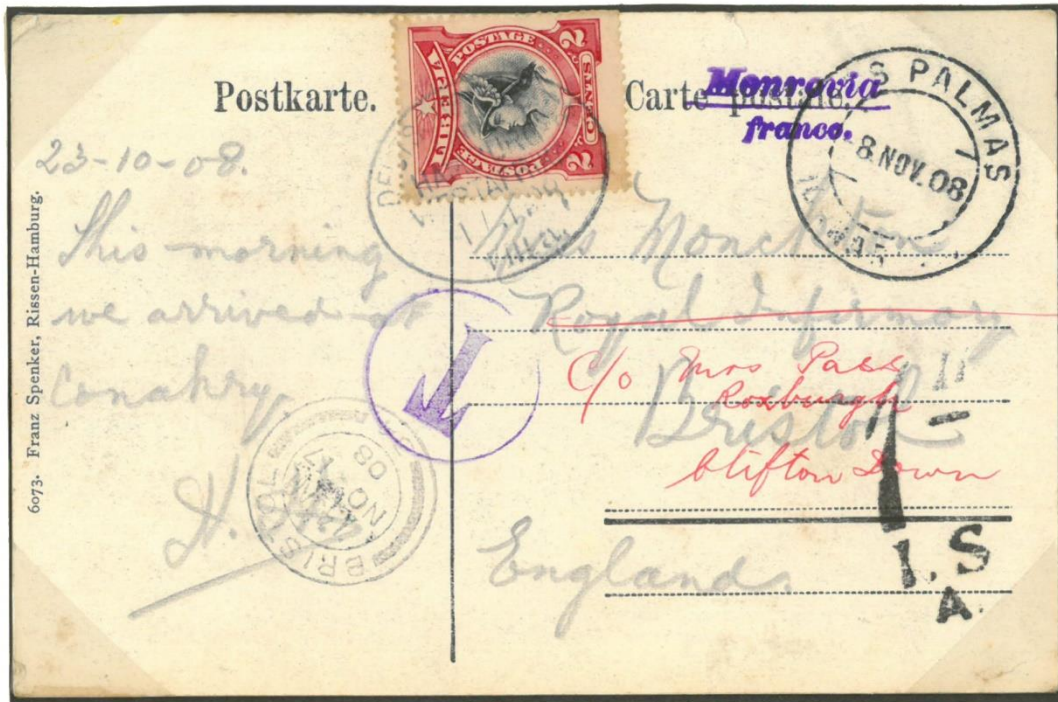


Figure 2 Underpaid postcard franked with ovalstempel VIIIa on 1 November 1908 with rubber stamp Monrovia / franco carried on a northbound voyage, addressed to the UK and taxed. This extends the latest known date of use of this rubber stamp.



Figure 3 Togo forerunner franked with undated boxed AUS / WESTAFRIKA and two 20pf German stamps, endorsed Lome / franco in manuscript. Northbound voyage of SS Gretchen Bohlen, backstamped Bremen 05.08.1898.

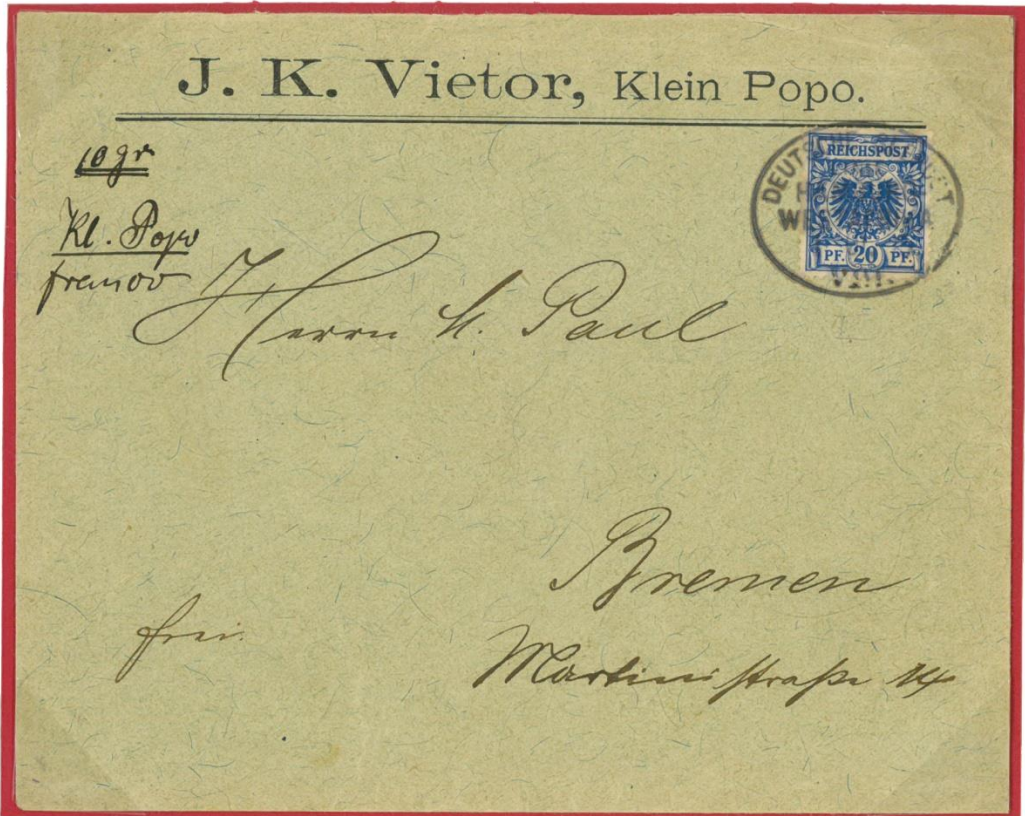


Figure 4 Togo forerunner franked with ovalstempel VIII (date indecipherable) and one 20pf German stamp, endorsed Kl. Popo / franco in manuscript. Carried on a northbound voyage.

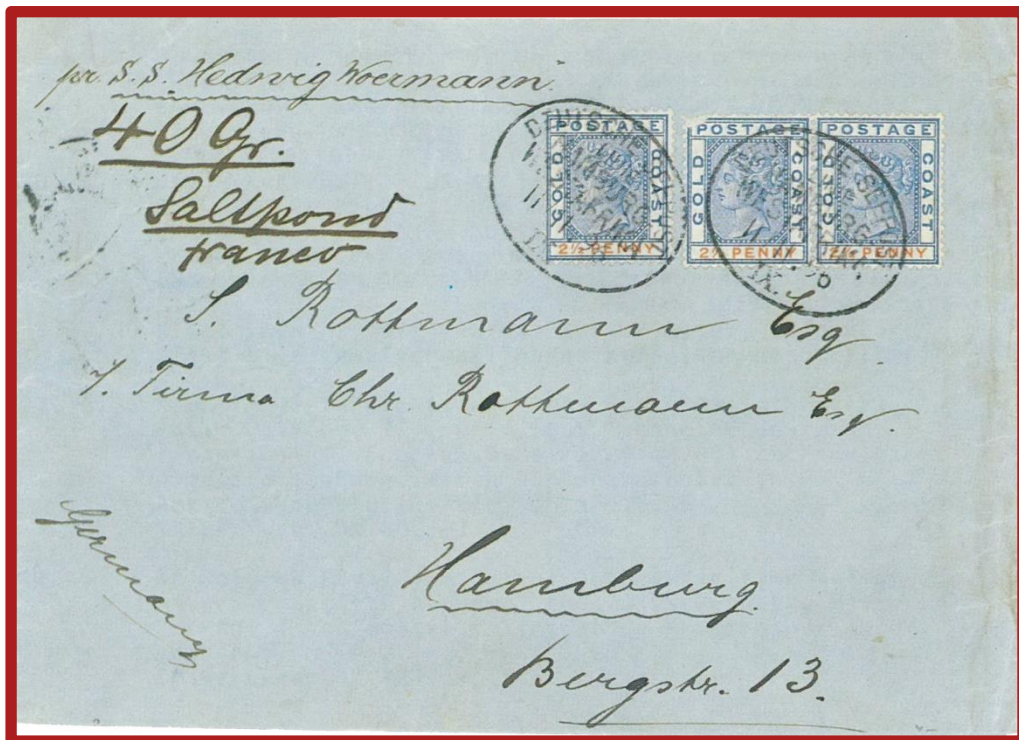


Figure 5 Gold Coast cover with ovalstempel IX dated 11.11.96 paid 7½d, endorsed per SS Hedwig Woermann. Manuscript 40Gr and Saltpont / franco in the same handwriting.

(Cover illustrated by Gottspen & Grimmer at Ref. 2, page 153)

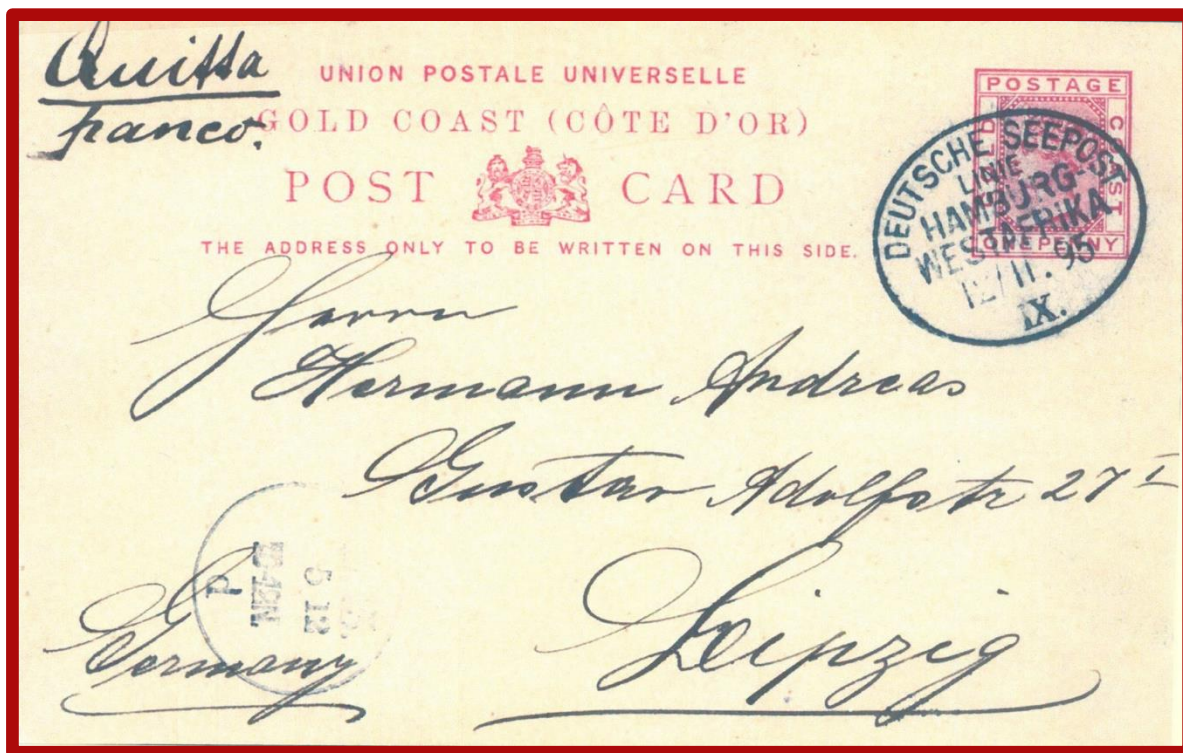


Figure 6 Gold Coast 1d postcard carried to Germany on the same voyage as Figure 5. Ovalstempel IX dated 12.11.96. Endorsed / Quitta franco in the same handwriting as on Figure 5.

I have another postcard from Gold Coast to Germany dated 4/5 96 with ovalstempel IX and manuscript Quitta / franco which again appears to be in the same handwriting.

