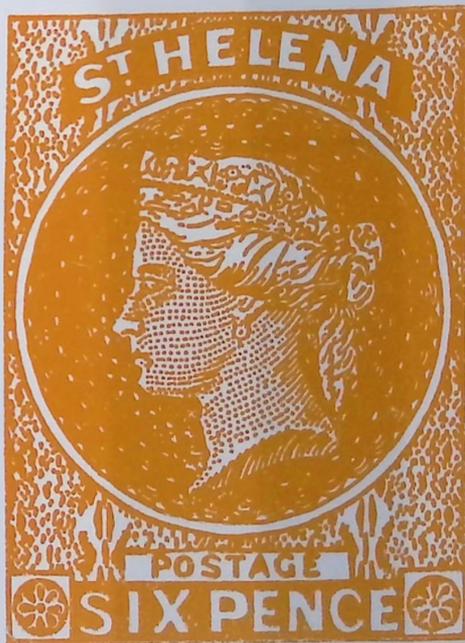


The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 30



THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO. 30

JULY 1998

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## THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

### ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO. 30

#### EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

My apologies for the fact that this issue is some two months late in arriving on your doorstep. As you may be aware from the previous Supplements I, along with two other members of the Circle made a visit to St. Helena this June. I had requested material for inclusion in this Supplement to be in my hands by May at the latest as I had hoped to get most of it prepared before I departed for St. Helena. Unfortunately enough material was not forthcoming, and therefore I have had to find time to put this issue together since my return in July. Remember, the Supplement is only as good as the material I receive from you, the members, so if anyone has anything for the January 1999 issue, please let me have it as soon as possible.

Now to our trip to St. Helena; I don't really know where to start, the whole thing from start to finish was a wonderful experience. From staying in the superb Town House Hotel in Cape Town, the voyage on the RMS to the wonderful St. Helenians that we met. We were blessed with exceptional weather for the time of year and saying goodbye and boarding the RMS for the return trip was difficult. Barry, Brian his wife Penny together with another St., Helena philatelist Alan Scrine and his wife Joyce who we met on the RMS all agreed it was a great holiday. Barry, Brian and myself have all vowed to try and make another visit in 2002 for the 500 anniversary of discovery, God and a friendly Bank Manager willing. A full report of our visit with hopefully a photograph or two will appear in the January 1999 Supplement, and to any member who has been thinking about going to St. Helena, GO FOR IT, you won't be disappointed

We are hoping to have a meeting of the Ascension and St. Helena members at Brian Foord's house in Dulwich later this year. If you are interested in attending please drop me a line, or better still give me a call so that a date can be set that will be convenient for as many of you as possible. Hope to see you at the Study Circle meeting in November at the Royal.

Also included in this issue is a loose sheet on the Watermark Varieties of the Perkins Bacon 6d. Our member Vic Dyball is trying to get a complete listing as possible of these so I urge all members to check their collections and to make any additions to the sheet and return it either direct to Vic Dyball or myself.

Best Wishes, Bernard Mabbett

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GEORGE V1 DEFINITIVES  
THE 1949 NEW COLOURS

by Bernard Hughes

David Studd's article in Supplement No 27. p.p. 4-11 on the St. Helena George V1 definitives asks why there were colour changes in 1940 and 1949. I believe the answer is exactly the same for St. Helena as for Ascension, i.e. as explained in Supplement No 19. p.8, the aim was to comply with the UPU colour scheme, which meant the overseas printed paper rate stamp should be green, the postcard rate red, and the letter rate blue. It is the foreign rates which applied outside the Empire which had to be in these colours. In 1939, the printed paper rate went up from 1d. to 1½d., which was already the postcard rate. So the 1d. stamp could no longer be green, but there was no stamp that could be green! The foreign letter rate went up from 3d. to 4d., so the 3d. stamp could no longer be blue, and the new 4d. value appeared in blue. In 1948, the printed paper rate went down to 1d. while the postcard rate went up to 2d., hence three colour changes were needed - 1d. green again, 1½d. no longer red, 2d. now red.

The postal rates chart on Page 11 of David Studd's article starts with rates introduced at the end of 1939, but earlier rates can easily be found in No 10. p.25 and No 17. p.34 which both show the 1926 postage rates which still stood in 1938/39. I would have a couple of quibbles with the rates shown in David Studd's chart - was the Empire postcard rate and samples rate reduced to 1d. in 1941 as opposed to 1948, and did the foreign extra ounce and postcard rate revert to 2d. in October 1951? Surely this 2½d. rate (Which lasted until 1959) is why both St. Helena and Ascension issued 2½d. stamps in their first QE2 definitives? The St. Helena set followed the UPU rules, 1d. green, 2½d. red and 4d. blue, supporting the continuation of the 2½d. postcard rate through this period.

David Studd page 5 highlights the interesting question as to why the 1949 1d., 1½d., and 2d. stamps had a new vignette, pointing out that there are similarities with Ascension. I think the changed postal rates in 1948 are the explanation as to why three new colours were needed, but that still leaves two interesting questions which might profit from input from both Ascension and St. Helena collectors:

1. Why did these issues take longer to appear - both were ordered c.September 1948?
2. Why were there new dies for all three St. Helena stamps and the 1d. Ascension stamp?

Having done some research at the Crown Agents Archive at the British Library, it seems the new colour stamps were planned for delivery in October 1948! Proofs of the Ascension stamps show various colour problems affecting the 2d. (too orange - i.e. too much like the 2d. being replaced) and the 1½d. The idea was to change the 1½d. to carmine without the colour being too much like the 2/6d. (same design and similar colour) and this was not easy. I have no idea why they should have chosen a quite different colour for the 1½d. in the circumstances! By the time they were ready to print, new orders for reprints of the old colour stamps being replaced had arrived, and paper to print all six Ascension stamps (old and new colours) seems to have been released on 28th December 1948.

Unfortunately the Crown Agents record here is partly left blank, but the flaws suggest the red ("June 1949") 2d. was printed BEFORE the orange ("February 1949") perf 14 2d. (and before the yellow perf 14 1d., which has the same design), but for the 1½d., the "February" one was printed before the "June" one. All these perf 14 stamps (one 1d., two of the other values) are on very similar paper. The Crown Agents released the plates to De La Rue on 4th January 1949 and returned on 14th January.

But what of the new 1d. green? Paper for this appears to have been released in December, and the records suggest the green 1d. would have been printed alongside the other five stamps. yet proofs show the new plates of the 1d. Three Sisters were only approved on 14th January, and the 1d. green could not possibly have been printed before that. The paper used and the (Perf 13) perforator used for the issued 1d. green is quite unlike that for the other five values. Also, while the old colour reprints were released in London on 17th February, it was months before the new colour stamps were issued on 1st June 1949. It has often been said that the February 1949 trio were not sent to Ascension - the crown Agents record suggests they may have been (or to St. Helena anyway) as a few sheets were numbered and these are described as "Colony Supply". I have never seen any with sheet numbers myself!

Could the 1d. green have been printed in the old Green Mountain design, which was then found to be too much like the 1938 printing in colour (the paper/perforation would differ, of course)? The proofs in the Three Sisters design appear to have been prepared hastily, but AFTER the other values had been printed. Why? Then why did they have to produce two new dies, one for the frame and one for the vignette? Why could they not have used the old 1d. frame and put in a newly made vignette (none of the others would fit the 1d. frame!) or made a new 1d. frame to go round an existing vignette? If the 6d./10s vignette was for any reason not now usable (unlikely with the number of 6d./10s stamps printed), why not use another design - the 5s vignette must have been almost pristine for example. Even simpler would have been to use the Green Mountain design in a marked yellow-green or blue-green shade. Producing two new plates for a 1d. stamp does not sound very economic.

Are there parallels here for St. Helena - whose new colour stamps were not released until November 1949, and resulted in four new plates: the black vignette, and a different frame for each value. Yet it seems plans were afoot for a completely new definitive issue (proofs of these unissued definitives seem to be described in auction catalogues as c1950), and as with Ascension, low value stamps were being printed in fairly modest quantities. Was there also a problem to get a non-orange red for the new 2d., to get the 1½d. to look sufficiently carmine to distinguish it from the "old" 1½d., and to ensure the 1d. did not resemble the 1938 1d., for St. Helena as well as Ascension? I am sure that more research might turn up some answers here - or does any WASC member have any information about all this?

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 30

Rates of Postage and Telegraph Charges. In and From the Colony.

