

The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 28



WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE
ST. HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 28
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WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST. HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 28

EDITORIAL

Firstly I must apologize for the late arrival of this issue, this was not due to lack of material, but lack of spare time on my part in which to put the Supplement together. I have been working six days a week for the past six months which has left me with very little free time in which to pursue my hobby.

This issue sees some varied articles from modern Ascension Post Bag Labels to a very early St. Helena correspondence, and I have to thank the following people for their assistance: Firstly the Ascension Island Administrator and Mr. James Podger who kindly forwarded information and photostats to Jeremy Martin, Dr. Stephen Royle of Queens University of Belfast and Mr. Richard Stroud, Editor of The Anglo Boer War Philatelist who have allowed me to re-produce 'Alexander The Rat'. Dave Tarry of Cavendish Philatelic Auctions for the photostats of the Rosemary Hall Correspondence, and finally to Trevor Hearl who managed to decipher the criss-cross scrawl of the letters and furnished information regarding the St. Helena De Fountain's. A piece of re-search that I would not have known just where to look for the information.

After the success of the last meeting of the Ascension and St. Helena members it is hoped to hold another on either the 4th or 18th of October 1998 at the home of Brian Foord in Dulwich. At the moment Saturday the 18th seems to be the best day and I urge all those who can attend to contact either Brian or myself as soon as possible.

I know this is looking ahead, but if any member is thinking of preparing an article for inclusion in the July 1998 issue of the Supplement please could you let me have it by March 1998. My reason for this request is that your Editor and two other intrepid members along with one of their spouses are off on a visit to St. Helena next June, so I will need to produce the Supplement in advance (if possible) so that I can post them off to the membership as soon as I return from St. Helena.

BERNARD MABBETT

34 VERONICA GREEN
GORLESTON
NORFOLK. NR31 8LE

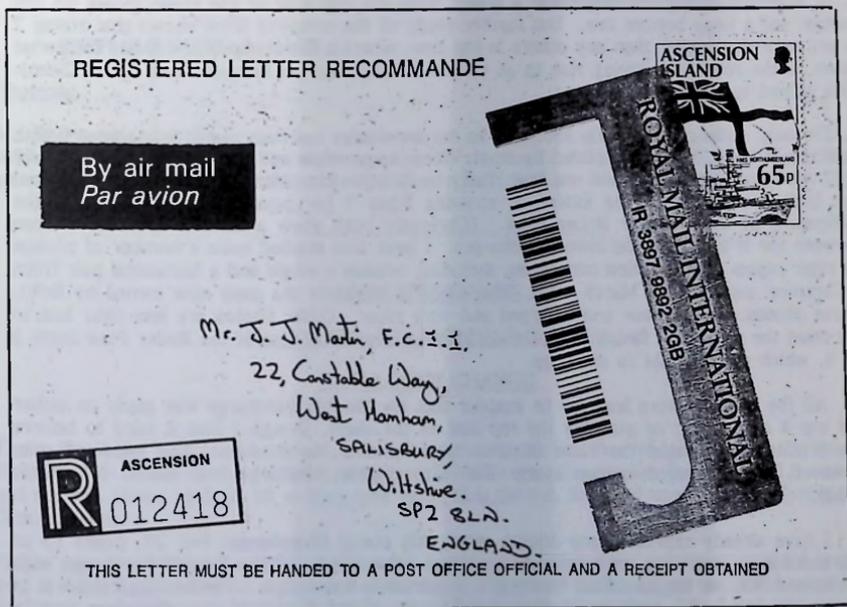
TEL(01493)656147

ASCENSION FORMULA
REGISTERED ENVELOPES

by Jeremy Martin

Small islands or territories such as Ascension, The Falklands, St. Helena and Turks and Caicos have made use of these envelopes. They are similar to standard colonial ones, but without a name or impressed stamp.

I have just obtained examples of a completely new type from Ascension. These are brown envelopes with black print. The smaller (illustrated below) measures 160 x 113mm, the larger 219 x 111mm. The reverse carries the inscription: "Name and address of sender".



THE HALFPENNY
DOUBLE SURCHARGE

by Roger Morgan

A while ago I bought a used copy of the halfpenny double surcharge to add to my unused copy, but only very recently did I bother to check its watermark. This provided a perfect replica of illustration No. 38 from Supplement No. 3, page 12, and thus proved it was from one of four positions: 1/1, 1/7, 11/1 or 11/7. Turning to Supplements Nos. 5, page 3, and No. 6, page 3, stamp 11/1 could be rejected immediately—"First Re-entry", and stamps 1/1, 1/1 and 1/7 could also be rejected because my stamp had no horizontal guide lines. This left 1/7 with "Left square broken". My stamp had a weakness in the left square frame line rather than a break, but so also did the same stamp in my complete sheet and I was thus satisfied that the stamp was indeed 1/7.

2. It might be thought strange that a stamp from the top row of the sheet shows no top margin and a large bottom one. But further study of the complete sheet shows that stamp 7 is set somewhat higher than any others in the row, whereas the stamp below is set somewhat lower in the row; thus giving rise to an unusually large margin between them (about 2mm). This helped to confirm the plating.

3. The only other copy of S.G. 35b. that to my knowledge has been plated is stamp 4/9 with "blurred A in St. Helena" - plated by Roger West some while ago. I have studied carefully both my own unused copy and one lent kindly by Bob Deakin. Neither can be plated (by me) but both are similar to the extent of showing State 1 (or possibly 5 - I can't tell the difference) of the Transfer Roller Flaw. (Curiously both show a distinct space of 1.2mm between the N and Y of the lower surcharge). I have also studied quite a number of photos of other copies from Auction catalogues, including notably a single and a horizontal pair from a Christies' sale of 13th March 1991. (the single is probably the copy now owned by Bob). These photos are in colour and enlarged and very clear. Other photos are less clear but to my mind the significant factor is that none of them shows and sign of the Roller Flaw State 3 or 4, which really ought to show up.

4. All the above factors lead me to suspect that the Double Surcharge was made on either the top 4 or 5 rows; or possibly the top half of the sheet, though I find it hard to believe the printer would make the same mistake twice running, as it were. The awkward one, however, is the alleged unique stamp 216 with double surcharge and spaced NY (S.G. 35ba).

5. I have already expressed my doubts about this stamp (Supplement No. 23, pages 13 to 15) and I have now seen with my own eyes two other copies of the Double Surcharge with the spaced NY, so the so-called Stamp 216 is certainly not unique. Neither do I think it is stamp 216 but I still can't prove this - and many of my thoughts must therefore remain suspicions



Fig 38



FIG 38
SUPPLEMENT NO 3, PAGE 12

Footnote

6. The used stamp illustrated has a cork cancel in violet. I don't recall having seen such before - can anyone else? The accompanying B.P.A. certificate (July 1935). says that it "is genuine in all respects" - perhaps the Postmaster just used the wrong ink by mistake?

STANLEY GIBBONS

ST. HELENA HALFPENNY S.G. 34/35

CATALOGUE CHANGE

There has been a major change in the S.G. numbers of the the ½d. Green and the ½d. Emerald S.G. 34/35 of the 1884/94 printings. Gibbons now list the ½d. Emerald as S.G. 34, and the ½d. Green as S.G. 35 as they now agree that the ½d. Emerald was printed before the Green shades.

Please note that if you are buying either of these stamps at auction, or from a dealer that you are buying the correct S.G. number as this change may have escaped the notice of the dealer or auction house if they don't have an up to date catalogue.

OPENER BY EXAMINER

by Jeremy Martin

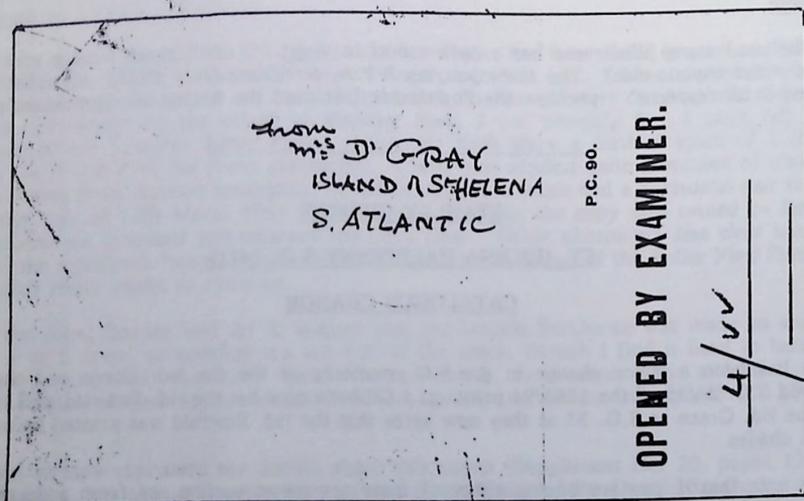
The illustration below shows a new sub-type Examiner label. The main difference is the full stop after "P.C. 90." This will be classified(1) as Type 2E: P.C. 90/ OPENED BY EXAMINER. with large oblique and three lines. Manuscript < number > VV added. Black ink on white paper. (66 x 28mm).