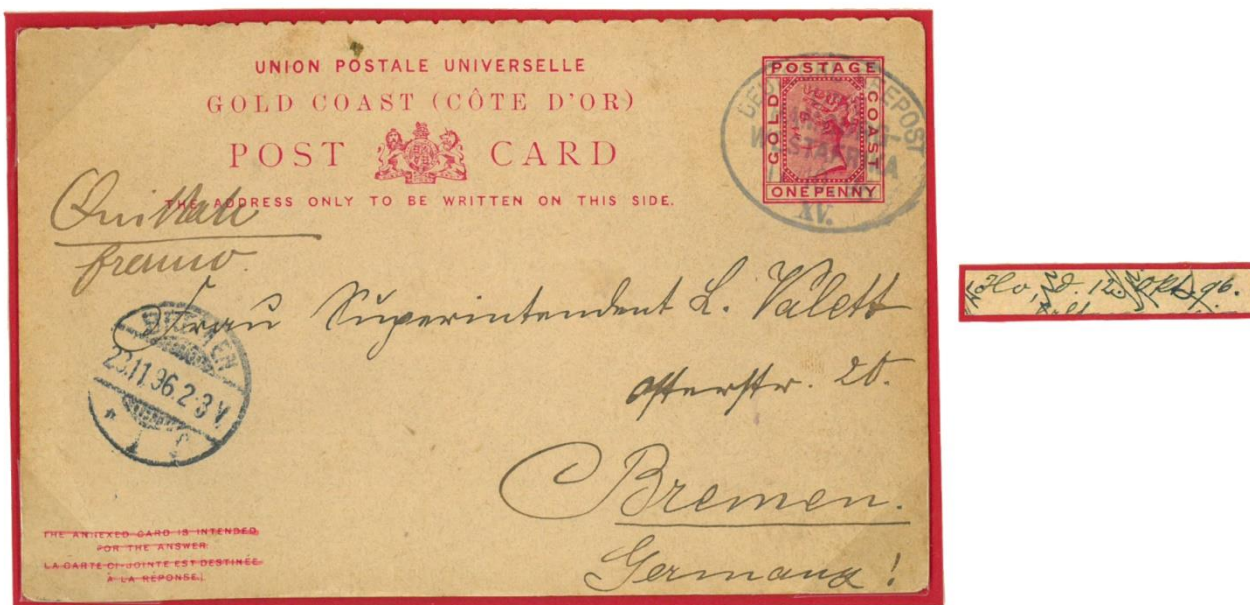


Figure 7 Gold Coast 1d postcard to Germany struck with Ovalstempel XV dated 11.10.96, a month before Figures 5 & 6. Endorsed Quittah / franco. On the message side the sender's address is shown as Ho.

References

1. Sacher J.(ed), Beale P., Ensor M., Martin J., and Newroth P., *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast to 1901*, RPSL, London, 2003
2. Gottspen A. & Grimmer L., *Die Deutsche Westafrika-Schiffspost 1885 - 1956 Handbuch und Katalog*, 1988

Kete-Kratschi, Togo: 1910-1914

John Mayne



Figure 1

Kete-Kratschi overlooks the Ashanti region of the Gold Coast from the east bank of the Volta River not far from the border with modern Togo. In the German period it was part of their colony of Togo, named Kete-Kratschi and was the head town for the district. Whether due to distance from Lome (150 miles) or lack of commerce, the opening of its first post office was delayed until 10 August 1910: the thirteenth of the 17 post offices opened during the German period. At the start of the Great War in September 1914 the successful invasion of Togo by Anglo-French forces resulted in the closure of this post office. It came under British control and was not reopened. Mail from this post office carries a premium.

The cover shown at Figure 1 was recently acquired by me at auction. It was sent from Kete-Kratschi at 40pf rate on 31 August 1912, addressed to Governor (of the Gold Coast) Sir James Thorburn care of the Colonial Office in London. It has no Togo transit stamps but would have passed to Lome for collection by SS *Henny Woermann*. The Southampton ship letter strike dated 29 SP 12 accords with the Woermann Line timetable which dropped mail at Southampton on the 29th of every month. I consider the manuscript *S. Exzellenz* to be part of the address, translated as His Excellency.

Upon arrival at the Colonial Office the letter was first redirected to him care of the R&A Golf Club, St. Andrews then again redirected faintly in red manuscript to the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate, reaching there on 1 October. Enquiries of the R&A Golf Club reveal that Sir James Jamieson Thorburn CMG (1864 to 14 September 1929) was Governor of Gold Coast from 21 November 1910 to 29 June 1912 so he had recently departed for the UK when this letter was posted. Educated at Edinburgh Collegiate School, he joined the Ceylon Civil Service in 1886, transferred to Southern Nigeria in 1905, becoming Lieutenant Governor when it merged with Lagos, until his transfer to Gold Coast on 21 November 1910.

Calabar Post Office Relocated in 1951

Dr. Simon Heap

During 1950, work progressed on the new main Post Office buildings on Calabar Road (Ref. 1). Eventually, the Resident opened the town's fourth Post Office at 10am on Monday, 6 August 1951. However, as it was a public holiday, without normal postal business, it turned into a formal opening where local notables were given an opportunity to examine the office (Ref. 2 and Figure 1).

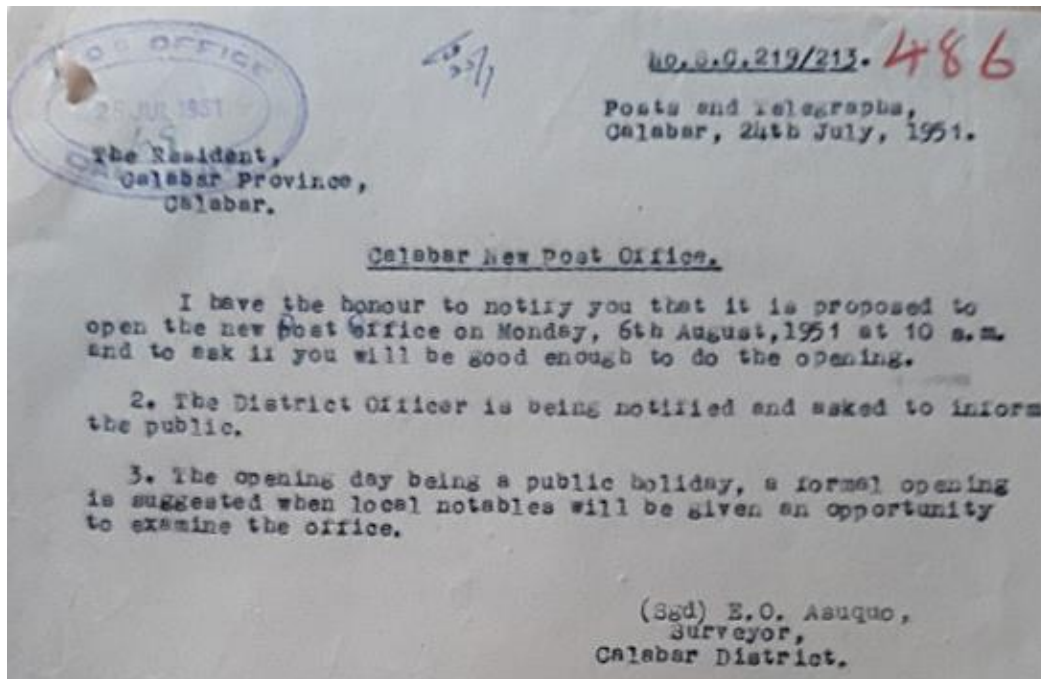


Figure 1 Letter dated 24 July 1951 inviting the Resident to conduct the opening

The 1951 post office remains Calabar's GPO. The facade at the front with its arches and walkway space for shade (occupied by sellers of envelopes and pens etc) is typical post-war colonial architecture (Figure 2). The post offices at Oron and Uyo are in the same style: the standard Nigerian type A post office building.

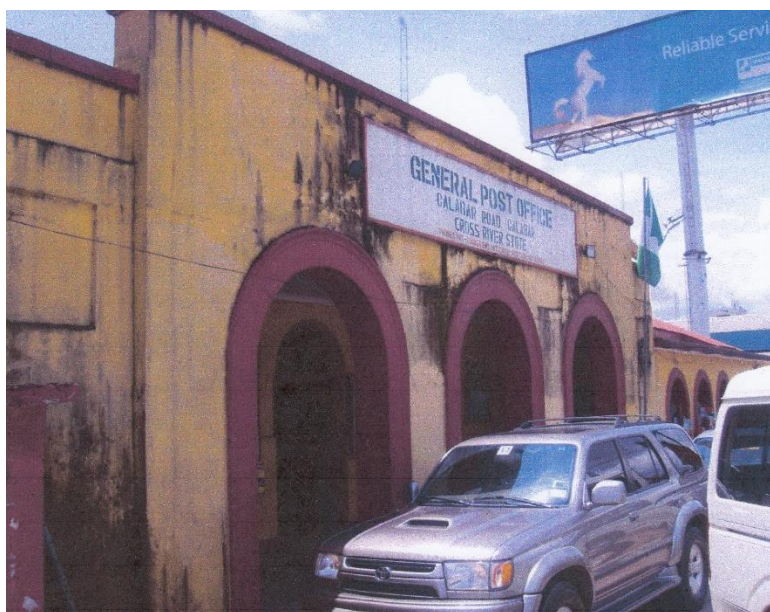


Figure 2
Calabar GPO photographed by the writer in about 2010

By 8 January 1952, it was reported that the Old Post Office in the docks had been completely vacated and keys handed to the new occupants, the Customs Department. At the same time, four nearby postal agencies (including Duke Town) closed (Ref. 3).

However, 1955 saw three more Postal Agencies open in Calabar Province, bringing essential postal services to more of the local population: Oban on 13 April and Ikang on 28 May, while Essien Town in Calabar opened its doors to customers on 25 June (Ref. 4).



Figure 3 This image taken by Edet Akpan in 2020 shows that the building has been re-roofed and painted since 2010



Figure 4 Interior of the arcade



Figure 5 The public side of the counter

The inside of this post office is remarkably clean, tidy and in good repair (both images by Edet Akpan 2020)

The old post office building in the docks still exists but cannot be inspected because it is in a secure area operated by the Customs and Excise Department.

References

1. *Posts and Telegraphs Department Annual Report, 1949-50*, p3
2. *Posts and Telegraphs Department Annual Report, 1951-52*, p7
3. Nigeria Archives, Calabar [NAC], Calabar District Office [CADIST] 3/6/3, O. Asuquo, Surveyor, Calabar District, to The Resident, Calabar Province, 24 July 1951
4. Proud, E., *Postal History of Nigeria*, pp380, 453, 624

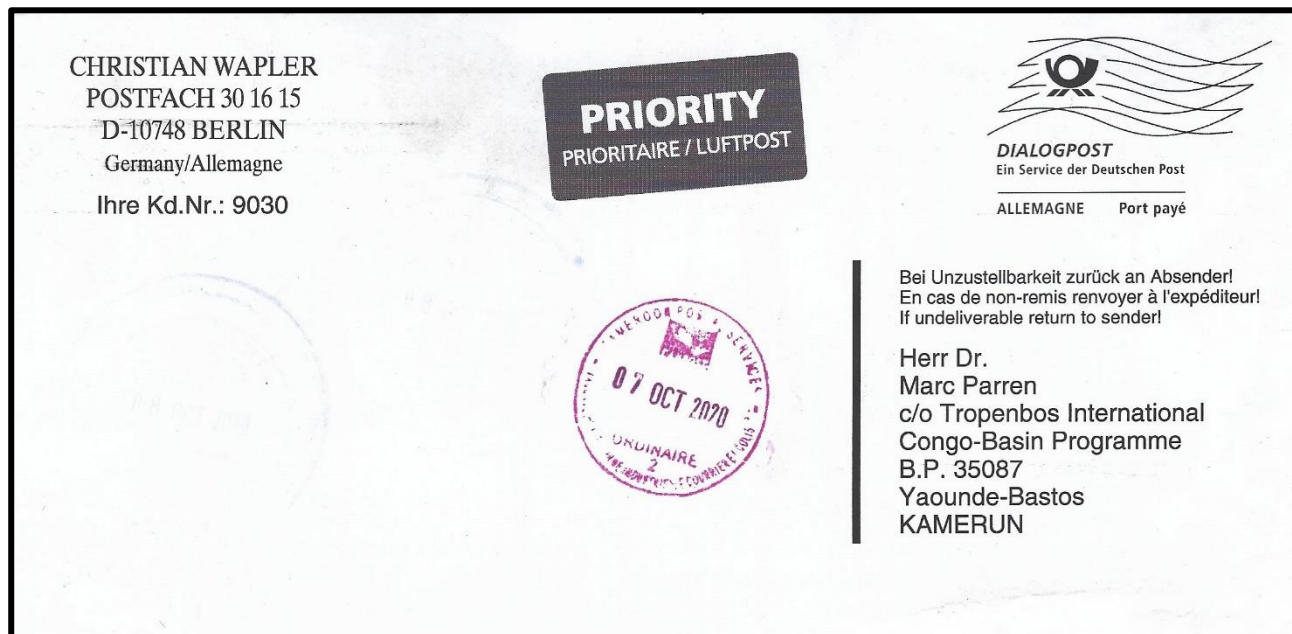


Figure 3 Postcard from Germany to Yaounde Bastos, received 7 Oct 2020

Although there was no mail leaving Cameroun it is certain that there was still inbound mail. Figure 3 shows a German card delivered at Yaounde-Bastos on 8 October 2020. In my travels to Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi later during November I will have posted some covers to Cameroun to see what happens.

Marty Bratzel has added an observation by Benoît Lebourq who spent a fortnight in Cameroun in September. He was then able to send a few letters to the USA at 500FCFA, but some destinations (including Portugal) were not reachable due to COVID-19 embargos. Benoît reports that stamps are hard to find, so meter machines are used by default.

