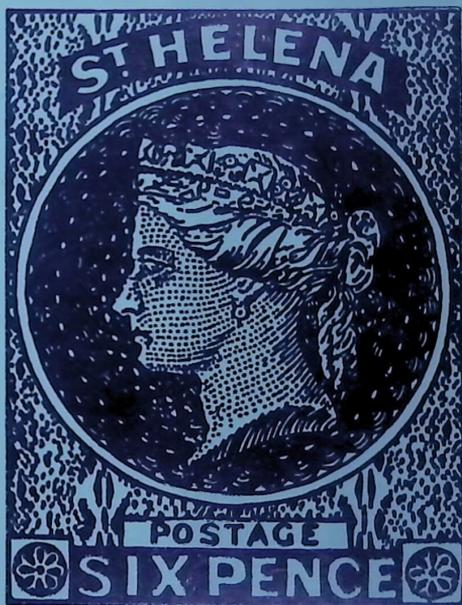


The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 14



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THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY
LONDON
THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST, HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO, 14

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CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Ascension Study Papers	3
Ascension George VI Sheets	5
Ascension in World War One	8
Which Castle?	19
The Secrets of Surgeon Moore	21
Filatellic Frolics	29
More On Paquebot Marks	30
RMS St. Helena Renamed	33
Information Required	34
Who Was J.H.M.B.?	35
Can You Help?	36
Wanted	36

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THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST. HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO. 14

EDITORIAL

London 1990 has come and gone, and what a fine exhibition it was. In praise of the organisers I must congratulate them on a fine venue, well laid out exhibits with plenty of seating for those of us with aching feet (something that is sadly lacking at Stampex etc; adequate seating, not aching feet I mean). Also the refreshment areas were plentiful, on the debit side I have only two complaints; first the lighting of the exhibits was very poor, and secondly, there were no Ascension, Tristan or St. Helena exhibits on display.

Now to this Supplement, this issue sees two fine articles on Ascension by Bernard Hughes plus an article on the early St. Helena letters of Surgeon Moore by Trevor Hearl, a non philatelist by the way. A marvellous article that puts us philatelists to shame.

In the next issue I hope to include an article on the St. Helena GV Badge Issue varieties. If you have any snippets of information on stamps or covers in your collection or on auction results, please drop me a line.

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W.A.S.C. ASCENSION STUDY PAPER NO 5
ASCENSION ISLAND'S POST OFFICE
IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
by PHILIP BEALE FRPSL

Published by West Africa Study Circle Summer 1990.

- Contents: Post Office Correspondence (1852-71)
Admiralty Station Correspondence (1862-88: Public Records Office)
Registration of Letters (1884-92)
Post Office Instructions (1892-93)
Proposed Postage Stamps (1894)
Parcel Post (1886-89)
Postal Orders and Insured Letters (1905-17)
St. Helena and Ascension Mail Service (Union/Castle) (1883-1900)

This, the fifth W.A.S.C. Ascension Study, reviews surviving material in the Post Office Archive in London which relates to the Ascension Post Office in the last century. The Study contains a great deal of previously unpublished information which will be invaluable to any Ascension collector. How many of us knew anything of a proposed issue of Ascension stamps as far back as 1894, or of the detailed instructions for setting up the Ascension Post Office? It must have taken many hours of research to elicit so much on Ascension from the extremely scanty information in the indexes at POA!

Just one fascinating titbit from page 1 - a letter of 1857 explains why it was necessary (in 1858) to send a datestamp to Ascension in that year, even though there was then no Post Office on the island. Mail was reaching England without markings and it was impossible to tell whether this originated in the Cape Verde Islands, the Cape of Good Hope or Ascension. Mail from Ascension should at that time have been charged only 6d, but was being overcharged as a result of the confusion. Datestamping Ascension mail was part of the solution to this problem. Perhaps this is why, until around 1880, all mail leaving Ascension was thus datestamped, even naval privilege mail (the datestamp usually being well away from the postage stamp). In Gibbons, it seems to be only under Ascension that G.B. stamps postmarked in England (with the Ascension postmark away from the stamp) qualify for catalogue listing as G.B. used abroad (Ascension Z1-Z6).

ASCENSION STUDY PAPERS

There are now five Ascension Study Papers published by the West Africa Study Circle, as follows:

1. **Ascension Island - The Crown Agents Records in the British Library** by Philip Beale (12pp)
2. **Ascension Island's Post Office 1922-24 - Control Transferred to St. Helena** by Philip Beale (11pp)
3. **Mail from Ascension 1817 To 1901** by John Attwood (c60pp)
4. **Mail from Ascension 1897 - 1976** by John Attwood (c50pp)
5. **Ascension Island's Post Office in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century** by Philip Beale (c40pp)

All of these Studies contain essential information for the Ascension collector, most of which has never been published elsewhere.

The Studies are all available from **Jack Ince 212 Ipswich Road Colchester Essex CO4 4EP England**, cheques payable to West Africa Study Circle.

Studies No 1 and 2 cost £4.50 each, No 3 and 4 cost £2 each, and No 5 costs £4. In addition postage must be added. To addresses in the UK, postage is 50p per Study. By printed papers airmail, the rate to addresses in the EEC is £1 per Study, elsewhere £2 per Study. Seamail is cheaper but much slower!

ASCENSION GEORGE VI SHEETS

BERNARD HUGHES

At "London 90", regular Cameo advertisers/supporters J. Edward Sellars & Co. displayed an amazing accumulation of complete sheets, one of each value of the George VI definitives. They kindly allowed me to examine the sheets, an opportunity which can hardly crop up often! To start with some general notes:

White Paper: Four sheets were on white paper. This is the very white, slightly glazed paper used for all Ascension printings 1950-53, before they reverted to the "normal" less white paper in 1954-55. The white paper is distinctive on singles, quite apart from complete sheets. The paper fluoresces a deep purple, much darker than the normal paper. The white paper was also used for other colonies, for example *Stamp Collecting* 16 November 1951 mentions the 1951 St. Helena 8d reprint is on this paper.

Guide Marks: These appear between R4/3 and R5/3, usually under R4/3, in the vignette colour (black). Printings of 1942/44 mostly have a "Line and Dot" guide mark, but there are exceptions. Stamps reprinted in 1945/46, and subsequent reprints of these stamps, have a small dot. Printings issued 1938/40, plus 1949/55 printings of the ½d and 1d Green Mountain (i.e. plates not used in 1945/46) have no Guide Mark. The 6d and 10/- are exceptions.



1944 4d Guide Mark

Double Transfers: These occur on many values, I have only mentioned the most prominent. Except on 6d and 10/- R9/6, they occur on all printings, and are well recorded elsewhere. Under a strong lens, the frame is clearly split.

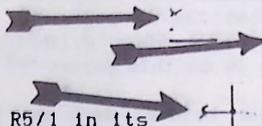
Printings: For the relative sizes of the various printings, please refer to the West Africa Study Circle booklet "Ascension Island: The Crown Agents Records in the British Library" by Philip Beale. If anyone still has not bought a copy, they cost £2.00 (UK) from Jack Ince, 212 Ipswich Rd, Colchester, Essex CO4 4EP.

THE SHEETS (Perf 13 except 1/- P13½, 1½d and 2d P14) All Plate 1-1:

½d; January 1953 Reprint: On white paper, with perf holes right through the side margins. R1/1 shows a small dot in the sky, R2/2 shows a clear double transfer, whilst R2/3 shows the Long E in ASCENSION, S338ba. These flaws appear on all printings, though the Long E is not found throughout the 1938 printing (Cameo July 1986 P80). The 1953 printing (as 1949) shows two "V" marks added to the + crosses in the middle of the top and the right margins.

1d; January 1953 Reprint: On white paper, and easily distinguished from the 1955 printing on normal paper. Both these printings are found far less often than the 1949 printing. Each stamp on the 1949 printing has a thick perf "tooth" at the top of each side: in 1953/55 an additional perf hole has been added, making identification simple. The sheet has many stamps with double transfers, the most prominent is at R4/6.

1½d; June 1949 Issue (Shade): This sheet is of the scarce SG40db. I'm sure we have all seen normals misdescribed as the shade, but in a complete sheet there is no possible doubt. Apart from the distinct shade, the stamp is on rather greyer paper, which fluoresces a deeper violet. Also the marginal markings are quite different, as reported by G. Fryer in *The London Philatelist* vol 79 P53/4. In both side margins, a red cross is added between the = lines next to R5, whilst a squiggle is added at the end of the T cross between R5/R6. These markings recur on the 1953/54 printings, showing the shade was printed after the normal SG40d.