1. TO UNITED KINGDOM AND BRITISH POSSESSIONS.

|      |   |   |    |    |
|------|---|---|----|----|
| (a). | Letters:-                                       |   | d. | d. |
|      | For the first oz. or fractional part thereof    |   | -  | 3  |
|      | For each additional oz. or part thereof         |   | -  | 1½ |
|      | (Maximum weight 4 lbs.)                         |   |    |    |
| (b). | Post Cards                                      |   | -  | 1½ |
| (c). | Printer Matter. For each 2 ozs. or part thereof |   | -  | 1  |
| (d). | Samples:-                                       |   |    |    |
|      | For the first 4 ozs. or part thereof            |   | -  | 1½ |
|      | For every additional 2 ozs. or part thereof     |   | -  | 1  |
|      | (Maximum weight 5 lbs.)                         |   |    |    |
| (e). | Registration fee, per packet                    |   | -  | 4  |
| (f). | Insurance Premiums, Letters:-                   |   |    |    |
|      | For first £12 or part thereof                   |   | -  | 5  |
|      | For each additional £12 or part thereof.        |   | -  | 2½ |
|      | (Maximum insurable amount £120).                |   |    |    |
| (g). | Parcels:-                                       |   |    |    |
| 1.   | For United Kingdom and Possessions              |   |    |    |
|      | Weight not exceeding 3 lbs.                     | 2 | 0  |    |
|      | " " " " " " " " " " " "                         | 3 | 9  |    |
|      | " " " " " " " " " " " "                         | 5 | 3  |    |
|      | " " " " " " " " " " " "                         | 8 | 3  |    |
|      | (Insurance Premiums Parcels).                   |   |    |    |
|      | For every 25 or part thereof                    | - | 6  | 7  |
|      | (Maximum insurable amount £50).                 |   |    |    |
| 2.   | For Union of South Africa:-                     |   |    |    |
|      | For every pound weight or part thereof          |   | -  | 10 |
|      | (Maximum weight 11 lbs.)                        |   |    |    |

EDITORS NOTE: ON MY RECENT VISIT TO ST. HELENA I DELVED INTO THE POSTAL ARCHIVES HELD IN THE CASTLE. THE DOCUMENT I PHOTOCOPIED FOR THE PERIOD IN QUESTION CLEARLY SHOWS THAT THE POSTCARD RATE WAS 1¼D., NOT 1D. UNFORTUNATELY DAVID STUDD GOT HIS POSTAL RATE INFORMATION FROM MYSELF, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE COPY I HAD IN MY FILES WAS NOT PHOTOCOPIED CLEARLY SO THE CORECT RATES ARE LISTED ABOVE.

ST. HELENA

L. S.



G. A. JOY,  
Governor.

STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS

1951, No. 22.

THE POST OFFICE (RATES) (AMENDMENT) RULES, 1951

In exercise of the powers vested in him by section 2 of the Post Office Ordinance, No. 1 of 1898, His Excellency the Governor-in-Council is pleased to make and hereby makes the following Rules, concerning the rates of postage to be charged on postal packets sent from the Post Offices of St. Helena and Ascension:—

1. These Rules may be cited as the Post Office (Rates) (Amendment) Rules, 1951, and shall be read as one with the Post Office (Rates) Rules, 1950, hereinafter referred to as the "principal Rules".

2. Sub-paragraph (1) of paragraph (h) of Rule 3 of the principal Rules is hereby repealed and replaced by the following:—

|  |    |    |
|--|----|----|
| “(h) Parcels—                                    | s. | d. |
| (1) For United Kingdom and Ascension—            |    |    |
| Weight not exceeding 3 lbs.                      | 2  | 11 |
| Weight exceeding 3 lbs but not exceeding 7 lbs.  | 4  | 5  |
| Weight exceeding 7 lb but not exceeding 11 lbs.  | 6  | 3  |
| Weight exceeding 11 lbs but not exceeding 22 lbs | 9  | 0  |
| Insurance Premiums (Parcels)                     |    |    |
| for every £5 or part thereof                     |    | 6  |
| (Maximum insurable amount £50)”                  |    |    |

3. These Rules shall come into force forthwith.

Given under the hand of the Governor and the Public Seal of the Colony of St. Helena at the Castle, Jamestown, this 8th day of October, 1951.

H. G. RICHARDS,  
Clerk of Councils.

THE 1964 ASCENSION OAT/FS COVERS  
MORE THOUGHTS

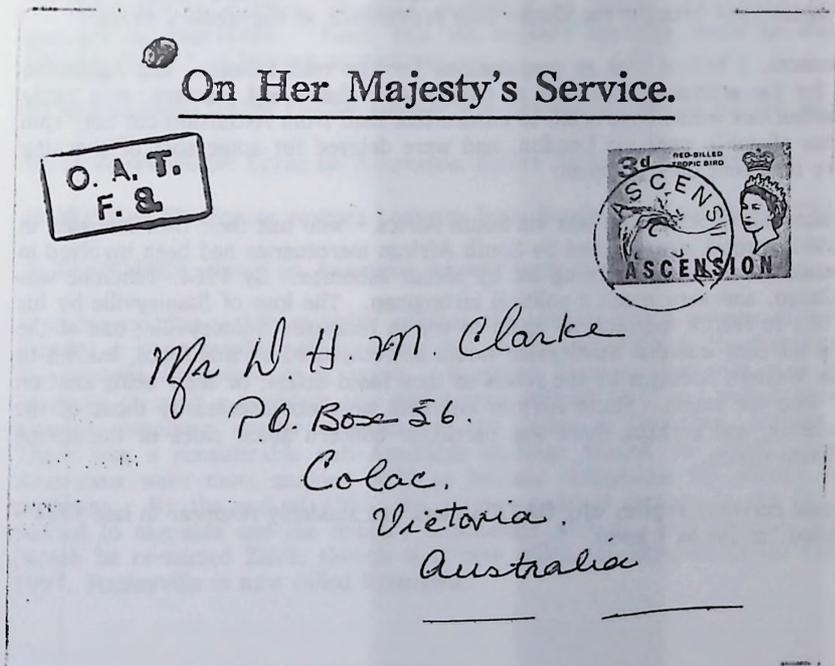
by Bernard Hughes

THE PROBLEMS:

As explained in Supplement No 23. p.p. 11/12, there are 3 problems in explaining the few (only two recorded!) Ascension covers from late 1964 with the boxed O.A.T./F.S. (Onward Airmail Transmission - Foreign Section) cachet:

1. Why do they have this London Foreign Section marking, usually found on World War 2 material?
2. Why did the covers take 25 days or so from Ascension to London F.S.?
3. Why were covers to South Africa and Australia sent via London at all?

The cover below illustrates the problems - a surface mail cover to Australia sent from Ascension postmarked 5th October 1964 with a London/F/30th October 1964 backstamp, forwarded to Australia by air, judging by the cachet.



## THE SOLUTION?

Having read "Dragon Rouge - The Rescue of Hostages in the Congo" by Fred E. Wagoner, I feel the answer lies in the Congo crisis of 1964. Ascension was an important staging post in the rescue of hostages from Stanleyville in November 1964, and preparations for this rescue had developed over quite a few weeks prior to that. The book does not suggest that any route other than via Ascension was seriously contemplated, because of the number of overflight permits that would be needed by the rescue party going over land rather than sea, all increasing the risk of secrecy being breached. The rescue was more likely to succeed if the rebels knew nothing of the mission, and keeping the plan from the world's press was a priority. It was particularly important - had the rescue not gone ahead but there had been a massacre of the hostages - to prevent anyone from knowing that there had been a plan at all! The political fallout had this happened was a great concern. All the countries involved had elections in the period - USA, Britain and Belgium - and none of the governments wanted the Congo as an election issue. One factor delaying the rescue until November was the USA election, also Britain wanted Zambia to gain independence on 24th October without anti-Western agitation - Zambia bordered the Congo as well as Rhodesia. The USA did not want to get sucked into an Africa war - Vietnam was quite enough! But the capture of Stanleyville by rebels who took Western hostages - mostly Belgians but including some American diplomats - in August 1964 brought the Congo into prominence in the world's press.

In these circumstances, I believe that as preparations for the rescue began, and Ascension was made ready for the arrival of hundreds of troops with planes and supplies, it is likely that the British authorities would have acted to ensure that mail from Ascension did not "spill the beans", so that all mails went via London, and were delayed for some sort of checking there. They were then sent on by airmail.

The other mail route out of Ascension was via South Africa - who had their own interests in the Congo. In 1961, a rebel army backed by South African mercenaries had been involved in the Katanga secession, this secession being led by Moïse Tshombe. By 1964, Tshombe was Premier of the Congo, and very much a political strongman. The loss of Stanleyville by his government led him to recruit mercenaries again to try to recapture Stanleyville: one of the American fears at the time was that Stanleyville would be recaptured by this force, leading to a massacre of the Western hostages by the rebels as they faced defeat, or their being sent on a "death march" into the jungle. South African interests were not necessarily those of the Western governments, and perhaps there was particular concern about clues of the rescue plans reaching South Africa.

This scenario would certainly explain why OAT/FS markings suddenly reappear in late 1964 - and no other period, as far as I know.

**THE KEY DATES**

**5 AUGUST 1964:** Rebels seized the city of Stanleyville, and took American Consulate staff as hostages.

**Rest of AUGUST:** Rebels extended their territory and rounded up c500 Westerners, mainly Belgians.

**SEPTEMBER:** Diplomatic efforts to free the hostages seem to get nowhere.

**15 SEPTEMBER:** First rescue plan is developed for possible use if the position deteriorated, America troops and planes sent to Europe for a hastily arranged "exercise".

