

The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No 29



WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST. HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 29

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WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST. HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 29

EDITORIAL

Dear friends I hope that this issue finds you all well and not too battered from the recent storms that have hit the country. My family and I are all in good health and I am looking forward to my forthcoming trip to St. Helena in June of this year with fellow members Barry Burns and Brian Foord. In the editorial of the previous Supplement I requested articles in advance for the July 1998 Supplement as I would like to try and prepare this before our trip. So, if you were thinking of sending something for the Supplement please do so as soon as possible or by April at the latest.

This issue sees a fine article from Prof R Stanton on the Badge Issue of St. Helena, Ascension Island Forces Mail Bag Labels by Wilf Vevers, modern St. Helena Picture Postcards together with several other varied and interesting articles. My thanks must go to Dickie Pollard of Murray Payne for allowing me to re-produce information on St. Helena GVI Plate Numbers.

All that remains now is for me to wish you a happy, healthy and philatelically prosperous 1998.

BERNARD MABBETT

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THE FIRST PRINTING OF THE BADGE ISSUE OF ST HELENA

by Ralph Stanton.

1. Introduction.

Let me begin this article with a preamble about position. Every collector of the badge issue knows that the stamps were printed in sheets of 60, comprising 5 rows of twelve stamps. I adopt the usual convention of naming the stamps across the rows. Thus, row 1 contains stamps 1 to 12, row 2 contains stamps 13 to 24, row 3 contains stamps 25 to 36, row 4 contains stamps 37 to 48, and row 5 contains stamps 49 to 60. I do not employ the old-fashioned notation of "Row 4, stamp 6" for the torn flag; it is simply "Stamp 42".

One purpose of this note is to correct an error that appears in the Gibbons Catalogue with regards to this first badge issue. This note will also allow me to explain the order in which the various values were printed, as well as to correct a false statement about the "white stern variety" that appears in Billig.

First, let me make a general remark about the occurrence of varieties on the badge issue. The issue was printed by De La Rue, and it appears that almost all varieties were caused by De La Rue's methods of storage. This is no surprise to anyone who has studied the King George V Heads of Australia; there, most of the varieties seem to have been introduced between printings, the most famous variety, of course, being the "rusted clichés" and "substituted clichés" on the one penny red King George V head. It is generally admitted that these cliché varieties occurred as a result of storage problems, but students of that issue will have noted that most other varieties also seem to have been introduced between printings.

The same is definitely true of the Badge issue of St Helena. I know of only one instance where it can be established that a repair, creating a new variety, was introduced during the course of printing a particular value (this was the repair to the "storm over the rock" variety on position 29). Other varieties seem to be introduced between printings, or at least between the printings of particular values.

2. The Torn Flag.

In the Gibbons Catalogue, it is stated that the torn flag occurs on all values from the first printing. This is not so.

The first printing of the one penny has a particular brown-black shade to the vignette that can be easily recognized by any experienced collector. I have a complete sheet of this printing and the torn flag does not occur on it. I also possess a block from the first printing; it likewise does not show the torn flag. Furthermore, in the numerous copies in my accumulation of one penny torn flags, not a single one is from the first printing.

As an example of imagination concerning "torn flags", I can not help referring to a collection that I acquired some time ago from an "expert" on the Badge issue. He had a page proudly showing a copy of position 42 without the torn flag (it was not position 42), a copy showing the "torn flag partly developed" (this stamp was lightly inked, and was neither position 42 nor

This would indicate that the fifteen shilling stamp and the pound stamp were printed either before all the other stamps, or after all the other stamps. Since the torn flag is missing on the two lowest values, we are forced to conclude that the fifteen shilling and pound stamps were printed after all the other values of the first printing.

5. The Ordering of the First Printing.

We can now decide with reasonable certainty the order in which the stamps of the first printing were printed. We have three facts to go on.

First, the torn flag does not appear on the one penny and six penny stamps. So their printing must have preceded the printings of the other values.

Secondly, the controls and jubilee lines have been changed only on the fifteen shilling and pound stamps; so they must have been the two final values printed.

Thirdly, the white stern occurs on the one shilling, one shilling sixpenny, and two shilling sixpenny stamps. So these stamps must have been printed contiguously. If it is true that vestiges of the white stern remain on some of the five shilling stamps, then the printing of the five shilling stamp must have immediately followed the printing of these three values; however, I do not regard this as an established fact.

We now ask the question as to whether there is a reasonable ordering that explains the three facts I have just stated, and one obvious ordering leaps to mind. Undoubtedly the order for the stamps was sent in as a request for certain numbers of the one penny, the six penny, one shilling, one shilling sixpenny, two shilling sixpenny, five shilling, seven shilling sixpenny, ten shilling, fifteen shilling, and pound stamps. It was natural for the order to list the stamps in ascending order of value. It would also have been very natural for the printers to run off the stamps in that ascending order. It appears that this was done.

This very plausible ordering explains why there is no torn flag on the two lowest values; they were printed first and the variety developed after the printing of the six penny stamp. The white stern variety then occurred and was present for the printing of the one shilling, one shilling sixpenny, and two shilling sixpenny stamps. It may or may not have left vestigial remnants on some five shilling stamps.

After the five shilling, seven shilling sixpenny, and ten shilling stamps had been printed, there was an alteration in the control numbers and the jubilee lines. The two highest values then appeared with altered controls and altered jubilee lines.

I might add that there is considerable evidence from other later printings of the badge issue that the later printings were also printed in ascending order of values, from the lowest values to the highest values. So there is extremely strong support for the hypothesis that the values were printed in ascending order of value.

6. Conclusions.

I am not sure that the white stern variety deserves catalogue status in Gibbons; perhaps it should remain as it is, namely, an item for specialists. Certainly there are many other badge varieties that have a much stronger claim to catalogue status (and a claim that is much stronger than the claims of some of the varieties that Gibbons does list for other countries). In particular, the "storm over the rock" variety is even more noticeable than the torn flag, the cleft rock, or the broken mast; it is THE major variety *par excellence* on the badge issue.

Gibbons deserves a great deal of credit for removing the three Edward VII varieties "printed on bluish paper" from the catalogue. It is amusing to note that every dealer and auctioneer now suddenly has ample "supplies" of these non-varieties. I recall that many years ago, when I was quite unsophisticated, I bought a strip of two penny stamps "on bluish paper" at an auction. When the strip arrived, I immediately returned it. It was obviously not on a paper that was even remotely bluish.