The Davit flaw (SG40dba) appears at R5/1 in its later form, with the top of the arc extending outside the shading of the vignette, plus a dot (extra island) appearing above. The Guide Mark is a dot below R4/3. The Derrick flaw found on 1953/54 printings at R6/6 does NOT appear. The Railings flaw at R3/1 is interesting, not just the usual line (1945/46 and later printings of 1½d and 2/6) identified by Dr Richard Baker, but joined to a thick band. Is this typical of this printing or a chance occurrence?

2d; June 1949 Issue: The only scarlet frame printing (P14). The sheet is on greyish paper, as usual. The Mountaineer flaw appears at R4/4, with the dot Guide Mark below R4/3. The JG initials in the top margin (St. Helena Supplement No10 P4/5) are barely to be seen, only a slight trace is left.

3d; December 1950 Reprint: The distinctive pale grey shade, on white paper. This printing shows a number of retouches in the sky at R6/5, R10/2 and R10/4. Some of these retouches first appear on the 1946 printing, none are found on the 1944 printing. The best flaw is the Extra Rock at the far left of the vignette on R10/3 (found on part 1940 and all later printings). See *Wideawake Journal* vol 2 no 3 P121. The Guide Mark is a dot below R4/3.

4d; November 1951 Reprint: A real find, a complete sheet of the rare white paper printing, with the Mountaineer Flaw at R4/4! On the 4d, this flaw is very hard to find. This suggests only part of the 1945 (normal paper) printing had the flaw and that much of the 1951 (white paper) printing remained unsold: no doubt the printing, made prior to the King's death, was intended to last years. Otherwise, why would this flaw be so scarce? I have seen the flaw in a block, but never before in a positional block, let alone a sheet! The dot Guide Mark is below R4/3. Unlike 1945, a cross appears in the left margin, between the = bars, something not previously recorded.



ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 14

6d: May 1946 Reprint: Something else not previously recorded is the position of the Boulder flaw on the 6d and 10/- values: it is now identified as R5/4. This must be the largest of any of the flaws on this set, but being in the middle of the sheet, will many positional blocks be found? Is it also to be found on the 1944 printing? Among the other flaws on this sheet, R9/6 is of the second type with no double transfer, weak foreground, and a dot over the mountain (St. Helena Supplement 11 P4/5), whilst the weak left frame is found on R9/3 as usual. There is no Guide Mark below R4/3.



1/-: May 1938 Issue: Not a sheet, but two bottom half sheets from the P13½ printing. Nothing surprising here, but there is a good double transfer (on each) at R6/4. Unlike other values, both plate numbers are under R10/2.

2/6: May 1944 Issue: This printing is in a dull shade of carmine when compared with the 1945 P13 printing. The sheet includes the Davit flaw (SG45ca) at R5/1: this stamp also shows the start of a constant vertical hairline that extends to R6/1. The Guide Mark at R4/3 is the Line and Dot. There is no Railings flaw at R3/1, this does not appear until the 1945 printing.

5/-: May 1944 Issue: This printing can readily be distinguished from the 1945 P13 printing, which was made with the perforator inverted, i.e. in 1944 the top margin is perf through and the bottom margin imperf, but in 1945 it was the other way around. Single stamps can easily be distinguished as the double "overlap" perf, normally at the top of each side as on the 1944 5/-, is at the foot on the 1945 5/-. I could see no evident constant flaws on the sheet - there is not even a Guide Mark on the 1944 printing, though the 1945 printing does have the Dot Guide Mark.

10/-: February 1945 Reprint: This printing has, unlike those of 1938 and 1944, the frame in non-aniline ink. Like the 6d sheet, the 10/- sheet has the Boulder flaw at R5/4 (and how many positional blocks of that flaw can still survive?), and shows the later state at R9/6, with the absence of the double transfer but the dot over the mountain and the weaker foreground. The Guide Mark is most interesting, being a dot in the frame colour, the only value to show this. The 1944 (aniline) printing shows two dots, one in the frame colour, one in the vignette colour. The 1946 6d printing (from the same vignette plate, of course) has no Guide Mark at all.

Crown Agents: The sheets have no serial numbers, thus must have come from Crown Agents, probably around 1954, as the 1d 1953 printing is included, but not the 1½d and 1/- reprints released in November 1954. Crown Agents generally used the most recent printing they had available, they must really have been scraping the barrel by coming up with 1938 half sheets of the 1/-!

ASCENSION IN WORLD WAR ONE

BERNARD HUGHES

The W.A.S.C. Secretary's Newsletter with July 1989 Cameo tells us that, after the joint Meeting with the Forces Postal History Society in December 1989, both societies will "attach importance to a full writing up of the displays for inclusion in their respective journals". This three part article - of which I hope the first two parts may contain items of interest to St. Helena collectors as well - follows John Attwood's display of Ascension World War One material.

Part One is an extract from a 1919 Post Office report describing postal services to South Africa, Ascension and St. Helena during the War. The document "A History of the Sea Conveyance of Mails During the War of 1914-1918" (Post Office Archives at Post 56/69) covers services to all parts of the world, including a list of all mails lost. Its general section says that "the frequency of the sailings was not at first much affected, but the time taken over voyages steadily deteriorated as the War progressed. Much delay was also caused by following unusual routes, and by the system of Convoy which was generally introduced early in 1918 the South African service was adversely affected as regards regularity, but of all the overseas services, this one lost less mails by enemy action than any other." Only two were lost, and only one had mail for the islands - Alwick Castle with mail for Ascension, St. Helena and Mauritius dated between 20 February and 14 March 1917, torpedoed in the Bay of Biscay two days out from Plymouth. According to Duff Hart-Davils in "Ascension - The Story of a South Atlantic Island", this meant Ascension received no mails (or food supplies) from England for 3 months, though I could find no other evidence backing this.

One surprise (to me anyway) was that only 17 British mails were lost worldwide in 1914-16, but 117 in 1917-18. The Post Office continued to publish mail times, sailings etc right up to the end of 1916! **Part Two** is a list of all mails reported sent/received 1914-16 from the Daily List, and those reported as outward mails sent in the restricted Daily List 1917-18 (POA Post 43/59-63).

In **Part Three**, I cover the Censor marks used on Ascension, as displayed by John Attwood. I do not think that it has ever been established when these handstamps were used, and I have attempted to summarise the evidence to date. **Perhaps other members can expand on this?** It is not as easy as it sounds, unfortunately! In early 1917, (as John's display illustrated) Ascension datestamps still read "16", whilst dates are easily misread.

Ascension's mail services in 1914-1918 seem to have continued remarkably well. Perhaps the worst problems were faced in 1918-19, as it was some time before the Union-Castle Line was able to restore a full service; the normal South Africa service was restored in October 1919, but the intermediate service on which the islands depended took much longer to recover.

The main survey of Censor marks of which I am aware is in John Attwood's WASC Study Paper "Mail From Ascension 1897-1976", which can be ordered from Jack Ince as explained on page 4 of this edition of the Supplement.

PART ONE; P.O. REPORT ON MAIL SERVICE TO SOUTH AFRICA

Before the war the Mail Service with South Africa was performed by the Steamships of the Union Castle Mail Steamship Company under contract; and a weekly service outwards and homewards was maintained between Southampton and Cape Town calling at the Island of Madeira. Mail services to the Canary Islands, alternately to Grand Canary and Teneriffe, were performed by the Intermediate Steamers proceeding to and from the Cape.

Early in August 1914 the Imperial Government exercised their powers by requisitioning for use as Armed Cruisers three of the Company's steamers which would in ordinary course have been available for the performance of the outward Contract sailings of that month. The Company was consequently not in a position to provide steamships fitted with accommodation for sorting correspondence at sea, or capable of maintaining the speed necessary for the accomplishment of the voyage within the period stipulated in the Contract. The Mails had to be sent by the slower steamships used in the Company's Intermediate services, and the Sea Post Office had to be suspended. The port of Southampton was closed for commercial purposes; and London was made the port of departure. The homeward Mails was landed at Plymouth.

In addition to requisitions at home, the Admiralty requisitioned in South African waters vessels which had taken the outward Mails, and were originally appointed to return with homeward Mails, thus causing inevitable blanks in the homeward service.

The Union Castle Company maintained a regular outward service when they could, but owing to withdrawals of their ships, the intervals between the sailings became longer. In order to reduce the disadvantage arising from want of continuity in the regularity of the normal service, ships of other Lines were used for the conveyance of Mails. In consequence of the menace of hostile submarines at the Madeira and Canary Islands, these calls were omitted in March 1916, and were not resumed during hostilities.

Deductions were made from the Mail Subsidy for failures on the part of the Company to provide the number of sailings required by the Contract.