The correct postal rates for letters up to 20gm are 250f to France, 410f to the rest of Europe and 450f to the Americas, Asia, Australia and the Pacific, so 500f was an overpayment. However, 500f stamps are often used in this way because stamps at the correct 410f or 450f rates are lacking.

It might be that the present hold on acceptance of letters to addresses abroad has more to do with the present Anglophone armed revolt than COVID. I reported in a previous *Cameo* (Ref. 1) on censorship in the southwest region. When I lived in Garoua in early 2018 I noted the same happening to incoming letters and whilst since living at Yaounde, that has continued. The Anglophone community in West Cameroun are in armed revolt, wanting independence as the Federal Republic of Ambazonia (see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambazonia>) or Amba Land. The government tries to contain the situation, including monitoring communications. For some time, the internet was not available in the area, apart from government agencies. My wife has told me they are also thinking of restricting bank/money transfers in the entire Cameroun to restrict the flow of finance to the independence movement.

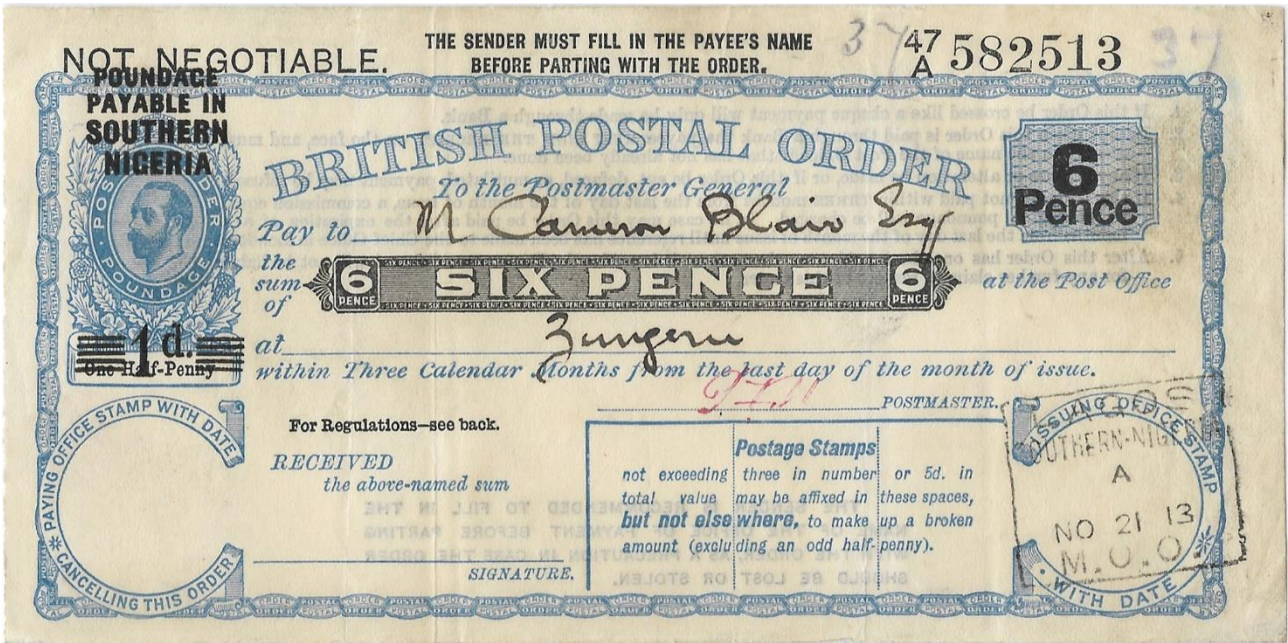
Reference

1. Parren M., "Modern Postal Censorship in Cameroun", *Cameo*, Volume 18 p227, WASC, October 2017

Southern Nigeria Postal Order

Peter Hørlyck

I recently bought a Southern Nigeria postal order on eBay, shown p34, which is only the fourth recorded Southern Nigeria item according to John Gledhill. Most interestingly, the postal order is made out to Zungeru in Northern Nigeria. Northern Nigeria introduced British postal orders on April 1, 1908 but, so far, no example from there has been recorded.



Receipt for Telegram Form used in Cameroons

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

Posts and Telegraphs, Nigeria.

RECEIPT for TELEGRAM "A" Form.
(issued on demand).

N.B.—Sender to fill in Items 1 and 2. P. & T. Accepting Clerk fills in 3 to 6 only.

1. Name *Wileci*
(addressee)

2. Office *Victoria*
(destination)

3. Telegram No. *516*

4. Amount prepaid *1/3*

5. Time handed in *8.00*

P & T. Form 21A. Office Date Stamp.

G.P.D., Lagos. 12730 4,000 of 50 (2809)

This Nigerian Post Office stationery form 21A (Figure 1) shows that a telegram was handed in at Buea post office on 25 January 1932 which was to be sent to Victoria, Cameroons.

I cannot recall seeing this form used in Nigeria, let alone the Cameroons, but maybe other members can correct me on this statement.

Figure 1

Marginal Markings on NSP&M Co. Printings of Nigeria

Ray Harris FRPSL

The Nigeria Security Printing and Minting Company Limited was established in 1963 by the Federal government in partnership with De La Rue. Postage stamp printing began in 1968 with commemoratives; in 1969 it commenced printing versions of the then current definitives. Since that time, it has printed the majority of Nigeria’s stamps, although in recent years some other companies have been involved.

The stamps are printed in panes of 50 (10 rows of 5 in landscape format, 5 rows of 10 in portrait format). The printer has been mostly consistent in the various items included in the margins. The purpose of this article is to draw attention to those items, and how they may be used to identify different plates or printings when it is not obvious from the stamps themselves. Small mint blocks, and sometimes used stamps, often come with a portion of margin attached. If there are any markings, particularly alongside definitive stamps, it can be worth taking note.

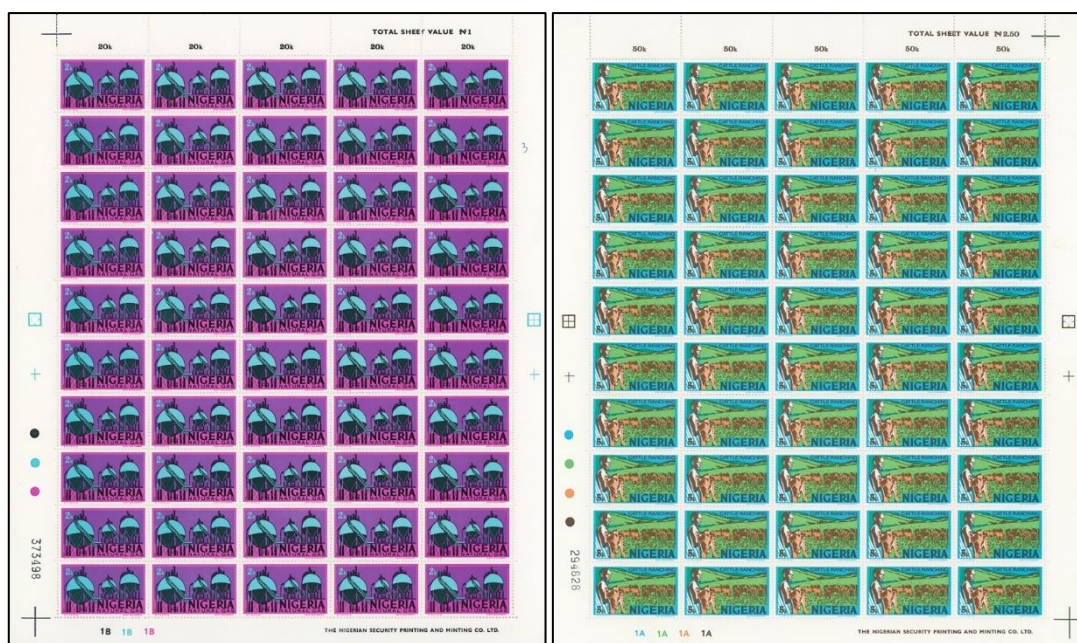


Figure 1
 Sheets of 2k and 5k definitives from the 1973 litho printed series (at 30%)

Notable features are listed first, after which there is some discussion of each, although not in the same order. Moving clockwise around the left hand sheet (Fig. 1) from bottom left there are: crosshairs; sheet number; 4mm diameter coloured spots often described as ‘traffic lights’; a coloured cross; a coloured square containing a cross but with a hole punched through, a second set of crosshairs close to the line of perforation; column values; total sheet value; another square and separate cross; printer’s imprint; plate numbers.

Colour

The traffic lights and plate numbers show the different ink colours used for the printing. The SG catalogue aims to be consistent, naming the colours if there are fewer than four, otherwise describing the stamp as multicoloured. The colours of the traffic lights are sometimes in the same order, reading top to bottom, as the plate numbers read left to right; frequently they are in opposite order. Crosshairs exist at the top and bottom of the plate for each of the colours (top and bottom only refer to the sheets as we see them, which may not be how the plates are attached to the printing machine). They are used to ensure that the colours are printed in register with each other. The accuracy of registration is key; it can be seen that registration is good for the 2k sheet above (Fig. 2). There is actually a small number of plates from this series which do not have crosshairs in the visible bottom margin. Those plates have numbers which look more finely printed than the majority, so perhaps they were from a different machine.

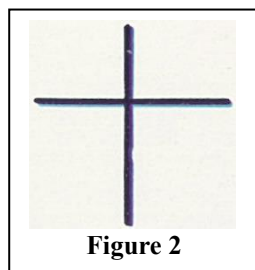


Figure 2

In printing, two panes of 50 are printed together, with the B pane on the left and the A pane on the right, when the stamps are in landscape format. Consequently, in a sheet of 100 stamps there are four sets of crosshairs for colour registration. So a bottom right corner block with crosshairs is from pane B, and without crosshairs is from pane A. ('Pane' is used throughout this article for the group of 50 stamps, and 'sheet' for the two panes together). If the stamps are in portrait format the crosshairs appear at the top of pane A and at the bottom of pane B. Traffic lights are normally printed in the left margin, though for the photogravure printing of the 30k definitive in 1973 they are in the top margin and a few commemoratives have them in other positions.

Plate numbers

The plate numbers are intended to lie approximately in a straight line and to be separate from each other. They are usually placed near the bottom left of a pane, under columns 1 and/or 2. Normally the first printing of a value has panes from plates 1A and 1B for each colour. Although it is clear in the 1973 definitive series that new plates were made for most values, sometimes several times, the majority were still numbered 1. The 7k (Fig. 3) is unusual in having a plate 3 for the blue of its first printing. It also has fine print plate numbers and no visible crosshairs at the bottom.



Figure 3

In the period from 1973 to the present a few issues have been seen with a plate number missing for one of the colours on one value, or more frequently with plate numbers of two colours overlapping. Two corner blocks are illustrated from the International Women's Year (IWY) set of 1976 (Fig. 4). On one block there are clearly 6 plate numbers and traffic lights; in the other, the orange and blue plate numbers and colour spots overlap. It may be a new plate or simply that those orange markings were replaced after the printing of some sheets, but it's a pointer to looking for other plate differences. No differences are apparent in the orange printing in these stamps.



Figure 4

Marginal crosses and squares at rows 5 and 6

I cannot state with certainty the purpose of these, but it appears that the squares at the left of pane B and the right of pane A are used as the guide for pins which hold the sheets in position, presumably for perforation. Any reader with specific knowledge is encouraged to write to the Editor. Later issues do not have a hole punched in either square. Possibly the crosses are used for optical registration.

Text in the top and bottom margins

At the top of each column is the total value of the stamps in that column, and near the right is also the total value of the sheet. The format of the values varies. Here (Fig. 5) are compared the figures from the 30k of the IWY set mentioned above, and from the 15k definitive with watermark, probably printed in 1982. Occasionally differences in style or position occur for an individual stamp, which shows that a plate has been replaced (see below with reference to the 18k definitive).

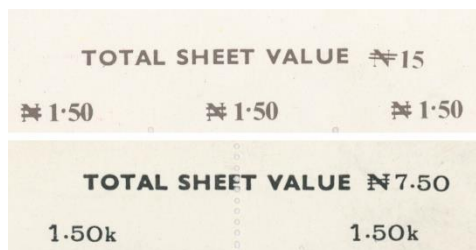


Figure 5

In the bottom margin of a sheet towards the right is the name of the printer. In all issues seen this has always been in the same font, originally bold and ending “CO. LTD.”, more recently not bold and ending “PLC”.

Sheet number

Sheet numbering is usually to the left of stamps 41 and 46, in the margin of landscape format stamps, but is sometimes under stamp 47. The sheet number consisted of 6 digits. It is not known how often numbering began again at 000001, whether for each new requisition (as was Crown Agents practice), and whether consistently. The examples here (Fig. 6) show that it must also have been the practice sometimes in Nigeria. The printing on the left is from about October 1974 and on the right from about September 1975.