Indeed, the truth of the matter seems to be that much, if not all, of the paper that was used for the Edward VII low values was off-white. The appearance of some of the most off-white examples led to the belief in a "bluish paper". And you could always give credence to the claim by displaying a companion copy that was more white (and less "bluish"). Indeed, I have seen a block of these stamps that had a certificate (!) in which there was a considerable variation in the whiteness (or off-whiteness) of the different stamps within the block.

The only true "bluish paper" stamps of the Edward VII issue that I have ever seen were at a stamp show in Chicago. An American dealer had three stamps that were definitely on bluish paper; it was an extremely deep blue! The stamps had obviously been immersed in a solution of the Rickett's Blue that my grandmother used to use when doing laundry on our farm some seventy years ago!

Having made these remarks about the former "bluish paper" varieties, let me express a hope that Gibbons will correct the item in the catalogue that states that all values from the first printing displayed the torn flag. Specialists will note that this will decrease the total number of torn flags that are available on the one penny and six penny stamps. Indeed, the number of torn flags on the six penny stamp is exactly the same as the number of cleft rocks and the number of broken masts.

I would also suggest that Gibbons include the first printing of the six penny stamp as a separate catalogue item, except for one fact. The entire listing for the badge issue needs to be revised with the dropping of a couple of items and the addition of several more. So the piecemeal approach of making a single alteration is probably premature.

ST. HELENA
PROBLEMS OLD, NEW MYSTERIES

by Dicken Pollard

At the York show in August (what a good venue the new Grandstand is!), a customer asked if we could keep a lookout for the St. Helena 4d. and 8d. with Plate No.1. He said they had to exist because the 4d. and 8d. Tristan overprints showed them - we commented that they might have been a special printing and not released without the overprint.

One week later, we encountered at auction a drawer full of low value KGV1 in blocks. Lo and behold, there was an 8d. block, unoverprinted, with Plate number 1. Problem solved? - nearly: the stamps were in a greenish grey colour. Apparently this drawer full of blocks had been subjected to smoke damage at some stage, and the St. Helena 8ds. were among the serious casualties.

Having resisted the temptation to put a block of 4 in one of the London auction houses as 'colour trials', we then looked at the rest of the envelope. All the other items were from the top right corner of the sheet, with sheet numbers: two ½d. blocks, a 1½d. pair, a 2d. block, and a 1d. block with the selvedge above R1/6 removed and a sheet number (1645) inserted above R1/5. This immediately suggests a numbering error. Such errors did happen and were usually obliterated, then re-numbered. This removal of the offending selvedge is unusual, but not unique. The piece de resistance, however, was the 8d. block from the top right of the sheet: the errant number having been torn away, and '774' inserted in manuscript, above R1/5. The combination of altered colour and altered sheet number make this, if nothing else, something of a conversation piece!



The following article on the Boer Prisoner of War who escaped from St. Helena was sent by Ian Mathieson. The prisoner was a Comandant A. Smorenburg and the story of his escape is related by Lawrence Green in South African Beachcomber.

My grateful thanks to Ian for forwarding this information. Editor

"One man, as I have said, succeeded in outwitting all the guards and leaving the island. he was Commandant A. Smorenburg, a tall Hollander who had settled in the Transvaal in the 'eighties of last century and had served as a policeman and detective.

Smorenburg formed his escape plan when he overheard a British Officer telling someone that he was sending a case of Boer curios to his address in England. Very soon Smorenburg obtained a crude packing case, and enlarged it so that he could sit inside with provisions and water. The case finally measured four feet in length, two feet one inch in height and two feet broad. Smorenburg consigned it to the address in Gloucester, England, of the officer commanding Deadwood Camp in St. Helena, knowing that this officer had already forwarded several cases of curios to his home, and hoping that one more would not arouse suspicion.

The case was marked: "Boer curios--this side up with care." But Smorenburg took the precaution of fitting the case with three doors so that he could let himself out whatever the position of the case might be in the ship's hold. The doors were disguised with iron bands which appeared to be clamped round the corners.

Smorenburg had decided to allow himself to be loaded on board the Union-Castle intermediate steamer Goth, which was to call at Ascension and Las Palmas after leaving St. Helena for England. He hoped to land at Las Palmas, where the ship was to load bananas, and then make his way to Holland. To be on the safe side he allowed himself food and water for twenty days. Army biscuits, bully beef, MacConnachie's rations and jam were packed in a bag weighing 15 pounds, and fastened to the floor in such a way that he could rest his knees on it when reclining. Water was carried in two tin containers specially moulded to fit round his chest, and he had several military water bottles as well. A few empty bottles and containers completed the equipment of the packing-case. A censor's seal should have been affixed, but this was not available and Smorenburg took the risk of going without it.

It was on December 20, 1901, that the packing-case (with only the food and water inside) was taken to the hospital in Deadwood Camp and loaded onto an ambulance bound for the wharf at Jamestown. This clever piece of trickery was achieved by J.W. Smorenburg, nephew of the escaper, who acted as his uncle's orderly. The plan almost came to grief, however, on the way down the steep valley road to Jamestown. The ambulance was simply a mule cart, and the driver managed to upset it and the packing-case landed in a ditch. Fortunately it did not break open. No one on the wharf suspected anything, and the case was left outside with a pile of baggage belonging to a detachment of Royal Marines who were going to Ascension.

Commandant Smorenburg had a parole pass which enabled him to leave Deadwood Camp during the daylight hours on four days a week. This was an embarrassment to him, for he was unwilling to break his parole. However, the parole did not apply at night, and in the early hours of December 21 he slipped through the sentries at Deadwood Camp and reached the wharf. To his dismay he could not locate the box.

It looked as if the plan had failed. Smorenburg was a most determined man, however, and he made up his mind to search the lighters offshore before giving up the attempt. A man-o'-war in harbour was using her searchlight intermittently, and Smorenburg had to avoid the beams as he swam from the wharf. The first lighter was empty, but he was delighted to find his box under a tarpaulin in the second lighter. He pulled out the pegs which held each door in position, crept inside, and secured everything. The discomfort of wet clothes was forgotten in the excitement when he realised that the first stage of his escape had been successful. Then, exhausted after his long swim, he fell asleep.