In order to provide suitable tonnage for the conveyance of war materials and personnel from the United States to this Country, the Government found it necessary early in 1918 to divert to the North Atlantic trade route all available steamers whose capacity and speed were appropriate for that Service. The Union-Castle steamers were especially suitable; and they were, accordingly, diverted, with the result that, for a time, the comparative regularity of the sailings was seriously interrupted. The Ministry of Shipping, in conjunction with the Admiralty, suggested that the Mails should be conveyed by the Armed Liners which were employed as escorts to the Convoys proceeding to Sierra Leone about once a month, and that transshipment should be effected to other Armed

Liners proceeding from Sierra Leone to the Cape. This proposal had serious disadvantages, as there was no adequate storage accommodation at Sierra Leone for the Mails; and their disembarkation at that port would probably involve some days or possibly some weeks' delay, during which the receptacles would be exposed to the elements and to the risk of pilferage. It was decided to adopt the arrangement rather than face an indefinite period of uncertainty in mail communication with South Africa. The Parcel Post Service was suspended at this period for a fortnight (7-21 May), in view of the large accumulation of parcels at the Head Post Office, and the inadequate facilities available for sending mails.

The arrangement to send the Mails by means of Armed Liners proved unsatisfactory, and was adopted on one occasion only ("H.M.S. Patoca" 24th of April 1918). The Mails remained at Freetown from the 3rd of May to the 13th of June awaiting onward despatch; and numerous cases of damage and tampering were reported on the arrival of the Mails at Cape Town. Arrangements were then made by the Admiralty - May 1918 - for the despatch of Troop convoys to the Cape about once a month; and Letter Mails were sent by these vessels, and Parcel Mails by means of a new service of less speedy vessels employed in the conveyance of cargo; but this arrangement was subsequently revised on the representation of the South African Chamber of Commerce that inconvenience was being occasioned to commercial undertakings by the Letter Mails being kept back for specific vessels; and Letter Mails were then forwarded by all Ships carrying Parcel Mails.

The Liner Requisitioning Section of the Ministry of Shipping arranged for the Department to be notified of the sailings of ships available for the conveyance of Mails through the Secretary of the South and East African Steamship Owners' Committee. Monthly lists of sailings were issued, which proved of great service.

The allocation of tonnage to the different trade routes is still under the direction of the Ministry of Shipping. There appears to be no prospect of an immediate resumption of the normal Contract Service; but Mails for South Africa are being sent by all suitable opportunities; and, although not entirely regular, the despatches are now made at approximately weekly intervals.

St. Helena and Ascension Service. In consequence of the almost complete withdrawal of the Union-Castle Company's intermediate steamers from the South African Service, the monthly Mail Service to St. Helena and Ascension hitherto provided by those vessels was undertaken by the Cape Mail Packets and was continued until November 1917, when the Company were informed by the Shipping Controller that none of their steamers carrying troops would be allowed to deviate from their direct passage to Table Bay until further notice. The Mails for St. Helena and Ascension were therefore despatched to Cape Town for onward transmission by homeward Packets due to call at the Islands. Arrangements were afterwards made for the mails to be forwarded from England by means of Admiralty colliers.

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 14

PART TWO; SHIPS CARRYING MAILS TO ENGLAND 1914-18.

This list of ships bringing mails to England from St. Helena and Ascension comes from the Post Office Daily Lists of 1914-18 (Post Office Archives, Post 43/59-63). From December 1916 to November 1918, for security reasons the Daily List did not record mails arriving in England from any destinations. Occasionally, during the War, mails were sent from St. Helena (only once from Ascension) to Cape Town for onward transmission to England: for reasons of space these mails are omitted from this list, but appear in my list of mails sent from England to the islands. Since 1912, the Union-Castle Line Intermediate service, which served the islands, had operated in two directions, one set of vessels going down the East coast of Africa and returning via St. Helena and Ascension, the other set of vessels going in the opposite direction. Most of the Union-Castle line vessels in the list below are on Intermediate service, going out down the East Coast of Africa and returning from Cape Town to England via St. Helena and Ascension. Such vessels do not show a Cape Town date as they brought no Cape mail, the direct weekly Main service from the Cape was quicker. Those with a Cape date are wartime Main service vessels routed to take mails from the islands. The Golconda was not a Union-Castle vessel.

Vessel	Cape Town	St. Helena	Ascension	Other Mail	England
Guildford Castle		28 DEC	30 DEC	LP 8 JAN	14 JAN 1914
Gloucester Castle		25 JAN	27 JAN	LP/T 4 FEB	11 FEB 1914
Grantully Castle		23 FEB	25 FEB	LP/T 6 MAR	12 MAR 1914
Guildford Castle		22 MAR	24 MAR	LP/T 2 APR	9 APR 1914
Gloucester Castle		20 APR	22 APR	LP 30 APR	6 MAY 1914
Grantully Castle		17 MAY	19 MAY	LP 27 MAY	? JUN 1914
Guildford Castle	- mail shown as "overdue" 2-6 July but no arrival recorded				
Gloucester Castle		12 JUL	14 JUL	LP 22 JUL	28 JUL 1914
Grantully Castle		10 AUG	12 AUG	LP 21 AUG	27 AUG 1914
German		19 AUG	-	T 29 AUG	7 SEP 1914
Berwick Castle		26 SEP	28 SEP	T 8 OCT	15 OCT 1914
Dover Castle		8 OCT	-	SL 16 OCT	30 OCT 1914
Gascon		28 OCT	31 OCT		17 NOV 1914
Durham Castle		22 NOV	24 NOV		9 DEC 1914
Comrie Castle		26 DEC	29 DEC	LP 8 JAN	18 JAN 1915
Saxon	16 JAN 1915	21 JAN	23 JAN		3 FEB 1915
Briton	13 MAR 1915	18 MAR	20 MAR	F 26 MAR	1 APR 1915
Cluny Castle		22 APR	25 APR		14 MAY 1915
Comrie Castle		28 MAY	1 JUN		20 JUN 1915
Berwick Castle		2 JUL	6 JUL	SL 11 JUL	26 JUL 1915
Dover Castle		10 JUL	15 JUL		4 AUG 1915
Walmer Castle	14 AUG 1915	19 AUG	21 AUG	F 28 AUG	1 SEP 1915
Llanstephan C.	9 OCT 1915	14 OCT	17 OCT	F 25 OCT	31 OCT 1915
Saxon	8 NOV 1915	13 NOV	15 NOV	F 21 NOV	26 NOV 1915
Balmoral Castle	4 DEC 1915	9 DEC	11 DEC	F 16 DEC	24 DEC 1915
Golconda		21 DEC	-		14 JAN 1916
Cluny Castle		10 JAN	15 JAN	T 24 JAN	5 FEB 1916

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 14

Vessel	Cape Town	St. Helena	Ascension	Other Mail	England
Balmoral Castle	12 FEB 1916	17 FEB	20 FEB	F 27 FEB	3 MAR 1916
Norman	4 MAR 1916	9 MAR	11 MAR		24 MAR 1916
Golconda		28 APR	-		17 MAY 1916
Comrie Castle		5 MAY	9 MAY		29 MAY 1916
Norman	20 MAY 1916	24 MAY	27 MAY		8 JUN 1916
Cluny Castle		30 JUN	4 JUL		24 JUL 1916
Berwick Castle	10 AUG 1916	19 AUG	23 AUG		15 SEP 1916
Durham Castle	7 SEP 1916	13 SEP	15 SEP		30 SEP 1916
Comrie Castle		21 OCT	24 OCT		14 NOV 1916
Walmer Castle	6 NOV 1916	11 NOV	13 NOV		29 NOV 1916

OTHER MAILS: This indicates that vessels took mails from Las Palmas (LP), Tenerife (T), Funchal (F) or Sierra Leone (SL).

After publication resumed 21 November 1918, only one mail is mentioned, by the Japanese Iyo Maru from St. Helena (21 October) to Cape Town, and thence by the Main service Berwick Castle (Cape Town 23 November, London 20 December 1918). Next was HMS Warrior (St. Helena 3 December, Ascension 8 December, Sierra Leone 14 December, England 2 January 1919).

SHIPS CARRYING MAILS FROM ENGLAND 1914-18

The same vessels also carried mails from Ascension to St. Helena and from both islands to Cape Town. Most are Union-Castle Line ships, but Umvumu was a new building for the South African shipping firm Bullock, King & Co., sent out to join their fleet, whilst Barton and the unnamed vessels leaving from Newport and Cardiff in 1918 were Admiralty colliers. My list also includes mails from St. Helena to England via Cape Town, which are occasionally recorded during the war years. Only one such mail from Ascension is mentioned - by the Ingoma (another non-Union Castle vessel) for 22 August, apparently the date Garth Castle reached Ascension. Other than Ingoma, these mails from Cape Town are Main service ships.