Figure 6

Also apparent from Figure 6 is that the sheet numbers do not always appear in the same font. The 1973 definitive series was actually being printed from 1973 to the mid-1980s. So far 11 fonts have been identified in use since 1973, which are shown in Table 1. While there may sometimes be more than one typeface in use in a particular period, the less used ones seem to be tied to certain years, some of which are identifiable by their use on commemorative issues, as suggested in Table 1.

	Seen on commemoratives	Sample
Font 1		01234567 9
Font 2		01 45 7
Font 3		0123456789
Font 4	1973-1974	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Font 5	1974-1981 and later	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Font 6 Wide spacing	1979-1982	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Font 7	1982 and later	0123456789
Font 8		0123456789
Font 9		01 34 6 8
Font 10		012 45678
Font 11	1984, one issue (not on defs)	01 4567

Table 1

Use of these characteristics in looking for new plates

Placement, colour and style of these marginal markings can all be pointers to new plates, though other differences in the plates may not be identifiable. As the more modern stamps are created on computer, features are more exactly reproducible from one plate to the next. A few examples of variation are shown here, mainly in relation to the 1973 definitive series.



Figure 7

Fig. 7 shows two litho printed versions of SG305 from 1973 (left) and 1974 (right). It is obvious from the plate numbers that the plates have been changed. Significant differences can be seen in Figure 8, at x300%: the loss of head of the third walker, a less complete circle and other details in the road shading.

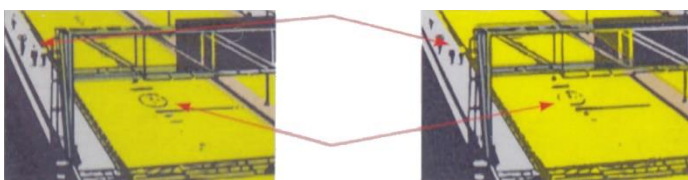


Figure 8

The comparisons of marginal pairings of the 18k definitive are interesting (Figs. 9 and 10). In each picture the red line marks the top of the orange printing in the pile of palm oil fruit.

In Fig. 9, one version of the 90k column value is 1/2mm above the other. In Fig. 10 the printer's imprint on one sits about 1mm higher and also 1mm further to the right than the other. It is possible that these are simply differences between panes A and B, but usually the panes match almost exactly, so other evidence of a change of plates could be sought.



Figure 9



Figure 10

Lastly in this section, it is worth noting that the colours of the marginal markings sometimes change with new plates. Illustrated (Fig. 11) are two marginal copies of the 2k definitive, both with watermark, where the marginal cross, and presumably the square too, have been put on to a different plate when the plates were renewed.

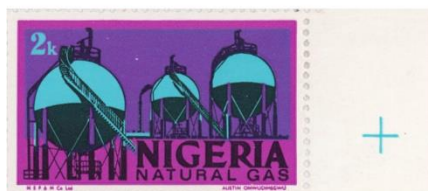


Figure 11

Additional marginal notes

With the use of computers for preparing the complete plates, a few margins include other registration marks, typed notes, and occasionally handwritten remarks, some of which should probably have been placed in an area where they would be trimmed off.

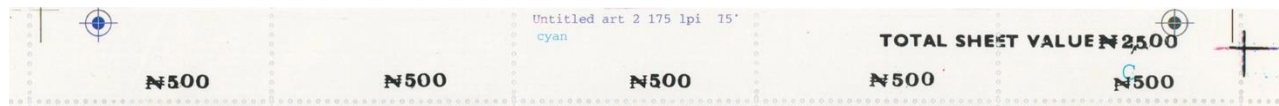


Figure 12

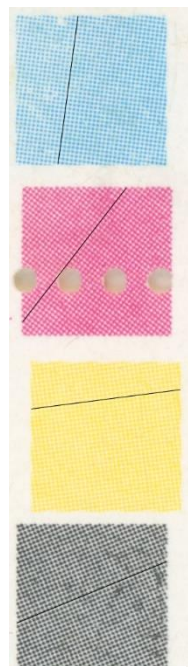


Figure 13
From SG790
x400%

As an example, the top margin of the Nigerian Institute of Management sheet (2011), reduced to x80%, is shown (Fig. 12). The sheet retains the registration marks in the side margins but has two additional registration circles in the top margin. Under the total sheet value it has a random C, presumably standing for cyan. It also has text in the centre which shows that the cyan plate has 175 lines per inch (lpi), and that it is printed using a 75° half-tone screen. In modern four colour printing, using cyan, magenta, yellow and black, each screen is at a different angle to minimise moiré patterns.

Additional colour blocks in the sheet margin of the 2002 Kola Nuts stamp, SG790, show other angles of the half-tone screens (Fig. 13). Black lines have been added to show the screen angles of 82½°, cyan; 52½°, magenta; 7½°, yellow; 22½°, black. The internet provides more detail about printing with halftone screens, choice of angles and the interaction between colours.

The final illustration (Fig. 14) shows a plate block of SG937 issued in 2006. The computer operator has included his name, the date and computer used, as well as some apparent self-praise. However, this is the row of stamps which includes the bullet point (●) instead of the copyright symbol (©) after the year 2005 on each stamp!

Further examples of useful or unusual marginal markings will be welcomed.

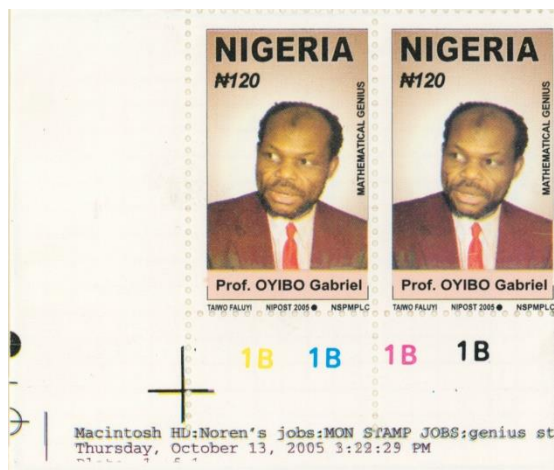


Figure 14

Madeira 1847 Wrapper to France

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

I acquired the wrapper shown in Figures 1 & 2 (front and reverse) from a France & Colonies PS auction. The main source of information about the British post office in Madeira is the booklet written by Philip Beale in 2008 (Ref. 1).

The reverse of the wrapper (Fig. 2) has a MADEIRA double arc date-stamp of DE 2 1847 which is recorded in the Post Office Impression Books as being issued in 1842 (Ref. 2). Other markings on the reverse include a red London transit mark of 17 DE 47, a black London SHIP LETTER and a black LE HAVRE arrival date-stamp of 19 DEC 47.

On the front (Fig. 1) there is a red COLONIES / & ART 13 boxed handstamp applied in London and also a red ANG / CALAIS of 18 DEC 47.

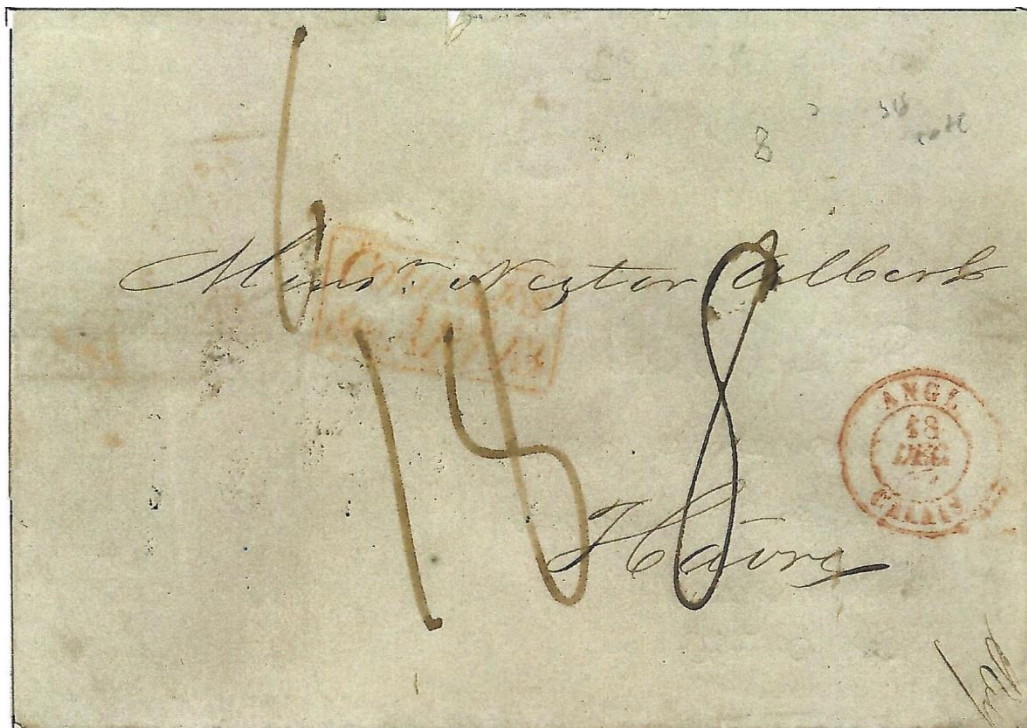


Figure 1 Front of DE 2 1847 wrapper from Madeira to Le Havre



Figure 2 Reverse of DE 2 1847 wrapper from Madeira to Le Havre

I need help with the manuscript markings. The “8” would be the 8d ship letter rate to London for letters up to ½ ounce. The two other manuscript markings are, I believe, in decimes. Would the “18” be the total charge to Le Havre including the 8d? The other charge mark appears to be a “1”. Would this be a local delivery charge?

References

1. Beale P.O., *The Agents of the General Post Office in West Africa during the 19th Century*, pp11-15, WASC, Dronfield 2008
2. Beale, P.O. and Martin J.J. & Walton F., *West African Post Office Impression Books*, p1, WASC 2001

Cameroun: Garoua PNA “Postmark”

Rob May FRPSL

Figure 1 shows a very peculiar cover I wrote about in *Cameo* a few years ago (Ref. 1). As I could not find the postmark GAROUA-PNA / CAMEROUN in Marty Bratzel’s book on French Cameroun postmarks (Ref. 2), I e-mailed to ask him if he could shed any light. There are no backstamps or transit marks which is strange. He, equally mystified, forwarded my query to Michel Collet who, three years later, found another cover written in the same hand with the same postmark, and has worked out a logical meaning of “PNA”.



Figure 1 Cover, apparently postal, from Garoua Cameroun to France, bearing two adhesives of French Soudan cancelled by cds of GAROUA-PNA without a date

Marty Bratzel’s first comments were that the stamps were issued in the 1930s, the 80 cents tariff corresponds to no known postal rate and Cameroun has no obvious connection with French Soudan. Michel Collet thinks that PNA is an abbreviation of “Protection de la Navigation Aérienne” (“Air Navigation Safety”) and is probably a service cancellation of the Meteo Radio Station at Garoua Airport. The Cameroun P&T service contributed to the protection of air navigation through Le Service Radioélectrique P.N.A. The contribution included, but was not limited to, aircraft radio guidance and air traffic information, radio communication between aircraft and the ground, and the dissemination of meteorological information.

The first Garoua Station Radio was opened at the Garoua post office in 1928 and is one of the older radio stations in Cameroun. These stations could receive private or official radio telegrams and then send the messages to the addressees by normal local postal means. There is nothing in the process that required use of a specific postmark on such telegrams. A Cameroun UPU commemorative stamp on the second cover was issued in July 1949 so both covers are likely to have been created by the same person in about 1949-1950. They could possibly have contained a re-transcribed message or a mail from a radio station staff member, but it seems unlikely that the Garoua post office would have handled international letters from the Radio Station in this way. Prepayment in current Cameroun stamps would have been required and a normal postal date-stamp would have been applied.

The consensus is that these are bogus covers created as a souvenir by a staff member of the Garoua Radio Station, probably using a genuine service handstamp held at the Station.

Reference

1. May R., “Garoua, Cameroun – mystery postmark”, *Cameo*, Volume 18 p161, WASC, June 2017
2. Bratzel M.P., Kraja H. & Maddocks R.J., “*Les Obliterations du Cameroun 1914-1960*”, pp43-44, MPB Canada, 1990.

Cameroun – Use of Sterling Revalued Stamps to Collect *Poste Restante* / General Delivery Fee

Marty Bratzel



Figure 1 Cover postmarked Fulda, Germany 19 November 1961 to Tiko. 0,40 frs notation and 5d in sterling revalued stamps affixed and cancelled Tiko 28 November 1961



Figure 2 Cover postmarked Fulda, Germany 18 October 1961, also to Tiko. 0,50 fr notation and 1/6d in sterling revalued stamps affixed and cancelled Tiko 30 October 1961

The two air mail covers depicted in Figures 1 and 2 are similar but different, posing questions which perhaps others can answer. Both covers, respectively postmarked Fulda, Germany 19 November and 18 October 1961, are clearly philatelic. Both have 60 pfennigs postage affixed and are addressed to Mr. Klewitz, Poste Restante, Tiko, Cameroun. Both have a red manuscript "T" in a triangle accompanied by a violet notation plus a violet 6g notation in the upper left corner. The first difference is that the stamps on the cover in Figure 1 (including a *tête bêche* pair) are German but those in Figure 2 include two Berlin stamps. That, however, should be of no consequence. The second difference is the violet notations. The notation in Figure 1 is *0,40 frs. d'or* and in Figure 2 it is *0,50 fr d'or*. Each is a charge expressed in UPU gold francs. Why was a fee charged?