Smorenburg awoke to the rattle of winches. They were hoisting the cargo out of the lighter, and the packing-case of "Boer curios" landed on the deck of the Goth with a crash, but without breaking open. Then it was man-handled, turned over and over and lowered into the baggage-room. Some hours later the hatch was closed. The engine started and Smorenburg decided that it would be safe to leave the box. This was difficult, for it had been placed upside down among the marines' kit bags. However, Smorenburg lit a candle which he had in his pocket and crawled out at last.

His first task was to move his packing-case, and the kit and heavy cases surrounding it, so that he could slip into his hiding place at a moment's notice and come out without being trapped. This was hot work, and it had to be done as silently as possible. By the time Smorenburg had arranged everything to his satisfaction he was suffering from a raging thirst, and drank more of his fresh water supply than he could really afford.

Seaman entered the baggage-room next day and moved some of the cases without disturbing Smorenburg in any way. The next day was Christmas Eve, and Smorenburg could hear the passengers singing on deck. The ship slowed down early on Christmas Day, and Smorenburg knew she was approaching the Ascension Island anchorage. He had been in the habit of sitting under a ventilator and sleeping on the floor of the baggage-room; for although the whole compartment was hot, his packing-case was almost intolerable. When the anchor went down, however, Smorenburg had to take cover. The hatch was removed and all the Ascension baggage was hauled out. When the hatch was closed Smorenburg felt that he was safe.

Perhaps he would have reached Las Palmas and escaped but for the newly-laid cable, between Ascension and St. Helena. Smorenburg had been missed at roll-call on the day after his departure, and the fact that the Goth had just left the island provided an obvious clue. It also seems probable that when the hue and cry was raised, some prisoner-of-war gave away the story of the packing-case. At all events a cable was sent to the naval captain in command of Ascension Island instructing him to have the case of "Boer-curios" opened.

Thus the unhappy Smorenburg heard the baggage-room hatch being removed for a second time. He hurried back into his case, and saw through the peep-hole an officer and a number of seamen coming down the ladder. The officer was Mr. John Attwood, who retired in 1934 as captain of the Balmoral Castle. "I was so overcome with excitement and despair that I grabbed and drained two bottles of water," Smorenburg told his friends. Attwood rapped on the case, and Smorenburg called weakly; "Stop! I'll come out."

Dr. Paisley, surgeon of the Goth, who examined Smorenburg that morning, remarked: "I thing Jonah in the whale's belly had a more comfortable time than Smorenburg."

Smorenburg was in a fainting condition when he reached the deck. Attwood revived him with a brandy and soda, followed by a bath and eggs and bacon and coffee. He was sent back to St. Helena (with the packing-case as evidence) in H.M.S. Gibraltar. A court of enquiry was held, and Smorenburg was imprisoned in High Knoll Fort, reserved for "turbulent Boers", until peace was signed. He had not broken his parole, and was not charged with any such offence. That was just as well, for an officer who breaks his parole as a prisoner-of-war is liable to the death penalty.

Smorenburg's box and a number of documents bearing on the escape were presented by the Governor of St. Helena to the Africana Museum in Johannesburg some years ago. Smorenburg, I may add, became a motor licensing officer for the Johannesburg municipality, a sworn translator for the Supreme Court, and a Justice of the Peace.

"Time heals all wounds" wrote Smorenburg in a letter to Captain Attwood not long before World War 11. "I bear no grudge or ill-will against anyone. If the present unsettled world conditions should unfortunately result in war my services, if required, are at the disposition of the British Commonwealth of which my country forms a part."

WATERMARK VARIETIES ON
THE PERKINS BACON 6d PLATE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On page 19 of Supplement 28 Roger Morgan asked if a list of all the known watermark varieties could be listed. Roger has forwarded me further information which I list below.

SG 8	1d. P12½	INV	
SG 13	4d. P12½	INV	
SG 16	6d. Dull Blue P12½	-	REV

ASCENSION ISLAND
FORCES MAIL BAG LABELS

by Wilf Vevers

Following the invasion of the Falkland Islands in April 1982, Ascension Island became a base for British Forces with a Forces Post Office being established. Through this office mail was directed not only to the U.K. and the Falklands Islands but also to H.M. Ships. This mail covered not only airmail letters but also parcels, and to differentiate between the various types of mail and its destinations, a range of mail bag labels were produced. To date the following have been identified:-

Air Mail - from B.F.P.O. London
Blue on White

Type	A1 DMC/1383/8238598	6/82 Three line destination in Black.
Type	A2 DMC/1383/8237518	4/84 All blue-note 82 for B2.
Type	A3 DMC/1383/8237793	8/86 All blue.

Parcel Post - From B.F.P.O. London
Black on Yellow

Type	P1 DMC/1383/8238567	1/82 Ascension Island
Type	P2 DMC/1383/8237518	4/84 Ascension Island
Type	P3 DMC/1383/8237703	10/86 As Type P2.
Type	P4 DMC/1383/8238598	6/82 HMS/RFA,BFPO,Ascension Island.

Registered - From BFPO. London
Blue on Brown. (BFPO London in Black)

Type	R1 Dd8237727	10/86 1383 Large Type.
Type	R2 Dd8237727	10/86 1383 Small Type.

Air Mail - From BFPO Ascension Islands.
Blue on White

Type	AA1 DMC/1383/8237630	8/83 For BFPO London.
Type	AA2 DMC/1383/8238003	12/85 For Great Britain.

Air Mail - From BFPO 677
Blue on White

Type	AB1 1393/8143692	9/88 7714 For BFPO 655 (Falklands).
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ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 29

PARCEL POST -From BFPO Ascension Islands
Black on Yellow

Type PA1 DMC/1383/8238003 12/85 For BFPO London.
Type PA2 DMC/1383/8238003 12/85 For Great Britain.

Falklands to Ascension
Black on Brown

Type FA1 Dd0473699 5/82 FC 1383 From BFPO 666 to BFPO 677
Type FA1(A) Dd0473699 5/82 FC 1383 As above but 666 altered in manuscript to 655.