(1) "West African Censorship World War 1 and 2" by J.J. Martin and F.L. Walton published 1993 by the West Africa Study Circle.

2E Number 4

20th April 1944

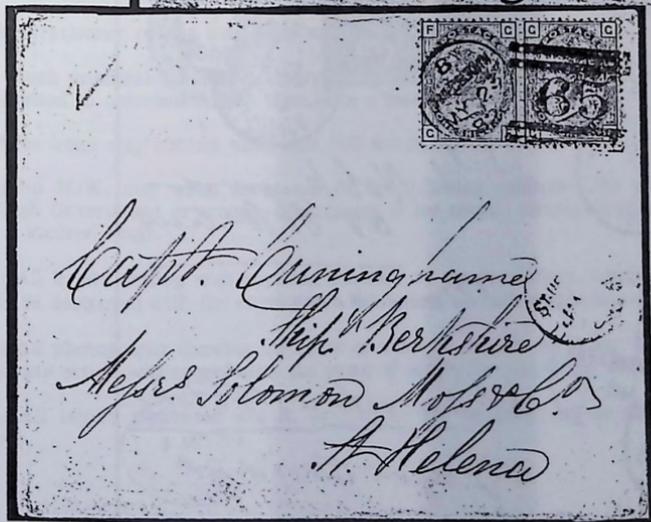
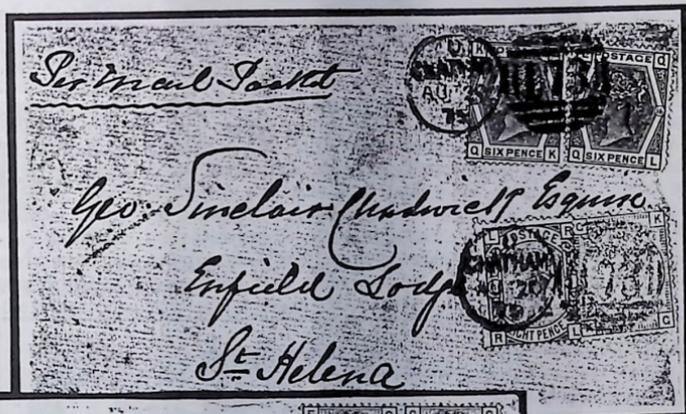
20th April 1944



DOUBLE RATE COVERS
TO ST. HELENA

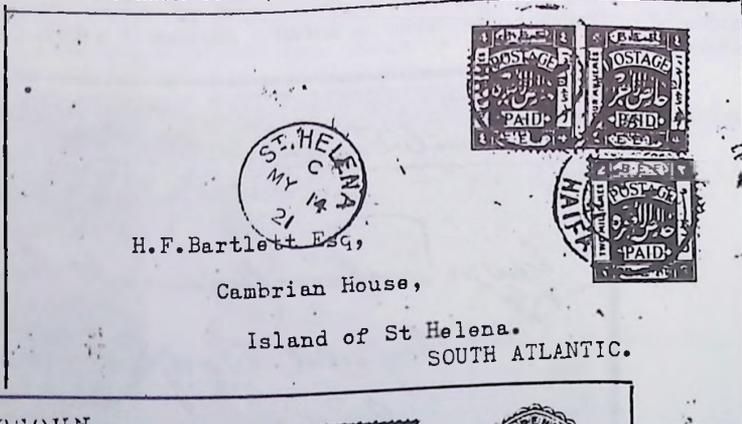
by Jeremy Martin

At the S.P.H. conference at Leamington, a display given by Gilbert Wheat included covers to St. Helena. The two covers illustrated below both show rates of 2/-. The first dated 1875 is addressed to "Enfield Lodge", while the second is addressed to a Ships Captain, care of Solomon and Moss.



PALESTINE TO ST. HELENA

Last year Dr. Art Groten forwarded to me a photostat of an unusual cover from Palestine to St. Helena dated 21st March 1921, it shows St. Helena arrival for 14th May 1921. Also illustrated is a registered cover from the Middle East dated 29th October 1894, with St. Helena arrival for 20th November 1894. (Note the manuscript marking, "Not known at St. Helena").



'ALEXANDER THE RAT'
F.W. ALEXANDER, CHIEF CENSOR,
DEADWOOD CAMP, ST. HELENA

by Dr. Stephen Royle
of the School of Geosciences, Queen's University of Belfast

This article is based on material in the Stopford Green Papers in the National Library of Ireland which records the visit to the St. Helena prisoner of war camps in 1900 of Irish woman Alice Stopford Green. Information revealed therein about the life and character of F.W. Alexander, the Chief Censor, may be of interest to readers. Alexander is not shown to have been a pleasant character.

I have been interested in St. Helena for a number of years and recently explained in this journal how I became involved in a study of the island's early twentieth century history [Reference 1] To this end I purchased a copy of Bernard Mabbett's book on the philately of the St. Helena Boer prisoner of war camps [Reference 2] From this I learned a good deal, including the fact that the Chief Censor and later Staff Interpreter at Deadwood Camp was Mr. F. W. Alexander, who was active on the island from April 1900 to March 1902, as evidenced from his initials on the envelopes of censored letters. He was on the staff of the Camp Commandant who had a Sergeant Major, orderly room clerk, two MPs, orderlies, quartermaster, quartermaster sergeant and POW helpers as well as three censors. The role of Alexander and the other censors is found within this proclamation to the POWs.

**Rules Regulating the
Correspondence of Prisoners of War**

(1) No prisoner of war may write more than two letters per month.

Such prisoners who have fathers, sons and brothers in the various camps abroad will be permitted to correspond with them once a month.

(2) No letter may contain more than 500 words.

(3) No POW. may write about any of the following subjects:- the political situation, the British Government or troops, occurrences in the camps, complaints about food, or anything of a kindred kind.

(4) All letters dealing with anything contrary to the regulations, whether registered or not, will be destroyed with the envelopes. No notices of such destruction will be given.

(5) All photographs shewing the coats of arms of the late republics, pictures of the leader, and any article whatsoever with the coats of arms aforementioned will be confiscated.

(6) All letters addressed Z.A.R. or O.F.S. will be destroyed as these places no longer exist.

- (7) Letters may be posted daily between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12 noon, but must be handed to the Staff interpreter, who will attend at the office during these hours for the purpose of receiving them.
- (8) No POW is allowed inside the Staff interpreter's office for any reason whatsoever.
- (9) Parcels and packages must be packed in the presence of the Staff interpreter.
- (10) With reference to the envelopes retained in the censor's office, the unused stamps will be sold to the POWs and the proceeds given to the widows and orphans of Boer prisoners.

A.J. Price, Colonel
Officer Commanding Troops
[Reference 3.]

My researches into a hitherto little used archive of St. Helena history can identify something of the man responsible for putting into operation this proclamation, F.W. Alexander, whose initials are to be found on so many postal items from the St. Helena Camps. What I have uncovered may thus be of interest to readers of the *St. Helena & Ascension Supplement*.

The archive I used was the Stopford Green papers held in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin. [Reference 4.] These relate to Mrs Alice Green, née Stopford, widow of historian J.R. Green. She was a noted historian herself as well as being a political campaigner. Mrs Green (1847-1929) was an Irish Nationalist and became a senator in the Irish parliament when the Irish Free State gained its independence. Born into a family of a Church of Ireland Archdeacon in rural County Meath, she spent much of her adult life in London where she was active in women's issues and was a friend of Emily Hobhouse and Mary Kingsley. Another cause close to her heart was Africa and she was a founder member, vice president and journal editor of the african Society.

The Boer War took her interest because it was in Africa and also because it was a stick with which she could beat the British. Her friends went to South Africa in the cause of the Boers: Emily Hobhouse to write a report on the state of the concentration camps; Mary Kingsley to nurse Boer prisoners, an activity that led to her own death from enteric fever. Green instead, went to St. Helena to report on the state and conditions of the Boers held in camps there, a resourceful journey nearly a century ago for an unaccompanied widow in her fifties at a time of war. This was in September 1900 and from that time she maintained her interest in the camps and the Boer POW cause, frequently writing to the press and badgering establishment figures including Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies with whom she had a number of meetings. The papers she left of her work, which includes a journal of her visit to St. Helena, have formed the basis of my on-going researches. [Reference 5.] Readers might like to know that many of the documents are letters from St. Helena, some in the original envelopes with stamps and postal marks. In the archive is some mention of F.W. Alexander, which forms the raw material for this article.

Before writing about the censor, I should re-emphasise that Alice Green was an Irish Nationalist and was antipathetic towards the British establishment. Historians must use her papers with caution, for fear of accepting her bias. The detail of her visit seems to be accurate and to balance her own views new papers contain also material from people with opposing ideas with whom she corresponded. Opposing views also appeared in print, see for example the article from one of her correspondents, Colonel Paget [Reference 6.] and compare it to her own published work. [Reference 7.] However, I have come across no other source that details the life and character of F.W. Alexander and so have only Green's account to report. Let the reader beware, though, she did not like either the man or what he stood for and routinely referred to him as 'Alexander the Rat'!