On the cover in Figure 1 *Poste Restante* is underlined in violet, linking it in my mind with the fee notation, also in violet. *Poste Restante* / General Delivery allowed the addressee to collect his mail at the counter at a post office. The service was especially convenient for businessmen and travellers away from home. Mail addressed *Poste Restante* was held until collected or, if unclaimed within a set period of time, returned to the sender. The post office charged a fee for the service. The fee could be paid by the sender upon posting, with additional postage affixed, or by the recipient upon collection of his mail. The recipient could pay per item collected, in which case stamps were affixed to the letter to cover the fee and cancelled; or he could pay an annual fee for a season ticket / *carte d'abonnement à la poste restante*, which entitled him to collect an unlimited amount of mail without further charge.

In both cases, Mr. Klewitz apparently paid the per-item fee. Postage stamps were affixed as West Cameroon did not have postage due stamps. However, the amounts in the notations and the amounts paid are different. For the cover in Figure 1, the notation is 0,40 gold francs and the three affixed sterling revalued stamps total 5d. For the cover in Figure 2, the notation is 0,50 gold francs and the two affixed stamps total 1/6d. (There may be additional stamps affixed to the backs of the covers, which have not been seen.) Why are the notations and the amounts paid different? And, what was the actual *Poste Restante* charge?

According to Maddocks, when the Southern Cameroons joined the République du Cameroun on 1 October 1961 to form the Federal Republic of Cameroun / République Fédérale du Cameroun, the postal fees then in effect in Nigeria remained in effect in the Southern Cameroons, now West Cameroon, through the end of 1965, when harmonisation of postal tariffs in the Federal Republic was finally possible (Ref. 1). For the information and benefit of us all, it would be appreciated if someone familiar with Nigerian postal tariffs in 1961 could advise and confirm the actual charge.

Another possible explanation could lie with the violet notation 6g in the upper left corner of both covers which matches the violet notations associated with the "T" in triangle. I am not familiar with German postal tariffs, including air mail fees and weight increments. Perhaps the postage affixed was insufficient to pay the fee for letters weighing 6 grams and fees were collected for overweight letters? Or, were the "T" in triangle notations added upon departure from Fulda? Another consideration for someone else to unravel.

It is also possible that, since the covers are philatelic, the value of the sterling revalued stamps affixed was somewhat arbitrary, so the recipient could have postally used stamps.

In any event, these covers are the only examples seen of the use of sterling revalued stamps to collect a fee. Unusual indeed.

Reference

1. Maddocks, R.J. "Southern Cameroons in Postal Transition", *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, January 2002, pp80-85

Poste Restante in Nigeria

Rob May FRPSL

I tried to answer Marty's question about Nigerian *Poste Restante* regulations by extracting the relevant section of my copy of the 1963 Post Office Guide (Figure 1). I don't think Nigeria charged any fee for returning uncollected mail, but the Post Office was aware that some foreign countries did so.

That leaves Marty's question hanging. There is both documentary evidence and evidence from non-philatelic covers that the Nigerian postal rates, converted to CFA francs at 692 CFA to the £, applied to all mails from the former British Cameroons until December 1965. So why would the West Cameroun post office operate its Poste Restante service and fees on the French Cameroun basis during that time?

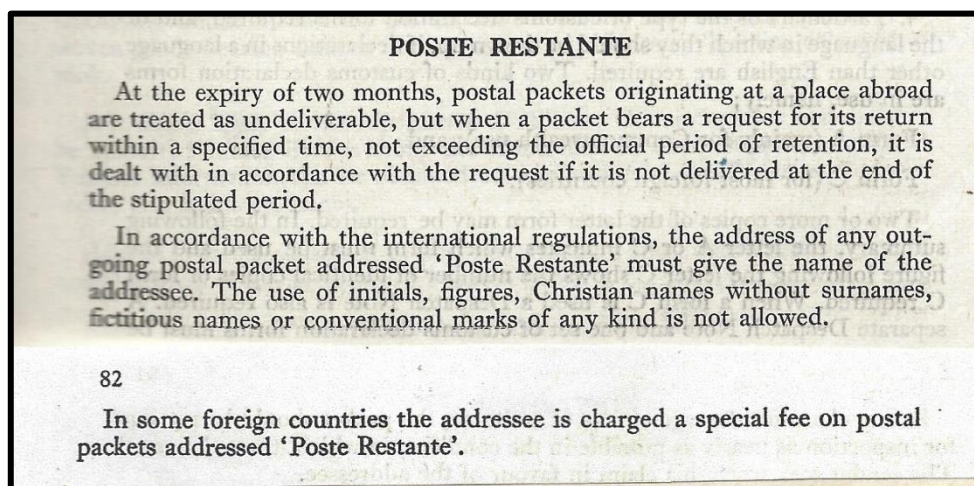


Figure 1 Extract from pages 81 and 82 of the 1963 Nigeria Post Office Guide

Postage Rates on Mail between Nigeria and the Former British Cameroons, 1961-1965

Rob May FRPSL

The British Cameroons used Imperial weights and measures, so its postal rates were applied in units of ounces and pounds. Independent Cameroun used metric weights, with its postal rates in grams. After the Southern Cameroons had voted to merge with the independent Cameroun, currency conversion was a priority and was completed by 2 April 1962. As happened during UK decimalisation, there was a burst of inflation as vendors rounded prices up or took advantage of buyers' unfamiliarity with the conversion rate (692 FCFA to the £). If weights and measures had been converted at the same time the public would have been even more confused, so that change was left until 31 December 1965. We know from Bob Maddocks (Ref. 1) that, in the interim, the 1961 Nigerian postage rates were used (converted into CFA francs) so that mail could be weighed in ounces.



Withdrawal of Nigerian postal staff from the former British post offices in Cameroons and a lack of Cameroun post office staff to fill the void added to the confusion. Cameroun initially failed to publish any postage rates but after Mr Christian Epanya was appointed Deputy Director, P&T Area HQ, Buea he did publicise the correct postage rates to the public in June 1962. Nigeria published a postal notice, shown here, requiring mail posted from Nigeria to West Cameroun to be treated as international, in line with its existing published rates to the Cameroun Republic.

I do not have a copy of the 1959 Post Office Guide, but the rates to Cameroun in the 1963 Post Office Guide are:

Air mail – letters per half ounce 1/-, postcards 6d, second class air mail 3d per half ounce

Surface mail – letters not exceeding 1 ounce, 6d, each additional ounce or part thereof, 4d

Bob Maddocks says at page 81 of his article that *a 3d stamp for an ordinary domestic mailing (which included Nigeria) up to 1 oz cost 9fr*. The postal rates adopted from Nigeria were amended only to the extent of putting all of Cameroun into the 9fr domestic rate, but it seems Nigeria was not put into the “foreign” category for mail from West Cameroun, as it already was from the rest of Cameroun.

For some years I have been puzzled by the cover shown at Figure 1, sent from Victoria to Lagos on 11 December 1961 and probably containing a Christmas card. The 10d postage accords with no known Nigerian air mail rate for an ordinary letter. I think the 10d paid could be a product of confusion in the minds of both postal staff and the public. At the Nigerian internal surface rate, the cost of a letter weighing up to 1 ounce was 3d, plus 2d for every additional ounce. So, it is either underpaid for air mail or is 1d overpaid at the surface rate for a letter between 3 and 4 ounces, which seems unlikely. I can only speculate but maybe the sender put the two 3d stamps on the letter for air mail, which was correct for an aerogramme, but was told it was underpaid, that it weighed just over an ounce and also that it should be sent as foreign mail, as if from the Republic. So, the sender paid the foreign second step surface rate of 10d and failed to delete the AIRMAIL endorsement.

Maybe – or maybe not! Does anyone have another explanation?

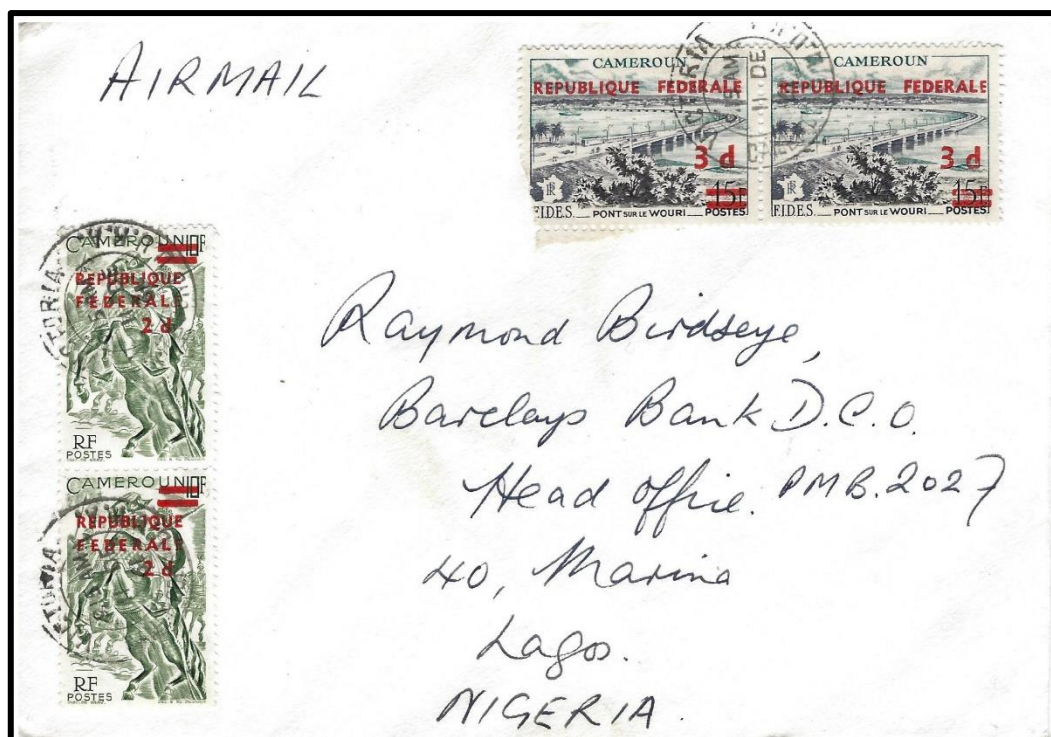


Figure 1 (at 80%) Cover dated 11 December 1961 from Victoria, former British Cameroons, to Lagos at 10d

Reference

1. Maddocks R., "Southern Cameroons in Postal Transition", *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, pp80-85, January 2002

Nigeria July 1943: Damaged by Fire in Transit

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

This partial front (Figure 1, p46) has been franked 1/3d for the air mail rate to the UK. The stamps have been postmarked SHAKI 21 July 1943. It also has a violet cachet DAMAGED BY / FIRE IN TRANSIT.

Neville Jones wrote about this air crash in *Cameo* 31 (Ref. 1) and asked if any other covers were known. He provided a few details about the crash. More information can be found in Peter Wingent's subsequent compilation (Ref. 2). On 28 July 1943, a Short Sunderland flying boat (G-AGES), operated by BOAC, crashed near Brandon Head, County Kerry. Nine of the eighteen passengers and three of the crew of seven were killed. The aircraft was completely destroyed. At the time of the accident the aircraft was making a return flight on the UK – West Africa service. This accident is also detailed in Nierinck (Ref. 3) classified as 430728.

References

1. Jones N., "Nigerian Crash Cover", *Cameo*, Volume 4 p17, WASC, January 1990
2. Wingent, P. (compiler), *Extracts from the Air Ministry Civil Aviation Intelligence Reports Summaries 27 August 1939 -30 May 1945*, p4, West Africa Study Circle, 2010
3. Nierinck, Henri L., *Recovered Mail*, 1st edition, p225, R. Editions, Antwerpen, Belgium, 1984



Figure 1 Front from Shaki, Nigeria by air mail to the UK on 21 July 1943 damaged by fire

Letter Carried on Special Mission 13

John Powell FRPSL

The cover illustrated at Figure 2 was posted at Accra on 7 February 1942, addressed to Plymouth and endorsed PAN-AMERICA-AFRICA. On the face of it not that exciting although from the outset it was fairly clear from the endorsement and the rate of 5/6d that it was carried twice across the Atlantic by Pan American Airways. The reason it was sent to the *Cameo* Editors was to show what could be achieved with the write up by some research and a picture of the aircraft that actually carried the letter (Figure 3). An enquiry to our member John Wilson resulted in confirmation that this item must have been carried by SM 13 and he sent a scan of a nine-page document headed *Statistical Data Special Mission No. 13*. The first page is copied as Figure 1 (reduced). I hope John will not be too embarrassed if I publicly thank him for his expert help in all things Airmail Atlantic, not only this time but on many occasions in the past. In his encouragement to offer this piece to *Cameo* John says this is good information and hopes it is of interest to everyone.