**15 OCTOBER:** British election - new government under Harold Wilson.

**25 OCTOBER:** Now around 800 hostages. An America allegedly called "Major Carlson" arrested by rebels, who claimed this was "proof" of American involvement in the fighting.

**3 NOVEMBER:** America election - President Johnson re-elected.

**14 NOVEMBER:** Carlson allegedly sentenced to death, and Congo government forces approaching Stanleyville. Fears that the western hostages would be massacred triggered "Dragon Rouge" to become operational.

**17 NOVEMBER:** 14 US C-130 Aircraft and 545 Belgian troops left for Ascension.

**18-21 NOVEMBER:** Force on Ascension, before flying on to Kamina.

**24 NOVEMBER:** Forces rescues hostages from Stanleyville, and Paulis (27th).

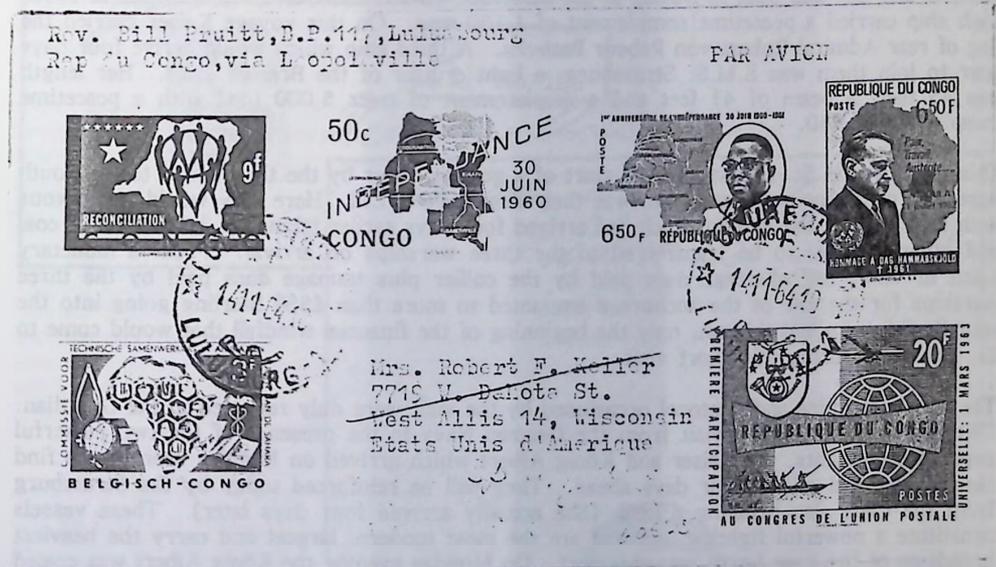
**30 NOVEMBER:** Force on Ascension on way back to Belgium.

It is beyond this article to asses whether the mission was a success or not: they certainly rescued a large number of hostages, but there were killings of other hostages and pro-Government Congolese as a result. Rescuing hostages scattered in a large number of locations through a rambling city was a very difficult task, and though there were plans to attempt something similar elsewhere in the Congo in December, nothing came of these. There was a considerable anti-American backlash around the world, though in fact the Americans were most anxious NOT to become responsible for sorting out the Congo's problems. By the end of 1965, the various political factions in the Congo had all been pushed to one side and the military commander Mobutu, took control, ruling the country (which he re-named Zaire, though it is now called the Republic of the Congo again) until 1997. Stanleyville is now called Kisangani.



CONGO COVER.

It would be interesting to know if any mail from Stanleyville came out with the rescue party, on the whole I would think it unlikely as they had little time available to them. The airmail cover illustrated was mailed to the USA from Luluabourg on 14th November 1964, the day Carlson was sentenced to death. Incidentally he was not executed, but was killed in the melee when the rescue party arrived, when he tried to escape over a wall. The stamp at the top left commemorates "Reconciliation" which seems a bit optimistic in the circumstances. The stamp at the top right marks Dag Hammarskjöld, the UN secretary General killed in trying to solve the Congo's problems in 1961. The other portrait stamp shows President Kasavubu 1960-65, who had little authority left in late 1964, when Moïse Tshombe (who had previously led the Katanga secession from the Congo) was the prime minister and political strongman in the Congo.



Does anyone have any personal recollections of life on ascension in the later months of 1964, which might throw some light on what preparations were made for the possible arrival of a rescue force?

THE MALTESE CROSS  
AT ST. HELENA

by Robert Richardson

Reproduced from the SOUTH ATLANTIC CHRONICLE by kind permission  
of Robert Richardson and Everett L. Parker Editor.

To St. Helenians the sight of warships in the Jamestown anchorage was not unusual but even they must have been impressed with what they saw one Monday morning in early February 1914. Riding there at anchor were two super dreadnoughts of the "Kaiser" class of battleships built by Germany in an effort to match the size and strength of the fleets of Great Britain and France which were at that time numbers one and two. They were also part of what some naval historians would later label "The Luxury Fleet". S.M.S. Kaiser was built and launched at the Imperial Dockyard in Kiel in 1912. Armed with ten 12-inch guns in five turrets and 14 six-inchers in batteries, all of which were quickfire, her displacement was 23,380 tons, her length 564 feet and a beam of 95 feet. König Albert of the same class was of equal size but was built in Danzig at the Schichau Works, completed and launched in 1913. Each ship carried a peacetime complement of 1,150 men. On this voyage Kaiser carried the flag of rear Admiral Robert von Rebeur Pashvitz. A third ship which would arrive four days later to join them was S.M.S. Strassburg, a light cruiser of the Breslau class. Her length was 45 feet, a beam of 43 feet and a displacement of over 5,000 tons with a peacetime complement of 350.

This stop over at St. Helena was the start of a goodwill tour by the three ships to the South American continent and Jamestown was their first port of call. Here they would rendezvous with their collier, the Erithia which had arrived four days earlier taking on 3,150 tons of coal and other supplies to be transferred to the three warships on arrival. From a monetary point of view, the wharfage dues paid by the collier plus tonnage dues paid by the three warships for the use of the anchorage amounted to more than £550 Sterling going into the island's Treasury and this was only the beginning of the financial windfall that would come to St. Helenians during this short visit.

The usual amenities and protocol occasioned by the visit were duly reported in the Guardian: "We are favoured with a visit from the German Navy in the presence of the two powerful super dreadnoughts, the Kaiser and König Albert which arrived on Monday morning to find their collier had got in four days ahead. They will be reinforced today by the Strassburg from the Cape also bringing a mail. (She actually arrived four days later). These vessels constitute a powerful fighting unit and are the most modern, largest and carry the heaviest broadside of fire ever borne into this port. On Monday evening the König Albert was coaled and streams on men were on leave from Kaiser. The vessels were visited by the Hon. H. W. Solomon, the German consul here who, on landing was accorded his seven gun salute. After having received a visit from the Admiral and staff His Excellency, the Governor (Cordeaux) paid an official call and received a seventeen gun salute. His Excellency's 'At Home' on Wednesday should prove a gala day with our visitors present and we are wondering if the treat of a band from the ships is in store. On Monday much trade was lost by the hawkers of small things due to the fact that the German coinage is not acceptable and the ships had

not been accommodated with exchange. The however, has been adjusted happily as it would have been a great loss... We believe the squadron proceeds for South America to 'show the Flag' and they certainly make a very imposing spectacle. It is comforting to reflect that our relations with our Teutonic cousins are now warmer than in the past so that--at any rate--for the time being--we need not feel that we are faced with the problem of an adequate defence of the Island by the Naval Contingent supplemented by the Civilian Conscription Corps".