There seems little reason to doubt the facts she details of Alexander's life. It seems he had been 47 years in South Africa where he had had a kitchen garden and vegetable shop. This is mentioned twice but with different locations, once in the Cape, the second time in Johannesburg. The latter seems more likely as he had abandoned his livelihood rather than turn against the British as he did not want to be on the 'wrong side' which would presumably not have been a problem if he were at the Cape. His role on St. Helena also required a good knowledge of Afrikaans which he would have needed also in Johannesburg.

He lost a son in the war and 'the whole camp of Boers was nothing to his son'. His antipathy towards his charges showed itself, it seems his refusal to pass on requests for parole and in comments he made about the Boers. At lunch with senior officers and Alexander on 22nd September 1900 Green recorded in her journal that 'Alexander the rat' in his genial way took most of the conversation: "Boers-Liars-No truth in them and no gratitude....You've got to grind them down now - to g.g.r.r.ind them (hardening the edge of his knife against the table with all his strength) so that they can't stir". On another occasion Alexander told Green that the Boers should be exterminated or 'brought to a right mind'. He regarded them as liars and would have no truck with parole for the Cape.

Green in return, had no truck with Alexander obviously hating him and this is why one must be aware of bias in her reportage. 'Up came Alexander, rat like, and monopolised the conversation' was one comment in her journal. She told the War Office on 3rd December 1900 that Alexander was a 'very coarse and ignorant man'; the same month she reported to Chamberlain that the Head Censor and the other two 'are low and inferior men' chosen, presumably, just because they speak Dutch.

Despite Alexander's characteristics, Green found that he had insinuated himself with the officers, thus his presence at her lunch with the two senior officers. she claimed that the officers hardly ever enter the camp and do not speak to the men, except for a few favourites and listened only to Alexander's tales. As a result she found the officers to be ignorant of camp affairs. By contrast, the Boers, she reported, spoke well of the officers but hated the censors, especially Alexander, though Alexander himself seemed to be unaware of this. Another censor, E. Walton, was described a 'gaol bird' by one. A third, called Crown, was known to be 'a common drunkard' (but note that no censor called Brown features in Mabbett's book).*

One reason for the Boer's hatred of Alexander forms perhaps the most serious charge against the man to be uncovered in the Stopford Green archive. It is that Alexander (and Brown) did not confine themselves to their official duties but also dealt with the prisoners in illegal commercial transactions by supplying them with illicit whiskey (not the spelling, Green was Irish) at huge profits. They were not the only traders. In her journal on 15th October 1900 Green noted that 'the liquor question' in Camp (there was only the one camp then) 'seems to have been pretty bad among the Johannesburg men...Tommy [i.e. British soldiers] would roll in bottles under the wire and the Boers brought some in in aloe sticks. Alexander and Brown did a little business with their black bags'. The Boers would not set up a vigilance committee to help stamp out the trade and so the Colonel punished the whole camp until the Boer leader, Commandant Wolmarans, told him where to search for the alcohol. In a paper sent by Green to the War Office, she was keen to point out that the Boers themselves had put a stop to Alexander's whiskey selling. Further material sent to Chamberlain in December 1900, she complained that the Head Censor and another secretly sell sprits at a profit of two shillings to two shillings and sixpence a bottle, carried in in little black bags. She advised the removal of the censors but this was not done.

All in all the Stopford Green papers if taken at their face value, and the possibility of bias has been mentioned, reveal many unpleasant features about F.W. Alexander, the St. Helena Chief Censor. He comes across as an embittered, poorly educated man with few social skills who, though he had insinuated himself with the officers, was hated by the POWs themselves not just because of the unwelcome, but necessary, job of the censor, but because of his dealings in illicit sprits. They doubtless valued his trade but were bitter at the inflated prices he charged. In his turn, Alexander hated the Boers, not least because of the death of his son. The new evidence of the state of relations between the censor and the censored and the type of man who was the censor might help readers understand more clearly the operation of censorship on St. Helena.

REFERENCES

1. Royle, S.A. (1996) 'Another view of St. Helena', *The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist*, 39.2, p.29.
2. Mabbett, B.J. (1985) *St. Helena: the philately of the camps for Boer prisoners of war April 1900 to August 1902*, Anglo-Boer War Philatelic Society Publication number 3.
3. National Library of Ireland MS 10,465 (3).
4. National Library of Ireland MS 10465 and MS 421.
5. Royle, S.A. (forthcoming) 'St. Helena as a Boer prisoner of war camp, 1900-1902: information from the Alice Stopford Green papers', *Journal of Historical Geography*.
6. Paget, A.L. (1901) 'Some experiences of a Commandant Prisoners of War, at Deadwood Camp, St. Helena 1900-1901' *Longman's Magazine* 38 pp. 513-527 and 39, pp. 35-48.
7. Green, A.S. (1900) 'A visit to the Boer prisoners at St. Helena', *The Nineteenth Century*, December, pp. 972-83.

* EDITORS NOTE - CENSOR J.H.M. BROWN

The censor named Brown is now known to be the one previously thought by Hibbert (1979) to be J.H.M. Bateman, and by myself (1985) to be J.H.M. Beasley. The true name of the censor came to light in Supplement No. 14. p.35 where a card is illustrated showing that Brown was transferred to Bermuda. Covers from Bermuda are known with the initials J.H.M.B. confirming this.

ASCENSION
MAIL BAG LABELS

by Jeremy Martin

Illustrated over the next few pages are a number of Ascension Mail Bag Labels sent courtesy of James Podger. Each one is illustrated and annotated beneath with the relevant information.

AIR MAIL-PAR AVION
From **B.F.P.O. 677**
FOR
GREAT BRITAIN
VIA
1383/8743692 9/80-178



Serial Number
Date of Despatch
Gross Wt. Grammes
Wt Grammes **L.C.**
Wt. Grammes **A.O.**



Forces Post Office Air Mail Bag Label. front and back illustrated the island number is 677. As with all B.F.P.O.'s this one is ran by the army.

Postal Parcels	from Ascension to
Despatch No.	CAPETOWN
Date of despatch	via
Bag No.	Ship
Number of parcels	Port of disembarkation
933/WIP/76897.	

Parcel Label, yellow with black script.

Postal Parcels	from Ascension to
Despatch No.	LONDON
Date of despatch	(GREAT BRITAIN)
Bag No.	via
Number of parcels	Ship
933/AMSS/385387.	Port of disembarkation

Parcel Label, yellow with black script.



Parcel Bills Label, buff with black script and is attached to the outside of the mail bag.

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 28

Labels all white except Cape Town/Registered Articles which is buff and the Cape Town one which is chalky white. All script is in blue, except Cape Town which is black.

For ST. HELENA

Despatch No. 6 Date of despatch 27.5.97

from ASCENSION to

ST. HELENA

Via ship RMS "ST HELENA"



For FALKLAND ISLANDS

From ASCENSION ISLAND

PAR AVION

FALKLAND ISLANDS

Serial No.	LC	AO	Total	Airport of Destination
Date of Dispatch	Kg	Kg	Kg	
Airport of Transhipment				

Despatch No. _____ Date of despatch _____

from ASCENSION to

Cape Town

via _____

ship _____

933/DA32/585387.

From ASCENSION ISLAND

PAR AVION

For

GREAT BRITAIN

Serial No.	LC	AO	Total
	Kg	Kg	Kg
Date of Dispatch	Airport of Transhipment		Airport of Destination

Again thanks to James Podger, I am able to illustrate some modern Postal History. The 'Registered Articles' Label is put on a mail-bag to seal it. This in turn is put inside another mail-bag carrying normal mail which is sealed with the label 'from St. Helena to Ascension (Island)'. The sealing is done by string and a metal clip, the clip being embossed 'STH'. The small pale red label is also attached to this indicating that this bag contains a bag containing registered mail.

REGISTERED ARTICLES

From ST. HELENA

To

ASCENSION!

Cream with blue writing.

Despatch No. 24/5/97 Date of despatch 7

from St. Helena to

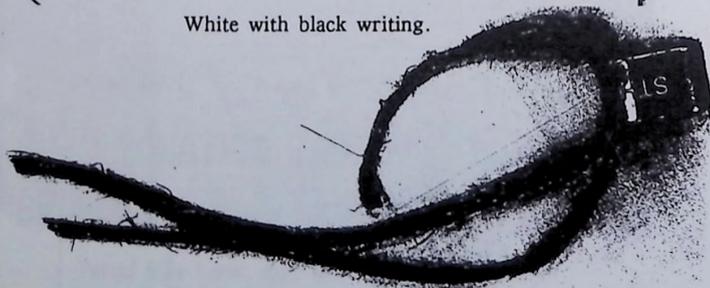
Ascension
(Island)

via _____

ship RMS. ST. HELENA-

933/Dd32/68770.

White with black writing.



Steel clip embossed 'STH'.