Type FA2 1558/008353323D2294A 9/91 7714 From BFPO 655 to BFPO 677
Type FA3 Dd 08377703D2204B 12/92 8523 From BFPO 655 to BFPO 677

Black on White

Type FA4 Dd 0480709 1/83 SL 1081 OE1010 From Mount Pleasant F.I. for AS1 Via BFPO

Ascension to Falklands
Black on Red

Type AF1 Dd 8237514 3/84 From 677 BFPO to 666 BFPO.
Type AF1(A) Dd 8237514 3/83 As above except 666 amended in manuscript to 655.

Blue on White

Type AF2 CON/11/45 4/85 DMC OE1012C AS1 to F1 in manuscript.

BFPO Ships

Type ARN1 DMC/1383/8237493 2/83 BFPO Ships to HMS/RFA BFPO 677
Ascension Islands.

Size 140mm x 76mm

If any members have details of any others, could they please let me have full details together with photocopies.

Wilf Vevers.

TYPE A1

AIR MAIL-PAR AVION

For From B.F.P.O. LONDON

FOR FPO B2
BFPO 677
ASCENSION ISLANDS

For VIA
DMC/1383/8238598 6/82

TYPE A2

AIR MAIL-PAR AVION

For From B.F.P.O. LONDON

FOR FPO 82
BFPO 677
ASCENSION ISLANDS

For VIA E3447247
DMC/1383/8237518 4/84

FINAL

TYPE A3

AIR MAIL-PAR AVION

For From B.F.P.O. LONDON

FOR FPO B2
BFPO 677
ASCENSION ISLANDS

For VIA E 3443043
DMC/1383/8237793 8/86

TYPE P1

For B.F.P.O.

PARCEL POST

From B.F.P.O. LONDON

FOR FPO B2

BFPO 677

ASCENSION ISLAND

VIA

DMC/1383/8238567 1/82

For B.F.P.O.

TYPE P2

For B.F.P.O.

PARCEL POST

From B.F.P.O. LONDON

FOR FPO B2

BFPO 677

ASCENSION ISLANDS

VIA **1**

DMC/1383/8237518 4/84 **E3443204**

For B.F.P.O.

TYPE P4

For B.F.P.O.

PARCEL POST

From B.F.P.O. LONDON

FOR HMS/RFA.....

BFPO 677

ASCENSION ISLAND

VIA

DMC/1383/8238598 6/82

For B.F.P.O.

TYPE R1

FROM BFPO LONDON	S/76
TO BFPO 677	BAG IF
P.O. P509C	Dd823727 10/86 1383

TYPE R2

FROM BFPO LONDON	S/23
TO BFPO 677	IF
P.O. P509C	Dd823727 10/86 1383

TYPE AA1

AIR MAIL-PAR AVION	
From B.F.P.O. ASCENSION ISLANDS	
FOR	
	B.F.P.O. LONDON
VIA	
DMC1383/8237630 8/83	

TYPE AA2

AIR MAIL-PAR AVION
For From B.F.P.O. ASCENSION ISLANDS
FOR
 **GREAT BRITAIN**
For
VIA
DMC/1383/8238003 12/85

TYPE AB1

AIR MAIL-PAR AVION
For From B.F.P.O. 677
FOR
 **BRITISH FORCES POST OFFICE**
655
For
VIA
1383/8143692 9/88 7714

TYPE PA1

PARCEL POST
For From B.F.P.O. ASCENSION ISLANDS
FOR
 **B.F.P.O. LONDON**
For
VIA
DMC/1383/8238003 12/85

TYPE PA2

For B.F.P.O. GREAT BRITAIN

PARCEL POST

From B.F.P.O. ASCENSION ISLANDS

FOR

GREAT BRITAIN

VIA

DMC/1383/4238003 12/85

For B.F.P.O. GREAT BRITAIN

TYPE FA1

T [] FROM BFPO 666 5116

P [] TO BFPO 677

E [] ASCENSION ISLANDS

P534CB

1

F-I-N-L

130473679 8/82 PG 1342

TYPE FA2

T [] FROM B.F.P.O. 655

E [] TO BFPO 677

ASCENSION ISLANDS

93

1

F

11870835323D1294A 9/91 7714

TYPE FA4

For ASI

From Mount Pleasant, Falkland Is.

FOR

ASCENSION. IF.

Serial No. of Mail 11.

VIA BFFPO

Dd 0480709 1/83 SL 1001

OE.1010

TYPE AF1

FROM 677 BRITISH FORCES POST OFFICE

TO 666 BRITISH FORCES POST OFFICE

Date..... Serial No.....

TYPE AF2

For

From ASCENSION ISLAND PAR AVION

For FALKLAND IS.

SERIAL No. 8/1 TOTAL 2 KG. kg.

DATE OF DESPATCH 27/1/88 AIRPORT OF TRANSHIPMENT AIRPORT OF DESTINATION

CON/11/45 4/85 DMC

OE 1012C

PLEASE DO NOT OPEN — N'OUVREZ PAS SVP

OFFICE OF ORIGIN
BUREAU D'ORIGINE
LUGAR DE ORIGIN

FAVOR NO ABRIR

BFPO SHIPS LONDON

TYPE ARN1

FOR
POUR
PRA

HMS/RFA

Maersk Ascension

F
I
N
A
L

BFPO 677

ASCENSION ISLANDS

UNTIL
JUSQU'À
HASTA QUE

VIA

TYPE FA3



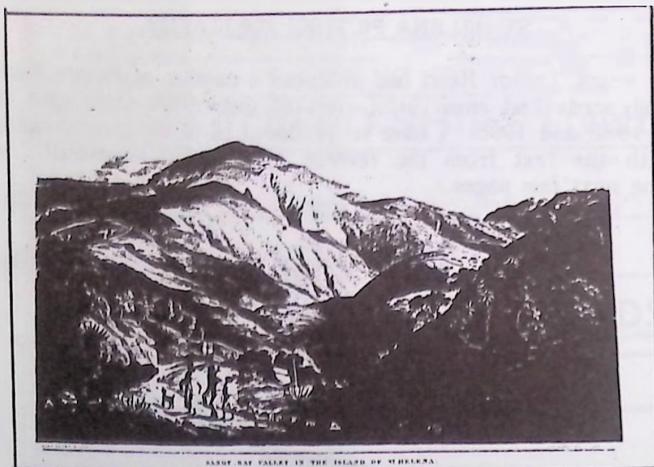
ST HELENA PICTURE POSTCARDS

Over the past few years Trevor Hearl has produced a number of Picture Postcards for sale on the island. all cards had small print runs of just 1,000 cards each and have been produced between 1988 and 1996. I have re-produced all of the cards (slightly reduced to fit the pages) with the text from the reverse of the card underneath with Trevor's permission over the next few pages.