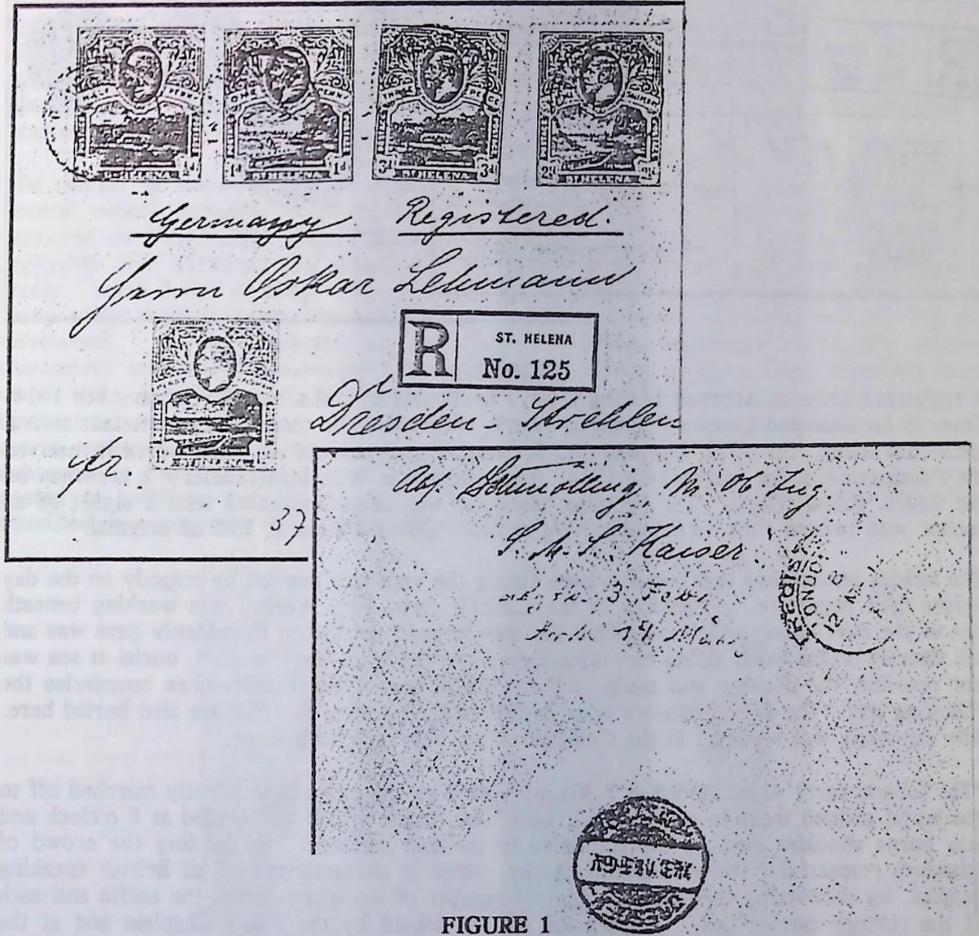


FIGURE 1

A registered cover to Dresden franked with S.G. numbers 72,73,74,76 and 77 all but 74 are tied by c.d.s. dated February 3rd 1914. Backstamps show London Registered March 12th 1914 and Dresden receiving c.d.s. for March 14th 1914. The sender was A. Schmolling, who served on the S.M.S. Kaiser which, as noted in the text, allowed its crew shore leave on that date.



FIGURE 2

A registered cover to Arnstadt bearing S.G.72 to 75 tied by c.d.s. dated February 6th 1914. Cover is backstamped London Registered March 12th 1914. It received the Arnstadt arrival c.d.s. for March 13th 1914, but was then forwarded to Frankfurt am Main where it received the Frankfurt c.d.s. for March 14th 1914. The sender was Wilhelm Grunefarb, a crewman on the S.M.S. König Albert. The backflap has three wax seals impressed with a signet of an anchor with twisted rope surmounted by a crown. Cover shown at 75% of original.

The holiday atmosphere that had prevailed during the visit was marred by tragedy on the day before their departure. A member of the Kaiser's crew, Paul Woelm, was working beneath one of the steel booms which supported the anti-torpedo nets when it suddenly gave way and fell directly on his head, killing him instantly. Since the ships were in port, burial at sea was not possible; the decision was made to bury him in one of the Knollcombes cemeteries the following day. The Boer prisoners who died of food poisoning in 1902 are also buried here. The ceremony was reported in the Guardian in its February 12th issue:

"The funeral party which landed at 7.30a.m. headed by the ship's band silently marched off to the burial ground there to await the arrival of the corpse which was landed at 8 o'clock and was borne shoulder high by his comrades to the gun carriage. On landing the crowd of Islanders respectfully showed their sympathy, which is characteristic of all British speaking peoples, by uncovering their heads. Quite a number of wreaths covered the coffin and each of the cortege carried one. The service was conducted by the ship's Chaplain and at the conclusion the Captain and each officer threw a handful of earth onto the coffin while each of his brave comrades stood silent witnesses shedding many a tear, some bitterly. The band played appropriate music in a touching and reverent manner".

Through a friend whose home is close to Knollcombes, I was able to obtain photographs of the cemetery and the headstone over Paul Woelm's grave. He also included the following description of his visit.

"When the recent showery period ended I made a trip to the cemetery. More people visit the moon than Knollcombes so there is absolute peace for the three cemeteries. The old one appears to have plenty of room in it but is actually full. The majority of grave stones long ago disappeared, many of the graves themselves not even discernible. Some stones are broken and half missing while at others the broken pieces lay where they fell. Inscriptions on the later graves can still be read but others are badly worn and many completely obliterated by a couple of centuries of weather. Eventually I managed to locate the stone of Paul Woelm, naturally almost the last one I looked at. Like the others it is badly stained a rust colour from the lichen that covers it making it hard to read. I shall have to go up there again with the necessary tools and try to clean it up before any attempt can be made to photograph it. All that exists is the stone, perhaps two feet high, simply a rough chunk of granite the surface on one side being flattened and engraved."

The marker is shown in Figure 3 photo, which was received some weeks later along with several others including some of the Boer cemetery. Prior to the accident which had occurred on the morning before the ship's departure, it appears the German sailors had an enjoyable time exploring the island and, as sailors on shore leave are wont to do, spent freely. some 2,400 of them were on shore daily roaming the countryside in all directions, many as far south as Sandy Bay and High Peak while others went eastwards to Stone Top and Levelwood. It was reported by the Guardian: "They seemingly thoroughly enjoyed themselves among our picturesque hills and dales purchasing whatever fruit, especially pears which were rather plentiful, they could procure and spending their money freely among the hawkers of seedwork, etc. Unfortunately, vegetables which were in demand, were very scarce owing to the hot weather and lack of rain. Our Post Office revenue was largely enhanced by the abnormal sale of postage stamps. We believe over 5,000 postcards were posted to relatives and friends in the homes of these men. Altogether the island has benefited in a monetary way by the visit of these warships."

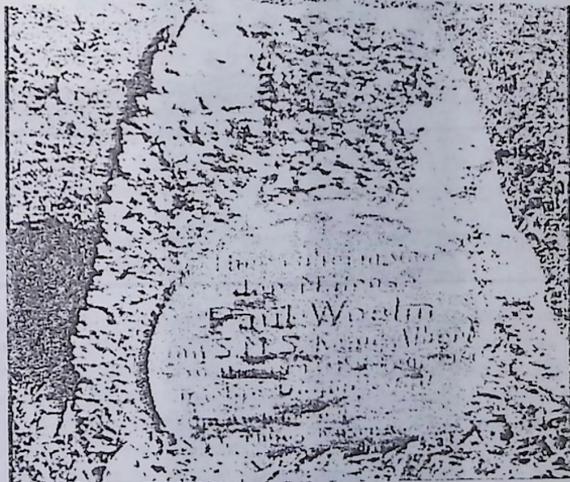
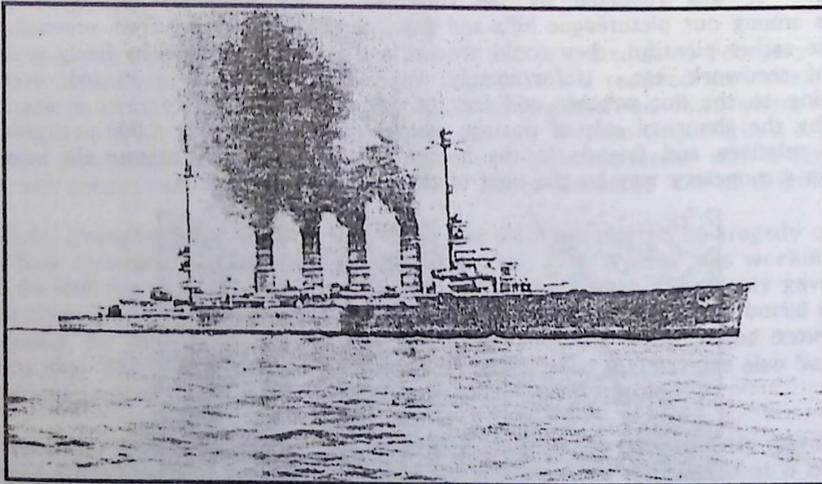


FIGURE 3

The gravestone of Paul Woelm at Knollcombes.

The festivities also included the well attended "At Home" party mentioned earlier which was held on the 4th following His Excellency's dinner party of the previous evening. A large number of officers were present and the Kaiser's band provided a musical treat "of which we must say rarely comes our way." What seems to have made the deepest impression on the islanders was that the general conduct of the men from the ships was exceptionally good, with not a single case of quarrelling or drunkenness.

"They were the most orderly, quiet and the largest lot of men it has been our pleasure to meet on several roads and they carry with them our hearty good wishes for a safe passage to their destination. The warships left St. Helena on February 6th, Strassburg being the last to go, sailing on the evening tide. Goodwill had been evident on both sides, unfortunately it was not to last. The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo would be the spark which ignited World War 1; from that point on St. Helena's erstwhile friends would become their enemies. The transition did not take long.