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 28

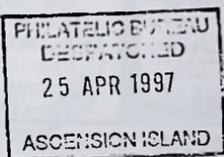
CURRENT ASCENSION ISLAND
DATE STAMPS AND CACHETS

by Jeremy Martin

Once again thanks to James Podger, a friend who is working on the island, I am able to record the various cancellers and cachets held at the Post Office. The signature is that of Mrs. Angela Francis, the Postmistress. The date was April 25th 1997.

The 'MISSENT TO ASCENSION' cachet has been withdrawn from service, and all missent mail is handwritten in the same style. Apart from the postmistress there are two other employees so the style of writing may differ.

James was shown a pile of mail, some eight inches high, all being the latest missent mail. Most of it was addressed to the Turk and Caicos Islands.



DOUANE
Philatelic Material
Value £.....

ON POSTAL SERVICE

Official Paid



PAQUEBOZ

ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

Francis

**POSTAL ORDERS
AND
POSTAGE RATES**

by Jeremy Martin

British Postal Orders are used on the island. An example is shown below.

24

COUNTERFOIL **50P** **BRITISH POSTAL ORDER**

TO BE DETACHED AND KEPT BY THE SENDER

SENDER MUST FILL IN PAYEE'S NAME IN INK PLEASE PAY

NOT NEGOTIABLE

FIFTY PENCE POSTAL ORDER PAYABLE TO

FIFTY PENCE AT (POST OFFICE)

50P

RECEIVED / SIGNATURE

POSTAGE STAMPS

Postage stamps may be added to the Postal Order to a maximum value of forty-nine pence, in this space only (see reverse).

DO NOT WRITE OR MARK BELOW THIS LINE

0056 275573 0056 275573

DATE STAMP: ST. HELENA, GEORGETOWN, APR 11

DATE STAMP: PAYING OFFICE, ST. HELENA, APR 11 97

NEW POSTAL RATES

There will be an increase in Postal Rates from 1st June 1997.

For Example:

SURFACE MAIL

Letters	
For the first 20 grammes or part thereof	
International	25p
St. Helena	15p
Above 20g up to 100g International	50p
St. Helena	35p
Postcards International	20p
St. Helena	15p

AIR MAIL

To all destinations:	
Letters	
for the first 10g or part thereof	40p
above 10g up to 20g	50p
for ea. additional 20g or part thereof	30p
Postcards	35p
Aerogrammes	25p

Further details are available from the Post Office in Georgetown.

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 28

WATERMARK VARIETIES ON
THE PERKINS BACON 6d PLATE

I have been asked by Roger Morgan if a list can be made of all the known Inverted, Reversed and Inverted and Reversed watermark varieties of the Perkins Bacon 6d. Plate. And to ask if any member can add to the known current listing.

SG 8	1d P12½	-	REV	INV/REV
SG 10	2d P12½	-	REV	-
SG 11	3d P12½	-	REV	-
SG 14	4d P12½	-	REV	-
SG 17	1s P12½	INV	REV	-
SG 18	1s P12½	-	REV	-
SG 19	1s P12½	-	REV	-
SG 24	4d P14 x 12½	INV	-	INV/REV*
SG 27	1d P14	-	-	INV/REV
SG 30	1s P14	INV	-	INV/REV
SG 35	½d (Green)P14	-	REV	INV/REV
SG 37/38	1d P14	-	REV	-
SG 40	2½d P14	INV	-	-
SG 41	3d Deep Mauve P14	-	REV	-
SG 43/43a	4d. P14	-	REV	INV/REV*
SG 44	6d P14	INV?	REV	-

*This variety also known on 'SPECIMEN' stamps.

It is thought that SG 16 6d. Dull Blue P12½ may exist with reversed watermark, although this has yet to be confirmed.

FROM THE EDITORS POST BAG

KGV1 DEFINITIVE PLATE NUMBERS

David Studd who has been studying the St. Helena KGV1 definitives would like to know if any member has copies of the 4d. and 8d. value with Plate Numbers in their collections.

All replies to: David Studd
6 Rose Mount
Bradford
West Yorkshire BD2 4JJ

REMAINDER CANCELLATIONS

Roger Morgan has had a lengthy correspondence with the editor of Stanley Gibbons publications regarding the REMAINDER CANCELLATIONS on the ½d., 1d. and 2d. values of the 1884-94 issue. Has any member seen, or got copies of these stamps with the remainder cancellation in their collections, as neither Roger or myself has seen any, and Gibbons would like to amend their catalogue.

All correspondence to Roger Morgan please.

JAPTUNA HANDSTAMP

Ian Mathieson has confirmed that the above handstamp illustrated in Supplement No. 27 refers to the licensing system for Japanese trawlers for tuna in St. Helena's territorial waters. In 1995/96 the revenue from the licenses was about £800,000 making it one of the St. Helena Government's main sources of revenue. Presumably only correspondence relating to the licences receives the japtuna handstamp.

ESCAPED BOER PRISONER

Also from Ian Mathieson comes information on the above. The prisoner was a Commandant A. Smorenburg. The story of his escape will be published in the next Supplement.

1884-94 4d. WITH
ADDITIONAL THIN BAR

by Bernard Mabbett

I have recently purchased a copy of this stamp S.G. 43a. It was first brought to our attention by Roger West in Supplement No. 3, p 7 to 8. I have managed to plate my copy as stamp 171 (15/3), although Gibbons list this as stamp 76 (7/4). The only other member I know who has copies of this variety is Prof Ralph Stanton, and the following information was supplied by him.

First we can ignore the statement that it is position 76. Melville is not reliable, and Gibbons has merely copied him.

The probable cause of this extra line lies in the fact that the overprint letters would have had some sort of supporting material. If one of these pieces of supporting metal (somewhat in the nature of the supports we still use when employing rubber stamps) were a trifle to high, then it could receive ink along with the overprint and would print out a thin line.

However, I would classify this as a "transient variety", that is it did not occur in every possible position nor on every possible occasion. There are three explanations for this. Depending on how the overprint forme was set up, it might or might not be at just the right slant to permit the supporting line to engage in printing. Also from time to time, or when the forme was moved, the tightness of the forme would be altered. If the forme was over-tight, then the thin line might or might not print. Finally, if the forme was very lightly inked, or if it were due to be re-inked in the near future, there might not be enough ink remaining on the thin line for it to print.

The scarcity of the variety certainly supports the idea that not all possibilities always produced the variety. In particular, when the forme was moved to another portion of the sheet, there would be a change in the slant of the forme, in the tightness of the forme, and in the inking. All of these factors could affect the production of the variety.

I have four copies, three with the thin line below the overprint, one with the thin line above the overprint. One of the former occurs in a block of four, and any experienced collector can plate a block of four of the Queen's Head issue. Indeed, the stamp is position 74, and the other two singles I have are likewise position 74.

The single copy that I have of the thin line above the overprint comes from position 63.

FOUR PENCE

FOUR PENCE

Does any other member have copies of this variety? as they would appear to be very scarce. We now know of five copies including my own, the first I have seen in over twenty years of collection.

THE ROSEMARY HALL CORRESPONDENCE
THE DE FOUNTAIN-BAKER AND OTHER LETTERS 1828-64

In the Cavendish Auction, (Sale 521) was an interesting correspondence of 7 early St. Helena letters mostly used internally on the island between 1828 and 1864. Most of the letters were addressed to Thomas Baker, a well know Forwarding Agent on the island at that time. My grateful thanks go to Dave Tarry of Cavendish Philatelic Auctions for allowing me to reproduce the letters in the Supplement, but my biggest thank you must go to Trevor Hearl for supplying information regarding the De Fountain's etc, and for transcribing the letters for me; a daunting task when you look at the criss-crossed scrawl of some of the letters.

The De Fountain family was certainly landed on the Island in 1690 among the Huguenots recruited by the Company (H.E.I.C.) to plant vines and produce wine. They landed from the "Benjamin", Indiaman on 6th January 1690. Captain Stephen Poirier, 3 sons and 5 daughters, Samuel De Fountain and 9 other french Viuerous.

John De Fountain was a senior merchant in the East India Company's service, who was dismissed, in company with another, for serious defalcations.

The following De Fountains (or des Fountains) are listed between 1797-1842

In the East India Company Calendar for 1797 there are:-

<u>Writers:</u>	James des Fountain
<u>St. Helena Artillery:</u>	John Des Fountain
<u>East India Register</u> for 1809:-	
<u>Senior Merchants:</u>	John De Fountain

Elizabeth Desfountain (widow) had an estate of 105 acres at Peak Dale (indigenous forest?)
John Desfountain (farmer) of Prospect Place had 90 acres there and 28 acres at "Meads".

G.W. Melliss: Survey of Land holding 1836.

This suggests that Desfountain brought "Prospect" from T.H. Brooke when he left c 1835 - tho I should not jump to conclusions!

St. Helena Register for 1830 List of Inhabitants:

John de fountain: Hon Company's Pension List.