Outward Vessel	England	St. Helena	Return Vessel	Cape Town	England
Galician	3 JAN 1914 (S)				
Goorkha	31 JAN 1914 (S)				
Garth Castle	23 FEB 1914 (S)				
Galician	28 MAR 1914 (S)				
Goorkha	25 APR 1914 (S)				
Garth Castle	23 MAY 1914 (S)				
Galician	20 JUN 1914 (S)				
Goorkha	18 JUL 1914 (S)				
Garth Castle	15 AUG 1914 (L)	26 AUG	Ingoma	4 SEP	29 SEP 1914
Cluny Castle	2 OCT 1914 (L)				
Aros Castle	22 OCT 1914 (L)				
Berwick Castle	19 NOV 1914 (L)				
Umvumu	30 DEC 1914 (L)	3 JAN	Walmer Castle	9 JAN	26 JAN 1915
Comrie Castle	17 FEB 1915 (L)				
Durham Castle	27 MAR 1915 (L)	8 APR	Dunvegan C.	21 APR	11 MAY 1915

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 14

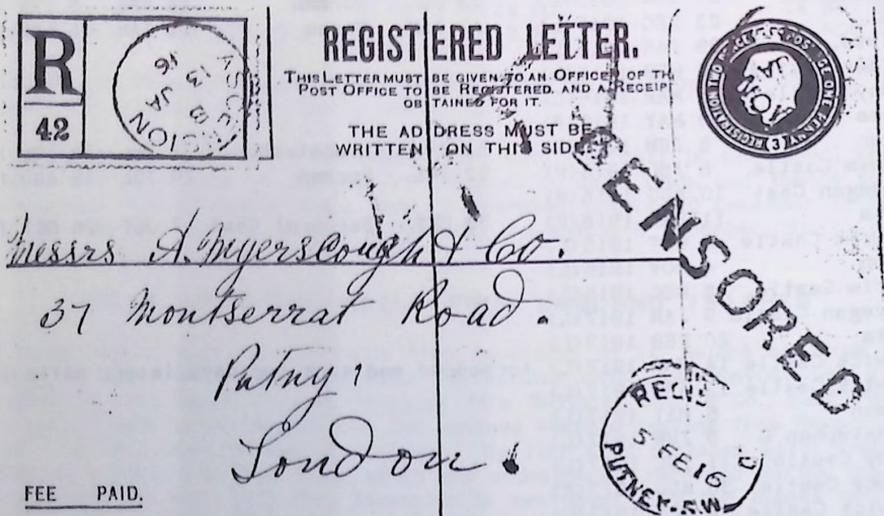
Outward Vessel	England	St. Helena	Return Vessel	Cape Town	England
Dover Castle	27 APR 1915(L)				
{Vessels	22 MAY 1915(L)				
{not	19 JUN 1915(L)				
{named	28 JUL 1915(L)				
{in lists.	28 AUG 1915(L)				
{Vessels	25 SEP 1915(L)				
{not	1 NOV 1915(L)				
{named	27 NOV 1915(L)	13 DEC	Norman	18 DEC	5 JAN 1916
{in	23 DEC 1915(L)	17 JAN	Saxon	29 JAN	16 FEB 1916
{lists.	29 JAN 1916(L)				
Walmer Castle	19 FEB 1916(L)				
Cluny Castle	25 MAR 1916(L)				
Gaika	10 MAY 1916(P)				
Saxon	8 JUN 1916(P)	22 JUN	Llanstephan C	1 JUL	22 JUL 1916
Durham Castle	6 JUL 1916(P)	22 JUL	Norman	29 JUL	16 AUG 1916
Dunvegan Cast	10 AUG 1916(P)				
Gaika	11 SEP 1916(P)	30 SEP	Balmoral Cast	7 OCT	26 OCT 1916
Alnwick Castle	5 OCT 1916(L)				
Saxon	4 NOV 1916(L)				
Comrie Castle	8 DEC 1916(L)				
Dunvegan Castle	9 JAN 1917(L)				
Gaika	20 FEB 1917(L)				
Alnwick Castle	14 MAR 1917(L)	torpedoed and sunk two days later, mails lost			
Berwick Castle	13 APR 1917(L)				
Norman	5 MAY 1917(L)				
Llanstephan C	9 JUN 1917(L)				
Cluny Castle	11 JUL 1917(L)				
Galway Castle	30 AUG 1917(P)				
Berwick Castle	2 OCT 1917(L)				
(Gaika intended for 8 Nov but cancelled)					
Kenilworth C	26 NOV 1917(P)	- mails to islands via Cape Town			
Walmer Castle	19 DEC 1917(P)	- mails to islands via Cape Town			
Cluny Castle	19 JAN 1918(P)	- mails to islands via Cape Town			
Unnamed	15 FEB 1918(N)				
Berwick Castle	28 MAR 1918(P)				
Unnamed	22 MAY 1918(C)				
Barton	5 JUN 1918(N)				
Cawdor Castle	15 JUN 1918(P)				
Unnamed	26 AUG 1918(C)				
Berwick Castle	28 SEP 1918(P)				
Durham Castle	3 JAN 1919(P)				

After the war broke out vessels left London, but some are shown as calling at Plymouth to collect mails. I think these are mostly Main service ships routed to call at the islands. Departures were thus from Southampton (S), London (L), Plymouth (P), Cardiff (C) or Newport (N).

PART THREE: ASCENSION CENSOR TYPES IN WW1

TYPE 1: CENSORED 65mm x 7mm.

This is the earliest recorded marking, and the predominant one in 1915/16. Being a rubber handstamp, the exact size and shape varies very slightly depending how hard the stamp was applied, the angle it was applied, the amount of ink etc. The latest date that I have seen an uncensored wartime cover is 22 January 1915, so Ascension censorship was introduced in the first half of 1915.



FEE PAID.

Earliest known date: 4 June 1915 (to South Africa)

Latest known date: 24 October 1916 (to England)

The main philatelic source of this handstamp are covers addressed to Messrs Ewens. Their price list of March 1916 advertised Ascension Censor covers with the George V ½d, 1d, 2d and 3d and the Edward VII 2½d, one stamp per cover except for a pair of the ½d. These quickly sold out. In August 1916 a new range was offered, covers with George V 1½d (pair), 1d+2d, 2½d+½d, 3d (two shades available), 4d, 7d or 10d. Covers sometimes have registered labels covering part of the Censored handstamp, which appears not to have been Ewens' intention (though registered covers with 3d worth of stamps were correctly franked). The final batch of covers (one stamp per cover) added the 5d, 6d, another 7d shade, 8d, 9d and 1/- to the range. The catalogue value of a complete range would be over £1,000 now, but would have cost less than £1 at the time! Covers continued to be offered by Ewens until May 1918. Obviously the stamps were bought in England by Ewens.

TYPE 2; CENSORED 59mm x 7mm.

As far as I can establish, only two examples have been identified to date, though surely others must exist. Both are illustrated below, and, significantly, both are stamped in bright violet ink. Other censor marks are found in various shades, occasionally black or violet, but usually in a dull greyish blue, apparently the product of an ink pad which seldom had ink renewed, but when such renewal took place, it could be any colour to hand. For example, Type 1 Censor marks for July 1915 are in the usual dull blue and certainly not in the violet ink used for Type 2. The oval cachet on one of the Type 2 covers is that for the Superintendent/Ascension of the Eastern Telegraph Co Ltd, and is also struck in violet. In his display, John Attwood suggested that there is every reason to think that the Type 2 Censored handstamp was used by the ETC Superintendent.



CENSORED

The Secretary

Army & Navy

105

Mps

A. W. Gamage

Solborn

London E.C.



CENSORED
LETTER
SUPERINTENDENT
E.T.C.

Earliest known date: 5 July 1915 (to England)

Latest known date: 22 August 1915 (to England)

TYPE 3; PASSCENSOR 99mm x 10mm.

Little is known about this handstamp, generally regarded as being the scarcest (and most expensive!) of the Censor markings. I am aware of only two examples, do any others exist? Unfortunately, only one of these covers has a clear postmark, so providing a range of recorded dates becomes impossible! Both covers are written by the same hand to the same address and bear the same censor's initials. The upper cover is postmarked 18 FE/16, the lower ? DE/?

PASS CENSOR



*The Secretary
Army & Navy Co-operative
Society, Ltd.
Victoria Street*

PASS CENSOR



*The Secretary
Army & Navy Co-op Soc^y Ltd
105 Victoria St
London*

THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY
LONDON
ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 14

TYPE 4: TWO LINE PASSED CENSOR, /ASCENSION.

Probably the commonest of the four Censor Types, largely because of the number of covers produced for the stamp dealer W. Barker of Todmorden of blsect fame. A problem in dating this censor mark is that in January 1917, the Ascension "A" postmark still read "16". John Attwood's display illustrated this with "1.11.17" Swiss arrival markings on a cover postmarked on Ascension "JA 13/16". Oddly, the January 1917 mail was postmarked on 13 January - exactly the same date as the January 1916 mail. Thus "B" 13 JA/16 postmarks (such as that I have used to illustrate Type 1) are true 1916 postmarks, "A" JA 13/16 postmarks like the one below, are really 1917. I have not seen any 1917 postmark inscribed "17" before 2 April 1917. Incidentally, this is not the only year that the Ascension Post Office made this mistake, it also happened in 1925, testified by Badge stamps postmarked JA 1/24, before they were printed!