**FIGURE 4**  
Official German Navy photo of S.M.S. Strassburg.

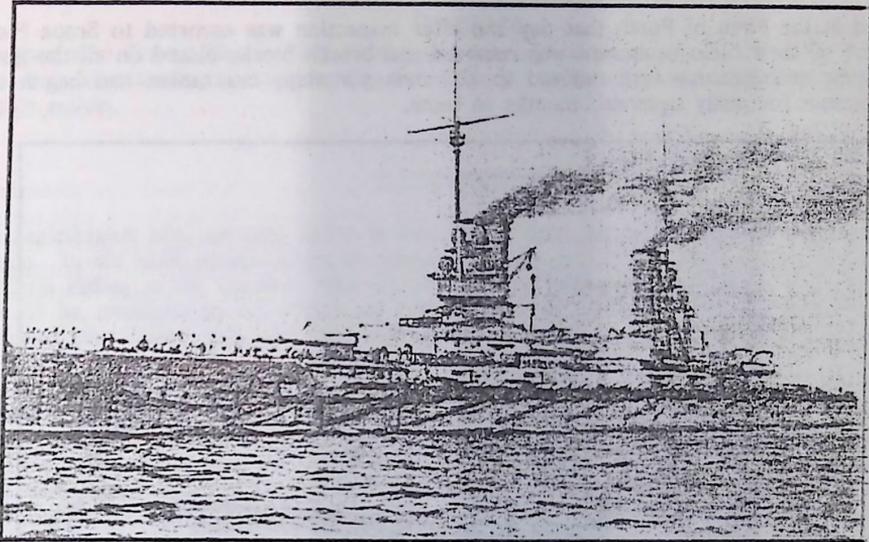


FIGURE 5  
S.M.S. König Albert under sail.

In December of 1914 Strassburg was one of several German warships involved in an attack on three towns on the East coast of Yorkshire which was later labeled "The Scarborough Raid". In a 90 minute bombardment on Hartlepool, Filey and Whitby, 122 civilians were killed and 433 wounded. Only a combination of bad weather and bungled orders by the commander of the British squadron sent to intercept allowed the Germans to return to their home port without loss. In 1920 Strassburg was turned over to Italy as war reparations and renamed Taranto. Fate finally caught up to her in World War 11 when she was sunk by allied bombers in the Mediterranean. Kaiser was involved in the battle Jutland in May 1916, surviving it and suffering the least number of casualties, one man wounded. König Albert did not participate in this action, being kept in port with condenser problems. Ironically the torpedo nets which had caused the death of Paul Woelm were discarded after this battle as entirely inadequate. They had reduced speed to eight knots and if damaged while rolled up they would foul the ships screws.

When the war was ended and the Armistice signed, one of its provisions was the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet to the Allies. To the German's it was "Der Tag", November 21, 1918 the day the fleet left port for the last time and headed for the Firth of Forth under the command of Admiral von Reuter. The British Grand Fleet was assembled at the western edge of the North Sea to welcome them. Admiral Beatty on his flagship, H.M. Queen Elizabeth was to say of this scene: "It was a pitiable sight--in fact, I should say it was a horrible sight to see these great ships come in led by a British light cruiser with their old antagonists, the battle cruisers gazing at them."

It arrived at the Firth of Forth that day and after inspection was escorted to Scapa Flow. Once there all their radio equipment was removed and breech blocks placed on all the guns. The wartime complements were reduced to 200 men per ship; internment had begun and would continue for many miserable months to come.

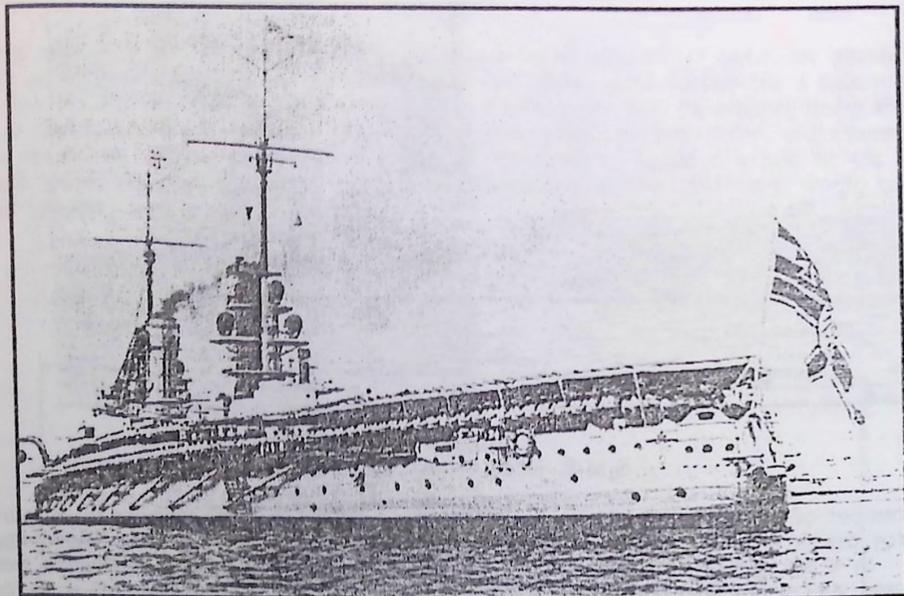


FIGURE 6

S.M.S. Kaiser in port with crew on parade during a naval review by the Kaiser.

Prior to the surrender contingency plans had been discussed by the Naval High Command to scuttle the fleet in the North Sea rather than surrender it to the Allies but was dropped for fear of reprisals. It would also have been a violation of Article 31 of the Armistice agreement but the Germans at Scapa Flow continued toying with the idea. On June 17th, 1919 von Reuter, after reading a copy of the Times that the Armistice would expire at Noon on the 21st, issued provisional orders to his officers for scuttling and at 11.20 a.m. on the 21st the order to expedite this command was given. It was a spectacle unprecedented in naval history, some half a million tons on warships disappearing into the sea. Imperial battle flags flying, among them Kaiser and König Albert. The British Harbour Patrol panicked at the sight of so many Germans leaving the sinking ships and before it was all over nine Germans had been killed and 21 wounded by bayonets or gunfire. More than 1,800 crewmen were captured and taken to POW camps where they stayed interned until January 1920. For those from the Kaiser and König Albert, it must have seemed a far cry from the good times they had enjoyed four years earlier on St. Helena. For these two ships the final indignity was still to come. In the post-war years both were re-floated keel upwards, Kaiser in 1929 and König Albert in 1935. They were sold for scrap, the fate of most of the other scuttled ships at Scapa Flow. The "Luxury Fleet" was gone forever.

#### ENDNOTE

My thanks to Trevor Hearl, Nick Thorpe and Maureen Stevens, the St. Helena archivist, for their help in providing the information from the St. Helena Guardian of February 1914 used in this article.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS

The registration label on each cover is listed by Hibbert as the first of its type used on St. Helena. In his book he lists them as coming into use circa 1912 (Appendix 6), but an article by Chris Riding in the October 1982 St. Helena & Dependencies Newsletter, (Vol. 6, No. 4, page 6) he mentions in his review of Gibbons exhibit of I.D. Lampart's collection that it contained two covers with this label affixed and St. Helena c.d.s. of April and July 1910.

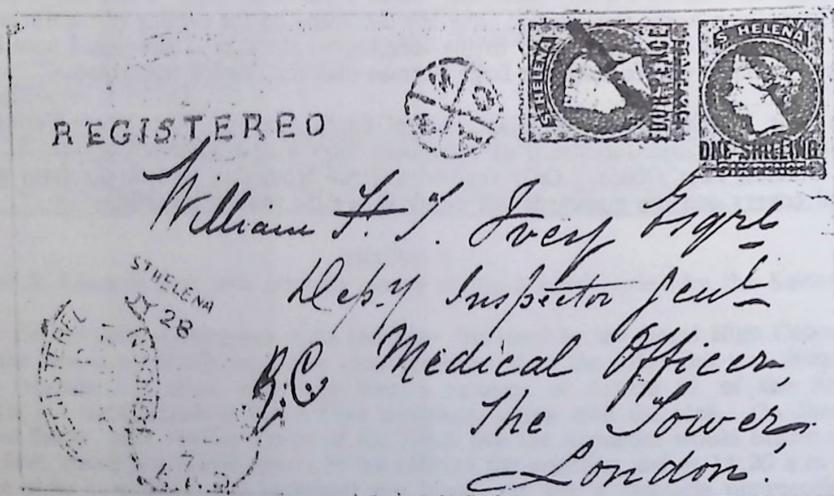
One question, perhaps "mystery" would be a better was to put it, concerns the disparity between the dates of the St. Helena c.d.s. and the arrival backstamp of the London Post Office; a total of 36 days. The closest date for a Royal Mail Ship to have picked up the mail from the ships would have been that of the Norman, which left Cape Town on January 31st, 1914 and would have reached St. Helena around February 7th. However, she reached Southampton on February 17th, which still leaves a gap of 24 days. a case can be presented for the Strassburg being the carrier. She left the island on the evening of the 6th and since she had been allowed to carry mail to the island from the Cape, there would have been no reason not to allow her to take the large German mail for onward transmission.