[It was a Charles de Fountain in 1818 who was fined £2 for ill-treating a slave girl. Sir Geo Bingham wished he could have been fined £40. Gosse pp.277-8]

For 1833:

2nd Lieut J. Desfountain Island Militia (20 Dec. 1830)-appointed.

Retired Officers include:-

Lieut Chas Desfountain (from 13 April 1826).

Agricultural Society:

J. Desfountain Esq (a Vice president).

Vestry Committee:

Mr J. Des Fountain- 2 years to serve.

for 1842 Militia:

J. Desfountain promoted Lieut 7 July 1836-promoted Captain 1843.

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 28

1828 (Friday 21 March) [Cover No. 1] John de Fountain to Thomas Baker, Jamestown

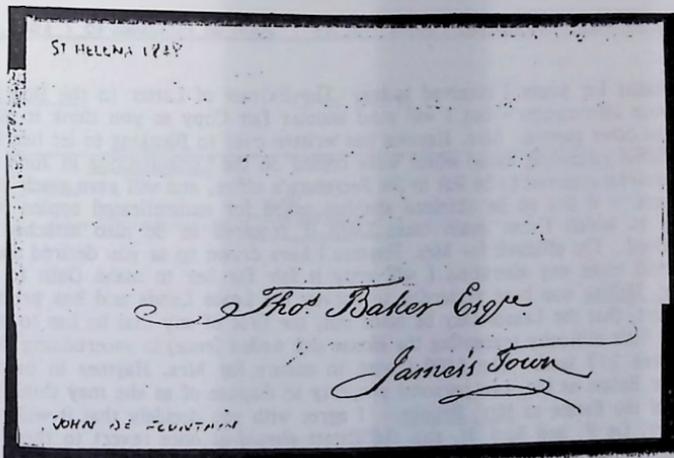
My dear Sir.

"To Thos. Baker Esqre, James's Town"

The enclosed Papers I received last evening from Fowler, and have to beg the favor of your revising them as you think best: - I have lost no time in sending them to you before the S.S.s arrival (on the 23rd) when you will have too much else to attend to: - the penciling is all mine as well as the Condition to follow on the 4th side of the first Sheet. Mr. Haymes sends her kind Compliments & begs you will allow her to avail herself of your kind promise to act as Trustee, and leaves it to you to make the insertion in the latter part of the papers in the way that may be most agreeable.

Yours mo: truly & obliged / John De Fountain

I have enclosed Mr. F-s Note - be so good as let me have it again



1828 (Thursday 27 March) [Cover No. 2]John de Fountain to ? Thos. Baker ?

My dear Sir,

Mrs. Haymes and myself beg you will accept our most sincere thanks for the papers you had the very great kindness to send on Tuesday Evening: - I hasten to return them to you that I may be enabled to avail myself of your kind offer to have them prepared too be executed: - I have enclosed Copy of an Extract - and affidavit for your perusal, that you may consider whether the words

[Sides 2 and 3 of this letter were not sent]

Creditors hereafter. I have agreed to give Mrs. Haymes £100 pr. annum for Rosemary Hall: I have done so more to give her the opportunity of giving her Children a good Education than any other inducement (a good Education being in my opinion, particularly to Females, the first of all Considerations) - the Rent I wish you to deduct Monthly from my Pay from 1st May next - I have much more to say on this subject, which however time obliges me to wave [sic] for the present.

Yours mo: truly & obliged / John De Fountain

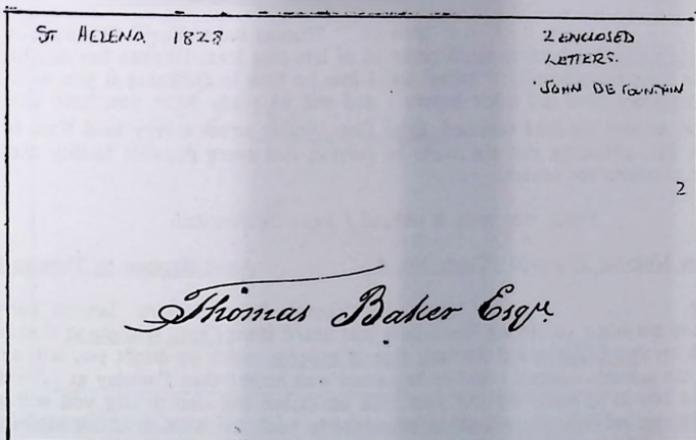
1828 (Sunday Evening 30th March) [Cover No. 2]John de Fountain to ? Thos. Baker?

My dear Sir,

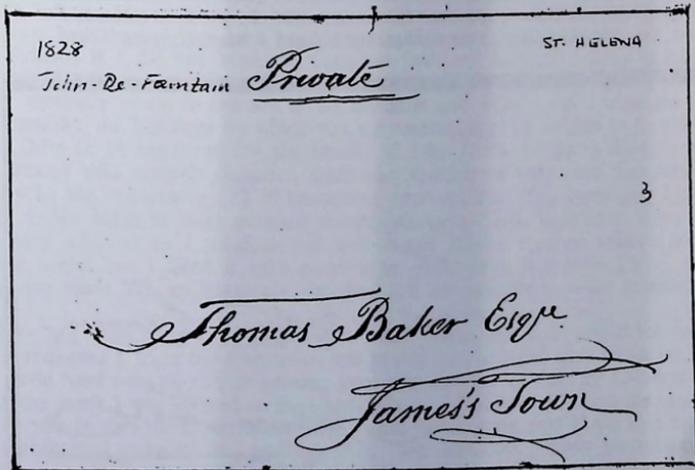
Many thanks for yours I received today. The Extract of Letter to the Board I sent merely for your information - but I will send another fair Copy as you think it should be attached to the other papers. Mrs. Haymes has written over to Blenkins to let her have the Original affidavits (including mine) which were copied on the Consultations in June 1825 as they cannot now be required to be left in the Secretary's office, and will save much trouble if I can get them: - if not to be obtained she has asked for authenticated copies from the Consultations to which I can again make Oath if required to be also attached to the Conveyance Deed. The affidavit for Mrs. Haymes I have drawn up as you desired and if you approve or will make any alteration I will copy it fair for her to make Oath to be Mr. Brooke. Mr. Melliss was here yesterday to survey the Lease Lands and has promised to make his report, that the Leases may be made out, the first of any that he has to survey - there is some little difficulty (excepting the House and walled fence) in ascertaining the other part of the free [?] land. The £400 I wish to ensure for Mrs. Haymes in case of the revision of the Estate as her own personal property to dispose of as she may think fit after the revision of the Estate to Mrs. Brooke: - I agree with you decidedly that it will be much better for Mrs. De F. and Mrs. H. that the Estate should at once revert to them; not to them thro' me: - I have returned the Items leaving it to you whether I have made the erasure correctly or not.

Yours truly & obliged / John De Fountain

Pardon my troubling you at a time when your anxiety must be so very great - trust however that you have received pleasant accounts from Mrs. B by the Walsingham



Cover No. 2.



Cover No. 3.

1828 (Saturday 19 April) [Cover No. 3]

John de Fountain to Thomas Baker

My dear Sir.

"Private Thomas Baker Esq^{re} James's Town"

Mr. Brooke's time has been so much occupied of late that Mrs. Haymes has not had it in her power to make her affidavit 'till today, and I lose no time in enclosing it you as desired, with the Conveyance deed and other papers - and will be ready when you have leisure to come to Town to have the deed executed. Brig^l Gen^l Walker wrote a very kind Note to Mrs. H. before he left, intimating that she might be assured that every possible facility should be given to her obtaining the Leases.

Yours mo: truly & obliged / John De Fountain

1828 (Sunday Morning 20 April) [Cover No. 4]

Anne Haymes to Thomas Baker

My Dear Sir,

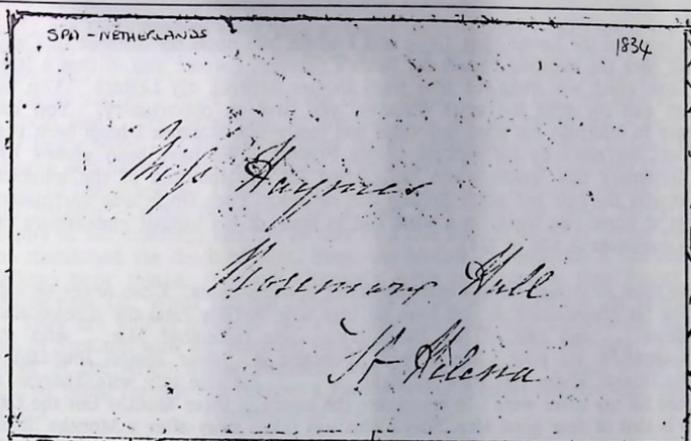
"Thomas Baker Esquire James Town"

Excuse my troubling you today, but I have just heard from Capt. Whitehead that he will take me with my two Children and Servant, free of expense which no doubt you will agree is an object of the greatest moment - but as he cannot wait longer than Tuesday at 10 o'clock I am quite at a loss to be ready without your kind assistance and also to beg you will let me know what Money and Bills you will kindly promised to assist me with, or think advisable, to take with me to defray my present Expenses in England &c. I approved of all the papers as they have been drawn out and will thank you to include my father in the Power of attorney as he will be in immediate possession of all my wishes - I may [?] allow my Baggage to remain at you Office as it comes to Town tomorrow if it cannot be shipped immediately and also allow me to request you, My dear Sir, to afford me your kind assistance till I embark, with kind regards to you believe me ever to remain with the greatest esteem,

My dear Sir / Yours sincerely obliged / Anne Haymes

Thomas Baker Esquire
James Town

Cover No. 4.