Editor.



St. Helena Natural History Series No.1
THE ST. HELENA WIREBIRD (*Charadrius
pecuarius sanctaehelenae*)
Illus. by J.E. Harting & J.G. Keulemans (1873)
From J.C. Mellis : **ST. HELENA** (London, 1875)



SANDY BAY VALLEY IN THE ISLAND OF ST HELENA

'Picturesque St. Helena' No. 1

SANDY BAY VALLEY

From a watercolour by Henry Salt, 26 August 1802

Aquatint engraving by Daniel Havell, 1809



G. H. MILLAR'S New & complete Method of SYSTEM of GEOGRAPHY
C. has begun his progress including all the Modern Discoveries and is now ready for publication
in the West Indies (London) With every publication

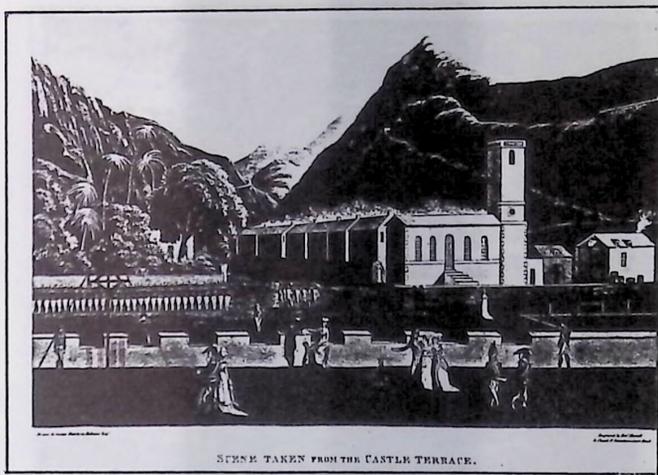
A View of the Town and Island of ST HELENA, in the Atlantic Ocean
belonging to the English East India Company.

St. Helena 'Fortress series' No. 1

TOWN & ISLAND (a popular 18th Cent impression)

Publ. by Alexr. Hogg (31 May 1783) for G.H. Millar's

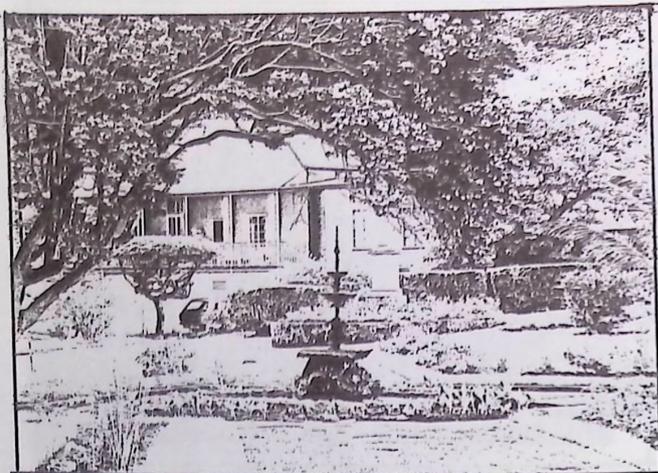
New System of Geography.



JAMESTOWN, ST. HELENA, 1804
Aquatint engraving by Robt. Havell, 1815, from
G.H. Bellasis *Views of St. Helena* showing old
St. James' Church, Govr. Patton's Telegraph,
the HEIC's St. Helena Regt, & Castle Gardens.

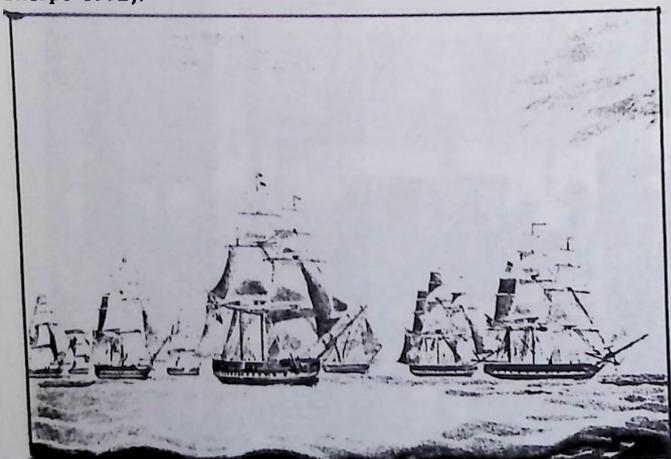


OLD ST. HELENA CUSTOMS
Musical Mummers bring Guy Fawkes to town in
1971 watched by puzzled Jamestown children.
(Photo: Trevor Hearl).



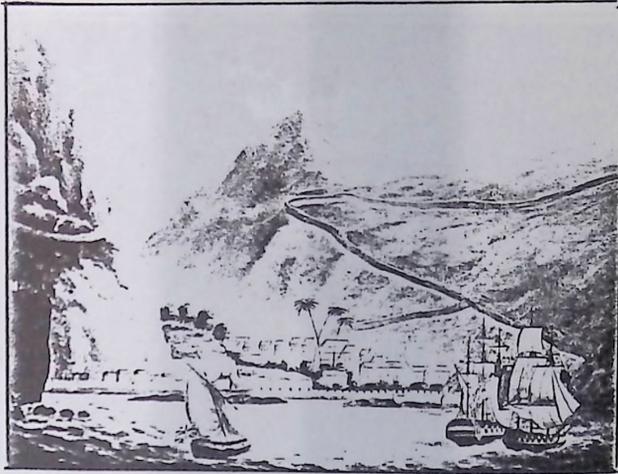
PUBLIC GARDENS, JAMESTOWN, ST. HELENA

Here, under Chinese lanterns, with fountain coolly splashing, the 'old Saints' band once serenaded evening strollers along SISTERS WALK. The WATERWITCH MONUMENT commemorates sailors who died capturing slave-ships 1839-43. In GARDEN HALL, former Museum, Joshua Slocum, first solo round-the-world yachtsman, lectured April 1898. (Photo: Nick Thorpe 1992).