Allowing time for the "Show the Flag" tour of South American ports where Germany had strong interests and connections, it could account for the time difference between St. Helena and the London Post Office. Only further material from this visit in the form of non-registered covers and the postcards will really verify the routing involved.

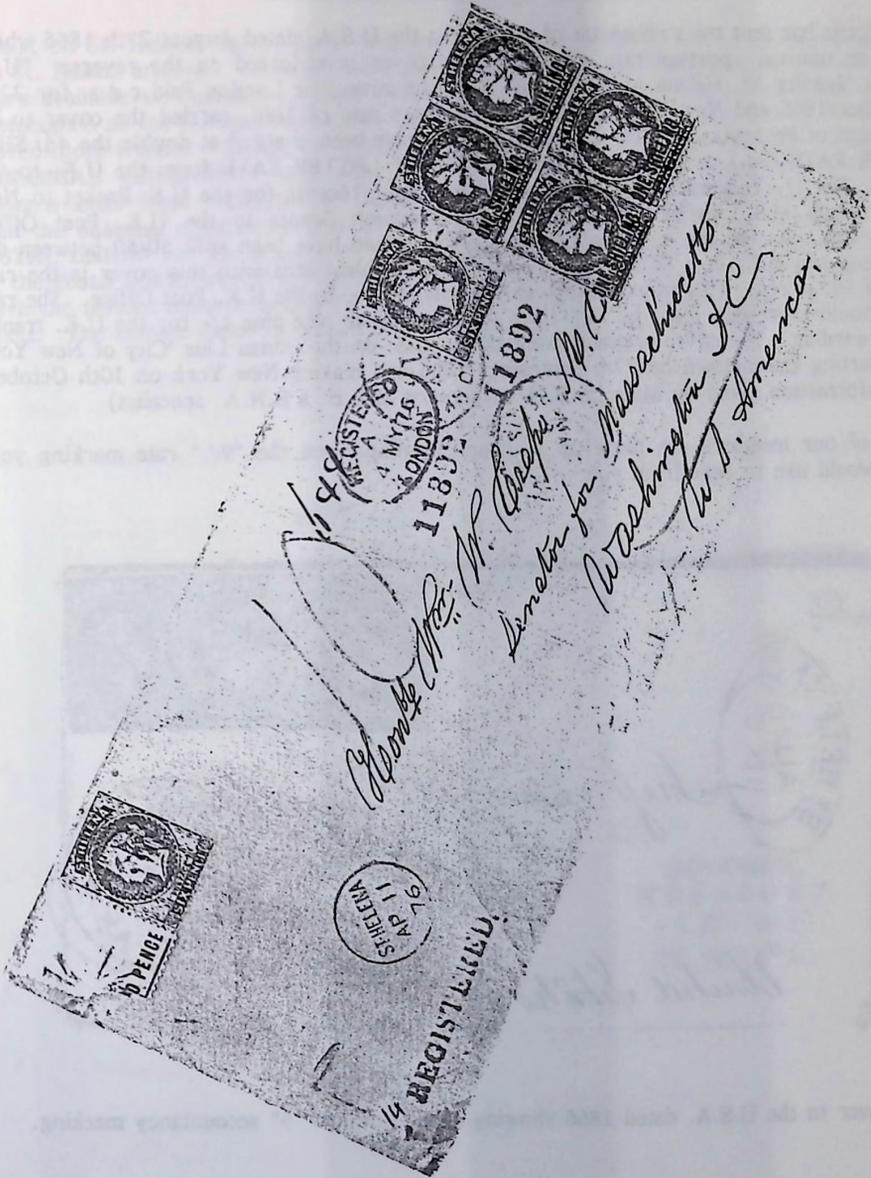
## EARLY REGISTERED HANDSTAMPS

by Robert Deakin

In the Harmers auction sales of January 27th and March 10th there were a considerable number of early St. Helena covers; several of which were registered. Early registered covers prior to 1869 were usually marked "REGISTERED" in manuscript. Between 1869 and 1879 a straight line handstamp appears to have been used. Five examples of this handstamp were to be found on covers from these two auctions. The handstamp struck in red measures 4 x 47mm in serified capitals. It is noted on covers dated between 12th June 1869 and 1st February 1879. The oval registered handstamp is known to have come into use some time in 1879. Illustrated below is a cover from my collection dated 1871 showing this handstamp in red and the number "1" dumb cancellation. On the opposite page I illustrate a cover that has been in my collection for some time; it shows a triple rate registered cover to the U.S.A. The rate at that time being 1/2d. single, 2/4d. double, 4/8d. triple plus registration fee of 6d. = 5/2d. (Unfortunately the 2d. value was damaged before being applied to the cover) The registered handstamp on this cover dated 11th April 1871 is struck in black and measures 4 x 40mm including the full stop. It seems strange that this slightly smaller handstamp was used struck in black in 1876, while the larger handstamp which so far has only been recorded in red was in use from 1869 to 1879.



Registered handstamp struck in red on 1871 cover.



Registered handstamp in black on 1876 cover.

1866 COVER TO THE U.S.A.

Peter Cottis has sent me a photostat of a cover to the U.S.A. dated August 27th 1866 which shows an unusual postage rate of 1/8d. The cover is endorsed on the reverse "U.S. Steamer 'Juanita' St. Helena Aug 27th 66". As the cover has London Paid c.d.s. for 22nd September 1866 and New York Paid "5" the postage rate of 1/8d. carried the cover to its destination of Pennsylvania. The cover appears to have been charged at double the 4d. SHIP LETTER RATE (8d.) to the U.K., then 1/- PACKET LETTER RATE from the U.K. to the U.S.A. The 1/- Packet Rate (24 cents U.S.) was split 16cents for the U.S. Packet to New York, 5cents U.S. onward transmission to destination 3cents to the U.K. Post Office handling fee. As for the 8d. Ship Letter fee, this would have been split 50/50 between the St. Helena and U.K. Post Offices (4d.) each. The problem area with this cover is the rate mark of 9d. in red. This would have been the amount due to the U.K. Post Office. The rate mark should have been 1/4d. i.e. 4d. from the Ship Letter rate plus 1/- for the U.K. transit and forwarding. The cover probably went to the U.S. on the Inman Line 'City of New York 11' departing Queenstown on 27th September 1866 and making New York on 10th October. (This information given by Malcolm B. Montgomery M.B.E. a B.N.A. specialist)

If any of our members can come up with an explanation on the "9d." rate marking your editor would like to hear from you.



Cover to the U.S.A. dated 1866 showing 1/8d. rate and "9" accountancy marking.

FROM THE ST. HELENA ARCHIVES

Whilst on St. Helena, Barry Burns and myself managed to get a few hours to ourselves in the St. Helena archives. Unfortunately there appears to be no filing system, but in the few hours available we managed to wade through the Blue Books and also a few old files. We photocopied all the relevant Postal Rate material from the Blue Books, but one of the old files proved more fruitful. Illustrated below are three handstamps, a new "CASTLE" handstamp, "COLONIAL TREASURY" handstamp and a "GARRISON OFFICE" handstamp. Page 24 shows a letter from "SOLOMON, HOGG & CO" with a request to The Colonial Secretary from the business community that the island have the privilege of being included in "THE POSTAL UNION" for the reduced rate of postage from 6d. to 2½d. Page 25 shows an invoice for the Postal Stationery Cards which went on sale in November 1895. In very faint ink just above the invoice number is the wording 240 at 1d. single in a packet and 120 at 2d. in a packet. The invoice shows a "CASTLE" handstamp for 17th October 1896.



W. d'  
COLONIAL  
TREASURY  
- 5 JUL 1897  
ST. HELENA.



The Hon<sup>ble</sup>  
 The Colonial Secretary,  
 The Castle.

(1)

ack. & reg. petition  
 by mail of 11<sup>th</sup> Jan  
 22<sup>nd</sup> W/W.

went forward

(2)

none  
 mns.

We beg to enclose herewith a  
 Petition (in duplicate) signed by  
 540, more or less, of the inhabi-  
 tants of St. Helena, representing  
 the Mercantile (wholesale & retail),  
 Farming, Fishing, Labouring, and  
 General interests of this Island, request  
 that they may be granted the privi-  
 lege of being included in the Postal  
 Union, and placing the postal rate  
 reduced from 6<sup>d</sup> to 2½<sup>d</sup> per ½ oz,  
 if only for two years as an experi-  
 ment.

GOVERNMENT OF *St. Helena*

*R 49*  
*94*

DESCRIPTION. Duty. Number of Sheets. Stamps on each Sheet. Number of Stamps.