1834 (20 November) [Cover No. 5] Aunt to "Miss Haymes, Rosemary Hall, St. Helena"

My ever dearest Child

Spa, Netherlands

Your dear and affectionate Letter afforded both me and your Uncle the greatest satisfaction as it convinced us we had not laboured in vain to implant good principles in your young Mind; and we sincerely rejoice in the flattering account you give us of your improved health. God in his infinite Mercy grant it may continue to progress towards perfect restoration! next to your happiness I can have no fears for that surrounded as you are by tenderly attentive Friends if I did not hope the Christian faith and humility I have endeavoured to implant should preserve you from the snare I should tremble for your young Heart as we know how naturally prone to evil are all its thoughts and ways - but I trust my Child you will ever consider the blessings by which you are encompassed as Talents to be placed out of interest - Gifts to be improved for the benefit of your fellow creatures Sent by a merciful but just Creator who severely threatens those who slumber on their Post You have made us quite happy by the importance (?) of continuing your studies. You know dear Lou I do not attach any undue value to these outward accomplishments I only look upon them as elegant and necessary adjuncts to a religious and well-stored Mind. I never balance between the elegant and useful but I think it very possible to unite them in a good Girl - and fondly hoped to have made You an instance - but the Lord has seen fit to order it otherwise [5/2 ends]

[5/3] I have not been allowed to finish what I had begun but as I prayed for his blessing upon all I projected I trust the foundation will enable you to build up a structure worthy of us both. You have now no way of proving your affection for us than by devoting your time to perfect the work I was obliged to leave unfinished. I fondly dwell upon the hope of being reunited to you in this world therefore think "what would Aunt say" if she met her Child an indolent uninformed awkward or unamiable Girl. Yes dear Lou, I really do indulge the hope of having you once more near me, not indeed Spa but somewhere in the South of France. Netty in her letter enclosing yours hinted at the possibility of your dear good Grandpapa's coming to Europe to reside and I declare I have thought of nothing else.

I hope he received the Letter your Uncle and I wrote him upon the Subject of Capt. Harris having paid back the Hundred Pounds for Netty's passage. I wrote also in that a few lines to you my Love which will make the time seem shorter between my Letters. You ought not however to wait for mine but write whenever you have an opportunity. You know how much I have to interrupt my good intentions and really this Summer I have been perpetually occupied and harassed by the distress of my Friends. We have been visited by a very dreadful Dysentery this Season which has carried off two hundred of the inhabitants and attacked equally the rich and poor, English and natives. Your Uncle was surrounded by it, never slept at home two nights in a week and in spite of his utmost endeavours could not [5/3 ends continues at top of 5/4]

[5/4] save them all though he was most fortunate in many cases. I can never be sufficiently thankful for his preservation as you have no idea how terribly fatal the disease has been - poor Madame ... and two of her Daughters - you remember Mac... who was Mrs. Cracroft's agent for the poor. She is dead. Fontaine le ...sieur Joseph Jourdain (?) and Children by Dozens whom you knew by sight ... his nice tidy wife Thérèse also. In fact I should fill my letter were I to enumerate the losses in three Months but the far greater loss to us is that of dear good Mrs. Sneyd who was taken away after a Months illness by an inflammatory attack in the Throat which spread to the lungs in spite the united efforts of your Uncle and Dr. Newbolt who was fortunately here at the time. I cannot describe the distress of his poor wife, who has lost everything - Fortune, Son and Husband within twelve Months. Cap^{tn} Hawker was here and though but just recovering from the loss of his Wife - he supported our good Friends in that most trying affliction as did also the Cracrofts - indeed everyone felt deeply for the distress and their loss to Spa will be incalculable as you know the good they did among the poor. Poor Nathaniel occupies the ... next to my angelic Child and the good old Man lies at their feet as his dying wish was to be placed as near as possible to his poor Son. Poor Mrs. Sneyd has been sorely tried and the poor Girls also but they are now recovering a little from the stunning effects of so much Misery and are returned to Aix-la-Chapelle for the Winter [5/4 ends]

[5/2 crossed] and you will be greatly surprised to hear that the Cracrofts are there also, all but Monsieur who is something like Uncle rather difficult to remove from dear Spa. The girls are grown more worldly minded than would have been expected from the strict religious principles of their Parents and the poor Mother now finds the falacy [sic] of her System of Independence and indulgence for at the time she most requires their affectionate attentions and might naturally expect comfort in their society at Home they are dissatisfied and would rather be anywhere else and with any other person. You know I always predicted the failure of her plan therefore am not surprised. You give me infinite satisfaction in shewing that you do ['not' omitted?] set your affections on the pleasures of the World. I would have you a Slave to anything so uncertain and deceitful. A young woman may shine innocently in society but her true glory is seen in her department at Home. I fondly trust my Child will study to be a blessing to all around her and as she knows where to seek for help I doubt not she will obtain it from Him who has promised to grant unto all who ask in his Son's Name. You will not I know be ashamed of that Name for you know there is none other under Heaven by which we can be saved and always fly from anyone as an Associate who would endeavour to weaken your Faith in it or to tell you that you

[5/3 crossed] are too young to think thus seriously upon Religion - "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy Youth" and he will go along with you through all the thorny paths of this life and receive you in his rest hereafter - but I forget the narrow limits of my Paper when I begin to write to you so I must turn to the other matter - Well then my love let me see. Aunt and Uncle Han... are quite well, so are the Girls but still unmarried - poor Mary's deafness is I fancy fixed [?] for life as there are no symptoms of change and her health is perfect - a very sad prospect for all parties. The Munros are still at Guernsey they were to have gone out to Demerara but I fancy it is put off - talking of Demerara reminds me of cidevant Miss Nielson - Cecilia Bosch [?] had a long letter from her lately saying she was perfectly happy in her marriage and the Mother of a fine Boy on whom of course she doated [sic]. She mentioned the death of Mrs. Bean, the Mother of Madeleine & Marianne, your old play fellows poor things; they will ultimately settle in Europe as their Father intends returning to be near Dr. White and his Sister, Miss White, who you know has brought them all to life. They are still in Edinbro' and I daresay Netty has seen them as she has passed this Autumn in Scotland with her Husband who went there for Grouse Shooting. It seems he has a Brother in the Army whose Regiment was quartered there. Indeed Netty has been highly favoured being for she has entered a Family of the greatest respectability an ... hope all received her
[continues at 5/4 crossed]

[5/4 crossed] with open arms his Mother and Sisters coming up from Devonshire to visit him on their arrival - his Uncle General Baker has invited them to pass the Winter in Tavistock but I suppose Mamma will not give them up as they only stayed a week with them in Guernsey on their first arrival in England. I have little chance of seeing Netty at present unless the Captain decides on remaining on shore for a year or two in which case they may come to the Continent par économie. You are quite right my love to treat the ignorant gossip and vulgar reports you hear with contempt; Netty proved herself your Friend in quitting her happy Home to bear you company on your perilous voyage and therefore she is entitled to your affection and gratitude and although her so doing was rewarded beyond her utmost hopes still as she could nor foresee the events which awaited her landing in St. Helena she is not to be abused and vilified by those who are incapable of appreciating her motives - either you or I owe her life to her for had she not gone with you I never could have parted from you but knowing you were so ably assisted I bowed in resignation to the will of him who orders all things for our good and was rewarded by the restoration of my long shattered health - I do confess however that I was hurt and surprised at your not being at the Wedding but when all things were properly explained I then saw the impossibility of her inviting persons unknown to the Dallas's.
[5/4 ends]

[5/5] Mrs. Hen... is wintering at ... She has her sister Mrs. H.ley with her and their darling Joslyn poor Mary's Baby. They have placed George and Henry at Niewyd where the two Cracrofts are chez les Frères G...s where they learn German French English Latin and Greek and are Clothed for Forty Pounds a year. I forgot to add Music and Singing but I think there is quite enough for the money don't you Lou. Mon^{sr} Juliard is just dead of a rapid Consumption leaving two Children. I hear sometimes from good Mrs. G... - Cecilia has no Children and Elizabeth is still unmarried. I hoped to have passed this Winter in Brussels but when it came to the starting point Uncle's courage failed him and so I have been obliged to lay in my Winter provisions and make myself comfortable here if I can - although my health is wonderfully restored I am subject to very severe colds which always end in Cough therefore I am often obliged to keep my room for some days in order to get rid of it.