The latest date I have seen is just before the war ended: after November 1918, only mail outside the Empire was censored, and I know of no post-war censored covers from Ascension. The earliest 1919 cover that I have seen was in fact shown by John Attwood at the Meeting: it is postmarked 11 February 1919, and was particularly interesting in being a stampless "On Active Service" cover, perhaps the only one known from Ascension - of course the free post for Naval personnel (unlike other services) was only introduced in June 1918.

Backstamped: -



Mrs E. Stanley

Hotel du Lac

Gunter

Lake of Cham

Switzerland

Ch Bern

PASSED CENSOR
ASCENSION

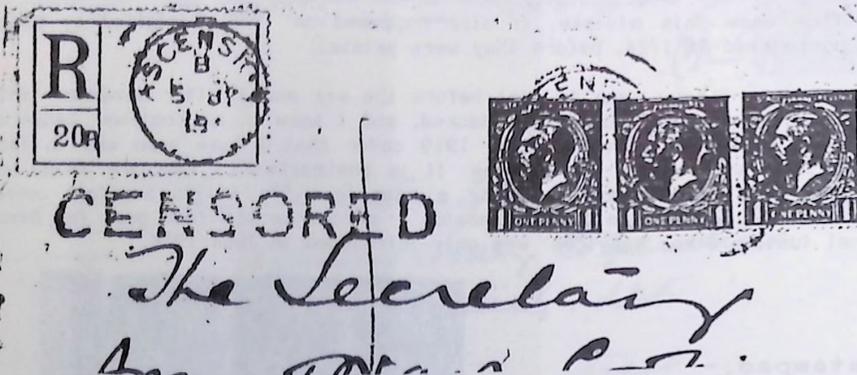
Earliest known date: 15 December 1916 (to England)

Latest known date: 3 October 1918 (to England)

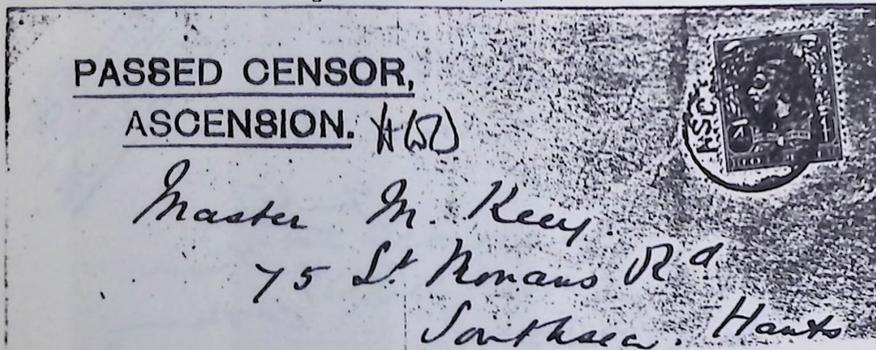
MISREAD DATES

It is probably as well for me to emphasise how extremely easy it is to misread dates on Ascension postmarks of this period. Either they seem to be overinked or underinked: in any case they are not always straightforward!

The two covers below are cases in point. The first one could easily be 1919 - though in 1919 a registered letter would cost 3½d, not 3d, the Empire postage rate rose from 1d to 1½d in June 1918 (registration still 2d). It is in fact 1915 - see the Hibbert Auction catalogue, Robson Lowe 8 February 1984 Lot 728.



The second cover could easily well be read 1916 or 1918. In fact it is 1918, see Robson Lowe Auction catalogue 7 June 1988, Lot 123.



Another problem is to be sure that covers bear a Censor mark at all: for example I doubt whether any 1919 covers do. One cover that has been said to be Censored in 1919 is a registered letter to Huddersfield with 3½d in stamps, postmarked 8 MY/19. This was Lot 43 in the Fryer sale, Gibbons 23 October 1980, but with absolutely no mention of Censored marks, unlike other Lots.

WHICH CASTLE?

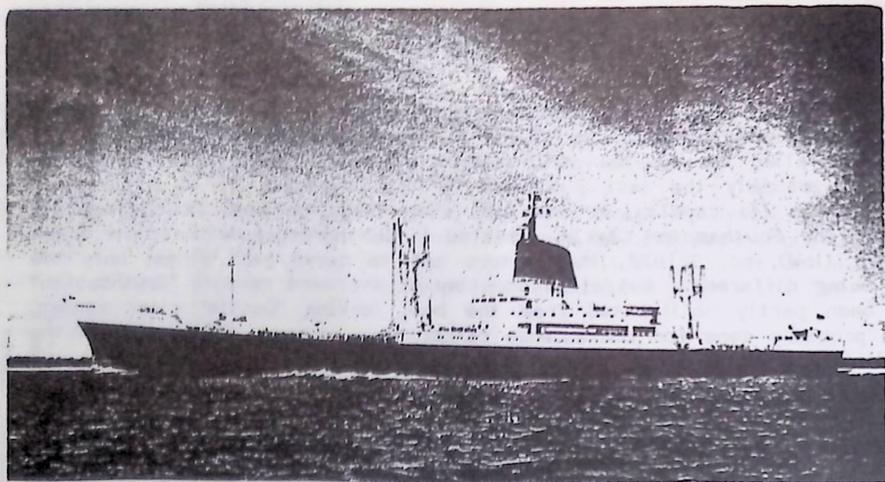
The postcard of the post-war (1946) Union-Castle Mailship *Good Hope Castle* which headed the list given in *St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No 13* (January 1990, P10) recalled for me the curious case of another, and later, *Good Hope Castle* card, probably the last published by the Company. It is a curiosity because, despite its caption, it does not show the *Good Hope Castle*, but its sister ship the *Southampton Castle*. Printed in photogravure by J. Arthur Dixon of Newport (IoW), no. SP1872, the picture had to serve both ships, only the captions being different. But close scrutiny of the card reveals "Southampton" to have been partly obliterated from the bow, leaving "Castle" clear enough. This was probably done for convenience rather than economy, but hardly in the best traditions of Britain's maritime service!

The cards do not show the ships as launched in 1965 as refrigerated cargo ships of 10,538 GRT, but after refit in 1967 as mailships of 13,152 tons, with First Class accommodation for 12 privileged passengers. A fine painting by Claude Muncaster showing the *Southampton Castle* entering Durban on her maiden voyage was presented to Princess Alexandra; another copy graced Union-Castle's offices, but I do not know their present whereabouts. They were remarkable ships, among the fastest merchantmen afloat, averaging about 24 knots and a schedule from Southampton to Durban that you could set a watch by! At St. Helena they were called the "Two-hour ships", the time allowed by the demands of the fruit trade. It fell to the *Southampton Castle* to end the Company's South Africa mail service on 24th October 1977, after which the ships went to Genoese owners, the *Good Hope Castle* as *Paola C* and *Southampton Castle* as *Franca C*.

The most astonishing event in their short history, however, occurred on 29th June 1973 when the fire-wracked *Good Hope Castle* was abandoned after leaving Ascension Island where its 'Mayday' went unheard. Despite the most advanced communications in the world, no-one was listening, so 82 passengers and crew spent 36 hours in lifeboats while the red-hot Royal Mail Ship drifted helplessly in the South Atlantic. This story of tragedy and farce, yet to be told before Time takes the survivors from us, is summarised in W.H.Mitchell & L.A.Sawyer: *The Cape Run* (Terence Dalton, 1987, pp.145-7). A little known source of St. Helena-centred shipping information is Robert Wilson's *Merchant Navy Past and Present*, still perhaps available from the author c/o St. Helena Shipping Company, Porthleven TR13 9JA.

March 1990

TREVOR W. HEARL



NATURAL COLOUR
J. Arthur Dixon
PHOTOGRAPHURE
POST CARD

Printed by J. Arthur Dixon Ltd., Newport, I.W., England

Southampton Castle
(tonnage 13,152)
Union Castle Line to South and East Africa
SP. 1872

Good Hope Castle
(tonnage 13,152)
Union Castle Line to South and East Africa
SP. 1872

THE SECRETS OF SURGEON MOORE

Some Early St. Helena Letters

"Our Island is very sickly and soe are the soldiers...I am almost dishartened", grumbled Surgeon Francis Moore in a letter to a friend at East India House in 1682. Yet it was the Governor's arrogance more than the garrison's ill-health that depressed him after eight years on St. Helena. "I cannot live under it," he declared, begging the Company to let him return home to wife and family.