*RA*



*no N.º 2*

| DESCRIPTION.      | Duty.                | Number of Sheets. | Stamps on each Sheet. | Number of Stamps. |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Cards Sing</i> | <i>1<sup>d</sup></i> | <i>7200</i> ✓     | <i>1</i>              | <i>7200</i>       |
| <i>Reply</i>      | <i>1<sup>d</sup></i> | <i>5040</i> ✓     | <i>2</i>              | <i>10080</i>      |

*Shd be*

*5.96 N.º 993496*

## FROM THE AUCTIONS

An amazing collection of St. Helena Postal History has been auctioned by Harmers of London over the past few months. The collection was split into two sections, the first being 96 covers plus stamps on 28th January, the second part of 57 covers plus stamps was on 10th March. This collection was probably the best collection ever to be seen on the U.K. market. Just 12 cover lots were unsold from the first auction and 25 from the second auction. My own feeling is that too many items were put onto the market at one time. Owing to the limited number of collectors of St. Helena and the extremely high prices realised from the first auction resulted in the almost 50% of unsold lots in the second auction. Most of the unsold lots were re-offered on 30th July.

I have listed some of the better items over the next few pages. Realisations include buyers premium of 11.75%

28th January 1998

- Lot 687 1863 cover to U.K. bearing 4d. imperf pen cancelled Est £700 Real £726
- Lot 688 1863 cover to Canada bearing two 1856 6d. imperf, and 1863 1d. and 4d. imperf. Est £10,000 Real £10,616
- Lot 690 1865 cover to London bearing 1864 4d. pair and single. Est £2,000 Real £2,235
- Lot 691 1865 Official registered cover to U.K. bearing 1856 6d. imperf and 1864 1/- green pair. Est £4,000 Real £6,146
- Lot 695 1867 cover to India bearing 1864 1/- green with oval Post Office date stamp in blue. Est £1,500 Real £1,565
- Lot 696 1867 Officers Letter to Scotland bearing two 1d. and 4d. uncanceled. 1/- due mark as stamps were unacceptable. Est £1,000 Real £1,118
- Lot 698 1868 cover to Paris bearing 1861 6d. and 1868 2d. stamps cancelled with the black "2" handstamp. Est £3,750 Real £4,470
- Lot 702 1870 cover to the U.S.A. bearing 2d., 3d. and 1/-. Est £1,250 Real £1,676
- Lot 704 1870 cover to the U.S.A. franked 1d. 4d. and 1/-. Est £1,250 Real £1,341
- Lot 708 1874 cover to France bearing 6d. and 1d. with Blue Black surcharge. Est £2,000 Real £2,012  
(Editors note: Cover probably with 1d. stamp removed from left of 6d. as the rate to France was 8d.)
- Lot 712 Cover to the U.S.A. bearing 2d. and 1/-. Est £750 Real £782
- Lot 713 Cover to the Cape of good Hope with perf 14 x 12½ 6d. Est £400 Real £447

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 30

- Lot 715 1880 cover to France bearing 2d. and 1/- values. Est £200 Real £268
- Lot 718 1881 cover to the U.S.A. bearing 1d. 2d. and 2 x 1/-. Est £500 Real £447
- Lot 720 1881 cover to Hungary bearing 2d. and 1/-. Est £700 Real £726
- Lot 725 1885 registered cover to London bearing 3d. pair and 4d.  
Est £575 Real £1,062
- Lot 737 1892 registered cover to Jersey bearing 2d. and 4d. tied by oval THE CASTLE  
handstamp in violet. Est £750 Real £1,006
- Lot 739 1893 cover to Sierra Leone bearing pair of 1884 2½d. with additional Tax 5d.  
Est £1,250 Real £1,341
- Lot 744 1895 Official stampless cover to the U.K. with oval Post Office handstamp in  
violet. Est £150 Real £335
- Lot 751 1897 O.H.M.S. stampless cover to Cuba with oval Post Office handstamp in  
violet. Est £300 Real £313
- Lot 796 1d. imperf surcharge omitted. Est £7,500 Real £8,381
- Lot 798 1d. imperf block of 6. Est £500 Real £492
- Lot 800 4d. imperf horizontal pair. Est £750 Real £726
- Lot 803 1d. imperforate with long bar and perf 12 6d. both overprinted "CANCELLED"  
in black affixed to small piece. Est £1,250 Real £1,788
- Lot 805 1d. surcharged in Blue Black. Est £400 Real £726
- Lot 806 3d. deep dull purple block of four. Est £225 Real £224
- Lot 807 3d. block of fifteen showing re-entries. Est £1,750 Real £1,676
- Lot 811 4d. surcharged double. Est £2,500 Real £2,570
- Lot 818 4d. carmine block of four. Est £300 Real £291
- Lot 819 1880 1d. lake three singles and strip of 5 imperf along top margin. Est £200  
(Editors note: This lot was re-offered in the 30th July sale at a much reduced  
estimate, and now resides in your editors collection.)
- Lot 823 Imperf Plate Proof for 1884 4d. Est £700 Real £726
- Lot 825 6d. Colour Trial perf 12 in bronze-green. Est £500 Real £492
- Lot 829 2½d. Ultramarine, horizontal pair with right hand stamp showing bar to  
surcharge omitted. Est £70 Real £1,006



698



704



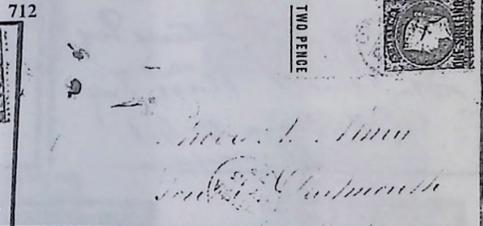
702



708



715



712

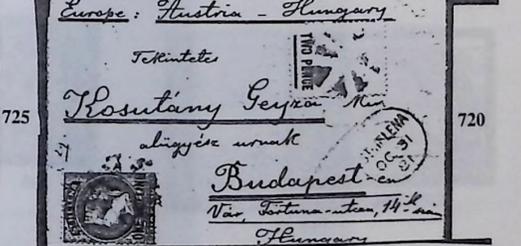
TWO PENCE



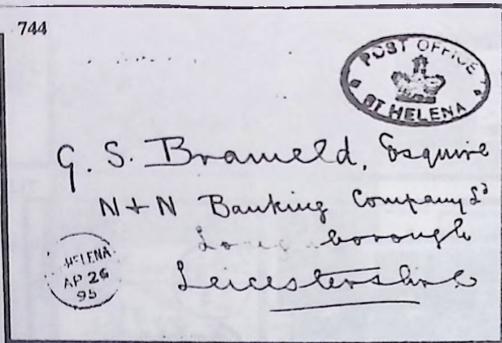
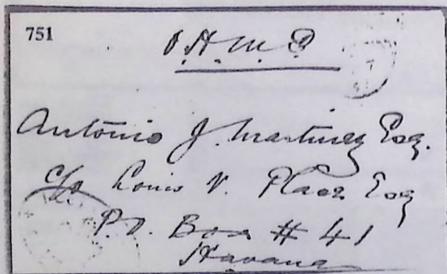
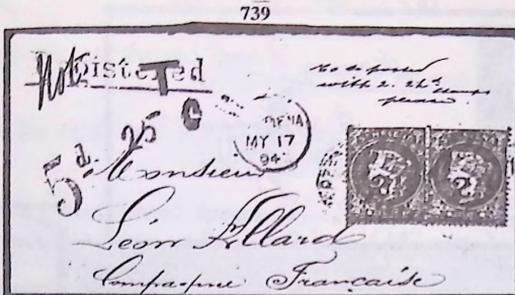
725



718



720



798



800



805



806



811



807



818



823



825



829

Ex  
819



831



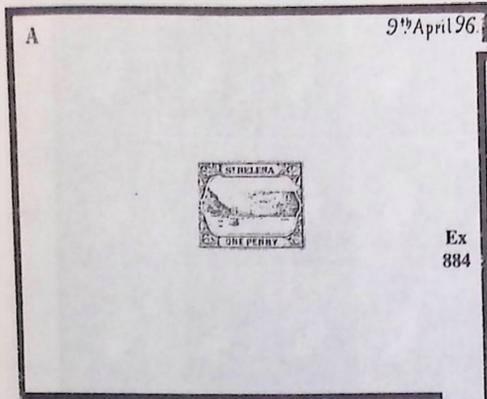
832



834



Ex 849



Ex  
884

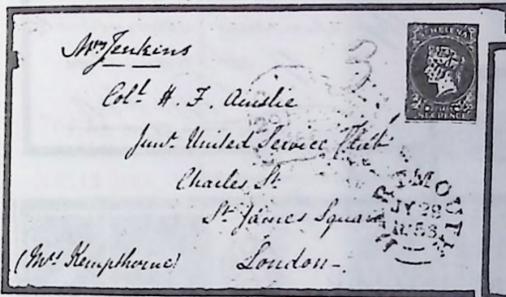
March 10th 1998

- Lot 1579 1856 cover to the U.K. bearing 6d. imperf rated "3" Est £3,500 Real £4,191
- Lot 1582 1866 registered cover to the U.K. bearing 4d. and 1/- Est £1,250 Real £1,900
- Lot 1583 1866 cover to the U.K. bearing 1864 4d. Est £700 Real £1,006
- Lot 1584 1866 incoming cover from the U.S.A. with St. Helena oval date stamp in blue for Jan 1867. Est £3,000 Real £3,129
- Lot 1586 1868 cover to France handstamped "INSUFFICIENT PAID" Est £2,000 Real £2,459
- Lot 1587 1868 double rate cover to London with "2" cancellation. Est £1,000 Real £1,006
- Lot 1588 1869 registered double rate cover to the U.K. Est £1,500 Real £1,565
- Lot 1596 1871 registered cover to the U.K. franked 1/4d. Est £1,300 Real £1,341
- Lot 1598 1875 cover to the U.K. bearing pair of 6d. Dull Blue Est £2,500 Real £2,459
- Lot 1602 1876 printed cover to the U.S.A. bearing pair 4d. carmine cover rated "7½".  
Est £1,200 Real £1,229