Uncle's health is also much better. He lived for some months on vegetable diet and I think cured his stomach complaint as he rarely has a Headache now and you know how he used to suffer with them - his knees too are wonderfully strong he can bear a hard days Chasse three times a week and a long walk between each. Chloé is quite as good and as gay and quite as great a favourite as even dear little J... too just the same only a little grey in the Tail and not so full of play - but alas I have to recount the death of our poor old Vicky who strange to say was taken with inflammation of the windpipe and died after twenty-four hours suffering on the first of July just six years from the day of his arrival in Spa. Uncle opened the body to see what had so suddenly caused the death, for the old Dog was quite fat and happy when this attacked him - he is buried in the Garden [5/5 ends]

[5/5 crossed left] this Winter to be near the Boys who are all at the 'Gurgins' at Bruxelles, Fritz and all, he ... such a Pickle he was obliged to send him. dear Mrs. Vau... has just taken Madame Antoinette House the Hotel de Nouilles ... Baby's [?] where I have no doubt she will be much more comfortable on account of the nice Garden in which the Children are playing. [?] ... Thomas Hislop lost his cause with the Government so our dear Friend lost ... addition to the Fortune of his Children ... Father and Lucy Hislop ... kindness. Eliza [?] has grown out of knowledge. She is far from well, God bring her ... improved in character and disposition [?] that you would be surprised and pleased. Louisa also grows quite a Demoiselle and does her English lessons with Monsieur Jacques ... Caroline grows pretty and dear ... the finest little creature in the world - walks and talks - and is quite a Boy. Janette is still at the head of the Nursery but Isabelle has left to go to Madame de [5/5 crossed right side] where she has ... the care of Blanche and John who are very fine Children - they pass the greater part of this Winter here at the Marteau [?] so I shall not be quite alone. Miss Plunkett is still here but intends leaving in a few days for England. I forget whether I told you of the untimely end of your poor Friend Randal who died in consequence of a fall from his Horse when out hunting in Ireland perhaps you read in the papers - a few days ago we saw the death of his Uncle the Honble Randal Plunkett announced, so poor unt Rose has lost two since you left us "Will ... something out about Eddy". Well then Eddy grew very handsome, very idle and very wicked so his Uncle Lord Dunsany was wroth and sent him to do penance with a clergyman for three years when if he behaves well he is to have a Commission in the Army and someday or other you may see your old acquaintance is a fine dashing uniform walking up to Rosemary to leave his Card on his way to India. Of the Prices I can tell you but [5/5 right side ends]

[5/1 right side] ... Aunt [?] Brooke was then a stranger to the Family but I need not further enlarge upon the subject - you may very fairly hold the good or evil report of persons capable of such deceit in the highest contempt ... those who after receiving her with the warmest affection the moment her back is turned ridicule and abuse her. As to poor Sally I am grieved to find her Heart so wickedly ungrateful but it is poor human nature when unsupported and improved by Religion and Education. I had flattered myself she had learnt better [5/1 right side ends]

[5/1 top] things which ... you see the idea of freedom was too m[uch?] for her weak head to bear and then bad advisers did the rest, entre nous I think you are lucky to be rid of her but remember dear Child you must pity and forgive her and if ever she is in Misery find her out and relieve her for such is the will of the Master I hope you follow - you do

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 28

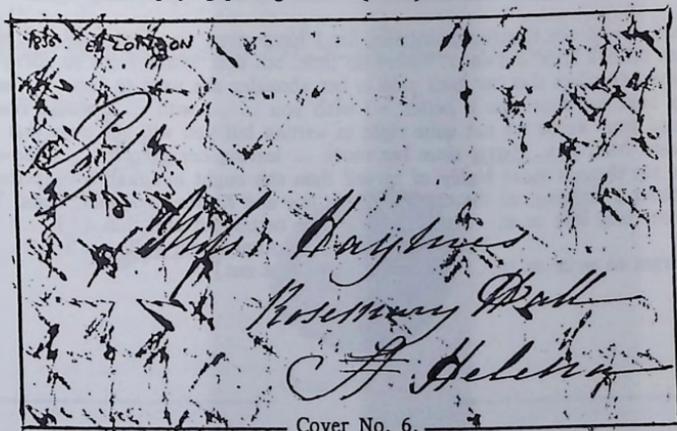
not tell me whether Grandmamma has still got little Betsy or who attends upon you - I hope you do not fall back into the original error that it is very ungenteel to be useful and independent Never suffer [?] [continued at sides]

[5/1 sides] a servant to do that for you which you can without serious inconvenience do for yourself. Pray my dear Girl devote every hour of your time to some useful or healthy employ. We are both delighted to hear you have a Piano and hope you will spend half an hour each day at your Major and Minor Scales - Exercises and Shakes [?] which will give you greatest facility of execution - I know you will do so for Aunty's sake - you must also try your Solfège every day as your chest will permit - God send my Child could say her Cough was so fully gone why should it linger in your fine climate - I hope you pay the greatest attention to the state of the interior you keep [?] regularity in that quarter is of vital importance and pray dear Lou do not eat Curry or highly seasoned food but all things as plain as possible - how Aunt is preaching you must forgive her on account of her great anxiety for your restoration [5/1 sides crossed ends]

[5/1 centre crossed] I shall be obliged to enclose a little scribble as I find I have not room to say all I wish to say You are a shabby fellow Lou when you write you ought not to leave a scrap uncovered remember how deeply interesting it is to me to know how you spend your time what kind [contd across, as follows]

[5/1 centre right] of people you are surrounded by - I see you are a little jealous of the elegant ... of Farm Lodge but you say not a word about the Vernons, I hope you associate with the Clergyman's family - there are Daughters I believe educated in England. [5/1 centre ends]

[5/1 crossed below address] You must also write to Mrs. Beard and send her some trifling remembrance as you can never repay their kindness to your poor Mother and dearest Sister [contd. below address] You must write to your Uncle Philip "St. Andrew's Cottage, Guernsey" he has complained of you not having done so any one can put the Letter in the post in England without paying postage [ends]



Cover No. 6.

1835 (21 April) [Cover No. 6]
My dear Louisa

Miss Haymes, Rosemary Hall, St. Helena
39 Great Tower St., City

I received a letter enclosed in Margaret's from you and I certainly felt ... then annoyed at your long silence and hoped it will be a lesson in future to you - I should think you could always find something to write about although ... What a dull and stupid place St. Helena is - nothing to do but finding fault and talking scandal of their .. which is the ... fact [?], but still I should like to know how you

[6/2 left side] are getting on. I had a letter from Mrs. Beard a few days ago, and she feels very much hurt in not receiving any letters from you, written to me to know if I have heard and how you are. Now dear Louise let me give you a piece of good advice and believe me a person who wishes you well like your Aunt ... lose her as a friend and nearly a Mother or I may say so, if you had been her own daughter she could not feel or express sentiments towards you in such endearing way as she did in her letter to me so ... my dear Lou write every two months or three to her

[6/2 right side] do not let her ... or imagine that your behaviour is ungrateful and you have forgotten her kindness and not sensible of it, let this go no further but keep it in memory as your Aunt Sarah must in prayer - I think you acted right in not going to Longwood perhaps you would have lost more than gained by their company, I tell you candidly the Bakers I never liked My P...ts I count ... if you ... no money never look to the Bakers as friends I know enough of Mr. Baker ... some things I know [?] but would not keep him my friend - she has been particularly kind to you therefore you ought in indebted to her

[6/1] but we must all differ a little in opinion, give my kind love to Mrs Torbett, and she is a lady I always liked and respected for she used to behave very kind to me, and am truly sorry for her severe trial and situation poor woman, we are all doomed to misfortunes in this world and must make the best use of our time and trust to our good providence for his kindness to us - write before - the music I will send the first opportunity I know

[6/2 crossed] any of the Captains going out for I have given up playing myself having so many children to look after and do ... I have no time, tell dear Mama I am so sorry she has been so ill and I recollect that her back pain in her shoulder she used to have in the Winter but sincerely hope and trust she is better - I wish you with ... I would finish your Music [?] and your Verbs are not quite right in writing but you will get over that in time. Have you heard from Mrs. Harris since her move ... leaving her favorite ... I do not care about her as she thought more highly of herself than she ought but that is ...ly the Scotch ... pride without a farthing, all the children ... in line and Kisses to Mama, Papa, Yourself passed with our best love to all. Mr. Valle is a little better but still thin [?]

Your ever affectionate Aunt Sarah Valle

PS do not forget to write or let [cannot make that out]

S9LIX

Post

1842

ST HELENA
29 11 29
1842
POST OFFICE

Mary De Fountain

St. Helena

PAID
24/11/29
1842

EAST INDIA HOUSE



Cover No. 7.

1842 (29 August) [Cover No. 7 1/2]

East India House to Mrs. Mary de Fountain

Madam, / I have laid before the Court of Directors of the East India Company your memorial representing that by your decease of your husband you are left without the smallest resources and praying that you may be continued in receipt of some portion of the allowance granted for his support.