Special Mission 13 left New York on 4 February arriving Lagos on the 10th. It then did one “shuttle” back to Natal and returned to Lagos arriving there on the 13th. It picked up the mail and returned to North Beach New York via Natal, Belem and Port of Spain arriving back on the 19th. Note that it did not call at Miami on the return trip. From the manifest it looks as though 282 kg of mail was delivered from Lagos to New York. Mail for onward transmission eastward was forwarded on the FAM-18 flights to Lisbon and then on to the UK. From the detailed data and judging by comments on the waybills, proper documentation for this mail carriage was not being supplied and civil mail was being carried on an unofficial “throw it on the aircraft” method. All a bit erratic but this was only a few weeks after Pearl Harbour and things had not yet settled down.

SPECIAL MISSION NO. 13

Designated as: Special Mission No. 13

Charterer: U. S. Army Air Corps

Airplane: NC-18606

Origin: North Beach - February 4, 1942

Destination: Lagos - February 10, 1942 and Return - February 19, 1942

Authorized by: Colonel T. L. Mosley-Air Corps-Executive for Operations
Foreign Wing - Air Forces Ferrying Command

Routing: Miami, San Juan, Port of Spain, Belem, Natal,
Fisherman's Lake, Lagos, Natal; Fisherman's Lake, Lagos,
Natal, Belem, Port of Spain, San Juan, North Beach.

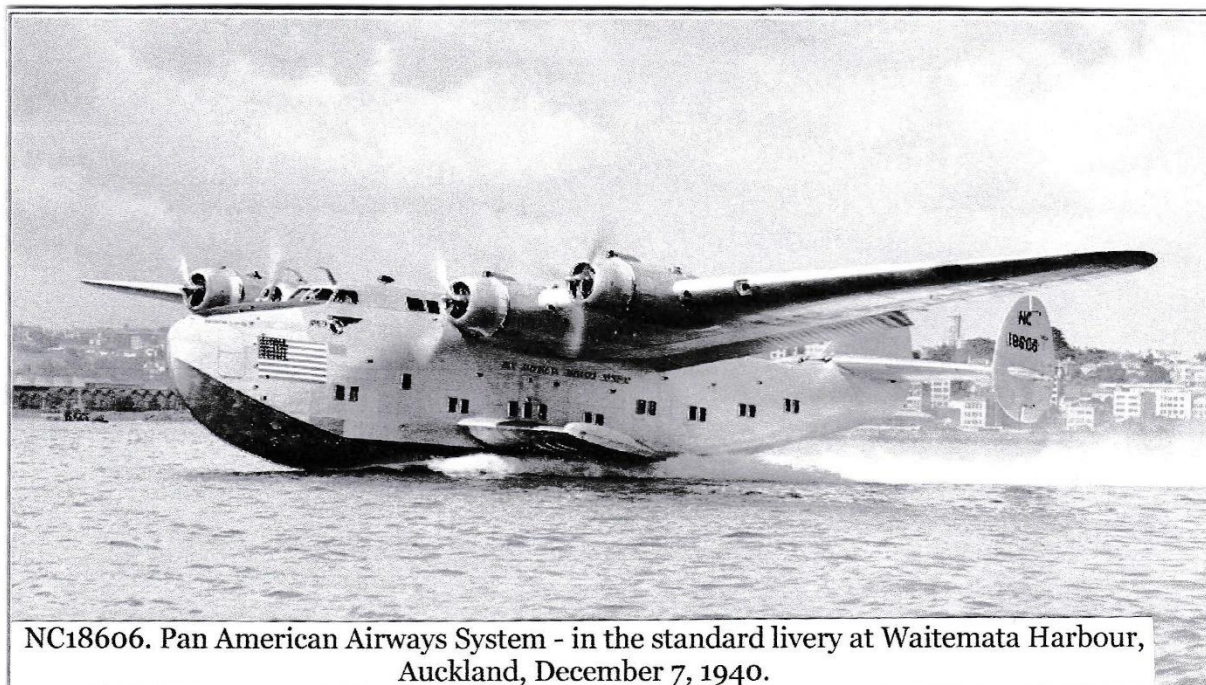
Crew List:

Captain	- C. R. Titus
First Off.	- G. C. Gibbs
Second Off.	- J. L. Flynn
Third Off.	- F. C. Gillespie
Fourth Off.	- E. F. Norman
Eng. Off.	- Fowley, D. R.
Ass't. Eng. Off.	- M. J. Boyhan
Radio Off.	- P. J. Wertman
Ass't. Radio Off.	- R. M. Carroll
Steward	- P. R. Casprini
Purser	- E. E. Egger
Supernumerary	- J. M. Marcus

Figure 1 Page 1 of the flight data from the Pan Am archive (at 67%)



Figure 2 Cover from Accra 7 FEB 42 to the UK by air mail at 5/6d



NC18606. Pan American Airways System - in the standard livery at Waitemata Harbour, Auckland, December 7, 1940.

Figure 3

This letter was carried by NC18606 *American Clipper* (pictured in New Zealand in 1940) the last of the 6 original B.314 flying boats delivered to Pan Am in June 1939. The 14-cylinder double-row Wright cyclones were the first to use 100-octane fuel. Described as the finest flying boat to go into regular commercial service it weighed 40 tons and the first batch cost \$550,000 per aircraft.

The Coloured Inks of Sierra Leone Grid Cancels - an Indicator of Place?

Major Anthony J. Fulmes CD BSc (retd)

While reworking the large number of new additions to my Sierra Leone cancel collection and exhibit, a thought came to my head when reading Walton’s notes (Ref. 1) on the grid cancels and their potential use in other Post Offices. Though black was the norm, different colours of ink were used.

I began to notice that all my copies of stamps cancelled in brown ink were of the 035.12 medium line thickness variety with 9mm between top and bottom bars framing the B31 (Fig. 1). Respectively, all my stamps cancelled in red ink (nb: red is not noted in Walton but is very bright and distinct from the brown) were of the 035.13 type (Fig. 2) with fat type and 8mm between bars.



Figure 1 Type 035.12



Figure 2 Type 035.13

Published conjecture by both Beale (Ref. 2), and Proud (Ref. 3) is that the grid cancels may have been issued to other offices: – specifically mentioned are Bonthe or Mano Salija. I think that the coloured inks provide further circumstantial evidence that this is true.

What is important are the date ranges of use for the cancel's colour, based on the stamp's issue date correlated with the Post Office's opening. Could this indicate that these cancels were sent to these respective post offices?

Figures 3 and 4 are indicative examples of stamps cancelled with either of these two-coloured inks. A table indicating my sampling data is set out to provide dating brackets. I also did a search on eBay to find other examples which are included in the list to increase the sampling size.

Stanley Gibbons #	Scott #	Source	Year Issued	Cancel Colour	Grid #
2	1b	mine	1865	Red	035.13
18	13	mine	1877	Brown	035.12
18	13	mine	1877	Brown	035.12
25	25	eBay	1883	Red	035.13
25	25	mine	1883	Brown	035.12
27	22	mine	1884	Red	035.13
27	22	mine	1884	Red	035.13
30	26	mine	1884	Red	035.13
33	30	eBay	1884	Brown	035.12
28a	23a	eBay	1885	Red	035.13
31	27	mine	1891	Red	035.13
31	27	mine	1891	Red	035.13
35	17	mine	1895	Brown	035.12
35	17	eBay	1895	Brown	035.12
37	19	mine	1896	Brown	035.12



Figure 3 Type 035.12 showing brown ink



Figure 4 Type 035.13 showing red ink

While the years of cancel use are wide, the findings are consistent. We also know that Bonthe opened in 1872, while Combraymah, Lavannah, Mano Salijah, Shaingay, and Sulimah all opened in January 1884. Therefore, it may be that 035.12 was issued to Bonthe? Why brown ink was used intermittently is still a puzzling question, but again; it seems always with this hammer. The red ink on 035.13 also potentially pushes back the use of this mark back although this is not completely confirmable as the stamps are undated and off cover.

It would be interesting to see if examples of these marks in other collections maintain this data consistency.

References

1. Walton F.L., Quirk P., Hamilton M., and Horry D. *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 – 1961*, Second Edition, The West Africa Study Circle 2015
2. Beale P.O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone*, The Royal Philatelic Society, London 1988
3. Proud E.B., *The Postal History of Sierra Leone*, Proud Bailey, 1994

New Post Office in Douala – Laquintinie Hospital

Benoît Lebourcq

During a trip in February 2020 to Cameroon, I discovered a new post office in Douala, located inside the Laquintinie hospital premises. A commemorative plaque on the wall shows that the office was inaugurated on 26 December 2017 (Figure 1). We can presume that the office was open to the public around this date.

More information can be found on the hospital website (in French):
<https://www.hopitalaquintinie.cm/actualite2/preview.php?id=12&p=4#ontitle>



Figure 1 The commemorative plaque

The hospital name comes from Doctor Jean Laquintinie, with the rank of Captain. He was the chief-physician officer of the Leclerc column (the future French 2nd Armoured Division) during the capture of Kufra, Libya, in the beginning of 1941. During the oasis siege, the doctor contracted sepsis, but refused to be evacuated. He passed away in Yaounde a few days later. In his memory, the hospital at Akwa, created in 1931, acquired its name.

On 29 May 1941, two overprinted stamps “Ambulance Laquintinie” were issued in order to collect funds to create an ambulance car group in his memory (Figure 2).



Figure 2 Charity fund-raising stamps issued 29 May 1941

The post office is painted in blue and yellow, the *Campost* colours (Figure 3).



Figure 3 Outside of the post office at Laquintinie Hospital

A quite faint cancellation was provided by courtesy on a blank sheet of paper. The model is similar to the current cds used in Cameroon, but two discrepancies can be observed:

- It has no date
- On the cancellation mark, “Douala Laquintinie” has no office number, contrary to most other cancellers of this type



Figure 4

Figure 4 compares the differences, illustrating the Douala Laquintinie (left) and the Douala Airport (right) cancellers.

As usual, any information is welcomed.

British Occupation of Cameroon – Use of Telegraph Cancellers on Letters

Rob May FRPSL

In Maddocks & Bratzel's book (Ref. 1) they describe, but do not illustrate, a commercial letter to England where a Southern Nigeria Telegraphs canceller with code letters -T and AU had been used (their Type 138). Then a further Southern Nigeria Telegraphs canceller with code letters -O and -S had been used in transit, five days later. By good fortune that cover has come into my hands and I can illustrate it on the cover of this issue of *Cameo*. I have found in Bob Maddocks' archive the map reproduced at Figure 1 with my own colours added – red showing the telegraph line and blue showing the mail route down the Cross River.

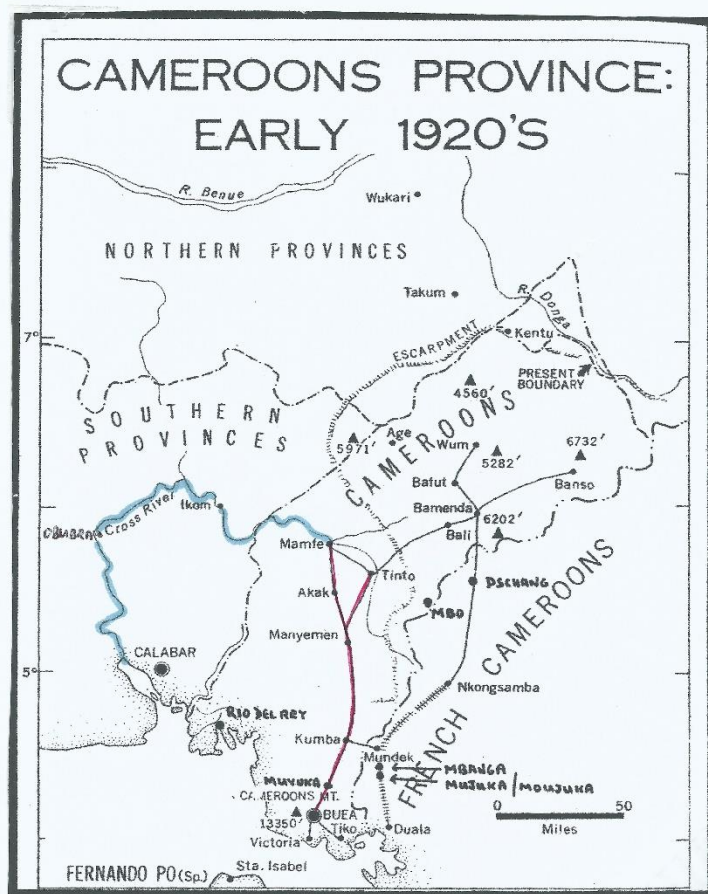


Figure 1

The first reference I have found to the use of such cancellers in Cameroons is an excellent article by J.E. Schelling in *Cameo*, July 1986 (Ref. 2). Mr Schelling had found a philatelic "Blatter" cover of 1920 sent from Bamenda cancelled with a Southern Nigeria Telegraphs canceller with code letters SBM at the left and nothing at the right, dated 4 August 1920. Proof that this was used at Bamenda is provided by the German-type handstamp of Bamenda on a registration label. The cover also bears another similar Telegraph cancel with code letters -O and -S dated 14 August 1920, two strikes of a skeleton postmark of Tinto dated 9 August, then a series of Nigerian postmarks starting with Ikom on 21 August 1920, showing its route to have been down the Cross River to Port Harcourt in Nigeria.