Could Moore have known how important his letters would become, he may have found some consolation in his plight. For they are now probably St. Helena's earliest surviving private correspondence, and all the more significant since official records of the period are so scanty. They would arouse still wider interest should young Moore prove to be "old Moore" of Almanac fame!

What do we know about Mr. Moore? St. Helena's Medical Service records only go back to 1684, but Dr. Gosse discovered that the Company sent out a surgeon of that name in 1674 on a "modest salary of £25 a year, with the right of dining at the Governor's table".¹ Moore's letters show this to have been a dubious privilege, however, for, although a member of Council, he felt badly treated, and after four years he asked to be relieved and sent his wife and four children home. A letter from his father in October 1678 confirmed that the Company was sending a replacement, but the outcome remains a mystery for he was still writing from St. Helena in 1682 and as keen as ever to get away. He must have left by 1684, however, as Thomas Spencer was then surgeon.² Of Moore's later career nothing at present is known.

It is tempting, however, to imagine him returning home to become Francis Moore, the almanac-maker. After all, he was a friend of the astronomer Edmond Halley. Today, "Old Moore's" early career is shrouded in mystery, but he might well have been in medical service before 1698 as then he obtained a licence at Lambeth to practise as a physician, astrologer and schoolmaster.³ He was in his early 40's, however, so would have been about 18 when appointed to St. Helena, and married with four children at 21, which seems unduly precocious - although it was not uncommon for an ambitious young bachelor on the Island to make a profitable match with a settler's widow! Unfortunately the letters do nothing to resolve such points. Moore senior's bizarre report of his wife's death, almost as an afterthought, suggests she was not young Moore's mother; nor, apparently, was grand-daughter Hera[?] one of Moore's four children. But the odds against him being "old Moore" lengthen.

The letters are historically helpful on several counts, nevertheless. They furnish not only bare facts about the Island's officials and shipping during early years of settlement but also frank comments about the difficulties of serving on St. Helena, such as private correspondence alone provides. Closer scrutiny offers further insights. The haphazard spelling betrays writers' speech - 'lioll' [loyal], and "Santilina", proving this to be the original pronunciation despite finding the alternative "St. Hellenia". Moore senior's October 1678 letter demonstrates how infrequently mails reached the Island - his wife had died in March, and Halley returned in May (surprisingly with a present for him from the Governor). The two final letters given below, sent in 1700 and 1703, are not part of the Moore correspondence, but are included for their intrinsic interest and confirmation of the demoralisation and isolation suffered by the Company's servants on the St. Helena station. Captain Kelly's "long and tedious" passage explains exactly why the Company sent ships there from England as seldom as possible.⁴

Of the three letters from the Moore correspondence, the first (March 1678), from Governor Field, is signed by Moore as Member of Council; the second (October 1678), from Moore's father, is in answer to a missing letter from the surgeon asking him to petition the Company for his release; while the third (February 1682), from Moore to Thomas Lewes of East-India House, has generally been regarded as "the earliest letter from the Island in private hands".⁵ But having recently acquired Moore's earlier letter from his father there is every chance that other items of this valuable correspondence will come to light.

The letters have been transcribed as closely as possible to the originals. Notwithstanding that archivists frown on the use of "ye" for "the", but accept "yt" for "that", I have used both as they were written.

ASKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am much indebted to Mr. Edward Hibbert, author of The Postal History and Stamps of St. Helena for photocopies of four of the above letters. I also wish to thank Mrs. Mary Lashbrook of W.Foulsham & Co., for joining the search after "Old Moore", and staff at Gloucester Record Office for their patient assistance in checking my doubts while deciphering the Moores' curious calligraphy!

NOTES

1. GOSSE, Philip: St. Helena 1502-1938 (Anthony Nelson 1990) p.75
2. CRAWFORD, D.G: Roll of the Indian Medical Service 1615-1930 (1930) p.618
3. Dictionary of National Biography: see Francis Moore (1657-c.1715)
4. SUTTON, Jean: Lords of the East - the East India Company and its Ships (1981) is the source for shipping details given in this paper
5. HIBBERT, Edwd: The Postal History & Stamps of St. Helena (Robson Lowe 1979) p.142

Wee are att ware wth all nations at present, god soe keepe us. Our kinge hath sent a great Army into flanders or ells the ffrrench kinge had taken all flanders². I have noe newes to write to you, butt that a great plott³ is discovered, blessed bee god, they] would have morthered our grasious souvrine and have bornt wesminster. There is seaven of them taken & were examined before the Kinge and Counsell but itt is kept very close. The Lord sends them all to bee found out that they] may receive there rewards.

I have noe more to send you but I must lett you know my great losse. The Lord hath taken away from [me] my deare wife⁴. Shee departed this life the 21 of March last past, a greater losse never befell mee, beinge now soe ancient, god bee my help. I have noe more at present but my prayers to almighty god for your health and safety, hopeinge in the lord that wee may have a happy meetinge. Thus prayinge to god to bless you and keep us all in health and send us a joyfull meetinge to gods glory and our comfort

I rest

Your loveing father

October 5, 1678

ffrancis Moore

My lodging is within St. James at the in side of the great stone gate att one Mr. Coles next house to the Goulden Lock and Kay where I hope to see you.

My humble servis to Capt. ffield and lett him know that I rec. his kind token a silver headed cane that my granddaughter Hera (?) conveyed to mee by the hand of Mr. Hally⁵.

NOTES

1. LOYAL SUBJECT Indiaman of 500 tons on its sixth and final voyage (1667-78).
2. FRANCO-DUTCH WAR At Peace of Nijmegen, August 1678, part of Flanders ceded to Burgundy. As Princess Mary had married William of Orange in 1677, England sent an army to support the Netherlands.
3. THE POPISH PLOT On 12 August 1678 Titus Oates (falsely) accused Catholics of plotting against Charles II. Eighteen executed, 29 December 1680.
4. MY DEAR WIFE And presumably his son's mother. Or was he an adopted son? Yet he signs himself "Your loving father". Perhaps his second wife.
5. EDMOND HALLEY (1656-1742) astronomer, had returned from St. Helena at the end of May 1678 having made a catalogue of the Southern Stars.

3. FRANCIS MOORE, surgeon, St. Helena, to Thomas Lewes', East-India House, Leadenhall Street, London, per ship London², 6 February 1682.

Mr. Lewes

S^r I my hearty searvice to you: I hope these few lines will find you in good health. I hope you have received my letters and hope you wilbe pleased to lett me have two or three lines. ffor I beg y^r advice for here my Condition is very low for I cannot dissemble or carry tayles. For here is soe much pride and hypocrisie that I cannot live under It, but I will submit to y^r advice. Noe king desires more obeydiance nor servitude. Y^r lord deliver me from it, or that I am befor advanced that I need not care for it. For y^r lady and their Boy Nevis(?) who hectors, sweores and dams without Controll and is now placed at y^r Governours table³. Beyond all modesty I cannot see what y^r Company sees in y^r Great man, except they love to heare of their vast Charges and number of officers which half would serve turn: and there soldiers would turne free but are hindred. For then the Greatness will fall: for though they turn free they are still upon y^r Iland (only these Boyes are permitted to goe off) which in my opinion should have bine kept here being naturalized to y^r Iland but I know not there meninge. Capt. Beale⁴ is very sicke but I hope will doe well againe: our Iland is very sickly and soe are the soldiers: and y^r Medicines were bad at y^r first: but are now expended and mine also y^r most upon the soldiers: but y^r Governour takes noe notice of it. I am almost dishartened and wishe myselve upon Ascention where y^r fowyles would be more kind then y^r people here.

Pray S^r be not Angry with me for writing to you for I have now freind else to write to: if I were Chyrurgion of a ship I should live better. Pray S^r if the Company doth permit me to come off) I desire that they may take my Cattle in to their stocke and pay me in England: for their stocke grows low for all there debpts are still gatherin in. Pray S^r assist my father⁵ in what you cann: if a ship comes and you think it convenient to sendd pray furnish him with mony and I will repay it: or if he doth not come yett, furnish him with some mony and I will repay it. Having noe more at present but to heare from you I wish you and y^r family all y^r prosperity in this world and everlasting happnesse in y^r world to come which is y^r Continuall prayers of y^r

very loving freind and servant to Command

ffra: Moore

S^t Hellena ffeb y^r 6 1681/2

NOTES

1. THOMAS LEWES Was he Pepys Clerk to the Victualling Office in 1660's?
2. LONDON Three ships of this name listed 1658-85.
3. GOVERNOR 1678-90 Major John Blackmore.
4. ANTHONY BEALE Former Governor 1672.
5. FATHER Francis Moore, London.