THE EAST INDIA FLEET LEAVING ST. HELENA,

July 1830. The Hon. Company's Ship Inglis (Commander Joseph Dudman) with HCS Windsor, Waterloo, Scaleby Castle, General Kyd, Farquharson and Lowther Castle, escorted by H.M. Frigate Ariadne, painted by W.J. Huggins, Marine Painter to King William IV. (Photo: Trevor Hearl 1993)



JAMESTOWN, ST. HELENA (Chinese c. 1810)

From a miniature oil painting on brass by a Canton artist (after Spoilum), copied from G.H. Bellasis' print of 1806. Scenes, in this style, of ports along the East Indiamen's route were a feature of 'the China trade' only between 1805 - 1815.
(Photo: Trevor Hearl 1993).



'Picturesque St. Helena' No. 2

VIEW FROM DIANA'S SEAT (northwards)

Watercolour by Lieut. Wm. Innes Pocock, 1810

Aquatint engraving by Thos. Sutherland, 1815

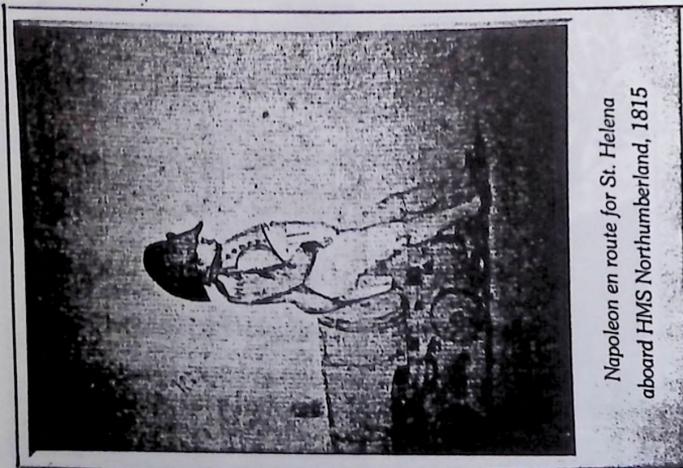
(Note signal station, Patton Telegraph System 1802)

*Note: Card is a 4 x 5½ inch colour picture on a 6 x 8 inch card for mounting.



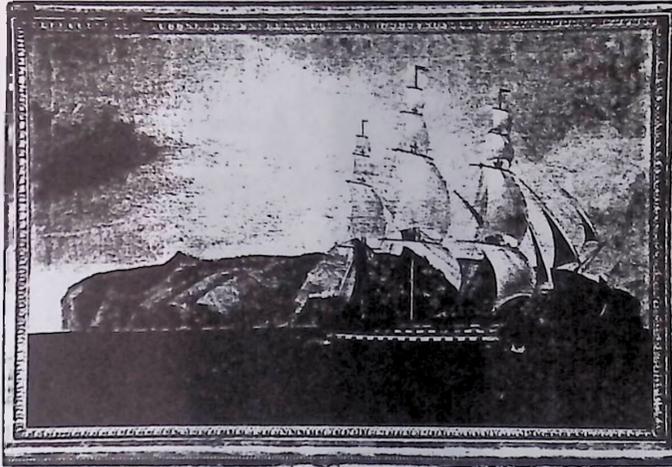
JAMESTOWN, ST. HELENA, 1798

Pencil and watercolour, "taken from my window", by HUBERT CORNISH (1757-1823) "The Houses are very neat, stucco'd smooth and painted.. The Troops are going down to relieve the Guard, the large brances (sic) like feathers are brances of the Cocoa Tree". (Photo: Trevor Hearl 1994).



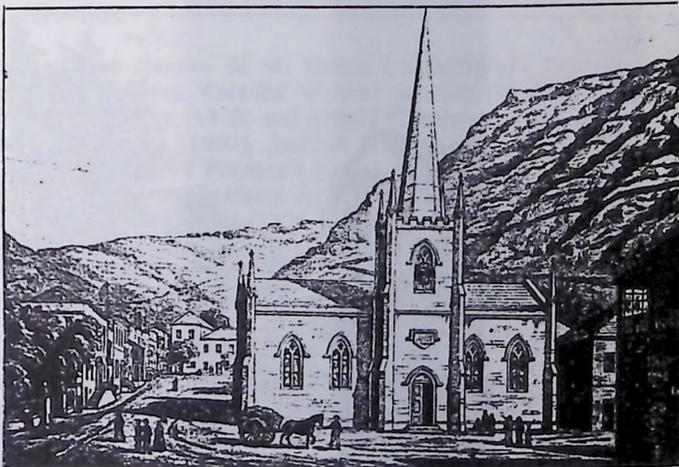
Napoleon en route for St. Helena
aboard HMS Northumberland, 1815

This watercolour sketch by Commissary Denzil Ibbetson is the most important caricature-portrait of Napoleon to have survived from his exile on St. Helena (1815-21), where it was given to the writer Theodore Hook in 1817. (A.M. Broadley: *Napoleon in Caricature*) (Photo, from the original: Trevor Hearl 1993, Publ. for 'The St. Helena Link'.



AN EAST INDIAMAN OFF ST. HELENA

"W. Huggins 1806". Oils on canvas 26" x 42". The earliest of three studies of East Indiamen off St. Helena by William John Huggins (1781-1845), later marine-painter to the King, a scene he knew well from his youth as a sailor in the Company's service. (Photo: Trevor Hearl 1996).



Churches of St. Helena: No. 1. ST. JAMES.

"the oldest surviving Anglican church south of the Equator".

In 1674 the East India Co., built a church on the site of an earlier (1502) Portuguese Chapel replacing it is 1774 with the present building. A new tower, with spire was erected in 1843, but damage by white ants required extensive repairs in 1865-6. The spire was dismantled in 1980. From a colour print by VINCENT BROOK'S, 1868, artist unknown.



Churches of St. Helena: No. 2. **ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL**

Designed by Benjamin Ferry and erected from pre-fabricated material sent out from England in 1851, it replaced 'The Old Country Church' built c. 1677. It was consecrated as a cathedral on the creation of the diocese in 1859.

From a colour print by VINCENT BROOKS, 1868, artist unknown.