**EDITORS NOTE: THE RATE TO THE U.S.A. AT THIS TIME WAS 7½d. AS ST. HELENA DID NOT ISSUE ¼d. STAMPS UNTIL 1884 THE COVER HAD TO BE OVERFRANKED BY ¼d.**

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 30

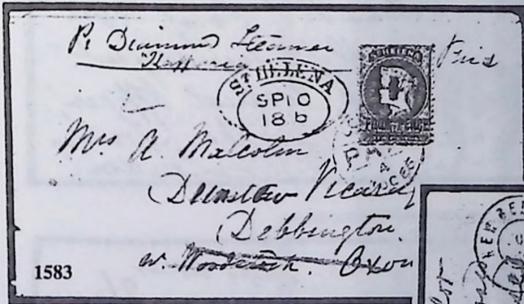
- Lot 1608 Two covers to the U.K. both bearing 1880 6d. Milky Blue.  
Est £500 Real £615
- Lot 1620 1863 stampless cover to the U.K. endorsed "Ships Letter" and rated "2/-"  
Est £550 Real £559
- Lot 1622 1894 cover to the U.K. franked 2½d. with Tax 35c and handstamp "7" for  
double the deficient postage of 3½d. Est £440 Real £726
- Lot 1624 1895 part of the ST. HELENIAN newspaper bearing 1d. Est £400 Real £492
- Lot 1626 1895 soldier cover to the U.K. franked 1d. Est £90 Real £1,006
- Lot 1636 6d. Imperf horizontal pair. Est £1,000 Real £1,341
- Lot 1638 4d. imperf horizontal strip of three. Est £1,200 Real 1,676



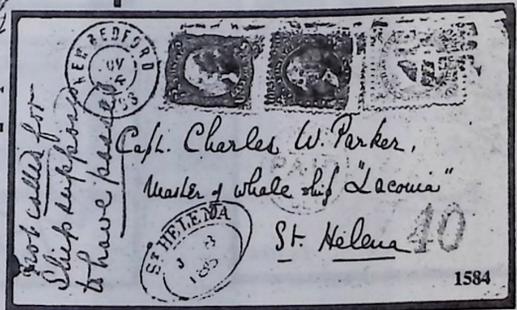
1579



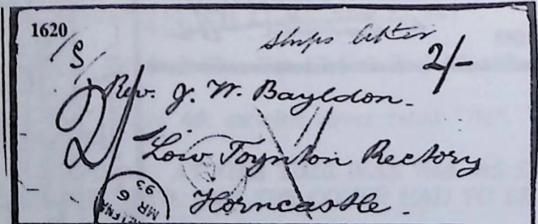
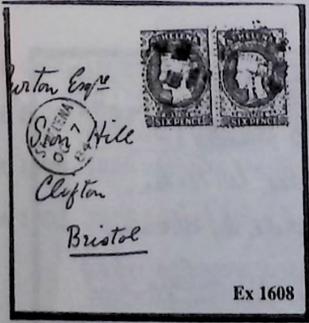
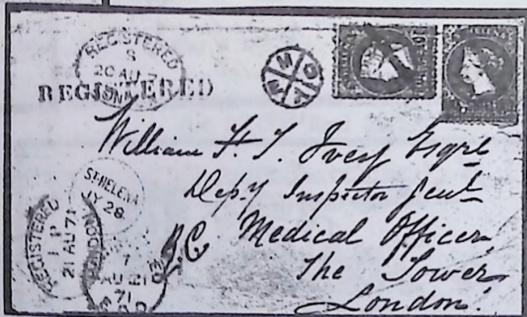
1582

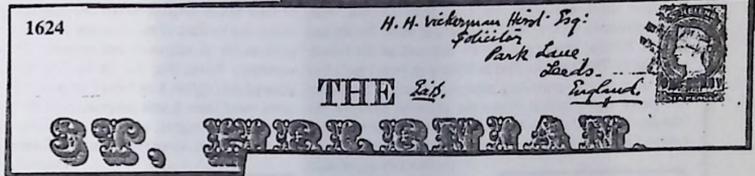
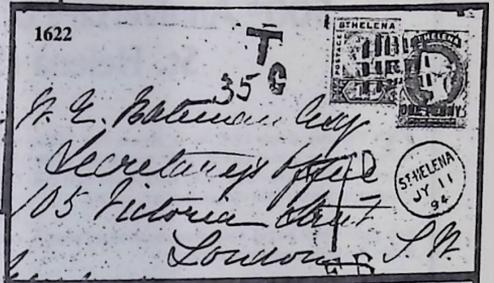
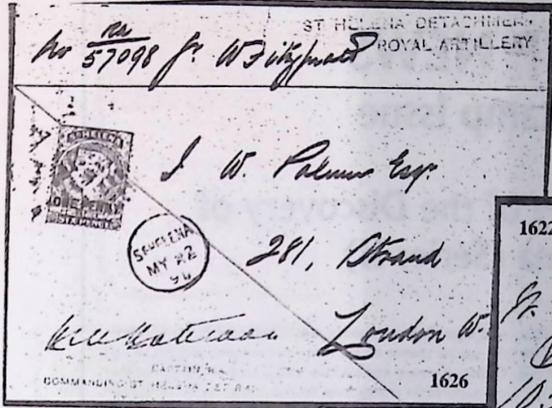


1583



1584





# STAMP NEWS

## New Stamp Issue

### 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Discovery of St. Helena (Series II)

Friday, 2 July 1998 the St. Helena Post Office issued four stamps entitled "500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Discovery of St. Helena Part II". This is the second issue in a series leading up to the quinqucentenary in 2002.

The stamps design portray a significant event in the Island's history during the seventeenth century.

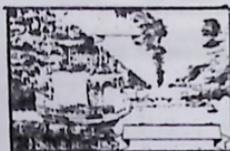
The Governor of St. Helena, John Dutton, was appointed by the East India Company to settle, fortify and defend the Island. This task is vividly depicted on the twenty pence stamp. The Dutch invaded St. Helena on New Year's Eve 1673. After several unavailing attempts to land, the twenty pence stamp design shows the skirmish between the English and the Dutch, when an attempt was made to land at Jamestown. Being spotted by the islanders, the enemy was

met with a barrage of rocks and was forced to retreat. However, returning after dark the Dutch were successful in landing and stormed the fort in Jamestown forcing the English to flee. The Dutch success was short lived; for in May 1673 possession of the island had changed hands again. Captain Richard Munden on learning the Dutch had taken possession of St. Helena, made a daring plan for its

recapture. Captain Munden was to bombard James Fort from the sea (as shown on the thirty pence stamp design), whilst Captain Keigwin and his men would land at Prosperous Bay and surprise the enemy from the rear. However, when Captain Keigwin arrived in James Valley the Dutch had already capitulated to Munden who had kept up a bombardment of the fort throughout the previous day. Following the recapture of St. Helena, the Committee in London, realising the importance of their South Atlantic haven and also being anxious for the safety and welfare of its colonists, set about putting into place policies for its economy and security. The conditions were extremely favourable for on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1673 the King granted the English East India Company a Charter, which constituted them Lords proprietors of the Island with all the rights of sovereignty, and free and exclusive jurisdiction of the Manor of East Greenwich in the County of Kent.

This magnificent document is currently held by the British Library in London. The beautiful frontpiece bears a portrait of King Charles II contained in the letter 'C' of his name. The eighty pence stamp design shows the Royal Charter together with its authenticating Royal Seal.

Each of these colourful stamps includes in the text "Series II - 17<sup>th</sup> Century". The Discoverers Logo is also depicted.



at £1.55 and Official First Day covers (descriptive liner card) at £1.95 are available from the Philatelic Bureau, The Post Office, St. Helena, for a period of fifteen months providing



#### Technical details

|                  |                               |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Designer:        | Ross Watton                   |
| Printer:         | Walsall Security Printers Ltd |
| Process:         | Lithography                   |
| Stamp Size:      | 28.45 x 42.58 mm              |
| Sheetlet Format: | 50 (2 x 25)                   |
| Paper:           | CA Spiral Watermarked         |
| Perforation:     | 14 per 2cms                   |

— ST. HELENA —  
Post Office

JAMESTOWN  
ISLAND OF ST. HELENA  
SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