4. GEORGE CARNE¹, St. Helena, to an un-named correspondent, possibly at East-India House, Leadenhall Street, London, 13 November 1700

Dr Friend,

I am allmost at a Nonplus to conceive how you should be ignorant of this Ship y^r Advice² her orders to touch here or if you knew thereof yt [that] I should have noe other Incloasd letter, In yours than yt you call my Fathers but really from my Brother. Tis True what you say yt he is my Good Fa: But why than have I not ye happiness to hear from him. methinks it would have been much more necessary to have receivd advice from him yt I was not still soe unfortunate to be forgott or yt ye last was noe other than a Reprive by ye Armenian Merch^t (for since I have received none). all yt I can hope for is yt certainly he has writt by some other ship. Since I sent Mr. Keelings⁴ Acco^t home stated, severall Bills of Exchange, [Let]ters of Attorney, & some small presents by severall hands to all which I might have received an answer by this ship.

I profess I am allmost at my Witts end & did not soe good a Friend, who I believe would scorne to flatter me declare it, & yt of my Brothers assure, I should certainly believe my Fa^r had forsaken me in ye greatest Exigency of my whoal life, but as it would be ignominious to despair & be too distrustfull when least guilty of any mismanagem^t soe tis upon your [let]ter I befound all my hopes of that success you seem to declare is a Pushing forward & therefore have sent to my Father once more an Entreaty of Embraceing my Interest, & y^r reasons why I importune, with ye [let]ters I send he will when you confer more particularly show you, & ye Character I have sent of our French Gov^r soe dispotick power is allmost insufferable. Tis strange news y^r Ship has brough up of y^r loss of our Minister^s who is soe well beloved as yt he has carried a large testimoniall home with him of his Parishioners affection who all deplored at his departing Sermon their Loss with tears. I wish it may be possible to have his Character reconciled with his Interest & yt private mallice may not too much prevail I doubt not yr good & generous temper will endeavour to obviate.

Dfeair Sir. excuse me if my presumption in preferring ye Inclinations I had for you to drinck my health was considered before ye meanness of my present. I can assure you I allways beleivd you a man of a higher Principle than for those mean Expectations to extend a pretended friendship; beleive me not soe blind as to have forgott yt distinguishing Pallatt I ever had to be sensible Mr. Leris^t[?] Temper was not of yt Mercinary Stampe to sell his Friendship. I must not expect an agency in India But creep before I can goe y^r Joy I should receive by gaining in time soe great an Employ would be elated yt I might corrispond in a proper sphear with you, from whose merritts & assistance much is to be hoped.

Sir

Island S^t Hellena
Nov^r ye 13th 1700

Your True Friend & Humble Serv^t
George Carne

There is one Jn^o Long among ye St. Hellena attendors at ye East India House Gate I should have you know him from a Black sheep. he is a great R--ll.

NOTES

1. GEORGE CARNE not yet known.
2. ADVICE frigate (130 tons) made this one voyage (1700).
3. ARMENIAN MERCHANT (220 tons) three voyages recorded 1692-98.
4. KEELING Captain Richard Keeling, Governor 1693-97.
5. FRENCH GOVERNOR Captain Stephen Poirier 1697-1707, Huguenot refugee from France in 1690; introduced vines to St. Helena.
6. MINISTER probably Rev. Simons (1697)
7. LERIS not yet known.

5. H. KELLY^s, of the Ship Anna² at St. Helena,
13 August 1703.

Sr/ These come to acquainte you that one the 4th of May we parted with y^e Lizard & haveing so greate a fleet had a tedious passage and one the 11 of May parted with y^e Convoe acording the Companys orders; y^e 19th day of May tooke my departure from Madera haveing Sight of It but did not touch there nor none of the East India Ships. The 23rd parted wth y^e fleet of India men except Northumberland³ & y^e Mary Ann⁴: who kept Company untill wee gott to y^e S^{wd} of the Line. One the 6 of June my Carpenter W^m Wheatly by name was drowned; y^e 24th of June I left Capt. hide in Latt^d 6.01 S^o sailing better than he did & haveing after along & tedious passage arrived att S^t hellena the 4th of August, where wee found that all the East India fleet homeward bound und^r Convoe of the Kingfisher⁵ weare departed 10 days before I came in & this after Noone aboute 6 hours after me the New Castle⁶ arrived, and the fifth Day the Burlington⁷ haveing many sicke people one board. I had aboute 10 seamen & 15 solders Sicke lost one Soldier by Sickness in our passage. I thank god our people are pretty healthy Now, & are very bussy at this troublesome place unlivering of our Ships. I am forced to unload all w^t my one long boate, which will be very tedious. This is all at present wishing you all health & happiness I rest

Sr

Ship Anna at S^t hellena
August ye 13th 1703

Yo. Most humble Serv^t

H: Kelly

NOTES

1. KELLY (Captain?) not yet known.
2. ANNA (350 tons) four voyages 1697-1707.
3. NORTHUMBERLAND (250 tons) four voyages 1698-1706.
4. MARY ANN not listed, but an Interloper, MARY, was taken to India in May 1698 by former EIC Captain Robert Knox after refusing the post of agent at St. Helena.
5. HMS KINGFISHER (46-gun frigate).
6. NEWCASTLE & BURLINGTON (50-gun naval frigates) arrived too late to convoy the India fleet. See Basil Lubbock, ed: Barlow's Journal 1659-1703 for this incident. Barlow was on HMS Kingfisher from St. Helena to UK.

FILATELIC FROLICS

I cannot claim that the St. Helena Government Gazette - useful though it may be - often makes rivetting reading. But a line in the issue for 30 November certainly made me sit up and take notice. "Special Issue of Postage Stamps", it read, and among the five values listed, there appeared the following:-

" 45p. 1929 Morris Crowler 11.9 h.p."

This clearly was a "special" stamp. Could it be worth a fortune?

Or had the Government printer in Jamestown made a mistake? Surely not in the official Government Gazette! But just supposing he had. Should it be "Morris Crowler", a caterpillar tractor, perhaps? Or was it a deep-throated Morris nicknamed "Growler". I don't recall any growling crawlers, or crawling growlers, though I well remember our neighbour's 12 h.p. 1929 Morris Cowley.

Only CAPHCO (Crown Agents' Philatelic Co. Ltd) could put me right. Mr. Ken Underwood, working on the current St. Helena "Farm Animals" designs*, assured me that no crawlers or growlers appeared on their stamps! Just a plain old Morris Cowley. So no fortunes to be made this time. But perhaps it will be worth watching the St. Helena Government Gazette a little more closely in future. You never know; it may give something away one day.

* "Farm Animals" feature the large white pig, a red poll bull and calf, mixed sheep and domestic geese. What! No goats?

MORE ON PAQUEBOT MARKS

ALAN BURGIN & B. MABBETT

The article written by Bernard in Supplement No 13 would perhaps be more appreciated if we better understood the Regulations laid down by the Universal Postal Union on this subject.

Briefly, this article will outline the decisions or rules regarding Mail Posted at Sea, as laid down by The Universal Postal Union in Paris in the 1890s. At this period masses of Europeans were travelling by boat to all parts of the world to find a new life. These voyages took a considerable time, letters and postcards were written on board on these voyages. To obviate the raising of Postage Due Charges at the receiving end, the U.P.U. laid down that such letters and cards could be posted at sea bearing stamps of the country where the ship was Registered or Flagged. In most cases these ships were British, and as such it is most common to see mail with a 'Paquebot' cancellation, whether it be a circular dated handstamp, a dated machine cancellation 'Paquebot/Posted At Sea' or a small rubber handstamp inscribed 'Paquebot' or 'Navire'. Mail was handed to the Ships Mail Officer, who bagged or bundled letters etc together, before handing them to the Port Post Office where the 'Paquebot' mark was applied and the mail forwarded to its destination. It was also known for mail to be transferred from ship to ship for onward transmission. German, French, Netherlands and Norwegian Liners also took part in this exodus, but they had their own Post Office and Postmaster on board who cancelled the mail, handing mails to the Shipping Agent at the port of call who passed them on to their destination. The Post Offices on these vessels had their own stamps, again of the country of Registration.

Now alas we have no liners with passengers plying the High Seas from one country to another, and basically the system is no longer needed; we have the cruise liners, often with their own 'Paquebot' handstamp which is used purely as Philatelic Mail. In fact most of the Philatelic Mail we see with 'Paquebot' markings are from these liners, but again the rules of the U.P.U. states that they must bear the stamps of the Registration of the ship, and so we have Liberian, Panamanian, Singapore, Cyprus etc, etc, so it is hard to carry stocks of the varied stamps to meet requirements.

Referring to St. Helena and in particular the R.M.S. St. Helena. The R.M.S. is registered in St. Helena, and as such the stamps of St. Helena fall within the required regulations. When the Union Castle Steamship Company supplied the service, these were British Registered Liners and as such G.B. stamps were required on mail posted at sea. Other small boats called at St. Helena, often British on their way to Bermuda.