Churches of St. Helena: No. 3. **ST. MATTHEW'S.**

Taken from a colour print by VINCENT BROOKS in 1868 (artist unknown), this shows the original pre-fabricated building erected at Hutt's Gate in 1861. The present church was built on the same site, beside Halley's Mount, in 1915-16.

LAYING THE GHOST OF CASTELLA

by Trevor Hearl

If there's one thing more than another that every 'Saint', and 'friend' of St. Helena, knows for sure it is that the Island was discovered on 21 May 1502 by João da Nova Castella. That was, until St. Helena day 1997! But two days later, "upon instructions from HE Smallman", the St. Helena News announced that the discoverer was "not João da Nova Castella as stated in the history books" and I was named as the perpetrator of this apparent heresy. So perhaps I should explain how it came about.

My bluff was first called a few years ago by an indefatigable investigator into early St. Helena history, Mrs. Yvonne Stadler of Tasmania, who challenged me to prove da Nova Castella's existence. What could I say except that every St. Helena historian accepted the fact? Perhaps, she replied, but no Portuguese historian has ever heard of him. Dr. Quentin Cronk said the same. They knew J.da Nova, but not João da Nova Castella. The American Encyclopaedia Britannica likewise claimed that "João da Nova discovered Ascension (1501) and St. Helena (1502)". And true enough, I could find no "da Nova Castella" anywhere - except in books about St. Helena!

So when a few weeks ago the Crown Agents' Stamp Bureau rang with a query about a new issue commemorating "João da Nova Castella's discovery", I blurted out, "it wasn't da Nova Castella." It must have been like telling the Bank of England that it isn't Stephenson's Rocket on the £5 note! I apologized for my indiscretion. "No; tell me more", they said. And I promised to check how, or where, "Castella" had crept into our Island story to prove that it could be safely eliminated.

Backtracking through the classics of St. Helena Literature was not reassuring. The most meticulous researchers accepted "Castella" without question, Roland Svensson's Swedish study (1968), Ian Shine's Serendipity (1970) and Arnold Chaplin's St. Helena Who's who (1919), no less than the works of Cross (1980), Jackson (1903), Mellis (1875) and Gosse (1938) who even listed a 1752 translation of Fonseca's Narrative of the Voyage of Joao da Nova in 1502 in his bibliography. Island publications such as Grant's Guide (1883), St. Helena Almanac (1843-83) and Calendar & Directory (1826-42) all confirmed "Castella" to be their man.

The first hint of doubt I found in Thomas Brooke's History of St. Helena where, in the second edition of 1824, he gave it as the "general opinion" that the Island had been discovered in 1502 "by John de Nova, or Juan de Nova Castella" [p.46]. But it then emerged that in his first edition of 1808 he had named only plain "John de Nova". As no other writer identified a 'discoverer' of St. Helena, this was a revelation in itself, duly copied in James Wathen's Series of Views (1821) as "John de Nova... on May the 21st 1500-1", and as "Johann von Nova...in 1502" in a German version (Leipzig 1815) by a Captain C.C. Best. But most publications, if they mentioned the matter at all, were content just to credit "the Portuguese", as authors had done since Jan van Linschoten published the first account of the Island over two hundred years earlier.

Now they included the first book about the Island, Francis Duncan's Description (1805), and other pre-Napoleonic sources such as Johnson's Oriental Voyager (1807) and Beatson's Tracts 1808-13 (1816), as well as those rushed out in 1815 to satisfy the unforeseen interest in St. Helena, from the many editions of the pocket sized Geographical and Historical Account and even more popular broadsides ("Eight Pence Plain, One Shilling Coloured"), the lavish sets of aquatint Views of St. Helena by Bellasis and Pocock. Clearly at the turn of the 19th century knowledge of the Island's discovery was scanty and confused - Duncan had even dated it 1508.

"Castella", it was now clear, must have infiltrated St. Helena literature with Napoleon! In fact Brooke was not the first to feel obliged to quibble over the navigator's name. James Prior of HMS Nisus, who visited the Island in 1813 and published A Voyage...to St. Helena in 1819, was unsure whether to call the discoverer "Don Juan de Caleca, or de Nova" [p.84], as if he had heard a garbled version of "Castella" there. At least he could not have been the culprit. Another book remained to be examined, however, A Tour through...St. Helena published in London in 1817, but written on the Island by Capt. John Barnes, "Town Major, and Civil and Military Surveyor in the Hon. Company's Service". "According to the most accurate account," he declared, apparently taking a 'dig' at Brooke, "this Island was first discovered by Juan de Nova Castella..." [p.2]. Could Brooke only have challenged it...! But sadly Barnes died before copies of his book ever reached the Island, and his Preface, signed 5 September 1816, left few clues. He claimed to have used "sources of unquestionable authenticity", but only identified Duncan's Description (1805) and certainly did not find "Castella" there. So is a piece still missing from this literary jigsaw?

There must be a lesson somewhere in the cautionary tale. But from now on, all doubts dispelled, come what may, "Jaoa da Nova... is the name that is accepted by the St. Helena Government as being correct" [St. Helena News, 23 May 1997]. Less reassuring is the explanation quoted from Crown Agents' Stamp Bureau: "Castella was someone else entirely, and a writer in the 18th century used this name in a case of mistaken identity." Verily may he rest in peace!

INFORMATION REQUIRED

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**ST HELENA AND THE CROSS
A FORGOTTEN PHILATELIC TREASURE**

by Trevor Hearl

The half-crown 'St. Helena and the Cross' stamp issued in the ten-value series marking the Island's centenary under the Crown in 1934 will be readily recalled by most loyal St. Helena addicts. Not only was the set "one of the most attractive and well-designed issues ever made by any colony" (Hibbert, p.68), but this particular stamp stands out as the only vertical design in a set of mainly horizontal, mainly landscape, scenes.