Looking at the direction of travel of this Blatter cover across the map, the dates of the Tinto cancellation and the second Telegraph cancel mean that the latter must have been applied to the west of Tinto but to the east of Ikom and can only have been applied at a Telegraph office. There is only one possible place: Ossidinge. The German post office at Ossidinge had moved to Mamfe in 1909, retaining the original name, but the British

changed the name of the post office on 31 March 1922. An Ossidinge/Nigeria double ring postmark was supplied before 1922 (Maddocks Type 68) but it is not known when it was delivered.

Creation of inland telegraph offices had been a greater priority than the creation of inland post offices during the British campaign, as the need for quick tactical communications with Nigeria via Ikom and with the Governor's office at Buea was recognised, at a time of tribal unrest. The line from Ikom to Buea via Ossidinge and Tinto was in use from 1916, with the branch line to Dschang and Bamenda operative from 1918. There was a small British staff allocated to each telegraph office who needed to manage their own postal facility using runners and, when water levels allowed, the Cross River into Nigeria. In the absence of post office cancellers, the Telegraphs cancels had to suffice, although there is no record as to whether that was officially sanctioned.

I turn now to the cover shown on the front cover posted, two years earlier than the Blatter cover, on 18 August 1918. Firstly, I think the August date of both covers is significant in that the rainy season makes the Cross River navigable from Mamfe (aka Ossidinge) at that time of year. Secondly the -O-S transit cancellation dated 23 August applied at Ossidinge telegraph office has the same five-day gap from the -T AU telegraph cancel on this cover and the Tinto skeleton postmark in 1920. Bob Maddocks convincingly concludes that the -T AU version must have been used at Tinto.

The addressee of my cover, Groves & Lindley, still trade from their mill at Huddersfield and, during the Colonial period, were especially active in supplying traditional woollen suits to expatriate workers and the military. One can imagine the effect the climate in Cameroons would have had on woollen clothing; regular re-ordering would have been essential for the telegraph office staff and been good business for the clothiers, but the clothing may have taken as much as a year from the date of this letter to reach the customer!

References

1. Maddocks R.J. & Bratzel M.P., *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons Under British Administration 1916-1961*, p71, MPB Canada 1994
2. Schelling J.E., *Telegraph Cancellers used in British Cameroons (1920)*, *Cameo* vol. 3, pp83-85, July 1986

Sierra Leone – Free French Forces, Freetown

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

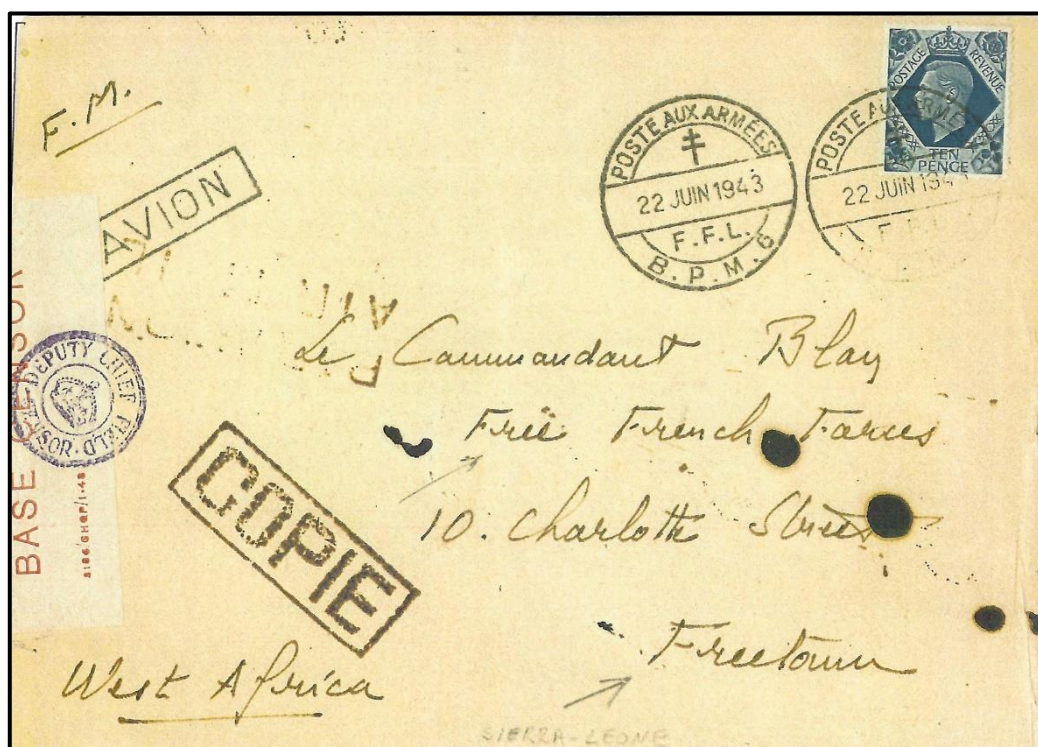


Figure 1 (at 85%)

This 1943 cover (Figure 1, p53) intrigued me. Franked with a 10d GB stamp it was sent air mail to Le Commandant Blay at Freetown.

The B.P.M.6 (Bureaux Postal Militaire) date-stamp was in use at Alexandria (Ref. 1), dated 22 June 1943. On the reverse are two B.C.M.4 (Bureaux Central Militaire) date-stamps at Cairo dated 25 June and 1 July 1943. Also, there is 195 in a circle which I believe is the number of the censor. The cover has a red 'EXAMINED BY BASE CENSOR' label with a violet cachet 'DEPUTY CHIEF FIELD CENSOR' surrounding a crown, applied by the British.

There are no arrival marks. What was the air route? Information will be welcome.

Reference

1. Waugh W.M. & Luft S.J., *A Chronology of French Military Campaigns and Expeditions with their Post Markings*, p144, France & Colonies Philatelic Society and the War Cover Club, New York, 1984

Sierra Leone 1963 2nd Anniv. of Independence Issue Overprint Settings and the 'Raised Shilling' Variety

Robin Peters

The Second Anniversary of Independence issue of 27 April 1963 consists of surcharges on a range of values from the 1956 Definitive set (Figure 1).



Figure 1 11 Shillings on 10/-

The Surcharge Settings

On all the horizontal stamps I can confirm (having studied many full sheets of most values in this issue), that there are the following settings. On the third line of the overprint the line is spaced at different horizontal widths.

The NARROW setting of 17mm exists in positions R5/1, R5/2, **R5/3**, R5/4, R5/5, R10/4 and **R10/5**.
A 20 mm setting exists in position R1/5.

The WIDE setting of 22mm exists in positions R1/1, R1/2, R1/3, R1/4, R2/1, R2/2, R2/3, R2/4 and R2/5.
In all other positions within the sheet a setting of 19mm is to be found. Hence, I can confirm that there are 4 different settings.

In Position **R5/3** maybe it is **17¼ mm to 17½ mm and not exactly 17mm**. This could possibly be called a fifth style of setting widths.

However, for NARROW settings, in the John Lister 1978 catalogue it states that they vary from 17½mm to 18mm and the Elizabethan 1978 edition confirms the same measurements. For WIDE settings the John Lister 1978 catalogue states that they vary from 19½mm to 21mm and the Elizabethan 1978 edition it states that they vary from 19mm to 21mm.

Both these catalogues only list five positions of the narrow settings but in fact there are six to seven positions (see the above text regarding the highlighted red positions). Since these assorted settings vary, I have not recorded these under my error/variety list because of the complexity.

The ‘Raised Shillings’ Variety



Figure 2 High Overprint but Normal 11 Shillings surcharge on 10/-



Figure 3 Raised Shillings surcharge on 10/-



Figure 4 Normal 11 Shillings surcharge on £1



Figure 5 Raised Shillings surcharge on £1

Originally, from earlier auction catalogues, it was thought that this variety existed only in Column 4 for the two shades of the 11 Shillings on 10/-, and the 11 Shillings on £1, SG 268, SG 268a & SG 269. In this variety the bottom of the 11 is no longer level with the word Shillings, with the latter raised approx. 1mm (see Figures 2 to 5).

Figure 6 shows a lower left sheet corner of 12 stamps of the 11 Shillings on 10/-. On Line 3 of this block the far-right stamp R 11/3 has the raised Shillings which is above the bottom of the 11. On Line 4 of this block the far-right stamp R 12/3 has the raised Shillings which is above the bottom of the 11. In addition, in the selvedge below this stamp is the Printer’s Imprint of Waterlow & Sons Limited, London Wall, London E.C., plus a printers’ setting mark denoting the centre of the sheet.



Figure 6 Lower left corner of sheet with the ‘Raised Shillings’ on Rows 11 and 12 in Column 3

Layout of the Sheet

This table shows the sheet layout for the horizontal stamps of this set.

	R 1/1 Sample required	R 1/2 Normal Split in first 's' in Progress at the top <i>or</i> small 'ss' in Progress	R 1/3 Normal	R 1/4 Normal	R 1/5 Medium setting Robin Peters (see notes) Normal	
	R 2/1 Dropped 'c' in Independence Sample required	R 2/2 Normal	R 2/3 Normal	R 2/4 Normal	R 2/5 Normal	
	R 3/1 Sample required	R 3/2 Sample required	R 3/3 Normal	R 3/4 Normal	R 3/5 Normal	
	R 4/1 Normal Spaced 1 9 only 266 examples existed	R 4/2 Normal	R 4/3 Normal	R 4/4 Normal	R 4/5 Normal Fifth line of overprint displaced to right Raised '1' in 19 of date	
	R 5/1 Narrow setting (Urch Harris 1976 & Elizabethan 1978) Normal Short limb to the first 'n' in Independence	R 5/2 Narrow setting (Urch Harris 1976 & Elizabethan 1978) Sample required	R 5/3 Narrow setting Robin Peters (see notes) Normal Fifth line of overprint displaced to right	R 5/4 Narrow setting (Urch Harris 1976 & Elizabethan 1978) Normal Fifth line of overprint displaced to left	R 5/5 Narrow setting (Urch Harris 1976 & Elizabethan 1978) Raised Shillings Fifth line of overprint displaced to right	
*	R 6/1 Normal	R 6/2 Normal	R 6/3 Normal	R 6/4 Raised Shillings on one sample but on another sample it is normal. Both blocks are 268a	R 6/5 Normal On one sample is no printers setting mark in the selvedge	*
	R 7/1 Normal	R 7/2 Normal	R 7/3 Normal	R 7/4 Raised Shillings	R 7/5 Fifth line of overprint displaced to left Normal	
	R 8/1 Sample required	R 8/2 Sample required	R 8/3 Sample required	R 8/4 Raised Shillings	R 8/5 Normal	
	R 9/1 Normal	R 9/2 Normal Damage to 'Ye' in Year at top left limb	R 9/3 Normal	R 9/4 Raised Shillings	R 9/5 Normal	
	R 10/1 Normal	R 10/2 Normal	R 10/3 Normal	R 10/4 Narrow setting (Urch Harris 1976 & Elizabethan 1978) Normal The first line of the overprint displaced to the right	R 10/5 Narrow setting Robin Peters (see notes) Normal	
	R 11/1 Normal	R 11/2 Normal	R 11/3 Raised Shillings	R 11/4 Raised Shillings	R 11/5 Normal Sample required	
	R 12/1 Normal	R 12/2 Normal	R 12/3 Raised Shillings	R 12/4 Normal	R 12/5 Normal Sample required	
			Waterlow & Sons Limited, London Wall, London; E.C.2	1	1	

It would be interesting to know if any members have blocks of known positions to compare with this grid to see if we can confirm the positions marked "sample required" for SG268, 268a and 269 (10/- and £1).