In reply I am commanded to state that on a compassionate view of the situation of distress in which you have been placed, the Court have granted you a pension of Sixty pounds (£60) per annum commencing from the 26th August 1841 the date of your Memorial and to continue during widowhood.

The necessary application has been made to Her Majesty's Secretary for the Colonies to authorise the payment of the said pension at St. Helena on the Company's account.

I am / Madam / Your most obedient / humble Servant / [signed] Whewell[?]
Mrs. Mary de Fountain [Cover No. 7 1/2 ends]

[1864] (6 August) [Letter enclosed in Cover No. 7]

from Nathaniel Solomon to ?

My dear Sir,

I quite agree with you in the value of your nice property at St. Helena and if I could only get one third of what mine is worth be assured I would never return to St. Helena for the Island does not improve in any way. The Sum of money I am requested to try to purchase Rosemary for is 1000£ and even then I see no chance of the matter being settled / at once as you wish for of course reference must be made to the Rock for the money. I do not for one moment wish your Son to fancy I think it the value but I can only say that I will make great sacrifices to sell Farm Lodge, Bevan's West Lodge, Briars &c., simply for the reason that I believe St. Helena has seen its best days and the Government oppression / will drive every one away.

We have been afflicted as you are aware with white ants and they have destroyed not only our own property but the Government buildings & they (the Gov.) to ease our affliction are about to tax our provisions &c to keep up their useless civil establishment and put their offices &c in order it is cruel & I only want to get our case before the public when I hope we shall meet with Sympathy and the Authorities ashamed of themselves. You infer dear Sir I might like to buy Rosemary believe me when I tell you if I had to keep it in repair and hand to you in ten years I would not accept it. In England the property would be worth 15000£ if one penny but I have the best house in Town furnished that would let here for certainly 1000£ a year and at St. Helena I cannot get Sixty pounds / [crossed] the people are all poor I beg you excuse my long note and if I could be of service to you I would.

Yours truly / Nath^l Solomon

The Government are about to tax us at 75 per cent to obtain £30000 is it ... [?]

ROSEMARY HALL CORRESPONDENCE : NOTESCover No. 1 : 21 March 1828

Rosemary Hall: important country house and estate; 18th century home of Wm. Wrangham and his daughter Emma, the belle of Bengal. During Nap. exile it was let to Baron Sturmer (1816-18) and Count Balmain (1816-20), Commissioners for Austria and Russia respectively. In G. W. Melliss's Survey of 1836 it is listed as "the estate of Anne Haymes" (41 acres) with McIntoshes (31 acres), following her death in 1830.

John de Fountain: 'Senior Merchant' in St. H. civil service in 1809; "dismissed for serious defalcations" (Chaplin). In 1829 listed among Residents as on EIC pension list, but he does not appear on any published list of Company pensioners, though as will be seen, he seems to have been in receipt of an "allowance".

Thomas Baker: Shipping Agent; R.W. Baker bought the naval stockyard in 1821 and became main cattle and sheep importers on their ship Williamina, "a risky business" after departure of the 'royal' garrison. By 1856 Thos. Baker & Co. were agents for EIC, Lloyds, Sun Life & Alliance Ins. Cos.

Fowler: William F. Supt. of Public Sales from 1818; leading merchant family "S.S.'s": steamship? Source needed is Shipping Intelligence in the St. H. Calendar & Directory for 1829. Copies? IOR? St. H?.

Mrs. Haymes: Anne Haymes (née de Fountain), widow of Frederick James St. John Haymes, former Ensign, 66th Regt., who died 17 April 1822 aged 26; he went on half-pay from Nov. 1817 which may indicate date of marriage. She was a daughter of John de Fountain and died 26 March 1830 aged 29 at Spa.

Cover No. 2 (1/4) : 27 March 1828

Note: pp. 2 & 3 not present.

"my pay" : despite dismissal, he seems to have had an allowance - see 1842.

Cover No 2 (4/5) : 30 March 1828

the Board: EIC Board of Directors in London

Blenkins: George B. ('Senior Merchant') was Govt. Sec. under Governor Dallas; on leave in UK in 1829; lived at Woodlands until 1849.

Consultations: official record of St. H. Gov. Council business. Copies IOR.

Brooke: Thos. Hy. B., 2nd in Council; Author of History of St. H. 1808/1824.

Melliss: Geo. Whalley M.; Supt. Public Wks & Asst. Surveyor. Built 'Ladder' 1829.

Mrs. Brooke: presumably wife of THB; was she residual owner of Rosemary?

Walsingham: not listed among Indians since 'Lord Walsingham' 1799.

Cover No. 3 : 19 April 1828

Brooke's time: He was Acting-Governor from 14th to 29th April 1828.

Brig. Gen. Walker: Alexander Walker, Governor 1823-28; left 14 April 1828

Cover No. 4 : 20 April 1828

Capt. Whitehead: not found; source 'Shipping Intelligence' published 1829.

two children: i.e. Marion Louisa, born 1818 / Susan Margaret, born 1820.

my father: John de Fountain.

Cover No. 5 : 20 November 1834

Aunt: Sarah Valle (née de Fountain); her husband was related to Philip Vallé Supt. Silk Dept, St. Helena 1829-34 ["11 Jan 1833 to Mrs. Vallé a son"]

Miss Haymes: Marion Louisa H., "dear Lou", now living with her grand-parents, John and Mary de Fountain at Rosemary Hall again.

Not allowed to Finish: Lou had left after her sister's death in April 1832.

"not to Spa": in view of her mother's and sister's death, no doubt.

Netty: not yet identified; chaperoned Lou back to St. grandpapa: John de Fountain.

your uncle: M. Valle - she omits the accent é - seems to be in medicine.

Cap. Harris: was he Netty's new-found husband at St. H? H.Harris, commander of HCS Lowther Castle at St. H. 24 April-23 May 1833 outward bound for Bombay & China, fits the bill as to dates, but no marriage is listed at St. H. "my angelic child": was this her own, or Lou's sister, Susan Margaret, who died at Spa 6 April 1832, aged 11½.

Gen. Baker: not found / "the Captain": Harris? "the wedding": was this Netty's, or of Governor Dallas's daughter, Davidona Eleanor Dallas, who married Commander Francis Harding RN, 23 Oct 1833? Dallas's: Brig. Gen. Chas. Dallas, last EIC Governor, 1828-Feb 1836. Plunkett/Lord Dunsany: Dunsany's come from the Plunkett family; is Aunt Rose a relative or honorary Aunt - like 'Aunt Brooke' at St. H. presumably.

grandmamma: Mrs. Mary de Fountain - see letter below. Solfège: Tonic sol-fa exercises / Curry: standard fare at St. H. Beard: a St. H. family? Margaret Beard married R. Banks at St. H. 13 July 1833; but Mrs. Beard below seems to be living at Spa.

Farm Lodge: a leading country house owned in 1836 by Merchant Richard Prince.

Vernons: Rev. Bowater James V. EIC Chaplin 1816-34 had probably left St. H.

Uncle Philip: presumably Philip Vallé, ex-Silk Dept., having returned to the UK after transfer of St. H. to the Crown that year. NOTE: Letter not signed.

Cover No. 6 : 21 April' 1835 [NOTE: London address]

My dear Louisa: surprising that news of her death 7 months before (12 Set 1834) had not reached her. Had the end of the Company's use of St. Helena disrupted postal arrangements?

Margaret: Margaret Beard? / Mrs. Beard again / Aunt Sarah: first use of name. Longwood: property used by Napoleon 1815-21, then let to a tenant farmer. the Bakers: presumably Thos. Baker. Torbett: Torbetts owned the land used for Napoleon's tomb. Mrs. Harris: Netty's new mother-in-law?

Cover No. 7 (1/20 : 29 August 1842

East India House: Leadenhall St. London; demolished by Government in 1861-62.

Mary de Fountain: widow of John de F. the allowance: must have been a special provision after his dismissal. £60 p.a.: lowest widow's pension for a 'covenanted servant' of the Company.

Cover No. 7 [additional letter enclosed] 6 August 1864

1864: dated on internal evidence; SGH sought to raise a £30,000 loan in 1864 to repair Jamestown's white ant damage, but it was not authorised by the Colonial Office - perhaps following Nath. Solomon's protests, as he appears to be in London for that purpose.

Nathaniel Solomon: head of Solomon & Co., eldest son of Saul S., founder and "merchant king" of St. H. Dear sir: who? / note "your son" below, with an interest in Rosemary.

the Rock: unflattering name for St. H. Farm Lodge: among important country houses bought by Saul Solomon after property slump post-1836. Briars: Balcome's house where Nap. stayed in 1815; auctioned after Saul S's. death in 1852, yet still in the family apparently; later home of Phoebe Moss; then Cable & Wireless. Rosemary: perhaps left to decay; since demolished. This is all good evidence of the dramatic slumps in property and land prices in St. H. at various times 6 1821, mid-1830's, 1860's, 1870's. 1906 - needs investigating with the rest of its economic and social history! So good Luck to the Postal Historians, I say!

28 April 1997 /T.W. Hearl