Few know the origin of its design, however. It came from a painting showing St. Helena standing under a Roman arch holding a Cross with the inscription 'The Holy Helene' in Greek over her head, which had been brought to the Island two years earlier, in 1932, by the newly-appointed Governor, Sir Steuart Spencer Davis. Davis a recognised financial wizard in the Colonial service, had spent most of the previous ten years in Palestine. Indeed in 1925, among other prestigious posts, he had been chairman of a commission on the finances of the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, a connection relevant to our story. In 1932, hearing of his appointment to St. Helena, the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Churches in Palestine presented him with a copy of an Ikon in the Chapel of St. Helena, close to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

"The Saint is depicted with a halo encircling her head... The expression on the face is one of great spirituality. The robes are exquisitely painted, in the background is a Palestine scene and the whole makes a striking picture." [The St. Helena Wirebird, No.9, September 1955]

At St. Helena, Governor Davis had a mahogany frame made for it from a bookcase which had once furnished Napoleon's Longwood House, most of which had perished from the ravages of white ant. Presumably during the five years of his Governorship the picture hung in Plantation House, or perhaps at the Castle, but certainly when he retired in 1937 at the age of 62, the painting went with him. On his death it passed to his nephew, Mr. W.B. Davis also in the Colonial service, who in 1955 was serving in Tanganyika. Taking advantage of Union-Castle's 'Round Africa' service, he sailed out on the Warwick Castle to get at least a glimpse of the Island whose economy had so signally defeated his uncle's expertise. Thoughtfully he brought the Ikon copy with him, and on 23 August presented it to the then Governor, Sir James Harford, to be kept permanently on the Island for the people of St. Helena.

Three years previously, in September 1952, Bishop Turner had consecrated the newly-built church of St. Helena and the Cross on a lonely, yet timeless site, at Blue Hill. Perhaps it was news of this that motivated Mr. Davis. At any rate one might have expected his Ikon to find a natural home in this sparsely decorated chapel of ease, which, indeed, in 1989 gained a beautiful tapestry featuring the Saint with the Cross as depicted on Colchester's charter seal worked by Miss Clarice Chapman. But in 1955 Governor Davis's Palestine portrait went, not to Blue Hill, but to hang on the front of the Cathedral pulpit at St. Paul's. At least it must have been familiar to more worshippers there, although Edward Hibbert unfortunately missed it during his three week sojourn in February 1972. Otherwise the story would surely have found a place in his comprehensive survey, St. Helena Postal History and Stamps, in 1979. In the event it was left to Bishop Cannan in 1992, in his Churches of the South Atlantic Islands 1502-1991 (p.137), to publicise it more as a symbol of pre-war ecumenism than as the inspiration for one of St. Helena's most celebrated philatelic legacies. On both counts, do not miss it when you visit today's 'Saints' of the South Atlantic!

RMS ST. HELENA

FARES 1998/99

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CARDIFF – CAPETOWN Voyages 40 & 42	3638	3397	3155	2914	2672	2426	2063	1943	1701
CARDIFF – CAPE TOWN Voyage 41	4006	3518	3397	3155	2914	2672	2184	2063	1822
CARDIFF – CAPE TOWN Voyage 43	3155	3035	2672	2426	2305	2184	1822	1701	1460
TENERIFE – ASCENSION	1213	1134	1055	971	893	809	688	651	567
TENERIFE – ST. HELENA	1432	1339	1241	1148	1051	958	815	771	672
TENERIFE – CAPE TOWN	2904	2712	2519	2327	2134	1936	1650	1551	1359
ASCENSION – ST. HELENA	515	505	458	433	402	309	309	309	309
ASCENSION – CAPE TOWN	1559	1460	1355	1250	1145	1040	887	835	730
CAPE TOWN – ST. HELENA Voyages 40 & 43	690	664	587	530	505	479	350	335	319
CAPE TOWN – ST. HELENA Voyage 41	876	773	747	690	639	587	350	335	319
CAPE TOWN – ST. HELENA Voyage 42	798	747	690	639	587	530	350	335	319
CAPE TOWN – TRISTAN DA CUNHA	1177	1037	1004	929	859	788	643	610	535
CAPE TOWN – BANJUL	1906	1780	1654	1528	1402	1271	1082	1019	893
CAPE TOWN – CARDIFF Voyage 40	3155	3035	2672	2426	2305	2184	1822	1701	1460
CAPE TOWN – CARDIFF Voyages 41,42 & 43	3638	3397	3155	2914	2672	2426	2063	1943	1701
BANJUL – TENERIFE	520	488	452	420	383	347	294	278	247
BANJUL – CARDIFF	1386	1297	1202	1113	1019	924	788	740	651

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3. Stamps to the full value of the postage for each half ounce must be affixed to the top right-hand corner of the address side of the envelope or packet.
4. Air Mail letters will be accepted for despatch up to one hour prior to the closing time of the ordinary mail.

Given under my hand and the Public Seal of the Colony of St. Helena this 18th day of June, 1936.

By command of His Excellency the Acting Governor,

J. J. ...
Acting Govt. Secretary.

No. 114.

**Statutory Rules and Orders,
1947, No. 21.**

POST OFFICE (AIR MAIL RATES) RULES, 1947.

In exercise of the powers vested in him by the Post Office Ordinance, No. 1 of 1898, and otherwise and with the advice of the Executive Council, His Excellency the Governor is pleased to make and hereby makes the following Rules fixing the rates of Postage to be charged on postal packets sent from Post Offices in this Colony for onward transmission from the United Kingdom by Air Mail:—

1. These Rules may be cited for all purposes as the Post Office (Air Mail Rates) Rules, 1947.

2. The following air carriage rates shall be charged on postal packets sent from St. Helena or Ascension Post Offices:—

(i) VIA UNITED KINGDOM.	s. d.
(a) AIR LETTERS to any country shown in the current British Air Mail Leaflet as having Air Letter Service	- 6
(b) AIR MAIL PACKETS of all classes per OUNCE or part thereof to Europe	- 6
(c) AIR MAIL PACKETS of all classes per ½ OUNCE or part thereof to ALL COUNTRIES OUTSIDE EUROPE	1 0

3. Postal packets other than Air Letters shall have a blue Air Mail label affixed above the address or be superscribed "By Air Mail" on the address side, and all packets shall be clearly marked "via U.K."

4. Stamps to the full value of the postage rate should be affixed on the same side as the address.

5. Order in Council No. 5 of 1936 is hereby cancelled.

6. The Post Office (Airgraphs Rates) Order No. 31 of 1944 is hereby cancelled.

7. These Rules shall come into operation on 15th October, 1947.

Given under the hand and Official Seal of the Governor at the Castle, St. Helena, this 13th day of October, 1947.

By command of His Excellency the Governor,

S. N. PETERS,
Clerk of Councils.