Opening a Postal Agency in Nigeria, 1956

Rob May FRPSL

This is an edited version of an article that first appeared in Postscript (the journal of the Society of Postal Historians) in volume 70, no 4, winter 2020

During the lockdown I took down from dusty shelves some philatelic archives which had been donated to the West Africa Study Circle by, or on behalf of, past members over many years. One such archive contains correspondence sent and received by Herbert Porter who collated one of the first comprehensive studies of Nigerian postmarks by writing to the postmaster or postal agent at each new and existing postal establishment. In that archive I found the hand-written text of a speech delivered on 26 January 1956 when Ilora postal agency opened. It was delivered by the postal agent appointed to run the agency. His name was J. Ola Adewoyin and his neat hand-writing and grammatical English show that he was a Christian who probably benefitted from a missionary-run school education. His speech gives an insight into the political pressure and funding needed to secure agreement to any new postal agency.

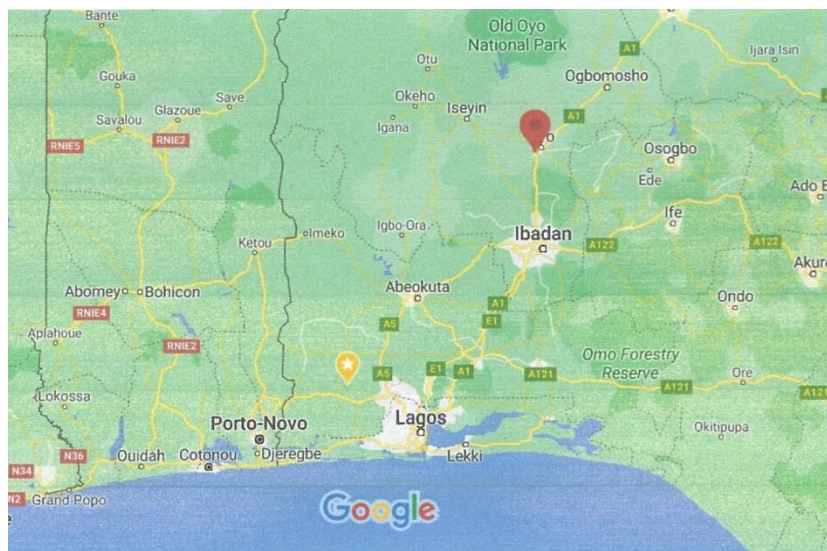


Figure 1 The location of Ilora in Oyo State, Nigeria

I have marked Ilora on part of a Google map of Nigeria (Figure 1). It is a suburb immediately south west of the city of Oyo. I can illustrate the first skeleton date-stamp used at Ilora from 1956 until at least 1963. This example dated 15 MR 1963 is currently the LKD. A year later, on 20 MR 1964, I can also illustrate the steel single ring cds which replaced it (Figure 3).



Figure 2

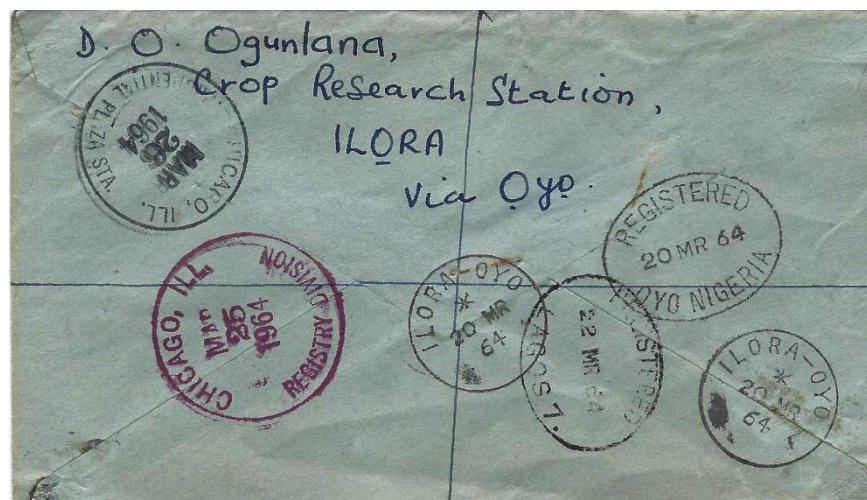


Figure 3

Part of his speech read:

The Ilora Community in the Gold Coast took the initiative.... by providing a sum of £290 for the building and equipping of the postal agency. Because of this inspiration the Ilora community at home willingly augmented the sum by £160. And so the work started. Special thanks and praise go to the Bale of Ilora, Chief D.A. Oparinde and Rev J.A. Lawoyin who, by letter and personal contact, influenced the Ilora Community, Gold Coast to make the first and substantial contribution towards the construction of the Agency. When the District Officer, Mr G.F. Anson, realised the need for a postal agency at Ilora, and the willingness of the people of Ilora to contribute so large an amount, he made it possible for us to obtain £133 from the Colonial Development and Welfare Funds.

In a letter from the Senior District Officer, Oyo, we were told of a debt of £96 10/- 8d accruing from the construction of the building which should be paid by first July 1956. This makes the [total] cost ... £697 10/- 8d.

Today we are grateful to God that the Postal Agency has come to stay. It will no doubt ease us from the trouble of going to Oyo, during the rain and sun to post and clear out not only our mails but [also] those of the surrounding villages.

Except in the largest cities the Nigeria post office never offered free delivery to the door. In the earliest times the Post Office used to quote local carrier charges for delivery from the nearest postal establishment, but that was discontinued in the 1930s when postal volumes grew. Customers were therefore expected to travel to the nearest post office to collect their incoming mail over the counter or from a post office box. The advantage of a postal agency was that the postal agent would make that journey on behalf of all their local customers, carrying outward mail and returning with their combined incoming mail. The local customers still had to collect from the postal agency, usually in person (to avoid theft and fraud), but that was a shorter journey and saved them from making fruitless trips when there was no mail waiting for them at the chief post office.

In the 1950s, as the Colonial administration was ending ahead of Nigerian independence on 1 October 1960, similar initiatives took place all over Nigeria. Paul Redhead has recently used the Nigerian P&T Department Annual reports and Nigeria's postal returns to the UPU to graph the growth of postal establishment numbers in Nigeria (Ref. 1). In 1955, 1956 and 1957 over 100 new postal establishments were opened each year and most of those will have been postal agencies like that at Ilora.

Reference

1. Redhead P., "Nigerian Post Offices: names, numbers and opening dates", *Cameo*, Volume 21 p162, WASC, September 2020

Gambia Serekunda Registration Date-stamp

Jeremy Martin FRPSL



The Duncan & Andrew book on Gambia Postal Markings (Ref. 1) records a REGISTRATION / SEREKUNDA mark Type 531.02 but there is no illustration. I have a cover from Serekunda dated 23 November 1999 with this date-stamp on the front and a better example on the back, which is now illustrated above (full size).

Reference

1. Duncan S.P. & Andrew O., *The Postal Markings of the Gambia 1858-2000*, p71, WASC, Dronfield, 2006

Modern Sierra Leone Postal Curiosity

Ian Sibsey

I illustrate below a section of a registered envelope, showing a selection of stamps from the 1992 Birds of Sierra Leone series.



With the exception of the five Le500 stamps which have an imprinted date of 2002 (SG 1908B) the rest (only visible on 4 of 5) have the earlier imprint date of 2000; in addition to this they all appear to have been previously used (I hope you can see the older cancellation marks).

The postmarks are BO / SIERRA LEONE No timecode, Type 016.11 sSC8 (P. Quirk, communication 03/2020), dated 2 NO /00. On the reverse a “Registered Inland Receipt” circle stamp Type: 535.42, dated 04/11/2000.

This looks like a case of postal fraud, on two counts:

- 1 The discrepancy between the postmark dates and the 2002 imprint date
- 2 The reuse of previously cancelled stamps

The cancel date would suggest collusion between the postal official and sender, but considering the fragmented state of the postal system, I doubt will ever be proven, unless more surface from the same office.

Reference

- 1 Fulmes Capt. A.J. “Postal Services for the Canadian Contingent Serving in UNAMSIL, Sierra Leone Part 1 – Outgoing Mail”, *Cameo* Vol. 10 number 3 pp142-147

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WEST AFRICA OFFERS FROM STOCK

ASCENSION. 1887 4d tied to piece by a complete strike of 20mm Code 'A' c.d.s. for '19 OC 89'. SG Z13. £275	NIGER COAST. 1893 ½d on half 1d lilac in lower marginal unsevered pair. Very fine mint. SG 7a. £275
ASCENSION. 1912/22 9d tied to part 1½d Stationery cover by 22mm Code 'A' c.d.s. for '9 AP 20'. SG Z48. £400	NIGERIA (BIAFRA). 1968 2/6 Kobs with red omitted. Unmounted mint. SG 13a. £175
GAMBIA. 1872 6d pale blue with large even margins used with GAMBIA/PAID c.d.s. in red 'AU 16'. BPA Cert. SG 4. £450	NORTHERN NIGERIA. 1910 1d with 'damaged frame and crown'. Unmounted mint. SG 29a. £75
GAMBIA. 1881 4d pale brown in block of four. Very fine mint. Rare. Ex Bavington-Jones. SG 16B. £750	ST HELENA. 1873 6d ultramarine (Perf 12½). Very fine mint. SG 16a. £300
GAMBIA. 1881 4d pale brown with early stage 'sloping label' (R.1/5). Unmounted mint. SG 16Bvar. £275	ST HELENA. 1868 1/- deep yellow-green (Type 'B'). Very fine mint. Scarce. SG 18. £450
GOLD COAST. 1901 1d on 6d pair, the lower stamp with 'ONE' omitted. Unmounted mint. SG 36a. £225	SIERRA LEONE. 1884 2d grey in corner Plate '1' block of nine. Very fine mint. Scarce multiple. SG 30. £350
GOLD COAST. 1906 2/6 'damaged frame and crown'. Unmounted mint. SG 57a. £350	SIERRA LEONE. 1891 2½d ultramarine in corner Plate '1' block of eight. Unmounted mint. SG 31. £120

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Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals

London Philatelist, Vol. 129, June 2020 pp 187–201,

Cameroun: Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961 – A Summary, by Martin Bratzel Jr., summarising a 20-year study of re-valued stamps used in Cameroun from October 1961 to May 1962. This article has since appeared in *Cameo*.

London Philatelist, Vol. 129, December 2020

pp544-548, *Extending the Colour Key*, by Ray Harris (now FRPSL), in which he highlights the use of available software to show any colour as a set of values of R (red), G (green) and B (blue) to scan the Stanley Gibbons colour key and use it to compare shades of stamps and postal stationery. A spreadsheet will be available on the WASC website (www.wasc.org.uk).

pp549-557, *A Brief Guide to the Crown Agents Philatelic & Security printing Archive for George VI Specialists*, by Richard Scott Morel FRPSL, curator of the British Library's Philatelic Collections.

Air Mail News, Vol. 62, no. 251, November 2020

pp15-31 *The veil is lifted builds (sic) a seaport in the jungle, Fisherman's Lake and how FAM22 became known as FAM 18*, by David E. Crotty.

Geosix, whole number 276, June 2020,

pp14-15, part of a report of the meeting on 22 February 2020 describes a display by Brian Pugsley which included Gambia photographic essays of designs for KGVI 6d and 1/- definitives by De La Rue, later adapted for the first QE2 set.

p18, *Scratched Marginal Mark on Gambia 'Victory' 1½d*, by Alan Baker

Daily Telegraph 22 June 2020, two letters.

Memorial on Ascension Island to those crew of HMS *Bann* of the West Africa Squadron who died of yellow fever.
Memorial St Luke's Church at the former Royal Naval Hospital at Gosport to Commodore William Jones, Commander of the West Africa Squadron.

24 June 2020, letter.

Memorial to crew of HMS *Waterwitch* in St Helena who died while serving on the anti-slavery patrols off the coast of Africa.

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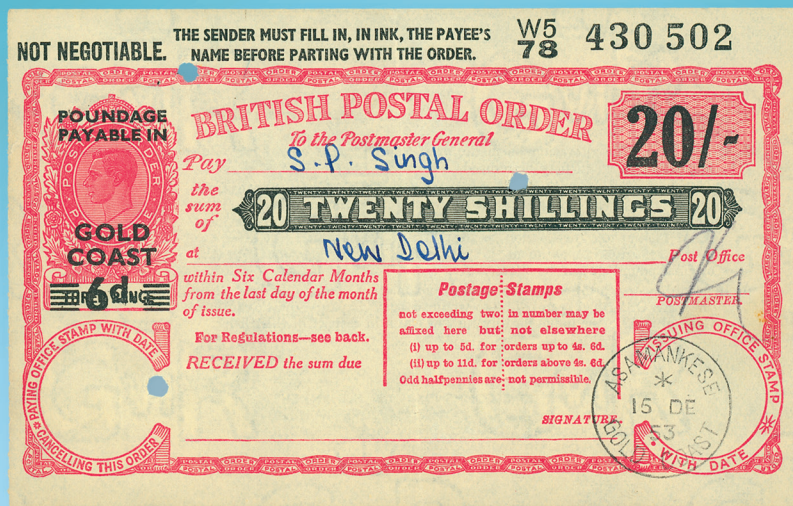
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