Now to the covers illustrated in Supplement No 13. The H.M.S. 'Scylla' cover is incorrect as the Royal Navy had their own Fleet Mail Post Offices, the main office being in London where the adhesives were cancelled Maritime Mail, other ports had circular handstamps inscribed Maritime Mail/date/Name of Port. These were primarily used when Royal Navy personnel had concessional Postage Rates. The visit of H.M.S. 'Scylla' would have been a big social event to the St. Helenians with football matches, dances, tour of the ship etc, and what better way than to get the ship's Mail Officer to put the ship's handstamp to the envelope, affix some nice St. Helena stamps and send it to a friend.

The covers illustrated on pages 21 and 23 show correct useage of the 'Paquebot' mark applied to the cover away from the stamps. The covers illustrated on pages 24 and 25 although commercial items show incorrect useage of the 'Paquebot' mark as it should have been applied to the cover away from the stamps not cancelling them.

To summarise then; the use of St. Helena stamps is quite in order, it is the misuse of the 'Paquebot' mark and not the circular date stamp to cancel the stamps that is wrong.

In conclusion we must not overlook the visit of the R.M.S. St. Helena to Tristan da Cunha who do the job correctly by having a circular dated handstamp inscribed 'Tristan da Cunha - Navire - Date', and cancels the stamp(s) with this handstamp, although they sometimes cannot find all the date slugs, still one can't have everything.

Listed on the next page are the known 'Paquebot' marks from the South Atlantic Islands.

ASCENSION IS.

Ascension Is.	1	27	Ca 1965-1974		A36c	PLAGUETTE. Replaced by #2 West
"	2	29	1974-1975* See: St. Helena 4		A36a	Longseth
"	3	28	1975-1976		A36b	Longseth, Lund.
"	4	33	1976-1978		A36d	Longseth.
St. Helena	1	38	1900* See: Banjul 1		A1/A30	Probably British OMN. Gordon.
"	2	19	1954-1970		A642	S4a Spalding.
"	3	22	1968-1971*		A912	S4b Stone, West.
"	4	30	1975-1979* See: Ascension 2		S4c	Longseth, Lund.
Tristan da Cunha	1	38	1974-1977*			Bracey Ice Cap News. Issued 1974. First use late 1976. A 3 ring mark - a private promotion for the Q12 was in 1979, never was on the island Coyne.

PLAGUETTE

1

PAQUEBOT

2

PAQUEBOT

3

PAQUEBOT

4

Ascension types 1 to 4

PAQUEBOT

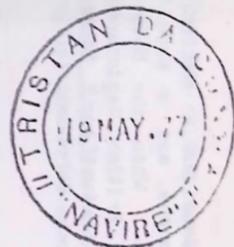
St. Helena 2

PAQUEBOT

St. Helena 3



EX. O.E. 1



Tristan da Cunha

St. Helena type 1 is as Banjul 1 (see Page No. 9)
Type 4 is as Ascension 2.

RMS ST. HELENA RENAMED

The present Mail Steamer the RMS St. Helena was renamed the RMS St. Helena Island on return from her voyage 67-North which arrived in the U.K. around 10th March 1990. The reason for this was that the new RMS St. Helena launched recently is due to take up the service from voyage 70-South leaving Avonmouth on 5th July 1990, and it is against maritime law to have two vessels registered in the same name.

With the vessel being renamed, a new ship's cachet has been made to be applied to all mail posted on board, and I have been lucky enough to receive a commercial cover with this new cachet applied. (Remember it will be in use for only a short period 15th March 1990 to 30th June 1990 if the new RMS takes over the scheduled sailings on time).

The cover (illustrated below) posted on board the RMS St. Helena Island was sent Air Mail from Ascension where it received the Georgetown transit c.d.s. and "PAQUEBOT" mark. The "PAQUEBOT" appears to be a new type as it is very similar to the Ascension Type 4. but it is only 25mm in length whereas the Type 4. is 33mm long.



MR. B. MABBETT

34 VERONICA GREEN

CORLESTON

NORFOLK NR21 8LG

ENGLAND.

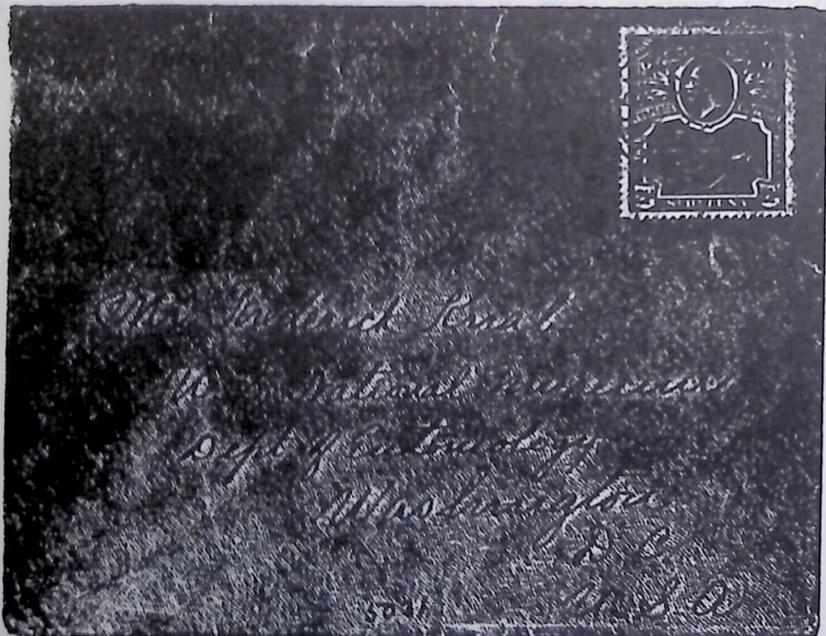


INFORMATION REQUIRED

Paul Rodzianko, of New York, has asked if anyone can help with information regarding the cover illustrated below.

The cover is dated July 12th 1913 and Paul asks if this ties in with Captain Scott's last Antarctic Expedition and the return of "Terra Nova" to the U.K. Any information on the vessel's movements around that date would be most appreciated.

If you can help, please write direct to Paul at:-
55 Liberty Street,
New York,
New York 10005, U.S.A.



WHO WAS JHMB

One of the first censor's initials found on the Boer Prisoner of War Mail from St. Helena are J.H.M.B. Edward Hibbert in his book 'The Postal History & Stamps of St. Helena' indicated that the initials could be those of Capt. J.H.M. Bateman whose initials can be found on soldiers' mail of the mid 1890's. Subsequent research showed that Capt. Bateman was not on the island during the Boer War period, but there was a J. Henry Mountifort Beasley on the island, so the initials were attributed to him by myself in the book I prepared on behalf of the Anglo Boer War Society. (St. Helena, The Philately of the Camps for Boer Prisoners of War, April 1900 to August 1902).

It is known that the censor with the initials J.H.M.B. was transferred to Bermuda with the opening of the camps there, as at least two covers are recorded from Bermuda with his initials applied, but no censor marks. From a postcard recently acquired by one of our members, it would appear that both Edward Hibbert and myself were wrong on the censor's name. The card from G. Vollmer dated 12th September 1901 states ... "I hear Brown our old censor is in Bermuda, I am going to send him a card." The card goes on to state "Old Alexander is back from C.T." (Cape Town). So it would appear that the surname of the censor with the initials J.H.M.B. was Brown.

FROM G. VOLLMER
 Willow Cottage
 St. Helena, 12. Sept. 1901.
 My dear Fiddell,
 This is the second post from S. after
 which did not bring me a letter from
 you & I am so longing for news. Did
 you not get my post card & Mrs Vollmer
 is still in Durban writing for one. I re-
 ceived a plan for cold storage plant, with
 I could go to Durban to make further
 arrangements. - Is the war not over on the
15th inst according to proclamation?
 I hear Brown, our old censor is in Ber-
 muda, I am going to send him a card. -
 Old Alexander is back from C.T. We all well. -
 Please write soon. - Kindest regards to Mrs J.H.
 all inquiring friends. - G.V.

CAN YOU HELP?

Derek Law has sent me a photocopy of a St. Helena EDVII ½d pictorial stamp with an unusual obliteration. The obliteration consists of some 11 bars approx 22mm at its widest point, and the word "CANCELLED" across the centre. The obliteration has 5 bars above the word and 6 below.

Derek has asked me if I know what this obliteration is, or the reason for its use. If you can help with any information, both Derek and myself would be pleased to hear from you. Derek's address is:-
Cheddar Farm Road,
Axbridge,
Somerset BS26 2BN.



WANTED

Queen Elizabeth commercial covers from or to St. Helena, also O.H.M.S. covers of the same period with Castle or Departmental handstamps. If you have any surplus to requirements, your editor would like to hear from you.